

Fred (Fritz) Schreiber, by Julie M. Luker

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Narrator

Cole Steinberg
Concordia University, Saint Paul
Interviewer

Landmark Associates
Transcriber

August 14, 2023
Minnesota

CS: Cole Steinberg

FS: Fred (Fritz) Schreiber

[Start of Schreiber F Audio Part 1 of 2]

CS: This is an interview conducted as part of a larger faculty and student research project initiated by Dr. Julie Luker of Concordia University, Saint Paul. Today is August 14th, 2023. I'm here with Fred (Fritz) Schreiber. My name is Cole Steinberg, and I'm an undergraduate student at Concordia University Saint Paul. I'll be talking to Fritz about what life was like growing up in the Twin Cities.

During this interview, I'm going to ask you to reflect on your childhood life experiences as they relate to a variety of social topics from that time period. For the purposes of this interview, we have defined childhood as birth through 17 years of age. To begin, please state and spell your full name.

FS: Fritz Schreiber. S-C-H-R-E-I-B-E-R.

CS: Please identify your race and gender.

FS: I'm a male. White male.

CS: Please state your date of birth.

FS: August 7, 1926.

CS: Finally, please share where you grew up such as the name of the neighborhood, or a nearby street intersection. Please include any major moves you made during this time period.

FS: Well, we moved to 459 Central, which was between Arundel and Mackubin, when I was about four years old. We were there till I was about 13 or 14. Then, we moved up Central to 710 Central. When I went in the army, my dad moved back to 459 Central, which was his birth home.

CS: Okay. Thank you. I would like to learn more about your family life. Let's begin with the memories you have for immediate and extended family. Please share some memories that you have about these relationships.

FS: Oh, man. That's where I shoulda had the list of questions. Do you have anything specific? What is that question again? Share my memories with my family.

CS: Yes. Your immediate and your extended family. Just the memories that you lived with.

FS: Well, I was one of five children. I was the youngest. My dad, anyway, he married young. He had two children. A son and a daughter. His wife died. He remarried, and she had three children. Margaret, older sister, Ardis, older sister, and myself. When I was four years old, my mother died. My mother's mother, my grandma, had been living with the family, and she just stayed and took over and mothered us, so to speak.

That was my immediate family. When we moved after my mother's death, and I was four, to 459 Central, there were two of my aunts living there. As I said, this was my dad's birth home, and his two older sisters were still living there. We moved in. There were six, let's see—five kids, and grandma, and me. That was seven. There were nine in the house. I don't know. We existed. We had a lot of great times.

I don't remember ever getting really close to my aunts. I mean, there was some affection, and it was good, but I can't say I loved them, looking back. I don't know how it was when I was younger. Okay. When I was about 12 or 13, my older sister Marge, she was three years younger than I. Older. Pardon me. She was at John Marshall, I think. Anyway, there was friction between, I think, basically her and my two aunts.

I think they wanted her to *[laugh]* be more her upbringing. I don't know. Anyway, so Dad, Grandma, my two older sisters and I, moved up to 710. We stayed at 710. I was inducted into the army in November '44. We were there.

During the course of my army service, served two years, Dan and my one sister then moved back to 459. I was there for a couple of years. Then, I got married, and of course moved out. Then, let's see. Yeah. Good. Ask some more specific questions.

CS: Okay. Did you have any family pets? If so, please describe them.

FS: Yeah. The first one we had was a dog. I don't know where it came from. A little rat terrier. He was called Skipped, and he was a nice dog. We loved him. He got run over, not in our view. I mean, my dad found him. Anyway, and then I think we went to the whatever it was, the pound or something, and we found another dog. A little terrier type, white and black. My sister Arda said he looked so droopy we got him. That was his name. Droopy.

He was alive when I went in the service I believe. I'm not sure. Anyway, I can't remember when he died. Okay. Those are the two pets. Grandma for I'm guessing at least a couple years—first, she had some canaries. Then, she had parakeets. I remember they had the run of the house. I remember that at one point some bird escaped the house. Kind of a miracle I guess, we put the cage outside, and it came back. That's the extent.

Oh, we mighta had goldfish. Yeah, we must've at some point. They didn't last long. No, I keep going. At one point, I think it was Cathy, brought home a white rat from her biology class. That wasn't you Jamie, was it?

Other [Jamie, relative off camera]: No.

FS: It was Cathy. She brought it home.

Other [Jamie, relative off camera]: That's a lot more recent. I think he was asked about pets when you were growing up.

FS: Well anyway, she brought it home and she was a pet for a while. A white rat. I think that's about it.

CS: Okay. How were household chores divided between members of your family?

FS: Well, I was the youngest child, so I was given the most breaks. I remember that at one point Marge, three years older, had to wash the dishes. I think Ardis, one year older, pardon me, dried them. I think that I was assigned to sweep the floor. This is the kitchen. Other than that, I don't remember any official. No, I think... No. We didn't cut the lawn. We didn't have much lawn. That's about all I can remember really. [*Crosstalk 00:09:38*]

CS: Thank you. Next, please describe the ways in which your family's economic status influenced your childhood.

