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**John Nicholas Brown Center For American Civilization,
Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island**

Interviewer: Robin Perenchio

Narrator: Betty Adler

*** The spelling of the words that are highlighted still need to be confirmed by Betty Adler***

Robin Perenchio: All right so I am just going to test the microphone really quick. Will you say your name really quick?

Betty Adler: I'm Betty.

Perenchio: All right, so. Let me just find my questions. So first I am just going to go over. Hi Chelsea. Is it ok if we do it in here?

Chelsea Shriver: Yeah, I just wanted to make sure you found a spot.

Perenchio: Yeah, thanks. So, first we are going to go over really quickly how the interview works. I have a list of questions but you can basically shift the interview however you want if there is something you think I am leaving out. And I, so if you also, feel free to stop me if you want a break or whenever the time is enough for you, just let me know and we can stop. Also if there is anything I ask that you don't want to answer, that is fine too. So, of course. And I. Yeah so we went over the consent form. And you can, you signed it but you can take it away at the end of the interview if you don't feel comfortable.

Adler: Don't worry about it.

Perenchio: But I just want to make sure you know that. And, yeah so I will start with the questions. If that is ok.

Adler: Sure.

Perenchio: So, you mentioned that you were born in Germany. I was, you told me a little about it already, but I was just wondering if you could talk about how you came to Rhode Island.

Adler: Well, I was born in Germany, Aachen Also known as Aix-la-Chapelle, right at the Dutch and Belgian border and in fact Aachen was the first city that was conquered during the Battle of the Bulge and pretty much smashed to pieces, except much to my surprise the Jewish cemetery. I am Jewish and of course had to leave Germany because of the situation with Jews due to Hitler. And we left in May of 1939. The war started in September so we were very lucky. Moved to Belgium for a month where I have a great deal of family and then for nine months to Guatemala, Central America where I still have lots of family and some are rather prominent. My cousin Eduardo Stein just served four years as Vice President of Guatemala and finished January 14, 2008. Politics are very messy there; Thank God he has an excellent record and already has been approached for the presidency. That's another matter and that's four years away. We lived in Guatemala nine months, I went to school there and it was rather difficult because I neither knew English nor Spanish. But, we're young and we learn. And we had no options to begin with. And in 1940 March 17th we landed in America, New York and my father had come a little bit ahead of time. We were waiting for our quota to come up for the USA and his came up before

my stepmother's and mine. And we landed March 17th, 1940, New York in the harbor and were met by friends of ours from our former hometown. And several. Oh, the next day went to the Empire state building with a very close friend of mine, a girlfriend from Aachen, we went to school together. In fact, her dad was the Ford Motor company dealer in Aachen. That was quite special in that day and I still remember seeing this huge oil painting of Henry Ford in their living room. Little did we realize that he was quite an anti-Semite. We moved to Providence immediately. My dad had made contact here and lived with a wonderful family, the Fox family, both my stepsister and I, on Hope, they lived in Hope Street. And several days after arriving here went to Hope High. And I went to Hope High one year through the tenth grade and then had to start working and was married in 1948 to a wonderful guy, Carl Adler. Anyway. And I always enjoyed going to our business but I really didn't start working there full time till 1969. And I've been there ever since, full time, enjoying 99 percent of my time there. Once in a while there is a grouch in the middle, but all in all its a wonderful place to meet people, get to know them, to like them, to make friendships and do a good days work besides.

Perenchio: When you first came to Rhode Island did you ever go to Fox Point?

Adler: No. Not at all.

Perenchio: No? Where did you live when you first came here?

Adler: Well, we lived on Tenth Street on the East Side and I worked for some very nice companies: Spidell company that invented the expansion band. Also in 1940, Rhode Island was booming, especially Providence. We were the city, the center of costume jewelry for America. Coro, Trifari, Spidell, Kessman, many many very prominent companies had their headquarters in Providence. And many came from Forchheim, Germany and migrated to Providence. And, **Barninshop**, a big big tool company, Nicholson File, again a big company and also much textile. Well, my father and his family were in the textile business and that's exactly why we moved to Rhode Island, but my father never did settle in textile. Instead he was a salesman for other items.

Perenchio: Ok. Is there a reason that you would never went, that you didn't go to Fox Point?

