



**Berkshire Historical Society at Herman Melville's Arrowhead**  
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**Invisible Community Project**  
in partnership with  
**Housatonic Heritage Oral History**

**Betsy Katz**

**Recorded: August 13, 1974**

**0:00:00 to 0:30:00**

**Speaker:** Betsy [0:00:07 Bookless?] Katz. And today is August 13, 1974. Here is Mrs. Katz.

**Betsy Katz:** I came from [0:00:17 Velina Cabani], the city of the name [0:00:20 Cianis?]. And I left to America, I was 15 years old. 1913, I left to America. And I stayed with my sister, Rose. Then, I went to work, and I was making \$6.50 a week, and I paid her \$2.5 board. The rest, I had myself. Then, it wasn't enough. I went, and I got a job for Saturday night and Sunday working in [0:00:50]. I worked on through, and then I got a raise in the mill, Tillerson's Mill, and I got more money. And I worked all the way until I married Max [0:01:03 Bookless?].

0:01:04

**Speaker:** How did you meet Mr. Bookless?

**Betsy Katz:** He was delivering milk to my sister's house. And that's how we met. My father never wanted to come to America. Then, six months after I left, he came by himself. After, we decided to bring the family to the [0:01:23], and we couldn't get them. My mother died in Europe to the War.

**Speaker:** That's World War I?

**Betsy Katz:** Yes, World War I. And then, the children were all separated. They didn't know from each other. We got an agent from New York, and we sent him \$500, and he found them all. And then, they came here, and they lived in Great Barrington. And then, Colleen came. She lived with me all those years.

**Speaker:** That's Colleen [0:01:54] Hallman?

**Betsy Katz:** Hallman, yeah. And the boys stayed in Great Barrington.

0:02:00 Another sister of mine got married and went to New York.

**Speaker:** What did your family do in Great Barrington?

**Betsy Katz:** My father was a junk dealer. And then, my father got sick, so he came [0:02:16] and he died. My husband died first. [0:02:23]. Then, like I said, I met Mr. Bookless. I met him, and we got married. And he was a milkman. After that, he worked for himself for many years. We lived in [0:02:42]. And when he got killed, I and my children took care of the business for a year. It was the wartime.

**Speaker:** World War II?

**Betsy Katz:** Two. I used to get up 3 o'clock in the morning and make the hot water ready for the man to come in to wash the bottles.

0:03:03 And Rita and Esther used to go out early in the morning every day, delivering the milk with the truck, and pick up the cases, and [0:03:10] because you couldn't get help. It was wartime. I had it for one year. Just 1945, when the War stopped, I sold it. And then, the girls went to work. Esther worked in my [0:03:26] store, and Rita worked in [0:03:29] at night.

**Speaker:** What happened to your husband?

**Betsy Katz:** He got killed through a ladder. He fell off a ladder. And then, I was left with a boy, and I had to make a bar mitzvah. We saw that [0:03:44]. My husband was [0:03:46]. So I made a bar mitzvah. They all went through the school, and my son graduated high school, and I had to sign for him. He went into the service, in the Air Force. And he was four years in the Air Force, and he went to Providence.

0:04:03 He met a girl, and he got married. Then, after Arlene got married, I was all by myself in the house. [0:04:10].

**Speaker:** Arlene was the baby? Was Arlene the baby?

**Betsy Katz:** My son.

**Speaker:** Oh, your son was the baby.

**Betsy Katz:** My son was the baby. Arlene was before. [0:04:21] opened it up there, the [0:04:23]. We were the first one in our group, but we had to meet in our house to have the meetings. And we only paid \$1.50 a year dues. Little by little, we had a bigger crowd, and we were [0:04:40] until the sisters took it over. And I was very active in the [0:04:46]. We had rummage sales, if you can remember. Anyway, we used to make over \$600, say, in the rummage sales, but we used to have the sales on North Street.

0:05:00 And I never missed a rummage sale. I always used to help them out. Now, I couldn't do it so much. I did with the [0:05:09], but I couldn't do so much that I did at the beginning for the sisterhood now where they have it.

