

Interview with Sara Miller Arnon (part 1)  
Amy Eklund

AE: Okay, so, just for the record, this is Amy Eklund and I am speaking on the phone with Sara Arnon on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 2011, and do I have your permission to record this interview?

SA: Absolutely.

AE: Excellent. So, why don't we start off with you telling me about growing up in Waterville.

SA: Okay. Well, although I wasn't born in Maine, I lived there all my life because I lived there since I was six months old. I lived on Ticonic Street for nine years in a house that belonged to my family. I lived with extended family until I was nine years old, and my parents built a house on what was then a new area of town, Johnson Heights, which is close to Colby; but the campus you go to really didn't open up until the '50s. The original campus was closer to the other end of town. So anyway, I lived there all my life in what would be called the North End of Waterville, Ticonic Street and then Johnson Heights, and I didn't really know any better, I only knew growing up in Maine. When I became older, when I was a teenager and I went to Boston more often to visit relatives or even to stay with relatives, then there was this sense of oh my God there's a whole world out there; it is very different. And Waterville, of course, was a very small town, of 20,000, I think it's always been about 20,000, and because my family was well known, I was always recognized, which isn't great when you're growing up. But now that I'm an adult, of course I realize how wonderful that was that it was small town America. Everybody took care of everybody else's families, everybody looked out for everybody, it was extremely safe. You know, we walked everywhere, and for me the only problem was that I was always Howard's daughter, Gisele's daughter, or Frieda's granddaughter, and I was recognized everywhere. And so as a teenager I could never get served at any of the local bars, and as a teenager, especially a Jewish teenager growing up in Waterville, I wanted to meet guys from Colby, so there were two ways to do that: One was to work at my father's store, and so I was there often at Levine's store, and the other was a lot of local bars (the ones that I knew are now long gone), but I could never get served because everybody knew who I was. So, you know, it was a nice small town, I had a lot of relatives, and a lot of family that lived in Waterville, and everybody knew everybody else's business.

AE: So did that influence your decision to, you went to a college out of state, right?

SA: I went to college in Boston, and did that influence my decision to not come back to Maine? You bet! (3:56) In retrospect, I'm glad that I left Maine, and that I lived in Boston for four years and then I moved to New York after Boston to work. I sort of assumed that I would always live in the Boston area, and here I am still, 45 years later still in New York. At one point, my husband and I considered moving to Portland, because he was a physician and we thought, well maybe he thought, you

know maybe Portland would be a good place to practice. And that was probably at least 30 years ago, maybe more, 35 years ago. I was not ready to move back to the state of Maine, it was still too small for me, and in retrospect, I'm sort of sorry that we didn't, but you know, life has been good here too. But we always spent time in the summer in Maine. Until my parents passed away in the '90s, we were in and out of the state of Maine a lot. My car was sort of on, you know, automatic pilot. You drive six hours and ten minutes to my mother's house on Johnson Heights, so it was a trip that we took often.

AE: So, going back to you for a little bit, what career did you decide to pursue after college?

SA: Well, I entered college as a math major thinking that I was going to teach. I didn't go to the local high school in Waterville. I went to what was a local, day private school, Coburn Classical, which is now also long gone; a small private school. And I graduated with twelve children and I was number two in the class so I thought I was smart, and then I got to college and found out that boy, there are a lot of smart people out there. (6:22) And I was a very good math student in high school, and when I got to calculus, I realized that I have no idea what they're talking about, and decided that, you know, maybe this wasn't for me. A piece of me wanted to major in early childhood education, but this was the '60s and, I don't know, I was so shallow I think that the idea of meeting Harvard and MIT and, you know, guys at mixers, and having them say "what are you majoring in?" and saying "I'm majoring in nursery school education," just sounded so rinky dink; that I was so unsophisticated sounding that I decided to become a retail major, a business major. I actually ended up majoring in retailing, which was ridiculous because I never really wanted to become a retailer, having lived it my whole life, and knowing, you know, the hours, and the life, but so I did. I majored in retailing and got a very good job in New York and was a buyer for Ohrbach's (7:44), which has also gone out of business, and then for Bloomingdale's, and I did that for about five years. I absolutely did like it, it was kind of sophisticated and, you know, it was just interesting. But then the California stores announced that they were going to be open on Sundays, and I realized that this is not good, this is going to be a seven-day industry and I don't want to work a seven-day industry. And I decided to teach. So I quit and went back to school and got a teaching license, and then after I got married. I got my masters in early childhood education, and spent most of my adult life either teaching or administering early childhood programs, which I adored.

AE: Was there something that influenced your decision to ultimately go into early childhood education?

SA: You know, I don't know. I never went to nursery school as a kid, because I'm 65 years old, you just didn't go to nursery school in those days, you hung out and played, and the first schooling was kindergarten. I really enjoyed my childhood, I had a really good childhood. And I don't know, I think that, I mean, I saw a lot of children who didn't have great childhoods, and who had trouble learning and I don't know, I was just drawn to giving children a good start from the very beginning. I

mean, it was what I wanted to do when I went off to college, but I thought it was not sophisticated enough to say that I was going to major in early childhood education, so I actually went back to what I wanted to do.

AE: Now, was it important for your parents, as well for you, to go on to college? Was there any type of push for higher education when you were younger?

SA: You know, it was a given. It was just a given. It wasn't as though there was a push, I never assumed that I wouldn't go to college. My father and most of my relatives went to Colby. I was probably one of the first people in our family not to go to Colby. We have a very large legacy at Colby.

AE: Yeah, I saw the list of it here.

SA: Probably fifty something [relatives who attended Colby]. People who have gone over the years, but of those living in Maine and in the Waterville area, I was the first not to go. And for me, my only fear during my junior and senior year was how was I going to tell my uncles, my uncles Ludy and Pacy Levine, how was I going to tell them that I didn't want to go to Colby? (11:02) That I wanted to go someplace else. You know, as a kid, they [her uncles] had a great deal of influence on me, and as far as they were concerned, Colby was the most wonderful place in the world. And I loved Colby, but it was two steps, I mean I could walk there. My mother, not being from Maine and not being from Colby, sort of had this subtle undercurrent of "You will leave the state of Maine, you will not come back here" [laughs], because it was kind of dull for her, or as she felt. So no, I mean I just always knew I was going to college, and I always knew that I was going to go to college outside of Maine. What I didn't know was that I wasn't as brilliant as my parents made me feel, and so I didn't get in to some of the schools that I thought I would go to, but I ended up at what was my first choice, Simmons College, and in those days there were a lot of all-girls schools and all-boys schools, so it was not unusual to go to a same-sex college.

