

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF CEDAR RAPIDS
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with
Dr. Morris Katzoff

Conducted by Cathy Frenzen
June 2, 1985
Thompson Drive SE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Transcribed by Renae Blasdell

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Dr. Morris Katzoff was born in Lithuania on May 2, 1900. He moved to the United States with his family in 1904 and to Cedar Rapids in 1910. In his early youth he was a newsboy for The Gazette. In 1916, at the age of fifteen, he joined the National Guard Band and went to Mexico. In 1917, he went to France with the First Iowa Infantry, returning in 1919. He resumed his schooling and graduated from high school in 1921. He then attended the University of Minnesota Dental School and was instrumental in getting fluoride added to the Cedar Rapids water supply. His thoughts on changes in dentistry over the years are very interesting. Dr. Katzoff was also very active musically in Cedar Rapids. He helped form the city band (using city state taxes) and played in the Cedar Rapids Symphony and the Coe Promenade.

INTERVIEW TOPICS
CEDAR RAPIDS: THE EARLY DECADES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

I. PERSONAL LEAD-IN QUESTIONS

- 1 --When were you born? Where?
- 1 --How long have you lived in Cedar Rapids?
 - What are your parents' names?
 - Where did you go to school?
 - Are you married or single?
 - Did you raise a family? How big?
- 5 --What has been your occupation (career) during your adult years?

II. COMMUNITY TOPICS

A. Technology in the Community

1. Transportation

- 14,15 --Railway travel (Union Station, trips to Iowa City on Crandic)
 - Trolleys (the Interurban)
 - Horses and First Automobiles
 - Mud roads and the seedling mile
 - Hunter Airport and the first planes
 - Cedar River (ferries, floods, dams)

2. Communications

- 2 --Newspapers
- Radios
- Advertising
- Telephones

B. People in the Community

1. Amusements/Recreation

- 7 --Motion Pictures
 - Cedar Rapids Parks
 - Dances
 - Carnival Week
 - Chautauqua
 - Community Theater
 - Little Gallery
- 5 --Symphony Orchestra
 - Circus
 - Greene's Opera House
 - Amusement Parks (Alamo)
 - Camps
 - Community Centers (YWCA, YMCA)

2. Famous Characters

- Cherry Sisters
- 16 --Grant Wood
 - Carl Van Vechten (The Tattooed Countess)
- 16 --Marvin Cone

3. Lifestyle
 - Life before air conditioning
 - Winter Activities
 - Holidays (Memorial Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, Christmas)
 - Clothing
 - 2 --Toys
 - Saloons/Taverns
 - Farm Life
 4. Family Life
 - Household Help
 - Women's Roles
 - 2 --Childrens' Activities/Behavior
 - Sunday activities (Church life, Sunday Blue Laws)
 5. Ethnic/Minority Life
 - Immigrants (Czech, Greek, German, etc.)
 - Indians
 - Segregation of Blacks
 - Jobs Available
- C. Organizations and Institutions in the Community
1. Education
 - Cedar Rapids Schools
 - Coe College
 - Mount Mercy College
 - Cornell College
 2. Government
 - City Services
 - Streets/Roads
 - Relationship with Marion (Courthouse Dispute)
 3. Medical
 - Hospitals
 - Patient-Doctor Relationship
 - Broken Bones
 - Polio, TB, Debilitating Diseases
 - House Calls
 - Home Delivery of Babies

4. Business and Economy
- Local Factories (Douglas Starch Works, Quaker Oats, etc.)
 - Local Brewing Companies
 - Retail Businesses /Department Stores
 - Professions
 - Banking and Finance
 - Restaurants (Greek Restaurants in 30's)
 - Businesses that no longer exist (old groceries, drygoods, icehouses)
 - Farmers Market
 - Mills on Cedar River
 - Buildings Erected
 - Manual Labor/Types of Jobs
 - Companies (Labor Unions, Strikes, Pay)

5. Attitudes/Values
- 19 --Children/Discipline
 - Sex/Petting
 - Charity
 - Divorce
 - 20 --Work
 - Working women, Voting Rights for Women
 - 4 --Patriotism (World War I)

D. Historic Events in and Outside the Community

1. Catastrophic Events
- Clifton Hotel Fire (1903)
 - Douglas Starch Works Explosion(1919)
 - Bank Closings (1933)
 - Lyman-Stark Building Collapse(1913)
 - Public Library Murder(1921)
2. National Historic Events
- Womens' Suffrage
 - 3,4 --World War I
 - Roaring 20's
 - Prohibition
 - 17 --Great Depression

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CF: Dr. Katzoff and I will be discussing topics relating to the history of Cedar Rapids, including dentistry and musical interests. Dr. Katzoff, when and where were you born?