**Speaker:** What were your first projects you did in [0:05:19]?

**Betsy Katz:** First, we got together, those years, people didn't have the money. The [0:05:26] used to give it to them, call for Passover, matzo. Nobody knew for each other what we were doing for them. We used to give it to them. But [0:05:35], Mrs. [0:05:37 Brah] came to the meeting where we had a little group, and she said, "Why we have to spend money to give our people—we haven't got so much. Why [0:05:47] people go up to the welfare? Why don't we—we are paying taxes." That, I'll never forget. And she said, "Let them go, too, to the welfare and get it."

0:06:00 And some did. I know their names, where they went, and they got it. And then, the [0:06:04] didn't have to give out so much money. We had to get them their coal, we had to give them coal, we had to give them grocery, we had to get for Passover. And I was at the core of that. [0:06:15]. So I was at the [0:06:18]. I was [0:06:23] for everything.

**Speaker:** Do you remember some of the names of the ladies that you first got together with? Can you recall some of the names?

**Betsy Katz:** Well, not [0:06:33].

**Speaker:** That's all right. Well, we can...

**Betsy Katz:** It's funny, I can't think of the name right across the street...

**Betsy Katz:** Mrs. [0:06:41 Carlman?] was active, too. And I always knew her. She died and lived on [0:06:47 Bradford?] Street. Of course, [0:06:50 Bea Aston], Mrs. Carlman, Mrs.

[0:06:52 Green?] was the president then. Mrs. Goodman was not here. [0:06:56 Dara?] Goodman.

0:07:00

**Speaker:** Did you have parties?

**Betsy Katz:** No. No. They had no activities. We didn't know that to do with those things. We had the meetings, and we'd say, "Yeah, everything should be all right." [0:07:10]. She's still living. We used to help her a lot. [0:07:14]. I don't know where she is now. Yeah. Oh, I think I know where she is. [0:07:24 Molly Patinski?] and I worked very hard all the time for all the rummage sales, and that's how we used to make money, and we used to bring it in to [0:07:32], and they had money to work with. We always had a store on our street. We used to pay \$5 for the three days in the store.

**Speaker:** We interviewed Mrs. [0:07:45 Stowkowitz?], and she mentioned that there was a lady who used to sing at the meetings. Do you remember who it was? She used to entertain or play piano.

**Betsy Katz:** We didn't have a piano.

**Speaker:** Or something.

**Betsy Katz:** I don't remember Mrs. [0:07:57].

**Betsy Katz:** —excited to have—but you had it already.

0:08:02 The door was \$5 for the dinner.

**Speaker:** Yeah.

**Betsy Katz:** And then, they went to raise, and we said, "I think it's too much." And I still remember Bessie. Her name is—he's Greek. He's married to a Jewish girl. What's his name?

**Speaker:** Rosen?

**Betsy Katz:** Rosen. Bessie Rosen.

**Speaker:** Rosenthal, Rosenfeld?

**Betsy Katz:** Yeah, Rosen. She was there. She said, "It is enough. They shouldn't raise." And it was commotion, but then after they they went up, and they ran for [0:08:37]. But we couldn't

do it. We had everything in the shul. We only had the one room in the back with the kitchen.

**Speaker:** Is that the shul on Linden Street?

**Betsy Katz:** On Linden Street.

**Speaker:** Yeah.

**Betsy Katz:** And that's where we started the [0:08:48]. And the kitchen was in the back, and it was just a room, so we couldn't do much.

**Speaker:** Yeah.

**Betsy Katz:** We couldn't go out to [0:08:54] upstairs. We were downstairs.

**Speaker:** That was just the ladies. The ladies, that's it?

**Betsy Katz:** Yeah, just the ladies. Just the ladies.

**Speaker:** Yeah.

0:09:01 What other organizations were you active in? Did you do anything for the synagogue or Hadassah?

**Betsy Katz:** Well, Hadassah was always tied—I always [0:09:08] for Hadassah. As much as I could. I was on the calling list all the time for the sisterhood and for Hadassah, I was on calling list. [0:09:16] to call when they had meetings, or if they're going to have the dinner. During the dinner, you always had to call them up. I had a big [0:09:22]. And they used to [0:09:24]. I had to call them up, too. I used to do a lot. Wow, I've got to write my [0:09:30].

**Speaker:** Well, you did your share.

**Betsy Katz:** I'll tell you the truth, I really tried my best. I tried everything to help as much as I could. [0:09:40].

