

EI-101

SALLY (SURKA) KLEINMAN GURIAN

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US: WILLIAMSBURG, BROOKLYN

LEVINE: This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service. Today is Friday, September 27, 1991. I'm here at Ellis Island with Sally Gurian, who came through Ellis Island from Russia in 1914 when she was eight years old. It's very nice to have you here today.

GURIAN: It's nice to be here, thank you.

LEVINE: Good. And why don't we just start with your telling me your birth date.

GURIAN: My birth date is March 15, 1906.

LEVINE: And where were you born?

GURIAN: I was born in Russia in a little town near Odessa. I don't know the name of the town.

LEVINE: And could you describe the town at all?

GURIAN: Well, it was quite small, although it was a little countrified, and we had a little brook in the back where my mother used to wash clothes and hit it against the rocks. It was very small, and when it snowed we had lots of fun because the brook would freeze over and we'd sort of skate around there, and it was quite, that, I remember that.

LEVINE: You remember the brook. And how about the house you lived in? Do you remember anything about that?

GURIAN: It was quite small, and we shared with another family, and we sort of had a room, just sleeping, and one room for cooking. There was no large dining room or anything like that.

LEVINE: And how many of you were in your immediate family?

GURIAN: How far?

LEVINE: How many?

GURIAN: How many? Our immediate family was my mother, father, my sister and I. We were just four.

LEVINE: And what was your mother's maiden name?

GURIAN: Her name was Dolgapyat.

LEVINE: Can you spell that?

GURIAN: Well, I use my own spelling because I really don't know exactly how they spell it, but I sounded it out and I spelled it D-O-L-G-A-P-Y-A-T.

LEVINE: And your mother's first name?

GURIAN: Molly, Malke in Russia, M-A-L-K-E.

LEVINE: And how about your father's name?

GURIAN: My father was Pinchus in Russia and he changed it to Philip when we came to America.

LEVINE: And how about your brother and sister . . .

GURIAN: I have no brothers and sister, just one sister, Ruth Feldman.

LEVINE: Okay. And were you the youngest or the oldest?

GURIAN: I was the older.

LEVINE: The older of the two, uh-uh.

GURIAN: And she was younger than I. It's a year-and-a-half difference.

LEVINE: Okay. Now, so the house had two rooms, essentially, a cooking area and a sleeping area.

GURIAN: Yes, right.

LEVINE: And do you remember, did you have electricity?

GURIAN: No. We had lamps, kerosene lamps. No electricity.

LEVINE: And how about bathrooms?

GURIAN: Well, the, we had sort of a, we had a bathroom. It was not very up-to-date or anything. And we slept on, my sister and I slept on a, in Russia they call it a prepechik, and it's sort of an oven underneath, and it's built in. And we, my mother would spread blankets, and we'd sleep on it.

LEVINE: Oh. And can you remember anything else about that house?

GURIAN: I just, I couldn't remember too much about it. It was very ordinary. It was just very plain. And we had, I remember we had a nice neighbor and they had a young boy about my age, maybe a little older. And we also had some friends and we used to play checkers and childrens' games, and it was very nice living there. And in the wintertime, of course, we would all go out and skate. It was fun.

LEVINE: Now, had you been in school while you were in Russia?

GURIAN: No. It was, at that time it was very difficult to get into a school. But we had a private tutor that would come in, and it was cheaper to have that than to go to school. We were very poor. And I used to, I used to write a little Russian and a little Hebrew. And I started quite late, and I didn't get

too much schooling until I came here.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. So you had a tutor come in to your house?

GURIAN: Yes. Actually it was a student who went to school, and on his off hours he would come in and teach my sister and me whatever. So we learned a little of it.

LEVINE: Now, how about your father. What did he do for work?

GURIAN: My father was a blacksmith, and for fun we would go and help the billows, blow, you know, sway the billows so they would blow while he was getting the fire done. And he used to shoe horses, and . . .