FS: Well, Dad at one point had sleeping sickness, and I'm not sure when that was. He was laid off and out of work for some time. I remember early on, he worked at the Hoist and Derrick, American Hoist and Derrick. Later on, he worked at the Minnesota Mine, which later became 3M. He got that job through being a friend with somebody at our church. He was actually the director of the Civil Service Department in Saint Paul.

I mean, I think he's the one that arranged Dad getting the job. How it affected our economic status. Well, he was working. Those memories aren't clear enough for me to say if our economic system or our status improved any during, or how much. I know that the first car Dad had that I remember was a Model T Ford in 1926. Then, he got a 1929 Graham Paige we had for a while. Then, the next car was a 1933 Chevrolet four-door.

Actually, that was the last car he had until he died. My two aunts were both maiden aunts. Aunt Edith was a maid, a maiden, a spinster, and Aunt Matilda also was. Aunt Matilda had an outside job. She worked as a furrier for B.W. Harris Company in Saint Paul that made furs, I guess. Aunt Edith, so far as I know, never did work outside the home. I don't know what the financial arrangements were for our living there.

I didn't answer your question. Looking back, I think we were lower middle class. I never had a new bicycle until I was an adult. That doesn't say much. I can't really answer any more than that. When we went to 710 Central, and that was my aunts were left behind then, I don't know. We were living in a bottom duplex, and we lived okay.

We were never hungry or anything. I know that at one point I can remember when the schools—this was during Depression. The schools were giving out free milk and I think graham crackers to the kids. My dad didn't want us to do that. He thought that was charity.

CS: I do have a follow up question. Can you describe the extent to which you felt your family's income met your basic needs?

FS: Well, there's no doubt it did that. I do know that my Grandma Walters had tuberculosis at one time, and the early years of my life as I remember, we had to go I think it was twice a year to what was the Wilder Dispensary. They would check our weight, and not sure what else. I remember that they prescribed cod liver oil for us for a while. It was a charity. I know that.

During that time and a couple years later, the ones from the *[unintelligible 00:15:00]*. Anyway, the Wilder Dispensary I believe was connected with the Volunteers of America rest camp that

was out on Highway 96 that we were able to go to for several summers. I think we went one week. I think a couple of years, we went for two weeks. Of course, we didn't pay anything. It was a Volunteers of America rest camp.

CS: Now, I would like to know about your experiences with religion, such as Catholicism, Lutheranism, *et cetera*. Describe what you can recall about your family's religious practices when you were growing up.

FS: Oh, well, I was born a Lutheran. One of the few, about the only one. The only memory of my mother alive was when she was superintendent of the infant division of our Sunday school at Redeemer Lutheran on Dale and Carroll. Still there. Anyway, so religion was important. I know that we went every Sunday to Sunday school. Over the years, I accumulated a pin, and a wreath, and a couple other little bars.

To get one of those, you had to go to Sunday school every Sunday for a year. If you were out of town, you had to get something from the church you attended indicating. As I say, I think I had one, two—I had five years of perfect attendance. As I was growing up, that was part of my life. Oh. When I got to, I suppose 10, I began going to church quite often. Almost every Sunday.

When I got older, I joined a choir, and I've been a choir member in a Lutheran congregation all my life. In the service, there was a choral group on Okinawa, and I joined that. [*Unintelligible 00:17:43*] religion. Get back to that. It's been a very important part of my life. I know that we had three years of confirmation. The first year, a vicar taught. The second year, a Pastor Lindemann taught.

The third year, his uncle Pastor Fred Lindemann confirmed me. Pastor Herb later became the main pastor at Redeemer, and he married us. Since then, when we moved to Forest Lake for a couple of years, we kept our membership at Saint Paul, and we attended regularly. When we moved back to Saint Paul in about 1954, first we went back to Redeemer. It was too far to drive with the kids.

We joined Hope Lutheran Church, which was only about four or five blocks from where we lived. We were members there until they dissolved last year. Now, I belong to Gustavus Adolphus. Religion has been a very important part of my life. Yeah. When I go out and do exercises in the evening or late afternoon, and I try to do that on one of these crosses, whatever they are, machines. I say my prayers while I am doing that. It takes about 20 minutes.

It's been very important. When I came to this assisted living facility, I mentioned right away that I wished there was a choir. There wasn't. Since then, we don't have a regular choir, but we have a choir that had a concert last Christmas, and another one this spring. I'm assuming it's gonna keep

going. I enjoy that. Religion's just been a very important influence that I try to bring our children up that way. Lorraine, my wife, was raised a Catholic. When I met her, we talked about religion a lot. She became a Lutheran before we married.

