

## Interview with Betty Phyllis Roth

Born in Greensboro N.C., April 3, 1923 to Esther & Harry Chandgie., Betty notes that this is the same year Temple Emanuel on Greene Street opened for worship. Harry Chandgie had migrated from Russia to Philadelphia, becoming a first-generation American. Harry, like so many other immigrant Jews, got a job with a dry goods firm as a traveling salesman. He covered the Southeast, and that's how he met Betty's mother who was born and raised in Alabama.

After marriage and travel throughout the South, Esther and Harry decided to settle in Greensboro, a lovely small town. In 1922, Harry opened the first National Shirt and Hat Shop in downtown Greensboro.

Betty grew up in Fisher Park. Her list of friends was all inclusive, experiencing no anti-Semitism, Betty was free to attend social and civic clubs along with the Country Clubs.

Attending Sunday School at Temple Emanuel since age 3, Betty learned Reform Judaism. There were no Bar Mitzvahs, certainly no Bat Mitzvahs, and very little Hebrew. However, all students, boys and girls, were confirmed. Betty remembers Temple Emanuel was the pride of all who belonged. Everyone took an active part in keeping Temple Emanuel and Judaism alive and well.

Rabbi Fred Rypins and his wife Ruth came to Greensboro in the late 20's early 30's and were respected, loved and accepted in all manner of Greensboro. Their presence and work aided in making Greensboro a comfortable and desirable place to live.

On the High Holidays, the Temple was a busy place with services being held for Reform, Conservative and Orthodox Jewish Communities.

After wonderful teen-age years in Greensboro, Betty went to National Park College, an all-girls school near Washington D.C. During that time she had the privilege of meeting Eleanor Roosevelt. She also met and married Stan Lerner, a student at the University of Virginia. Stan was in the military and Betty moved with him from base to base in Colorado, Alabama, Maryland and Connecticut finally settling in Greensboro to be with family and for the birth of their son, Richard. Stan was in service during World War II. Unfortunately, he died in an airplane crash soon after the war.

Several years later, Betty married prominent Greensboro attorney, Charles Roth, of Falk, Carruthers and Roth and brother of Ruth Rypins. They had two daughters, Kathryn and Barbara, born seventeen months apart. Charles adopted Betty's son, Richard Lerner, so the family of five thrived surrounded by a great number of friends and family.

Again, tragedy hit Betty with the untimely death of their son Richard at age 40.

Betty, her two daughters, two granddaughters and one great-granddaughter still live in Greensboro. They are expecting the arrival of two more great grandchildren in the not-too-distant future. Living in New York is a daughter-in-law; in California a grandson, a granddaughter and a great grandson and great granddaughter.

The Chandgie/Lerner/Roth families are grateful for their many active years here in this “lovely, small town” growing, aiding, and sustaining the Jewish and secular community.

*Written by Midge Pines, July 2021*