Katzoff: I was born in Lithuania, May 2, 1900.

CF: For what reasons did your family come to the United States?

Katzoff: My father came here in 1903 and he brought the family over in 1904. He came to Baltimore, Maryland where he knew some friends and got a job. From there, after we were there a few years, my mother had a brother in Lawrence, Kansas who thought that my father might change from being a good mechanic to a businessman, so we came to Lawrence but he did not take to that. He learned that there was a Jenson Manufacturing Company in Topeka, Kansas, where he could work at his specialty of being a tinner. After a few years there, the Jenson Manufacturing Company was bought out by J. G. Cherry Company of Cedar Rapids, who stipulated that they wanted to take five or six of their mechanics with them to Cedar Rapids. My father was one of them and that's how we came to Cedar Rapids--about 1910.

CF: How old were you then?

Katzoff: About ten.

CF: What are some of your fondest childhood memories of Cedar Rapids?

Katzoff: Well, I had boyfriends of my own age. We did what most boys of

that age do--we played with things. We were from the other side of the tracks and we had to make our own toys. One of my friends and I spent all summer making trains in the back yard from discarded lumber. The wheels were made from spools of thread. Another one of my accomplishments was to assemble a bicycle from different parts. The frame was an old Indian bicycle. And we made our own wagons. All in all, we kept busy.

CF: Then you started working for The Gazette. How old were you then?

Katzoff: I was a newsboy--about 1912 or 1913. I think I started in 1912 as a newsboy on the streets. There weren't many automobiles then and papers sold on the streets--probably more that were delivered to the homes.

We had different corners. Mine was on Boyson's Drug Store corner, where the Iowa Theatre Building is, which is now taken over by the Community Theatre. Some of my memories there go back to when Quaker Oats let out its work force of several hundred coming down Third Street. Among my customers was Arthur Poe, the manager of Quaker Oats. Arthur Poe was a descendant of Edgar Allen Poe. About that time we were reading and studying about Edgar Allen Poe in school so I was greatly impressed that I sold papers to Arthur Poe.

CF: I think it should be noted that you were elected the Cedar Rapids Gazette Newsboy Association President.

Katzoff: The Gazette people--and at that time, The Gazette had a competitor, The Republican--the street circulators for each of the papers got together and thought there ought to be a newsboys association and I was elected President. I was the first and only president. The

association was there but it became less important as the years went by.

CF: How long were you a newsboy?

Katzoff: Until about 1915 when I had a job with the John Blaul Wholesale Grocers. I was also beginning to study the clarinet at the age of 12, and also about 1915 I started playing with the National Guard Band. So about 1916, when the National Guard was sent to the border chasing Pancho Villa, in the Mexican Border incident, they needed members in the band. So they asked me if I would be willing to join. I said, "Of course I'm not old enough." "How old are you?" when I said I was 15, they said, "You are 18!" So that's how I got into the National Guard. (Laughter) I got my father's consent to go the border in 1916.

CF: Usually you had to be 18 to join?

Katzoff: That's right, the minimum age was 18, supposedly. Well, then when we returned in 1917, the National Guard became federalized and my high schooling was interrupted after my sophomore year. I played with the National Guard Band, which was then federalized, and it became the First Iowa Infantry, that was part of the Rainbow division.

They split the First Iowa Infantry in two--part of it went to the Rainbow division and part stayed here until we got into the war, World War I. Then what was left of our Iowa Infantry went to France where we were further split up to fill the ranks of the first casualties. So I ended up with the 18th Infantry of the First division of the regular army. That condemned me to serve until the end of the war when we returned with General Pershing

in 1919. I returned to high school with the help of some very good and considerate teachers, I was able to make up some work because the school had already started. Subsequently, with some extra work at Coe, I graduated in the class of 1921, about three years late.