CS: Okay. Now, I'd like to learn more about the neighborhood in which you grew up. If you moved during childhood, you may wish to reflect on more than one neighborhood. This is fine to do, but please indicate as you do it. Please describe what comes to mind when thinking about the neighborhood in which you grew up.

FS: Okay. When I was four years old, we moved to 459 Central, which was the family home. I think my grandpa had it built. Okay. We lived there, and when I reflect back and count the houses and who was where, it was about half and half black and white. When we moved there first, I was youngest, there was a Jewish family, the Fishmans, next to us.

Then, a few years later, Mr. Bollard, a black man, and his family moved there. They were there until I guess I got married. Although he was dead. As I say, about 50 percent of the homes were inhabited by blacks. There weren't a lot of kids on my block. I'm not sure why. I guess most the families were probably a little too old. Anyway, there were some, and we played with 'em.

In fact, there were more kids on the block who were black than white. However, there weren't very many. I can only think of four. Okay. That was our block. The kids I played with mainly, the boy across the street of us, George Clement. We played together a lot when we were young. He wasn't much for physical activity, sports. I think he had a shoulder problem.

Anyway, so when I played, it was mainly on Fuller Avenue with a bunch of kids that lived there and on Aurora. We would play in the street mainly. Hockey, street hockey, in the winter. There was one big empty lot, and the next block up on Central, and we used that as our ball field in the summer. Growing up, I remember no conflicts with black and whites.

There was a black church at our corner. There was a grocery store on each corner. In those days, there were grocery stores all over. Within two blocks of our house, one, two, three, four at least. A grocery store. Clue me in. Where am I? I told you about our playing. Yeah. Oh, we did a lot of sliding in the winter because the block away there was a big empty I don't know.

Fuller Avenue was elevated, so there was a sliding hill available, and we used that a lot during the winter to slide down. Ice skating. My dad was a really good figure skater. His daughters, my sisters, were skating on figure skates. When I came along, he didn't buy any new skates. The only thing he could find for me at the time he bought it was long blade racing skates.

I don't know if you're familiar with them. They have a very thin blade. My ankles were not good, so I just never did get into ice skating. Let's see. In the summer, I played a lot with the boy across the street, George. Now, I got lost again. Clue me in.

CS: That's pretty good on the neighborhood. I can move on to the next section.

FS: You know what? Okay. 12 or 13, we moved to 710. There was no playground or anything like that. The people on one side of us were black, the Pearsons. No children. On the other side were the Donovans, and there were two or three boys older, and a daughter that was a little younger than I.

There was a boy my age in the upper duplex at 710. We played a lot during the summer months outside. There was a basketball hoop, and a backboard at the back of our garage. That was it though. Mainly playing basketball. That's about it for sports.

CS: Okay. Next, I would like to learn about the values shared by your family and your neighbors. Values are principles or standards that help guide behavior. What memories come to mind that demonstrate what these values were for your family and your neighbors?

FS: Oh, heavens. Well, I think you already know something about how I was brought up. Religion was very important, and the tenants of Christianity were there. You do good. You're kind. As much as I could, I think I always lived that. The people that we lived near, or next to, or that I knew, I think most of 'em shared those ideals and those principles pretty much. I don't remember anybody that I can remember in our neighborhood who was a troublemaker.

'Course I didn't know the adults that well. I think that the neighborhood was not rich, but the people were, I think, good to each other. I know that I was always trying to be. I know that the black man living next to us, Mr. Bollard, I know that he was working on his house and roofing it. He allowed me to come up on his porch roof and watch him. We talked.

He even took me fishing once. He had an old flat-bottom rowboat, wooden. He took me to [Carence?] once, and we fished. He was a very, very nice man. I later learned that he was one of the masons, the bricklayers, for the state capitol. In fact, a Minnesota history magazine had an article about him some years ago. That's not our neighborhood.

We had a grocery store at the corner that we used quite a bit. I can remember going down there for meat. Getting dog bones for Droopy. It was quiet on the way to school. One, two, three, four, four and a half blocks to school. Not a lotta kids. When I got to sixth grade, I began to be a police boy.

My corner was up at our corner, Central and Mackubin. I can remember getting that Sam Browne belt, and my yellow sign, and being proud *[laugh]*. Pleased that I could stop traffic *[laugh]*. Let's see. What else can I tell ya? Nothing I can think of.

CS: *[Laugh]* that's okay. I can move on to our section about leisure time. Now, I'm going to ask you all about leisure time. Describe some of the ways in which you, your family, and your neighbors engaged in leisure time when you were growing up.

FS: Well, the neighbors and leisure time, there was nothing except for me, and to some extent my two older sisters, playing outside with neighboring kids or whatever. Leisure time with the family, that's easier because almost every Sunday, Dad would take us some place. In other words, Sunday afternoon, Sunday, was important day. Most of the time, he was off on Sunday.

