INTERVIEW BEGINS

Rebecca: This is Rebecca Chadwick, interviewing on behalf of the Savannah Jewish Archives, I am interviewing Murray Arkin at the Savannah Jewish Educational Alliance\(^1\) on October 28, 2014. Okay, Murray, if you can just give us your full name.

Murray: Murray Charles Arkin.

Rebecca: Okay. And what are the names of your parents and siblings?

Murray: Ben and Yetta Arkin were my father and mother, they’re deceased. I had a sister, Claudia Kantsiper, who is deceased; a brother Marvin Arkin. He’s deceased. And I have a sister, Marilyn Seeman. We’re the only two, we’re both in Savannah. All four of us came back to Savannah.

\(^1\) The Jewish Educational Alliance (“JEA” or “The Alliance”) was chartered August 2, 1912 to meet the leisure and Americanization needs of the Jewish community in Savannah. It was originally located on the corner of Barnard and Charlton Streets, and in 1955 a new building opened on the corner of Abercorn Street and DeRenne Avenue, where it still stands as the center of Savannah’s Jewish community. The building includes a gym, pool, preschool, and day camp. The JEA is Savannah’s Jewish Community Center, and is a member of the Jewish Community Centers Association of North America.
Rebecca: Great. And what is your occupation?

Murray: I’m a retired physician.

Rebecca: Retired physician. Okay, great. So, to start at the very beginning, if you can give your date and place of birth.

Murray: Savannah, Georgia, January 26, 1928.

Rebecca: Great. So, you’ve spent your entire life here, for the most part?

Murray: Well, for the most part, yes.

Rebecca: For the most part, right.

Murray: But education and so forth and in the Army, away from here.

Rebecca: Right.

Murray: I was in Savannah. I was born here and went through high school here. And, then I went to the University of Georgia at Athens\(^2\) a year, then I joined the Army in 1946. I was too young for World War II but I was in the Occupation Forces in Japan\(^3\) for a little over a year. Then I came back and went back to Athens for a few years and then got into medical school [at the Medical College of Georgia]\(^4\) in 1949, I believe it was. Graduated from medical school in 1953. Interned at Minneapolis General Hospital. And then I went to Chicago for my residency.

\(^2\) The University of Georgia, founded in 1785, also referred to as “UGA” or simply “Georgia”, is an American public research university in the city of Athens in the U.S. state of Georgia.

\(^3\) The Allied occupation of Japan at the end of World War II was led by General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, with support from the British Commonwealth. Unlike in the occupation of Germany, the Soviet Union was allowed little to no influence over Japan. This foreign presence marked the only time in Japan's history that it had been occupied by a foreign power. The country became a parliamentary democracy that recalled "New Deal" priorities of the 1930s by Roosevelt. The occupation, codenamed Operation Blacklist, was ended by the San Francisco Peace Treaty, signed on September 8, 1951, and effective from April 28, 1952, after which Japan's sovereignty – with the exception, until 1972, of the Ryukyu Islands – was fully restored.

\(^4\) The Medical College of Georgia, often referred to as “MCG,” is the flagship medical school of the University System of Georgia, the state's only public medical school, and one of the top 10 largest medical schools in the United States. Established in 1828 as the Medical Academy of Georgia, MCG is the oldest and founding school of Augusta University. It is the third-oldest medical school in the Southeast and the 13th oldest in the nation.
And I was at Hines VA Hospital and Presbyterian St. Louis Hospital. Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago for my residency and fellowship that I was in internal medicine, too. And I met my wife in Chicago and we got married in Chicago and she moved to Savannah with me in 1958. That’s when I started my practice. Was solo for about 8 or 9 years until I joined Lamont Danzig, who was another internist and we hired another doctor, Dr. DiBenedetto and formed a small group. And we grew to about 12 or 14 people eventually and then sort of split up, through the times. Not problems with the practice. We all got along well but we had nephrologists and, we all did different things and it got hard, in 1990 it got difficult. We just sort of divided up. I went to Memorial as an internist.

Rebecca: Oh, okay.

Murray: And worked there, worked for Memorial until I retired in 2005.

Rebecca: Okay.

Murray: So I was in practice 47 years.