**Speaker:** Do you remember any high points in certain Jewish activities in [0:09:46], any special events that you remember over the years that stand out?

**Betsy Katz:** I don't know. Like your sister [0:09:54] used to holler, "Three-pound bananas for a quarter." Used to come to my house. [Laugh] They used to come and holler.

0:10:03                   And we used to buy bananas. They used to sell [0:10:05] he lived and he opened a little house on Robbins Avenue. He had a second-hand store. [0:10:12]. And he opened another one on North Street. North Street [0:10:17]. Of course, my family, the Booklesses, they were on the North [0:10:23], too. Bookless [0:10:24]. Sam Bookless. When my husband came, he worked by hand. [0:10:31].

**Speaker:**                   Where did your husband come from, what country?

**Betsy Katz:**               He also come from Velina Gabany, but it's a different place. [0:10:41].

**Betsy Katz:**               And then, I don't know if you want to but—if you want about the—we were a member for 50 years in the shul. I don't know, they don't do it anymore. We're not sure if [0:10:59].

0:11:02

**Betsy Katz:**               –Max [0:11:02] 50 years, and this is Max [0:11:04]. 1968, [0:11:05].

**Speaker:**                   They were members 50 years of Knesset Israel Synagogue, and you received certificates honoring you.

**Betsy Katz:**               But they had a big dinner down in the shul. That's when we were [0:11:17]. And then, I had to make a bar mitzvah for my son, he went to school all the way, and then he—when he got set, just when he graduated high school, he enlisted. They didn't want to take him because he wasn't old enough, and I had to sign for him. The man had to come to my house, beg me. And he was four years to the day, then he went to Providence to college. And he got married, and he moved to Rochester, New York. And he's got three children now. Two girls and one boy.

**Speaker:**                   What does your son do in Rochester?

**Betsy Katz:**               In Rochester? He's in business for carpeting.

0:12:00

And then, I was left all alone, and all my children were married. Then, I stayed in the big house on Robbins Avenue, had eight rooms. And I moved here. [0:12:12]. All my children were married then.

**Speaker:**                   You moved to 311 Elm Street.

- Betsy Katz:** Yeah. I left. I lived 113 Robbins Avenue, and I moved to [0:12:23] 311. Opposite number.
- Speaker:** The same numbers.
- Betsy Katz:** Yeah. And then, I—I don't know if I put down how long I was a widow. So I married Max Katz. And we [0:12:35] there, very happy, three years. And then, he died. [0:12:40]. Now, I'm left alone. And I have [0:12:46] nine grandchildren in Boston, Worcester, Pittsfield, and Rochester.
- Speaker:** You're not too alone.
- Betsy Katz:** No, but I'm here alone.
- Speaker:** Yeah, you have your two grandchildren right upstairs. That's pretty good.
- Betsy Katz:** Yeah, Mark. That's Mark and Robert.
- 0:13:00
- Speaker:** And Mark is going to college?
- Betsy Katz:** Yes, he's leaving to college the 1st. Going up to Boston. He's working now at the bank.
- Speaker:** He works at the City Savings Bank.
- Betsy Katz:** Yes.
- Speaker:** We see him there.
- Q1: Oh, my child [0:13:12] on the City Savings Bank, too. [0:13:14].
- Speaker:** Just going back a little bit—
- Betsy Katz:** Yes, dear.
- Speaker:** —in the Depression, the 30s, did your business suffer? Did you suffer financially?
- Betsy Katz:** In Europe, you mean?
- Speaker:** No, in the Depression in the 30s.