CF: What were some of the feelings during the war? What opinions did people have about the war at the time?

Katzoff: I can't tell you that because I was not here.

CF: How did people in your unit feel?

Katzoff: Those of us serving knew what we were serving for and why, and we were really quite content that what we were doing was worthwhile and necessary. Certainly nothing of the feeling that I can remember with the Vietnam War.

CF: How did you feel before you went? What were some of the discussions that went on before you went? Do you remember anything in particular about people saying, "Yes, you should go."

Katzoff: I think at that time we were feeling much more patriotism than I sense now, at least at my age, then. I loved this country and I was willing to go to war for it.

CF: Then when you returned, you finished high school and at that time you were involved in music, also?

Katzoff: Having played in the military band, I had a lot of experience playing and I was fortunate enough to have some help from our director, who was a fine musician. I had very good professional experience and was confident playing professionally, so in the summer when I returned, I played with various concert bands, some

of whom are not so well known now. For instance, I played with Patrick Conway who was a contemporary of Sousa--that caliber. That's the way I earned money to go to college--The University of Minnesota, having decided that I wanted to be a dentist.

CF: How did you come about that decision?

Katzoff: That came about because a friend of mine here from Cedar Rapids, Dr. Dr. Fay McClelland, was a dentist and he was active in the bands with whom I played. I looked up to him, and I said, "I guess, well, I'd like to be a dentist, too."

CF: Then you played all through college?

Katzoff: Yes, I was the solo clarinet in the Minnesota Concert Band--and the University of Minnesota Symphony Orchestra. In the summer, I played with very competent musical organizations. During the school year, I played in theatres, one of which was the Hennepin Orpheum Theatre when vaudeville was at its peak and Lake Harriet, Minneapolis, which was made up mostly of Minneapolis symphony orchestra people. It was a band of 35 and about 18 or 20 of them were from the symphony. I played one year with the Mayo Park Band in Rochester, Minnesota because I wanted to see what the Mayo Clinic was doing in dentistry.

When I returned to practice in Cedar Rapids, I played in the Cedar Rapids Symphony Orchestra for 27 years, taught part-time at Coe and subsequently helped form the city band which is now supported by the state tax.

CF: What can you tell us about the state tax and how that came about?

Katzoff: Well, a band leader named Karl King in Fort Dodge was the one

who got that started. When the tax was passed, cities like Fort Dodge, Mason City, Cedar Rapids, Sioux City, took advantage of the tax and formed a city band. In Cedar Rapids, ours was formed about 19--I think we're in our 35th year now, so it was formed about 1950. I think Cedar Rapids has been fortunate in having a continuity of people on the city band commission. I happen to be the only one left of the charter commission. With this continuity, we have developed a set program. We've been very fortunate in finding band directors. The current one, Frank Piersol, is a recently retired leader of the University of Iowa Concert Band---a very fine musician and musicians like to play under him. It's a privilege for these young people to play under a man like that.

So we've been very fortunate in Cedar Rapids, we have a band of 55, 5 to 10 of whom are students. We have auditions and we choose the most competent. Our concert band will be as good as any in this region.

CF: In what Cedar Rapids theatres have you played that are still here; that are not still here? Tell me something about those theatres.

Katzoff: The Cedar Rapids theatres, before sound, had small combinations of orchestras. For instance, the Isis Theatre would have three to five pieces and sometimes for some special weekends, as many as eight or ten. The Isis Theatre was in the building across the alley from the Witwer Senior Citizen's Building which was a post office, and that now houses the Capri Beauty College. Across the street from that was the Palace Theatre --I played in that when we had from three to five pieces.. The Realto Theatre was on First

Avenue and the Grand Theatre was across the street from that on First Avenue. The State Theatre, I remember when that was built, that housed an orchestra of about six. And then came the Paramount Theatre. The Majestic Theatre, which is no longer there, was the vaudeville theatre, that had an orchestra of six, seven or eight. I played at most of these.

