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**Jewish Historical Society Oral Histories  
Orvil “Ozzie” Zuckerman (9 March 1999)**

**By Christopher Penrith  
May 2020**

**Link to audio file:**

<https://archive.org/details/JHS65SideA>

**Summary Information**

Tape Number: JHS 65  
Length: 36:27  
Interviewer: O. [Orvil “Ozzie”] Zuckerman  
Interviewee: O. [Orvil “Ozzie”] Zuckerman  
Date of Interview: 9 March 1999  
Place of Interview: unidentified

0:00 – Starting it out with introducing the segment. Talking to a group of people. He starts out by talking about talking to women. Went shopping with his mother. Spent 25 years at the Hermitage Deli and learned about Trenton. Was not originally from Trenton. Bought the Hermitage Deli. His mother told her daughters to make sure they had their own source of income. Mother designed all four houses. Likes to play bridge on the computer.

3:30 - His mother at 13 was a photographer. She and her brother traveled down to Washington DC. By her 20's she had studios in DC. Every admiral at the time was photographed. She didn't believe in sitting idly by and went to live in Trent Center after her husband died. His mother was painting nudes after moving into the Trent House. She wanted a nude painting in the powder room. She considered painting a playboy centerfold. She hated thin soups and always served 9. When she died, she left a note on a tape recorder, she said goodbye to the staff saying she didn't want to live anymore. On the tape recorder, she said God gave everyone a certain amount of blessings, she needed 3 or 4 and wanted to give the rest away.

9:30 – They grew up in small towns, grew up in Virginia where they were the only Jews. Father was a scrap peddler. His old house used to be a part of the Underground Railroad. He explained how that

worked. They were the only Jews in the town. A lot of Jews such as rabbis and scholars always wound up at their house. He visited a nursing home in New York and was talking about old times. The fellow in the next bed was one of the people who visited the house.

13:30 – Restarting the Jewish Historical Society after it fell apart when the founder passed away. When she died, everything disappeared and the people looking to rebuild the historical society was able to collect most of the stuff to rebuild the society. He started a historical society, and they have a place to keep the things they collect. They have the place air conditioned and the right humidity. They don't move at the speed that they liked to. There are the Woodbrook House. He is discussing about the historical society and collecting things for the historical society. He shot over 4000 photographs as a photographer. He does oral histories in his spare time and has a recording of a woman's mother and played the tape so her kids could hear their grandmother's voice.

18:54 – He continues to talk about the historical society and its meaning to him. He had a couple of tables of photographs at this show; he knew people who had families who hadn't spoken to each other for years hugging and crying over what they saw. Talking about how meaningful the historical society is to him and his community. Talking about how Trenton was going to be the District of Columbia. It didn't go there because George Washington wanted it near his home. There was a rabbi who was not a rabbi, he tried to get approval, helped Henry Ford develop his anti-Semitic rhetoric. They found that in 1917 and 1918 that a boy was playing with a crystal radio and was picking up dots and dashes was able to listen to a German message and told his father who told police who found a German spy network.

25:00 – They want Trentonians who have a collection to donate it in order to preserve it. They have a computer with a scanner so they can take a photograph and restore it. He was at the Holocaust exhibit explaining to him about how a number after a woman's name was the same as his. He told him to get in touch with someone at Rider University who might be able to get him information. This is part of collection gathering that he was doing.

30:00 – He is talking about who went to the [concentration] camps. Russians, Jews, and gypsies all went to the camps. He read an article about these 3 or 4 times; he wants to keep everything, the good and the bad. He is talking about writing a column for Jewish news, when he sits down and does oral histories, he is getting more minute details about people. He gets his material by talking to people. Everybody in Trenton is related to everybody else. A guy named Arthur has an in-depth genealogy of a family and has given a bunch of them to the society. He is talking about his work history, and is repeating some stuff. Ended with talking about his wife.