Adler: I just. There was so need. When we went shopping we would take the trolley to downtown Providence. That is when downtown Providence was blooming. Gladdings and **Cherry Wicks** and Shepards and Boston Store and The Outlet and you could find anything you wished. And then the old ladies, and the young ones too, used to meet many times at Gibsons that was like a pastry shop where you could have coffee or tea. And then Shepards tea room that was a big meeting place. Again you could have lunch and desserts there. That was a wonderful department store. In fact, I saw some house ware items there that I still carry today. One was Ritz Towels and the other was an apron line and they'e still in business. Of course their merchandize is no longer made in America much to my sorrow. There is nothing quite like American made merchandize and it is very disappointing to see the many many items we carry at Adler's, forty thousand to be exact, and much of it is made in China. Which is in my opinion a very sad story.

Perenchio: Was, so Fox Point at that time, was it predominantly Irish or it was Portuguese?

Adler: I think it has always been very Portuguese. The Portuguese people came to the port here and settled here. It was a nice neighborhood and their families were here so they settled here.

And working at Adler's since 1969, I've waited many times on Portuguese customers. They're very family oriented and used to carry these huge sea bags made of canvas, very heavy beautiful material, American made, sold them in all sizes. But mostly they bought huge bags and filled them with clothing and other items and sent them to their families abroad to Portugal and the Azores, wherever the families lived. They were very kind and good people and to this day the Portuguese employees are the best employees at Adler's and I have experienced that over the years. Also, the Portuguese customers they're easy to please; they don't charge, they don't owe you money, they're a unique group of good people. And that's the experience we've had right along. Now Fox Point, Wickenden Street, my husband always told me about this, at one time had some bar rooms especially Manny Almeida's and they did not draw a very nice type of people and really was not good for this street. But once that barroom was closed, the street started blooming and today when you walk Wickenden Street it's very civilized. Our block has Picture This, a very nice framing store that I do business with at all times. Fellini's, lunch and pizza, Kabloom the flower shop and the Shell across the street. Oh, Residential Properties they have done extremely well. I remember when they started on Wickenden Street, right across from where our business is and in fact we owned that building at the time and they bought it and it was renovated and Liz Chase and Sally Lupita started the business. Two ladies, believe it or not, and made a tremendous success of it and today Residential has their own big building at the corner of Benefit and Wickenden and are the most prominent real estate company certainly on the East Side and probably Rhode Island, but that I don't, I am not sure of. The building where Kabloom is, we owned and that's where Residential started and many many years ago it used to belong to a lady, she never married and she owned that entire building and we put in a bid that the minute she would pass on that we could buy it which we did. And then going up Wickenden, there's a nice building where Utrech the art shop is today. Well, for many many years that was Dudley Hardware and that was an excellent hardware store. They mainly carried architectural hardware and the old generation passed on and the young generation didn't quite work as hard and unfortunately they closed some years ago because they were a quality outfit. I am trying to think what else. Unfortunately we have an awful lot of restaurants on Wickenden Street and a bit much but I don't support them. They don't get rich on me. I'm still, I am very very old fashioned: I have a sandwich that I take from home and eat at my desk in maybe three four minutes and on with the job. But today's generation isn't quite like that.

Perenchio: So you said that in the beginning you weren't as involved with Adler's. So how did you get involved?

Adler: Because of my marriage to an Adler. And that was a wonderful thing to happen. My mother died very young in Germany and my dad remarried and my stepmother was not a very nice person to say the least. She was very unkind to me and when I met my husband and he asked to marry me, I fell into a pot of gold. Both my mother-in-law and father-in-law were very very warm people, embraced me, welcomed me into the family and I was very lucky to end up with an Adler.

Perenchio: Do you remember, maybe not the first time, but do you remember sort of those original like the experiences you had at Alders? What it was like inside?