CF: What were the theatres like?

Katzoff: Movie theatres, mostly that. My first contact with a movie theatre was the one on Third Street and Twelfth Avenue where the Community Theatre was housed until just recently. Sunday matinees were very popular. The pictures were mostly about cowboys and Indians or train robbery. The admission there was five cents, but later it changed to a dime. So for five cents admission and a five cent bag of popcorn you could have a great afternoon.

CF: Do you feel that interest in music has changed since you were growing up? If so, how?

Katzoff: With rock and roll coming in, music has changed a great deal. We used to have traveling shows. We don't have those very much. We're fortunate to have a good symphony orchestra as we do. It's a fine symphony orchestra here in Cedar Rapids. When I played with them, it was much smaller and it was on a voluntary basis. That's the difference, in the 27 years I played with the orchestra, I was never paid anything. Today it's much more like a professional orchestra. They have a budget of a quarter of a million.

The Community Concert Association was formed about 50 years ago

because at that time Coe College used to bring (in) a series of artists. As the artists began to cost more and money was less available, Coe couldn't afford to bring them. So there was formed, nationally, a pre-paid audience plan. The community concerts were part of the Columbia chain, it was the one that we choose here. We would have our current costs for membership, for a minimum of four concerts, at \$20. In contrast to that, the popular rock and roll bands will come here for a fee of, say an admission of about \$15. If you contrast that, \$15 for one evening of very, very loud--I was going to say noise--we'll say music, but anyway, my generation is not very fond of that.

In contrast to that, when you can, for breakdown of say--for one concert, \$5 for the community concert--you can hear some top-notch artists. For instance, we can get the Big Band, or some of the finest voice artists, pianists--a popular piano team that we had not too long ago, Ferrante and Teicher. Going back, one of our first artists was Nelson Eddy. And we've had some top musicians and instrumentalists--Francescotti the violinist. Those--we're having trouble getting enough members to support this Community Concert Association. So when you're asking about how music has changed, there's the greatest change.

CF: Those tickets, you can also use those in other cities?

Katzoff: Yes, a membership in Community Concerts gives you the privilege of attending, on your own membership, any other concert in any other city that has this. Around us, we have one in Davenport,

Clinton, Waterloo, Oelwein, Marshalltown, and all of these have been visited by some of our members.

The same way when we get a popular number like the Canadian Brass, we've had bus loads come from Waterloo and Marshalltown.

CF: How did this start, the Columbia Concerts? When did it start and what were the reasons?

Katzoff: It started in the 1930's for the very reason that I mentioned-- the economic situation. That was the Great Depression years. And also to give young, promising artists the opportunity to begin to show themselves before the public. That way we are helping develop great artists in this country.

CF: So it's a \$20 flat rate?

Katzoff: Right now. When we started out, it was only \$10. As of right now, \$20 gives you a membership for at least four concerts. If we run a surplus, as we have in years past, then we'll get a fifth concert in.

CF: And you don't sell individual tickets?

Katzoff: No, we do not sell individual tickets. If a member wants to leave his ticket at the box office or has someone--the tickets are interchangeable. So if one wants to get in, usually, if you want to do it badly enough, you can find somebody that's not going and get their membership.

CF: And it's always been run pretty much the same way?

Katzoff: Yes, it defeats the purpose to sell individual tickets. We pick our budget in accordance with how much money we have to spend.

CF: You've been involved with so many different facets of Cedar Rapids musicals. . .

Katzoff

Rapids musicals. . .

Katzoff: Yes.

CF: The Cedar Rapids Symphony for 27 years, the Cedar Rapids Band Commissioner.

Katzoff: Since its inception.

CF: And you taught part-time at Coe? And the Coe Promenade Orchestra?

Katzoff: Yes, I was in that from start to finish.

CF: What did that involve?

Katzoff: The Coe Promenade Orchestra was a small group between 20 and 25, who played popular music. Not the jazz type but--like comedies and you might say, easy to listen to music.

CF: Is there anything else you'd like to add about Cedar Rapids, musically?

Katzoff: That just about does it.

CF: We talked about how you became interested in dentistry--from someone you met through music, also.

Katzoff: Right.

