

# Betty and Lou's Joint Biography

**1944 to present**

This section covers the joint lives of Betty and Lou Cassorla,  
from their wedding onward.

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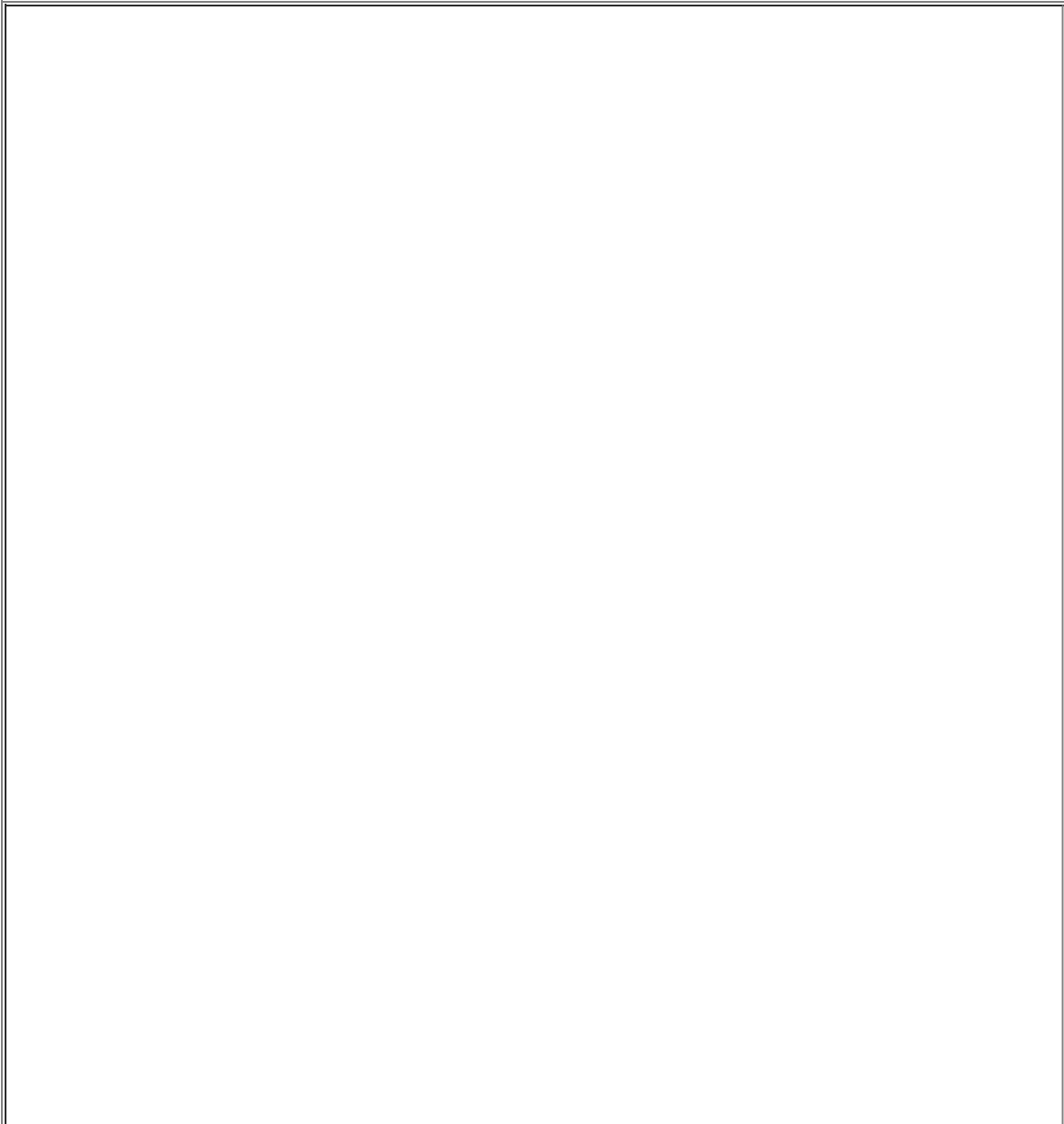
Recent additions:

8/14/04:

Professor Block, 2003, 1962 - Marshall & Lou shaving: Pahanakootie Fish story, 1959;

## **Our Wedding: Wednesday, March 14, 1944**

**It was traditional for the bride's father** to take over the expense of the wedding. However, that was not to be. It was a buffet type meal, with hors d'oeuvres. It was done by a duo called The Twin Cantors, which was a business with a catering hall and two actual cantors who performed the ceremony. We had no pictures of them.





*Betty and Lou's wedding portrait, March 14, 1944*

We had fifty or sixty people. There were no invitations, and all inviting was done by telephone.

My cousin Izzy said that instead of a present, he'd take pictures. They ended up with white spots, but the few that turned out well, I covet and treasure.

While the cantor was praying, he was singing so sharply, that I (Mom) was shaking like crazy!



I (Dad) was watching his nostrils go up and down. Uncle Gabriel, Aunt Victoria, Uncle Josef and Dora came in from Rochester, New Lots.

There were maybe twelve days from when we decided to get married to when we did.



