

VN810074 Silia Giannone & Vittoria Giannone

[0:00:00]

**Interviewer:** I am sitting in Sylvia Poretta's house at 121 Robert Street just south of Harbord. I'm sitting here with Sylvia, of course, with Vittoria and Silia Giannone, who lived in this neighbourhood. Vittoria lived here from 1963 to '69, and Silia lived here from 1962 to 1977. And they're bursting with stories, but first I want to say to **[0:00:30]** Sylvia, thank you very much for bringing us together.

**Respondent 1:** I'm so glad that we were able to do this finally. [Laughs]

**Interviewer:** So we've already been chatting, and I had to stop us from chatting because you have so many good stories, I want them on the tape. Maybe each of you could tell me how old you were when you moved here, and why you moved to this neighbourhood.

**Respondent 2:** Me? I **[0:01:00]** came from Italy. I live with my sister. My sister was living on Robert, I think it was.

**Respondent 1:** 206 Robert.

**Respondent 2:** So...

**Interviewer:** So you lived at 206 Robert.

**Respondent 2:** Yeah. Whenever, before I got married.

**Interviewer:** And that was 1962?

**Respondent 2:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Respondent 2:** No. 1960 I came from Italy. Yes. And then I – those two years, I met my husband right away because he **[0:01:30]** came and picked us up because they were all in the family here. And he lived with my sister-in-law, so they came and pick us up from the train there, the station, and come and bring us home. So that's all I – I lived

with my sister for – my mother, me, my brother. I live with [0:02:00] my sister, and she married.

**Interviewer:** And you lived on Robert Street?

**Respondent 2:** On Robert.

**Interviewer:** Who else lived in that house on Robert Street?

**Respondent 2:** My...

**Respondent 1:** 206 Robert.

**Respondent 2:** 206. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Okay. And who was living there?

**Respondent 2:** My sister.

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Respondent 2:** Which she married – was married with brother of my sister-in-law, which is Nicky's aunt.

**Interviewer:** The Poretta family.

**Respondent 1:** The Poretta family. The Poretta's lived at 206 Robert.

**Respondent 2:** Yeah. So – and [0:02:30] until I got married, and then I lived on 118 Harbord Street. That's until I was thirteen, fifteen years there. I had my two children, a boy and a girl, in '64 and '65.

**Interviewer:** So you were young when you had your children.

**Respondent 2:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** How old were you when you had your children?

**Respondent 2:** What was Rosalie? Twenty [0:03:00] years.

**Interviewer:** Whoa. Yeah.

**Respondent 2:** Yeah. The oldest. And twenty-one, my son.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. So by twenty-one you had two children.

**Respondent 2:** Yeah. And then...

**Interviewer:** So you lived here for about fifteen years once you moved...

**Respondent 2:** Fifteen years.

**Interviewer:** ...to Robert Street.

**Respondent 2:** Yes. And then my...

**Interviewer:** To Harbord Street.

**Respondent 2:** ...kids – eleven, twelve years when we move up. We sold the house and then moved out. And then the house, I [0:03:30] lived with my brother-in-law and my sister-in-law, which is my husband's brother.

**Interviewer:** Right.

**Respondent 2:** We have the house. We bought the house together. And she was – they were living upstairs and I was living downstairs.

**Interviewer:** So – and that's the house on Harbord.

**Respondent 2:** On Harbord. 118.

**Interviewer:** Oh, so that's nice. So the family was living so close to each other upstairs and downstairs.

**Respondent 2:** Yeah. And then I had two kids, and two kids of mine, and we lived [0:04:00] there for, like I said, until...

**Interviewer:** 1977.

- Respondent 2:** ...fifteen years. Like we buy it together. And it was beautiful because we have all the family here and the other, you know, my brother-in-law, and then the other brother-in-law, Vittoria came from Italy and we joined in the family. We getting bigger, and we have a lot of parties, a lot of gathering with the family, [0:04:30] and together. And then the kids. The kids were amazing. They love each other. You know, grow up together, and they still do now, you know, because they grow up together. And now they have that closeness. I remember all the time they spend here too when they were younger, so.
- Respondent 1:** We had a lot of family parties.
- Respondent 2:** Lots of family parties. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Lots of family parties, lots of music, lots of dancing.
- Respondent 2:** My [0:05:00] house there was all the time full.
- Interviewer:** You mean people were coming and you were feeding them? And...
- Respondent 2:** I make the pizza. Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** Relative, of course.
- Interviewer:** What's that?
- Respondent 3:** Relative.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. So you...
- Respondent 3:** Remember, they're all relatives. We were not really quiet – big. Five brothers, five wife, and all the people behind.
- Respondent 2:** And then I have my family come over sometime when they have a party, so you imagine there's a lot of [0:05:30] people in my house, and when I have birthdays, or Christmas, or those, you know, all the time it was a feast. Like one time when we finish, when we finish pay the house, that's when we – my husband bought lambs and had a barbecue. And my sister-in-law, my sister-in-law's father

helped to [0:06:00] – to cut pieces and then we had a lot of barbecue in the backyard.

