



THE RUTH ANN OVERBECK  
CAPITOL HILL HISTORY PROJECT

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**Interview with Susan Jacobs**

**Interview Date:** April 28, 2009  
**Interviewer:** Sharon House  
**Transcriber:** Colleen Cruikshank

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TAPE 1/SIDE 1

**HOUSE:** We're here doing an interview for the Ruth Ann Overbeck Project. I'm Sharon House, I'm the interviewer and I'm interviewing Susan Jacobs. It's April 28<sup>th</sup>, we're doing the interview at my house on Sixth Street SE. Susan, do you want to tell us your full name or is Susan Jacobs your full name?

**JACOBS:** That's fine, that's my name.

**HOUSE:** OK. And would you like to tell us when and where you were born?

**JACOBS:** I was born in New York City on April 17, 1944.

**HOUSE:** And when and why did you come to Washington, DC and to Capitol Hill?

**JACOBS:** I came to Washington, DC because I had quit my job as a social worker in New York and camped out for eight weeks across the country. And I then had no money and so I came to visit my college roommate who had just moved down to Washington and she was up in Friendship Heights.

**HOUSE:** In Friendship Heights?

**JACOBS:** In Friendship Heights and after a week I still had no money and I said to her, Mary Jo, do you care if I stay and she said no, you can stay so I moved in with her roommate and with Mary Jo for about a year and a half and then I moved down to the Hill because I had other friends who were living in the same apartment house I'm living in now.

**HOUSE:** Oh, OK.

**JACOBS:** Another college friend, a woman who was a year older was living there and so, it has four apartments. So there was a woman upstairs named Sally and when her roommate, Ann, moved out, I moved in because Mary Jo was going someplace else, she'd moved to—well, you don't have to know all that, do you?—so that's how I came to the Hill. I had friends here.

**HOUSE:** Tell me again, you probably said, when did you move to the Hill?

**JACOBS:** 1969.

**HOUSE:** 1969. And you've been living in the same place ever since?

**JACOBS:** Same place. Until, well never mind.

**HOUSE:** OK. And when and how did you get involved with Eastern Market Pottery—is that the official name of it?

**JACOBS:** Yes, it's Eastern Market Pottery. I was working at the National Gallery of Art and I was postcard princess, I was in charge of the sales area and I hired a woman named Mary Jane Armstrong who'd just come in from spending ten years living in Paris and she had studied pottery in college and so she took a group of about five of us to another studio on the Hill and we did a little hand building for a few weeks and then—

**HOUSE:** Hand building?

**JACOBS:** Hand building as opposed to—that's in pottery—it's not wheel-thrown it's just working with hand build. And I was interested in it and she said well there's a studio over at the Eastern Market run by a guy named Harold Guiland so I went over and started taking lessons there while I was still at the gallery.

**HOUSE:** And was this in '69 too or?

**JACOBS:** Well it could have been '70 or '69.

**HOUSE:** But soon after you came.

**JACOBS:** Yes, soon after.

**HOUSE:** And did you start working full-time right away?

**JACOBS:** No, I was still at the gallery and then in 19—time does fly—1971 I decided I was, I was bored that's all. And it was in summer and I thought it would be really nice to sit out on my front lawn and read murder mysteries. So I quit my job. I was just 27 and, but I did have time on my hands and so I started to kind of work at this other studio which was on C Street then on Maryland Avenue and then, and continued to go to the Market Pottery and then time went on and I went to Europe for six months—my boyfriend was teaching in Florence—and then I came back and I didn't have a job or money, once again Sharon! It's kind of like, is this déjà vu? So I went to the studio because I'd worked before I had gone to Europe making owls with Chuck, who still owns the studio, he was managing it then.