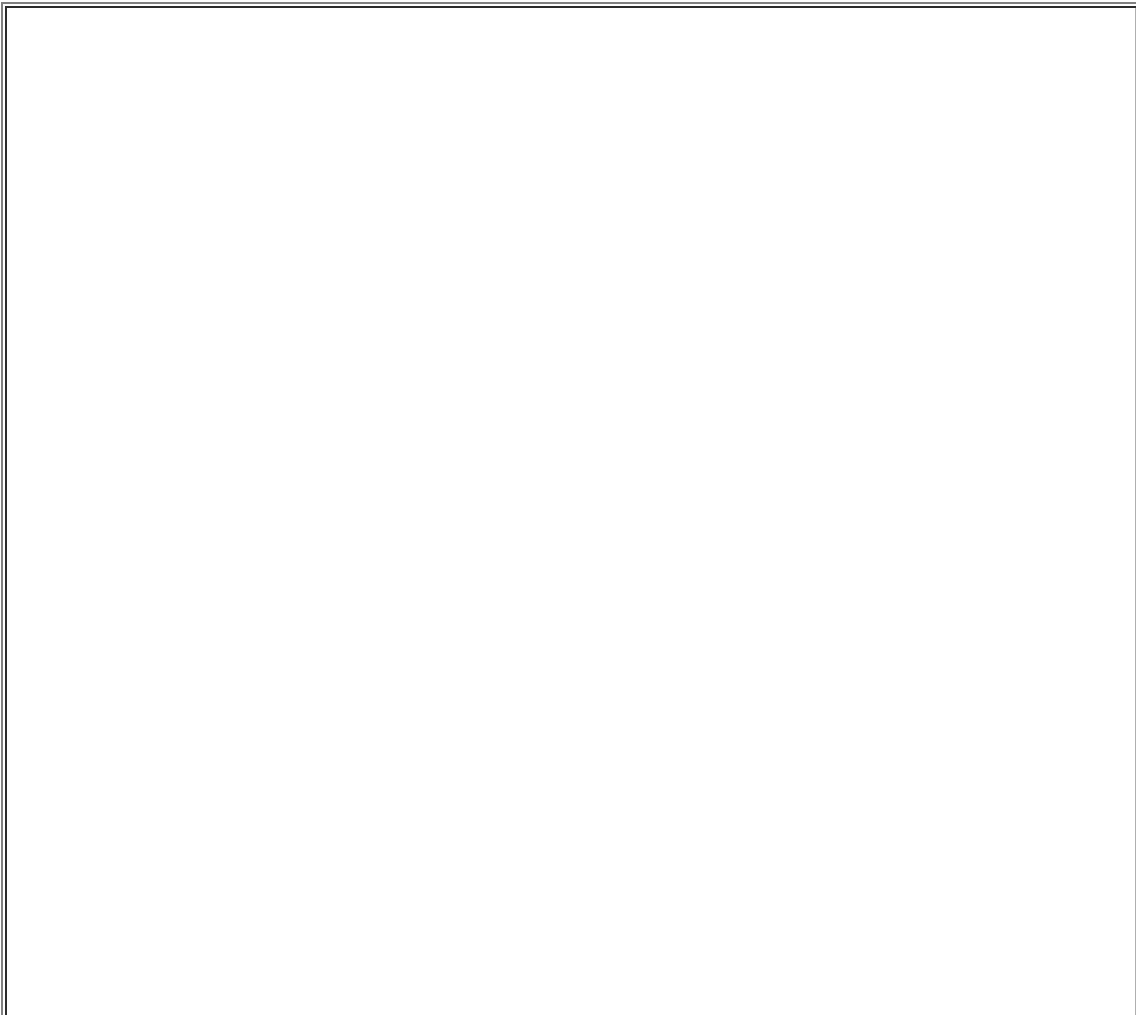
*The men at our wedding, all in a row.*



*Left to right are: Chubby (Abe) Mevorah, Moishe Copio, Eli Rousso, Hymie Baruch, Benny (Flash) Elias, Callie (Jack) Zacheria, and Jack Camhi*



*Left to right are: Teddy Cohen, Lou Calderon, Itzy Horowitz, Lou Cassorla, Irving Copio, Leo Cohen and Jack Hazan*





*Betty at age 22 in her official wedding portrait.*

We were all getting hungry and everyone else was eating sandwiches. Grandpa Cassorla showed Dad some frankfurters and he, Louie and I ended up eating them.

We sat by a wall, and there were tables.

The whole wedding cost four hundred dollars, says Dad. "I know because I paid it." We paid the expenses out of our gifts, which just about handled it.



*At the wedding in 1944...left to right: Bessy Hasson, Avrahm Cassorla, Betty, Sophie Cassorla, Lou and Molly Baruch*

We had wine and soda and that was it. We went to a professional photographer, Paradise Studios, for the photo. The gown was lovely, but to this day I can't believe it only cost five dollars! We were very much in love and very happy. I remember schlepping to a hotel and going to the IRT.

Of course I didn't wear the gown into the subway. I had a nice little figure then (Mom says with a sigh).

Selma said to me "You now Betty, you gotta get yourself a trousseau."

In those days we had customary flowers. She asked to borrow my flowers and she put them into her hair.

I went shopping and I got two or three little suits.



*Here we are, walking down the aisle.*



Selma was good for me in knowing how to shop economically, even though she was younger than me. So we went to May's Basement.

### **Our Honeymoon at the Stanley Hotel in Lakewood, New Jersey, March, 1944**

**Uncle Joe told us** where to go for our honeymoon. We took the IRT with our luggage and a little money. We could have taken a cab, but we needed the money that we had, or maybe we were just stupid not to take the cab! I had my sweepstakes winnings in the bank.

The honeymoon wasn't much. We went on a horse and buggy ride through the countryside. We have some nice pictures of that. We met some nice people and made friends with them. We stayed for four days.

Mom: "That was the first time I experienced a place like that."

Joe had said, "This is the place to go."



We had a good time for four days.

*Lou's parents, Avrahm and Sophie Cassorla, 1944, at our wedding.*

It was mid-winter, March. No snow on the ground but cold, but we were so much in love it didn't matter.

They had peacocks hanging around on the hotel grounds.



Mom stayed with her mother at that point.

Mom: "I went to work and kept giving my father closed pay envelopes."

I continued to live there for a month at the 661 Williams Avenue address.

That was the month of April.

Dad: "I knew I was going there, to Charleston Air Force base."



*In 1944 with Molly, taking a trip to Washington, D.C.*

I rented a room from a witch, an anti-semitic southern woman. I paid 24 dollars a week, and we shared the bathroom with 20 people. I went there and secured a room with a fireplace. We kept in contact through the phone.

We had the apartment waiting for us when we finally moved in together.



*In the cockpit of a P-40 patrol or fighter plane, in Charleston, South Carolina. Many different types of planes rolled through the base. I took the opportunity to test the feel of this one.*

Mom: "I asked my Mom and Dad to send us a radio. So they sent us one by mail."

The radio they sent us was called a camera radio, not much bigger than a camera. It had a small, compact powerful battery. So I would hook up the two batteries available to us as military personnel, just to make the connection. We put in on the broken old mantelpiece. The ceiling was so high - ten feet high.

Mom: "I'd go into the bathroom, and there would be two men there because we had to share the bathroom. I'd say Oh my God!"

Dad: "Sure it was great living together."