LEVINE: Did he have his own shop, then?

GURIAN: He had his own shop, yes.

LEVINE: Aside, apart from the house where you lived.

GURIAN: Apart, well, after a while we had to move and we had to move into, out into the country because for some reason we couldn't stay there any longer. And I don't remember what the reason was, but I know we moved in and he got himself a shop in the country. And we moved there, and there we had our own little house, and we, and he, and we used to go down and spend time with our father when we, we didn't go to school. We ran around with bare feet, and the only time we had shoes on was Saturday,

because that was the holy holiday.

LEVINE: Now, were there other blacksmiths in town?

GURIAN: There was another blacksmith in town, and when we moved down, my dad was a very good blacksmith, and he took some of his customers away. And he was so angry that he burned down our house while we were asleep. It had a thatched roof.

LEVINE: Oh!

GURIAN: And we had to run, go out in the middle of the night, and we couldn't go back to our house. So we had a priest who was very nice. And we, he let us stay there overnight. And my mother was a very good baker. When we finally found another place to live, she would bake strudels and things and bring it over to him.

LEVINE: Now, this was the little house in the country that got burned down.

GURIAN: This was the little house in the country, yes.

LEVINE: Wow. So was it largely a Jewish town, or was it a mixed town?

GURIAN: No, it wasn't. It was mixed, and there were a lot of mostly Gentile people, I would say. But we got along with everybody there. And, you know, we had friends.

LEVINE: And were you a religious family?

GURIAN: Well, we were religious, yes. But they had a shul not too far away, and there was always a horse and buggy that we could take. And in the wintertime, my grandmother was living in another part of the countryside, and we would go by sleigh in the winter and it was fun. It was a lot of fun.

LEVINE: Now, what grandmother was this? Was this your mother's mother?

GURIAN: This was my mother's mother. And my uncle that took, got us to America, was the one that, it was his mother as well. This was the only brother she had.

LEVINE: I see. Now, did you have an extended family that was around in that area? Did your father have . . .

GURIAN: No. All my father's people were in another town, and they, we never got together with them as far as I can remember.

LEVINE: I see.

GURIAN: He had, oh, yes. He had one nephew that would come and see us occasionally from the other town, but he had no family nearby.

LEVINE: I see. And how about the Jewish people and the Gentiles of that town? Did they get along?

GURIAN: We got along with most of them. The only one that we didn't get along with was the other blacksmith.

LEVINE: Oh. I see. And you say your mother was a good cook.

GURIAN: Oh, she was a marvelous cook and baker, and she always, she, all our friends, she had our friends over to the house, and she always baked. Because the priest was so nice to us she would, every Friday when she baked her challah and her strudels, she would bring some over for him and his family and not, you know, people there.

LEVINE: Can you think of any dishes that you particularly remember that she made? Any dishes, any kinds of food?

GURIAN: Food? Oh, yes! She would make, of course, chicken and soup and gefilte fish, which she made fresh, which I don't do here. (she laughs) And she always baked challah on Friday, and all kind of cookies. She was a very good cook.

LEVINE: Now, what would be a typical meal that you would have, like . . .

GURIAN: During the week we would just have, we had very simple meals. My mother would make chopped, you know, the hamburgers, and we would have, we would have some salads, but not too much salad. And I remember we had, for lunch we would have black bread and we'd have some herring with it. You know, that was real Russian meals. And Friday

night was the big dinner, and Saturday we couldn't cook or anything and we had to have what was left over, whatever we could have cold.

LEVINE: Now, what kind of a town was it? Was it a farming town? Is that what people mostly did, farm?

GURIAN: Well, no. A lot of people had businesses, and they, and some went to work, and some went to school. But they all, you know, they had, there was no cars. One time I remember somebody came in with an automobile, and everybody ran to the window to look at it, because we had never seen an automobile before. You know, that was 1914, before. Before 1914.