- Betsy Katz:** No, I didn't. I worked, and I made—like I said, what I made, so little. And I got along, and I was dressed nice. It seems there was always [0:13:37] people. And my sister lived on another street that you would know.
- Speaker:** Which year did you get married to Mr. Bookless?
- Betsy Katz:** I married 1919.
- Speaker:** So then, during the Depression, you were married already.
- Betsy Katz:** Yeah.
- Speaker:** You had your children.
- Betsy Katz:** Yes. Yes, I had all my children. The boy at the [0:13:53].
- Speaker:** I guess people needed milk. If they were going to buy something, they'd buy the milk.
- Betsy Katz:** Oh, we used to sell all the milk. I used to sell [0:14:00] cases milk in the house.
- 0:14:01
- Because those years, they didn't go into stores to buy milk. They knew they had to come to the milkman. And I used to make butter, used to make cheese and sell it.
- Speaker:** Do you remember how much you sold it for at the time?
- Betsy Katz:** About \$.35 a pound.
- Speaker:** For the butter?
- Betsy Katz:** For the butter.
- Speaker:** And how much did the milk cost at that time?
- Betsy Katz:** The milk, I think, was \$.08, \$0.12 after that. But I used to make about 25 pounds of cheese, and then I had a [0:14:29] I used to turn to make the butter.
- Speaker:** Who taught you how to do this?
- Betsy Katz:** Believe me, my husband never let me go into the dairy. He said my work was in the house. But that happened, I went in, and I knew how to work in the dairy, fixed the pasteurizer. We had a pasteurizer. We were the first ones [0:14:46], we were the first ones to put in a pasteurizer. After that, I used to walk in—I walked them in [0:14:53].



The milk was all bottled, and the girls went out to deliver it because the customers, they knew the girls.

0:15:00

[0:15:00], I don't know. [0:15:01]. He was laying that time, the head of the house. He was laying the house the night that they had to get back—they had to deliver milk 2 o'clock in the morning every day. So Rita and Esther. Mike Kravitz was very good to Esther. He let her go out, and helped Rita deliver the milk, and Esther come to work just like she worked. It was very good.

**Speaker:**

So she worked long hours.

**Betsy Katz:**

No.

**Speaker:**

He let her [0:15:25].

**Betsy Katz:**

She would, but he let her have her hours.

**Speaker:**

Her hours.

**Betsy Katz:**

He let her help Rita. He didn't care. She would come to work. He didn't [0:15:33] she came in late, and he didn't care. He was very good.

**Speaker:**

So you worked along with your husband, actually? But you worked in the house?

**Betsy Katz:**

Yeah, I was just in the house. But afterwards, I had to work in the dairy. And I worked for one year, I used go [0:15:50]. And everybody says somebody was going to take me away. Nobody—they never saw—I would [0:15:53] to see somebody. There was coal, and they had to make fire by coal, so I had to make the hot water ready.

0:16:02

So I was taking showers off coal, and put it in the boiler, make the fire, have the bottles ready, fix up the cases. I was stronger then. And have everything—we had all the dairy—the Jewish milkmen used to pasteurize milk by us because we were the only pasteurizer.

**Speaker:**

Ah, I see.

**Betsy Katz:**

[0:16:13] had a pasteurizer. We were the only one, [0:16:17]. Five garages had a dairy afterwards. So big. We had Willy Cohn, we had [0:16:24], we had [0:16:25], we had Papinsky. They all used to come to us to get the

pasteurized milk because they weren't allowed to have raw milk.

**Speaker:** And these people sold milk, the names you just mentioned?

**Betsy Katz:** They would peddle milk. Sure, they all peddled milk.

**Speaker:** Back then, there must've been many more milk dealers.

**Betsy Katz:** Nathan Bookless was pasteurizing milk by us, too. And they were all—[0:16:46 Biata?] was pasteurizing milk by us, Mr. Biata, my brother-in-law. And we had all those Jewish dealers. Ron [0:16:54 Clemon?], was—after that, I couldn't do it anymore, so I made him take over until I sold it, 1945 I sold the business. [0:17:02].

0:17:04

**Speaker:** How come there were so many Jewish milk dealers?

**Betsy Katz:** That's how they were making a living.

**Speaker:** They were junk dealers?

**Betsy Katz:** Junk dealers.

**Speaker:** Junk dealers and milk dealers.

**Betsy Katz:** That's all. Yeah.

**Speaker:** How did your husband get into the milk?

**Betsy Katz:** Well, when he came to Pittsfield, he came down to Bookless, and Bookless peddled with a horse, and he was peddling with a horse. He was delivering milk, and he worked for him. And after that, he went, and he got a business for himself, and we worked for ourselves. And they were peddling with a horse.

**Speaker:** What did he do in Europe? Or did he come over when he was very young?

**Betsy Katz:** I don't know, he was young also. Maybe [0:17:37] 16. But he didn't come to Pittsfield. He came someplace else.