Although there was a period during the war I think when he was at mining, and they were working three shifts, and he mighta had to work some Sundays. Anyway, Sunday being a special day, we *[unintelligible 00:31:44]* always to do something. We went out to Como Park a lot to see the zoo. We were eager to see it and enjoyed it. Even the conservatory was really wonderful for us.

We would drive to see relatives, or we would drive just some place and drive back home. We had a family, my grandma, who was really acting like my mother, had a sister in Carver, Minnesota. She and her husband had a 40-acre farm just outside of Carver. We went there often. I mean, we musta been there at least once a month. We went there a lot. Winter and summer. I know that I and my sisters just loved that place.

We'd go in the morning, or right after church, and come back later that night. I know that at one time, one year, I got a bicycle. It was used. I biked out there, and it was about 35 miles to the farm. I stayed over for a couple of days. That was fun. I know on the 40-acre farm, he had some corn. I'm not sure what else it was. I wouldn't recognize it if it was rye. I don't think it was wheat.

Anyway, a couple of years I had a shack, and that was older now. I would go through the cornfield looking for pheasants. They didn't have many there, but I was looking. I did see some quail once. I don't know if this fits, but in the fall during pheasant season, we had another relative of my mother's who was married to a tenant farmer. For several years, she was in Maynard, Minnesota. For a couple of years, she was at Blomkest, Minnesota.

Another year, *[unintelligible 00:34:19]* water. All where she and her family lived. Well, he was a tenant farmer. I guess he farmed for them for the place to stay. Anyway, we would go pheasant hunting. Dad would take me there, and we would pheasant hunt. That was a time of the century

when pheasants were really plentiful. Ah, man. Hard to believe. Anyway, let's see. Most Sundays we did something as a family.

Now, usually those did not involve my two aunts. It just didn't. I'm not sure why. At that time, my brother older, he was 12 years older, and my oldest sister, who was 10 years older, by the time I was 9 or 10, 11, they were in California with an aunt. They both came back. For several years, they weren't here. The family that Dad was visiting people with was my two sisters, Marge and Ardie, and myself, and Grandma. That was our basic family unit.

CS: Which bands or music genres were your favorite growing up?

FS: Oh, heavens. When I was growing up. Well, we had a radio. I don't remember listening to the radio except for little kids programs. The Katzenjammer Kids. I remember Orphan Annie, Dick Tracy. There was another one. Kaltenmeyers Kindergarten. It was on Saturdays. Anyway, I listened to those pretty regularly. For quite a few years after school, I'd come home and there were a couple that I listened to. I think Orphan Annie was one of those.

Music, no. Not a lot of genres. When I was maybe 12—13, 14, yeah. Anyway, Marge was at John Marshall High School then, and she had a boyfriend, Darrell. She and Ardis, my other sister, and myself had a little kids quartet. Our one public performance, I don't know if was Ramsey or Washington. Anyway, we went to a county fair. I don't know if it was 4H. We sang there. Otherwise, we just sang for ourselves.

When we went out to Carver and Darrell was along, we'd usually sing there. Those were old-fashioned songs. Some hymns. I think the first song we ever learned was Beautiful Savior. I remember we learned God Be With You 'Till We Meet Again. I remember a time when one of my second cousins Percy had died, and his mother and Sophie, who was a sister a grandma, we were all visiting Carver.

Our little quartet sang God Be With You 'Till We Meet Again for the old folks. I think it made them cry. I didn't feel good about that. Let's see. Later on, music, it's always been important to me. Not so much popular music. I like a lot of Westerns and the old-fashioned ones. I suppose there was a time when the kids were growing up. I don't even think then.

I mean, I like the Kingston Trio, and Woody Guthrie, and the Weavers, and that type. This was later. Not my childhood. Hymns have always been a vital part of my musical library. That'd be the most important one. I have with me in my latest gifts was a CD of Paul Simon's, nine songs, which was nice.

CS: Okay. Next, let's discuss your experience with schooling. Please describe what it was like going to school as a child.

FS: Well, we walked. I walked about four a half, five blocks. McKinley took up a whole part of the block. Anyway, so I walked there and back well, always. You went in the morning. You came back for lunch. You went back in the afternoon, and at the end of the afternoon, you came home. I can still remember many of my teachers. *[Clears throat]* when I got to the sixth grade, I could be a police boy.

I remember at one point in the morning, I would be at the front door of the school. When a teacher pulled up, I would go out and open the door for them. The grade school, each year we got books at St. Paul Book and Stationery, or Twin City Book and Stationery, one of the two. I was a good student I think by and large.

I remember that Ms. Collins, I think she was my third-grade teacher. I was sitting in the back of the room, and I don't know if I was talking or something, but I remember she called me up, and she said, "You used to be such a nice boy" *[laugh]*. Something like that. It made me feel bad. Well, I suppose that's what it was supposed to do. I went through the eighth grade at McKinley. Then, I went to Mechanic Arts High School. That's no longer there either.