LEVINE: Did your father have a horse and wagon?

GURIAN: A horse and wagon, yes. We had, my father fixed wagons also, and he shoed horses.

LEVINE: Now, what was your father like as far as his temperament?

GURIAN: Well, he was, he was a very hard worker, and he loved us, but he wasn't as responsive as my mother was, but he was always very good to us, and we always loved, my sister and I would always love to hang around the shop when we had nothing else to do. And it was fun just watching there, and it was nice.

LEVINE: And how about your mother? What was she like? How would you describe her?

GURIAN: My mother was wonderful. She was so good. And she was, everybody loved her. All the people in town loved her. And she was beautiful, too. She was very lovely. I look like my father. (she laughs) But he was very nice, too.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, now, how did it get decided that you would come to America?

GURIAN: Well, my uncle came to America first. And we were, he kept in touch with us. That was my mother's brother. And he finally suggested that we come over, but he said he could only bring my father over first, and we also started to have problems. If we had to move from one place to another, we had to report to the government and get a license for it. You couldn't just move and move in wherever you wanted to. They didn't allow you to do that. And after that, after our house burned down we were very unhappy and we were frightened. And my uncle sent for my father. And when he was here about a year-and-a-half we were able to join him. My uncle got him started on his job as an ironworker. Here they didn't have blacksmith's jobs, and he was good at it, and a year-and-a-half later we came. And my aunt, and my uncle was working, but my aunt, whom he was married to, came with my father to take us off the ship.

LEVINE: Oh. Okay. Now, what was your uncle's name?

GURIAN: Lou Schnitzer, and his name is on the Wall here, too.

LEVINE: And what did your Uncle Lou do when he came to America before he . . .

GURIAN: Well, he started with some sort of tin boxes, and eventually got into silversmithing and things like that, and he got into his own business.

LEVINE: So then he was able to send money for your father to come, and your father got into iron work.

GURIAN: Iron work. He was an iron worker here. And we came over on, we came over on a maiden voyage, German ship.

LEVINE: Well, tell me how you got from your little town to the port where you were from.

GURIAN: We had to go to Kiev. And we got a wagon to take us, and a few belongings that we took with us.

LEVINE: Can you remember anything that your mother took?

GURIAN: That we did take?

LEVINE: Yes.

GURIAN: Well, we took a little clothes and some bedding and we just had packages, you know, bundles. And we took that with us, and a few of our clothes. We didn't take too much. We took, my mother had taken a few things,

silverware, you know, spoons and things like that, spoons and knives and forks. And . . .

LEVINE: Can you remember getting, packing and getting ready to leave?

GURIAN: Yes. It was quite a thing to, we packed a few things. We got on the wagon and the man who drove us to a place in Kiev where we, I guess they got all, the immigrants that were going to America. And then we had, from there I think we stayed overnight. And then from there we had to go, like, on a barge and meet this ship mid-ocean. And that was quite a ways, you know. And we got on the ship and the ship was brand new. We went steerage, but everything was so nice and new, and everybody was really very nice to us.

LEVINE: Well, now, when you were leaving can you remember anything your mother told you, or any of your thoughts, expectations about coming?

GURIAN: Well, you know, everybody thought that when you get to America there's gold on the floor for you to pick up. And when we arrived, of course, there was no such thing. But, as a matter of fact, we had to stay with some relatives until we were able to get our own little apartment.

LEVINE: Well, what was it like for that year-and-a-half, was it, between the time when your father had already come here.

GURIAN: Yeah, he came.

LEVINE: And you were still there.

GURIAN: Well, he came here, and he would send us money to live on, and eventually we got, you know, visas to come over. And . . .

LEVINE: Did your father write to your mother, then, and tell her things about . . .

GURIAN: He wrote, yes. He would write and tell us, and just as soon, he would say that just as soon as he could we would come over, but he had accumulated a little money here.

LEVINE: Can you remember anything that he wrote that your mother told you that your father had said about being here in the United States?