Rebecca: Wow! Great. Okay. And now were your parents...

Murray: My parents lived in Savannah. They were not from here. My mother was from Austria and my father was from a shtetl in Poland, and they came to New York and he had a friend from his Polish neighborhood that lived in Savannah who came up to New York and told him he had a good job for him in Savannah and he came down here. He stayed here.

5 The Edward Hines Jr. Veterans Administration Hospital is a second-generation Veterans Health Administration hospital in Hines, Illinois, United States. Founded in 1918, it currently encompasses 174 acres on its campus and leases an additional 60 acres to the Loyola University Medical Center.

6 A 612-bed academic hospital formerly known as Memorial Hospital, Memorial University Medical Center is a large, privately-owned hospital in Savannah, Georgia, founded in 1955 as Memorial Hospital. It is owned by the Hospital Corporation of America and is home to the region’s only Level-1 Trauma Center, the region’s only children’s hospital, and the Savannah Campus of the Mercer University School of Medicine.

7 A shtetl is a small town, usually in eastern Europe, with a significant Jewish presence in it. The Yiddish term for “town,” “shtetl” commonly refers to small towns or villages in pre–World War II Eastern and Central Europe with a significant Jewish presence that were primarily Yiddish speaking.
Rebecca: Okay. And do you have any idea of when, around, around what time they came to Savannah?

Murray: Oh, I imagine in the late 1910s. I’m not sure exactly.

Rebecca: And what was your father’s occupation?

Murray: He was a merchant. Had a little store on Broughton Street.8

Rebecca: Okay. And did your mother work or…?

Murray: She worked there with him.

Rebecca: Oh, okay, great. Do you remember your family being affected by the Depression9 at all?

Murray: Oh, boy. I don’t really remember it. I was a young kid, but my father, he was low-key, in a little small store and right around 1929 he tried to open a big fancy store and they really got sort of wiped out with the Depression.

Rebecca: Right.

Murray: Then he went back to what he had been doing. He did that the rest of his life. A small store, nothing fancy.

Rebecca: Right. Yeah, okay. But nothing, it was possible to cope, do you think, for the most part?

8 Broughton Street is a major commercial district in downtown Savannah, Georgia. It has been home to various retail establishments since the late 1700s. It is generally considered to be Georgia’s first shopping district. From the 1870s until the 1970s, many of the stores on the street were owned and operated by Jewish merchants and closed on Saturdays and Jewish holidays. The area experienced significant decline after the “white flight” to the suburbs in the 1950s and subsequent development of the Oglethorpe Mall in 1969. Since approximately 2010, the area has been experiencing a resurgence as more people are moving back into the historic homes of downtown, more tourists come to visit Savannah, and more developers restore vacant buildings. Broughton Street is now known for its high-end retail shops and restaurants as well as its well-preserved architecture.

9 The Great Depression was a severe worldwide economic depression in the decade preceding World War II. The time of the Great Depression varied across nations, but in most countries it started in about 1929 and lasted until the late 1930s or early 1940s. It was the longest, most widespread, and deepest depression of the twentieth century.
Murray: Oh, I never missed a meal, and never missed a pair of shoes, you know.

Rebecca: Okay.

Murray: It wasn’t fancy.

Rebecca: Right. But you got by.

Murray: We got by fine.

Rebecca: What synagogue did you...

Murray: B.B. Jacob and I still do.

Rebecca: Okay, great. Do you have any specific memories or experiences that stand out?

Murray: Well, let me see, uh, while I was in Savannah, I was in AZA. I was president of the local chapter and I was also president of the region of the AZA and the district that was from North Carolina to Florida. I was very active in AZA for years. I spent a lot of time at the old JEA on Barnard Street, playing ping pong and basketball and so forth. I enjoyed that and have always been devoted to the Alliance, then I went to Japan and spent a wonderful year in the Occupation Forces in [unintelligible], Japan. I was a TEP at the University of Georgia and I was president

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10 Congregation B’nai Brith Jacob (originally “Kahal Kadosh B’nai B’rith Jacob,” or “Congregation of the Children of the Divine Covenant of Jacob,” also known as “B.B.J.”), the orthodox synagogue in Savannah, Georgia, was established in 1861 by a group of eastern European Jews who desired to start their own synagogue patterned after the Ashkenazi tradition. At the time of its establishment, the only synagogue in Savannah was Temple Mickve Israel of the Spanish-Portuguese Sephardic tradition. The name for Congregation B.B.J. probably originated from the Independent Order of B’nai B’rith (I.O.B.B.), a Masonic-inspired fraternal organization for Jews.