CF: How has dental training changed, training for dentistry?

Katzoff: The dental student of today gets a lot more information than my generation did with the help of the various teaching tools that are available. Now, with computers and the use of video cassettes, information can be imparted much more easily, and it's much better because it's visual, too.

The main drawback is that the educators want to cram so much information into the student that, unfortunately, they are forgetting that a profession like dentistry requires digital

skills. The student must have time enough to develop those digital skills. Unfortunately, that has not been so. But in the past few years, I'm thinking within the last five years, they are beginning to realize that and (are) trying to change the curriculum somewhat, to give students more time to develop those digital skills.

Harvard, for instance, is putting on an extra year in dentistry now, so that the student that wants to do more in a certain field of dentistry has the opportunity to do that. Recently one of the professors in the operative department told me that in the fifth year if the student wants more training on bridge work, for instance, or on operative work, they have one instructor for two students. So it's a very personal thing. There they have the opportunity to develop those digital skills that the regular curriculum in the four year program, in too many schools, is not sufficient. From those schools, graduates are not as fit--from the standpoint of having developed digital skills. Again, of course, that depends on the individual. But the student of my generation had much more time to develop those skills than the current ones.

CF: Are dentists doing as much as you used to have to do?

Katzoff: In school?

CF: Or are they becoming more specialized?

Katzoff: Probably there is more emphasis on specialties than there used to be, that is true. But as far as being able to do things--the dentist today can do a lot more because of the development of some of our--for instance the air rotor. It's much more efficient.

CF: Some people might not know what that is.

Katzoff: An air rotor. We used to have drills, first, driven by foot power, and then by electricity. The drills were driven by electricity and by geared-up hand pieces. The older type used to have an RPM (revolutions per minute) of from 3- to 5,000. 20,000 was big. But more sophisticated hand pieces were developed that would permit 35- or 40,000 RPMs. When the air rotor came in, that could go up to 300,000 RPMs. It's used at a speed of between 75- and 110- or 120,000. And that speeded up the work. It made it a lot easier for the patient as well as the doctor. So mechanically, dentistry could be performed much more quickly than it used to be.

CF: Did you tend to do more of your own work as far as dental apparatus?

Katzoff: Yes, we used to have to do a lot more of our own than we do now. Today, the dentist is really greatly handicapped without the assistance of a commercial technician. And also the assistant at the chair. We used to do most of it ourselves but now it's four-handed dentistry pretty much.

CF: You were instrumental in getting the Cedar Rapids water supply fluoridated.

Katzoff: Yes, I was on the committee that helped start that. We talked about it to luncheon clubs and different committees, different organizations--to tell them the advantages of having fluoride. And of course, now that's proven because before we started, a five-year-old just starting in school had an average of--about 90 percent of them, had already had some decay begin.

CF: This is in what year?

Katzoff: Somewhere in the 1940's. It was controversial. It still is to a limited degree. It's proven now that the teenagers today, about 70 percent of them are almost free of decay. And that has never been attained anywhere in the world, until now. The fluoridation of the water supply is given credit for that. In our own city, the five-year-olds, 90 percent of whom had decay before the program was started, when retested five years later, of the children who lived in Cedar Rapids, brought up on the city water supply, only about 10 percent have decay. So it just reversed itself. And today it's--a big majority of children do not have tooth decay. Also today we are using what are called sealants to help prevent decay from beginning in teeth that are not formed well.

CF: What other types of things about dentistry that people would find interesting, how it's changed, or . . . ?

Katzoff: Well, dentists are often butts of jokes and dentistry is said to be so terrible. Well, that is no longer true. I've had the privilege of, with two families, working on the fifth generation. Young people don't hesitate to come; their parents were brought up that way. And people that come regularly, are going to a dentist who is interested in helping them keep their teeth, don't have any problems at all.

For instance, when I first started, I used to make a lot of dentures, because people had lost their teeth. Today, that's not true. Very few lose all their teeth.

CF: Anything else you'd like to add about dentistry?

Katzoff: Well, dentistry is constantly trying to eliminate itself, and it's really doing a pretty good job of it. People who go

regularly, who are taught the importance of good nutrition should never have any tooth problems.