Adler: Well, once I met Carl. This was in [19]47, [19]48, January 1, [19]48. He used to have another store, also Adler's Army Navy, on Westminster Street, Upper Westminster Street. But, about eight or ten years later a throughway came that way and he had to close store. They took

the property. And then Carl came back to Wickenden Street and joined his brother Irving and my father-in-law who was the original owner of Adler's and my father-in-law, Fred Alder, started Adler's in 1919 with surplus from World War One and did engraving on the side to make a living during the Depression. And he had to support his wife and two children and was family oriented and wanted them to eat and live properly. And then when the men came home from war posts, Irving served in Europe and Carl in the Pacific, and when they returned they joined their father. And they decided to open the second shop on Westminster Street, also work clothes and army navy merchandize. And as I said, that had to be closed when the throughway came along. And then in nineteen early sixties, they had a vacant piece of property we owned the building and they decided to open a little bit of a hardware store. They noticed that there was one across the street and they're doing well, so we'll try it too. So they did and little by little they enlarged the hardware business and then we had a big renovation in 1974 and went into paint. We probably went into paint before but on the larger scale in 74 and about fifteen years ago we closed the army navy. Well army navy meant at that point that we sold a lot of work clothes, excellent lines: Carhard, Champion, Woolrich. Oh I wish I could think of all the good lines we had. Just the top of the line of work clothes and casual. And many people came to outfit their kids for camp in the summertime because we carried the camp trunks and tents and blankets, knapsacks, what do you call the kits for lunch?

Perenchio: Lunchboxes or?

Adler: Yeah, we had that too but, oh the kits. Can't think of it right now. But anything a young person needed for camping we could supply. And for work clothes my husband was terrific, the service was unsurpassed. He'd measure gentlemen or whoever came in for work clothes whether it be painters pants or carpenter's pants, whether it was coveralls or overalls. If they were too long he would say, "Sit down for a few minutes, I'll, while you wait, I'll alter them and there is no charge." Well today, that just doesn't happen and that was a wonderful way of building a business. If the sleeves needed shortening he did that and I remember at the time when the Alaskan pipeline was laid the men came into buy Carhaid quilted coveralls that were a beautiful outfit and many times the legs were too long and he had to shorten them with the zipper. Take the zipper out and shorten them, put the zipper back in. It might have taken him hours but never charged a penny for alterations. He was a good guy.

Perenchio: Wow, sounds like it. What, who were your customers back then when you were doing that?

Adler: Well, many contractors like today and painters and woodworkers.

Perenchio: Were they mostly people from Fox Point or all over Providence? Or...

Adler: Yeah, initially mostly Fox Point, but then the word spread that we have good merchandize, good service and today mostly I work in the office, but many times I work at the register and people will make remarks, "Oh I hate Home Depot," "Oh I wish I hadn't gone to Wal-Mart." Well I'm thinking, but I never say it, "Well you should have come to Adler's first." But of course, I try to be diplomatic and not say what I think. But Adler's does give excellent service: when the old ladies come in with broken flashlights that probably cost a dollar ninety-eight, well they don't work. So we have to test the batteries, we have to test the bulbs and we just might sell a set of batteries or replace a light bulb, but they leave happy and we serve them

and they can use that old flashlight for a dollar ninety eight again. And we have many RISD students that work on projects and my husband always used to say, "Boy, sometimes I spend almost a half hour for thirty cents. But we never know, those customers from RISD may someday be an important designer, painter, who knows." But we serve them all: big and small. Small sales, medium sales, big sales we do it with a smile. We may not always feel like smiling, but we do try to smile.

Perenchio: Definitely, wow. So it seems like the service you can give is really great. And what is it like running a business with your family. Is that?

Adler: Well, my mother-in-law was a very smart lady. She was born in Russia, had very little education, but boy she always impressed on all of us, Peace at Any Price. At one point there were five Adlers working together, then four and today three. Of course, I am the antique. We all speak to each other, we all get along, we do have differences in opinions, especially me and I voice them but we talk and we get along and that's very good.

Perenchio: Hmmm. So what has your role been at Adler's since you've been working there?

Adler: Well, I take care of the money, the register and housewares. My baby is housewares. The men don't want any part of that of course. So, I enjoy doing that. I buy... I like very much being at Adler's. The customers are fabulous and they come from all over. And some are rare jewels that you would never meet otherwise. We've had some many dignitaries in our business: John Kennedy, Ethel Kennedy, Mrs. Carter and on and on. More or less. Oh, what's the actor, Devito. What's his first name, his wife?

Perenchio: Oh, Danny Devito?