11 The Grand Order of the Aleph Zadik Aleph (AZA) is an international youth-led fraternity for Jewish teenage boys, founded in 1924 in Omaha, Nebraska. It currently exists as the male wing of B’nai B’rith Youth Organization, an independent non-profit organization. AZA’s sister organization, for teenage girls, is the B’nai B’rith Girls (BBG).

12 The Allied occupation of Japan at the end of World War II was led by General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, with support from the British Commonwealth. Unlike in the occupation of Germany, the Soviet Union was allowed little to no influence over Japan. This foreign presence marked the only time in Japan’s history that it had been occupied by a foreign power. The country became a parliamentary democracy that recalled “New Deal” priorities of the 1930s by Roosevelt. The occupation, codenamed Operation Blacklist, was ended by the San Francisco Peace Treaty, signed on September 8, 1951, and effective from April 28, 1952, after which Japan's sovereignty – with the exception, until 1972, of the Ryukyu Islands – was fully restored.
of the TEPs. I came back to Savannah after medical school. Medical school was tough. And then the residency was very tough. They didn’t pay very much and my wife was a school teacher in Chicago for a while and sort of supported me. Then I came back and I opened a practice. It was slow at first, but I eventually got pretty busy. Having come from Savannah, I guess, I was very active in the, not only in the medical community, but the Savannah Jewish community, too. I got involved with the Alliance and the Jewish Federation, you know, the Chairman of the Federation Fundraising for a year or two and I was president of the Savannah Jewish Federation. Later president of the Alliance, fundraiser there, too. When I was president of the Federation, one of the things that stands out in my mind is that I invited Yitzhak Rabin. He was Ambassador from Israel to the United States at the time. I said, “Savannah’s a lovely city,” and I said, “Come down to Savannah and see the small Jewish community. No fundraising, no nothing, just enjoy it.” And, lo and behold, he came down here. We had a wonderful two or three days with him. He’s a wonderful man. That was one of the highlights of my...

Rebecca: What time was…?


Rebecca: Okay. Do your children....

Murray: My children all live in Atlanta. Two are physicians and one’s in the medical records field.

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13 Tau Epsilon Phi (TEΦ, commonly pronounced “TEP”) is a fraternity founded by ten Jewish men at Columbia University in New York in 1910 as a response to the existence of similar organizations that would not admit Jewish members. The Nu Chapter, into which Dr. Arkin was initiated, was founded at the University of Georgia in 1919, making it the first of three Jewish fraternities on that campus.

14 The Savannah Jewish Federation (SJF), originally incorporated as the Savannah Jewish Council (SJC), was founded in 1943 by twenty-two local Jewish organizations and twelve original members. The Council changed its name to the Savannah Jewish Federation in December 1985 to better define its work and resemblance to other federations. The purpose of the organization is to provide a centralized group in charge of raising, collecting, and distributing funds to causes and institutions that are in general interest or affecting the welfare of Savannah’s Jewish residents. It is dedicated to preserving and enriching Jewish life throughout Savannah and to perpetuating identification with the State of Israel. The Savannah Jewish Federation has a history of strongly supporting the Jewish community in Savannah, in the United States, as well as internationally. The Savannah Jewish Federation is affiliated with the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA).

15 Yitzhak Rabin (1922-1995) was an Israeli politician, statesman and general. He served two terms as Prime Minister. He was assassinated in 1995 by an extremist who opposed the terms of the Oslo Accords.
Rebecca: Oh, wow, taking after their father, huh?

Murray: Yeah. Two of them: one’s an ophthalmologist and one’s an endocrinologist. The younger one worked with medical electronics. I get to see them. They’re all in Atlanta, thank goodness.

Rebecca: Were they a part of the JEA? Growing up?

