

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Idora Park Project

Employment at Idora

O. H. 800

STANFORD CSIKY

Interviewed

by

Robert Toti

on

November 12, 1986

STANFORD JOSEPH CSIKY

S. J. "Sam" Csiky was born on December 14, 1912, the son of Zoltan B. and Julia Csiky, in Cleveland, Ohio. At age twelve his family moved to Brentwood Avenue in Youngstown, Ohio. This new location brought him in close contact with Idora Prak. In 1926 he began to work at Idora as a vendor during the baseball games. The following summer he worked as an extra. The next three seasons, Mr. Csiky worked at various drink stands until he eventually became a stand manager. Mr. Csiky attended South High School and upon graduation he became increasingly involved in various types of artwork which enabled him to find jobs elsewhere.

Mr. Csiky was employed by the Palace Theater from 1941 to 1951, Custom Displays from 1951 to 1961, and Packard Electric from 1962 to 1978. At each of these jobs, he was director of the art department until he retired on January 1, 1978 from Packard Electric. Mr. Csiky attends St. Christine's Church and belongs to the Elks Club, Saxon Club, and the Chatterbox Retired Men's Club.

Rob Toti

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INTERVIEWEE: STANFORD CSIKY

INTERVIEWER: Robert Toti

SUBJECT: various jobs at Idora, employers' names, special days,
park plan dancing, baseball park, streetcar

DATE: November 12, 1986

T: This is an interview with S. J. Csiky for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, by Rob Toti, at 4358 Meadowview Drive, on November 12, 1986, at 2:00 p.m.

First of all, could you tell us something about your childhood?

C: I had a very nice childhood. I was raised by a strict father and I had to take my piano lessons. I took piano for eight years and later on played in an orchestra for about sixteen years. Then when I was about twelve years old we moved out on Brentwood Avenue right next to Mill Creek Park. This is only a hop, skip, and a jump from Idora Park. Naturally being young, I used to go out to Idora Park quite a bit. They didn't charge admission. Anybody could walk through.

Later on I asked for a job out there. This was way back in about 1926. The first year when I was fourteen I started selling pop at the ball games for the park. They had a concession right outside of the ball park where they furnished pop in little cartons and we went out and sold it, candy bars and stuff like that. That was my first contract with the park.

The following year I went throughout the park and asked for a job. I was a little young, I guess, and inexperienced. They gave me a job as extra, which means you only work on picnic days or weekends. My main job was in the drink stands and in the sandwich, hamburger stands, which there were two of them. I used to peel onions, make patties, just menial chores that were done around there, cleaning up and everything. I used to get about 30¢ an hour for that.

The following year I started out as an extra too. There were two stands involved and each one wanted me all the time. It ended up that I got a separate drink stand all by myself, steady job. I was about fifteen then. This was a little stand that sold nothing but soft drinks, candy bars, cigarettes, and things right by the Whip. You know where that is? In the northern section of the park around the cars and Fun House. I worked there for a year.

The following year I went out and I got to work in the big stand, which is on the big midway--what they call the midway stand. It was a long, drink stand. We sold everything from foamy root beer which came in a big barrel . . . You turned on the spigot like regular beer and it was all foam, A & W root beer. That is how old A & W is too. So I worked in that stand first and then the following year I got to manage that stand.

In the meantime I was taking up art at Butler Institute and then I was doing lettering too, practicing sign work. When we had picnics out at the park, I had a little stand in the back room, a little paintbrush and cardboard. I used to paint "Free milk here" and "Get your free coffee here" at the picnics.

I don't know whether you know this or not, but in back of our stand up the hill--you could also go from the other side--they had picnic groves. They had about five, six, seven, regular covered picnic groves where the people had picnics, these company picnics--big companies. Incidentally, they used to come by train.

Going back, retracting a little bit, when I first went there, Rex Billings was manager of the park and his secretary was Happy Collins. Later on they had a new secretary which was Eddie Gilronan. Anyhow, Jack Barkley was my first boss out there. We were very friendly. He was a nice fellow. Then after the third year I got a new boss, Frank Nelson. He worked for the park concessions and he was the boss of the hamburger and drink stands and stuff like that.