CF: Dr. Katzoff, you've been very active in a number of dental organizations. What can you tell me about some of those?

Katzoff: Dentistry has been good to me. I've been invited to be a Fellow of the American College of Dentists and the American Prosthodontic Society, and the American Cooperation Society, the Pierre Fauchard Academy. Some of those are honorary organizations. Then I was appointed to the Iowa State Board of Dental Examiners in 1960, and reappointed in 1965 for another five-year term. That's the maximum one can serve on the Board.

After that I was invited to be a consultant to the Central Regional Dental Testing Service, and that includes eleven states. That was a good experience for 15 years. And in 1978 I was honored by the Iowa Dental Society as being the dentist of the year. On the local level, I've been the President of the Linn County Dental Society and the University District Dental Society. Also the secretary for a number of years.

CF: What types of things do you remember in particular, about your childhood, Cedar Rapids, about the town, the people?

Katzoff: Cedar Rapids was a very friendly town and it was under 30,000. The Czech population was very prominent in Cedar Rapids. About one-fourth or as much as one-third of the population were Czechs. From my newsboy activities, I remember the trains that we used to have, especially the Milwaukee train that went to Hot Springs, Arkansas. That was a regular excursion two or

three times a week.

From the other depot, the Northwestern depot, which was a classic in its architecture--unfortunately, it was taken down--we used to have as many as five or six trains a day to Chicago. It was fun to get on the train for breakfast and get off about 11:30 at the hotel in Chicago, coming back after the meeting, having dinner on the train. You could board any time after 5:00, have a leisurely dinner, come back home early evening. Those were fun days.

I remember the Boyson's Corner was a very popular place. That was Boyson's Drug Store. And I remember, too, that that's where Lapes started--in one corner of the store he had a rather large bureau or breakfront cabinet that was refrigerated in which he kept his flowers. Mr. Lapes, not having any delivery service, sometimes asked me to deliver a plant on my bicycle during the Easter season, especially--that was popular.

CF: Otherwise you could just go into Lapes and pick up your plants? Roses and things?

Katzoff: Right, yes.

CF: So it was a little bit more personal?

Katzoff: I remember the old Greene's Opera House, it was a classic structure in the style of the European opera houses.

CF: Did you play in Greene's Opera House?

Katzoff: Yes, I played, musically, I played for a few shows. I was not a regular player there. I played there as an extra.

And the auditorium that was on First Street North, and also the open air theatre that was there. The Gazette building itself

was on one side of First Avenue and the YMCA on the other, right at the corner of the bridge. Both were on the river bank. The old Grand Hotel which was directly across the street from Boyson's Drug Store corner, was a classic place. It seemed old to me then.

CF: Was it a very fancy place?

Katzoff: It was fancy, as so many of the older buildings were. A lot of gingerbread on a building.

CF: Did people tend to socialize more at the hotels, do you remember?

Katzoff: I can't answer that. I can't remember that because I was not in that age group.

CF: What about some of the prominent Cedar Rapids citizens? Who in particular do you remember? Maybe from selling newspapers?

Katzoff: One, who I remember, was the first Mr. Hamilton of the Merchant's National Bank, a customer of mine. About 1914 or 1915 (he) encouraged me to open my first savings account which I've kept going ever since.

People that were prominent. . .you don't think of them so much as prominent people, when you're a newsboy and you're selling papers.

CF: Local artists?

Katzoff: The artist, Grant Wood, who taught in the schools and is very well-known. I remember one (painting) that he did that he called "Old Barney" was one of the mechanics that came over with my father to the J. G. Cherry Company here. Apparently it was one that was well-liked because I'm told it was bought by the museum of art--the Chicago Museum of Art, and it is housed

there as part of their permanent collection.

A contemporary of Grant Wood was Marvin Cone, whom I knew as a teacher at Coe. Ed Bruns was another man who doesn't really get as much credit as he deserved. He was a fine portrait artist and did a lot of portraits for Mr. Dows of the Iowa Electric Company. He, too, taught in the school.

CF: His artwork is very colorful.