GURIAN: Yes. Well, he said he thought we would like being here, and he would get us over here just as soon as possible, and that my uncle who was helping us by helping him so that we could come over here. And that he missed us and he would like us to come over. But, you know, it was funny when we arrived we didn't recognize him because he had a beard when he was in Europe, and when we came here he was clean-shaven. But . . .

LEVINE: Well, we'll get to that reunion.

GURIAN: Oh, okay.

LEVINE: But let's just say, do you remember anything about the ride to Kiev or

staying overnight before you took the barge?

GURIAN: Well, the only thing that I can remember is, you know, Kiev is a very big city and we weren't even used to anything so big.

LEVINE: That was the first time you had seen a big city, I suppose.

GURIAN: The first time that we had been to Kiev. So we were, of course, very surprised. And one other thing, we never saw black people where we were. And when we arrived there we saw some. And at first we were a little shocked because we didn't know what to think, especially as a child, you know. And, but outside of that we enjoyed being there. It was very, you know, it was much nicer living than where we were, because we were so poor there. And then they told us all, there was a few of us waiting to get on board ship, from other towns as well. And they took us to this barge, and we all got on there, and there was a few hours. I don't remember exactly how long, but we met the ship mid-ocean.

LEVINE: And what was the name of that ship?

GURIAN: I think it was called the Vaterland, (she repeats in English) the Fatherland, you know. And I'm not sure of this, but I was under the impression always that when America got into war that they captured the ship and changed it to the Leviathan. I'm not quite sure. That has to be researched, but I thought that that's what had happened. But we had a very nice voyage.

LEVINE: So the ship was brand-new, and you were in steerage, so you were in the hold of the ship with a number of other people?

GURIAN: Well, you know, they had partitions rather than, a small, well, what I can remember it sounded, it seemed to me that they were all open places and, but everything was very clean. And we were able to, you know, get on deck, and it was a very short ride from Monday to Friday.

LEVINE: Very short.

GURIAN: We left May 13th and arrived here May 18th.

LEVINE: Now, do you remember playing with other children aboard ship, or what was it like for those days?

GURIAN: They had some children there, and we didn't, I don't think we played too much on board ship. My sister and my mother were seasick, but I was lucky enough not to be. But the sailors were very nice to us. They would give us oranges and talk to us, you know. And . . .

LEVINE: Were they speaking Russian, or . . .

GURIAN: They spoke some Russian and some German, and we spoke Russian at that time, believe it or not. I don't remember it now, but we did speak Russian there.

LEVINE: And how about food? What did you do for food aboard ship?

GURIAN: Oh, aboard ship they gave us food.

LEVINE: Did you go to a dining room, or how did you eat?

GURIAN: Yes, they had a dining room. But, of course, there was different class, different dining rooms for first class or whatever. We never got to that part of the ship.

LEVINE: Oh. Now, can you remember the ship coming into the New York Harbor?

GURIAN: Oh, yes. It was the most thrilling. We got into the harbor and we saw the Statue of Liberty, and everybody cheered. And as we got off all the children got little American flags and we got little boxes of candy when we got off.

LEVINE: Someone from the ship was giving these, or . . .

GURIAN: They gave it to us on board ship before we got off, as we were getting off. And we were all, you know, we all had to be inoculated on board ship. We had to get shots for smallpox before we got off, and everybody had to be examined.

LEVINE: Do you remember that procedure?

GURIAN: Oh, very well. I do remember that. Yeah, I have a, you know, a mark. And we, the people that were, had anything wrong with them, they weren't

well, they had trouble with their eyes or anything. You know, they were, a lot of people were sent back, unfortunately. We were very fortunate. We weren't detained at all.

LEVINE: Do you remember seeing Ellis Island for the first time?

GURIAN: Oh, yes. It didn't look like this.

LEVINE: No? What did it look like?