**HOUSE:** That's the Eastern Market, not the Maryland Avenue?

**JACOBS:** Yes, this was 1973 and we were making little owls that he sold for 50 cents. I got 20 cents an owl. It was production, but—

**HOUSE:** How long did it take you to make an owl?

**JACOBS:** Well, they were done in pieces, you did several a day. It wasn't what you call terribly lucrative and it was very exacting. So I came walking into the studio and he said he had an apprentice who he'd had a fight with and he said, "You want a job?" And so I said, "Sure." So I became the apprentice at the pottery studio, which was no pay but all free space and materials and a lot of work. I mean, you know, mixing clay and making tools and cleaning and—and I just thought somehow that's the way, and I'm sure it is that way in most crafts kind of situations, you do a lot of work and you learn.

**HOUSE:** Was there one apprentice and then—

**JACOBS:** Yeah, me.

**HOUSE:** And then?

**JACOBS:** And then Chuck owned it and there were teachers and Mary Jane was a teacher there and, oh, a guy named Joe Vitek who's a wonderful potter and then other people kind of came and went and then Harold came back for awhile. It was a very—Harold was from California—it was a very kind of '70s situation. It was quite relaxed, let's put it that way. It was a great deal of fun but one evening in our class I believe when Harold was there, we had a pay phone on the wall and we just took clay and we threw it at the phone and so for a week the phone would ring but you couldn't get to it because it was encased in clay. And no one seemed to really worry about it.

**HOUSE:** Was this a money-making venture for anyone?

**JACOBS:** Oh yeah! For Harold that was his job, I mean the pottery studio has always been people's jobs. It's never been, no one's a Sunday painter.

**HOUSE:** Uh huh. And do you know anything about the history of the pottery group before you went to them?

**JACOBS:** Yes. Harold came out from California in 1967 or 68 and he went to Charlie Glasgow who was running the market—he was a fish guy—he's the one who saved the market—and said, "Give me that space upstairs and I want to turn it into a pottery studio," and he did. And he built all the shelving and the, I guess got the kiln and he did everything and then he left and went back to California and then he came back briefly.

**HOUSE:** So you were there really from—

**JACOBS:** From the beginning, yeah. I mean, as a student.

**HOUSE:** What was that space before?

**JACOBS:** We heard that it had been a tea room, not you know within recent years but early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century it has been a tea room.

**HOUSE:** Oh that's interesting. Now getting a kiln up there, that must have been—

**JACOBS:** I think that they built it in there.

**HOUSE:** OK, that makes sense. I remember those little stairs.

**JACOBS:** Well, there's the stairs in the back, though, too.

**HOUSE:** Oh there are other stairs? OK, I didn't know that.

**JACOBS:** They came down between the lunch counter and the fish stand. It was the staircase we went up to the bathroom.

**HOUSE:** Now what was your position with Eastern Market Pottery? Are you head of it?

**JACOBS:** No, Chuck owns it; I'm the manager.

**HOUSE:** You're the manager. Because you're the face that people—

**JACOBS:** Well Chuck lives out near Front Royal so he's only in, now he comes in on Tuesday to take Alan's class but you know, he would be in maybe 12 times a year. He's been much more involved since the fire because a lot of the, he's done a lot of the work of building a new studio and he's very handy—can wire and he can do whatever plumbing and all that kind of thing.

**HOUSE:** So how many others are there associated on an ongoing basis?

**JACOBS:** Well, Audrey Jones is still there and Ellen, whose hand has not been good and she was a teacher but she came in 1975. And Audrey's been there for easily 20 years, if not more—20, 25. And then Lynn Murphy who was a student, now is a staff person who does some teaching and monitors the studio time on Saturday. And a man named Mark Lewis who just came recently to replace Holly, who'd been there as a student for 20 years and as a teacher for eight.

**HOUSE:** And these people are all full-time?

**JACOBS:** No, they teach a class.

**HOUSE:** I see.

**JACOBS:** But Audrey doesn't have another job, I mean, she does double-duty with all of her grandchildren but she does make pots. And Lynn comes in I'd say anywhere from three to four days a week. She's a dental hygienist and she helps a husband who's a vet so she has other commitments. And Chuck is a full-time potter but he does most of his work out in Virginia.