T: Supply.

C: He didn't care much for me doing signs there because we were busy out front. I had a little clash there about the fifth year I worked there. Eddie Gilronan wanted me to make these signs for the picnic. Frank Nelson didn't want me to make signs. He wanted me to work out front. I was kind of torn. This is when I didn't get hired back the following year because Frank Nelson didn't like the idea that I favored Eddie Gilronan.

In this stand we made the first frozen custard around 1929-1930. It is hard to pinpoint, but I was working there at the time. The fellow who was working on that end of the stand, Jack Chipperfield, who was a brother-in-law to Eddie Gilronan, he and I made the first custard there. We had the recipe and poured in the canned

milk and sugar and everything. That was one point in its history.

At that time, of course, Ace Brigode was playing in Idora Park too. I got acquainted with musicians. In fact I took some piano lessons from the piano player, Bud Budniack.

T: First of all, I want to backtrack a little bit and ask you about the ball park. What types of games were being played in the ball park?

C: Baseball.

T: Baseball?

C: Hardball, yes. I can't remember the teams. The name of the teams I can't remember. They were all bearded and they played there often. There was a House of David ball team. Then there was boxing, amateur fights and professional fights out there too. And fireworks too, special fireworks. That was about all.

T: Was there a set schedule or would they just call you when they needed you?

C: They would call me. We would have scheduled picnics for a certain week and he would tell me about them and I would go to work the day he wanted me.

I don't know whether you realize it but in those years we had what we called the Park & Falls streetcar line. That went around the fish pond and unloaded the passengers at the park and then they went about 200 feet down the tracks a bit and they loaded people going back into town.

Another thing they had out there--I don't know whether I should mention it or not--they had a park cop. His name was Henry Hoffman. He was a short guy but if a colored person walked into the park, he would gently escort them out. This is hard to believe. There were two colored days at Idora Park. One was the colored Masons and the other was the regular colored day. You know how far back that was.

T: Were they billed as colored days?

C: Yes.

T: Was there any problem that arose from this?

C: No. Colored people were very nice. They came out on their two picnic days. They never gave him any trouble when he led them out--funny.

T: That is peculiar.

When you were working as an extra in the ball parks, could you give me a rough estimate of some of the prices for the items that were bought?

- C: Candy bars naturally were 5¢ and the pop was 10¢, which was high at that time because you could get that in the store for 5¢. Out there being in a park it was 10¢. I think we did sell hot dogs too for 15¢, but not at all the games.
- T: What were the crowds like at the games?
- C: Good crowds, always had a good crowd.
- T: Can you give me a rough estimate as to how big a crowd would have been?
- C: It wasn't like the crowds today. They only had one covered grandstand and one open grandstand. I would say 800 to 1,000.
- T: And this was for amateur events usually, except for the fights?
- C: Yes. Well, the baseball players were professionals. At that time leagues were different. I wish I could think of the name of those bearded guys. Then they had donkey baseball. They played baseball on donkeys. They used to have a lot of things that they don't have anymore.
- T: Could you explain that, the donkey baseball?
- C: You hit the ball and then you jumped on the donkey and rode to first base. The guy out in the field would be on a donkey and he had to get off to get the ball to throw it.
- T: How old were you when you first started to work?
- C: I was about fourteen.
- T: And how did you get to work?
- C: Just walked through Mill Creek Park. I went out of my house--we lived right next to Mill Creek Park--took the road out to where Parkview Avenue comes down into the park. I would just take that road and then cut up and go in the back gate. Actually it was the back gate that I always went in.
- T: Why did you decide to become an Idora Park employee?
- C: One reason--money. I was pretty gung ho when I was young, ambitious. I was ambitious all of my life until I retired. I worked day and night, moonlighting and everything else. In those days the money wasn't so plentiful either. I took it home to mother. When I finished my last year there, I was making \$25 a week. That was seven days. Some days were fourteen, sixteen

hours. I took my money home and gave it to my mother. She would give me \$5 and I would eat all week on \$5. It wasn't like today.