Did I answer your question about elementary school? I got along with the kids. I don't remember ever an argument, a fight. Oh. I was pretty naive, unsophisticated, and I didn't wanna fight. I can look back on it now, and I think, "Well, I was lucky." I think I had good teachers. I think I did as well as I could in grade school.

CS: For our final topic, I'm going to ask you to reflect on local and global issues such as war, poverty, discrimination, social unrest, *et cetera*. In your opinion, what were some of the biggest local or global issues affecting the people in your neighborhood when you were growing up?

FS: When I was growing up. Well, you see, that's the problem. At 459, and even at 710, at 710, I was in the upper grades of high school. I knew about current events to some extent. Of course, we got into the war during that time. Growing up when I was younger, I didn't have a lot of feelings. I know that before World War II started, we were living at 459 at that time. My aunts were there. Grandma was there. Dad, of course. Okay.

I remember discussions about Hitler because I remember the name. I remember discussions about Father Coughlin, and Amy something-else. She was an evangelist. I cannot remember any arguments at home about Germany or America. I knew that Germany had lost the First World War. I knew that the man I was named after, my uncle Fritz, died there in October of 1918. I knew that, but that didn't really color my thinking.

I didn't really begin to think about politics a lot until I got to college. Then, I really went for it. In my growing up years, I just had so few memories. Oh, I know. *[Unintelligible 00:45:39]* not how I felt, but I remember it had to be '36. Anyway, on University Avenue, three blocks away, there was President Roosevelt was in town. He was gonna go down the street. We went over there, and I guess I saw him.

In 1950, President Eisenhower was here running for president. I remember going. I got a picture of him. That's not my growing up years. Even in high school, no politics. I know I had to take social studies. I know in seventh grade elementary school, we had to learn about Minnesota history. I don't remember politics in high school being talked about a lot.

CS: Yeah, that's okay. A lotta participants have a hard time recalling politics or any sort of large events that would come to them in their childhood.

FS: Let me interrupt with something that doesn't fit with this at all. *[Laugh]* anyway, when I was a junior in high school at Mechanic Arts, I had a good friend who was in the band. He played trumpet. Another, not a friend but I knew him, Melvin Carter who's now mayor of Saint Paul, he and Ed were both trumpeters in the band.

One fall day, it must've been a football day. Anyway, during the lunch hour that I was in, a few of these guys Ed, and Melvin, and there must've been at least five or six guys, playing a little music for them. I can remember it embarrasses me even now that a couple of my friends and myself, we threw pennies down. They laughed, and we laughed. I think about that was such a stupid thing. I mean, they didn't mind. They laughed.

I wonder if that was a time. I went to see the assistant principal at Mechanic Arts twice. Once, it was for we had three stories, and the top story looked out upon, it was a big open atrium but it was huge. It was right next to the big building that housed the capitol's heating system. Anyway, it was a big area. A couple of other guys and myself, I think it was again during a lunch hour, we made paper airplanes, pretty good ones. We were throwing 'em out. We got caught.

Okay. That's one time I went to see Mr. McKee. I don't know if they had detention then. I don't think so. Anyway, I had to sit in what they called the mourner's bench outside his office for a while. The other time that I had to see him was when I threw these pennies *[laugh]*. I don't remember anything specific *[unintelligible 00:49:42]*. I remember how when you think about it, what a stupid thing. I'm glad they didn't mind.

CS: Is there anything else that you would like to touch on before we wrap the interview up? Anything you may have wanted to bring up, or remember now?

FS: No, nothing that I can think of. My mind blanks out when I try to think of something, as you found out. I feel more blessed than anybody because I grew up not rich by a long shot, but I had enough that we never went hungry. During the war, I went to Okinawa for a year, but I got there right after the war. My biggest excitement really was living through one of the biggest typhoons ever to hit that island.

Even that year on Okinawa was a wonderful experience because I worked as a mechanic in the motor pool of a hospital. We had Okinawan women coming to help. I'm assuming they helped in the patient wards, and in cleaning, that kind of stuff. We also had Japanese prisoners of war who, I don't know where they stayed, but in the morning, they were shipped to, in my case, the motor pool.

Then, got back the next night. I had the chance to meet, and work with, and try to communicate with a couple of POWs. That was a wonderful experience. Much more wonderful in retrospect than I realized being too unsophisticated and naive to even ask the good questions. Now, I wish I had. Anyway, that's about all.

CS: Okay. This is the end of our interview. Your responses are invaluable, and we really appreciate that you took the time to do this today. Thank you so much for participating. I did wanna say on a personal note, I couldn't interject during the interview, I was in the Marine Corps for a while, and I was stationed in Okinawa. I got to live there too.

FS: You were? Yep. Okay. That was not too long ago. I was on the island. Our field and then general hospital was right off the shore because [*crossstalk 00:52:37*], I and another guy would go out and go into the water and pick up cowrie shells. Then, we would get a selection of cowrie shells, and bring 'em, and bury them in the sand.

