

## **Nathan Barnett Interview, Part 1**

**Yetta Chaiken:** —Chaiken taping Nathan Barnett, former executive director of the Jewish Federation of Delaware, for the Jewish Historical Society. June 15th, 1978.

*pause in recording*

**YC:** Mr. Barnett, where were you born? And when were you born?

**Nathan Barnett:** I was born in 1925 in Chicago, Illinois.

**YC:** And would you like to tell us something about your training prior to this?

**NB:** Surely. When I was quite young, my family moved, basically, to Cincinnati, Ohio. We moved there, approximately third grade, I went through high school, to elementary school and high school in Cincinnati, Ohio, then going into the army, and served in 1944 through 1946. Upon returning, I attended the University of Cincinnati receiving my BS in Education in '49, and then matriculating to Ohio State where I received my MSW, at Ohio State. From there, I joined the United Community Way, which then was known as the Community Chest, field. I stayed in that movement for approximately fourteen years. Moving into the Federation field, where I became a campaign director in Montreal for two years, and then assuming the position of Director of the Federation, that was my background.

**YC:** And that was prior to coming to Wilmington? You came to Wilmington at that point?

**NB:** I came to Wilmington directly from Montreal, yes.

**YC:** And what were some of your duties in Wilmington with the Jewish Federation of Delaware?

**NB:** Well, I've always thought that the Federation was the central organization, basically, in the Jewish community— outside of the synagogues, of course, the religious area. And consequently, I took a very broad view of what Federation did, should do. Consequently, my view was, is today, that anything that the Jewish community is involved in the Federation should be involved in. Therefore, I suspect, that I was atypical of executives, in that respect, but that it went beyond the field of campaigning or budgeting or planning. I felt that we should be involved with agency relations with the community, with issues in community relations, in developing a communication vehicle such as *The Jewish Voice*, and almost anything that touches the lives of the Jewish community. So consequently, I guess, we were involved, I think, when I was there, in almost any activity that was really meaningful.

**YC:** What happened to the Jewish community when the Israelis went to war in 1967?

**NB:** Well, before we get into that, let me tell you a little bit about the prelude to that, because I think it has some effect on it. I remember very well that my family and I came down to Wilmington— and I started work, actually, on February 1st of '67— at that particular time— while Joe First was the campaign chairman. In fact, that was interesting, when I was interviewed by a number of people for the position of the Executive Director, I went back to New York on a train one night, and little did I know that I was riding back with Joe and Shirley First— who then was the campaign chairman— who was not part of the interviewing team. And I suspect Joe didn't realize at that time, either, that I would be coming back to be the executive director running his first campaign.

Joe First was a rather, I think, extraordinary person, he had a great deal of warmth and heart and knew very little about campaigning. And as a matter of fact, when I arrived and started work on February 1st, we hadn't raised a single dime, there was no campaign organization to speak of, and they really were not in decent shape. But we had raised \$287,000— I should say the Wilmington community had raised— about \$287,000 the year before, in 1966. And together, Joe and I agreed that we ought to set a goal that was reachable, but would make us really stretch. And so, we set a goal of \$325,000. We started at that particular time working very hard, very long hours, to reach that goal. And just prior to the Six Day War, just prior to the '67 war, we had raised approximately 308, 309, \$310,000. And while we were closing in on the 325 figure, we weren't quite certain that we were going to reach it. But Joe had organized a campaign, and we had worked toward this, and we felt very good at that stage. Suddenly, we got a call. Things were heating up.

**YC:** You got a call from whom?

**NB:** We got a call to attend a meeting in New York called by— and I'm guessing a little bit because my memory may not be clear— but I think it was a combination meeting of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds and the United Jewish Appeal. I must tell you that that meeting, in the Warwick hotel, late at night, in a small room basically, filled with smoke, was probably the most exhilarating meeting that I've ever attended in my entire life.

**YB:** Who attended this— from Wilmington— with you?

**NB:** Okay. My memory may not serve me as accurately as it should, but I am reasonably certain that these four or five men were there— there were no women at that particular time— Joe First, Ed Shaw, Lou Finger. Lou came up on his own, he didn't come together— four of us drove up. Lou, we met up there. Norman Schutzman, and I guess myself. That's five. Yes. And we listened to what was going on, we were urged to go back to our community and to raise the most massive amount of money in the history of this country.

And I remember driving back— it was late at night— I suspect we left around twelve and got home about three and so forth. It may have been eleven thirty, got home at two thirty. But

we talked all the way back as to what we were going to do— how were we going to approach the board of directors? In the meantime, we had already set up in motion a board meeting for the next day, either I suspect mailgrams had gone out over Ed Shaw's signature calling for such a meeting. And we were we were trying to figure out what should we go for? How much money should we raise? And, of course, sitting with me were people who had been in the community for many years. They knew the community; they knew the people. I didn't know the community very well; remember I had been there less than six months. Although I think in the type of situation that I was in, and type of situation that almost any Federation director is in, he gets to know the community reasonably fast, and under the circumstance that I was in I would get to know it even faster.

We finally decided that we would ask for a million dollars on that drive back. We knew that was going to be very difficult. We knew that people would rebel against it, at least we thought they would, because the first thing that people are going to think when we go into that room is "What is this going to mean to my pocketbook?" And that's going to mean a significant increase. So, what we were really asking people to allocate, something in the neighborhood of three times as much as they had given before, assuming that you take \$350,000 as a third of the million dollars, in effect, that we're going to raise, although we're going to raise a million in addition to trying to raise that. But as I remember that night in New York, and I could hear the agony— really the agony— of the people, they didn't know what was going to happen. They just didn't know what was going to take place at that time.

**YC:** We're talking about the beginning of what was called the Six Day War.

**NB:** The Six Day War, that's right. And of course, in retrospect, after we got back and as we moved into the campaign, and so forth— I'll talk about that in a little while— we raised money long after the war was over, because people recognized what had to be done. Well, we came back, and we had our meeting.

**YC:** This is with the board of directors?

**NB:** This was with the board of directors of the Jewish Federation of Delaware, in which Ed Shaw was the president. Now, Ed Shaw was put in— During this period Ed Shaw was put into a peculiar position, which I will talk about, but we went before the board and Joe First and Ed Shaw recommended to the board that we go for a million dollars. Well, there were those, of course, who were quite willing to do that, such as a Norman Schutzman. There were others, I think, that were a little more practical in terms of the ability of our community to raise the money, and felt this was out of sight. And there were others that were possibly a little more honest, or maybe more realistic— I don't really know, on that respect— but felt that if the Board of Directors agreed to go for a million dollars, what in effect they were saying to the community is that they, as members of the board, were prepared to contribute at least three times as much, again, as they had during this last campaign. I remember very vividly that Irv

Shapiro indicated if that was the case, he would submit his resignation right here and now. Now, that's what I meant by Ed Shaw being in a very peculiar position. Ed Shaw worked for Irv Shapiro. And it caused some consternation.