T: How did your mother feel about you working?

C: They permitted me to work. They knew I was in good hands. In those days kids didn't get into trouble like they get into today. Things were a little more serious. Although, even in our childhood around there I can remember we used to hang onto the side of the streetcar. We used to get on at Volney Road and Parkview Avenue there and hang on and go around to the park just hanging onto the side, things like that. Our parents never knew that we did these things, of course. It was like everything else, but they trusted me and I never got into any trouble.

There was only one time when I got close to it. This was after work and the circus was coming into town. We all decided at 12:30 to go down and see the circus come in. Roger Boyer who was across from me--he ran the popcorn stand--he got in a fight there and got a black eye. In the meantime his mother died and he had to go home. He lived out of town someplace. He had to go home. The theater was there at the time and they fixed up his black eye; they painted it with make-up so they couldn't see it. That was the only bit of trouble.

T: Did many of your friends work at that time or was it kind of unusual for someone fourteen years old to be working?

C: Of course, I made friends when I came out there. There were some school buddies who worked out there later on when we were sixteen or seventeen. I have a list of some of the fellows who used to work out there. I mentioned Jack Barkley and Frank Nelson and Pat Duffy and big Andy Anderson. I think they were partners on all of the concessions, the game concessions. Sam Bonchilla was maintenance supervisor. He had his crew every morning cleaning up the park. Ed Siefert was park electrician; Gus Gravus had the Firefly--the ride preceding the Wildcat. There was Jack Hammond; he managed theater and the theater had Lillian Desmond players. And then Jack Fitzgibbons was the manager of bingo. There was a Mr. Little who had a candied apple stand; Roger Boyer, popcorn; Muck Pennett had the shooting gallery; he was a former boxer. He talked real fast; he was a little punchy, but he worked out there for years. He was a stagehand in the wintertime. He was a character. I mentioned Jack Chipperfield. Mickey McBride ran the skeeball. Mike Cosmo ran the Fun House and the Jack Rabbit. Those are the name I could remember.

The stand I worked in last they called a big drink stand. It was quite a long stand. I took care of a lot of people.

T: I would like to ask you to explain a typical day once you did work at the stand. Explain for how long you worked, what time

you got there, when you left, breaks, and all that.

C: Picnic days we got there at 8:00 in the morning. We loaded up all of the pop, coolers and made a lot of root beer and we sold Vernor's ginger ale out there too by the glass. We mixed plenty of frozen custard, got things ready in general, cleaned up. The rest of the time we just waited on trade.

T: What time did Idora open?

C: On big picnic days, they would start coming out about 9:30, 10:00. It closed at 12:00 as a rule unless it rained and then it would close a little early if nobody was out there.

T: And that was seven days a week?

C: Seven days a week.

T: All summer long?

C: All summer, yes.

T: What would be the season? What would the first opening day be?

C: Decoration Day to Labor Day.

T: So did you usually work seven days a week?

C: Yes, all summer.

T: That's amazing.

C: I liked the fact that I was earning money at a young age. I helped out at home. We had our fun too; you know what I mean. In the slack afternoons I would leave the stands and go down and listen to the orchestra rehearse or go to the ball park and watch them play or something like that. There was other help there that took care of the business. I never had any trouble with the management. I always did my work. As I said when it came to that last part . . . I want to tell you something peculiar about this sign work that I used to do out there.

Frank Nelson didn't want me to do it. I had to do it because Eddie Gilronan wanted it. I had said that before. The following year Frank Nelson managed the eating concessions out at the Mill Creek Golf Course. Where do you think he came for his sign work?

T: To you?

C: So that turned out really nice. Then I was getting along pretty well in lettering and drawing at that time and I was getting little jobs working for myself.

T: You said that you were a stand manager at a very young age. Was that unusual?

C: Yes. I was the youngest kid out there, really. All of the rest of the stands were managed with workers who were older than me. Of course, the money was counted every night. I was never short. I very seldom was, maybe 10¢, 50¢. It all depended on whether you had extras working in there like on big picnic days. We had two or three extras working in there and maybe somebody would screw up the cash register a little bit, but outside of that there was no problem.

