

This interview with Sylvester Koloziejewski took place at his store and garage on November 3, 1978. The interviewer was John Brennan.

JB: Mr. Koloziejewski could you tell me what year you were born in, and where?

SK: I was born here in Michigan City in the year of 1914. December 6, 1914.

JB: What part of town was that?

SK: We used to call that Canada. The neighborhood just about four blocks from here.

JB: Is Canada considered to be on the lake side of U.S. 12?

SK: Only up to Felton Street is considered like Canada. Anything like Fogarty Street, Felton Street, Mulligan, Blain; I think anything this side of the harbor was considered Canada because they said you had to cross the bridge to get in ...like coming from one country to another. That's why they gave it the name Canada.

JB: Was it a Polish neighborhood?

SK: I would say ninety-nine percent were Polish people in the neighborhood.

JB: That was back when? 1914...?

SK: Oh well....1914. I think most of it changed when I was in the service. So, there's still a lot of Polish people living out there. The majority of them are deceased, cause they were older people; like my dad, they were practically all in the same ages.

JB: Did your dad come from Poland?

SK: Yes. Umhmmm. I don't know what part of Poland. I never traced it back to what part of Poland. He might have mentioned it, but I don't recall it.

JB: How did he happen to come to Michigan City?

SK: Oh, I don't know, he probably followed friends that were in this area coming from the East coast. They were probably bringing factories here that he heard about jobs or something. That's probably the way he worked his way up this way. I have no idea how...how he came into Michigan City.

JB: When he got here what was his first job?

SK: The only job I can recall he ever had and that was working at the Pullman plant. I think those days they made a dollar an hour...a dollar a day. That was before what ....he quit there I think in about 1928 or 29. He had to quit because he got hurt.

JB: When that happened did he buy the garage down here at Stop 2?

SK: My dad and my brother-in-law bought the place together. And then, I was just a kid, so I don't know what the arrangement was when my mother and dad took over. They figured two families couldn't make a living out of it so they decided one had to buy the other one out.

JB: Did your father and brother-in-law build the building here?

SK: No. No. It was built by a bunch of real estate men, men who had money. There was two fellows that I can recall. One was Bill Manny, and then his son was involved in it, by the name of Carter Manny. And then there were others involved in it. I think they built it because of the hotel. The hotel wanted a place to store cars.

JB: Was that the primary purpose they built it here, for storage of cars?

SK: I presume. See they didn't build, they bought it from these fellas.

JB: When they bought it did they add the gasoline pumps and the store?

SK: No, no. The pumps were there. Just the pumps and the storage part and minor repair work they used to do those days. The fellas that owned it originally had a mechanic and his friend and wife that were, had living quarters in here, and rented for them. Now when our folks, my brother-in-law and dad bought it, my brother-in-law and his wife lived in here. Then they moved out and we moved in and had living quarters in here for years.

JB: During your childhood years in Canada could you describe what the area looked like? Say take a walk down to the lake.

SK: You know the funny part of it is, when we were ....when I lived in Canada we seldom came out towards, to the lake.

JB: You were only three or four blocks away.

SK: Yeah, but we very seldom came down to the beach. We stayed mostly in our own neighborhood there, because we weren't that old to be roaming out of the neighborhood.

JB: Did you hang out with a bunch of guys, or with your brothers?

SK: No, just a ....when I lived in the neighborhood we just paled around with kids that lived in the neighborhood. There might have been twenty-five or thirty of us in the neighborhood. We didn't roam the town like the kids do today. We stayed mostly in our own neighborhood.

JB: What were some of your activities and games?

SK: In the evenings ....daytimes we played baseball, and that was maybe only Saturdays and Sundays. In the evenings when we used to meet on the corner someplace, we used to participate in running activities, jumping over, I don't know, a bar...playing hickory dickory doc.

JB: How do you play hickory dickory doc?

SK: Oh, we used to pile, put a pile of stones up, then used to throw, roll the stones down-you had to roll it across the road, and see who could knock it down, who could knock the top stone off the thing.

JB: Like stone bowling?

SK: On the principle of that. Yeah, yeah.

JB: Do you remember much about the neighborhood as a boy? Did you visit other peoples' houses?

SK: Oh yes! People then in those days were real friendly. I think they all knew each other. Especially if you were on one block. On Sunday mornings why everybody would stroll, if it was nice weather you'd walk by... and walk up and down the street. Everybody seemed to know each other then. There wasn't any strangers. They were all friendly and ...as I said, they used to visit each others' homes.