**YC:** Ed Shaw, what was his position in the DuPont Company?

**NB:** He was a lawyer, one of many, of course, and Irv Shapiro was the assistant legal counsel for the DuPont Company at that time.

**YC:** That was prior to his elevation.

**NB:** Of course, that was prior to his elevation on the executive committee as a vice chairman, and then subsequently to be selected as the chairman of the board. At that time, obviously, no one knew that, but the fact remained that he was Ed's boss. Certainly his superior at least, I don't know what the hierarchy in particular was in the legal department. But I think the question that Irv raised was a real question, and he had the temerity, I guess, to stand up and say that he wasn't prepared to stay on the board and to be supportive of Israel in that particular magnitude. And he did not want the community to be diluted by a board voting one thing, if, indeed, that's what it meant for every board person. That took probably most of the evening in terms of developing a goal as to what it meant for each individual. The end result, really, was that we would go out for a goal of a million dollars and that everyone had to look in their own conscience as to what it should mean to them. And that if, in their own conscience, they felt that meant to give three times as much as the previous gift— which was in the same year, remember— or when they can only give the same, or half, or whatever, they'd have to do that. So that was one of the, I guess— This was the first time in my experience I've been through— in Wilmington, at least— such a rocky type of meeting where people's emotions did come out.

**YC:** And then during the campaign itself, the campaign was a short one, because it was after the original campaign, as you explain it.

**NB:** The campaign was a short one, probably one of the shortest in the history of every community, because by the time we really organized and enrolled the campaign the Six Day War was over. I mean, not that we didn't get monies for this beforehand, but nevertheless it was over. One of the one of the lessons it should have taught but did not— the American Jewish community— was to be organized in advance for such a crisis. And in 1973, I can tell you, that while we were in a much better position than ever before, the American Jewish community had not learned its lesson.

**YC:** You mean throughout the nation?

**NB:** Yes, yes. There were some high points during this campaign. It was interesting, I remember— these are simply just vignettes, I guess— I remember we had a meeting at the Brandywine Country Club, and for the first time in my career— I'd been working for a number of years— people just gave me cash. They didn't want their names listed. And I mean, not simply nickels, dimes, dollars and pennies, but I remember specifically one person came in and gave me a thousand dollars in cash and said "Forget it. Just take it." Others did much the same.

**YC:** You're saying there was a great outpouring from the community, the people within the community?

**NB:** There was an outpouring from the community. We ended up raising \$565,000 in the second campaign, so in effect, in that one year—

**YC:** What did you raise in the first campaign the same year?

**NB:** We closed it at \$315,000.

**YC:** And so, the same year, you raised—

**NB:** Within the next two months, as a matter of fact, we raised an additional \$565,000.

**YC:** Which shows that the community was really capable of giving more.

**NB:** Yes, of course, but in the next year we dropped considerably. Now, every community dropped considerably, but we'd dropped even more so because of two circumstances. The DuPont Company traditionally had given \$11,000 to our regular campaign— and as part of the \$315,000, \$11,000 was part of that— they gave an additional \$50,000.

**YC:** During the '67 campaign?

**NB:** During the '67 war. But they made it very clear, in effect, that this was to be used within the continental United States. It was, you know, it was playing games. So, we used that within the local community, and we used other monies to go out to the United Jewish Appeal. Now I suspect— they never said it, of course— but I suspect that they just didn't want the Arabs to know that they were giving that kind of money. I never was able to determine why they gave the \$50,000. Somewhere in the oral history, possibly of Irv Shapiro, I suspect that there may be some reference to this which I'm not privy to, because I did ask Irv that question. And the only answer I could seek to get is that there was some pressure, not much, but some pressure, in New York, in the textile industry, to give some money, and they decided that they would give it here. Now, I don't know how to correct that is, that's an impression that I have, but Irv would never tell me this, and it's just one of the things that you sort of feel.

**YC:** Yes, that's an interesting footnote to that.

**NB:** There was a second footnote, because as part of the \$565,000, we received \$100,000 from a gentleman who had previously only given \$2,000. Now I think this was one of the more remarkable gifts, because in effect what he was doing, with the full backing of his children, was to give away part of his estate. And that was—

*pause in recording*

**YC:** Who was the man who contributed a large sum of money?

**NB:** This was Morris Liebowitz, and for those in the community who don't remember him, they should know that that's Sidney and Felix Loeb's father-in-law. And as a sort of vignette to that, Sidney Loeb's daughter married the son of the Federation executive director of St. Louis, so there is a continuation of a tie-in. But that was a very handsome gift. But unfortunately, as I indicated, I think, previously, we had some difficulties the next year because in the next year Morris died, and he would have certainly have given considerably more than the \$2,000 that he had given before. And of course, we didn't get the \$50,000 from the DuPont Company. Instead of the sixty-one that we received in '67, we received our normal \$11,000.

But in spite of that there was this type of tremendous outpouring that took place. And it developed the solidarity within the Jewish community, although I must say there were still those who still didn't make any contribution, but there always are those who don't. But we had children coming in with their piggy banks, and I remember one breaking their piggy bank right in the Federation office. We couldn't count the money fast enough, we had to put it in banks overnight, we had guards taking it back and forth. The safe was bulging, we couldn't get anything in it, we couldn't process the cards fast enough, we had volunteer bookkeepers and auditors that were coming in to help us. We had organizations like the Wednesday night Jewish men's bowling league, that instead of having their banquet— and I think it amounted to about \$2,000— they sent it to us. I may be off slightly, of course, on the amount of money, but we had other organizations that were doing similar things. Everyone was trying, to the level that they could, to give as much as they could. At least that was the thesis that most of us went on.

But you know, the problem with that is you really don't know if that's true. We raised \$565,000. You add that on to the \$350,000 we had an \$880,000 campaign that year. Compare that with the \$286,000 that we had raised the year before. And even in the best year history of Delaware, they've never raised much over \$400,000, if that; I don't have the records in front of me. But I remember very well thinking about that one gentleman, a David Katz, who had given us what I thought was the most magnanimous gift in the entire campaign. He had gone from \$250 to \$10,000, and I extolled David for years. And it's true that he was Zionistly oriented, and he did give to other things, nevertheless he had never given well to the Federation, and so the \$10,000 gift was a magnificent gift, in my judgment. And yet, some years later, when he had

died, he left the Federation some money, and I saw the will, and I saw all the money that he had, and he was a very wealthy person, I saw quickly that that really was not a very handsome gift. So, you never know whether a gift of that magnitude is handsome, or whether a person who is giving you a smaller gift isn't really being much more generous. The longer you stay in this business the more you realize that there are times— many times— that you just don't know; you can't read what the other person has in his pocketbook.