T: What events stand out in your mind about your days at Idora?

C: There is one event--when they first built the Wildcat. They were going to try it out. This was before the season opened. We were out there, naturally, hanging around. All of the employees who were there got in the first car. It was going up the hill on the chain. When it got up on the hill and as it was facing downwards, the tracks were still tight and it stopped there. We all had to get out on top of the thing, push the car, and then jump in. I wouldn't do it now, of course, but in those days you are young and nimble. That was one thing. There is nothing that I can really think of.

Every once in a while somebody would get hurt out there fooling around.

Another thing that used to be . . . You will get a kick out of this. The Fun House had an open area where the people came out. It was screened, of course. It was open; you could see the people going by just before they would exist or maybe it was as they were going in. I can't tell you. Anyhow, as the girls would go by they had air jets coming out of the floor that would blow up the skirts. You would see the big crowd out there on picnic days just watching the girls' skirts blow up.

Then we used to ride the rides too on off days, but I was out there seven days a week.

T: How did the crowds react to what you sold? Were there ever any problems?

C: No. Occasionally there would be a fight, but they contained it pretty fast. On picnic days, too, they had extra cops out there. Most of the fights took place down around the dance hall, which you might know.

T: What kinds of people visited the park?

C: Every kind, foreign people. I think they used to have Irish Day too and they had Hungarian Day, Slovak Day, special days for different nationalities. On Sundays on just regular weekends

they were just ordinary people who would go to the fair.

Everybody used to come out there dressed up. They didn't look like a bunch of trash like some you might run into today. People don't dress today like they used to then. Funeral homes, you were dressed up; church, you were dressed up. When you went to Idora Park, you had your white shirt on if you were a kid.

T: Would you say that a majority of them came out on the park lines?

C: At first, yes. There weren't as many cars in those days either. These big streetcars--they were the long ones--Sundays they would come up full and go back full later on. Of course, the reason we stayed open until 12:00 was they used to run the dances until midnight. We would catch a few customers on the way out, so we stayed open, not always. If there wasn't a big crowd down there, we would close maybe 11:00, 11:30.

T: What types of bands played in the ballroom?

C: Ace Brigode played there about three or four years, five years. Of course, during the off-season they would have different big bands in after the park season closed. They would continue to have dances with big bands.

T: Was he a national act?

C: Ace Brigode? He was from Cleveland. They called it Ace Brigode and his Virginians. They based in Cleveland. During the winter they played there steady; they didn't travel that much. Of course, when they played here, the musicians lived here, most of them. They would rent. In those days you could rent homes or rooms. Some people who worked at the park would rent rooms to the band and stuff like that. There weren't all of the motels in those days like there are now. Your travel from Cleveland to Youngstown was a little rougher too. I can't tell you much about after the season about the bands, but they did run special dances on big days like holidays and things.

T: You seem to have an interest in music. Did you get to meet any of the band members?

C: Yes. I was trying to remember some. Bud Budniack was a pianist. Jess Hawkins played the banjo and he sang. We knew all of the band members. Then there was a guy, a fellow by the name of Emil. He played trumpet. I forget the other trumpet player. They were a couple of comedians. They really entertained the people. I know the drummer was from Jimmy Dimmick's Sunny Brook Orchestra. He was a young fellow. He had a lot of money left to him but he loved music so he played the drums in the band. That is about all. The bass player, I used to remember him too. I can't think of his name. That was a long time ago.

T: Was it an all white band?

C: Yes. It had to be.

T: Getting back to the concessions, which concession stands were the busiest?

C: By concessions, do you mean food and drink stands?

T: Yes.

C: The others were called game concessions. Our big stand in the midway, that was where all the traffic was because the Wildcat and Firefly were near there. Then the exit ramp was down that way and the merry-go-round was almost across from us. The shooting gallery was almost across from us. That was the busiest section of the whole park, the midway.

T: Which items were your biggest sellers?