Then, in about a week when it was time to go out again, we would dig them up, and they'd be clean. The maggots or something had gotten to them. Being in the motor pool, there was compressed air. We would rinse 'em and blow them out nice and clean. Then, we used hospital surgical wire, and we made little links curled up on each end.

In the middle, we squeezed into the edge of the cowrie shell, and stuffed cotton in there. Then, we hooked these together to make bracelets and necklaces. I think we sold a couple. I brought some home, but [*laugh*]. That's one of the nice things about—okay. That was right on, next to the shore, way south. We were close to Naha. For a while, I was driving the Okinawan women to and from the hospital. I think it was Shuri, the town was where they were.

CS: Oh, okay. Is that Shuri Castle?

FS: Yeah. I remember when we were there, there were the remnants of something. They were told it was Shuri. That was it. On the island one Sunday, we went out someplace. Anyway, we met who was then the mayor. I thought it was Shuri. Anyway, what I remember is that he had some little cups, and we had a sip of sake. I would've loved to see the island back then. I'm sure it looks much different now.

FS: Well, I said I lived through that typhoon. Everything was tents. When I got to the hospital, it was all Quonset huts then. That was the extent of it. When I left, it was all Quonset huts.

CS: Yeah. I'm sure the base was probably pretty new at that point.

FS: Let's see. There was Yontan airport. There was another one. There were two airfields. Can't remember the names. I've got 'em written down. That's my mind. My mind. Yontan. Does that sound familiar, or not?

CS: I'm not sure.

FS: Okay. Anyway, we were right on the edge of the island. It was down near the end because Naha's down there someplace.

CS: Kadena? Does Kadena sound familiar?

FS: Yeah. Kadena. That was one of the *[crosstalk 00:56:14]*. That was the airport, or airfield. Was that still there when you were there?

CS: Yeah. It's a pretty big Air Force base. Has a big Air Force there.

FS: Is it still on the southern island?

CS: Yep. Yeah.

FS: It's on the side of the island that faces the ocean.

CS: Yep.

FS: That's right. Yeah, I remember that. Go ahead.

CS: Very cool. Thank you for sharing this.

FS: One other cool thing I'll tell ya. I was in the motor pool, as I told you. On Sundays, we met the mayor of Shuri once. On another Sunday, we were just driving around. There are a lot of hills, and we saw this one hill. Boy, that was nice and steep. There are four of us in the Jeep. This is another stupid thing.

Okay. We started going up, and it takes four-wheel drive of course. We're going up, and all of a sudden we can feel it *[laugh]*. The weight in the back, it tipped back. Luckily, it was slow enough so nobody was hurt. Everybody got out. We mangled the windshield frame. I remember that got crushed. I think that was the only damage though. Being in the motor pool, it didn't cost us anything *[laugh]*. *[Crosstalk 00:57:48]* any trouble. You got five minutes? No.

CS: Yep. Yeah. Go for it.

FS: You do? Let me tell ya. This was near Christmas. The Christmas I was on the island. The hospital, doctors of course, dentists, and a lot of nurses. Around Christmas time, we knew we heard it was gonna be a big party. Officers from all over, at least that part of the island, were invited. There were gonna be a lot of nurses, a lot of officers. Okay.

We aren't invited of course. That evening, we got into an ambulance because we had access to them in the motor pool. There were about—one, two, three, four, five, six—I'd guess seven or eight of us. Anyway, the ambulances have a bench going back on each side. You can get quite a few people sitting in there if you want to.

Anyway, we drove over near, but not really close, to the—the nurse's quarters must've had some hall or something of the officer's and nurses combined. Anyway, we knew the party was going on, and we saw all these Jeeps lined up. Being mechanics, evil, evil. *[Laugh]* I don't know who got the idea, but we went out and lifted the hoods of I'm guessing a dozen.

It was a *[audio cuts out 00:59:34]*. Anyway, about a dozen Jeeps. We took off the distributor cap and removed the rotor. Now, do you know what that means?

CS: Not entirely.

FS: Okay. I'll tell ya. Now, it's all electronic. Up until some years ago, there was a distributor, and a rotor, and ignition points. Anyway, the rotor spins around quickly on the shaft. Anyway, if you take the rotor off, the engine cannot fire. Okay. The battery'll go. We took all these rotos out, and we went back to the ambulance, and we watched. Sure enough, we waited long enough.

All I can remember now is seeing I think they must've had about two good ones because this whole line of Jeeps being towed out of where they were. I'm not sure where they went. They mighta gone to the ordinance depot. I don't know. Anyway, we never heard a thing.

CS: *[Laugh]*

FS: *[Crosstalk 01:00:57]* no. I think word circulated in the hospital enlisted men's hall, the mess hall anyway, that something had happened. We were never accosted or anything. They musta known.