**HOUSE:** And as manager, your responsibilities are what?

**JACOBS:** Well, let's see. What do I do? Well, I'm the person who's there most of the time. I go to the bank, I used to order all the supplies. Things are quite different now that we're in this temporary space because we don't have any storage. So I and other people tell me and Chuck has to order them, keep them out at his place in the country and bring it in as needed because we have no place to keep clay and chemicals. I seem to answer all the phone calls, put the signs up for classes, I—

**HOUSE:** Do you teach?

**JACOBS:** Oh yeah, I teach.

**HOUSE:** And you do—you're the person I see most often at the table selling.

**JACOBS:** Well, initially or originally we were the only table there in the mid-70s. It was the potters came out and had one little table by the forsythia bush and they, Seward Johnson, the skater—do you remember that sculpture? The skateboarder?

**HOUSE:** Yes. So just for the people who might be reading this, this is in the far Northeast corner.

**JACOBS:** Yes, it's the Northwest corner. It's the Northeast corner on the market but the Southwest corner of Seventh Street and North Carolina.

**HOUSE:** Right, right.

**JACOBS:** And then, you know, Audrey did for awhile and she's done Sunday but her life is now quite occupied by grandchildren so she doesn't produce as much. She may do it again when we are back in the market.

**HOUSE:** Are you going back to the same space you had?

**JACOBS:** No, we're going back to—you know, getting all this direction—we're going back to the South end, in the basement. They're building a studio for us in the basement. They took our studio space and have put air conditioning equipment up there.

**HOUSE:** I wonder if it's worth describing just a little bit what that studio space was like. I take it it was quite large.

**JACOBS:** It was about, I think it was approximately between 800 and 900 square feet. We'll have more in the basement but we won't have as high ceilings, before we had very high ceilings. The studio space as you came up from the alley side, a wonderful wrought-iron circular staircase which then was deemed not either an exit or an entrance because it doesn't meet code and then you came into kind of a long hall which has our kiln and a sink and a stove and then there was the little area in the back that we stored chemicals and had a display area which had a loft, which back in the 60s Harold slept there. And used to farm himself out for a shower so I would say things were a bit different then.

**HOUSE:** Farm himself out for a shower?

**JACOBS:** Yeah, when he wanted to take a shower.

**HOUSE:** Oh, shower. I was going to say—

**JACOBS:** When he needed to take a shower he would go to one of the students' houses or one of his buddies.

**HOUSE:** I get it, I get it.

**JACOBS:** And then you came into a large room which had a skylight that was installed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century—I think it was 1908—which was quite wonderful other than the fact that it was one side you could neither open nor close and it wasn't closed completely. It wasn't in great operating condition. So that was hot in the summer and cold in the winter because you couldn't close it completely or open it completely.

**HOUSE:** And you sold from that studio.

**JACOBS:** We did sell from that studio. We had studio sales, Christmas and spring but we also had a little display area people would come up and, you know, buy pots because they were aware—certainly members of the community were aware—that we were there.

**HOUSE:** And at the same time you had the outdoor space?

**JACOBS:** Right, we had the outdoor space. I think for me my, I was more indulgent of myself and the weather had to be relatively good. I didn't freeze nor fry because it was less necessary. We had the studio upstairs and also you could take your pots out or bring them back up if it was inclement weather.

**HOUSE:** Now you were the person who, if I remember correctly, after the fire did you lose everything in the fire?

**JACOBS:** We lost nothing.

**HOUSE:** You lost nothing?

**JACOBS:** I lost one mug. When the firemen broke in through the back, through the market although I was saying “I have a key!” You know, I have a key to the other side, they broke in through the market side.