But my judgment is that even though the \$565,000 was a magnificent gift at that time, it wasn't sacrificial giving. And yet, I can tell you anytime that you go from where you were— \$286,000 to raising close to \$900,000— the community has responded, from a pragmatic point of view, just wonderfully well.

**YC:** But you must have experienced some people giving in a sacrificial manner. I mean, those incidents must have occurred.

**NB:** I think there were. I think that there were many that gave in a sacrificial manner. I'm not suggesting otherwise, I'm talking collectively that it wasn't. And, I think, and when you think what happened in '73, you realize that that was the case. And I remember sitting down and talking to Ed Shaw and Joe First about this, and I think that we agreed that while we had all given well— and we had— and as a community we had given superbly— we still hadn't reached what we could do if we were called upon to do even more. Wilmington is not one of the real Jewish affluent communities. In fact, it's one, believe it or not, one of the poor organized Jewish communities because we don't have great wealth in here. I don't mean that our community is not an affluent one, because most of our people are professional people, they are earning a good living, but they aren't in the position to give twenty-five and fifty and \$100,000 gifts, not when you're earning \$50,000 or \$40,000, or even \$70,000. You just don't give that type of money. But they had they had responded well.

That was an effect then, the Six Day War. It was a magnificent outpouring of generosity on the part of the American Jewish community. And it also did one other thing which was tremendously important: it raised the level of Israel, in the eyes of the non-Jewish community very high, and it also did the same thing within the American Jewish community. So, they really strutted a little bit if I can use that.

**YC:** What changes took place in the community— Wilmington— as a result of the Six Day War that you could observe?

**NB:** Well, that's an interesting question. I think there probably were two changes that took place. One, I believe, it raised the sights of the people who were in leadership position that the money, while no one individual might be able to produce a very large gift— let's say in the six figures— it did mean collectively that we as a community were able to raise significant dollars. I am reasonably certain that had a great deal to do with the decision to go ahead with the building of the Jewish Community Center— not the building of it, but to go ahead with the large

sum of money needed to build the Jewish Community Center. And that to me was the most direct result of that because, and, you know, we can talk about another meeting that we had after that, because in '68 we went ahead, in effect, to move ahead with the building of the Jewish Community Center. But I think that it showed the community that we were one, in effect, that we could raise dollars, that allowed them to build the center, and that it gave those who were in a position to know within the non-Jewish community an understanding that the Jewish community was the second-largest fundraising organization in the state. Up until then it wasn't.

**YC:** So, it really unified them on many fronts, and it acted as a coordinating influence.

**NB:** Well, it did, and it also allowed us as the years went by— When the center, for example, went to being in a position to be able to allocate dollars to the various local organizations, because heretofore they were getting most of their money— still do for that matter— from the United Way. But the Federation, which hadn't given very much— hardly at all— began to significantly increase their dollars because they knew they had a responsibility, and the United Way also saw the ability of the Jewish community to raise money and they felt that they should do more for their own agencies. And I think they were right.

**YC:** And so, from that point on, things did begin to change?

**NB:** Things did begin to change.

**YC:** What about more people being involved in community activities? Did those people stay, that worked, or did they leave?

**NB:** I guess I came in a period of time which I can almost say was a transitional leadership period of time. The people who were involved when I first arrived very quickly moved out, for whatever the reasons may be. Joe First, of course, died shortly thereafter. A couple of years later Saul Zallea, for example, who was one of the— may very well have been the leading citizen, in my judgment, in the Jewish community— moved away shortly thereafter. When I say shortly, I'm talking about several years later, with Tanya, his wife, who was—

**YC:** Very active.

**NC:** Not only active, but I really believe it was because of Tanya, to a great measure, that the Jewish Community Center—

**YC:** Was built.

**NC:** —is here today, yes. I think she pushed Saul to make it a possibility. And other people, of course, like that, who, as they slipped away, or they decided they were too old, or they left for



one reason or another, other people began to take their place. I don't think we did as good a job, frankly, in many respects. I think, first off, the older leaders left a lack of leadership available. And I think in the ten-year period that I been here we didn't develop as many leaders as we should have.

**YC:** You're saying there was a void in Jewish leadership, you felt?

**NB:** Yeah, I felt there wasn't the strength— and now I'm not talking about— there have been some that have stayed right with it throughout the years. Ed Shaw, Bernie Siegel, have been around for a long period of time and have given their wisdom to this. But other people have come and gone basically, and they haven't really stayed a long period of time. I think, if you look at the presidents of the Federation, for example, you will notice that the last, since nineteen— well, I can't remember offhand— but certainly with Ed Shaw every president served only two years. That's, I think, the past five or six presidents. Whereas before with the— Finkelstein, what was his first name, I have forgotten?

**YC:** Not Nisson.

**NB:** Not Nisson, no, he's the president now. He used to run the hardware—

**YC:** Oh, I. J. [sic, probably referring to I[saac] B[ernard] Finkelstein]

**NB:** I. J., and Kutz, and others like him, they served five and six and eight years, which gave some continuity. And the problem, of course, is that we don't have those types of people anymore. Leaders just can't be there for two years, because we don't have that many who can assume those positions of responsibility, and fill them well. It's my judgment, as a matter of fact, that some of the people who have been presidents of the Federation have left no mark whatsoever, and will leave no mark. I think that Dick Kane, for example, is a perfect example. I don't think that Irv Morris left a mark. Certainly Howard Handelman left nothing to the Jewish community. So that, you just haven't gotten— We have not the type of people in this community that will take on a position of responsibility and stay with it for a long period of time.

**YC:** Is there anything in the constitution which does not allow a president to continue?

**NB:** No. They're elected for one year, and you can be elected theoretically for as long as you wish to serve, or the community wants you to serve. Anyway, those were the pieces, I think. But I would like to move, if I may, to the to the second area, which, I think, during the period that I've been here— I was the executive director— was critically important. And that was the building of the Jewish Community Center. I must say that the decision to go ahead with that, and the original campaign, was completed before I arrived. I believe that the first go around they raised something like \$1,100,000 prior to my coming to Wilmington, Delaware. The

architects had indicated that the building would cost a million five. The contractors disagreed with them, and the final cost of that building and its furnishings total \$2,800,000. I remember the meeting that, again, was held at the Brandywine Country Club, and it was a joint meeting between the Jewish Community Center board of directors and the Federation board. And the decision at that time was whether to go ahead and put up the building as the contractors had indicated the cost would be— of course, the cost at that time wasn't two eight, it was closer to two million plus, and of course it escalated later on— or whether to ask the architects to cut back or to devise a different type of building. Dan Herrmann was the chairman of the planning committee and he was extraordinarily able in ramrodding this whole phase.