JB: Were they all part of the Saint Stanislaus parish?

SK: Uh...yes. I would say, uh ....guessing roughly, I would say yes. About ninety percent of them were from St. Stan's.

JB: Did you go to St. Stan's?

SK: Yes, I went to St. Stan's school.

JB: Do you remember any of that?

SK: I started at a late age. I didn't start St. Stan's until I think I was eight years old. And...We used to walk, walk to school and back, from this neighborhood here. Roughly, it was about two and one half miles.

JB: Even in the winter?

SK: Oh yeah! Winter, rain, sand. We had to walk up to the place. Sure. We had no other transportation those days.

JB: Were there still horse and buggies around when you were a boy?

SK: Oh yeah. I remember when I was going to school, there used to be a fire station on Tenth and Franklin Street. Where there was a, I think a pumper there with...still pulled by horses.

JB: Could you describe which way you took to school when you walked in the morning?

SK: We used to take short cuts. We used to...We'd 'd start out from, well, we'll call it Fogarty Street, and we'd work our way through around Sixth Street bridge. There used to be a junk yard there. Miller's Junk Yard. We went through his ...that yard, across Sixth Street. Then we used to run off of Michigan Street. There used to be an opening there, and we used to go around the dairy. There used to be a dairy there. Go up there. Then we'd go up through the alley. Up Seventh Street. I think there was a Jewish church there at that time. Right around their yard. Then we used to take up--I think you call it--Cedar Street, and walk it up to Eighth. Then Pine Street we used to take all the way up to about Ripley Street, and then cross over to school. Roughly through those areas.

JB: Did you have any trouble in the winter time when the snow got deep?

SK: No. Uhh. No.

JB: Do you remember much about school? What the teachers were like?

SK: We had nuns. We had all nuns, when I went to school. Oh, it was nothing but normal schooling. What do you have in school? You have ....you had your History, you had your Geography, you had your Arithmetic, you had, what you'd call, your Catechism lessons, you had Bible lessons, and you had, let's see, that's about most of the main subjects. And then you had your Palmsmanship. Those were the kind of things that were taught to us then. Today they call them different things.

JB: They have fancy names for them today.

SK: Yeah. What do you call it today, it's ....Algebra, Modern Math, and all that. No, I would never be familiar with them.

JB: How many years did you attend St. Stan's?

SK: Let's see, I started there when ....well, I went there about eight years, cause I started when I was eight, around eight years old. Then I had to quit school. When I was sixteen.

JB: How come you had to quit school?

SK: Oh, my folks had this place and my dad got hurt, and somebody had to stay here to do the work around here.

JB: Did you want to continue on with school?

SK: No. Never considered it.

JB: Was that in the twenties when you quit school and began work here?

SK: No. Yeah, but it was in the, no, it was in the, about, yeah, 29, 30. Up in that area. Thirty-one. That's when I started, because, like I say, my folks I think they bought this in twenty-six. And we moved in here about maybe, 1930, or something.

JB: What was Sheridan Beach like back then?

SK: Well, it was all, I'd say, it was just like a summer resort. In the summertime I'd say about ninety percent of the people living out here was Jewish people. They had homes out here, and a lot of them used to come and rent. In the winter months those cottages was closed, because most of them were built just for summer use.

JB: Did you get to know the Jewish people?

SK: Real well. I was very good friends with a lot of Jewish people. They were all merchants, manufacturers, doctors, lawyers, and that was the type of people you saw out here mostly. I think during the Depression, then they dwindled away, a lot of them. I suppose because a lot of them lost their businesses. Oh, then it took a few years after that, then it started to build itself back up again.

JB : With the Jewish people?

SK: Yes, we had Jewish people again. But that was in 41 when I went into the service. I was gone for four years. So then it started to dwindle away. Then the people weren't coming out. They decided in the winter months to rent their places out. So they went into real estate agents, and the real estate agents rented those places out, and I think that's how the trend changed. You don't see that many Jewish people out here anymore. A lot of them moved to Michiana Shores. They would store their cars here, get gas. We'd service all their cars. Oh, we had a lot of, like I say, all summer long...we ...we used to look forward to the season opening. The season used to open years ago, May 31. Declaration Day. And the season used to run from May 31--that's when the people used to come out, and then they were here until about September the 15th. Just before the Jewish holiday started, they leave. Now, oh, when I got back from the service in 46, then we noticed the seasons had changed. The people didn't come out until, open day season didn't start until the 4th of July. End of August, it's practically over with.

JB: When you first moved out here was Lake Shore Drive paved?