AE: My mom would have loved if I had gone to an all girl's school. She was really pushing for, I don't know why.

SA: I don't know that I would. I mean, my three children graduated from various colleges, and I don't know if I would have wanted them to go to an all, excuse me, a single sex-college today. But in the '60s, it was still very prevalent; most of the schools didn't go coed until '72, and Simmons had the best of all possible worlds. I mean it was an all-girls college next door to Harvard Med and right in the heart of MIT, Harvard and everything else that you could want in Boston. It was fun.

AE: Is that how you met your husband? 'Cause you said that...

SA: No, actually I didn't. I met my husband when I was living in New York. I met him through a college friend. But no, I didn't meet him while I was in college. My grandmother, I think, thought I was never going to get married, because again in those days people got married younger, and it was very common for girls to be married by the time they finished college. One of the things that was great about

Simmons was the philosophy behind that school, that you would get more than an MRS degree, you know that you would actually be able to do something with your life if you wanted to. (14:11) That was important to me, because although I grew up in a family with a lot of strong men, there were a lot of strong women, who were very avant garde in a way; my grandmother was divorced in 1930, which for Jewish people was really not something that ever happened, and worked and was a very, very influential person in our family and in town. My mother was very independent, and there were a lot of women that really made you feel that you can do anything you want.

AE: I like hearing that.

SA: Well, it was good.

AE: So I guess, going back to your family now, what were some of the Jewish things you did with your parents?

SA: Although I never thought of them as Jewish things, they were just things. We were not a very religious family, but we were traditional. We did all of the holidays together as family. The Jewish holidays in the fall, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, were very, very important, and for many years they were always done at my grandmother's house. My Alford cousins, who also lived in Waterville, we were all together for all of those holidays; we ate together at my grandmother's, and as my grandmother aged, my mother had her own house, a lot of that was done at my mother's house. We did Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, all of those holidays, Hanukah, Passover in the spring, we did all of them together. I don't really think that we did Jewish stuff. We ate together, and there were certain foods that were cooked those holidays, and there were certain traditions that you had, and so we did that. As I was growing up, that was when the synagogue on upper Main Street was built; I think that was dedicated in the late '50s. That became a very important part of our lives, the use of that building; going to Hebrew school, going to Sunday school, teaching Sunday school became a family commitment. My father taught Sunday school for a period of time, I taught Sunday school, I don't know if my sisters did because once I left for college I sort of don't know what they did in their lives; I was focused on my own. I can't say that we did anything that was particularly Jewish. We did family things. I believe that all my friends that I grew up with, most of the Jewish families were related to me. Most of my nonfamily friends were not Jewish, they were either Catholic or Lebanese or Protestant; they did their own family things. We didn't celebrate Christmas and we didn't celebrate Easter, but we had holidays that fell at about the same time.

AE: So, you had mentioned that when your family got together that there were certain foods.

SA: Yes.

AE: Could you elaborate on that a little bit? (18:20)

SA: Well, for example on Rosh Hashanah is a holiday that starts the year and you're supposed to start the year with sweet things, so there were certain recipes that they tended not to make other times of the year, one of which is carrot tsimmi. Tsimmi is spelled T-S-I-M-M-I-S; that is a long-cooking dish that has some meat in it but is mostly carrots, some squash, and some dried fruits, a lot of honey, and it cooks for a very long time so it is kind of mushy but very sweet, and we loved it. It was one of those things that you didn't get all year long, so that was part of the Rosh Hashanah meal. Potato pancakes, latkes, are part of Hanukah. You can make all of these things all year long, but most people didn't, at least in my family they didn't. At Hanukah having latkes was a big deal, and at Passover, when you can't eat bread, and you use matzah, there were things that were made with matzah that we didn't have at other times of the year, one of which is matzah brei, which is really French toast [AE: laughs]. I mean, basically it's French toast made with matzah, but we never made it for the rest of the year. You kind of looked forward to some of those things, because they are essences of the holiday as I'm sure there are certain foods that other families had that were reminiscent for them of Christmas or of Easter or whatever holiday, so it's sort of no different. I know that in my own family, I make my grandmother's tsimmi recipe, which of course I've doctored over the years, because none of the recipes were ever exact; it was you put a little this, you put a little that, if you don't have this, use that, you know. I made carrot tsimmi at another holiday, and when my kids were very young, one of my sons said, "is it Rosh Hashanah?" and I said, "no", and he said, "then why are we eating this?" and I said, "because we can eat it at any time" and he said, "no, then it wouldn't be special." I never made it again except for Rosh Hashanah, and I still only make carrot tsimmi on Rosh Hashanah, because he was right. For us, that was part of the specialness of Rosh Hashanah, and so you can't eat it other times of the year even though you could, but then it wouldn't be special at Rosh Hashanah. Those are the kinds of recipes that I'm talking about. (21:43)

AE: Did you and your family celebrate, like have a Friday night dinner for Shabbat or anything?

SA: We really didn't during my years of growing up. That's probably because Main Street was open on Friday nights. A lot of the farmers and people from surrounding communities came into Waterville on Friday nights to do their shopping. Some of them also came in on Saturday, so my father and my uncles worked until nine o'clock on Friday nights. So unless it was a Jewish holiday, the store was open, so we didn't have a Shabbat dinner together, per se. I didn't really do that growing up even though, well it's hard in America to actually, unless you make a commitment to observing Shabbat, it's kind of hard to have a family dinner on Friday nights. In my family growing up, my father was home for dinner every night, so we ate dinner at 5:30, a quarter to six, like clockwork. You know, he would come home, we would sit down five minutes after he was in the house, and we would be finished with dinner ten minutes later probably. We ate dinner together every night except for Friday nights, because that was the night he worked.

AE: I can relate to that, same deal with my family too.

SA: Yeah.

AE: I guess...

SA: Interestingly, raising my own family, my husband wasn't home for dinner, he was a physician, he wasn't home for dinner most nights of the week. So he and I made a decision when our kids were very young, that he, he was a psychiatrist, that he would stop seeing patients by 4:30 on Friday so that he would be home and we would sit down and have dinner together. And we did light the candles. So in my own home, I did have Shabbat dinner with my own kids, but I didn't grow up with that, but I did grow up when the synagogue was more active than it probably is today. And I grew up with junior congregation on Saturday mornings for kids, and so I did go to synagogue every Saturday morning as a young person.