**Speaker:** Do you remember anything about your life in Europe?

**Betsy Katz:** I was too young to remember anything. What did I do? I didn't know anything.

- Speaker:** Or were you just glad to forget it?
- Betsy Katz:** Huh?
- Speaker:** Were you just glad to forget it?
- Betsy Katz:** Well, it wasn't hard. That's all I used to do with my grandmother and grandfather, they used to live three miles away from us, and I used to walk to there. It was nothing. We used to walk, and I remember she used to stay on the hill and watch for us coming.
- 0:18:04 She was afraid somebody should grab us. But we walked three miles to make it to our grandmother and grandfather. I would go alone, if not, I would walk [0:18:13].
- Speaker:** What kind of business did your father have in Europe?
- Betsy Katz:** Well, my father had a business, they don't have it here. You had machinery. Those lambs, when you give the lambs haircuts, you take the wool, and you run it with a machine to make it fine, and then you make material out of it. Then, you get to the farmer, they bring hay/straw [0:18:35], and you have machine used to cut to feed the horses. So we had four horses go in the back, machiners going all around, and he had the machine inside. It was cutting.
- Speaker:** It's like baling hay.
- Betsy Katz:** Baling hay, yeah. That's right. That's why he never [0:18:48] to America [0:18:49]. And then, if you know, there's a cereal. We used to make a cereal, that's kasha. And he had the machinery to go through—
- Speaker:** [0:18:57].
- Betsy Katz:** —to go through and make [0:19:00].
- 0:19:00
- Speaker:** Kasha.
- Betsy Katz:** [0:19:01] kasha. And then, the press, like for oil presses. They had—from oil to make [0:19:08] to sell it. He had such a business, my father. He didn't need America. But then, in Europe, when a child is born, they never put the [0:19:17], you could go to the city hall and get it. Then, they were chasing him for one son was born, and they [0:19:26].

Didn't have it, you went to America, so he was afraid to be in trouble. So that's how you made up your mind, and he came to America, my father.

**Speaker:** You mentioned before your sister came first.

**Betsy Katz:** Yes, my sister came first.

**Speaker:** Yes. Why did she come first? Did she marry somebody?

**Betsy Katz:** No, no, I'll tell you another story. [0:19:43 Fannie Binder?] and Mike Groverman, they are cousins. My father sent him to America. He needed money though. [0:19:54]. Then, after my sister, Fannie, Fannie's sister, her mother, and Mike, they came together here.

0:20:03 That's how I came after them. But she came with them. I don't know about the other...

**Speaker:** But you were interested in coming.

**Betsy Katz:** Well, I remember when my sister was leaving, I was sitting at the table, I remember her—and my mother was baking [0:20:15], and I remember seeing them through the window going away. And I always wanted—that's when I made up my mind. My mother said I'm just like the birds. When they can't fly, I see them. After they fly, I don't see any more. I can still remember that word. And I made up my mind, I wanted to go. And I didn't care how. I had a nice trip when I went by myself. All alone, I didn't get lost and everything.

**Speaker:** Did you get seasick?

**Betsy Katz:** No—well, I did on the boat. I left my trunk there with my papers, my citizen—the passport and everything. I left everything. [0:20:44] to get out. Now, [0:20:46]. Now, I wanted to become a citizen. I wrote Providence. I wanted [0:20:52]. I wrote the Nation Society. Nobody knew how I came in. And I couldn't remember the name of the ship.

0:21:03 So it took me all of two years. All of a sudden, I dreamt [0:21:07]. And I went, and I got my papers. I'm a citizen. How do you like that?

**Betsy Katz:** And I got the first papers, and they couldn't give it to me because I didn't have the name of the ship. They wouldn't give it to me. I went twice, I couldn't get it. So I wrote [0:21:23], and I watched—then, they wrote to me. So I pay

\$18, I become a citizen, but [0:21:28]. I didn't want that. All of a sudden, I dreamt, and I went, and I told them the name of the ship, and I got my citizen papers. That [0:21:37].