Murray: Oh, yes. They all were. It’s a new world now, you know, when I was growing up, a lot of places where we Jewish people weren’t welcome. We had the Alliance and you were welcome there. We spent most of our time. Nowadays you can go anywhere you want to go. It’s sort of [unintelligible].

Rebecca: So, going off of that... did you experience any antisemitism growing up? Or... [both talk]

Murray: …It was just there. You can sense it in high school we had a little ghetto where the Jewish people stayed and a lot of little things. Couldn’t get invited into any of the gentle fraternities at Georgia or the Medical College of Georgia. And they had, I think, I’m talking now, I’m not sure, but I think they had a restricted number of Jews that they took into the Medical College.

Rebecca: Really?

Murray: Yeah, there were only about, there was one senior, one junior, one sophomore and they took five of us. So we were the first freshmen there. But, it wasn’t terrible.

Rebecca: Right.

Murray: It was just part of my life at the time.

Rebecca: Yeah, you were just aware of it. Can you describe the neighborhood that you grew up here in Savannah?
**Murray:** I lived on Duffy Street, near the big park, Forsyth Park, for a few years and then we moved to 37th Street on the West Side. That was sort of a Jewish neighborhood, too. I lived on 41st Street and Harmon for a few years when I went to high school and my dad finally built a home at 51st and Reynolds Street.

**Rebecca:** Oh, really.

**Murray:** That’s where we lived until, we used to live there until I went off to school and so forth. We lived there until Mother passed away.

**Rebecca:** Okay, do you want to go more into detail about your War experiences? Either the Second World War or your time in Japan?

**Murray:** Well, I’ll tell you, I enlisted. I thought I was going to be drafted and I enlisted because it would be 18 months, rather than 2 years and I didn’t want to wait. So I went to Japan and I was in the field artillery and I had taken a year of pre-med, I wasn’t sure I wanted to be a doctor at the time. When I got into Japan, I got into this place and I was in the field artillery and my job I never forget, we’d get up at 6 o’clock, have breakfast, and then we’d go out to the 105 millimeter howitzers, a big cannon. My job was to turn a knob so a bubble went to the center and then they shot off the gun. I said, “Am I going to do this for the next 12 months? I’ll lose my hearing and I’ll lose my mind.” And about a few weeks after I was there, somebody said they need they need a medic, and if anybody here had any experience? I’m a pre-med. They took me and I went into the medical corps which I enjoyed thoroughly. And that’s when I decided I wanted to be a physician.

**Rebecca:** Oh, good. Do you remember, I’m sure you do, or if you can describe just how Savannah has changed over the course of your experience, just the most significant changes you can remember.

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16 Forsyth Park is a large city park established in the 1840s that occupies 30 acres in the historic district of Savannah, Georgia. The park is bordered by Gaston Street to the north, Drayton Street to the east, Park Avenue to the south and Whitaker Street to the west. It contains walking paths, a café, a children's play area, a Fragrant Garden for the blind, a large fountain, tennis courts, basketball courts, areas for soccer and Frisbee, and home field for Savannah Shamrocks Rugby Club. From time to time, there are concerts held at Forsyth for the benefit of the public.
Murray: Savannah went from a segregated, little, small town to a pretty big city. One of the important things to me, what I really worked on is medical education. When I came back to Savannah, there was Candler and St. Joseph Hospital, there were no restrictions, a doctor would get to MD, in fact the person could do anything you wanted and Memorial had just opened two years before I got here. We [Memorial] decided that we wanted to emphasize medical education, too. I really wanted a medical school here, frankly. I was chairman of graduate medical education at Memorial for about 12 years or so, and I made a lot of enemies during that time because if somebody wasn’t trained to do something, we wouldn’t let him do it at our hospital and it got to be no fun. I mean, telling somebody who thinks they’re pretty good, they might have been, but you had to have 3 years of training and so forth. It was very restrictive. But it worked and we did something very smart. We built apartments because we were not in Savannah, who the hell wanted to come to, you know, just starting out and... so, we built these apartments and the interns, instead of having to live in little rooms, and be on call in the room, the intern and his wife could live in an apartment. We got some real good people because of that. It was a real good idea and we really formed a good residency program very quickly and had good residents. We’ve always had good residents. As I said, I was with medical education, we did a lot of recruiting, a lot of restricting and then, as you can see, now we’ve got a med school.