AE: So, I guess we can move along to talking about, unless you have any stories you want to talk about, we can talk about your summer camp up in Maine. I hear a lot of... (25:08)

SA: We do have a summerhouse on Snow Pond. You know, in Maine everyone calls his or her summer home...

AE: A camp, yeah.

SA: It's a family house that my great-grandfather bought, oh, many years ago, probably close to one hundred years ago at this point. He bought it, it's really fifteen minutes from Waterville, but you know he bought it a hundred years ago, that could be an hour from Waterville, because it's basically in Sidney on the Sidney-Oakland line, and it's not that far but we've got roads now. So he bought it because one of his sons, Pacey, had what we always called a nervous stomach, and so he thought that it would be relaxing for him. Now William and Sarah Levine, who were my great-grandparents and the people who bought this place, never stayed there; they'd go out during the day with the kids, and I guess the kids played out there. My father, as a child, remembers that his aunt Betty, one of William Levine's children, would come for the summer from Boston, and he and his sister, my aunt Glenyce, would stay out there with her all summer. My grandmother stayed in Waterville on Ticonic Street, and my uncles of course were working so they stayed in Waterville. And they all would come out to the lake house, certainly on Sunday, and there was a traditional family meal on Sunday that everybody, you know, ate together; those that stayed there, those that lived in town, etc. For me growing up, we started going there as a family, I was probably about five years old. It was crowded, because my Boston relatives also went. And as the family was growing, it just became too much for all of us to be up there together, so they made a decision to divide the time; those of us that lived in Waterville, meaning my parents ('cause they were the only ones interested in going), my parents used the camp from June when school ended; we would move out there the day that school ended, until the end of July. August first my relatives from Boston moved in, and they stayed there until Labor Day or later,

depending on, you know, children and school. Now because I lived in Waterville, we went up there every Sunday so I became very, very close to the Boston relatives that we shared with; and we live that way today. The house has been renovated several times, it's never large enough for us although there are six bedrooms. It's still not large enough, we're all over the place. One of my relatives from Boston maybe twenty five years ago built what started out as a garage with a small apartment above it next door to us; it is now a four bedroom house next door. So, we use the two houses, and basically the Miller family, which is my family, my three sisters and I at this point, use it June and July. (29:28) We have someone who opens and closes for us, and you know we get the place ready. And then July 31<sup>st</sup> we're out of there, and August 1<sup>st</sup> Stuart and Sharon Cushner on the Boston side come to Maine and they've go it for the month of August. So we've been doing it that way for years and years and years, and it works for us. Everybody loves it. Over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July there are at least thirty-five of us. We're crowded. We don't know what it is about this place. There is nothing about the waterfront, nothing about the interior, nothing about the exterior that you would say, "oh I must, you know, I got to be there, it's just so gorgeous, it's so beautiful, it's so this it's so that." Everybody that comes to visit, we can't get rid of them. They all come back. It's a fun place to be because we have a great time together. A couple years ago we had a huge family reunion, which we filmed; we got a whole bunch of extemporaneous interviews with (AE: Yeah, I read some of them) with some of the kids. Colby has some of them...

AE: Online and in our library.

SA: Yeah. What they don't have are the ones with the younger generations, because that's going to be part of the film we're trying to make. A lot of the younger generation (my children are 35 and 38) and then my sisters have some of their children that are younger, but what that generation says basically is that this place is really special. There's something about being together under one roof for the short time that we are that brings us all very close, and that helps remind us about our ancestors and our heritage and our background, etcetera, because, at this point, nobody lives in Waterville anymore. My children are basically the last generation to remember Levine's store, to go to the house on Ticonic Street, and to remember the people that are so important to us in our family background. (32:11) And it's one of the ways of preserving it, because we've got tons of pictures there and everybody has lots of stories to tell.

AE: What are some of your most memorable experiences having grown up visiting there?

SA: Well, certainly as a teenager my memorable experiences were, you know, there's a lot of sleep-away camps in Maine, and they take trips through the Belgrade Lakes chain. So of course as a teenager, wanting to meet counselors etcetera, a great place to be. We're next door to the New England Music Camp and next door to a camp called Cedar Crest, so there were always people to meet on the lake. My sisters did a lot of waterskiing. Me being the oldest, I don't think we had a boat when I was growing up, we had a rowboat, but we didn't have all the equipment that my sisters

grew up with. I just remember always feeling very, very welcome there whenever I came back with friends, 'cause I certainly brought college friends with me who to this day still come to visit it at some point, because it's a place that was always hospitable. No matter how many of us there are, there's always room for one more. No matter where you're sleeping, people always find a place for, you know, to open up a cot or put something on a couch so that people feel comfortable and as though they want to stay. So I think that's basically what I think of when I think of the Snow Pond house. It's just a place where everybody's welcome at any time.

AE: Now were there a lot of families in Waterville that had these camps or summerhouses, or were you pretty unique?

SA: Yeah, I think that a lot of the families did have some place on a lake that they went to. It's so ridiculous now that you think about it, because, you know, here we moved fifteen, twenty minutes from our house and I thought that I was going away; we could've been going to California the way we packed. You'd think that we were never going to get home again, and in the meantime we didn't have a washing machine or dryer out there in those years, so my mother was going back and forth doing laundry all the time, my father went to work everyday. I remember that the Beckermans lived near us on the lake. The Shiros, I think, lived on it. Well, the Shiros and the Beckermans are related, and in those years they had a small place not far from us. And then people started buying on lakes around. Like Bibby Alfond was one of the Levines' siblings, but her kids didn't grow up on my lake, they grew up on Great Pond because Aunt Bibby and Uncle Harold bought place on Great Pond, so that was the other place that we would go to. To this day, now basically, the only thing that we have in Maine where our families gather are our lake house on Snow Pond and the Alfond's lake house on Great Pond.

AE: Are they far apart from each other?

SA: It's probably thirty minutes.

AE: That's not to bad.

SA: Yeah.

AE: Did you know of any other Jewish families besides your own that had summer [stumbles], do you know what people did in the summer?

SA: Well, I knew some people from Boston that came to Maine for the summer that we developed relations with, and that I am still very friendly with who still have houses in Maine, you know that have passed down. I didn't know anybody from outside of Waterville that lived on the lakes, they may have, I just didn't know them.

AE: Ok. So what other types of activities would you do in the summer when you would go there? Or what did you do in your leisure time for fun?