**Interviewer:** So to celebrate when you had finally paid off the entire house you had a feast.

**Respondent 2:** Yeah. We gathered all of my family, my husband's family, friends, and we had this big gathering.

**Respondent 3:** Everybody must have come along, even stranger. No.

**Respondent 2:** Like I said, gathering, with all the friends...

**Respondent 3:** Because there was a lot of Italian people.

**Respondent 2:** ...around [0:06:30] here and there. Not all.

**Respondent 1:** The immediate are, even the people that were not family would come.

**Interviewer:** So family came and the people who lived close.

**Respondent 2:** Yeah. And there was friends.

**Respondent 1:** Yeah. Like there were friends. They would play music together because some of them had – they knew how to play instruments. They knew how to play the accordion and [0:07:00] the saxophone. Lenny Shapiro, do you remember him?

**Respondent 3:** Yeah. But even my brother-in-law Giorgio was too.

**Respondent 2:** Giorgio was playing too.

**Respondent 1:** George played.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So the accordion, the saxophone. What other instruments?

**Respondent 3:** And the guitar.

**Respondent 1:** The guitar.

**Respondent 3:** My husband was with the guitar always.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so...

**Respondent 2:** And there's singing, and then, you know...

**Respondent 1:** They would sing on Harbord Street.

**Respondent 2:** ...they're all together. Yeah.

**Respondent 1:** And they would all gather around, and the women would be dancing on the streets.

**Interviewer:** Oh my god. And this is Harbord just east of Robert? **[0:07:30]**  
Where was this?

**Respondent 1:** Yeah. It would be in front of – sort of like where the Harbord Bakery is.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Respondent 3:** Yeah.

**Respondent 1:** Between Fuda and the Harbord Bakery, right in the middle there.

**Respondent 3:** Yeah, yeah. It's fun. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** So Silia, that's a very nice introduction. Vittoria, do you want to talk about when you first came here, where did you live and who else lived there at that time?

**Respondent 3:** Are we going to be recording already?

**Interviewer:** It's all being recorded, definitely.

**Respondent 3:** Okay. Because, you know, I don't have nothing **[0:08:00]** very good in the beginning to say about Canada.

**Interviewer:** Well please talk about that. That's important.

**Respondent 3:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** So what was it like for you?

**Respondent 3:** This is all – you have to understand, when I came it's not like then. They were young, I was already a woman at twenty-five. I was working in Italy. I was a telephone operator, and I was already getting involved with my social life, with the city. Know a lot of Italy, you know, so when I [0:08:30] came in Canada because my husband was an immigrant – my husband graduated from Italy, so in 1960 in Italy there was down completely work. There wasn't work for nobody, you know? Not even people who finish school who has diploma.

**Interviewer:** Oh, that's hard times.

**Respondent 3:** So everybody – actually, our immigration was [0:09:00] – and most like between 1956 to 1960, '61, '62.

**Respondent 2:** Yeah. That's when we came here.

**Respondent 3:** Which in Italy was a really horrible time. There was not work...

**Interviewer:** So people were unemployed.

**Respondent 3:** Absolutely. My husband was get the diploma in 1956 to 1960. There was no way he can have a job. So Giorgio immigrated here [0:09:30] for the same reason. My oldest brother. You know, for the same reason we came over as a horrible life in the beginning, of course. You know? But then you should know my brother-in-law. My brother-in-law – I can't describe him. He was, you know, a superman.

**Interviewer:** In what ways?

**Respondent 3:** Superman because he knows everything. [0:10:00] He love people, people love him. He catch – everything was possible for him to go straight, you know. Like I say, in the beginning he has a very bad

work, but then you know, little by little, he become, you know, independent. He work by himself.

**Respondent 1:** He was a woodworker.

**Respondent 3:** Yes. And so when he started himself in this street in **[0:10:30]** Harbord and in Canada, if allowed to Canada was a lot to offer immigrant. It helped him.

**Respondent 2:** Everybody almost.

**Respondent 3:** Oh, everybody from Italy. Like as a brother, which there were five brothers which they have no job. So...