Adler: Yeah, Danny Devito and his wife. I mean, I could go on an on. When their kids go to Brown or RISD and they come to shop at Adler's. And it's fun. A lot of fun.

Perenchio: So you have probably seen a lot of changes on Wickenden Street and in the neighborhood.

Adler: Well its getting better all the time. No doubt about that. It's a good street. Many antique shops and as I say, plenty of eateries and I feel we do have a very nice building and we hope to do some renovating this year which should be something else. Don't look forward to it, but it will enhance the business. I hope.

Perenchio: Mm hmm. Did the relocation of the highway affect Adler's at all? I know in the...

Adler: Well, we aren't looking forward to it at all because I think they are going to close the entrance and exit. But I am not sure about that. We've been trying to find out but they are still not quite sure. But, I mean people will find their way. And it's just amazing how the word about Adler's has spread. We have people, many people, from all over Rhode Island, from Newport, to Newport, Bristol, um what are some of the others, South County and Situate, Smithfield, nearby Massachusetts. We do carry upscale merchandise to begin with. We have fabulous fabrics and wallpapers in our decorating department, mostly European and very much upscale. We also offer service when people can't quite decide what they want. We have a home service where our decorators go to the home to advise and the same in our paint department. It's amazing some

people can't decide what color to paint their bedroom or kitchen or the outside of the house and again we offer a service to go to their home, advise them and we have a very extensive line of decorative hardware which is just amazing from inexpensive American goods to very well designed goods from abroad. We carry hardware, decorative hardware from Britain, Sweden, Italy, Portugal, France and we're very proud of some of these items; they are unique. And of course, we have regular hardware, cleaning supplies, housewares, so we have about 40,000 items in our store. And unfortunately today, daily do we receive increases in prices. It makes it very very difficult. We are constantly constantly changing prices, which is not good, but that is how our economy in 2008. I hope with the elections, things will change a bit.

Perenchio: So you were mentioning before that generations have come to Adler's. Um are I guess I was wondering what kind of role Adler's plays you think in creating those kind of relationships and what kind of role it plays in the community.

Adler: Well I think we have always tried to be very nice and thoughtful. For instance when we know that a customer lost a maid or someone close we pay a condolence call, we make contributions. When someone has a happy event, we try to pick something out from the store and give it to them. I've done that many many times. Just today someone came and paid us a very nice compliment and I gave her some gifts from our houseware department. And people remember that, they like that, they like to be acknowledged and we do to. We love to be told that we're a good store and that we've served them well and that they're happy. What could be better? That's music to our ear, the best kind of advertising that can happen. Incidentally up to 1993 we never advertised anywhere and all our business was word of mouth and even today the majority of our business is word of mouth. And I must say, one little thing. Two years ago we started advertising on NPR and I pushed very hard for that because I felt that our type of customer listens to NPR, which is a wonderful station. And last year they asked me to underwrite it. And was it just amazing to this day, almost daily people will comment on that little bit of underwriting. And it shows you how important NPR is to our community.

Perenchio: Wow, definitely. Well I don't make anything too personal, but what, did your husband talk about Adler's from his childhood? Would you feel comfortable talking about that?

Adler: Yes, they used to live in South Providence the Adler family: my father-in-law, my mother-in-law, Irving my brother-in-law and Carl. And they used to walk over the Bridge when they were little to bring the father lunch and when they were about 9 or 10 they started working. And my son started working when he was about eleven, and he was so small he used to cut keys but he had to stand on the box. And it didn't do them any harm. Irving's three kids, the oldest one is Jacob who is an outright genius, Harvard graduate PhD philosophy. Now he is also a Rabbi, brilliant young man. He worked at Adler's till he went to college. My nephew is Marc's partner today, Harry. He started young and so did my niece. They all got their big start for pocket money at Adler's. It didn't do them any harm, if anything I think it was good for them.

Perenchio: So did Carl know that he as going to work in the business when he was older or?

Adler: Well I think, first when he graduated high school he worked for my mother-in-law's brother, at Standard Loan, that was a loan shop on Washington Street in Providence. Then he went to the army and the minute he came home he worked for his father-in-law, and then when Irving came home, well my father-in-Law, Carl's father, and Irving the same, and that is when

they decided to open another store but they always worked together and always got along thank God. It doesn't happen too much today unfortunately. Family businesses go down the drain and it's very unfortunate. We're lucky. We're here 89 years and hope to be around a while longer.