SA: Well, I think that, you know, life was much simpler in those days. You didn't have a lot of stuff. So when you were out at the lake you went fishing, you went swimming, you hung out, you had friends that came and you went swimming, you didn't go waterskiing in my day as much as you did in my sisters' days. My sister Wendy is five years younger than I am, my sister Julie is ten years younger, and those years make a big difference in the way that America functioned and the ways families functioned financially. So for example, I don't remember growing up with a motorboat that I was allowed to drive, but my sisters lived on the lake waterskiing all day long; so that five-year difference sort of changes things. I think that that was what people did: they water-skied, they visited one another, we went to drive-in movies, we... I don't know, we just really hung out more than anything else. It was a simple time. (39:08) I'm not saying that kids don't do that now, 'cause I know that my niece comes from Washington, DC, and is now sixteen, loves to come to Maine for the summer. Loves, loves, loves to come to Maine for the summer, but you know she loves to come because she drives the boat, she has two friends that live next door that she has seen since she was three years old and they have a wonderful relationship, these kids live in Maine, and... there's no school! [Laughing] Wonderful!

AE: Got to love that! So what about in the winters? Did your family ski at all?

SA: Yes they did, and again being the age that I am, I didn't ski as much as my sisters, because skiing was just coming into fashion. And although people did ski, we didn't have the money for me to go as often as my sisters go. And, I probably would have been starting at a later point in life, middle school, high school, which I wasn't the most athletic person, so those kinds of things didn't really interest me 'cause I didn't want to make a fool out of myself. I mean, I did go to Sugarloaf and I did try to ski. My sisters were wonderful skiers, I was not. My main ski incident that is remembered by me and by most people that were with me is that I fell on the bunny slope on what are those things called? Cherry bombs. (41:16) Yes, I fell on a cherry bomb, it exploded and it sent whatever the stuff that's in it into my tush. And I was in ninth grade, and I needed to go to, you know, the first aid place at Sugarloaf and lower my pants for some little doctor, it was the most humiliating thing in the world to me. So that was one of my ski experiences. Then another time my school, Coburn (we would go every year to Sugarloaf for a ski weekend), and it was fifty degrees below zero on one of the weekends that we were there, so of course there was no skiing. So my ski life was very different from my sisters who went almost every weekend and skied a lot.

AE: Did a lot of people ski or...

SA: Oh yeah, everybody did. My father skied, my sisters skied and they all loved it, they all had a great time. My mother didn't ski, she sat in the lodge and, you know, I never became a good enough skier that I wanted to do it.

AE: So what kind of recreation did you do instead when you were a child? What did you do in your spare time for fun?

SA: Well, you know, I don't remember. I remember that we went to movies and that I hung out with friends and that we danced. You know, rock 'n' roll had just become that music, it came on to the scene in the late '50s. So we had parties and we danced a lot, and we hung out in places in town that are long gone. There was a diner, Park's Diner that was open all night, so you could stay there, you could be there late. You could sit over an English muffin for hours and hours, it was cheap. But, you know, there weren't a lot of places to go. As a teenager in my junior and senior year, I was allowed to date boys from Colby, and so I got to go to some fraternity parties. But, there wasn't a lot to do in those days; you either did things at your own house or at somebody else's house, or you did things at the college. We went skating a lot, the only place that you could go skating was at Colby, was at the Alford rink. So you know, life was pretty simple, pretty limiting.

AE: You had said that you only went to school graduating with twelve kids, so where did you meet all of your friends? You had to...

SA: Well, Levine's store first of all was a hub, and you know everybody was there at some point. And, you know, I went to Coburn, but there were other kids that lived on my street that didn't that went to the local high school. I went to public schools through ninth grade, so I already had, you know, a ton of local friends. I just didn't go to the high school. I guess after my sophomore year of high school, I tended to do things mostly with my friends from Coburn as opposed to going to some of the Waterville High School dances and things.

AE: Well, I've pretty much covered all of the types of questions that my class is interested in.

SA: Ok.

AE: Do you have anything in particular that you'd like to talk about?

SA: Um, no, I mean I find this whole study that you're all doing kind of interesting. Are you part of the April presentations?

AE: You mean the conference that we're having later on?

SA: Yeah.

AE: I'm not sure if all of us are, but depending on how our individual projects play out, I think that he wants us to present at that given time. He had asked each of us individually and I said that I would, so depending on what type of end product each of us gets... (46:30)

SA: Well, I'm going to present.

AE: Oh, you are!

SA: Yes. I'm presenting the history of Levine's store.

AE: Oh, wow.

SA: So I will be up there for that, but I've just found this whole thing kind of interesting. You know, when you are young and you're growing up you just sort of take life for granted, and I did, I took life for granted. I loved my family, I still do, I loved that they were important, or at least I perceived them as being important people in the town of Waterville. Everybody knew the Levines of Waterville.

AE: They still do.

SA: That's interesting that they still do, because nobody's there!

AE: Well, everyone has some kind of story.

SA: Yeah. It wasn't until, you know, maybe the past five to ten years that I've really started to understand how unique my childhood was in some ways, and yet how similar it was to other immigrant families. I mean, the fact is that whether you are a Jewish immigrant or a... I mean Sarah and William Levine winded up staying in the Waterville area because they could speak Polish, because of where they emigrated from, and they spoke Yiddish, they spoke Polish, and they were learning English, and there was a large Polish population in the Winslow/Waterville area, so they knew they would be able to do business with them 'cause they could speak the language. So, I didn't even think about the fact that there was a Polish population in Waterville or in the Waterville/Winslow area. I didn't think about the immigrant population that meant the most to me, besides my own family, was the Lebanese population. because it turns out that my family was friendly with a lot of the Lebanese community: George Mitchell, you know, the Ferris (48:57) family, etcetera, but certainly our families were very, very close. And so, I saw a lot of similarity in the way that those immigrant families raised their children and the way that my family seemed to raise children and pass on values. As I get older, I realize that most families have some sort of value system that they are passing on. So I think that when you grow up in a small town it may be very limiting when you're a child. I mean I do remember as a teenager girls that were coming to summer camp that went to Minnetoka (49:42) and some of the girls camps, sleep-away camps that were in Maine in those days. They would come into town on their day off, these were campers and counselors, and a lot of them knew our family so they ended up in Levine's store. They would always ask me, "don't you miss deli? (50:08) Don't you miss this?"; you can't miss anything that you don't know about, so it certainly wasn't anything that I missed. But it wasn't until I went to college that I realized that there was so much more to do in other places. I mean, there were no museums in Waterville, I mean Colby didn't even have the gorgeous art museum that it has now. So it was limiting in that it you really just sort of had to make your own fun and your own activities, because there wasn't much out there. So I think that most people probably growing up when I did, did have a strong connection with their church or synagogue, because I think that was probably the heyday for the churches and the synagogues; that was the place where people did send some of their leisure time. Certainly today, it's harder to get them involved in their churches and

synagogues, because there are so many opportunities for them whether they're in Waterville, Portland, or New York City.