GURIAN: It was much smaller, and all you see were a lot of people. And everybody, you know, waiting for somebody to, somebody had to come and get them.

LEVINE: And so you were not detained.

GURIAN: We were not detained.

LEVINE: So you were through in a matter of hours, or how long?

GURIAN: Yes, we were through in a matter of hours.

LEVINE: And do you remember anything about the building or being inside the Great Hall here, or . . .

GURIAN: Yes. Well, we were in, and I looked around. As a child nothing impressed me very much except the Statue of Liberty. That was very thrilling.

LEVINE: Do you remember what you knew about it at the time, or what you

thought, or . . .

GURIAN: I knew nothing about it. It was such a great surprise, and it was thrilling to be here. It was wonderful.

LEVINE: Now, can you remember your father coming to meet you?

GURIAN: Yes, we do. I remember him coming with my aunt. I didn't know her at all. And we didn't recognize my father at first. (she laughs) But then he came over. Of course, he knew us, so it was very nice seeing him and being with him.

LEVINE: Let's see. And I suppose your mother was also very happy to see your father.

GURIAN: She was very happy to be here with my father, and my aunt was wonderful to us. I remember she bought us ice cream, but we weren't used to ice cream. It was too cold.

LEVINE: Okay. So then your father and your aunt, your mother and your sister and yourself. You left, and do you remember your first impression of New York City when you first got off the boat.

LEVINE: I wasn't too impressed, because we didn't, actually I don't remember being in Manhattan or anything. We immediately went to Brooklyn where they, I don't even remember how we got there. And we weren't impressed

because my dad didn't even have an apartment for us, and we stayed with some relatives until he was able to get one.

LEVINE: Now, what relatives were these that you stayed with?

GURIAN: These were, there was a distant aunt that, my mother's brother's step-sister. She, see, they were married more than once, and she was very nice to us. And we stayed with them just for a few days until they finally got us an apartment.

LEVINE: Where did you find the apartment? Where were you living?

GURIAN: In Brooklyn on, it was Geary Street. I remember the name.

LEVINE: G-E-A . . .

GURIAN: It was in Williamsburg.

LEVINE: In Williamsburg, uh-huh.

GURIAN: Yeah. And my sister and I weren't too happy because, you know how children, how cruel children can be, and they knew we were foreigners, and they'd call us "greenhorn, popcorn" and all these names. So we worked very hard and we studied and we went to school. We couldn't get in until the following term because it was May 18th, it was too late for us to register. And so we finally went the following term. And we studied very hard.

LEVINE: What was it like going to school? Did you know any English by that time?

GURIAN: We didn't know any English, and we sat. It was a big class, and it was a lot of immigrant children. And they graded us in the same class according to how quickly we learned, you know, English or anything else they taught us. And we made school, I made school in about five-and-a-half years. We went, you know, they graded you, then they put you in another class. And then, children learn quite quickly, and we, I graduated in 1920 and we, you know, we were here in 1914.

LEVINE: I see. Oh, so you went quickly through.

GURIAN: Yeah.

LEVINE: Okay. Why don't we pause here so we can turn over the tape?

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

LEVINE: Okay. So what can you say about your living in Brooklyn and getting settled there and going to school? What do you remember most about those early years?

GURIAN: Well, I remember that we had some friends but most people I think ignore immigrants. They did at the time. And we never had what we have now with children that, you know, can learn English by having somebody teach

them English. But we managed to get through very well in school, and we loved school.

LEVINE: Do you remember anything about being here that struck you as being different from the little village where you had lived?