Perenchio: So when you met Carl, he was, where was he working?

Adler: At that time they had the store on Westminster Street.

Perenchio: Would you mind telling that story again how you met? The blind date?

Adler: Well, how did we meet. We met on New Year's Eve forty seven-forty eight. I had a blind date and that fell through and the young man from Worcester said he couldn't make it so a girlfriend of mine set me up with Carl. And we liked each other and we carried on a wonderful friendship through the year and then in May Carl decided to take me to meet the family. Boy was that an evening. I didn't know what to expect. And, they, Carl said you know we have a Kosher home and I expected this old fashioned lady, this big fat lady, to come down the steps and they had just moved into a new home five days ago and when my mother-in-law came down the steps, a cute little lady with grey curly hair and a big smile, that took care of that: it was instant love. And my father-in-law was very warm and nice and then Carl's best friend, Billy Peyton, came to inspect me. Well, we had met at his house, but he had to make sure that I showed up and then my mother-in-law's sister Celia and her daughter Claudia they had to come and look me over too. So I must have passed inspection because we married that year on December 26th, 1948 and came moved in across the street incidentally where we lived two and a half years till we moved into our own home. It was this small back door entrance furnished apartment. We didn't have a telephone. We didn't own a car. But we worked hard and little by little things got better. We were very cautious, saved our money and it's certainly paid off over the years.

Perenchio: Hm mm wow. So was, when you first arrived in Rhode Island was the Jewish community pretty close? Like.

Adler: Yeah, I remember. First of all Rabbi Goldman, we lived on the East Side of Providence on Tenth Street and one of the big temples was Temple Emmanuel Conservative and they tried to make us welcome. And I will never forget, they had a German Jewish Cantor, Cantor **Hon Enzer**, and when I went to services he sang the very same tune that I learned in Germany and it made me feel very good and much at home. And it helped a lot and little by little I got friends and things became a little easier. It's not easy. My folks had no money to buy me new clothes, I had funny looking German clothes and didn't know the language too well. It wasn't easy when I came but by the time I married Carl and everything it was so much better. And I had worked right along at very good companies, **Adolp Miller, Spidell, Motoroma, The Feldman Family** all very nice places to work and I enjoyed that.

Perenchio: Oh, wow. And when did you have your son?

Adler: In 1951.

Perenchio: Uh huh.

Adler: And then I just worked part time until he finished high school. I always wanted to be home when he came home. Which I felt was very important. You can always make money and very easy to spend, but I felt it was much more important to be conservative and take care of my one and only son and be with him. And to this day, we work together which is pretty good.

Perenchio: Did he, when he was a kid, did he want to work at Adler's?

Adler: No.

Perenchio: No?

Adler: He went to, of course high school system in Cranston where we lived at the time and then he went to BU. And then went on for at Boston College for a Master's and passed the CPA exam. He's an accountant by profession. And then he married Jan in 1974 and thank God they're still married and have two terrific kids. Because today that is already a big accomplishment. And, they moved around a bit, they left Providence well during their college years and some years after they lived in Boston, came to Providence. Moved on to New York, Westchester County, Chicago, and then came back to Rhode Island when Rachel our granddaughter was two years old at the time and Jonathon my grandson, our grandson, was born in Rhode Island when Women and Infants just opened in their new location. And then they grew up in the Barrington Area and went to the Barrington School System.

Perenchio: And, so he's worked there for how many years would you say?

Adler: Marc? Since 80 or 85. So close to thirty years.

Perenchio: So, I guess. Well, I sort of thought that hardware was more of a male profession. How was it being a woman in a hardware store, did you feel any...

Adler: No, I just don't sell it. I don't sell any hardware, I don't know enough about it. And we want to make sure that the customer that is being served by Adler's is being served correctly. I will never sell, none of us will ever sell, a item that doesn't seem adequate for the customer's needs. I would never permit that. That's not our style. We don't sell to sell, we want to make sure it is the right fit for the customer. And I feel that is very important. Some stores are very pushy and unethical and we have a very good name. My mother-in-law always said, "You can't buy a name, you make a name." And I feel that we have a very good name in the community. No matter where I go I meet people I know and it's a pleasure to have nice things to say about our business. It's just amazing. That's worth a great deal.