AE: Now, can you tell me more about your relationship with your synagogue? You said that you had been a Hebrew school teacher and whatnot. Did you spend a lot of time there? (51:38)

SA: I did actually. During the years of going to Hebrew school we studied at, I guess they must have rented rooms for us to use at the old Coburn school building. We didn't study at the synagogue. The synagogue at upper Main Street has one classroom so, you know, I don't remember ever studying Hebrew school there; I remember going to other places. We had Hebrew school and we had Sunday school and we had junior congregation. Junior congregation was Saturday services, and you actually got to take part in running the services. And again, I didn't realize how abnormal it was for a Conservative rabbi to allow girls to take place in the service, and yet we were treated equally. I was not Bat Mitzvahed, my male cousins were, I didn't want to be, my sisters weren't either, but that was just coming into fashion that girls could have a Bat Mitzvah. Before that, girls just weren't even Bat Mitzvahed. I don't know if it's that it was the rabbi that was there when I was growing up dedicated a lot of time to us or that it was just normal if that's what you were studying than those are the things you kind of remember. I geekily kind of enjoyed going to Hebrew school, it was kind of interesting.

AE: I did too!

SA: I thought it was kind of interesting, and it seemed normal to me to teach Sunday school. You know, it gave me something to do on Sunday mornings, and in those days also, if I remember correctly, for part of the winter Sunday school was on Tuesday, because everybody skied. It seemed like a nice thing to do, you know, as a volunteer, so I taught Sunday school, I taught younger kids.

AE: Were there a lot of children in the Sunday School/Hebrew School?

SA: I don't remember, I really don't remember. My group probably had about twelve or thirteen kids, it was pretty substantial and we were mixed age. I just sort of don't remember anymore. It just seems as though it was just part of the routine. You know, you went to Hebrew school, you went to Sunday school, you did this, you did that, whatever. I think that it's incredible how this synagogue works so hard to try and maintain itself. I think it's really wonderful, because as I come back into Waterville, you know, it used to be that I knew everybody and I was related to almost to everybody that was part of the synagogue. And I remember the place being pretty full on Rosh Hashanah and on Yom Kippur. And college students also attending, that was another thing, that my family always hosted college students for the holidays, so what could be better than that! (55:50) And I remember not so long ago being in Maine, I think my uncle Ludy had passed away; one of my uncles had died. And we're there and we had to wait for the funeral because the Jewish holidays were in the middle, and so we couldn't bury. I remember going into the

synagogue with my husband on the second day of Rosh Hashanah and there were maybe nine people in the synagogue. It used to be that the synagogue was full, I mean, I remember the synagogue being full as a kid. It's interesting to me how hard they've worked to maintain that building and to be able to stay there. In fact, I'm hoping that I'll get there next Friday night. (57:00)

AE: I'm leading services!

SA: Are you?

AE: I am.

SA: If I can get there. I'm understanding that it's supposed to snow here maybe Tuesday into Wednesday. I don't know if that snow is going north, because if it's going north I am not driving.

AE: Yeah, I don't blame you.

SA: I'm supposed to be in Maine next weekend, so hopefully I'll get there, and I'm going to try to get to services.

AE: Well, then I'll get to meet you!

SA: Yeah. I mean I think it's really wonderful that they've reached out to utilizing things that they should have been using for years. Not only should they have been hosting college students, but they should have been utilizing the college students to lead the service, to do something, so that there would be a reason for Hillel to at least have some connection with the synagogue.

AE: I think they're trying to increase that.

SA: Well, they have to. And the interesting thing to me now is that although I don't know the names of everybody, and I don't know who the people are, I know that there are an awful lot of families that are interfaith families, which I find very interesting, and that have made commitments to the synagogue. I just find it all very interesting, because having raised three children, my daughter is very committed to Judaism and does some faith-based work, but she is married to a non-Jewish man. Both of my sons are married to non-Jewish women, and so a piece of me worries about where this piece of heritage is going to disappear to in my own family. (59:10) It's really important to me that I maintain the Jewish holidays while I'm alive, and that my kids are here for all the Jewish holidays and my grandchildren. So even if Christmas is celebrated in their homes, Hanukah is a part of their life and Passover is a part of their life no matter what. Especially since coming together in Maine in the summer with the rest of their relatives is going to be something that will happen for many, many more years. And therefore, the non-Jewish piece has to merge with the Jewish piece, because some of their relatives are going to have Bar Mitzvahs and Bat Mitzvahs, and along the route I don't want them to lose an understanding of their cultural background. That's my work right now.

AE: Did a lot of your family marry non-Jewish...?

SA: No. I think that it was kind of berated into your head that you were going to marry Jewish, that you were going to date Jewish, I mean, you couldn't not date somebody who wasn't Jewish. You had to date non-Jewish if you grew up in Waterville, because, as I said, first of all I was related to everybody, but I'm sure that's why my parents let me date college students, but I had to date Jewish college students; it wasn't okay to just date a college student. A lot of Colby men worked at Levine's store, so I had access to a pretty hefty group of fraternity guys. In my family you had to date a Jewish college student. Most of my relatives did not marry non-Jews. It isn't until the next generation, my children's generation, there's an awful lot of interfaith marriage on the Alfond side, and mine are the only ones on this side that are old enough to be married. And, as I said, mine were brought up in a Jewish household, we belonged to a synagogue, they grew up in a town that was very Jewish, there's like six synagogues in White Plains, so they grew up with a lot of Jewish kids. And all three of my kids have picked wonderful people, and I love all of them, but none of them Jewish. It's just interesting. So I will look for you if I get to the synagogue.

AE: I will be there.

SA: You will be the leader.

AE: I will be leading the services. Well, it was wonderful speaking with you. Thank you so much.

SA: It was my pleasure.

AE: Hopefully, I will be in touch with you soon, and I will send you a copy of this, transcribed.

SA: Great.

AE: Alright?

SA: Yeah.

AE: Have a wonderful evening.

SA: You too.

AE: Bye.

SA: Bye.

[Tape ends.]