Rebecca: Are you happy with the changes?

Murray: I’m thrilled with it. It is just, one of my dreams was to have [a medical school here]. Savannah is isolated, Augusta’s over here, and we’re more cosmopolitan, frankly, than Augusta. We’ve got a pretty good med school here now. Don’t get me wrong. I didn’t do it all by any means, but I was involved.

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17 St. Joseph’s/Candler is a large hospital system in Savannah, Georgia, consisting of Candler Hospital (Georgia’s first hospital, chartered in 1804), and St. Joseph’s Hospital (founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1875), as well as smaller centers such as the Mary Telfair Women’s Hospital, the Heart Hospital, and other specialty health care providers.

18 The medical school Dr. Arkin is referring to is Mercer University School of Medicine, Savannah Campus, housed at Memorial University Medical Center.

19 Augusta, Georgia is the home of the Medical College of Georgia.
**Rebecca:** Right, you were invested in it and you worked. Absolutely. Any other changes you can think of, outside of the medical realm?

**Murray:** Everything. Savannah has progressed. The nicest thing about Savannah, Savannah, Charleston, and Jacksonville were about the same size. Jacksonville has gotten to be big and I was a little jealous of them, but now I’m contented that we stayed relatively small and cultural and we had a symphony and, I mean, Savannah is really a nice city to live in. You have the ocean, you got Tybee, you got all kind of wonderful things. I’ve been active in the Jewish community too, especially social. You know, since when I came up that was the way it was, and so I just find it very nice. I won the Jack Levy Award. I don’t know, included or not, but the only ones we had Norton Melaver, Don Kole, Aaron Levy, me, Doris Lukin, and Paul Kulbersh. There’s only six of us [who have won the award]. That was just from doing a lot of work with the Alliance and with the community itself and the Federation.

**Rebecca:** Have you seen changes in the Jewish community itself?

**Murray:** Sure. Very different.

**Rebecca:** How so?

**Murray:** Well, when I was coming up, the Alliance was critical, because you weren’t welcome at a lot of places. Then, these people live at The Landings, they can do their exercises, we don’t have the same participation that we used to have.

**Rebecca:** Would you say more of the younger generations aren’t...

**Murray:** All of them. They come down here to, some of the older people retire down here, they don’t want any part of [unintelligible]. A lot of them have made quite a good contribution to the community and all, I don’t know too much about all that, but it’s a different situation.

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20 Tybee Island is a small barrier island (and coterminous city of the same name) off the coast of Savannah, Georgia. The easternmost point in the state, it is a suburb of Savannah and a popular tourist destination.

21 The Landings on Skidaway Island (or simply, “The Landings”) is an exclusive gated country club community located on Skidaway Island, an approximately 16-miles southeast of Downtown Savannah, Georgia.
Rebecca: Which, you know, comes from some good things.

Murray: Oh, yeah, I’m not, you know, it’s good for the community, I think. I certainly, it’s good, I think people are much more tolerant with the Jewish people now, much more socially. They get together more. And there is certainly a lot less restrictions than there were. So, things have changed. The Alliance is no longer necessary. It’s good and I love it and I still participate, but the things that we did here you can do elsewhere now.

Rebecca: Yeah, yeah, that seems to be the case in a lot of different communities that used to be very strong and now they’re sort of disbanding, which...

Murray: Well, we don’t want them to, we want to let them know that we’re still something special.

Rebecca: Right. Growing up, a little question, what were your favorite foods, when you were young?

Murray: Hamburgers.

Rebecca: Hamburgers!

Murray: Hot dogs.

Rebecca: Were there any...

Murray: My mother was a good cook. Every Sunday, she’d get up early in the morning and cook a nice Sunday dinner.

Rebecca: And what about holidays?
Murray: I’m not ultra-religious even though I go to B.B. Jacob but we were more aware of the Jewish holidays than they are now. When *Rosh Hashanah*\(^\text{22}\) would come, Broughton Street would be closed.

Rebecca: Oh, really, wow.