**YC:** Do you think he was an able administrator, would you say, as well?

**NB:** Well, I think so. I think there was one basic fault that I would have. My field was in the— I worked in the field of fundraising; I didn't have much to do with the plans. In fact, there were only three things that I asked, I remember, in the plans, all three of which were turned down. One— and it was interesting— One was to build the swimming pool in such a way that would enable handicapped people to go into it. And it's interesting to know, ten years later, they now are building it not in the same way as it would have been. But they turned me down, and I repeatedly asked such.

The second one, and I remember this very well because it was, in effect, soon after I arrived in Wilmington, and it was— I can't remember the precise date, it will be on the records— we went to the Woodlawn Trustees, and we were signing papers for the acreage that we were going to receive, and it was ten acres. And I asked Dan Herrmann, specifically, whether we could possibly, at this particular time, ask for more, because I knew we needed more. And his remark to me was, "Don't worry, when the time comes, we'll be able to get it. I think we should be satisfied with the ten acres." Well, he may have been right in terms of that's all we could have had at that time, I don't know that, but he certainly was wrong in what took place later on because the cost escalated from \$7,500 per acre to something that we had to pay later on, to closer to about— I forgot what it was, but I think it was something like \$30,000 an acre. But that's for two acres is the math, two and a half acres. But I guess— I didn't know the full details, of course— but I still think that he should have asked for more. Anyway, going back to this meeting.

**YC:** You said there was a third thing.

**NB:** Well, I can't remember what it was at that particular time.

**YC:** Okay.

**NB:** Let's see. It was the—

**YC:** Well that's alright.

**NB:** Okay. They had a long discussion. I think that the one area that we probably messed up on is that we worried too much about aesthetics, having the building look too beautiful for the next three generations, four generations, and not build it in a more functional way, which I think would have met our needs better, and the cost would have been considerably less. But that again is hindsight. No one was objecting during that particular period of time that I remember. They were objecting, of course, to the cost but then that was— they didn't have enough.

I remember also one other aspect that really hurt. No one knew about it, but I know the question was asked, they asked the architects "How much crawlspace would we have?" The architects said "Two feet." It ended up we had six and a half feet and crawlspace, and if we would have known then we could have dug out a little more and would have had almost another ten or twenty-thousand square feet of usable land. It was just unbelievably poor planning part of the architects. But during that meeting—

**YC:** Now, this is a meeting with whom?

**NB:** This was a meeting between the two boards, the Center board and the Federation board to see whether or not—

**YC:** And when was it, do you remember?

**NB:** It was in '68 sometime. It was basically to see whether or not we should go ahead with the price which the contractors had given to us, which was considerably more than what we had raised. The almost unanimous vote was to go ahead. I think there were two people who voted against it: Elaine Sherman, and I think Bernie Siegel. I don't believe anyone else, there may have been an abstention along the line, I don't remember that. Those were the only two that voted against it, basically, I think, because of the cost. So, the decision was made to go ahead, and we did.

There were two, almost three, in effect, other campaigns. One, we ran a sort of an abortive campaign in which we raised, in '68, \$100,000 from the non-Jewish community. And in nineteen— I believe it was sixty-nine— it could have been seventy, but I think it was sixty-nine— we raised the rest of the money that was needed for the building. And we did it, really, in three ways. One, through the efforts of Irv Shapiro and Dan Herrmann, they secured Irénée du Pont to serve as the non-Jewish chairman. Through his efforts we raised an additional half a million dollars. Secondly, we sold, of course, the building and French Street, the Jewish Community Center, and we got \$211,000 from that. And then we raised additional monies from the Jewish community. Later, we had to sell a part of the campsite, as you probably know, because we ended up only raising two million five, and it cost two million eight, so we had to sell it— I think we sold it for \$530,000— to pay off the remainder.

This Jewish community really doesn't know how lucky it is. It doesn't realize that we put up \$2,800,000, we put up a building for two million eight, in which the living Jews paid a relatively small amount of money. If you subtract backwards, in fact, and if you say that we received roughly \$300,000— that we used, at least— from the seller's estate, which was bought by people many years ago, as you know. If you think about the \$211,000 that we received from the building, of the old Jewish Community Center, which was paid for by those people way back then, if you think about the close to \$200,000 which the Federation gave out of his own coffers from its endowment from which people had contributed, if you think about the \$600,000, which the non-Jews contributed, you will see that a significant amount of money came from either non-Jews, or, in effect, not from people that were— What does that add up to? Six hundred, nine hundred, eleven, a million one, a million three— about close to 50 percent of it came from other than those people who were living at the time.

**YC:** That is a remarkable figure.

**NB:** Yes, yes it is, and people don't realize it. And let me just shift for a moment to the Kutz Home. 80 percent of the money that went up in the initial part of the building, and in the secondary part— the forty beds at first— came from one source, and that's Hattie Kutz. Again, the Jewish community doesn't know how lucky it is. They really have not been responsive in many respects to what's gone on, because the leadership hasn't really needed to let them be responsive, because there have been this type of thing.

I think they've made a grave error, in my judgment, in the new building— the extension in the new building that they've put up— in which will house the Federation, the Jewish Family Service, and the Albert Einstein Academy. I don't know what the cost will end up at. I know that as I left the Federation, it was earmarked to be something in the neighborhood of a little over \$400,000. What I hear now is that it will be closer to 450 or 470; I don't know how accurate that is. But instead of going out, in my judgment, on a campaign for not only that building, for other things that are necessary in this community— such as the promises they've made to the Jewish Community Center for a campsite— they went ahead and didn't go to the community. They got \$100,000 from the Kutz Foundation. They talked to Sadie Toumarkine and she very generously agreed to allow the monies that she is allocating to the center and to the Federation— I don't mean that she's allocating, but coming from the Harry Cohen Foundation— to go into this purpose. And the rest of it is coming, basically, from rentals, which they— theoretically will balance it out. My guess it won't balance it out, and my guess is that they either will have to charge an enormous amount of rentals to the agencies, or they'll have to take it out of their campaign funds. I think the time was ripe, ripe, to go ahead and raise money in the community for not only these purposes for others, but they didn't think it through. But that's hindsight.