**HOUSE:** Now this was the next day?

**JACOBS:** No that was that night.

**HOUSE:** So you were there that night?

**JACOBS:** I was there that night. My friend Sissy who has the frame shop and lives across the street on North Carolina, she called me. And I’m a very good sleeper and she said “Susan, Sissy, the market’s on fire and it looks like it’s your end.” So of course the media’s there because forever people are saying, “You’re dangerous, we’re so worried about those kilns.” Well, honestly speaking we were so cautious because we were aware of fire and we had a sign that was written on the side of the kiln was in big letters—“Fire is not the natural friend of man.” So I can’t tell you the thousands of times that I returned to check that I had turned everything off. Audrey said that she’d wake up in the middle of the night and rush over from Browns Court. So Sissy said that you know, “It looks like your end.” And I thought, “Oh my God,” and she said, “There are at least, I don’t know how many fire trucks there.” and I said, “Oh, the fire department’s there well, I think I’ll go back to sleep,” because what can I do? And then I woke up a little bit more and thought that I should go over. So I went over that night and actually they took me in. I can’t remember if they took me in that night or the next morning. They took me into the studio.

**HOUSE:** What time did she call you?

**JACOBS:** She called me about 1 or 1:15. 1:30, sometime.

**HOUSE:** When did they put the fire out?

**JACOBS:** Oh it didn’t go out until the next day. It was continuing to burn the next day. And I mean when the Mayor was there and everything, it was still burning.

**HOUSE:** So you didn’t go in while it was still burning.



**JACOBS:** No, nobody went in while it was still burning.

**HOUSE:** But it was the next day.

**JACOBS:** But it was smoldering. And nobody was going into the market but the firewall between the market and the central hall and the north end, we're in the central hall, held so nobody from that end was damaged at all. We had smoke, you know, you could smell smoke for months afterwards and everything was covered with soot which you didn't notice—because you couldn't see it—and you'd put your hand on it. On something then you'd put your hand on your forehead and people would, you know, you got a black mark. So we didn't lose anything.

**HOUSE:** Let me go back to the fire. Did you go over when she called?

**JACOBS:** I did. I went right then. I went back to sleep and then I thought I've got to get up.

**HOUSE:** So was there a big crowd there?

**JACOBS:** Yeah, uh huh, there were people. They were keeping you kind of I think from kind of C Street down you could be that side but then you had to go down to Eighth Street. You couldn't walk on Seventh Street on the other side of the block. It was just like, you know, it was just a crowd—there were tons of people.

**HOUSE:** Fire trucks from both sides? The alley and Seventh Street?

**JACOBS:** Yeah, I can't even remember—a lot of fire trucks and a lot of firefighters and a lot of water, a lot of hoses. Because it was the roof because what happened, was I gather, that when it started in the alley, I'm not saying what the cause was but it did start on that side, it just went straight up to the roof so when you went in, I mean when I came back the next day and it was either that day or sometime after, they hadn't started cleaning anything out, there were cartons in the market that were untouched. It somewhat—

**HOUSE:** Of food? Cartons of food?

**JACOBS:** Yeah. Cardboard boxes. So that there was little damage actually on the floor level. It was the roof, the ceiling which of course was major.

**HOUSE:** So I believe you told me that you're the one who found a new place for the studio?

**JACOBS:** It was kind of coincidental. I had a wonderful time wandering around the neighborhood looking for possibilities so it was really quite a delightful May and June. And I walked into this alley and

there was a sign saying “Studio” and I think I called the number or I wrote it down or called and didn’t get an answer. And then a few weeks later, Chuck was down at the market—I can’t remember why—on a Saturday and we were talking to one of the painters who was a friend of Audrey’s and she said, you know there’s a studio available over off Mass Avenue and it was not the one that we’re in but was right next door. So we called, he called the man who sublets it and rented it to us.

**HOUSE:** They weren’t concerned about having a kiln there?

**JACOBS:** Well they had a kiln there before, it’s a studio.

**HOUSE:** It was a pottery studio?

**JACOBS:** No, it was a studio, an art studio. It was two kind of and a half floors. Where the ground floor, there was a kiln, his girlfriend’s kiln was there and I think at one point there possibly had been pottery there. When we came in there was—a band had it as a recording, part of a place to do some recording I think. And upstairs was a sculptor who had been there for ten years or nine years and then a portrait painter came and then two little—that’s bad, I keep on saying too little—two young men who were clothing designers who turns out, the older one is married to my goddaughter. So it was one of those “you look familiar,” you know? Cole and Will, who are just wonderful. Everybody’s very nice over there. So yeah it turned out fine.