Murray: Closed. Now, I say, it’s wide open. Of course, at one time Broughton Street was full of Jewish merchants. There’s just not nearly that many now. But they controlled, I mean, the men’s clothing business was virtually entirely Jewish. There was Morris Levy’s and Allen Barry’s and Men’s Quality, all Jewish. And they would close on the holidays. Fine’s and Asher’s, women’s clothes, they closed, too. They don’t nobody close now.

Rebecca: Are any of those shops still around? Because I know there’s a, there’s some...

Murray: There’s still some Jewish merchants, yeah, of course, but nothing like there were. I mean, it was dominant. Jewish people [unintelligible] stores downtown and they owned this, there was the Bargain Corner, which was a supermarket that was Jewish, and M&M [Grocery Store], which was Norton Melaver, which was Jewish. And Barney Sadler, also was Jewish. And the Konters, at one time, had a supermarket. But that all went by, Melaver, the [unintelligible] and Barney passed away, and the Bargain Corner just sort of withered after a while.

Rebecca: Were you a member of Scouts?

Murray: The Boy Scouts? of course. [unintelligible]

Rebecca: What about any, did you have any jobs when you were, you know, a teen-ager?

Murray: I used to work, I would go to shul,\(^\text{23}\) to the services on Saturday, then worked from about 11 o’clock until 9 at night for about $1.25. I did that… but I worked during the summer,

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\(^\text{22}\) *Rosh Ha-Shanah* [Hebrew: head of the year; i.e. New Year festival] begins the cycle of High Holy Days. It introduces the Ten Days of Penitence, when Jews examine their souls and take stock of their actions. On the tenth day is *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement. The tradition is that on *Rosh Ha-Shanah*, G-d sits in judgment on humanity. Then the fate of every living creature is inscribed in the Book of Life or Death. Prayer and repentance before the sealing of the books on *Yom Kippur* may revoke these decisions.

\(^\text{23}\) The Hebrew words for “go to shul” are “to the services” or “to shul.”
too. One thing I had, during the summer I would go over to Armstrong because it was cheaper than Georgia. My three kids went to Country Day. It was a lot different than growing up. My wife was from Chicago and one thing she said, was that they were going to get a good education. You wouldn’t think the schools were doing that well at the time.

Rebecca: So, you said that you met your wife in Chicago. How did you meet her?

Murray: The year before I met her, one of my neighbors called me and asked me would I please, he had a cousin coming in from Chicago and would I take her out on a date. I said, sure. So I took her out on a date. We had a very nice time. She was a very pleasant lady and I don’t think I ever saw her again but then I went to Chicago for my residency program and she’d been living in California, was married already. But, anyway, her mother remembered that I had dated her in Savannah and had me over for dinner. I had dinner there and then she said, “I want you to go out to [unintelligible]. There’s an organization out there of young Jewish men and women and they do nice things for Chicago. They do charitable work and so forth. Any way they’re having a meeting up there and you’ll get to meet some people.” I saw [June] was there and I asked her to go out with me and we dated for a while and then we got married.

Rebecca: How long did you date before you got married?

Murray: Let me see. I would say about 8 or 9 months.

Rebecca: And then you had children.

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23 Shul is a Yiddish word for synagogue that is derived from a German word meaning “school,” and emphasizes the synagogue's role as a place of study.

24 Armstrong State University (formerly Armstrong Junior College, Armstrong College, Armstrong State College, and Armstrong Atlantic State University) is a public university in Savannah, Georgia, founded in 1935 by Thomas Gamble, then-Mayor of Savannah. It began offering four-year degrees in 1964. In 2017, it was announced that the university would merge with Georgia Southern University by 2018, and will become the Savannah Campus of Georgia Southern University.

25 The Savannah Country Day School (Also known as “SCDS” and “Country Day”) is an independent college preparatory school founded in 1955 in Savannah, Georgia. The co-educational school serves students from pre-kindergarten through to twelfth grade, and has 1,028 students enrolled.