But we do have a building, the Jewish Community Center, it's a magnificent building really. It's serving its purpose very well. It took a lot of courage, in my judgment, for the community, the leadership, to say, sitting on a million one, to go ahead and— at that time I

think they knew they had to raise two million five— to go ahead, because they didn't know where the money was going to come from. But it took courage and wisdom.

**YC:** You must have been very pleased with your role in that.

**NB:** Well, I— we did, yes, I think I was. We did hire an outside firm to help in this campaign, but basically, I was deeply involved with the running of it, probably the upper part of it, which [was] where the top money was. And I think it had to give a person a good feeling because it was successful, because we have something which the community needed and wanted, so I have felt that I played a significant role in seeing to it that the community had such a building,

**YC:** Then, it was not too much longer, or too much later, that the '73 war broke out.

**NB:** Yes, that's true.

**YC:** Just about the time you finish collecting money for that fund, new hostilities suddenly occurred in Israel.

**NB:** Yes. There's always been something, I suspected, in every Jewish community, and of course with us— It was not only the '67 war, but we had the building campaign for the Center and then at '73, of course, we had the very tragic Yom Kippur War. This was quite different, in effect, than the other. In the other there was a period of time prior to the war in which all sorts of talk was going on. We knew that there was something brewing. We didn't quite know what was taking place, but if you read the headlines you saw what really was taking place, and it wasn't so much of a surprise. Nasser had kicked out— had requested the United Nations to withdraw their troops. The Director General said he had to do so. We sensed— most Jews sensed that something was going to happen. In the '73 war this came on suddenly.

The difference was that locally we were probably as well prepared as we possibly could have been. Gil Spiegel was the campaign chairman. He had been selected early. For the first time, at least in my experience— and I believe that it goes back many years before we had done something like this— we had had our campaign leadership meet at Cherry Hill in New Jersey. We had asked the campaign director of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds to come down and we had a two-day seminar. We really were on top of things. We had our division chairman selected, we had a fair number of our captains selected, and suddenly things erupted, unlike what had happened in '67. And consequently, I remember getting a telegram— First off, both Gil and I, he got calls and telegrams and I got calls and telegrams. I was sitting, as everyone was, at *shul* when the war broke out. I couldn't believe it like anyone else, except that we knew it was true. We called a meeting almost immediately. And we had received— I had received a phone call and a telegram from the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, Gil had received it from different people. We called the meeting, and let me tell you, everyone was there.

**YC:** This was the meeting at the Adas Kodesch, or is this a preliminary meeting?

**NC:** No, no, this was a preliminary meeting which was at the Jewish Community Center. You can't call a—

**YC:** No, no, this was this was just the leadership.

**NC:** This was just a leadership. It was a campaign cabinet that we called; it was—

**YC:** Was it the day after Yom Kippur?

**NB:** It was either the day after or two days later, I'm not quite precise about that. Let me—

*pause in recording*

**NB:** —at ten, tonight, I got an important meeting—

*pause in recording*

**NB:** Why don't I stop now?

*pause in recording*

**NB:** —meeting, it was either the next day or the day after, and I'd have to check some records to find out, but we had the meeting, it was held at the Jewish Community Center, and in order to organize a community, it can't, you know, go off full blown. It doesn't happen by itself. So consequently we scheduled this meeting. It probably— My guess is it was on Saturday, too, because it was so important.

**YC:** That's why I asked you when it was.

**NB:** I think so. And we invited the rabbis, we invited the executive committee of the Federation, the campaign cabinet, and we launched our campaign. And the first thing we decided, we had to do two things. One, we had to go to key people to get their gifts. And second, we wanted to have a major meeting, which was scheduled, was held, it was at Adas Kodesh. And as all of us know it was filled to capacity. Now people may think— I think people like to think— that out of the goodness of their hearts they stand up and announce their gift without any pressures being placed on them. Let me—

*end of part one*

## Nathan Barnett Interview, Part 2

**Nathan Barnett:** —the dollars that we felt necessary, and we certainly were shooting for a much larger figure.

**Yetta Chaiken:** Do you remember the figure you were shooting for in the '73 War?

**NB:** Yeah. We set a goal of a million and a half dollars. I think that was somewhat *chutzpadik* on our part, frankly, considering what we had raised before. But what we were shooting for, in effect, was to go by and, yeah, and, stop—

*pause in recording*

**NB:** What in effect we were trying to raise was almost double what we had previously raised the last year. And as it turned out we raised the largest amount in the history of this community, we raised something like \$1,203,000, which was a fantastic figure, and again, while we had some major gifts— again DuPont gave us \$50,000, in addition to their \$10,000, they cut it back from eleven to ten by that time— we didn't have any great losses, like the one that we had suffered in '67, for the next year. But the fact is we were organized, and we went out to contact the larger givers in advance of our campaign, in advance of the rally that we had at Adas Kodesch, and we were very successful. Many people think that those men and women stood up in front of the microphone and for the first time made their gift. It was because there were people who were working day and night trying to persuade them to increase their gifts.

It was a fascinating period of time. It came at a time for example, when Howard Handelman was a lame duck president. He was going out of office and Dick King was going to take over. It was a time when you would work, as I did— and I'm sure Gil and Bernie Siegel, all the rest of it— we'd be in the central office at the Federation at 701 Shipley [Street] and we'd get there early, eight thirty or so, and all of us had to be home by eleven o'clock that night. So, we're putting in about, oh, I'd say sixteen-hour days regularly. But we had to be home at eleven o'clock because the news went on eleven o'clock, and by god, we had to hear that news!

I was probably the least informed of what was taking place in the war and everything than almost anyone else in the community, because I was at the center of the hub that was developing the work for the campaign. So, people would call and— “What's taking place?” and I said “I don't know!” All I knew is that we had to raise money at this particular time. But people would call in. Gee, I can't remember his name— There was several doctors. I can see his face and I'm blocking for a moment. He's a pediatrician. He married, I think, a Swedish girl. And he wanted to volunteer to go over and he put his name in and he was ready to go over. There were other people who—

**YC:** And took their children.

**NB:** —blood— But we were working, and I remember I was basically not a heavy smoker. I would smoke maybe a couple of cigars a day sometimes. I went up to two three packs a day, two or three—

**YC:** During this period of time?

**NB:** —during this period of time. And I know when the war was over and the campaign was over, I had a terrible hack. Just a terrible hack. It took me years to get rid of the cigarette habit. But because we were organized, because Gil was an excellent management person, we were able to contact everyone on a systematic basis. We didn't depend on the person coming in and volunteering, although many did. We got *a lot* of money at the rally at Adas Kodesch.