**HOUSE:** So you relocated there within a couple months?

**JACOBS:** We went there got in I think mid-August and opened in September. It takes a lot of work. It’s going to take the same amount of work getting back in the market. Chuck has to build things, you know, it’s not like going to Ikea and just kind of moving everything in and saying voila, it has to be—

**HOUSE:** OK. Do you want to talk some about your pottery? Is there anything—I mean, I’ve seen it but people who hear this won’t have seen it. Is there anything in terms of describing the pottery or is it unique in any way or do people do certain things?

**JACOBS:** Do you mean the pottery studio and what we do?

**HOUSE:** The pottery, the things you make.

**JACOBS:** OK well I think our studio for the most part everybody who has worked in the studio except our latest teacher who is new, we do functional stoneware and some porcelain and that’s basically it. And everybody has slightly different styles. I can tell, you know, anybody’s pot from across the room and I

can also tell the pots of students and former students and former teachers because even though we use the same materials—so it's functional stoneware, high-fired. And that would mean mugs, bowls, you know.

**HOUSE:** Very large platters, which I have one of.

**JACOBS:** I've done some large platters. I haven't done them since we moved to the new studio. We're doing electric-firing instead of gas for one thing and the kiln is much smaller and somehow, to my mind and I'm still actually kind of getting used to it. It's only been about a year and a half of using different clay, different glazes. So I'm doing somewhat different things, I'm doing smaller things.

**HOUSE:** You also, yes, do some very small things. Very small.

**JACOBS:** Yes. Because I think slightly different materials kind of encourage you to do something a little different. You probably don't paint the same thing in oils and acrylics even. So I don't know what else to tell you about it.

**HOUSE:** How about your own style? Has it evolved?

**JACOBS:** I don't, I think my voice is getting high, [laughs], you know I don't, yeah I think it's changed, sure. And I'll tell you Sharon, I look upon my pottery to some extent not quite like my knitting—I don't knit as much anymore, I've never been a wonderful knitter but I knitted for awhile. I really love throwing pots and since I make almost no money on it and never have, it is not a lucrative profession. But thank god you don't have to get dressed up and you can wear anybody's clothes to work, anybody's. They don't have to fit.

**HOUSE:** Throwing a pot, does that mean on the wheel?

**JACOBS:** Yeah, the wheel. So now I'm at the stage where I say ok, I'm going to do what I want. Now I do take orders of course. I don't want to do teapots anymore so I don't. I don't want to do casseroles, so I don't. I like doing bowls and I like making bottles and I like, you know, occasionally I do a mug or a pitcher, things like that. I mean, I'll do plates, I'll do platters but I really like bowls and bottles and so I do a lot of bowls and bottles. And a little, I like tumblers. So yes, it's evolved. I don't decorate very much anymore. I used to decorate—now I don't do much brushwork although you know, maybe someday I'll do it again. My pottery has become a bit looser, not as—you know, I'm freer with it. What else can I tell you?

**HOUSE:** That's good. And we've covered some of this but I have a question here, how has Eastern Market Pottery changed since you joined, aside from the fire but just generally? Are there things that have changed a lot? You mentioned materials recently changed.

**JACOBS:** Materials and location. Well I'd say, yes, I mean when we first, when I first came in the 70s well, we were young. I tell you, if you think about it, since four of the people who were there—three and then Audrey pretty much, are still there—we're now old. Not as old as some of your interviewees but we're old, ok? And so the difference is we started in our 20s and we're now in our 60s and 70s. And people's lives change. So then we used to always have lunch together and there were usually four or five of us would have lunch and either bring our lunch or go down to Boone's or get something at Prego and share it and we would sit there and we would do the puzzles in the Washington Star. Test your knowledge, the word game, because we didn't—we worked, we all worked, but life was easier then. I mean you just somehow, so it was a lot less I won't say professional but it was just a different, you know, people would say, "Oh let's go to the movies." and we'd all leave and go see The Godfather or something like that, it's not as common anymore.

