

Georgiana Sim

Oral History Interview

April 23, 1986

Narrator: Georgiana Sim
Date of Interview: April 23, 1986
Place of Interview: Narrator's home, located at 8549 Ferris
Avenue, Morton Grove, IL
Interviewer: Yvonne Ryden
Recorded For: Morton Grove Historical Society
Transcribed For: Morton Grove Public Library
Tape Running Time: 8 minutes

Introduction

Georgiana Peschke Sim relates that she was one of the four original employees at the First National Bank of Morton Grove.

In this brief interview, Georgiana tells a bit about her grandparents and her parents who lived in early Morton Grove. In 1951 she started her long career at the First National Bank of Morton Grove where she is currently employed. It is about that bank that she talks the most of in this interview.

GS: Georgiana Sim

Q: Question asked by interviewer, Yvonne Ryden

Tape One, Side A

Q: I'm recording at the home of Mrs. Georgiana Sim on Wednesday, April 23, 1986. Mrs. Sim, Georgiana, why don't you tell us a little something about your grandparents?

GS: Well, my grandparents were Charles and Ella Peschke and Dan and Anna Biesman. Charles came over from Germany in his early teens and met Ella, who lived in Chicago. Dan and Anna Biesman lived here all their lives. My father had a brother who died early in life due to the influenza in the World War I years. My grandfather was the blacksmith of Morton Grove at 8541 Ferris Avenue. He was also, I believe, the first or second constable of Morton Grove and also involved in the volunteer fire department.

Q: About your grandfather that had the blacksmith shop, do you remember that?

GS: No, I don't. He had passed away before I was born. But I do remember in my younger days that it became a tavern. In order to get to my grandma's house, I had to go through the alley, because we weren't allowed to walk in front of that tavern. It was just a very bad place. At least it was made out that way to us.

Q: Tell me a little about your parents, Georgiana.

GS: Well, I think they knew each other all their lives. They both lived like two doors away from each other and went to the same schools when my father would go to school. He didn't always like to go to school, and he

Q: Did he help in the blacksmith shop?

GS: I'm sure he did. He liked to hang out with the other boys, so would rather be hanging out than working.

Q: Or going to school.

GS: Right. Typical boy. But then, of course, they got married in 1924. my father had to wait until he 21. he was 21 on the 23rd, and on the 26th they got married.

Q: Oh, my.

GS: Then they moved in with the Peschkes on School Street. They had to live upstairs of the garage until the second floor was built so that they could move in up there with their two little boys, by then. Well, no, not by then.

Q: They were married in 1924.

GS: My brother was born in '26, and then another one in '28.

Q: When were you born?

GS: In '32. We all went to Morton Grove Public School. At that time, Grove was called Morton Grove Public School. I couldn't wait until I went to high school because then I could get to ride the school bus. My friends who lived out on farms could ride the school bus to public school, but I had to walk. It was a whole block away! But the high school was Niles Township, which turned to Niles East, which now doesn't exist anymore, but it was a

good school. I then went into working for a plastic company. Of course, that didn't work out too well, so I went into banking, which I've been in ever since.

Q: And you've been at the First National Bank of Morton Grove ever since?

GS: I started in 1951 with them, so it's 35 years this year. The bank started with just four employees. There was Roland Dilg at president, Glen Flory was our cashier, and then there was Jean Stephens and myself. We had a part-time girl that worked on Saturdays. Her name was Joanne VanHorne of another old family in town. Then we grew to six people by February of that year. We were growing quite fast. We had Ben Mohrbacher from Skokie and Lucille Norris. Then we just kept growing and growing. We built on there two or three times to the building at Lincoln and Callie, and then in 1958, we moved to Dempster Street, because that was the street where all the business in Morton Grove was moving to. Lincoln Avenue was going to become the quiet area of Morton Grove. Ever since, we've just kept growing and growing. We're now 85 people.

Q: It's interesting that you were one of the first employees of the bank on the very first day that it opened.

GS: Right. I'd never been in a bank before, and I was scared silly. But they just said, "Hey, we'll show you what to do," and they did.

Q: Wonderful. That's wonderful that you're still there. What's your position now?

GS: I'm an assistant cashier and also the personnel director.

Q: Is that how you know there are 85 employees?

GS: Yes, that's why I'm sure of the figure. I have hired most of the people that are there, to tell you the truth, except for the president, of course, and the other people.

Q: Right, some of the officers. So it's been 35 good years.

GS: Oh, yes.

Q: Now, you were single when you began to work for the bank.

GS: Yes.

Q: Tell us now about your life.

GS: Well, I got married in 1961 to a very lovely young man from Skokie. We had bought a home in Skokie for a while and lived right by the Lincoln School there.

Q: What was his name?

GS: Lloyd. Bud, we called him. Lloyd Sim. We never had any children. We always had in-laws running around our house, as we still do today. Went on some nice vacations together. He worked for his father in a printing company downtown. He died in 1975, so then I decided to move in here with Gertrude soon after that and sold my home and...

Q: And moved here.

GS: ...made a new family life.

[Interview Ends]