Mom: "I wanted to make a call to my parents, but you wouldn't let me, and I cried. You said it was too expensive. I grew up right then and there."

Then Dad and I went to buy a nice white dress from Lerner's. We were very proud of the dress, perky and white. All of a sudden, there was a heavy woman wearing the same exact dress!

We then visited a woman who looked like Dad's mom, named Mrs. Laufer. She was the owner of her restaurant called Laufer's. We loved her breaded veal cutlets and corn fritters. She took me into her kitchen to see where and how she cooked. It was spotless. We liked her very much. She was *ashkenazi*, but she made corn fritters and breaded veal cutlets. It was our favorite food.

Albert: "Did you visit the famous gardens at Charleston?"

Mom and Dad: "Never went."



*In Charleston, in 1944.*

## **June, 1944 - Charleston, continued**

I took a test to be eligible for housing, which is considered two rooms. This was done under dad's name. Under a GI registration, it's fourteen dollars a month. As a civilian it was 37 dollars a month. They denied me an apartment, lying, because they wanted civilians who would pay full rates.

A man named Charlie took care of the big giant freight trucks that came in, carrying the engines. He was a heavy guy. They had all the gasoline stamps, all they'd want.
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Mom: "Our apartment was in cinderblock buildings that was flat. Ours was called 1-6-3D Kiska Place. It had a wood burning stove and a propane stove. We'd put a pot of water in it.

"To rent that apartment, I had to take a test.

"But this southern woman said, 'I don't want to give a Yankee a test. You don't know our shorthand. We use the Gregg system. Up north you do Pittman shorthand.'"

*Lou with a B-24 Bomber in Charleston, July, 1944.*

I had to go to headquarters and find this woman who would give me the test. She was big and tall and if she blew on me, I'm certain I would fall over.

I came upon two officers and asked how I could get to headquarters.

The first one said, "What is this? An open street? Coming in and asking questions?"

The other man said, "Let me help you, ma'm." At headquarters, they asked me many questions about Lou and his rank and his stationing. He said, "All right, you can take the test right here at headquarters."



*Romantic in Charleston, 1944.*

I took the test and brought the papers to the man. I passed! That's how we got the apartment! It had maple furniture. We bought the furniture for 120 dollars. It consisted of a bed and more. We sold it for the same amount when we

moved out.

Dad was working near an air force supply. They asked me if I wanted to work near my husband. I said yes. Through that, I began to sew yellow fabric which they used in the flight line for flags.

I used the sewing machine in the post to make curtains for the sink in our apartment. There were wooden framed sinks with dingey galvanized metal. I also made cute bedspreads and curtains. In a way it was stealing, but nobody minded. They had thousands of yards there, all we needed were seven yards!

I worked myself up to work for Captain Matalski. He looked like Johnny Carson, tall and thin. He never knew I was Jewish. We had a very good time. He had a small office and we had staff sergeants and WACs there. Captain Matalski found out one day that Louie was Hebrew, and I was Jewish. From that day on, he didn't want to have anything to do with me. Prior to that, he took me out to lunch and such.

At this time, we watched baseball games and a World Series was on. I put a dollar in a pool and I won so much. So I told the staff sergeant, "Let's make a party for everyone." We bought kegs of beers and more. I spent a few hundred dollars. I did it to show everyone that Jewish people are very nice.

People were very appreciative. It built good will. I didn't care if he spoke to me or not -- it was the end of the war. Earlier they asked if soldiers wanted to be transferred to Atlanta. Captain Matalski asked me if I wanted to be transferred. The captain also removed Lou's name from that list, so that was a nice favor he did for me. He never said anything anti-semitic, just got very cold.

I wanted some footlockers that they had, and they gave me two of them as a gift to take home. I still have them in the basement! They were packing cases, but they did the job. In the same way, I was very close to the police, the lawyers, the judges, and I had a very good time.

Leo B. Roche was there, and he said "Hiya, Betty! I want to enter you in the Beauty Contest!" They didn't have silk stockings then, so we had no stockings. We drew a line on the backs of our legs to simulate a stocking seam! We also wore leg makeup. It was so nice!

### **Miss Charleston Beauty Contest, July 1944**

**Dad submitted** my picture to the base paper. The commanding officer had a chubby daughter also entered. The contest was held on the street. All of us girls were in a tent. Everyone knew the colonel's daughter would win even though she came from another camp. Sure enough, she won!

I cut myself on a nail on a tent pole. A GI gave me a handkerchief to control the bleeding. I was shivering and shaking.

A GI said, "Oh! You're going to win! You're for me, you're going to win!"

The crowd applauded and whistled. Maybe there were 300 or 400 men there.

I was dying! Imagine your mother! They had glossy pictures of me and other girls in the PX.



People wrote things near the pictures like:

"You're for me."

"You're the most beautiful red-head."

"Put your shoes by my bed anytime."

They were very nice men - boys really.



*In Charleston, 1944*

There was also a four-foot high cut-out of me in a bathing suit. So we thought sure enough I'd win. Everyone in the PX would see the cut-out in the corner. It just had a picture of me and it said, "The Winner." But this was not true. The actual winner was another Betty. The voting was done by whistling.

Then the warrant officer, Leo B. Roche, a Southerner, heard that someone named Betty won. He thought it was me. He came in with flowers and said, "Here Betty, for winning!" I told him it was someone else, and he was fit to be tied! He adored me, like an Uncle.

Jack Hazen the friend was the tallest man and he made money during the war. We don't know how he got put out of the service, Nor did we know how Hymie got out. He became an officer and a navigator. at the height of the war, he found himself home. He said, found myself airsick.

Sammy Alberker became a range officer.

## **Skipping forward to 1969:**

### **Our Return trip to Florida and Charleston**

**Twenty-five years** later, in 1969, we took the same picture in Charleston that we had taken in 1944. We drove to Florida that year and stopped at Charleston for a couple of days. We wanted to go to the old haunts and see our apartments.

The military and defense workers' apartments were all torn down by then.

### **1944: The bottle-throwing incident in North Charleston**

**This is the same** town where Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* took place. Callie was stationed at Ft. Bragg, NC. He came to visit us, and we saw him off at a bus stop in North Charleston. We took another bus closer to where we lived, maybe nine - ten miles from Charleston itself.