**Respondent 1:** So he brought them all over.

**Respondent 3:** So he bring over here with his own expenses, okay? Okay. After we give it to them back and all, **[0:11:00]** but he buy – the first thing he did, he buy this house on 93 Harbord, which was a big house, right? And everybody came to the house.

**Interviewer:** So as soon as somebody got off the boat they moved to 93 Harbord.

**Respondent 3:** He came to pick us up in the airport, and they bring us here, and give us the hospitality for **[0:11:30]** months.

**Respondent 2:** He found me a job. He bring me to...

**Respondent 3:** He found a job for everybody, you know? And after when he – the person, like for example my husband got a job, you know, so little by little they went to go through. You see, the problem is my English is not very good, you know? I have a very strong accent, no?

**Interviewer:** But you're speaking very clearly. I'm understanding everything you're saying.

**Respondent 3:** So **[0:12:00]** there is a lot of beautiful things. So he give to us the guts to go on, so even if for myself – and I speak for myself, when I

came here I was very disappointed. Oh my gosh. And I say, oh my gosh, why I came here? What is this country? You know, it was that. Completely that for me. And the house – I was thinking I was in the cemetery. In Italy, our cemetery is like this house, like this, a little one. I was crying [0:12:30] for so long.

**Interviewer:** Did you know any English at that time?

**Respondent 3:** No. Absolutely nothing. You kidding? No. Nobody knows any English. Nobody.

**Interviewer:** So you were twenty-five years old, you had a job, you had a whole social life.

**Respondent 3:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** You came here with no language.

**Respondent 3:** My husband because of the no job, you know? And so we came here, you know, and of course we have to work. We can't always live on my [0:13:00] brother-in-law house, so we started to work. We met the other nice people.

**Interviewer:** How long did you live at 93 Harbord?

**Respondent 3:** 93? One year.

**Interviewer:** Uh-huh.

**Respondent 3:** Then I move one right beside the Fuda, a little bit – 103. We bought a house. At that time by the house was twelve thousand six hundred dollars.

**Respondent 1:** It's worth about a million.

**Respondent 2:** That's how much [0:13:30] we pay. Six thousand dollar each, so our house in there. It's all how much now.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. So and when you lived at 93 Harbord, you and your husband were there.

- Respondent 3:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** Who else was at 93 Harbord at that time?
- Respondent 3:** My brother-in-law Giorgio was the owner of that house with his wife, and Maria and Giorgio. My brother-in-law and his wife, and myself [0:14:00] and my husband in the house. But then he came alone. Before was Emanuele.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Before when Emanuele...
- Respondent 3:** Before me.
- Respondent 2:** ...my husband came from Italy, he lived in there.
- Interviewer:** So George brought everybody, and everybody moved into 93 Harbord for a year.
- Respondent 3:** Everybody. Even my other brother-in-law, Gianni with his wife and one boy, again, and their sister with the eight kids and the husband. [0:14:30] So eight kids plus two, ten people. 93 Harbord. Everybody was in 93 Harbord.
- Respondent 1:** If I could just interrupt for one minute and just say that Uncle George, his wife, Aunt Mary, she was the sister to Mrs. Poretta.
- Interviewer:** Okay. So that's the connection with the Poretta...
- Respondent 1:** That's the connection, and that's how – and Silia's sister's husband [0:15:00] is Mrs. Poretta's brother. So we're coming from a very small town in Caccamo, Sicily, and we're coming over, or they were coming over as quite a large group. And they all intermarried in from their small town and came here to start a new life.
- Respondent 2:** And then my husband.
- Interviewer:** But then they all lived at 93 Harbord, even this family with eight children.

**Respondent 3:** Everybody. Everybody. [0:15:30] Even if her mother-in-law with the husband and the kids that was in the beginning, that was the start.

**Interviewer:** Yes. But what a generous man.

**Respondent 3:** Too. Oh my gosh. My brother-in-law, oh my god.

**Respondent 1:** Uncle George became the head woodworker for the Ontario College of Art, and he worked there until he retired, and then he ended up going back to Italy. So he [0:16:00] ended up taking his wife, Maria, and then at that point they had a child, little George, and they went back to Italy to retire there.

**Respondent 3:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** So he trained everybody, welcomed, gave them a life here, and then he's back – then he moved back there?