**HOUSE:** What about—

**JACOBS:** And we also enjoyed the studio itself. We had many classes then we went to one class then we went to four classes so that has changed with the number of students.

**HOUSE:** What about some of the challenges and successes you've had over the years, the pottery group? Are there, well certainly the fire was a big challenge.

**JACOBS:** I guess I'm going to tell you something right now. I don't think of, I don't tend to see things in terms of challenges and successes so I can't answer that question. Does that make sense to you? I don't look at things that way, so I don't think about it, OK?

**HOUSE:** OK. You mentioned, I know now of course in addition to having moved your studio and getting ready to move it back soon, we hope there's a lot of construction on Seventh Street, there's this recession we're going through. Has that been a major impact on your sales?

**JACOBS:** Well yes, I don't know what has been the impact on my sales, but everybody—I'm not alone in that—we're just not selling as much, I don't think anybody is. Maybe jewelers are but I mean that's life. And, since no one knows where the studio is we don't have studio sales anymore. So I assume that will improve when we get back to the market. As I tell people, if not, instead of selling a mug I'll stand out there with a mug.

**HOUSE:** I'm going to stop and change this tape.

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 1

TAPE 1/SIDE 2

**HOUSE:** OK are there, thinking about the market generally now, are there stories from the market that you would like to share with us?

**JACOBS:** Well since I've been there for now 30—well actually as a student it's 40 years—when I first came, the lunch counter which is now Tommy's, you know, Market Lunch, was owned by a woman named Mrs. Boone and it was called Boone's Lunch and they had a pork plate, a ham plate and a beef plate and two sides and that's what you had for lunch. And on Tuesday (the market was only open Tuesday through Saturday) and Tuesday was meatloaf and Friday may have been fish but I won't swear to that and Saturday was fried chicken. And Mrs. Boone who was at that time I think already in her 70s worked there and the other woman I remember was a woman who was also older named Vernel and when they closed, when Mrs. Boone retired which was sometime in the mid-70s they had a free lunch for everybody on Saturday and the line was down the block and they just gave out fried chicken and potato salad. And Mrs. Boone and Vernel had orchid corsages on. It was really a wonderful thing. And so many people in the market are still there. You know, the Calomirises were there, the Glasgows, I mean Charlie ran the fish market, now Chad and Richard do and then the meat counter, I can't—I'm drawing a blank—but the Glasgows were there too. And then there was a man who sold cold cuts who was an older man and everything—he would have, you know, roast beef or turkey or ham and it would say "very tasty"—so we called him Mr. Tasty. Then there was Mr. Becker and Le Poulet au Pot and he wore a beret and Eugene worked for him and Eugene had a rather unfortunate stay at the Market which somebody else can tell—

**HOUSE:** Eugene who?

**JACOBS:** Eugene. Do you remember Eugene? At the chicken stand? A very big guy and it seems that he, well, I don't think we're going there. He left, he left, and Mel [Inman] worked for him, and Mel took over. And then Mel's son who is now in his 30s, at the age of about six one day we were in the studio and there was a back door (we had a little back dressing room but there were two doors and the one to the bathroom) and we look up (we kept it open for air in the summer) and there's this tiny, tiny little boy in a big apron just watching us. And so we invited him in and we gave him some clay and about, I don't know, a half hour later, I think it was Edward comes up and says, "Little Mel! Where have you been?" He'd come upstairs to go to the bathroom and never went back down. He just came into the studio and, of course, somebody had finally realized where has this child gone and so every day he was quote helping his Dad during the summer, every day he came up and spent lunchtime with us and he was just adorable. And he made a wonderful little clay figurine of an artist with a beret and an easel.