We were passing through an area that was off-limits to any soldiers, a rough neighborhood on the outskirts of North Charleston. It was a very decrepit neighborhood. Somebody threw a whiskey bottle through a closed window of the bus.

It hit the glass and shattered all over us. I was the worst injured. I was bleeding quite profusely.

All of a sudden, the place was surrounded by MP's.

I don't know how they got an alarm out so quickly. They gave me a butterfly bandage and I still bear a scar.

We wanted to bring a lawsuit against the bus company.

A lawyer visited us and offered us 25 dollars to make a settlement.

I consulted a lawyer and said that wasn't enough money.

We refused that settlement, and we got nothing for it!



*Pitching woo with Betty wasn't all I pitched . Here I am at horsehoes!*

### **1945: Racial attitudes in Charleston**

**At the Commissary** in Charleston, I was struck by the humility of the kitchen worker, an African-American. He was one of the few non-white employees there. He acted thoroughly unproud of himself. He showed it in his "sirring" us all over the place, and his stepping aside.

There was no way a man should love with such humbleness. I never knew his name.

I tried to humanize him, by treating him well.

Black troops were separately quartered back then.

At one point I was called in by a captain in a solo conference, to find out if I minded working in close quarters with a black man who had the same radio training I did.

I went overboard in saying that I had no problem with that.

Even if I did mind, he said they would have to send me away rather than make adjustments.



*Lou in 1945 with the ladies: left to right: Betty Aldorati, Betty Hasson, Lou, and Bella Camhi. Lou was on furlough.*

### **Discharge from the Army, November 1945**

**Dad had about** 56 points from his time in the service and overseas duty, so we were the second of third group to be discharged. We were in Charleston for a year and a half, because we were comfortable there.

We sold the apartment furniture, pots and pans, pillows, kitchen table -- it was a darling, darling little house. I made it so neat. We always had flowers. Now we went to Brooklyn. We had a '31 Chrysler at the time, and it had 2 little windows, I made little curtains for the back window. We made it very nice and cozy.

### **Going to Charleston**

**Mom:** "I had nothing because I always gave my father my closed pay envelopes. Once I said, 'Pa,' I have to go with my husband.' *'Louie esta yamando'* (calling)"

Dad: "He saw his meal ticket running away."

Mom: "He said, 'I need money.' He and my sister Esther had been the bread winners. There was no medicare or medicaid, so he depended on me. He objected to my leaving, *'No no no, no puedes ir'* ('No, you can't leave'). How am I to maintain my house?"

My mother said, *"Esta casado ahora."* ("She is married now")



## **Charleston Air Force Base, and Getting Married in March, 1944**

### **The Famous "Circling Planes" Incident, Fisher's Island**

**I was in our** radio shack, and call came over that the transmitter that told the landing was difficult. I came ambling into the shack very unconcerned. The captain, unaware of how slight my training was, said, "Cassorla! Go to operations, get yourself a parachute and there'll be a bomber waiting for you."

I went there, not knowing what to do. I went to operations, left my jeep at the side, and I struggled to put on a parachute. I had a well-insulated screwdriver and a small toolbox. I got into an A-25 twin engined plane, the same kind that bombed Tokyo with Doolittle. It brought me to Fisher's Island where I met up with two radio operators.

Planes were circling and running out of gas.

"Are you from Charleston Air Force Base?!" I opened up the portal of the control tower apparatus. I saw 2-foot high radio tubes - much bigger than I'd seen anywhere. People were looking over my shoulders eagerly. I poked around with the screwdriver, and sparks started to fly.

Someone said, "Yeah! Yeah! You're making contact." It had started to work!

Mom: "He came home that night and bellowed, 'Babe, you don't know what happened to me today!'"

Those boys in the airplane went on ahead to fight in Europe.

### **Forklifting with Mom**

Soldiers lifted me up on a forklift to write down numerals that were on the planes. Another time, we went to see beautiful glass ball turrets and smash them and stamp them as obsolete. They were brand new. The war was over at that time.

Dad: "We also destroyed many radio tubes."



*1945: Jack Baruch giving a hug to Lou's sister Molly.*

### **Leaving Charleston: November, 1945**

**Lou and I** were discharged. Every day, Edward R. Murrow came out with discharge news. You were granted one point for every month in the service, plus 2 points for every month of overseas service.

So Murrow used to report this every evening. We used to tune in while we were servicing planes. So we would be outdoors, working on a B-24. Every plane had its log book. You'd open up the log book and look at any criticism the crew members had recorded or complained about each flight and they'd be checked out. After 25 hours of flying time, they'd get a better inspection.

I'd look up the communications section, as opposed to armaments, for example. After 200 hours of flying time, we'd remove all of the radio system and remove components and dehumidify them. They had cylinders of silicon gel, and the coloring of the gel was blue when natural. When saturated with moisture it would turn pink.

These planes were stationed in the U.S. Crews would come from navigation, piloting, and other schools, and would be assigned to work as a team. They would work maybe two months at Charleston Air Force Base. Then they would fly a few hundred miles to Cuba, for team training, to practice landings and take-offs.

Mom suffered from pains while in Charleston. The hospital was free to us, but we never took advantage of it. We just were not informed. They could have helped women just like mom there.



*1945 - Best friends! Here I am with Hymie Baruch, on the left. We were best friends for so many years.*

### **November, 1945: Discharge**

**I was discharged from** Charleston to Newark, as a Separation Center. We drove to Newark by car, in a 1932 Chrysler, which we had bought for \$225.

It was pretty much a junk heap. I remember painting it myself with a brush, and the wind was blowing sand on it! I painted it black, the most practical color. The roof always leaked. I put tar on it, and it was always leaked again.

We lived in a hotel room, with everyone sharing one bathroom. Mom and I hated that hotel, mainly because of the shared bathrooms. We were there for only two days.

They were anxious to get rid of us, and get us off the payroll. They gave me a pin to show we were separated. That was called the Ruptured Duck Pin, which I still have. I had only one, but I realized I would like to have it on every item of clothing as an item of distinction. So I asked the Quartermaster for two, and he said, "Oh no, only one per person." So I went to a clerk and paid him a dollar and he gave me about 20 of them!