**Respondent 3:** After many, many years.

**Respondent 1:** After many years. Yeah.

**Respondent 3:** But he give always help to everybody. All the paisani. You know paisani means people from back home?

**Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Okay.

**Respondent 3:** Which it was a stranger to him. He always [0:16:30] give a help. My brother also came over here. You know, he was engaged with a girl in Italy, which the mother wasn't too happy to marry my brother. So my brother came in Italy, from Italy here. Again, 93 Harbord. And then he moved with me, and he was always sad, sad. You know? Because he left the girlfriend in Italy. My brother-in-law, he say to my [0:17:00] brother, "Michele, why you are so sad?" And my brother tell the story, but he doesn't have no money because in the beginning to come here. He said to him, "I'm going to give you the money. Go in Italy, go and get your girl, marry her, and come back." You know, tell him to do something like this. And my brother did. Giorgio give the money, of course after my brother was working he went back to the mother, right?

**Respondent 2:** He wasn't working.

**Respondent 3:** [0:17:30] But can imagine what type of man it was? This is – I can never forget that.

**Interviewer:** And then your brother was happy after that.

**Respondent 3:** Happy end. And he stayed after. I buy the house 103. It was a very big house, you know, and they live upstairs with his wife, and I live downstairs, and they have two children, I have myself the two children, the house, so. So it's too long. [0:18:00] You have to put it...

**Respondent 2:** It's not easy to put every little thing.

**Interviewer:** It's so much.

**Respondent 3:** So much. So much life we have to us. Then I fell in love after, you know, after two or three years. I started to fall in love with the country and stuff like this, but my very love for Canada was when I started to work, which was in [0:18:30] 1960, with 1972, 1976.

**Interviewer:** So you – by that time you would have some children?

**Respondent 3:** I have three children.

**Interviewer:** You have three children. But you're saying when you started to work, you became a happier woman.

**Respondent 3:** I am already my three kids because when I have my kids I stay home to take care of them, and I was never working when my children were small.

**Respondent 2:** No. They don't allow. The husband – my husband, until they went to completely [0:19:00] all day in school, we not working. No. We're just with the kids.

**Respondent 3:** We're staying home until the kids they were in school, then we started to work, and I started to work.

- Interviewer:** But you're saying the first few years for you were the hardest.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. Because I don't like – you know, I don't know how to speak English, okay? I love the people here in Harbord. My brother-in-law, my sister-in-law, but I don't – it's kind of **[0:19:30]** funny, my life, because I don't know them in Italy. We were from the same town, the same small town, but I don't know anybody then except my brother-in-law and my sister-in-law. I don't know Silia, I don't know. So to me they were all strangers. The only person – my connection was only George and Maria, so – and my husband. So I was a little feeling very lonely.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Out of place, you know?
- Respondent 3:** **[0:20:00]** And the little by little I met them, you know? I started to get – because I'm very friendly, you know?
- Interviewer:** Yes.
- Respondent 3:** I don't need a long time to make a friend, you know?
- Interviewer:** But you had left your – you left your home, you left your country. It's a huge adjustment.
- Respondent 3:** My mother, my sister, my brother-in-law.
- Respondent 2:** Me, it was different because I was young. I was so happy to come over.
- Respondent 3:** And also the father was here.
- Respondent 2:** We were always together, you know. I come and find my sister.
- Interviewer:** So you...
- Respondent 2:** I was very happy.
- Interviewer:** So you **[0:20:30]** were young, and other family members came.

**Respondent 2:** Yeah. No, right now at first it was my sister here. She married, like I said...

**Interviewer:** Poretta.

**Respondent 2:** ...the brother Poretta. So – and then she call us, so she called my father. So my father come before us, and then my father called me, my mom, and my two brothers. Actually three brothers. So [0:21:00] we got – you know, the family was all here. All left in Italy.

**Respondent 3:** But that's a different story.

**Respondent 2:** Just my sister, she was married with two kids at home, and we left her, so we feel sorry for her, but we happy that we're all together here, you know, with my father, my sister.

**Interviewer:** So you had a lot of family here.

**Respondent 2:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** And you, Vittoria, you came no family here at all except this man you were marrying and his family.

**Respondent 2:** His family.

**Interviewer:** And you were [0:21:30] older and more established back home.

**Respondent 3:** Because my brother, my other two brothers, they came after, you know, many, many years, you know? But then they moved in in the States and all, so I'm still alone here. From the beginning I come alone and I still alone here. But I have my husband, and my kids, my grandchildren, and now it's a different story, you know?

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Very different. But your beginnings here were very different, except you both started at 93 Harbord. [Laughter]

**Respondent 3:** [0:22:00] Everybody started at 93. This is a 93 here.

**Interviewer:** We'll look at the pictures after, okay? Because I'm going to make copies of the pictures.

**Respondent 3:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** But Silia, you started talking about how warm the community was, how the family got together, and the neighbours who lived close by came together. So I'd like to stay with that for a few minutes and talk about what it was like, who lived here, and what the atmosphere [0:22:30] was like.