**Speaker:** But it was the right ship? They waited to check records?

**Betsy Katz:** Yeah, it was the right ship, and I got it.

**Speaker:** Do you have any memories of arriving in New York?

**Betsy Katz:** No, I came to [0:21:46 .....?], and they came and [0:21:50] brought me a ride here to Pittsfield.

**Speaker:** Oh, I see, OK.

**Betsy Katz:** I didn't have...

**Speaker:** [0:21:51] stay over in New York.

**Betsy Katz:** No, I didn't have to stay. They knew I was coming. And my sister and brother came. My brother was here, too, Nathan.

0:22:01

**Speaker:** Well, some of the people said they saw certain fruits for the first time. Oh, bananas. [0:22:04] banana. Everybody mentioned [0:22:06].

**Betsy Katz:** I didn't like it. They were given there—at the time we were going down, they were giving bananas. Oh, and I couldn't eat them. They tasted terrible. I remember. Here, I eat them. But I still remember [0:22:15].

**Speaker:** Two people mentioned the bananas were a strange thing they had never seen.

**Betsy Katz:** And I was most with German people when I first [0:22:24] traveling.

**Speaker:** I talked about what you did as a single girl.

**Betsy Katz:** We used to go out and [0:22:35] a crowd, boys and girls. We used to meet in the houses. And we used to enjoy ourselves and go down to the show. Went to the movies only for \$.10, went to spa, and now [0:22:46] palace is. \$.10 to go in. And then, we'd go in the house, and we'd enjoy ourselves that way. If there was a crowd, [0:22:54].

**Betsy Katz:** [0:22:56], there was one, Gantz. It was in Great Barrington. I don't know.

0:23:00 It was a different [0:23:01]. And we were all at the [0:23:05]. We all used to be [0:23:07] now. And we always used to be in her house together.

**Speaker:** And now, [0:23:12 Sadie Weiner?], is that her married name? Her husband...

**Betsy Katz:** Yeah, that was her married name. She lives in [0:23:17] now. I don't know what's her name now. And we all [0:23:20] used to meet all together.

**Speaker:** Did you go to the lake, or did you go dancing?

**Betsy Katz:** No, we didn't have no car fare to go.

**Speaker:** Oh, by trolley car.

**Betsy Katz:** Well, we couldn't go—we didn't go much at that time. Yeah. Well, I did, that's true, I did went, and I [0:23:35], and we used to spend Sundays. I even had a picture sitting on the lake there. We went up together. We took the bus. Trolley car, they used to call it at the time. And we spent the afternoon, a crowd of us, boys and girls. The girls would [0:23:51] girlfriend. We used to get together. And [0:23:58].

**Speaker:** Did all the young women work at the mill?

0:24:01 Or did they work [0:24:02]?

**Betsy Katz:** Most worked. [0:24:04 Ann Hamas?], her name was...

**Speaker:** [0:24:09].

**Betsy Katz:** No. Yeah, you know, [0:24:11 Hoffman?]. And she worked in the mill with me. She lives near the shul.

**Betsy Katz:** We worked in Tillerson's Mill.

**Speaker:** You and Ann [0:24:22].

**Betsy Katz:** Ann [0:24:23]. We worked there, and Fannie Binder worked at that time, too. And her sister, [0:24:27 Bessie Jabalski?]. We worked that time. But after that, we were

making more money than I did at the beginning. We worked ourselves out.

**Speaker:** What exactly did you do in the mill? What was your job?

**Betsy Katz:** We put the rolls in track, and we rolled [0:24:45] and rolls. And [0:24:46], they were weaving and making cloth.

**Speaker:** So you rolled the rolls [0:24:51]?

**Betsy Katz:** Yes, we were the [0:24:52]. And we waited at this spool, great big spool like that, and they were checking out how much money we made. And then, [0:24:59].

0:25:00 And then, the weaver was weaving and making the material. All colors.

**Speaker:** Where was Tillerson's Mill?

**Betsy Katz:** Tillerson's Mill, way up in—where New England Furniture is, that whole building was Tillerson's Mill. That's where I worked. And I walked way up from [0:25:13] Street, way up there.

**Speaker:** That must've been over two miles, wasn't it?

**Betsy Katz:** We walked every morning.

**Speaker:** What were your hours for working?

**Betsy Katz:** We used to go in the morning, about 8 o'clock. I think we worked until 5:30.

**Speaker:** So you had to leave the house early in the morning.

**Betsy Katz:** Early in the morning, no matter what storm, what the weather was. I put a pair of pants on, I walked in the deep snow, and walked up there, no ride.