**HOUSE:** How old was he then?

**JACOBS:** He was like six! And he came for a couple of years and he helped Katie clean and so, you know, and now his son is probably the age, not, I guess his son is almost the age he was when we met him. So and he's bald, which is hard for me to believe. So I've known Mel. And there's just—the market has always been in many ways, very—

**HOUSE:** [sneezes]

**JACOBS:** Geshundheit or whatever. It's been very, people have been very supportive of one another and very, in many ways, I hate to sound—but like a family. And people have always been quite nice and Chad, when Chad managed it he was very good and very funny. We had a faucet one time that was leaking and I called him, hysterical you know, water's pouring out and he comes up and he said, "Susan, don't you remember the story about the guy in Holland who put his finger in the dike?" And I said, "No way!" And he kind of like—you know, so it was that kind of an atmosphere. And then the farmers outside, I mean, I knew, I used to trade with three of them. I would keep a running tally of what I took in vegetables and then they'd come and get a pot. And they're, you know, one sadly died and another one is living on the Hill but not doing, selling vegetables anymore and Kenny retired, so, that's—

**HOUSE:** Does that continue at all? That kind of trading amongst vendors?

**JACOBS:** Not, you know, because it's a different group of people. The farmers—it just, it's a different time, I think. I don't know. I don't really trade with anybody anymore. The three people I traded with aren't there anymore. Oh and then you must hear about Joe, Market Joe. Did anybody ever tell you about Market Joe?

**HOUSE:** You're the only interview I've done on the market so far.

**JACOBS:** Oh, ok. Well, Market Joe was one of the winos who hung around the market. And I first met him at the laundromat, the Tub—do you remember the Tub? [ed: business formerly at the southwest corner of Seventh and C Streets SE, across C Street from the Market]

**HOUSE:** Right.

**JACOBS:** And he was out there reading, I think Heidegger or something quite amazing and I said what are you doing? An interesting man. Unfortunately, when drunk a little bit combative but he once said to me that he and some of the other guys knew very well that the girls were upstairs at all hours and we did, I mean I sometimes worked until midnight with that kiln and had to go home down the alley and he said and we're there keeping an eye on you. And he was—they employed him in the market.

**HOUSE:** To do what?

**JACOBS:** Oh, clean up or stuff like that. He was bright. And he was a part of the market and when one day he didn't come and I came back from Christmas and was talking and I said, "Where's Joe?" and Chad said, "Oh I don't know, we're kind of looking for him." And so we started making phone calls. And I thought I found him at Christ House and I came in and said I think I found him and he said, "He's back." So what I thought was really nice is that, you know, the Glasgows and me—this is a guy who was a bum in the neighborhood, a wino—but he was so much a part of our community and we cared about him, as he cared about us, that people went out looking for him to see that he was ok. And he did come back and you know, he died. He's, he actually was found dead on one of the benches at the swimming pool in his 50s and everybody on the Hill knew. I mean I was at the Safeway and somebody already knew that he was dead because that group of Safeway checkers had been at the Seventh Street Safeway. And I went to his funeral. He was given a 21-gun salute, buried—because he had been in the Marines, I guess—and it made the front page of the Metro section. So there was Market Joe. His last name was Genius. So I mean, he was very much a part of the market. So you had, it was and as were the farmers who came in for 20 zillion years and stuff like that.

**HOUSE:** Unlike many of the vendors, you live on the Hill.

**JACOBS:** I do.

**HOUSE:** And I felt we ought to at least, since this interview is about you as well as about Eastern Market Pottery, talk about some of your other activities in the neighborhood. I know some of those just from how we've intersected. I know you volunteer at Capitol Hill Village—

**JACOBS:** Right.

**HOUSE:** Doing things for people who can't get around as much or whatever. Are there other community organizations?

**JACOBS:** I've been volunteering at the soup kitchen at the Church of the Brethren for about 11 years.

**HOUSE:** Oh OK. Are you still involved with the National Gallery of Art at all?

**JACOBS:** No. I mean other than going and seeing friends and going to exhibitions and concerts but I don't have any, no I don't. I mean, they have volunteer docents but at this point my time is such that I have to work.