GURIAN: It was very different because there were so many people here, and here we didn't live, when we were in Russia we didn't have so many people around us. And at times it was a little overwhelming, but we managed. But we managed to make friends. And our teachers, we had very good teachers, and they were very patient with us, because we had to learn the language and everything else. But when I was in about seventh grade we finally, when I finally got up to seventh grade I only, I wanted to be a teacher. And when we went to school they had, at that time, there was a terrible epidemic of the flu, and a lot of the teachers were out. And I had a wonderful principal, Miss Olson, and she called me in. I was always very tall. I think I've shrunk a little since. And she said to me, "Sally, how would you like to teach to a second grade class, because we're short of the teachers being out with the flu?" And I did, and I loved it. And the children were just wonderful. And after the two weeks she called me into the office and said, "You did very well. You should be a teacher." But I never did become a teacher.

LEVINE: Well, that was quite an honor, I suppose, to be asked to do that.

GURIAN: It was a great honor, yes. It was a great honor. And we had some experiences here that when I finally did graduate and I got a job and, after a while. And I worked in a place, it was called the Home Pattern Company. It's probably before your time. And it's, you know anything about Brooklyn?

LEVINE: A little bit.

GURIAN: Oh, you don't. This area is called Bush Terminal, and they manufacture different patterns, and also they had a magazine, Ladies Home Journal, in the building. And I met a very lovely girl there, Gladys, and she worked with me, and we used to fill the orders. And . . .

LEVINE: Well, like, what would an order consist of?

GURIAN: Well, people that ordered these patterns, wholesale houses, people that sold a lot, you know. And we, that we would get the orders in writing and we would, we would get, say, if they wanted ten patterns, or whatever it was. And then after a while she had gone on vacation, Gladys, and while she was on vacation she got a job with Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. And when she came back and I said, "Did you enjoy your vacation?" And she said, "Yes, and I'm quitting this job because I got a much better job at Metropolitan and I think you ought to try it." And I went there and I made an application, but they weren't hiring any Jewish girls.

LEVINE: Really.

GURIAN: And there was a manager there, and one was leaving and one was staying, and the one that was leaving, I had to fill out an application, and I had to put my religion down, and when I did he said, "Sorry, but we can't hire any Jewish girls." He didn't give me any reason for it. See, today you can't do that. But once, I got the job anyway. And when I worked there a year he asked me if I knew anybody else who would like a job at Metropolitan, and I said, "Well, I have a cousin but, of course, she's Jewish." And that same manager said, "Well, it really doesn't matter because if she's a good worker we'll be glad to hire her." And I think I was the first Jewish girl working for Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

LEVINE: Do you know why the decision was made to hire you after you were told that . . .

GURIAN: Well, I think it was also a question of, they knew that, you know, Jewish people take a lot of holidays when they're, and I guess that's one of the reasons. But they didn't give me a reason at the time, but I imagine that that was it, because after that they hired Jewish help. And other, you know . . .

LEVINE: So you were a trail-blazer, being the first, perhaps.

GURIAN: I worked for Metropolitan Life for twenty-five years, broken service. I got married, I went back. And during the war they asked me if I would come back temporarily and I did, and they gave me continuous service, which,

and I retired when I was in my fifties from Metropolitan.

LEVINE: Well, now, how about your mother and father? Did they become citizens?
Did they . . .

GURIAN: My father went to school, and he became a citizen. And my sister, who is a little younger, just made his, she was able to vote on his papers, but I wasn't. I just made it where I had to get my own naturalization papers, and when I, I got the job with Metropolitan I didn't, I only had my first papers, and I had to go for my second papers. And I had two witnesses. Mr. Ryan and Mr. Fitzpatrick. (she laughs) And they went with me from the office, and I got my naturalization papers.

LEVINE: Do you remember that day?

GURIAN: Oh, I remember that day. It was thrilling. You know, we got little books to study all the rules, the laws, you know, who is our first president. And when I got there they were right there with me and the judge asked me certain questions, and then he said, "You're a naturalized citizen." And my two witnesses had to sign, too. It was very thrilling.

LEVINE: Can you remember when your father became a citizen?