**Betsy Katz:** At that time, we didn't know if my mother was dead or not. It was in the wartime. So we went to Springfield, we just had to [0:25:45]. Just had the family. Not even my sister, just the Booklesses in the car. And we got married, [0:25:51], we had it in Springfield, and then my sister had [0:25:54].

**Speaker:** So you didn't have a special wedding in Pittsfield?

0:26:00

- Betsy Katz:** No. I didn't want to because we didn't know about my mother.
- Speaker:** Oh, I see. [0:26:03], she was married in 19—...
- Betsy Katz:** 1919. 1919, I got married.
- Speaker:** Anything else you want to tell us? Do you want to tell us about your sister, helping your sister with the baby?
- Betsy Katz:** Rose? Or Jack when Jack was born?
- Speaker:** Yeah.
- Betsy Katz:** OK, if you want.
- Speaker:** Go ahead, it's all yours.
- Betsy Katz:** When Rose gave birth to Jack Martin, it was twins. One, Jack was born, the other one, the doctor said, "Mrs. Martin, I've got to call my son because another baby's going to come." By the time he went for the horse to bring his son, he came back, the baby was dead. So he picked the baby up, he put it on the table. And I was the nurse to help them, to give things, to put something for the baby and help my sister. And she was in bed, and I was just like a nurse in the house with her.
- Speaker:** You took off from work for this?
- Betsy Katz:** Yes, I stayed out of work and helped her out because she didn't have nobody to take care of her. I had to be with her.
- 0:27:02
- But Jack was a very healthy-looking baby when he was born.
- Speaker:** [0:27:07].
- Betsy Katz:** And then, after that, when she got on her feet, I went back to work.
- Speaker:** Did you help out much with other sisters or relatives?
- Betsy Katz:** Nobody was then—[0:27:19] did. After Pauline stayed with me, I did a lot for her. She stayed with me. Until she got married. She went to New York, and she got married in New York, [0:27:30]. But she stayed with me after that. She couldn't stay with her stepmother. But I did enough.



**Speaker:** Did you visit back and forth much in Great Barrington with your family?

**Betsy Katz:** Yes. When my husband was living, we always took a ride to my father. Used to go [0:27:46] someplace and never tell me. We'd just go straight to Great Barrington, say hello to my father, and come back. And then, after my father got sick, he lived by my sister then. And when he went, he picked up my father, he picked up all his things. He comes in the house, he brings him in the house, my father said he forgot his feet. [Laugh]

0:28:04 So my husband [0:28:06] Max Bookless. He went right back to Great Barrington, he got his feet, he brought them back, and then he could have his supper. [Laugh] But when my husband got killed, my father used to tell me, "No, don't cry. [0:28:21]." My father died two months after my husband. [0:28:25]. My husband left a very good name. Of course, Max Katz, too. [0:28:30], but everybody loved him. And all the people, when they owed us money, when they heard that my husband got killed, they all sent me the money they owed, and I didn't even know they owed me money. [0:28:44]. From [0:28:46], they sent it.

**Betsy Katz:** Yeah, Mrs. [0:28:55 Biala?] is a sister to my husband, Max. But my husband was the baby. There were eight children, and she's the only one left from the eight children, Mrs. Biala.

0:29:05

**Speaker:** And she was a Bookless?

**Betsy Katz:** She was a Bookless and now [0:29:07]. Yeah. She has four children, Mrs. Biala. Bertha, Birch. It's her daughter.

**Speaker:** [0:29:16]?

**Betsy Katz:** Birch.

**Speaker:** Birch?

**Betsy Katz:** Yeah.

**Speaker:** Birch. Isn't he a state trooper?

**Betsy Katz:** Yeah. Yeah, that's her daughter. Yeah, she works in [0:29:23].

**Speaker:** And the other children live here?

**Betsy Katz:** Well, [0:29:29] has a [0:29:30]. My daughter lives in New York. [0:29:33]. And Sam Bookless was a brother to my husband. But there were eight children altogether. She's the only one left.

**Speaker:** Did all eight children live here? Or did they all come...

**Betsy Katz:** No, they were in New York. They were all over. And some died in [0:29:46].

0:30:00      *Recording ends*