**HOUSE:** I know you're also a great walker. You like to walk everywhere.

**JACOBS:** I love to walk, yeah, I love to walk. I do walk everyplace. And I walk every morning around Lincoln Park. And now I have to walk a mile to work and back home and yes, I walk Sharon. And now that I'm an old person, yes, and I have insurance at AARP I can go to Washington Sports Club for free. And I also go to ballet on the Hill. I go to ballet at St. Mark's.

**HOUSE:** Ok great! You have lots of interests.

**JACOBS:** Uh huh. And the Library of Congress concerts—do you go there?

**HOUSE:** I go to the Library of Congress a lot but—

**JACOBS:** The concerts are fabulous

**HOUSE:** The ones outdoors?

**JACOBS:** No, no, no. They've had concerts there since I've come to Washington.

**HOUSE:** The chamber—

**JACOBS:** The chamber music, yeah and they're fabulous. In fact, I'm going Friday and a friend of mine gets tickets and they're wonderful. And the National Gallery has Sunday evening concerts that have been wonderful. So there's so much to do on the Hill that it's, you know, it can keep you very busy particularly if you like music.

**HOUSE:** Yes, and like to walk.

**JACOBS:** And like to walk. Absolutely.

**HOUSE:** Is there anything else you'd like to add about yourself or the market or the neighborhood?

**JACOBS:** Well I think it's a wonderful neighborhood. I think it's a fabulous neighborhood. I think it combines being on Capitol Hill—an aside, when I first came, moved here, it was pretty, but you know, you know how you change in your life which is, I guess, fortunate, and I was less interested in flowers than I am now. I don't garden but I am a very, very wonderful appreciator of other people's gardens; I love them and can tell you where, you know, the best tulips are, at least the ones that I've seen. And I wanted really to move to kind of Dupont Circle area which was livelier and more citified.

**HOUSE:** When you were younger.

**JACOBS:** Yeah, when I was younger. Because I came from New York and I still, I miss New York and I only lived there for like two and a half years after college. So, and then all of a sudden it changed and I



thought no, I don't want to live in Dupont Circle or Adams Morgan or now whatever the U Street area is. And the Hill with its, seemed to me to combine the best of every world. It's urban but it's really much more like a small town in many ways. People walk so you get to know your neighbors and I know people who have helped me in various ways and it's been just a joy to know them who I met simply because we saw each other on the street so frequently.

In fact, I'll tell you a very funny story, I think it's very funny. I do not belong to Christ Church but many of my friends do and I have been going to their St. Patrick's Day corned beef and cabbage dinner and auction for a number of years and this past year I was in the auction part talking to Norman Metzger, yes, and a man came up and said to me, "Hi do you remember me? I woke you up on the Metro." And I said, "Oh, oh, yes. Thank you." And then he and Norm kind of said hello and told me that they were neighbors and I said to Norman well, "Shall you tell him or shall I?" And he said, "You can." And I said, "Guess how I met Norman? He and Nancy woke me up on the Metro!" And I said, "I have a feeling that, you know, perhaps within the next 20 years all of G Street will wake me up on the Metro!" [laughing] So Norman and I and Nancy have been wonderful, we're friends and they have me to dinner. And I met them because they woke me up and walked me home, you know, "This is your stop." So that's how I look upon the Hill which is a very friendly, helpful, and people are just interesting and I find it delightful. I'm very happy to live here. And of course, now I want to ask you Sharon, what about you? What do you think about the Hill? Is it the same thing?

**HOUSE:** That's for another time.

**JACOBS:** OK.

**HOUSE:** This has been a delightful and fun interview. I thank you very much.

**JACOBS:** OK, OK, wonderful. So I hope I didn't talk—

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 2

END OF INTERVIEW