

TRANSCRIPT

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ref. Number | NBHOH-213 |
| First Name | Ethel |
| Surname | Bercove |
| Maiden Name | Berinson |
| Suburb | Menora |
| Gender | Female |
| Year of Birth | 1925 |
| Place of Birth | Hope Street, Perth |
| Specific period under discussion | 1920s-1950s |
| Occupation | Secretary, Manageress dress boutique – now retired |
| Primary cultural identification | Jewish |
| Languages | English Mother – English, Yiddish, French, Arabic Father - Yiddish |
| Generation in Australia | Second |
| Year of migration to Australia | Father – 17 years old from Safed, Palestine c1913 Mother – from Safed, Palestine c 1924 |
| Motive for migration | Personal safety from the Arabs |
| Father's Name | Shulem Berinson |
| Father's occupation | Baker Furniture Sale |
| Mother's Name | Rivka (Rebecca) |
| Mother's occupation | Home Duties |
| Mother's Maiden Name | Finkelstein |
| Names of siblings and their gender | Goola (f), Joseph Max (m) |
| Date and Time of interview | 29 May 2008 |
| Location | Perth Hebrew Community, Menora |
| Interviewer | Tanya Newport |
| Length of interview | 11 mins 04 secs |
| Language of interview | English |
| Notes | **In some instances the transcript has been edited in a minor capacity for readability **Items corrected after the recording or information added is enclosed in square brackets and in italics, e.g. [<i>around the back of the house</i>]. This information will not be on the associated recording. |

INTERVIEW OF ETHEL BERCOVE ON 29 MAY 2008 FOR THE NORTHBRIDGE HISTORY PROJECT

T
R
A
N
S
C
R
I
P
T

INTERVIEWER: Could you tell me your name please?

ETHEL BERCOVE: Ethel Bercove.

INTERVIEWER: And what is your connection to Northbridge?

ETHEL BERCOVE: Well, I was originally Ethel Berinson and I was born in Hope Street and later my older sister [*Goola*] – she was born in 1924; I was born in 1925 – she was born in Palmerston Street – this is all around the area which is now called Northbridge. My earliest memory of Northbridge – I went to a kindergarten; that's right, there was a kindergarten and I think it was in Palmerston Street more towards... I can't remember the name of the street [*Newcastle Street*]. As a child I went to this kindergarten and one day I decided I wanted to go and I started walking to my father's business. He worked as a baker in Carr Street and I walked there – I think they had the police out looking for me because I was quite a young child. That was the earliest I can remember. As I say we lived in Glendower Street – that's where my younger brother [*Joe Berinson*] was born and later on I worked in the city first in Saint George's Terrace [*at Carlisle Wade and Co, chartered accountants*] and then I worked for a Jewish firm in Newcastle Street which of course is Northbridge now and then...

INTERVIEWER: Which firm was that?

ETHEL BERCOVE: That was S and L Furnishers owned by Segler and London. In later years I was bridesmaid for [*Sally Traub*] – she was actually my sister's girlfriend but my sister went to Melbourne to live and I ended up being [*second*] bridesmaid [*Norma London was chief bridesmaid*] to Sally Traub who later became Sally London. I still visit Huskel [*London*] at the Maurice Zeffert [*retirement home*] weekly. Then I went to work for Krasnosteins in Bulwer Street. There were many Jewish people living around the area first of all because the Synagogue was in Brisbane Street and very few of the families had cars but it was quite easy to walk from Glendower Street to Brisbane Street. There were many, many Jewish families in Glendower Street – there were the Morris's, there were the Cohens and I think the old lady Cohen she lived to well over one hundred. There were the Barzels, the Seglers, Mrs Gottleib, the Ensllys, many, many more – I'd have to really think about that. The Raiters, the Browns – that's just to mention a few [*and there was our family, the Berinsons*].

INTERVIEWER: Could you tell me about the synagogue?

ETHEL BERCOVE: Well, we were regular worshippers – well I don't know as a child if I worshipped much but we were regular goers to the synagogue and I always remembered the beautiful chandeliers that they had; there were two lots. Even as recently as twelve months ago I was enquiring what had happened to them because I thought it was a shame that we didn't have them in our present synagogue. Generally, most of the Jewish people went to the synagogue on a Saturday and, of course, on the Yom Tov and I quite enjoyed it. I don't know how much I studied there but...

INTERVIEWER: And did you go to the Hebrew School?

ETHEL BERCOVE: Yes, at first we didn't. My sister and I, we were tutored by a Mr Rosenberg – a fine fellow. My father I think had had words with the Rabbi and he wouldn't send us there but later on we did go to the Hebrew School.

INTERVIEWER: Have you any other memories of businesses and shops in the area?

ETHEL BERCOVE: Well, the Ritchers had a shop in Fitzgerald Street. There were three brothers, if I remember correctly, and two of them had grocery shops. One ended up having a shop on the corner of William Street and Lincoln Street and I still have a little bottle – it was a perfume bottle given to me by Mr Ritcher when he opened his shop. My mother had baked him something and I took it over to him and he gave me this perfume bottle which was a little glass figure of someone playing golf. I still have it today – and that was given to me [*over*] seventy years ago and I still have it on display in the cabinet where we live today. Oh, and the Zeittlins lived on the corner of Palmerston Street and Glendower Street and a girlfriend of mine – Bella Levitt married Leon Zeitten and I was her bridesmaid [*together with my friend Doris Roberts, now Mossenson*] and the Hermans just lived

around the corner. There was quite a colony of Jewish families there. That was a long time ago. [Some of the Jewish families: Pearl Gibbons, Fanny Barzel, Segler family, Ross family, two Morris families, Raiter family, Cohen family, and Brown family]

INTERVIEWER: Did you visit the kosher butcher?

ETHEL BERCOVE: Well, we didn't have a Jewish [butcher] ... We had a butcher shop run by the Lamottes – they were Germans if I remember correctly. At that time they were the only ones there and we later found out that they were selling us trayfe meat at kosher prices. I was so cross because, at that stage I was married, and I used to walk down from Lawley Crescent to the corner of Brisbane Street and William Street to get my meat. I was very angry when I found out that he was selling us trayfe meat at kosher prices. He said to me "I didn't think you were bothered. I didn't think you were that particular". I said, "I walk down from Lawley Crescent and you think I'm not... I want to come down here and pay kosher prices for trayfe meat?" I remember that. Then they did [open] a second butcher shop [almost] on the corner [of Lake Street and Brisbane Street], and they used to deliver. When I was [living] in Lawley Crescent, after Ivan and I were married, they would deliver, because at that stage I think I might have had our first daughter. One day they delivered my meat and when I opened it up it was all sausages and [definitely not kosher]. I was so angry – I don't know why I didn't report him. I doubt if it would have made much difference. They came up and brought my real order but those were the difficulties that happened then.

INTERVIEWER: Any other memories of the area that you'd like to share? You walked mostly?

ETHEL BERCOVE: Yes and then when I first started working in the city at a chartered accountants [Carlisle Wade and Co, 14 Saint George's Terrace] – I worked there for two years and then I went to Seglor and London [in Newcastle Street] and I bought myself a bike. I thought I was the richest person on earth. I bought the bike so I could ride to work and ride home. But they were good days. [Later I worked at Krasnosteins in Bulwer Street and then in the city].

INTERVIEWER: It's been lovely – thank you very much.

ETHEL BERCOVE: It was a pleasure.

END OF INTERVIEW

T
R
A
N
S
C
R
I
P
T