GURIAN: Oh, he studied. It was very difficult for him because, you know, as an older. But he got, oh, he was thrilled. When, he went to get his papers way before me, and he studied every day, and we helped him because we

went to school. And he came back with, they gave him an American flag, and they gave him his naturalization papers, and he was thrilled. It was really great. But my mother could neither read nor write, but she was very intelligent. And she, you know in Europe they, when you're poor it's very difficult. I don't know how it is now. It's probably better than it was the years that we were there, but she never learned to read or write.

LEVINE: Well, now, in the home did your mother and father speak Russian or Yiddish?

GURIAN: Both. They spoke both.

LEVINE: And they just continued to speak either of those two languages.

GURIAN: Yeah. But they, you know, they tried. They spoke English because we were very anxious to speak English, and they learned to speak some English.

LEVINE: Do you remember if your mother and father encouraged you to become Americanized?

GURIAN: Oh, yes. Very much so. They, you know, they wanted a better life for us, too, because it wasn't very great in Russia at that time. It was a very hard life.

LEVINE: Well, now, then when did you meet your husband?

GURIAN: My husband? I met him when I was about fifteen years old and he was sixteen. And those years they had reading clubs and they had, you know, girls and boys would get together and have a club. And we had a literary club, and also we had, Saturday nights we would have dancing. And they'd play a phonograph and we'd dance. It was very nice.

LEVINE: Now, were the clubs mostly people who had come from Russia?

GURIAN: No, not necessarily.

LEVINE: They could have come from any place.

GURIAN: My husband was born here, and it was just people, neighborhood people. He was like a neighborhood friend. And we, you know, we met, and we'd go on hikes.

LEVINE: And, like, what would you do in a reading session? What kinds of things . . .

GURIAN: Well, usually we'd select a book, perhaps a Book of the Month, and then we'd read it and discuss it, and it was a lot of fun.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. So that's where you met your husband when you were fifteen, at one of the . . .

GURIAN: Yes. We met, and we saw each other. Not, you know, we were neighbors and we'd go, occasionally we'd go on a hike or go to a movie and a couple

of years later we got married. And we'll be married sixty-five years next month.

LEVINE: That's wonderful. Now, what's your husband's name?

GURIAN: Jere, but he spells it J-E-R-E. His name is Jere. Jere Hyman, his name is.

LEVINE: And what about children? What are the names of your children?

GURIAN: That was, Rhea is my older one, and Betty is my other daughter. And we have five grandchildren, three girls and two boys, and we have four great-grandchildren.

LEVINE: Wow. Wonderful. Well, now, is there anything else that you would care to mention about the fact that you came to this country or your life here since you've come to this country?

GURIAN: Yes. Well, there are lots of things. I, well, we loved being here after we realized that this wasn't important. People said you get rich and you have, but that was very unimportant. And when we grew up I think we tried to sort of pay back what they did for us, because we were very happy here, and also we remembered that we had nobody to teach us unless we had to go to school and learn. So there were, my daughter and I taught at the International Center. We taught immigrants. And then we also taught some Cambodian children who had come over, and we used to do that.

LEVINE: What did you teach them?

GURIAN: We taught them English, and we took them, the Cambodian children, we took them out, and we also pointed to different trees and told them that was a tree. We also had books where we taught them things, and we also played games with them. We, at the International we had adults and teenagers that came over and they didn't know English. And they, but they, at the same time, went to school. But we, this was more of a language speaking, not really, I mean, we didn't go in for . . .

LEVINE: More informal.

GURIAN: Right, yes. And we did that for a while, so that was nice.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, I think that's a good note to end on.

GURIAN: Okay.

LEVINE: And I thank you very much. It's been a pleasure talking with you.

GURIAN: It was my pleasure. I thought, I was very excited about coming here.

LEVINE: Great.

GURIAN: And I was a little nervous because I'm not really a public speaker.

LEVINE: Well, you did just fine.

GURIAN: Thank you.

LEVINE: This is Janet Levine signing off. I've been talking with Sally Gurian here at Ellis Island.