Katzoff: Yes, it is. He happened to be a patient of mine so I had a few of his works. Cedar Rapids has been very fortunate in its educational system. I remember Abby S. Abbot, the principal of Washington High. What a fine disciplinarian she was. There are many, many stories that can be told about her.

CF: Can you tell us some of the stories?

Katzoff: It would take too long to go into those! (Laughter)

CF: You mentioned Mr. Hamilton and the bank. How did Cedar Rapids receive the Depression?

Katzoff: Cedar Rapids, I felt, was not hurt by the Depression very much because we were fortunate to have good employment here. Cedar Rapids had so many industries then. We've lost a good many of those now.

CF: What do you remember about the crash of the stock market, the banks closing, and that sort of thing?

Katzoff: We weren't too scared about that in Cedar Rapids because we felt we were fortunate in having good banks here. I don't think people were hurt very much about that then. I remember one of the old stores on First Street, Kubias Hardware, that still had earth floors, clay floors. . .

END OF SIDE ONE

CF: What about bars? Do you remember anything in particular about dancing or that?

Katzoff: We didn't call them bars, saloons was actually the name. Most of them in Cedar Rapids were on First Street. We didn't have very many in the outlying areas--residential areas.

CF: So it was pretty much all downtown?

Katzoff: Pretty much so. And mostly on First Street.

CF: Who would frequent those types of places?

Katzoff: I don't know, never having gone into them.

CF: Blue collar workers?

Katzoff: Yes, I think so. Also there used to be billiard parlors. And they were scattered around the town.

CF: Any other special memories in particular about Cedar Rapids that you would like to share?

Katzoff: That pretty well covers it.

CF: What would you say was the most notable differences between, say, the early 1900's and today--Cedar Rapids and in general?

Katzoff: It seems much more complicated. Life was much simpler then. We didn't have so many distractions. People didn't seem to want so many things. There weren't as many things to be wanted. The streets were safe. We never used to lock our doors! We could go anywhere in the neighborhood and there would never be a locked door. No one was afraid to go out walking at night in any part of the town.

I would say that this is a much more violent way of life. And to those of us who remember the days when it was so different, we can't feel that we can enjoy it as much.

I can liken it to the feeling in Europe in a small town. You feel so much more free and life seems to go on in a very simple way. It's not complicated. I'm sure we have that in many places in our own country. As far as the city life, I think the larger the city is, the more complicated and the more difficult living is.

CF: Do you think the people are as appreciative of the arts and that sort of thing--children growing up?

Katzoff: I'm afraid not.

CF: Musically and the visual arts and that sort of thing?

Katzoff: As I recall, it was more part of our living than it seems to be now. Now there are many more spectator sports whereas we were participants. And the distraction of TV is something entirely different. It makes for a different life.

CF: Any other differences that you can think of?

Katzoff: I feel that it is much more important for the young person today to get an adequate education. I'm afraid the uneducated are going to have great difficulty in coping. It may be that there are too many demands made on the young people. You hear so much of suicides, and those were almost unheard of in my day.

CF: Do you appreciate life today as much as you did then?

Katzoff: I do because I have the capacity of enjoying a lot of things.

CF: You get involved a lot.

Katzoff: I enjoy living very much and I enjoy people. And my own circle, I'm very happy with things as they are. I'm unhappy because so many others cannot enjoy the same things. The broken homes, the way some young people are growing up--it's a great tragedy. My

philosophy of living is not in tune with the way life is going mostly because of the tragic things, the wars. When the biggest part of our expenses of government are involved in war, warfare, or past wars, it's a tragic thing that people can't enjoy the fruits of their labor in so many other ways that they could. But they have to spend the fruits of their labor--being wasted in those other ways.

CF: What do you think about the work ethic?

Katzoff: The work ethic. Unfortunately, it doesn't exist the way it used to. People grow up with the idea that the government owes them a living. And unfortunately, the government pays people not to work and they increase that idea. Some day I hope it will change.

CF: Anything else you'd like to add, or will that pretty much do it?

Katzoff: Pretty much so. You'd have to come up with a lot more questions to get more answers.

CF: Well, thank you very much, Dr. Katzoff, for sharing your wealth of knowledge and experiences.

Katzoff: Thank you. I enjoyed doing it.