**YC:** Do you want to talk about that rally? I was there and it was a very moving experience for everyone.

**NB:** Well, you may very well know more about it, in effect, than I, because I was involved deeply in the organization, but I remember that we had a number of speakers who spoke extremely well. Well, I thought they spoke extraordinarily well. There were some very strange people standing up and making contributions, and there were gasps that went over the room at the size of these levels of contribution. I remember, for example, we got a \$1,000 gift from Ziggy Gorson. We had never gotten a gift from Ziggy Gorson before. I don't think we've ever gotten a gift from Ziggy since. He's a peculiar duck, as people know. We got gifts from youngsters who came in, they signed their pledge card, there were people that were unwilling to stand up and count, but they certainly were not unwilling to sign their pledge cards. We called on people. The audience, I think we had 900 to 1100 people there. We made certain that police were there, we didn't know what would take place, because there's always some thought that maybe some crazies might be there.

**YC:** It was an emotion packed evening as I recall.

**NB:** It was. It was. I'm trying to remember a little bit. I think, Willie— I think Wolf from Winchester came down to speak. I think Rabbi Kraft gave, I thought, a brilliant address. We sang *Hatikvah*, we sang *The Star-Spangled Banner*. Gil spoke very briefly because he really wasn't a speaker, and he knew it. And people just felt that this was a crisis in their own lives, that they had to make the type of sacrificial giving that they hadn't made, in effect, in '67. And I think in this particular case, even though it was years later, and even though people were earning more money, I think the giving record was better.

**YC:** Yeah, I agree that probably Jewish people were more moved during this war than at any other time.



**NB:** Well, there was the fear, of course, that they might have lost. And for a while I think it was a real fear. And in the readings that we now have heard, it was almost like Churchill saying about his planes, "Never have so many owed so much to so few." When you think about the few tanks on the Syrian front, and the Golan, that held back the massive number of tanks. When you think about the people in the Sinai, who were strung back with— you know, they didn't have anything. And what took place, it was obviously one of the great counter attacks of the world in world war history.

The American Jewish community I'm not sure learned from that. Even today, I don't know what would take place if a crisis took place today, because I know I wrote a paper, an outline of what should take place in the event of another hostilities. Well, the paper is there, it's lying someplace. I think the same thing, basically, would happen again today if something took place. Either the Federation organization is well on its way and being organized or it's not, and that's just happened by happenstance. Either the chairman was secure early or late, he's organized or he's not, it has nothing to do with the system. And I suspect that's true in almost any community in the country. Now, Gil Spiegel worked very hard. Worked very hard. I don't know whether because he worked so hard that that led to his early death or not.

**YC:** No, he had been ill before.

**NB:** I know he'd been sick.

**YC:** He had a long history of illness.

**NB:** But Bennett Epstein took over the last period. We had raised about 90 percent of the dollars by the time that Gil sort of had to take things a lot easier. And Bennett stepped in and did a nice job, and it really was a nice job. I know that we gave sort of not dual awards, because at the annual meeting we gave Gil a much nicer one, in effect, than we gave Bennett. But it was great to have a Bennett around.

I'm trying to think of some of the things that took place in the '73 Yom Kippur War, but I guess the thing that comes back is: number one, that had happened while all of us— most of us at least— were in service, that we were organized, that we were able to call a meeting very quickly, that everyone responded, and that we could do it on a systematic basis. Now, Gil and I, we had another meeting as a matter of fact, I can't remember the exact date, but it was at Brandywine Country Club, and it was, I would guess, no more than a week after the hostilities broke out.

**YC:** Was this for people of the country club?

**NB:** This was people from the country club. And I know following that meeting, Gil and I took a train and went up to New York. I was carrying in my wallet, I think \$400,000. I may be off slightly on this, but I remember distinctly a check for a quarter of a million dollars that was in my wallet.

And it was a time in which the people, the National UJA [United Jewish Appeal], the Council of Jewish Federations, call this meeting for two reasons. One, to collect money, because they want to get the money in as quickly as possible and get it to wherever it was going, and secondly to help us in organizing. Well, we were one of the most organized communities at that time, because we had already raised over a half a million dollars, if not more than that. I think we were up to about \$800,000, as a matter of fact, now that I think about it. We were up to about \$800,000 at that time, of which we had close to \$400,000 in cash. I mean, we just were shoveling it over there. Our books even came very close to balancing at the end of this, which was sort of remarkable, because of what was going on.

**YC:** I remember stories of people who wanted to give up their mortgages, all sorts of—

**NB:** There were these stories of people taking second mortgages, selling all sorts of things because they were so fearful. And it was true. It was true. It was an outpouring of money that this community has not seen before, and it is my guess that that it will not see again, unless something very critically happens, and I don't foresee that as a matter of fact. As it turned out, the community has gone down since that period of time from '73 when we raised a million two o' three, to the next year when we raised a million one sixty, to the next year when, I think, we raised about a million one forty, to now this year— and the end of the campaign is not in— but I understand we'll be hard pressed to get up to \$900,000. So, it's been going backwards.

**YC:** It's been tough, yeah. Well, I take it that all of this experience that you've had— how many years were you the executive director of Wilmington?

**NB:** I was the executive director for ten years, and during that period of time there were these, I would say, there was at least four or five pieces of history that was made. One certainly was the '67 war, a second was putting up the Jewish Community Center. A third was the '73 war. The fourth, I think, was doubling the size of the Kutz nursing home, and I didn't have anything to do with that, basically, except the Federation gave them some money. But it happened, you know, during my regime here, and we worked it out with the Kutz Home.

And the other thing, I guess, is the support that I feel I gave, and I think because of myself— I was instrumental in getting Albert Einstein [Academy] started in this community. I'm not saying that I did it, I'm simply saying that without my support it probably couldn't have gotten off the ground. And that in itself is a tale, because even then there were those who indicated that once the Albert Einstein [Academy] got its— like the camel in the tent, you know, got its nose in— they'd eat us out of house and home. Well, in my judgment it hasn't happened. Although this community still— and in many communities it's very similar— there are hardcore people that do not want to support day schools, and there's hardcore people that want to support day schools. And I think at this time and age, with the type of mobility that we have, the type of affluence that the Jewish community is living in, with the ability for Jews to do almost anything, that we ought to be supportive of any type of heavy, Judaic experience,

whatever that may be, and certainly the day school was one of them. So, I feel rather positive about that. They only they asked for— they only got \$2,500.