C: People used to come from all over to get this foamy root beer, A & W root beer. All it was was high pressurized, a lot of gas shot into the regular root beer served. It was tasty. It was real good. It wasn't very thirst quenching. I guess some of these older people would come and walk through the park who lived nearby just to get a root beer. It made them burp or something. It was good tasting. It was a big mugful too.

T: Was that a plastic mug?

C: No, it was glass. We had to wash all of our mugs thoroughly. We used to have those washers in the counter and then every week we would give them a special wash, wipe them up. Of course, today you aren't allowed to wipe dishes.

T: And the customers are trusted to return the glasses?

C: They didn't take them away. They had to drink them right at the counter. Pop was usually drunk right there too. They could go a little bit away from the counter if the people were there. I suppose people walked off with one every now and then, but mostly we didn't have any trouble.

Then we used to have what we called near beer. It was a big seller on Slovak Day or Hungarian Day. It tasted like beer, but it just didn't have the kick. Fellows liked it better than pop, so they bought near beer (nonalcoholic).

T: Was beer sold at all in the park?

C: No, this was before beer and wine and whiskey came back.

T: This was during Prohibition?

- C: Yes. I can't tell you when beer did come back. It must have been in the later 1920's though.
- T: Did you sell any other things that you didn't mention earlier besides the Vernor's and the custards?
- C: Cigarettes and chewing tobacco. Cigarettes were 25¢ a pack out there. Downtown you could get two packs for 25¢. And candy bars and . . . that's about all. In the big drink stand, we didn't have sandwiches. There were separate stands, food stands. There was one food stand up by the airplanes and the other food stand was right under the theater on the midway. Then there was a cafeteria out there too where you could get food. I forgot who ran that.
- T: Could you talk about the theater?
- C: Well, I don't know too much. I knew some of the actors and everything. They would come up to get a drink and stuff. As far as seeing many shows, I didn't see too many shows. The only thing I know was that Jack Hammond was the producer. It was his business. He was a short fellow with heavy rim glasses. He would take care of the box office; he was a businessman. Of course, Lillian Desmond was the star. They had what you called a steady cast then. They would bring in others at different times. They used to have matinees out there on certain days; about two days a week they had matinees. I can't really tell you how many nights they ran it. They didn't run it every night, I don't think. When they changed shows, they would get busy.
- T: Was this an outdoor or indoor theater?
- C: Indoor. You had to walk up steps right beside this hamburger stand. That was the entrance. The box office was right across from the park office.
- T: How many drinks would you sell in a typical day? Do you have any idea?
- C: There were two kinds of typical days: A typical slow day and a typical fast day. I would venture a guess and say we sold 2,000 or 3,000 root beers on a good picnic day alone. Many times there were eighteen, twenty cases of pop--bottled pop. I can't tell you exactly on the frozen custard. It went over real big. It was soft. It was really rich in those days. We used canned milk and pure sugar and no preservatives or anything. It was like homemade ice cream. I forgot the price of it, but I think it started at 15¢ and went to 25¢. It was expensive in those days.
- T: Now you said you took part in the making of the ice cream occasionally.

C: Yes.

T: How long would it take to make the ice cream?

C: Probably half an hour. There were about five or six ingredients, which I don't recall. I do recall the canned milk and then there was a powder we used, sugar. That is about all that comes to mind. After we got started on it, why, Jack Chipperfield would make it himself except on picnic days when we were really busy and he would have to have help. Then they used to run out too. They just had the one machine out there. When they ran out, they would have to stop and start mixing again.

T: Which time of the year was the busiest for you?

C: In the park do you mean?

T: In the park.

C: There really was no set time. They just had picnics all summer long, maybe two, three a week, big picnics. Of course, Decoration Day was a great, big day because it was a holiday and Labor Day, of course, and the Fourth of July. Those three were outstanding.

T: How about when the trainloads of people came from out of town, did that happen very often?

C: Oh yes. I can't tell you really how often, but I remember they used to come in on the Erie and walk over to the streetcar on the square. I would say probably a dozen times a summer. Let's face it; that was a long time ago and I never did know the exact schedule. All I knew was there was a lot of business there. When they would come from out of town, why, they had a coffee concession up on the hill. They got free coffee, free milk. Actually the park didn't furnish that free stuff. The company they worked for would supply it. The park would help distribute it, things like that.