SK: Yes. Lakeshore Drive was paved. Mmhmm.

JB: The streets branching off Lakeshore Drive, were they there then?

SK: Oh no. That was nothing but sand then. They used to have wooden walks from the road. From Lakeshore Drive down toward the beach we had people that lived on those streets and had wooden walks and they used to walk down there.

JB: Did you say there were houses on stilts at one time?

SK: Yeah, right down to the edge of the Drive now, there used to be, well, like on the corner of Lake Avenue. Well, it's called Colfax now. At one time it was called Sheridan Beach Avenue. They got two Sheridan Beaches in Michigan now, so they changed that one back to Colfax. Now. But there used to be two homes right there. One family I think was from Pennsylvania. They had one built on brick stilts ...oh, fifteen feet high, ten, fifteen feet high. And the one right across from there. In the winter time, during the storms, the water used to lay right underneath those houses.

JB: Was the lake up closer to the drive then?

SK: Yes, the water used to...the water, the lake was where the road is now. That's a few years back.

JB: Do you know what year they began extending Lakeshore Drive?

SK: No, as far as I knew, when I started going out there, Lakeshore Drive was there all the time. What year it was built, I have no idea, but it was there as long as I can remember. A lot of homes haven't been built out there ever since then, a tremendous amount of homes. Mostly in Long Beach...not so much in Sheridan Beach. There's a few new ones built in Sheridan Beach.

JB: In Canada did the Polish have gardens and keep animals?

SK: Oh yes. I think we all had it. I think every home in the neighborhood had it. I know my folks and my uncle, we had ....some of them would raise rabbits. My folks they had chickens; they had geese. We had ducks. I remember I used to come home from school at night, we used to have a big gander in the yard, and when I used to come in the yard he used to chase me. I used to have to run like the dickens from the fence to the porch so he wouldn't catch me. I think a mailman's gonna come in here now.

JB: What area was called "Hungry Hollow"?

SK: Hungry Hollow I think was called the area from the tracks, this way. The tracks...from near the tracks. I think like Mulligan Street, Blain Street, uh, Fogarty, and Felton Street. That's what they called the 'Hungry Hollow'.

JB: Did you play baseball in that neighborhood when you were a boy?

SK: Yeah. We used to play up on, either on the streets, empty lots, and lots of times we went down to the, near the tracks and played. (Somebody just came in.)

JB: Were you able to gather enough together to get nine on each team?

SK: Oh yeah. We didn't have no problem. There was about twenty-five kids in that neighborhood, so we didn't have any problem with getting enough guys together. Those kids

over there they used to play hardball. They didn't play softball in those days. They played hardball.

JB: Did you have baseball mitts?

SK: Yes. About one guy out of all of them had spiked shoes. He was the catcher. The rest of us were in moccasins.

JB: What kind of field did you play on?

SK: Some of it on Fogarty Street, that was a sand field. Then when we played along the tracks. That was cinder, hard. You didn't slide on that. Better not try anyway.

JB: In the late twenties and early thirties were there other stores in this neighborhood?

SK: Yes. We had stores here. We had a Jewish grocery store. They were only kept open in the summer months. We had a Jewish grocery store there, and a butcher shop. A lady used to have a restaurant in her house. It served all Jewish meals. I think her name was Fanny. And across the street from her there used to be a place, a little restaurant called the 'Teapot Inn'.

JB: Where was that located?

SK: That was located on the corner of Lakeshore Drive and Georgia. Called the 'Teapot Inn'. Two sisters ran it. It was a home. They had tables and served meals.

JB: Where was the Jewish grocery store located?

SK: Jewish grocery store was on the corner of Lake Avenue and Lakeshore Drive. Then a couple of years later we had another restaurant right next door to the garage, a place called the 'Jackpot'. They used to run nearly all night. That was a hamburger joint. Ice cream parlor and a hamburger joint.

JB: What year was the hotel built?

SK: I think the hotel was built in the year 1924.

JB: Were there interests from Chicago that built it?

SK: No. It was a family from LaPorte that built it. They were the relatives of the Rumelys family that built it. It was a lady, her husband was John Wolfe, and she was a Rumely girl, the Rumely family out of LaPorte. I guess that used to be a very wealthy family.

JB: When it was built, what sort of people did it attract?

SK: In the summer time it had people from Chicago, and in the winter time it used to get a lot of people from the beach. They used to have homes down there along Lakeshore Drive. They used

to close them up and then move in the hotel during the winter months. They had home cooking. That was mostly home cooking.