Just so his name isn't forgotten, there was a guy by the name of Barry Weisman, who was a doctor, and it was really due to his efforts, because it was a few, very few people who wanted to start this day school, started for their children, and I think the support of the Federation that it's where it is today. I'm not denying any of the other people what they've done since, I'm simply saying it was because of Barry Weisman's vision of what had to be done and the willingness of the Federation, even though it was a hard battle, and I think that it's been well worth the fight in my judgment.

**YC:** In looking back over 10 years, would you like to say anything about any personalities or any experiences that you've had working directly with the Jewish community itself? Or with the non-Jewish community?

**NB:** Well, those of us who are in positions as executive director of the Federations always are involved with personalities with a variety of people. There are those people who are very erudite, knowledgeable; those who are really— have no knowledge whatsoever, and yet both of them are in positions of responsibility. There are those who are extraordinarily knowledgeable who can't lead. There are those who really have the charisma but don't know what the heck they're doing. It was certainly a very interesting experience for me. I loved, in effect, what I was doing. It takes a lot out of a person in terms of time and energy, but if you have the willingness to do it— I think it hurts the family to a great degree, in terms of the fact that you're really a servant of the community and you normally put them before your own family, at least I found I did that, which I think, in retrospect, was grievous error.

There are some little vignettes that come through. I guess I'm talking about— Irv Shapiro comes to mind, and obviously he's the number one Jewish citizen, in effect, because that's how people look at him. I remember that, for example, the 1970 annual meeting that we had, it was a funny one alright. We gave to Irv Shapiro the Community Service Award. I think it's the last time we gave it to him. The reason he got the award isn't because the Federation decided to give it to him, it's because Sid Loeb decided to give it to him. Sid Loeb walked in; he was met with the chairman of the annual meeting. And we had a meeting, and the second meeting was called, and I remember it was a group diet at the United Way building, and he up and told us that Irv Shapiro was going to get this award, and I can tell you that everyone's mouth just fell open. But he also told us he had already asked him. And there was nothing we could do about it. So, this is something that's unknown to but just a few people, because Irv Shapiro no more deserved that award than the man in the moon. And today Irv probably doesn't even know where it is because he has now received so many awards.

**YC:** So many awards. It's just one of many.

**NB:** Well, and it fades into who knows what, some of the things that he's been to and some of the awards that he's gotten. But at that time— it still is, for this matter— the most important award that we've given except that very few people even realize that we give it out occasionally.

That was one thing. The second was the thing that probably disturbed me more than anything else, was the fact that I had to be very careful in talking to my own executive committee and officers when Marvin Gilman became an officer of the Federation. And the reason being, that his wife the budget director of the United Way, and Marvin, from my perspective, at least, always took the side, basically, of the United Way and I had to be careful in what I said. But the budget director of the United Way is in a very sensitive position. It doesn't matter what the United Way does— fundraising and anything else— if you're not getting the dollars you think, then you have a problem. And of course, I am reasonably outspoken, and Marvin took the lead. In fact, they wanted me to be president of the steering committee of the executives of the United Way, and I certainly could have had it. Because of Marvin and others, people felt I should have a low profile and I had to refuse that position. I think that's the type of attitude which can only harm the Jewish community. When they when they want their professional to put his head in the sand, or to keep a low profile, rather than most of what happens at other agencies: they're proud when their professionals are selected for honors and things of this nature. It really didn't stop me particularly; I didn't accept that position because they told me not to, but I wrote several papers [on?] the United Way and so forth and so on, but it made it uncomfortable, to say the least, when I had to deal with the United Way. And I knew more about the United Way, because of my past association as the United Way director, than almost anyone in the entire state of Delaware. But that was just one of the things that happened.

There probably are some other aspects that took place. I became the executive director of the Center twice in my career, because on two occasions they didn't have a Center executive and I took over on that. I also took over, for a brief period of time, of the Jewish Family Service, and while my experience is with the Center— and I think the community leadership felt that I worked well with the Center— I know that the leadership did not think I worked well with the Jewish Family Service, and I think they are still wrong today because they made a mistake, but that's beside the point.

I guess I don't, let's see— I think there was a change from the time I came to the time I left in terms of the rabbis. I think that Rabbi Gewirtz—

**YC:** Changed his position.

**NB:** Changed his manner, yeah, and he came on much more strong in his feelings.

**YC:** Do you want to explain that? What was his position prior to that?

**NB:** Well, first off, he always had the feeling, and I think he manifest this and the Adas Kodesch felt the same way— I mean, the leadership did— that they were thought of as second-class

citizens because they did not give as much money as individuals who were members of either Beth Shalom or Beth Emeth. I honestly believe that the Federation never felt that way, the problem was when you look for leadership, you had to look— in a fundraising organization— for leadership among those who gave dollars, and many of the Adas Kodesch people couldn't. Secondly, they had a much closer affinity— I think a larger number of them, at least— to their synagogue than did some of the others, and they gave a fair amount of money to them, and they had a hard time in terms of supporting it. And therefore, I think he brought this out in the open to indicate that he didn't feel we were treating them very fair. He didn't he didn't have members on the board, he didn't have this, he didn't have that. And he didn't!

**YC:** And was his argument justified?

**NB:** I don't think that you can raise money in a democratic way. I think that it was justified in the fact that if he expected— which he did, I think— that 1/3 of the board should be from Adas Kodesch, he was absolutely wrong in thinking that it should be. You should try to get the best people that you can who are interested and who can do the job, and you can't put \$10 givers or \$100 givers on the board of the Federation and expect the Federation then to do the job that they're mandated to do. No matter how good that person may be, it just isn't going to happen. But he doesn't understand that. He had his time and trials with some of the other agencies and he, in my judgment, hasn't really been a supporter of community activity. I'm not saying that he's wrong and I'm not saying that he has hurt us, I'm simply saying that he hasn't really been productive.

I remember very well one other error one time when we had— So, one of the Protestant churches wanted to have a Soviet Jewry affair and they also wanted to run a Passover dinner, and he said if we did that, he would picket it. I'm sorry to this day— and I think that Paula Lehrer was chairman of the JCRC at the time, and I think both Paula and myself— or it may have been Elaine Berkowitz, I'm not positive, one of the two— sorry to say that we gave in to him.

**YC:** Because he objected to that.

**NC:** He objected. And the fact of the matter is, if you're going to get support for Soviet Jewry, and if you're going to get support for Israel, you darn well better just get support from the non-Jewish community as well. And he just won't accept that vehicle.