CS: *[Laugh]*

FS: *[Laugh]* they had to know. Anyway. I'm sorry. That was my story.

CS: No. Thank you for sharing. That's pretty funny.

FS: While we were sitting in the ambulance back, it was their Christmas. One of our buddies was a pharmacist, so he got the medicinal alcohol. Somebody had grapefruit juice. We drank a little of that. I never drank. That was probably the first alcohol I ever had except for a sip of wine when I was growing up at New Year's or something. Anyway, because at that time, the Minnesota drinking age was 21.

When I went in, there was no way I could've legally had anything. *[Crosstalk 01:02:26]* Okinawa, they had a little recreation hall PX. They sold beer there. I remember drinking Miller High Life and a couple of brands I never heard of since, from Pittsburgh or some place. I never drank much. Never. Anyway, that's it.

[End of Schreiber F Audio Part 1 of 2]

[Start of Schreiber F Audio Part 2 of 2; Picks up at last question again]

CS: For our final topic, I'm going to ask you to reflect on local and global issues such as war, poverty, discrimination, social unrest, *et cetera*. In your opinion, what were some of the biggest local or global issues affecting the people in your neighborhood when you were growing up?

FS: Well, I wasn't aware of any social unrest when I was growing up really. Poverty, I think I've covered that pretty much in the way we grew up. We weren't what you'd call poor. Okay, and the next one was discrimination. Well, that would fit in with what I wanted to say about race anyway. I told you earlier that we were on a block that was about 50 percent black, and 50 percent white. Almost exactly.

There weren't a lot of kids my age on the block. As I got to thinking about this more, I realized that I normally played with kids my age. Even two years differential, that was a different group almost. Anyway, because we had relatively few kids on our block, and George Clement living right across from me was my age. As I said, he was my main playmate.

It was a boy next door, Don Johnson. He was a year or two older, and we played sometimes, but I can't remember it. Oh, I know. Yeah. When we would play duck on the rock or kick the can, those were oriented to begin and end at our backyard. When we did that, we would play not just our little family kids. I'm sure he was there then, and some of the other kids on the block. Normally, we didn't play out with a lotta kids normally.

Okay. Let's go to discrimination. Yeah. I didn't know what it meant really until I grew up. As far as I know, my family—oh, Shaw, where are you—didn't discriminate, but I don't know if they did for sure. I never heard anything. I never saw any actions that would've implied that they were antagonistic in any way, or unfriendly with Mr. Bollard who was our black neighbor for most of the years. I don't know.

They might've had some feelings. They just didn't show them or tell them to me. I wasn't really aware of discrimination. Even in high school, grade school, high school. In grade school, I looked up my picture, and there was [*crossstalk 03:29*].

CS: Oh, wow. That's cool.

FS: Anyway, I can send these [refers to pictures off screen]. I got this one of the class. There are seven black kids in there. We didn't call them black, we called them negroes. The point is they were what we would now call black, and there was only one boy. I remember him through grade and high school. John Lynch. We called him Jake. There was one of the girls that must've been in my class regularly, Leah [Trestad?], because I knew her through high school too.

[*Unintelligible 04:16*] anyway, we were talking about discrimination. I wasn't really aware of it. I'm thinking, "It didn't make any difference." The kids in my grade school class, and later in high school, again, there was no cell phone or internet. If you didn't live really near somebody, you had to go, or they had to come, in order to play or socialize. The discrimination and racism I really didn't feel until I got into the Army.

That was a couple of months after I graduated from high school. In fact, one other item. In high school, Mechanics was east of the capital. The residential district that I lived in was west. I think more of the kids that went to Mechanics lived west rather than east. Although when I went there, on the east of the capital, there was a large community of people.

When I would go home from school, if I wasn't working, very often I'd walk with Chandler McWatt. His real name was Arthur. He became a teacher. We called him Chan. Anyway, with him, we would play football on the capitol grounds. Catch. Then, another boy I walked west with was Laurence Riff, called him Larry of course. Okay. When I got in the service, I really wasn't aware of the degree of discrimination there was.

I don't even know if it existed in Saint Paul. It surely didn't exist where I was. When I got in the service, I was drafted. We left from Fort Snelling, and the train took us first to Fort Leavenworth. On the train then, it was just a bunch of people from the Midwest. When we got to Leavenworth, we picked up a lot more people, and many of them were from the South. It was almost immediate.

Anyway, when they talked about negroes, I was never really at that time an extrovert. I was an introvert. I got upset enough so that I defended them. Didn't bother me, and it wasn't very long. That didn't last long. I think they and all the other guys didn't have those racial feelings, they realized I was okay. It never was a problem in any way.

When I got to Camp Roberts, at that time remember, the services were segregated. There was no way for me to meet any black people in the service. When I got to Okinawa, there still weren't any. Although I worked in the hospital as a mechanic in the motor pool, and I remember one night. I was on duty that night.