From Newark, we got a discharge. I was asked if I wanted to join the reserve. But I did not want to be in the army any longer. This was probably a good idea, since some of the people in the reserve were drafted into the Korean War. Bu, we didn't want any more connection with the army and saw no advantage.

So we just got in our car and drove to Alabama Avenue. One car was plenty to carry our belongings. When V-J Day was declared, we left the movie theater and the post in Charleston. I had one pair of civilian pants and a shirt, which I had been carrying around with me for four years. I put on those clothes just to celebrate, as did the other GI's.

### **November, 1945 to July, 1948:**

#### **At 732 Alabama Avenue, Brooklyn**

**We were both** anxious to start our new lives. It had been arranged that we would for the foreseeable future live at my parents' house. My Dad bought that building during the war. We had come as tenants. Then bank owned the building.

Our arrival was pretty routine. We were welcomed home. They were nice to us.

Mom: "I felt uncomfortable, because I didn't know them very well. I felt we were imposing. We wanted to rent out a room, but no apartments were available, because of GI's coming home."

Jakie came home and started living with her parents. Jakie and Bella wanted to move out. They had been living with the Mavorahs. Jack, too, wanted to be on his own.

It was the worst thing I did... trying to get an apartment on Alabama Avenue for my brother. Sophie and Avrahm thought that if an apartment was available, first crack should be given to Bessy and Ikie. Sophie and Avrahm were furious at me. Bessy wanted it, even though Ikie was nowhere around.... So nothing was done about the apartment across the street.

### **1945: Paying "key money"**

We moved into their apartment, where they had an empty room. Molly's husband, Jack, had not come home yet from the army. Neither had Joe nor Morris.

We would normally pay key money to either the landlord, or to the super. But since I lived in my parents' building, we paid none.





*Chaim and Mazalto, circa 1947*

### **1945: Lou's first job back: H & C Button Company.**

**My first job**, was arranged for me by my brother Joe who had formed a partnership with Jack Hazan. Belts and Buckles was the named of the business also called H & C Button Company. I went to work for them as a general salesman. I knew how to work the sewing machine. I had worked for Rene Dress before the war and knew the business.

I didn't like it at all, because I hated his partner, Jack Hazan, who was very disparaging of his help. He did very little but the business rolled in. Manufacturers said, "Charge me two dollars a belt, so that they could charge more to the retail stores."

They would actually pay fifty cents for the buckle. This all had to do with Price Controls, and beating them. Price controls could be beat under certain circumstances. So all of this was to beat the government.

Jack Hazan would come in at twelve noon, knowing the place was taken care of. He was a good-looking man, sugary on the outside, but really did not give a damn about anyone. He had wanted me to go into business with his brother, who was mentally ill. He wanted him taken care of. He viewed me as a level-headed man.

I turned Jack Hazan down. I got paid 45 dollars by him, which I thought was a decent wage. I went around to offices and showed dresses. We had wire-stitched buckles, but I needed wire. I would scour the newspapers for wire suppliers, and I would go and make appointments and go there with a sample of the proper gauge wire that we needed.



**1946, Rockaway!** *Above: Here is part of the gang enjoying a day's outing at Rockaway Beach! Shown are Edna and Hynie Baruch, Molly Baruch, and Jack Baruch holding daughter Sylvia.*

### **Lazar Becker, Joe's formeman**

**Lazar was the inside man**, the foreman, the belt designer. This had class and style. For years, Lazar was known as Benyacker. Lazar's dad committed suicide because of his severe depression.



## **Jack Baruch on Aljofa Baruch**

(Aljofa was Jack's mother. Jack is my father, Lou Cassorla's brother-in-law. They all lived nearby each other in new Lots in the 1940's.)

### **"So far you're moving?"**

When we were living on Pennsylvania Avenue, and Molly and I got married and rented an apartment on Bradford Street in new Lots, 4 blocks away from Alabama Avenue. So Aljofa, who lived near the as well said, "So far you're moving?"

Those were the expectations then!



*Aljofa Baruch*

## **Aljofa's Disposition**

My mom, Aljofa, even on her dying day always had a big smile on her lips. So much so that the doctor brought his wife to see something like that. To say, "See how a person a person can die with dignity and happiness."

She kept cheering everybody up. "My husband and my mother are there, telling me to come. I can't wait to get there."

## **1947: Working as a Salesman in Brooklyn and New York**

**I worked for Jack Russo** at Rene Dress. He taught me to be a salesman. His partner, Jack Pardo, passed on during the war. Jack Russo went into partnership with Marty Cassuto. From a little place they made quite a bit of money.

I went to work for him, but he paid me off the books, so I could collect twenty dollars a week. I joined what they called the 52/20 club. The government allowed discharge veterans to collect compensation and just to report their attempt to find employment. You would report unable to find work. "No work for salesman," I would say and I would get some money from the government

In fact, I was being paid by Jack, 45 dollars a week, plus twenty dollars from the government equaled 65 dollars.

The houses back then cost \$25,000 when brand new. Then they went down in price. The previous owners had let the houses go to pot. So the prior owners had defaulted on the mortgage. My father bought the house for \$7,000. I don't know if he paid cash. He had been making a pretty good dollar during the way. Anybody could see a bargain.

Molly was married to Jack, and during the entire war, she brought up the baby, Sylvia. We would push Sylvia through our legs, and she would say, "YAHH!" with laughter. At a year and a half, she said, "I want chichen." She could not say chicken.

While living there, I was always looking for an apartment. I lived in the upstairs apartment with them. They rented out the downstairs, but not as a whole floor. Instead, people wanted to rent out a dining room or a bedroom.

Living in the house at the time were: Mom, Dad, Bessy, Molly, Sylvia, and ourselves.

## **1947: Living in Brooklyn**

While we were there I would make myself feel comfortable by going to Cushan's bakery, and coming home with muffins and cakes and turnovers. This showed the Cassorla family that we were not grubbers. We'd have coffee or tea. We paid ten dollars a week for room and board.

My brother, Jakie was in Europe. Veida was sending things to Europe in the 1920s and 1930s.

They might have sent letters to Kastoria.

The brothers and sisters talked about good times by the lake, by which they meant Lake Dulac in Kastoria. Veida came to America with 3 boys. Her sister was born in 1912.

Sophie Nahmias: They were wonderful, the brothers and sisters, we were one big happy family. Our conditions were not luxurious. All the children were like one.