JB: Was it an expensive place to stay?

SK: No. Well, in those days. It was two, three dollars a night. But you're talking back when money, a dollar was worth a dollar. It was three dollars...today you'd probably have to give fifty dollars for it. But it wasn't too expensive then.

JB: Did they have a ballroom there? Dances and weddings?

SK: Not at the hotel. We had a big dance floor here in Michigan City called the 'Oasis'. It was a fabulous thing in the park. They used to bring top bands from Chicago here.

JB: Did you ever get down to the Oasis?

SK: Oh yes. We used to go down there. There used to be a fabulous park down there. We used to have roller skating down there. And Roller coaster, a rolling coaster they had down there, and they used to have a lot of shows in the place. But mostly in the summer time it was for dancing. They claimed it was the best dance floor anywhere around here in this area.

JB: Did you go dancing down there?

SK: I didn't. But I didn't do much dancing. I wasn't much of a dancer. We used to get groups together and go down there. They had dancing; they had a barroom there. They had their lunch room in there. Buy lunches. I used to go down to the park when I was a kid. They used to have pony rides over there. That's what used to draw me to the park because there was the pony rides down there. Could ride for about ten cents. And then they used to have every kind of a stand that you could imagine down there. They had rifles shooting corks against objects, and passing balls, and passing rings...and a place where you took your own pictures. You had a big stand down there that was pop, ice cream, and popcorn wagons you had there. You had all the slides, swings, slides, and whirl-wheels. Oh you could be occupied just all day.

JB: I'll bet that was a lot of fun for a kid back then.

SK: It was. That's where we used to go. We used to walk down on a Sunday afternoon.

JB: Did you say there was an arcade right along here on Lake Avenue?

SK: Oh yeah, that was years back. They built a place called an arcade. That was run only in the summer months. It used to be a hangout. They used to have pinball machines in there, pool tables, ping pong tables. That was for amusement.

JB: Were there slot machines?

SK: We had slot machines all over Michigan City years back. I even had some.

SK: People used to come out looking for something to drink. They couldn't get anything to drink, so I went and outside and put a bath tub out there. Went and got some ice and put an umbrella out there and I was selling pop outside there during the day. Right next to the garage here. And then people kept asking for more things. The summer months we had an office here, so I got ice cream in there, and I got candy, brought some candy in there, and pop. We even had, what do you call it? Near beer in there.

JB: When was this?

SK: I was only about fourteen years old then. We had all those things.

JB: You were working in here with your father and mother?

SK: Yes. We had living quarters here and that, and I worked like pumping gasoline. I would fix tires. Then I ran the little stand there. My mother and I used to do it in the evenings and people used to come in and we used to make what we called 'black cows' for them. People from Chicago wanted what they called a black cow. You got some big fancy, big glass and put chocolate ice cream in it and root beer pop. They used to call it a 'black cow'. We used to have a lot of those we'd sell, a lot of ice cream. On Saturday and Sunday we'd sell about fifteen gallons of ice cream. Those days you could get three bowls of ice cream for a nickel.

JB: Was the business slow in the winter months?

SK: Not the candy part section we never did. The garage stayed open because there were people staying at the hotel, stored their cars in here... and for gasoline. It was very quiet, I mean, not much activity around here in the winter time.

JB: Have you always done repair work in the garage?

SK: Yes ...long as I can remember when it was even built like I said, they had a mechanic here. My folks bought it. Then they had to hire a mechanic because there was nobody to do it. I never did any mechanical work. I don't think I did any mechanical work until I came out of the service, that I ever started to actually work on cars. Generally overhauling engines and things like that. But in those days all we used to do was change the plugs and points.

JB: Do you still do mechanical work?

SK: Not as much as I used to. I cut down on the heavier work. We do just minor stuff now. Now you've got such a competition, and such a fluctuation of prices on parts, people are taking it, I think they are taking it to where they can have things on charge accounts, on credit cards. A lot of people are trying to do their own. Not just because of the price of the parts, but a lot of people try to do it if they can.

JB: Labor is pretty expensive?

SK: Parts are too.

JB: Did you say there was gambling down here at one time?

SK: We had gambling all over town. We had places that used to have--I don't know if they were legal or not, I suppose they weren't--but you used to have places to go that you could, card games, roulette wheels, dice tables.

JB: These were just common workers?