Interview with Sara Miller Arnon (part 2)

Amy Eklund

AE: It is January 17, 2011, and I am speaking with Sara Miller Arnon. Do I have your permission to record this interview?

SA: Yes.

AE: Excellent. So to start, can you describe what Main Street was like during your childhood?

SA: Yes. Main Street was very, very busy. It had a lot of stores, clothing stores. Originally Main Street was two-way traffic, and then it became one way, and Levine's weren't too thrilled that the one way meant that they were going to be the end of, going towards Winslow, they were going to be the end of the street, but it all worked out fine; they figured it wouldn't be the end of the world. Anyway, Levine's was at one end, at the beginning of Main Street there was a huge pharmacy/drugstore; I'm trying to think, I think it was LaVerdiere's (1:23). We used to walk into town all of the time, and we used to have to call my mom from Lavertiers to let her know that we had gotten across the railroad tracks safely. We had to cross the railroad tracks, and then the first big store you got to was Lavertiers. Also at the beginning of Main Street was the old post office, which is now, I don't know, something; there's a bar or a restaurant, I haven't been in there for a million years. There was Levine's, there was Stern's department store, that was the only department store in town. Although their men's department wasn't huge, they had a wonderful women's department and they also sold linen. They didn't sell furniture, but they sold dishes, you know it was a department store. There was Butler's, Emery Brown, which was also a women's clothing store, Elvina and Delia's. There was a store called Dunham's that had a mail-order business, which in those days, you know, it wasn't as common as today, now everybody online you can from almost any kind of store, but in those days it really wasn't the case; it was L.L. Bean and Dunham's that I knew of, that mail-order catalogues, and I guess places like Sears and Montgomery Ward's, which were also on Main Street, and JCPenney was downtown also. It was a very active Main Street. There were also some very lovely stores that sold women's cosmetics and women's perfumes and things, but before I forget, that store Dunham's with mail order was the only store in Waterville that was allowed to carry Hathaway shirts. Hathaway shirts were made in Waterville, but they weren't sold; they were very expensive shirts in their day, and they were only sold in Dunham's, and you could buy seconds, the ones that had flaws, at the factory store, which was on the site of the factory. So it was a rather busy town, it wasn't wall-to-wall banks like it is now, although there was a bank next door to Levine's store. That bank was originally called Federal Trust, and there were some banks, but they were banks. There were jewelers, Tardiff's, (4:38) probably one of the ones that is still there, although they're never open in the summer so I don't know if they're really open, but that was a store from my childhood. But everything else is gone. Everything else is closed. (4:58)

AE: Now, when you were younger, if you went down with your siblings or friends, what were you most likely to do to pass the time?

SA: Well, we would go to the movies, there was a movie theater on Main Street called the Haines'. There was a movie theater where it was called Steve's, I don't know the name of the restaurant now, that was called the State Theater. And there was a movie theater at the opera house, where City Hall is. So there were those three movie theaters, we would go to the movies. We would go skating, but not downtown, you'd go skating at Colby. Kids didn't do a lot of in-town stuff. There was the Boys Club, so a lot of the boys could go to the Boys Club. Off of Main Street, I don't know if it was a YMCA or a YWCA that had activities for teens. Growing up, you were a Brownie and then you were a Girl Scout, boys were Cub Scout and then they were Boy Scouts. Kids were really into that scouting thing. I think that was kind of the stuff that we did. And then of course there were families on the weekend that went skiing, we talked about that, those kinds of things. Growing up, you visited a friend maybe after school, hung out and played board games and card games and things like that, or just hung out and talked or did homework together. There is a beautiful library in Waterville, and of course we went to the library to study, and that was a place where kids got together socially, that and the Y. I think most of my friends were also involved in some of their church activities. Most of the churches had youth groups of some sort, I don't know if they still do; probably some of them still do. And so, you know, they were involved in that kind of thing. (7:56)

AE: So, talking about other children, how would you describe your interactions with gentile children growing up in Waterville?

SA: I never thought of anybody as if they were Jewish, gentile, or what they were. Everybody was just kids. I knew that there were kids that were Catholic, I knew that I had some friends that were Protestant, and I knew that the Lebanese kids were Maronite Christians, which is a form of, I think, Catholicism. But I didn't really think much about it except for the fact that all of the Catholic girls I knew got to have a first communion. And although I didn't have any idea what a first communion was, they got that beautiful little white dress, that little outfit to wear, and they must be like ten years old at the time they're doing first communion, and I just know that I was one of the only ones that didn't have that. I mean, it wasn't like the end of the world, but that was the only time I sort of recognized that I was different than somebody else, but maybe that lasted five minutes, I never really thought about it. The Jewish holidays such as Sukkot, Shavuot, and things like that, if we had junior congregation or services on a school day we were dismissed early.

AE: And was this when you were in public school or when you went to Coburn Classical?

SA: No, this was public school, when I was in elementary school. We would get dismissed early to be able to go to the synagogue or whatever we needed to go to synagogue for. And to be quite honest I never really thought about it or realized it, but the Catholic kids were getting out early to go to the parochial schools and the



churches on Wednesdays, Wednesday afternoon for Catechism studies. I never felt any prejudice, nobody ever said anything to me that was derogatory. It never occurred to me that I was any different than anybody else or that they were any different than we were. There were some people that didn't have as much money. The poorer families had a harder time making ends meet, the same as economics play a part of people's lives today. And I saw things in more of a socioeconomic way than in a religious way, 'cause I lived in the North End. And although Johnson Heights was the new, young Jewish street in those days (I guess I never thought of it like that, I guess there were a lot of young, Jewish families in Johnson Heights and in that area), I also was at my grandmother's house on Ticonic Street. And my family owned a lot of real estate of people that were very poor, so I was very aware of the fact that there was a very, very poor population that lived in Waterville. My grandmother spent a great deal of time making sure that she closed down every beer parlor that was in the North End, so that the men and the women weren't drinking away their money. Having grown up there in her house, I lived there until I was nine, most of the kids that I knew from that area didn't live in private houses, they lived in two-, three- and four-family homes that my family owned, and they came and paid rent. And that was really the only kind of social difference that I ever noticed. (13:06)

AE: So, kind of along that topic, you had mentioned last time that when you couldn't afford (your family) for you to go skiing as much as your sisters did, and you kind of mentioned that your finances changed. So I was wondering what changed for your family and how...