Whenever they didn't want us to understand, they would talk in Greek.



Veida told Sophie about fairy tales. For example, about the man who carried the coffin to the cemetery. They took a man to bury him on a bumpy road. The coffin fell out and threw the man came out, and he woke up and lived for many years. He was in a coma. He lived for many years after that.

Father story is like a fairy tale... My father's mother, was Mana (grandmother) Chanyu. My father was an only child. He had the flu and pneumonia, perhaps in 1920, and people were dying.

Sophie, continued: I was considered Mazelto's daughter because I had red hair like Mazelto. Mazelto took us to Coney Island on a picnic. We called each other from rooftops to say we were Coney.

Betty, 11-27-99: We lived for 5 years in our parents' houses before getting our own place.

We stayed with Cassorla's upstairs from 1945 to mid-1947. We had a bedroom in the corner. Joey was here, Bessy too. Morris was at Selma Silverman's house.

Selma was very pretty, (Dad says). Morris, Jack Barocas and Howie - a friend of Jack's -- chose for who would be first to approach Selma. She was a new arrival in New Lots. So Moishe won, and his friends called him Pretty Boy -- He was so good-looking.

### **Cousin Joseph Elias remembers**

#### **1948**

You know I gave your Uncle Jack Camhi his first airplane ride at old Rockaway Beach Airport. I had invited him. He did all right. He was a pretty brave guy. It was a J3 Cub. We were sightseeing as they were building Idlewild Airport.

What made it funny was that he had never been in a light airplane before, and he thought we were on the ground, and instead we were still floating up to the runway. He opened the door, I had to grab him.

#### **1953**

Morris and Selma and Betty Elias were close friends and used to push their baby carriages up and down New Lots Avenue. That must have been Sandy Cassorla and JoAnn Elias.

#### **1950**

When Dad and I were tenants at the Cassorla's on Alabama Avenue, and I was pregnant with Albert.

Dad: Mom had been used to giving her dad her pay envelope. Now she had carte blanche and could depend her paycheck on whatever she wanted.

Dad: I got 70 dollars a week and Mom got 60. Mom and I put away 50 dollars a week. We were saving for a beaver coat for Mom.

We also wanted an apartment,. My cutter friend was jealous of what we had, but we said, "You know? What we want is what you already have -- an apartment and a baby."

Dad: We gave Mazalto and Chaim 20 dollars a month as rent and when we switched, my parents got 10 as rent.

Mom: When I stepped giving money to my Dad, my sister stepped in. It made it harder for my father to pay for insulin for my mother.

Dad: Insulin was free at Kings County Hospital (where Mazelto went).

Mom: My sister Esther helped out when I stopped paying. Chaim made the trip on the trolley to get the insulin, which then soon became free.

**1946**, Mom: I worked in the belt and buckle business for Jack Hazan, Del Rio Belts and Agency Button Company. Jack Hazan lifted up Lazar (Lou's cousin), and threatened Lazar for wanting too many needles for my sewing machines. Lazar was small, and Jack seemed like a brute. I thought he was terrible. I had asked Lazar for the needles, and he was just trying to help me out. I was trying to teach some people how to use the sewing machine.

Dad worked special machines and Lazar was a foreman.

It was very hard to get an apartment. We were lucky to pay \$500 to get an apartment. You had to give landlords presents. There were price controls, and we'd give cash payments under the table. That was called key money..

Mom: I liked living with the Cassorla's. Sophie was nice, and Joey was too. If a car passed up the street, the mattress would vibrate and make a ticky-tick noise.

Joe slept right outside our bedroom, and I, Mom was very embarrassed. The twin beds that Emma and Ben use were bought in the 1930s by Joe.

Molly lived there with baby Sylvia, and Jack was in the Army. One time. Sylvia was screaming in her bed, maybe age 1. Molly came out of the shower nude to see what was going on. She turned around, and Mom (Sophie Cassorla) shoed her right back into the bedroom.

I got along well with Molly. Sylvia got a skin sickness. Molly during the war went to a doctor asking about a skin clinic, Syl had. She went to a clinic on the Lower East Side. An old doctor there, whom they said looked like God, treated Sylvia.

### **Sylvia contracts "soldier's baby's skin sickness"!**

Jack Baruch asked what the baby's ailment was and got different answers. Jack pressed the doctor for the name of the disease, and the M.D. said: "Your daughter has soldier's baby's skin sickness."

Mom: I was Uncle Morris's idol. He liked me He's 3.5 years younger than me. I remember that instead of saying lollipop, Morris said "I want ollypop."

Uncle Morris got lost as a little boy in Coney Island in Seaside Park, near the Beach, at West 2nd Street.

1928, Dad: It was an ordeal to go the beach, changing subways 3 times. Little Morris got lost. we were besides ourselves.

At the beach, he wandered off. He was lost and it wads nighttime. Somebody had taken him home to New Lots. We did not have telephones in those days. We just hoped someone had found him and brought him to their home.

1928: We were going to the beach one day, carrying food. Molly said, "I don't want to carry it." She was 10. Dad said: "I don't want to leave it there, that's Mom's food in the valise and we can't leave it on the street." So I dragged the cheap valise, made out of cardboard, 8 years old.

1945-47 - Mom: We stayed at the Cassorla's. The bedroom were relatively large. Grandpa bought that building during he war. It cost \$7,000. It was grand, with steam heating.

Dad: After working at Jack Hazan's, I ended up with my own business with Moishe, called Casbro-Cassorla Brothers. We had that for 8 months, and it was hard to get help.

So we had Mom and Selma as partners. We bought an established shop in Canarsie, advertised in *Women's Wear Daily*. We looked into it. It cost \$2,000.

### **1948: Casbro-Cassorla Brothers**

My father lent us \$1,000 each. I had some lottery money, and an insurance policy.

We came into a slow season, and I did not know many people in the line. And people who had work for us no longer did. It should not have discouraged us so much, but we sold it for \$4,000 in 8 months.

As veterans, we got approved by Singer for sewing machines for say 50 heads. I enjoyed working with Moishe. We alternated the hours of working on the pressing machine. He was pretty good. "

He was young and burly. When I pressed, I did so much more. Later we had 2 pressing machines...

Morris lived first with Mrs. Silverman (Selma's Mom) and then got an apartment on New Lots avenue.