SK: No. They weren't just common workers. I suppose some of them were who had good jobs and could afford it, gambled. They used to have horse gambling in places in town. And your card games, every cigar store had a card game, and you had a lot of cigar stores in town years ago, so everybody in the back room had a card game going. Yeah, years ago, I think slot machines... nobody had any problem. Everybody had a slot machine. I had slot machines in here. The little restaurant that was next door to me had slot machines. You didn't have as many clubs as you've got today. Every grocery store, ice cream parlor, or tavern had slot machines, till the state made it against the law. They all disappeared.

JB: Is this the thirties you're talking about?

SK: Yeah, it would have to be. I never sat down to figure out.

JB: What was the depression like in Michigan City?

SK: The depression? Well, I didn't uh...they were I suppose rough, like I said, business down here dropped during the depression. There weren't as many people around here. The winter months were very quiet. The summer months were only just fair compared to what it was before the depression. Our activities here, like myself, passed the time. There was about four of us in this neighborhood, nearby, and all we did in the evenings was to sit down and play pinochle, and pass the time away...and listen to the radio. We used to turn the lights down low and listen to what was it? The old spook shows. The Shadow Knows and things like that. We'd turn the lights down. We had a place across the street, a friend of ours ...he opened up a little place there with a ping pong table, and had some pop in there, and at night we used to sit in there and light a small little candle and turn the radio on and listen for the Shadow Knows. Spooks story. Creaking doors.

JB: Would you walk through town with your buddies during the thirties?

SK: Oh yeah! Not very many of us had cars. My folks had a car but we never used it. In the evenings to pass the time away we used to walk from here, on through the park, down to about 11th Street. The streetlights weren't that bright. There never was that muck activity. We used to walk back and stop at a pool hall. Up there near Michigan and Franklin. Around Franklin Street, there with Michigan, and we used to go in there and spend the evenings playing pool.

JG: Were the pool halls a little different then than they are today?

SK: Oh, I'll tell ya, I haven't been in a pool hall today. I haven't been in a...I'll give you an example since I joined the clubs years ago we used to go to the taverns for a drink, and now it seems I end up just going to the clubs I belong to. The American Legion Post, St. Joe, and I haven't been in one, the taverns today.

JB: Were there fights in the pool halls?

SK: Oh no, we never had no commotion in there. We used to get a table in there. They must have had about six tables when I went there on Franklin Street. That's the only one we used to go to. The guys were in there playing pool. It was more like a cigar store. There was no fights. There was no drinking or anything in there. All that you got was pop.

JB: Just went in for a good time?

SK: Just to spend an evening out of the cold and to play pool....that's it.

JB: Did you say there were boxing matches around here?

SK: Yeah, I talked to an old-timer the other day. A fella stopped in for gas, I asked him about it. And he says. "Yeah Les... ", he says, "when Haskel-Barker had that place up there, they had a boxing ring." He says, "I used to go up there quite a bit and watch the boxing. It was in the woods; it was a boxing ring, .right in the woods there. The only way we could get in there to see them was to go in through the hills and sit up in the trees, so you could watch them. But then you had your Sky Blue Arena. I asked that man about the boxers and he mentioned them, but I wouldn't know none of them were familiar names to me.

JB: Was that ring in the hills illegal?

SK: I guess the one in those days, the one that was built in the hills was illegal then. But then they built that Sky Blue Arena. I think it was only up for a couple of years. He said it held about 30,000 people. I just know-he mentioned it to me here the other day when we got talking about it.

JB: Did you say you saw sere Klansmen on horses one time?

SK: Oh yeah, my mother and I. There used to be a neighborhood grocery store on the corner of Fogarty and Center Streets. I was seven or eight years old probably and we went to the grocery store one time. We started to walk and we heard horses coming down the street. We were maybe a hundred feet from that grocery store, maybe a half a block and we saw there horses coming down. We looked and we saw these men on horses with white uniforms on, more like white sheets. It scared the living daylights out of us. We ran into the grocery store. They went into the woods, up the hill. There used to be a water tower way up there near the tracks. It was a pretty high point in town here.

JB: Was that called "Yankee Slide"?

SK: No. I don't know which one was called Yankee Slide. It was south of the observation tower. It was right along the track. I don't even know how much of the hill is there now since the B&E Marina was built. They tore a lot of that hill down. I only recall the one time.

JB: Have there been changes in your equipment over the years?

SK: Oh God! The gasoline pumps are fantastic today compared to what we had years ago. We used to have a gas pump where you pumped five gallons at a time by hand, and it was cold weather your fingers would get stuck. Then they came out with a fancy pump, a fancy blow pump. Then they used to pump ten gallons so when the customer came you wouldn't have to pump it, just turn the nozzle on and stop at the mark. Today the modern pumps today, it's easier. Those days you had to figure out by finger how much you pumped.

