

JANE ZINK

**Interviewed by Jan Hutchings and Bobbi Jones
June 29, 2004**

Good evening Jane.

Good evening Jan and Bobbi.

When did you first come to Speedway?

About 1929, I was about 2.

Where did you live at that time?

They lived over on 11th Street. I don't remember it, but in 1930 we moved here.

Here being the house on 14th Street?

And so you lived with your parents, and any brothers and sisters?

I have two sisters, one was born in '36 and the other was born in '39. I was born in '27.

What is your first memory of this house?

Oh my goodness! I went two years to kindergarten because my parents didn't have anybody to sit with me or anything. The merchants on Main Street kind of took care of me, and then I went two years to Kindergarten.

Where did you go to school?

I went to the first school, Carl Fisher, the one they tore down, which is unfortunate; because I thought they should have kept it. But then my mother's parents came up and there were my mother, dad and my grandparents. We had a man from Jasonville, that worked at the store and he had a hide-a-bed and it was in there (pointing to the other room). And the living room went this way and there was an arch over to the end of the fireplace. This was the dining room and that (pointing to another part of house) was the living room and we had two little closets. I have all of them filled now. So we had two little closets and a little chifforobe with four little drawers in it. My grandmother and grandfather took care of me and I remember my grandfather walking me up to school.

Tell about the business on Main Street and why you refer to the merchants taking care of you.

Well, we had the first store; we had our first grocery store that was on Main Street. We have a picture of that store.

Can you tell us approximately what year?

Ok. Maybe 1935. This is the inside of it. There is more than one picture of the inside.

Zink's Market Speedway City, Indianapolis

Speedway City, don't give me that Indianapolis bit. And we were there for quite a while. Hurtz had a dry goods store next door, and they happened to live in the house next to me, here on 14th Street. They sold out the store to Lyons and I don't know how long it was before we moved. We moved to the other store.

Tell us a little bit more about going to the school. Do you remember going to the school that was torn down for your elementary, junior high and high school?

I went two years to kindergarten so I could be babysat, then I was in 1st grade. I was in Irene Robey's class. 2nd grade was Miss Parsons, 3rd grade was Muriel Thompson, 4th grade Laverne Ridlyn, and I had Miss Fleming, she taught English. I don't know what the rest were.

Do you have any outstanding memories of attending the school in Speedway?

One of my worst I remember was 7th or 8th grade and we had book reports to turn in. I stayed up all night copying that darn book report and went to school without it. Now the rear end of the school was right there (pointing across the street) and I could have gone home to get it but she (the teacher) wouldn't let me come home to get it. So she gave me a bad grade and when she did that I didn't work the rest of the semester. My punishment was I had to go to Washington to make up my grade. I had to ride the bus over to Washington. But after she said she was going to give me the "E" for not getting it, I just quit working. She would call on me in class, and I would say I didn't know. I mean that was the English and German in me.

What activities did you participate in while you were in high school?

None.

What would you and your friends do for fun and where would you hang out?

We would go up on Main Street to what was Beck's Drug Store and hang out there. After the rest of them would go do whatever they had to and I had to go to the store to work, which wasn't all that bad. But I

would walk home at noon or walk to the store and eat on Main Street and come back.

And where would you eat?

Mostly Houpt's Hamburger or the Sharon Lee.

And what would you kids get at Beck's Drug when you would go there?

Oh, mostly cokes and sodas. My name by the soda jerk was "Chubby".

Do you remember what you wore to school?

Oh skirts and sweaters, blouses, bobbie socks ad saddle oxfords.

What was the neighborhood like in high school?

Well, there weren't any people my age when I was in high school I was young. There used to be 3 houses across the street, and there were younger kids that lived there.

When Jane says across the street, that is where the Speedway Junior High School football field is now.

There was a house on the corner, a vacant lot, then two houses.

When were the houses tom down?

When the school bought the rest of the property, and then they tore them down.

So that was another major change in the neighborhood?

Right and there was a janitor, I'll think of his name. He had a house that would have been on 13thstreet but it was on the school property. The back parking lot.

So did you have any neighborhood kids you played with?

When I was little we used to play kick the can and stuff like that but I don't remember who they were because most of them were the age of my sisters.

Tell us about your dad's store.

The first one?

Yes - that one was Regal?

They both were Regal. It was where the coin shop is now and we used to deliver, and I remember sitting there were metal boxes about so big and I was very small for my age (before my grandparents came) and the delivery boy used to stick me in there and we'd go deliver groceries. They were just metal crates, and I used to ride there.