We move out of Grandma and Grandpa Cassorla's house in 1947, after spending the summer in the bungalows at Rockaway Beach.

We had our own place in Rockaway, one room with a rented fridge. Everyone else had an ice box. They blew fuses all the time. If we ironed, we had to either turn off our lights or the fridge.

1948: Moving into Williams avenue.

### **New Lots, 732 Alabama Avenue**

**1945 - 1957, Ages 25 to 37**

### **1950: News of Cousin Albert Cassorla**

**We got word from a Jewish agency** (or the Jewish Welfare Board or HIAS) that my first cousin, Albert Joshua Cassorla, (the same name as my son) was seeking entrance into this country, but that he needed certain statements in order to admit him.

Pop remembered Albert vaguely as one of three or four children of his brother (perhaps Joshua Cassorla). My brother Joe co-sponsored him. First Pop consulted Joe about employment for him. Joe had a pretty big establishment and felt he could find room for him in the factory.

Correspondence went back and forth. He wrote from a displaced persons camp. We don't know what country he was writing to us from, it could have been Germany. Originally, he was no doubt from Monastir, Yugoslavia.

After the war, people in concentration camps moved to the other camps. He might have been in Buchenwald -- it was certainly a famous concentration camp.

He was a big, strapping man. He arrived perhaps in 1950. He looked like others in the Cassorla family, with dark features, no beard, husky -- a guy you wouldn't want to tackle. The Hebrew Immigration Aid Society helped people like Albert.

By this time, all of my mother's children had left -- five children grown and gone, except perhaps Bessy. There was a room and a job for him, but he seemed discontent. He asked me once for a "loan." I knew he wouldn't return it; he already impressed me as that type of fellow.

My Mom and Dad prohibited me from lending to him -- they felt they had done all they needed to for him, and let him prove himself from here on in. He was very physically capable and had a job and a place to sleep, after all. He ate like a horse. My mother cooked for him as if he were a horse.

### 1955 - Alyce Reiner (nee Baruch) remembers Joseph Baruch

One of my favorite memories was when my Grandfather Joseph Baruch (we called him "grandpa Baruch" always using surnames) would let me drink coffee at the table - I was around 5 or 6 at the time

My mom always said I couldn't have coffee because it would "stunt my growth" - Anyway - grandpa Baruch would signal my grandmother to bring me coffee she'd put in 3/4 cup milk 1/4 cup coffee and 6 teaspoons of sugar and my mother would be complaining

"Hy, she's too young! It'll stunt her growth"

Anyway, little did my mom realize the sugar added to my growth - just not in the direction we wanted!

Just little memories, but they bring a smile to my face. Hope you enjoy the memory too.

Alyce

## The Bellmore Years

1957 to present - Age 37 to now



*Gabriel and Sinoyra Calderon with Betty in the 1960's.*

**Whenever anyone had a conflict -- an argument on a factual subject -- they'd all say, "Ask BIG LOU!"**

Once, we all went to a theater, and we went home following Lou. He made a right and then a left.

Fifteen minutes later, he pulls out in front of us and says, "I'm lost!"

I've always been fond of quoting statistics on anything. I'd say, "365.1 people out of 400 say so and so."

## **Leo Moskowitz, 1957**

**I first met** Leo when we moved in from New Lots in 1957. Leo had a kosher butcher shop in Merrick on Merrick Road, near the Chinese Laundry, where Daddy almost got killed.

I was looking for a kosher butcher. We asked the neighbors and they recommended him. I became his best customer, paying cash each time. I paid \$60 a week in meat bills-- maybe a two-week supply. \$60 then would be worth about \$180 now.

I'd buy chickens, cut into eighths, tenderloin steaks, rib steaks, but rarely chopped meat (for stuffed peppers only). I never bought brisket, which is ashkenazi-style. I would buy London broil. I'd get square-cut roasts. I wouldn't buy too much deli meats.

Leo one day came over and smelled my potato pancakes. He said, "I MUST have Betty's pancakes." He ate dinner with us, ignoring his helpers working for him back at the shop!

## **Betty's Latkes**

This is an ashkenazi food that we came to like.

Ingredients:

- Matzo meal
- potatoes, grated in strips
- onions - (drain the water after cooking)
- eggs
- pepper and salt

*Fry and eat right away!*



*1960: Two of our dear friends - part of our social club -- Esther and Ben "Flash" Elias. We had so many wonderful times together!*



### **1959 - Avrahm and the Panakootie Fish**

I'm not quite certain of the year, but my father, Avrahm Cassorla was spending time in Florida. He happened to be with his lifelong friend, Isaac Baruch.

Isaac was a white-haired, fun-loving man who loved a good tale.

The two of them told jokes and laughed about continually. So they were standing at this dock in Miami Beach. A fishing boat had just pulled in. My dad and Isaac were standing on the dock looking on as the catches were being hung and weighed.

A man standing near my father was puzzled by one unusual specimen.

"Hey, what kind of fish is that?" he asked my father.

My dad replied, "That one? Oh, that's a panakootie fish."

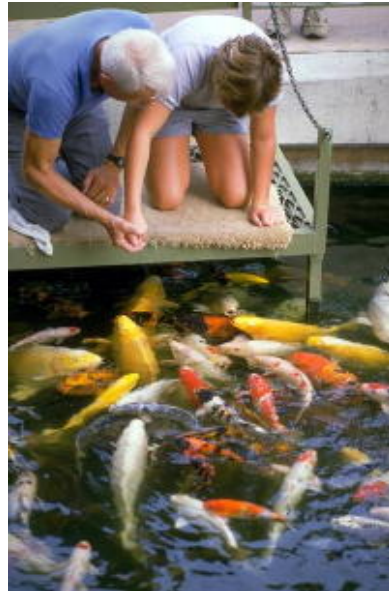
"Panakootie? I haven't heard of that kind. That's interesting."

"Yes, that's what it's called."

Isaac tried to keep a straight face but was practically busting a gut.

Betty adds:

They told and re-told this story many times. Ikie Hasson used to love telling this story and laughed each time.



### **Fire at Leo's, 1960**

**Leo went** out of business when his first store burned down. Many other stores burned down, too. Once I called Leo at his home looking for a kosher turkey.