JB: Where did you meet your wife?

SK: Where did I meet my wife? I met her in my sister's tavern. She was in there with a lady friend of hers. Her lady friend lived about a block away, and they used to come over there and, that's where I met my wife. I used to go down there once in a while.

JB: Was it respectable for women to go into bars then?

SK: They could go into bars. They were not allowed to sit at the bar. They could only sit at the tables in those days.

JB: How did your courtship go? Did you go to movies? Go dancing?

SK: Dancing, like I say, I didn't do very much dancing. We used to ....by God I can't even remember. Movies we used to go to. Most of the time we used to just play cards, pass the time playing cards.

JB: Is your wife Polish also?

SK: Yes.

JB: What was a Polish wedding like?

SK: Well, I'll tell ya, in those days they weren't as big as they are today. But we had a pretty good sized wedding. We had the Haskel-Barker Hall out here on the beach. We had probably about 300 people.

JB: Are there any particular Polish traditions involved in a wedding?

SK: They still do it today I think, a lot of it. They have, they call it the 'Wedding March'. They have where they steal the bride's slipper, and they have . . . I don't think there are that many more things they do. They go around and they collect money for them. Then they used to have where the bride sat in the middle of the floor, and they danced around her, take her veil off. The bridal

dance where the bride starts out and all the attendants start out and they dance in a circle. Then you donate your card, and if you donate your card you get a cigar, or a shot of whiskey, or whatever you wanted.

JB: Did there used to be a Jewish Synagogue next door in a building you owned?

SK: Yeah. When I had the restaurant, the restaurant went out of business. It opened when I was in the service. My dad rented it out and it had a Jewish butcher shop in there. After they moved out, when I was in the service, my dad rented it out to a Jewish Synagogue. That was the old-time Jewish people; they used to come in from Chicago. They had it there in the summer months. It was run June, July, and August. There was my wife, we had living quarters here. My wife cleaned there after every service. Sunday morning after services they always had a lunch. Saturday night they would have it, Saturday afternoon. My wife used to go and clean up, wash the glasses, clean up the tables, scrub the floors. I used to go in there, turn the lights on for them every weekend.

JB: Was there a visiting Rabbi?

SK: Occasionally. They used to have just the normal amount in there and maybe about fifteen or eighteen people and then they used to bring a special rabbi in. So then they used to get quite a congregation in there.

JB: Why did this neighborhood change?

SK: The Jewish people started to rent their homes for the winter. And then it kept getting ....the real estate people rented to anybody.

JB: Was the neighborhood better back then than it is today?

SK: Oh yes. They didn't have no problems in those days. We didn't have no people living here, but we didn't have no problems. (laughter) The cottages were closed and you didn't have to worry about having windows broken, or breaking into the houses, or anything. None of that used to happen. You could leave your door open. Nobody ever bothered you. The windows open. You could go to sleep with the windows and doors open. Nobody would bother you. Now, you put bars on the doors and they rip the bars off the doors. These cottages out here...soon as the people move out, a couple of weeks later somebody's already got the windows knocked out.

JB: Would you say they used to be the good old days because it was safer?

SK: Oh definitely. Those days, people I think were much friendlier with each other than they are today. But I say, when they started to rent these places out in the winter months, that's when it started to drop out. Then the Jewish people came out to their cottages, why their cottages were a mess. It cost them more to fix the place up, clean it up, than they made in the rent.

JB: How long have you been a member of the American Legion?

SK: I went into the service in June of 42. Got out January of 46. Spent about three years eight months in the service. So I've been, uh, I joined the charter membership I guess when I came out of the service. That was in 1946 when they were organizing a new club, an American Legion Club. Organized it and named it after two brothers that were killed in the service. One I think was in the Pacific, and one was in the Atlantic. Skwiat boys. Then there was another brother in the service, Toby, he just died. I think after the two brothers were killed he was released from the service cause of the deaths. Two, I think they released the third one. I don't know. I've been a member 32 years.

JB: Have you held offices within it?

SK: I've held every office in the legion. I was chaplain for 4 or 5 years. I was first vice, second vice commander ...first vice commander. Sergeant of Arms. I held the job of Chaplain I held the job of Commander. I've been their Christmas chairman for 31 years. Captain of the Mitchell (?) team over there for about twenty two years.

JG: I'd like to thank you very much for the interview.

SK: You're welcome.