There was an accident somewhere nearby, and one of our ambulances went out and brought back a black man who needed a blood transfusion. It matched my type, so I gave him blood. In those days, it was all direct. He was on a cot. I was on a cot. There was a direct connection between the two of us. I remember seeing him. The other thing I remember is when I was done, they gave me a shot of brandy. I'm not sure if that was the protocol, but anyway.

Even then, I had no—well, I still haven't got problems. Then, when I got out of the Army and into college, that's when I realized how bad the situation was in America. I've never been prejudiced if that answers it. I think the racial divide we have now is horrible. I think it's so unnecessary. Anyway, that's the racial component, I think. Politics. I didn't get involved. When I was about 9 or 10, 11, 12, I know that Hitler was coming to power.

I remember that my aunts and grandma, maybe Dad, would talk once in a while. I remember they were talking about that. What was happening in Germany. I can't remember specifically how they felt. When I got out of the service, was I old enough? Anyways, the first election I was old enough for was in 1948. I was a sophomore going to Hamlin. It was gonna be my first presidential vote. I was excited about it.

I knew that it was gonna be a Democrat. Anyway, I got involved with a group—I think I better talk about this before—anyway, at Hamlin that were liberal. At least one of the instructors, and he must've been in the history department because I remember a class he had one summer, Civilization on Trial, which was really a good course for me. I read some great authors. Let's see. Politics. I voted Democratic all the time since.

I did vote for Luther Youngdahl, Minnesota governor. I voted for John Anderson, independent, for president once. I have a hunch that way back early, I may have voted for Norman Thomas when he was still running. I'm not positive about that. I think my dad voted for him for sure. Okay. Takes care of politics. Race. I wanted to add some things about my childhood. In the neighborhood, playing, let's see if I can find it. Oh, help me find it. Oh, let's see.

What did I put down here? Well, I mentioned that I didn't play much with kids unless they were right there. Normally, we didn't walk a long place to play. However, next door, there was a kid, and I mentioned Don Johnson. I know that when we were little, there was a year or two when my two sisters, Ardis and Marge, one was one year older, and one was three. Anyway, we would put on plays in the garage.

I can remember we strung a clothesline or something between the two stalls. They weren't really stalls then. Then, we had a bed sheet that was our curtain. There we invited the kids in the neighborhood. I know we had several. We would put on plays. Well, at least once we did because I remember it was making soup for supper or something like that.

It involved this corny little thing about my sister making the soup and she added some salt. Then, my other sister comes by, and she doesn't know it so she adds more. Then, I come by, I do the same thing. When we finally come to taste it, it's horrible. That's the whole point of the play was just ridiculous. Anyway, we did that though. Sometimes I think we had amateur hour there. I think my sisters probably sang, and I probably recited some poems.

Maybe the other kids did something too. I can't remember for sure. Another thing we did, and we did this several years and it was different. On our block, 40-foot lots, and most of 'em had a garage in the back. There was no alley. Anyway, small lots. Fence between each lot invariably, and mostly wooden fences. Anyway, we would go up on our roof after dark at night, and we would jump from roof to roof.

It sounds kind of impossible, but it worked. I know from our house to the next house; it was a jump. The one to the next house was a jump. Then, we had to go down. Then, we could get up again and jump a couple more times. The last one had an apple tree in the yard, and I remember at a certain time of the year when the apples were ripe, we'd jump and walk, and jump up there

and grab apples from the rooftop. I've got a picture of my class. When I was in sixth grade, that's the McKinley School patrol of 1938.

CS: Oh, cool [referring to a shared image online].

FS: You see that the person in front is holding a cup. I can't remember when in the year this was taken. It had to be in the fall. I'm guessing that at the school parade that spring, the school patrol parade, McKinley won a prize because he's holding a cup. I remember that the school patrol parade was a big deal then.

Every school had one, and they would all march in this parade. I remember that when my sister, two years older, was in this, there was *[laugh]* somebody in the area who had been in the Army. He drilled this group of McKinley kids so that when they got to where the higher ups were, whatever they called it. Maybe there was a reviewing stand.

Anyway, that they actually marched, and they did a movement. I think it was a left flank or something, or the right flank. Anyway, it was a big deal for them, and I think that's what won the prize. Cole, I think that's it. Yeah. I wish I had some more from that time. Cameras weren't ubiquitous then. Sure weren't. Even when I was in the service, I didn't have a camera. Dad bought me one when I was in basic training. It was a Kodak Ektagraphic.

CS: Oh, wow.

FS: *[Unintelligible 18:58]* pull this out, and the lens came out on a billows. It took pictures that I think they were two and three-quarter by three and three-quarter. Anyway, 120 film. Things have changed.

CS: *[Laugh]* oh, yeah.

FS: They surely have. Anyway, thanks a lot Cole for letting me add some more.

[End of Schreiber F Audio Part 2 of 2]