T: Do you recall any changes that were made at the park during the years that you were there?

C: Everything went pretty well the same every year except when they got the new ride.

T: You mentioned the Wilcat.

C: Wildcat and . . .

T: I believe that was 1930. It was started in 1929 and finished for the 1930 season.

C: Is that the right date?

T: Yes, I believe so.

C: Right on it then. They changed rides here and there. They changed things in the Fun House, no drastic changes though.

T: Do you remember when they made any additions to the pool or opened up Kiddie Land?

C: There was a beautiful swimming pool out there. Do you know the reason it closed?

T: Basically, but I would like you to explain it if you would.

C: Colored people caused it to close actually. I think they filled it with sand and made Kiddie Land, but they used to have a beautiful pool out there. It did a good business. It had a bathhouse and everything. I can remember a red-faced fellow by the name of Mike; he used to manage it. I didn't partake too much in the pool being busy all the time. Once in a while I would be in there, go in there and swim, but it was a gorgeous pool, round. That is about all I can say. To save themselves trouble, hurting the colored people and stuff, they folded it down.

T: Do you remember when they added an admission fee?

C: To the swimming pool?

T: Yes.

C: There was always an admission fee.

T: Always?

C: Yes. I don't know just how they handled the bathhouse either, but as far as I can remember there was an admission [fee].

T: Do you remember when they added an admission fee to the park?

C: That was later on. It wasn't while I worked there. While I worked there, they had the back gate and they had parking on the other side on the Parkview side. Then they expanded that parking when cars became more plentiful. The other side where they used to have . . . Later on when the trolley buses came they used this as a turnaround. Still later on I don't just remember when they turned that into a parking place too. It was really after I left.

T: Looking back, what would you have liked to do to change your job? Was there anything about it that you thought could have been done differently?

- C: In those days I just took orders from superiors. I never questioned it. I never thought that . . . The thing was cut and dry. I may have added some little quirks to it to make it easier or whatever, but no major changes that I can think of at that time to help the situation.
- T: After you stopped working at Idora, how often did you visit the park?
- C: Not too often. It was no more of a thrill to me because I had been out there that long. I would walk through once in a while a couple of times a year just to see some of the old guys who used to work there and say, "Hi." It didn't hold any thrills for me because I had all the rides I ever wanted out there.
- T: What were your favorite rides?
- C: I used to like the Whip and the airplane and, of course, the Wildcat. They used to have the Caterpillar there too. I don't know if you remember that. I was well enough acquainted with the merry-go-round that I could hop on and off while it was moving.
- T: Did the stand you used to work at continue to operate?
- C: Yes. Later on they broke it down somewhat. I don't know exactly what they did, but two or three years after it was still the same.
- T: Do you remember any changes that were made in the rest of the park after you left, being that you were so close to the park?
- C: Not really, I can't say.
- T: What was your reaction of the closing of Idora Park?
- C: It was sad but I guess it just had to be. Parks don't hold the interest today like they used to just like Cascade in New Castle. That kind of went down the same before Idora did too. I can't really say what happened, what the reason for the demise was. People's habits change.
- T: You said that you were more or less forced out of your job due to the fact that you couldn't get along with your second manager?
- C: I got along with him; he just didn't hire me back.
- T: He just didn't hire you back.
- C: No. There were no words or anything. He just said to me, "I can't use you this year."
- T: So you looked elsewhere?

C: In those days I took it as . . . I was getting pretty busy in my own line of work. I didn't really care. In fact that year I think I debated whether I wanted to go there again or not because I was helping out in a couple of little sign shops. I did some hourly work here and there.

T: What would you say was the most memorable moment while you were at Idora Park?

C: Personal moment or . . .

T: Anything.

C: My best moment, naturally, when I was hired there steady. I can't think of any other big moments.