**YC:** Do you think he's changed somewhat in his view toward the community?

**NC:** I think his view— yes, I suspect it is, I think for the worse. I think what has happened is that, when he came on as a young man, he felt that he couldn't speak out. Now he feels that he's paid his dues, he's been there long enough, now he's going to ramrod and speak out at every turn he can. He's going to let people— He's going to do for the community what the community, he feels, did to him in the wrong way when he first came here, in terms of education, and

schools and so forth, where he didn't have a voice, where Dr. Birnbaum was, in effect, the director and he ran everything and the rabbi did not. Today, he's in a position, he thinks, that he can do something about that. And he can. Or at least the community is allowing him to.

**YC:** Well, of course, there have been changes, he's become more lenient in terms of allowing the Jewish Community Center to be open, and I guess—

**NB:** Well, for lack of a better view, certainly there has been that type of change. But then if he doesn't do that, he'd be one in a minority in terms of the country, because most communities are like that today.

**YC:** Do you want to make any statement about your— (telephone rings)

*pause in recording*

**YC:** Would you like to tell us something about your relationship with the non-Jewish community?

**NB:** Basically, my relation with the non-Jewish community was really only in two areas. Three areas. One, mainly with the United Way, which I felt was extraordinarily important. Secondly, with the religious community. And third with the professional, social work professionals in other areas—

**YC:** And how about the legislature and the—

**NB:** I would guess that's another area that certainly is critically important. The religious community actually fell in with the JCRC anyway, and I sat in for many years with the denominational executives, actually they call them the judicatory executives, the chief operating officer, like the bishops, and so forth. Because in our particular case, the chief operating officer couldn't be the chief rabbi, it had to be not only the rabbi but somebody like myself, so we sat in on those meetings together. In addition, of course, we didn't meet regularly— irregularly, I guess, would be better— with the legislature; I'm talking about the federal legislators now.

Third, with my colleagues, in the— I'm not talking about my Jewish colleagues, I'm talking about my non-Jewish colleagues— we met on a basis of mutuality and talking about needs for the United Way. The thing that I think I did probably the best job is with the United Way, because we really moved in terms of getting considerable dollars from the period I arrived to a period when I left, and I think a fair amount of that could be attributed to knowledge that I had in terms of dealing with the United Way. The work that I did with our Jewish executives, and the various organizations that got money directly, and the types of relationships which I have built up over the years with the United Way. The major impediment, I still think, was Muriel. And I don't mean this, that she did this—

**YC:** You don't mean in derogatory manner. You just—

**NB:** Well, I mean in it a derogatory manner, but at the same time—


**YC:** And you mean Muriel Gilman?

**NB:** Yeah, Muriel Gilman. But I don't think that she was aware of it. I think that as a Jew in a position that she has, she sort of leans backwards. So that's what I mean, it's derogatory, although I'm sure she doesn't mean to lean backwards, but I am convinced that she did. That we had to be better than other people. That we had to, in order to get the types of increases we wanted, we had to really show everything so that no one could ask any questions of Muriel that she couldn't answer, that's the type of thing I mean. Because she didn't want— and I think any Jew in that position— so you know, I'm not [unintelligible] Muriel. So that we made very certain that when we went before the United Way, we were prepared, we were prepared well. I would far prefer to have a non-Jew in that position, that's all I'm really saying. But we came out very well, as far as I'm concerned.

If I can pass a little— one other piece, I guess that by and large, I didn't have any really extracurricular activities because my whole life is built around the Federation and its activities. But because I have a handicapped child, I did go into two areas that I'm really very proud of. With a fellow called Lup Jung—

**YC:** How do you spell that?


**NB:** L-U-P, capital J-U-N-G, he's a DuPont chemist. He and I started the Diamond State Chapter for Children with Learning Disabilities. And that was a, you know, a labor of love in a sense. I started that the first year, basically, that I arrived in town.

Secondly, I started the Brandywine Social Club, which is a group for handicapped young adults. And that's sort of an interesting little experience, too, because it's been run now by the Jewish Family Service for many years, and it's been housed by the Jewish Community Center. But it was very interesting how it got started. It got started because my wife pushed me to do something for my daughter. I went to Jerry  Suskin, who was then the executive director of the Jewish Family Service, and asked him to take this project on; he refused. So, I sent out six, I guess ten questionnaires to people, and I told Jerry that I was going to run it, I was going to start it myself. And I got six replies from the ten questionnaires from parents, who I knew from the Diamond State Chapter for Children with Disabilities, who were interested in starting something. I show this to Jerry, and Jerry couldn't stand the pressure then, and he then took over, because he knew I was going to go ahead with it, and he took it over and ran it. And it's blossomed, and it's now an integral part of the Jewish Family Services program.

And the last piece that I've been involved with, was the founder with George Weiner, of setting up a residential home, called Independent Living, for handicapped young adults. Again,

being pushed by my wife, basically, because of my daughter, who didn't move in there. But that's been a sort of a thrilling experience to see those young people blossom in that. And so—

**YC:** How many how many children are living in these apartments?

**NB:** Well, this past year, I sort of gotten away from it, because I just haven't had the time to do this, but I would guess at the present time they probably are close to sixteen or eighteen right now. When I left it was fourteen, so I'm just making an assumption it's gone up a little bit since that time. And yet it almost failed. It almost failed. It was that close. Someday you'll have to talk to George Weiner, maybe an oral history. But it was interesting, we were sitting in a meeting at the Jewish Community Center, we had a couple, two or four children, in it at the present time, we didn't have any money, and they didn't know what to do. Yet, they knew there was a good possibility that three or four more kids, young people, were going to come in. And I remember saying— I said “Okay.” I said “How much money do we need?” and Al Ramsdale said we need \$1,200 operate for the next three months. And I said, “Okay, I'll give \$200 if the five of you around here raise the rest.” And George Weiner, who happens to be a rather affluent individual, I don't think could stand the pressure of me giving \$200 without him giving it, and  **Hermie** Berger was there. We ended up each one giving \$200 or thereabouts, and that really, I think, saved the whole thing. Just that.

**YC:** A hair's breadth away from not happening, obviously,

**NB:** Well, it already was underway, but it was going to fail. They didn't have money to continue the operation for the next couple of months. But those are the extracurricular activities that I've been involved with. Nothing startling, but yet in itself—

**YC:** Very satisfying.

**NB:** Yeah, very satisfying.

**YC:** And what are you doing now?

**NB:** I do consulting work for private agencies. Grantsmanship, evaluations, things of this nature. And we're planning to stay in Delaware.

**YC:** Well, we're very happy that you've decided to stay in Delaware. Thank you very much, Mr. Barnett.

*end of interview*