SA: Well, I think that it's true for most families in general. My family was not poor. I was very aware of the fact that we were part of the rich people in town. But, for my mother and father, they built a house so they had a mortgage, it was the early years of their family, and therefore your expenses are high. And if you're budgeting for the future, and you have three girls who you want to go off to college, etcetera, etcetera, then I think that what happens in most families is that the oldest child usually lives with parents who are at a different stage of life than with the youngest child. Especially, remember there is a ten-year age gap between me and my youngest sister, Julie. So I think that as the recreation, America's recreation, grew and as families had two cars... My family didn't have two cars. My father didn't really need a car. My family didn't have two cars for a long time. My mother drove my father to work in the morning and then there was no reason for him to have the car because he was in the store all day, so he might have driven home at night with one of my uncles for a while. Then later we had two cars, but when we first moved to Johnson Heights we had one car and my mother used it most of the time, but we also had the luxury of just picking up the telephone and say, "could you send a boy to pick me up?" So we never had to walk or take a taxi someplace, we always had somebody that could drive us that worked for us. As I said, they didn't have two cars, and I'm sure that the cost of skiing etcetera was something that they thought about as to whether or not they could go all the time. And remember, I'm not a very athletic person, so of the three of us, it probably was a nonissue. You know, I was

perfectly happy with other activities with my friends. And as I said, by the time families started skiing and started going to Sugarloaf, and that Sugarloaf was actually a place, and it was the early days of Sugarloaf, I was already in middle school. By the time you're in eighth or ninth grade, you don't want to do a heck of a lot of things with your parents on the weekends, number one, and number two if you're not a great athlete, it's not a great time to start something that people are going to stare at you, you know? So I think that's part of it as well, and my sisters were so much younger that of course they wanted to go because their social lives hadn't developed to the extent that mine had. (17:17)

AE: Now, were a lot of people at that point (with your sister's generation) going up pretty common?

SA: Yes, absolutely, and in fact my sisters are to this day very good skiers. They spent most of their youth at Sugarloaf.

AE: Why do you think it became so popular?

SA: Well, I think that as it grew, you know it started out as just a little hill, and it was a day place, and there were some people that had some homes up there, little A-frames and things. My next-door neighbor, for example, they used to go up there every weekend, and they lived up there on the weekends. Now to this day I have no idea what their house looks like up there, because going to Sugarloaf, if I was there, I would have been on the slopes, I wouldn't have been sleeping in their house. I don't think that the Alfonds, now they were all at sleep-away school, so when they went up there over Christmas vacation or any vacation, they probably stayed at one of the hotels when they were there, because they didn't have a house up there at that stage. And I think that my sisters had a lot of friends that went to Sugarloaf, they went every week, and as they became a little older, you know, all the teenagers drove to Sugarloaf. Also, now being the oldest and the first child, parents have to learn their way to the first child, so believe me they never would have left me drive all the way to Sugarloaf.

AE: I can relate to that, being the oldest.

SA: But of course, by the time Wendy and Julie came along, they were more used to having their teenagers drive, so their lies were just different than mine.

AE: Now, you had said that people went up to Sugarloaf on the weekends. Now did that influence, when you were teaching Hebrew school, the enrollment at all? (19:37)

SA: Yeah, actually in the winter Hebrew school, well I don't know about Hebrew school, but Sunday school, which is what I taught, in the winter Sunday school was on Tuesday.

AE: What was the difference between Hebrew school and Sunday school?

SA: Hebrew school was literally learning the Hebrew language.

AE: Okay, and they were different days of the week?

SA: Yeah, and Sunday school was Bible stories. Hebrew school was supposed to be for those who were supposed to be bar mitzvahed. Of course, I guess when they started it during my days perhaps they had decided that girls could be bat mitzvahed as well. Now as my said, my sisters and I weren't because we didn't want to be, but we went to Hebrew school and we did go to Sunday school. You didn't have to go to both. (20:45)

AE: Did you attend Hebrew school and Sunday school... you taught?

SA: I attended Hebrew school and Sunday school when I was growing up, and high school I taught Sunday school. I always taught the very young kids, six and seven-year-olds.

AE: So kind of along the same lines, how do you think your parents tried to transmit a Jewish identity to you if at all?

SA: I think obviously, you know, by celebrating the holidays. I think that by, the synagogue was really important to them. They weren't particularly religious people, but the synagogue was really important to them. You couldn't help but realize that you were Jewish if your mother was in charge of the synagogue kitchen. My father was always on the board. There was also this undercurrent of, I don't know if it was totally overt, it wasn't an overt prejudicial thing, but there was an undercurrent of "we're Jewish but they're not." There was more said about the adults, about who was Jewish, who wasn't Jewish, than by kids in my life growing up in Waterville. My sisters have had some different experiences, but for me I didn't really hear anybody say anything anti-Jewish or anti-anything.

AE: So another question, what types of volunteer or charity work did your family participate in when you were growing up, if anything?

SA: My father was on the school board, and he was also a part of Chamber of Commerce and business community. My mother was very active in Hadassah and B'nai B'rith, Sisterhood, and she volunteered at the hospital, she tutored some kids in math, and she was active at Colby when they started to build the museum and started to collect. That became a niche for her because art was her thing, that became a place where she could not only do something but do something that interested her, because my mother was part of the group of women who did not work. Although if my mother were alive today she would tell you that she worked in Levine's store, she went there every Friday night; don't ask me what she did other than meet and greet, but she would tell you that she worked.

AE: Socializing is work! Okay, so I was told that your family had three camps or three houses on Snow Pond, is that correct?

SA: That's true.

AE: Did you rent out your houses when you weren't using your houses at all?

SA: Well, they sold one. There were three in a row. They sold one to the Michauds, and the Michauds eventually sold it to Dr. Takash, who still lives there. Then there was one in between, the house that we live in now, and that was the house that they always used of the three of them. And the Michaud house, that one was rented; that was rented to another French Canadian, the Roys, for many years. I remember as a kid, I don't think they stayed there during the week, but they came on the weekends en masse; it seemed like there were hundreds of them, but maybe there were twelve or fourteen of them, and they were fun. They would spend the day, I don't think anybody slept there, although they could have, but I don't remember. Eventually that cottage was torn down, because they wanted to expand the one that we do use, and it was probably falling apart and they would have had to fix, and it really wasn't economically worth it. Yeah, there were originally three cottages, and my generation says, "Why did you get rid of all of them, we could have used those rooms?" Especially the one that was sold, because the one that was sold to the Michauds had a nice piece of land, a small patch of sandy beach, and we're stuck with ledge. So we've never really had a good entrance to the water. So there were three, but originally those three cottages were owned by Louis Ginsberg who then sold them to William Levine.