The people would have groceries delivered?

Yes, they had them delivered and we also had a charge card they could charge. Because of the depression and money was not available.

They would charge in a notebook?

Yes, we had some and I have some (copies) someplace. They were a carbon copy of the entry. You could call and give your order.

What would you actually do when you worked at the store?

I waited on people and answered the phone, took orders and put stock on the shelves.

And you had the same people come all the time?

Yes, during the war we had people line up to be sure they got there on Saturday to get the meat first. I mean people were nasty sometimes then.

How old were you when you started working?

I got paid \$5.00 a week. I don't know what year they put me on the payroll I was up there every day after school and on Saturday's. My home away from home. How old wasn't I, I worked there all the time.

And when did the store go out of your family's hands? What happened to the store?

I don't know what happened to the first store. The second was when mother sold it to Jim Kellam in 1960, after 30 years service. My Dad died in 1952. She (Mom) kept the store 8 more years.

What did the new owners do?

Sold fish. Goldfish. It was an aquarium. Helen still owns the property. Well Jim always said he was going to name one of his kids after me. But I don't think so. (He had two daughters, Beth and Janel)

What can you tell me about the churches?

The only church I ever went to was Speedway Christian Church. I don't know when they built the Catholic Church. But those were the only two that I remember back then.

And do you have any memories about what services were like?

The day that my sister and I were baptized was the same day Dad died. He was down in Kentucky fishing. They were eating lunch. He was with Dr. Hanna, the lawyer, that one on Main. Daddy was still there and he just keeled over.

Any people you visited with or went to church with that are still in Speedway?
I don't remember going to church with any of them.

And are you in any Speedway organizations now?

No. I pay dues to the thing (OSCNA) and belong to the library.

And as a young adult?

I think I went to Job's Daughters once and didn't go back.

As a young adult what were some of the activities in the Speedway area?

We had the Speedway drive-in that was there on 16th Street, and I used to drive the yellow panel delivery truck that had one seat and then we had a milk crate we would turn over and someone got to sit on or sit in the back.

Where was the drive-in?

At 16th & Georgetown. It was on the south side right past Georgetown Road.

What do you remember about the 500 in early days?

I was never in the track or anything. I worked for the State Police and I got to go then. My Dad had never been to the race till I started working for the police, and I took him in one year. We stayed open all night and on race morning, the 5:00 a.m. morning bomb went off and (we) would go on the corner of 16th and Georgetown and Main. The cars would go 10 feet and stop and go 10 more feet. It was something to see. You had to be there to see all the excitement that was there.

Tell us about the job with the police. How long did you work there and what did you do?

After I did 2 1/2 years at Butler my Dad wanted me to go to work and Bob O'Neal had a couple of job openings in the records department. My girlfriend, Georgia Foster, and I went, and we were hired to replace two of the men clerks so they could be trained to go out on the road and it was in the criminal records section. All it was was mainly filing. We didn't do fingerprints or classifications. We got to read all the reports; it was interesting. I'm in law enforcement. I went to Lafayette for 5 years and came back and worked at the Speedway Motel. Mother worked as the hostess at night and I worked on weekends for 2 or 3 organizations, Crossroads Rehabilitation Center and a couple of other ones. Then they built the law enforcement academy in Plainfield. Before they built it we had a little room down at the State Office Building. We were there for about 2 years then went to Plainfield and I worked there for 17 years. When we had the store the mechanics and

drivers were in the store and we got to know them that way. Louie Myers was one. I knew Len Trotter and just the old ones. When I went to work at the State Police I worked in the filing section of the Criminal investigation. Then when I went back to school and took shorthand and became a secretary for the Captain of Investigations Division Department, John Barton. He was a very special person. And then when I went out to Plainfield, Herman Freed, who just passed away a couple of weeks ago, took me on and I was his secretary out There. He was the Superintendent. It was all a very interesting job.

Jane, can you tell us anything else about the business on Main Street besides your store?

We had Rosner's. First off we had Bill Rosner that was in the drug store at 16th and Main. And right next to it in the little part was a grocery store, Clarence Houpt ran once and Art Raper ran it once. Then Bill Rosner sold it. Hank took over both parts of the store. Bill went to the corner of 15th and Main and opened what became Beck's Drug Store. Dorothy's was in the one store where the insurance company now is. It was a nice store to try on clothes. Wish I could do it now. Sizes are so different now. I got one pair of pants size 6, I don't wear a 6 and then I try on a pair of size 12 and they are too small. It just doesn't make sense. I think people making the clothes now think they are going to work on our mentality.