26 Dr. Arkin’s wife was the former June Barbara Alper (1931-2017).
Murray: Got married in Chicago. Had my first child. I was interested in internal medicine, I finished my internal medicine and I was ready to come back to Savannah but June was pregnant with our first son and she loved her obstetrician and she said “I know we’re moving to Savannah but would you stay another year so he can deliver [the baby].” So I found a fellowship on allergy and enjoyed it and it helped me a great deal later.

Rebecca: Okay, I think we covered just about everything. Do you have anything else you’d like to mention? Anything?

Murray: I think Kaye27 does a wonderful job at the Archives. I’m very appreciative of that, although I don’t tell her and I don’t give a lot of money to the Archives. There’s so many things to give money to these days, it’s unbelievable.

Rebecca: It’s overwhelming.

Murray: It’s overwhelming. And everything is good, don’t get me wrong. The causes are good, but sometimes you’ve got to just say “I don’t look at a lot of them anymore.”

Rebecca: Yeah, absolutely. So, I guess one final question is, where do you see the Jewish community going in the future? Do you see any further changes? Or you think things will pretty much stay the same?

Murray: I don’t.

Rebecca: Yeah, hard to tell.

Murray: It is very difficult for me to tell. It’s like, for some reason there’s always been antisemitism. I don’t know what is coming up. We’re a small group of people, there are only about 15 or 20 million of us in the world. And yet we, seems like, everything now falls,

27 Kaye Robinson Kole (b. 1935) is the founder of the Savannah Jewish Archives.
[unintelligible], it’s just unbelievable how it works out, even this Gaza War\textsuperscript{28} thing. Everybody condemns [the Jews]. Hundreds of thousands of people have been killed in Syria and they, for this. I don’t know. So, I just don’t know. I used to be optimistic because we’ve come a long way, but I don’t know. I just don’t know what it’s going to be. I know one thing, there’s a lot more intermarriage\textsuperscript{29} now than there was before and we could all end up just a very strong Orthodox, not that I, I don’t know. I don’t know what it’s going to be. I think Israel’s important. I think if they can hold on, there could be peace over there, it would make a big difference.

**Rebecca:** Absolutely. Well, great, thank you so much for meeting with me. We will make a duplicate of this for your family to hold on to.

**Murray:** I think the boys will like that.

**Rebecca:** Yeah. Thank you.

**Murray:** I took my 3 sons. I had a lot of American Express and I used all but 2 flying and so forth. We used up a bunch of them when we went to Colorado. We stayed at a fancy hotel in Colorado Springs, fishing, golfing. We went to see a couple of football games, no, a football game. We had a great time. That’s my son, my youngest son did that for us. Very nice.

**Rebecca:** Great, okay.

\textsuperscript{28}The 2014 Israel–Gaza conflict, also known as Operation Protective Edge, and sometimes referred to as the 2014 Gaza War (July 8, 2014-August 26, 2014), was a military operation launched by Israel in the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip. Following the kidnapping and murder of three Israeli teenagers by Hamas members, the IDF conducted Operation Brother's Keeper to arrest militant leaders, Hamas fired rockets into Israel and a seven-week conflict broke out. The Israeli strikes, the Palestinian rocket attacks and the ground fighting resulted in the death of thousands of people, the vast majority of them Gazans. The stated aim of the Israeli operation was to stop rocket fire from Gaza into Israel, which increased after an Israeli crackdown on Hamas in the West Bank was launched following the June 12th kidnapping and murder of three Israeli teenagers by two Hamas members. Conversely, Hamas's goal was to bring international pressure to bear to lift Israel's blockade of the Gaza Strip, end Israel's offensive, obtain a third party to monitor and guarantee compliance with a ceasefire, release Palestinian prisoners, and overcome its political isolation. Victory was claimed by both sides in the War.

\textsuperscript{29}Interfaith marriage in Judaism (also called mixed marriage or intermarriage) was historically looked upon with very strong disfavor by Jewish leaders, and it remains a controversial issue amongst them today. In the *Talmud*, interfaith marriage is completely prohibited, although the definition of “interfaith” is not so simply expressed. A 2013 survey conducted in the United States by the Pew Research Center’s Religion & Public Life Project found the intermarriage rate to be 58% among all Jews and 71% among non-Orthodox Jews.
Murray: Okay.

INTERVIEW ENDS