Leo went into business with a man named Sandy Gordon, who had an existing business in Freeport. They tried to have a ready-made take out business, but it failed and they lost a lot of business.

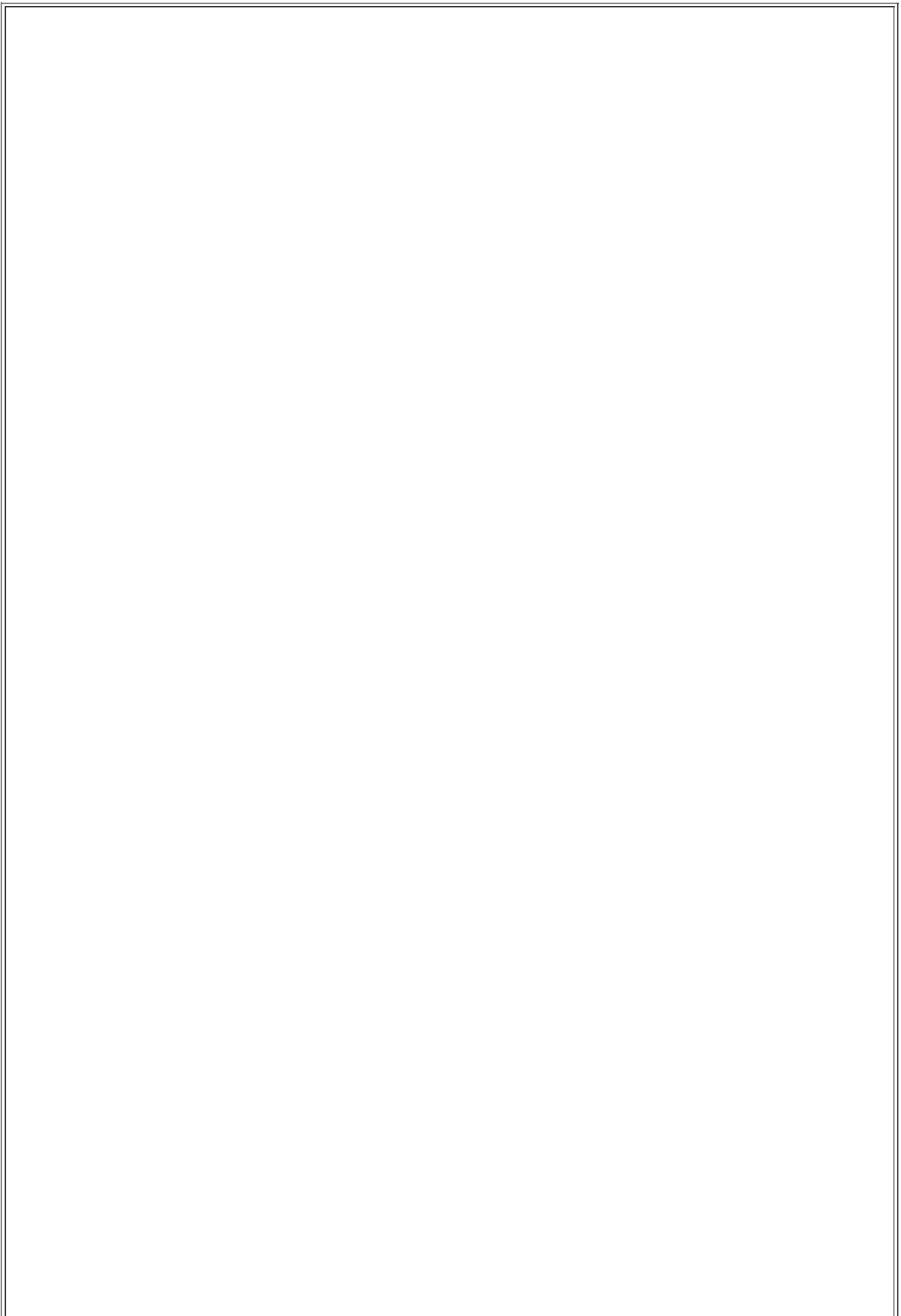
Then a Yiddish couple wanted to open a kosher butcher shop near Waldbaums. The three of them went into business together, but fights among the owners and a wife were constant. And then one day, Sandy died. No one told Mom about it because she loved him so much.

What was nice about Sandy was his sincerity. He was a blondish red-head. We saw at Jones Beach a lot with his wife and his two daughters.

When I finally figured out that Sandy had died, I asked, "Why didn't you let me know about Sandy's demise?" I wrote a nice letter to his wife and their two daughters. I told how I loved Sandy, and how much we loved the way he treated them.

I got a response from the wife that said, "How wonderful to know that my husband made such a powerful impression on people."

Leo went to Florida and retired.







Here we are, about to celebrate our 25th Wedding Anniversary in 1969.



*Dressed up in our finest, also in 1969. Left to right are: Kenny, Albert, me (Betty, seated), Lou and Marshall.*

### **1962 - Marshall Shaves with Lou!**

Marshall: " I was probably at the age between 4-6 years old. I used to get up every morning with Dad and he'd put lather on my face. He would give me a razor (same shaver I use today) with no blade in it but I didn't know any better.

"I would shave off the lather and feel just as grown up as a full adult. I would then put hot water on my face to take off the leftover lather and then Dad would put some after shave lotion on my face so I would smell good."

### **1993 Sarah Errera hears voices calling her to heaven**

Betty:

Sarah Arera had a daughter, Julia, with so many freckles. Julia married Dave.

Sarah married my Uncle Jaku. When Sarah almost died, she held my hand and said, "Rivka, I hear them calling me. I wil be dancing with your parents. Estata llamando. They want me to be with them now. This will be the last time I see you. "

She was kissing my hand and fingers. I kissed her good-bye, and she kissed my hand, and we left. I love to visit my cousins. Short visits, but always in contact.

## **2003 - Lou and Professor Block**

I like whatever courses he offers.

All are history courses, such as America Today or The World Today. He steers away from the usual question, such as capital punishment. Each session is an hour and a quarter. There's also an art course downstairs, but if I took it I'd fall for the hog stools!

In the anatomy course, I'd have problem with their parking lot. I could not find a space near. I walked forever, and I arrive late. I don't get lost.

**TO BE CONTINUED...**

**The End... for *now!***