Perenchio: Well it seems like, so your mother-in-law also worked at Adler's? So she was a strong woman.

Adler: Yeah, until she was 85 years old. I should have shown you the picture of her.

Perenchio: I will have to come by and see it sometime. So until she was 85 she worked there? Wow. So she worked there while you were working there too?

Adler: Yes, we worked together.

Perenchio: So you guys had a really good relationship too?

Adler: Very good, no problem. She always stuck up for me. I was never wrong as far as she was concerned. That's pretty good.

Perenchio: What was her name? Sorry.

Adler: Esther Adler.

Perenchio: Esther Adler.

Adler: Fred and Esther.

Perenchio: So, um, I'm sorry. You said that Marc had one brother?

Adler: Well, he is gone.

Perenchio: How are we doing on time?

Adler: It's ok.

Perenchio: So lets see. So before you met Carl had you heard of Adler's before?

Adler: No, not really no. My father was a home repair person and he might have known of the store, but I never had anything to do with the hardware business. Sorry but.

Perenchio: Oh no. Let's see. Well, we talked about a little about how Wickenden Street and Fox Point has changed. Have you noticed any big changes, there's more restaurants, but maybe who is coming to your store, over the past, since you have been there over forty years?

Adler: Well, naturally the homeowners that own all the beautiful homes on the East Side, we try to have merchandise that is needed in the Colonial and old homes. That's terribly important because no one else carries these items today. And we are known, this is very important, we are known to be the store that has everything. I hear that every single day. I come in here and I get what I can, what I truly need. And I feel that in itself is a big compliment to Adler's, especially with homes that are a hundred and two hundred-years-old and it's not easy to buy these items on our part and it's even harder for the consumer to find them. So that is one of the very good things that we have a reputation for.

Perenchio: Mm hmm. Oh wow. What else do you do besides work? You seem pretty busy.

Adler: I do community work. I am on the women's board at Miriam's Hospital, which I think is a fabulous hospital. My husband volunteered there for four days, four hours for nine years until almost the day that he passed on. He very much enjoyed it and he used to volunteer there from eight to twelve in the morning and then come to work at our business. He thought it was very important. And I had been a patient there many times and also I'm on the overseers board at **Tanaris** which is the Jewish home facility in Warwick. Unfortunately our original Jewish home closed and the new one is smaller but well run and we meet, try to solve problems. And I have

always been active in Hadassah, which is the largest Jewish women's organization in America. My husband and I traveled a great deal. This past year, 07, I had the pleasure of traveling to China with my son and daughter-in-law and my two grandchildren. And, Christmas New Year, 07-08, the five of us traveled to Israel. That was my fourteenth trip to Israel among other places we have traveled. And I think today, to have traveled three generations is unique and says something for the Adler family.

Perenchio: Definitely

Adler: It really does, its not usual any longer. Too bad. When I see what happens to families, its very sad. But that is another story. You have to work at it, its not always easy.

Perenchio: You guys have managed to really remain strong, strong bonds huh?

Adler: And you give. You can't take or you take little and give. Very important to give of your time, your energy and your money too. Very important. We worked hard, but we've been blessed. Very much blessed.

Perenchio: Let's see. So when you were a little girl and you thought about, like what were some of your dreams for when you were older?

Adler: I wanted to work in either a flower shop or a travel agency. But as you can see I ended up at a hardware store.

Perenchio: I could see how they are all linked together maybe. Oh wow.

Adler: I'm very happy with my life, very very happy. And of course, loosing my husband two years ago was not easy but I went back to work immediately. And friends and relatives have been absolutely unbelievably warm and caring and I try to give back whatever I can. And its been a full and busy life. Very full and very busy, thank God.

Perenchio: Yeah, well it seems so nice that the store, Adlers, that your family is there and then you have an even bigger family with the staff. Definitely. Just being there today I noticed that you all seemed very close and very comfortable with each other.