Have you got any notes on that stand that was right outside of the park on Parkview Avenue, a little food stand? It used to be run by Jack Lutz. He and his wife Grace ran it. We would all stop there after work and sit there on the park bench and get a sandwich. Sometimes three or four of us would start singing harmony. The neighbors would holler out the window. That was the meeting place for the employees, some of us, after working hours, Jack's stand. He used to have pork, beef sandwiches--barbecued beef, barbecued pork--and he sold ice cream and stuff too.

T: This must have been pretty late at night.

C: Yes, after 12:00. Yes, our stands, of course, were folded down and covered up overnight. Then they had a night watchman there. Policeman "Old John," we used to call him, and he made his rounds. Like I said they never had too much trouble there. Kids were a little different, a little more experienced, at least I thought so.

T: Is there anything else that we didn't cover in this interview that you might think would be important?

C: I can't think of anything. I just about covered everything.

Charlie Deibel was one of the owners, too, in those days. I remember a little incident with Charlie. He would come up from the park office and get a Vernor's ginger ale. We used to have the glasses sitting on a metal tray upside down, Vernor ginger ale glasses. He got a ginger ale. I served him and then he drank it and he left. I thought, that's funny; he didn't pay me. Later on when I was cleaning glasses, here I see 10¢ on top of one of the glasses. He laid the 10¢ there. Wouldn't you know he reported me for not ringing up the purchase. I had to explain it to my boss what happened. That was the only incident that . . . That was long before I left there too. I looked all over the counter for the 10¢. I couldn't believe . . . Charlie always paid for his drink. He laid it on top of the glass. With 10¢,

you can't see it on top of the glass.

T: So would it be customary then for them just to leave the money on the counter rather than for them to pay you, put it in your hand?

C: Yes. Well, as a rule, yes, they put it on the counter and pushed it toward you or however. You didn't have the big bills and stuff then like you have now. Everybody had a lot of change.

T: Do you have any memories of Max Rindin?

C: No, I never met Max . . . I did meet him later on because my brother played out at a place they had out there. It was right next to the Fun House. It used to be the Heidelberg Gardens. What was the name of those cars that you drove?

T: Bumper cars

C: Bumper cars, yes. When beer came back, they made a tavern out of it. My brother played there. My brother was a musician too. He played violin with Ruth Autenrieth's orchestra. She had a band for a long time, a nice, little band that played at the Tod House and nice restaurants. It wasn't a rock band. That is one thing I will say; we had real music in those days. Ace Brigode was a favorite there. Once in a while they would bring in a string band for a holiday or something. I can't bring anything back on that. He had a nice, smooth band. Of course, it was park plan dancing at one time. Do you know what park plan dancing is?

T: No.

C: 10¢ a dance.

T: Can you explain that?

C: Yes. You bought tickets. A lot of guys and girls staged out there. The guy would buy tickets. He would ask the girl to dance. As he was going in to dance at certain gates there was a box there at the gate. The ticket taker would take your ticket, 10¢ a dance.

T: And when the dance was over?

C: When the dance was over, you had to pay another 10¢ for the next dance.

T: They cleared the floor?

C: Oh yes, cleared the floor every time. The dances weren't too long.

T: How long did that last?

C: Didn't you ever hear of that?

T: No, I didn't.

C: That was park plan dancing, that's all, Idora Park plan. Later on they quit that. They just charged a big general admission. See, they wouldn't charge much admission on park plan dancing. You would get in for 25¢ or something like that and then you could stand around and just listen to the band all night if you wanted; all it would cost you was 25¢. If you wanted to dance, then . . . Of course, most people went out there to dance.

T: Do you remember any of the other owners, the Duffy's?

C: Yes, Pat Duffy.

T: Or the Cavalier's?

C: No, I never knew him. Duffy had a partner at that time. I don't know his first name but we used to call him "Big Andy;" Anderson was his name. He also had a son who was involved, Saul Anderson. Those were the only owners I knew. I don't know how Max Rindin came in or anything else--just Charlie Deibel, Rex Billings, Duffy's, and Anderson's.

T: Alright then. I'm pretty much out of questions. It has been a pleasure.

END OF INTERVIEW