AE: Now, did you do any types of Jewish things when you were at the camps?  
(28:08)

SA: No. What would be a Jewish thing?

AE: I mean, culturally. [SA: No.] I guess Jewish means different things to people, but okay.

SA: You know that there were a lot of sleep-away camps that were predominantly Jewish, and I did not go to sleep-away camp because we lived on the lake. In that transcript that you sent me, one of the corrections that you didn't make, now that I'm thinking about it, that was a word you didn't know was Camp Matoaka; that's probably the only one that's still here, but in the Belgrade Lake chain there were probably 30 boys' or girls' sleep-away camps. For the boys there was Camp Kennebec, Camp Lown, Camp Belgrade. Camp Lown was the only Jewish, Jewish camp, and they're still in existence. Camp Matoaka, Camp Manitou, (29:38) they were all owned by Jewish families from the Boston area, New York area or something; they were all probably in education in those days. And they had huge amounts of kids that came up here in the summers.

AE: Now, besides sleep-away camps, were there a lot of other house camps that you and your family had?

SA: Oh yes, there are tons of them on the lakes. I mean the Belgrade Lakes chain, I don't know if you've spent any time of the summer at any of the lakes. There are

five lakes that are interconnected if you portage (30:24) you can canoe through the entire chain. They're beautiful lakes. I mean, Great Pond is huge, but the one we're on is long and skinny, it's nine miles long. There's a ton of other houses on the lake.

AE: Did you socialize with any of the other families that were on the lake?

SA: Yeah, some of them were people that I grew up with right in town. There are some people that have houses on these lakes who come from other states and who come to Maine for the summer. There were also some housekeeping cottages that I don't really know that much about. They probably weren't particularly Jewish: Bear Spring camps and Alden camps, etcetera; they were places that people went for a week or two or more in the summer. You had your own little cottage of maybe one or two bedrooms, or maybe they're even larger. I knew a lot of kids that had jobs there, that were housemaids and kitchen help and waitresses and stuff. Jewish kids didn't get those kinds of jobs. (31:54)

AE: How come?

SA: 'Cause this wasn't the Catskills. Those were jobs that some of the kids I grew up with, they were either Catholic or Protestant; they would have gotten those jobs. And mostly Protestant, actually, that would have gotten those kinds of jobs. I remember that my sister Julie wanted to work, I want to say Boothbay.

AE: I think it was in Bar Harbor. I think somebody was talking about this in class today.

SA: Was it Bar Harbor? She wanted to work with her friend Robin Sanbourne, and she told my mother that she was going to get a job with Robin wherever, some resort. And my mother said, "No way they're going to hire you." She said, "don't be ridiculous of course they are! I am the same as Robin." And my mother said, "No you're not, you're not blonde, you're Jewish. They're never going to hire you." She went to apply for the job, and of course they didn't hire her. They didn't hire her because, they didn't say she wasn't Jewish, but you could turn around and say the same thing about the Catskills. I mean, most of those cottages and places that Jewish families went to for a month or two weeks or whatever, those were all populated by Jewish waiters and dance instructor and whatever, I mean Dirty Dancing, I mean that kind of thing.

AE: So you're saying that on the Belgrade Lakes where they had these communities of houses that Jews... not that they were outwardly discriminating, but because that....

SA: If there were Jews that were going to places like that, they weren't coming to Maine, they were going to the Catskills or wherever else they are in America. If they were coming to Maine then they owned their own place here.

AE: Okay, that makes sense.

SA: And there were plenty of Jews that were coming to Maine that own their own place here, that are on all of these lakes, because they are still coming.

AE: Now, why do you think that it was so popular to come to Maine?

SA: It's vacationland. It's beautiful here in the summer. Look, I have a very good friend who grew up in Scarsdale, she lives in Armonk now. Her heritage is German Jews, and they were very nonreligious; they celebrated Christmas in her house all the time. She married a Jewish man who is not particularly religious, but his family was much more committed, and so if you walk into the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y, his family's name is all over the place. And she and I laugh about things all the time, because she grew up hearing this: Her heritage was German Jewish and that made her better than the Jews from Northern Europe like Russia and Poland. And we laugh because I never knew that, I never knew that German Jews were better than I was. I mean, I guess Russian and Poland Jews didn't instill that prejudice into their kids, because they obviously left Russia and Poland for different reasons than some of the ones that came from Germany. But, I just find it very funny when she would say things like that, and of course she didn't mean it. She would say, "this is what I learned about, talk about prejudice." I can't even imagine my family saying things like that. I adored this person's father, I mean he was really fun, but this was a of kind of bred prejudice that I guess you only hear it around New York. But she and her family went to a place in Maine, she still goes with her kids. They go to a place in Maine on Sebago Lake. Now, I've never been to Sebago Lake, I've never been on the coast of Maine to anything, I've been to Boothbay, I've been to Bar Harbor, but I very rarely am any place other than Snow Pond in the summer. And they go to a place called Migis, which is on Sebago Lake. I know from her that there are a lot of people that she grew up with that now go with her grandchildren and their grandchildren etcetera. So obviously Migis was one of the places that accepted Jews. There were a lot of resorts on the coast of Maine where they would not accept the reservation if you had a Jewish name. (38:10)

AE: So they started going to other places.

SA: Yeah, you know, you had to buy if you were going to end up in Maine. The Jewish population of Maine was not hovered around the coast. If you look at the history of York, Wells, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, I don't think you're going to find too many Jewish names.

AE: I heard that that was a much more discriminating area...

SA: Oh absolutely, that's the only thing I remember growing up, the only discrimination against Jews. I told you I didn't feel any of it myself, but my mother did some volunteer work for the Anti-Defamation League, which is part of B'nai B'rith. One of the things that she did in those days is she made reservations at places on the coast as Mrs. Howard Miller, which was her name, then she showed up and gave her name as Mrs. Howard Levine, and they never had her reservation for her. They would never have reservations. It was part of the Anti-Defamation

League's work that opening up and point out places that wouldn't accept Jews. I'm sure they didn't accept other groups as well, but they were all on the coast. So that was the only thing that was kind of drilled into my head, only not drilled in on purpose by them, it was just by osmosis, by the work that she did and by the fact that you went to the coast for a lobster, but you didn't really hang out at the coast.

AE: Well, those are all the questions that I had for you in specific, but unless you had anything you wanted to add that you thought about after my first interview with you? (40:48)

SA: No, not really.