Adler: Yes, in fact Sandy. Well we've worked together fifteen years. She's a star. She is absolutely wonderful: always smiling and always helpful. And the computer and I don't get along, at my age forget it. She always smiles, she always helps me and one of the girls mentioned, you know we really should have a baby shower for Sandy. Well Jewish people don't believe in baby showers. But I had a luncheon for the women at Adler's a couple of Sundays ago in my home. We were 13 and it was just wonderful to sit around and be friends and talk. It went very well, everybody was very happy to be together. Luckily, the people who do work for us seem happy to be together. There's no in house fighting, or, of course some get along better than others, but in all in all we are quite lucky. People seem to be happy. And that's very important when you work a full day together, very important. Well, also Mark and Harry are very easy going and that helps a great deal.

Perenchio: So, some of the people that work for you are from Fox Point as well?

Adler: Yeah, Judy the cashier lives a block up and she's been with us twenty years and Sandy is Portuguese, John. So we have a number of Portuguese employees and they are the stars, they are excellent.

Perenchio: Has there ever been tension been tension between Adler's and the Fox Point neighborhood?

Adler: No, so that's good. Not that I know of.

Perenchio: Wow, that's good. I think, lets see. I don't know. Are there any, I guess from the earlier history of Adler's were there any stories about the beginnings of Adler's that you remember your family telling?

Adler: Well, the only thing I know is that the register didn't ring then as it did today and I always tell my employees that every time that register rings, its not profit. There are many times that people bring back damaged goods, they don't want them, they want credit, they want their money back. To stay in business today, to pay your employees and to pay your bills is not easy. Especially 2008: recession, war in Iraq, lots of unemployment. It will be very interesting what the future will bring, both in business and in our country. I think this is quite a year to be alive and witness history.

Perenchio: Yeah, definitely.

Adler: Quite unbelievable. I don't want to go into it.

Perenchio: So when it was, when the Adler's started it in 1919?

Adler: Yes, they started it right after World War One. Of course that wasn't easy and I am sure World War Two wasn't easy either. My father-in-law and mother-in-law, became involved too and their sons were in the war. And I am sure that wasn't easy. And then later to get merchandise again and now all the imports. So, business is not easy, especially today that's why so many family businesses have gone down the tubes because of Wal-Mart and Target and Home Depot, Lowes. I have never been to those shops, I really don't have the time to go around, I am not interested. But they are very tough competition, no doubt about it. But I think what saves Adler's is the service, that's number one.

Perenchio: Yeah.

Adler: And that we have the things that our customers need and want.

Perenchio: Were the Adler family from Providence? Or were they immigrants as well?

Adler: No my father-in-law was from Romania and my mother-in-law from Russia.

Perenchio: So how did they get the capital to start Adler's?

Adler: Sorry, I really don't know.

Perenchio: Don't worry its ok.

Adler: I really don't know. I never asked. That is a good question, sorry.

Perenchio: That's ok. Do you know if they were, when was Carl born?

Adler: 1919. He was 87 when he passed away.

Perenchio: Oh wow, so around the same time

Adler: And he worked believe it or not he worked, he was diagnosed with lung cancer in February and he died in December and he worked till seven weeks until he passed on. Up to the age of 87, he was just extremely determined. And luckily died at home. only in bed three days, he was just very courageous and never complained. It was a loss. We were married 57 years, well two weeks away from 57 years. And my brother-in-law had severe stroke and he too came back to work despite being paralyzed on the left side and he too had such determination. Many times I threw up my hands and said Irving please, he was cutting glass and all sorts of things even though he was paralyzed on the left side. Those boys worked hard and made a goal of the business.

Perenchio: So the business was started the same year he was born?

Adler: Yes. Actually 1918. I am incorrect, my husband was born in 1918 and the business started 1919. I am sorry about that.

Perenchio: Well that is still close. Still growing up with it with the business. Definitely. So you probably had a lot of memories from his childhood. Oh wow. Well great. Well I think

Adler: That's it I hope.

Perenchio: Yeah, I think those are all my questions.

Adler: We have good police protection right now, we have a grammar school that is the best in Providence, Gregorian School and we have excellent police protection. So let's hope that Fox Point will start, will keep blooming and booming.

Perenchio: Definitely. Well thank you. I really appreciate your time.

Adler: Oh it was a pleasure. You know this was much better than the store because I could have never sat down there. Thank you so much.

Perenchio: No, thank you.