**Respondent 3:** Do you want to settle...

**Respondent 2:** No.

**Respondent 3:** I think it was a beautiful atmosphere, you know? It was fantastic.

**Respondent 2:** Really nice. They're all friendly.

**Respondent 3:** No, no, no. We were not jealous or nothing.

**Respondent 2:** No.

**Respondent 3:** And we don't have no thing like today. They have a – see now it's different, you know? They pick on the dress, they look – we were so enjoy to stay together, you know? We laugh. If we dance, if we play [0:23:00] music, we went. In the wintertime, we went to College and my sister-in-law was with the snow like this, buy ice cream at Sicilian Ice Cream, and people was looking like, you know, very crazy.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent 2:** You know, we were...

**Respondent 3:** We were very happy.

**Respondent 2:** We went with the kids on the park, Christie park.

**Respondent 3:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Christie Pits?

- Respondent 2:** We bring the kids there, all together, and have fun there with the kids. And then, you know, we stay together. Sometime [0:23:30] the husbands and the boys stay together, play cards together, and the wife...
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. Fuda.
- Respondent 2:** Oh, it's all the time...
- Respondent 3:** Fuda was the centre of...
- Respondent 1:** Card playing.
- Interviewer:** So did you play behind the store or in the home? Where did you play when all these cards were happening?
- Respondent 3:** They play – the man play behind the store.
- Interviewer:** They did. Why did I guess that? [Laughter]
- Respondent 1:** Oh yeah.
- Respondent 3:** But we play in the house.
- Respondent 2:** We play in the house. [0:24:00] We play Rumino, Scala Quaranta. I don't know if you heard of those things, play cards.
- Respondent 3:** It's Rummy. It's a little bit like...
- Respondent 2:** Right. It's like bridge or something.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. Bridge. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** And did the men play with the men, and the women with the women?
- Respondent 3:** No, sometimes we would play – oh, the most beautiful thing I almost forgot, the Christmas time.

- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** The tombola. You know the tombola?
- Respondent 2:** The Bingo.
- Respondent 3:** The Bingo.
- Interviewer:** Bingo? Where was that?
- Respondent 3:** Again, 93 Harbord. [Laughter]
- Respondent 2:** [0:24:30] My house. [Laughter] My house. No, on 118. Actually was more fun in there.
- Respondent 3:** I know. But Giorgio for the...
- Respondent 2:** For the Bingo.
- Respondent 3:** Bingo.
- Respondent 2:** Most of the time in my family downstairs, and we have a – made even bread at home at that time. It wasn't work. I did the little bread, you know? And cakes.
- Interviewer:** [0:25:00] So you baked a lot.
- Respondent 2:** Bake before. No, that's – but I don't make no more. But those time, I was a woman and we have a lot of fun, and play cards, have a lot – all the time my house was...
- Respondent 3:** My sister-in-law, Maria, was a great cook.
- Respondent 2:** Oh, she was.
- Respondent 3:** She was a cook for everybody.
- Respondent 2:** She was.
- Respondent 3:** And she used to make a cannoli, the typical – the Sicilian...

- Respondent 2:** Yeah. She taught me.
- Respondent 3:** She make [0:25:30] cake. She was a very good cook, you know? And in the beginning for Christmas and New Year, we were all together, you know? But the guy with the family become a – we split between the house, and my sister-in-law Maria house, you know. Don't forget that they don't have no children.
- Interviewer:** Who had no children?
- Respondent 3:** My brother-in-law George and Maria.
- Interviewer:** Oh really?
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. [0:26:00] Then after, they have – when it was when they took Nicky?
- Respondent 1:** They took Nick – Mrs. Poretta had four kids and they – Mrs. Poretta's sister, Maria – George's wife – couldn't have any children. So Mrs. Poretta offered her son, Nick...
- Interviewer:** Oh my god.
- Respondent 1:** [0:26:30] ...to live with them so that they could have a child to bring up and raise.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. But he was there. He was...
- Respondent 1:** He was there until he was thirteen years old.
- Respondent 2:** He wants to be...
- Interviewer:** So he was very young when he moved in with George and Maria.
- Respondent 1:** Yes. He moved. He came from Italy. Nick was born in Italy, he came here in '58.
- Interviewer:** How old?

- Respondent 1:** With the family.
- Interviewer:** At what age?
- Respondent 1:** He was one year old.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** And he came in **[0:27:00]** '58. The whole family did. And then I don't know how long, but it was only a very short period of time and then Aunt Mary and Uncle George were – or as you say, Maria and George – took care of him, and brought him up, and raised him. And so he is sort of the product of Uncle George, we can say. [Laughter] He has a lot of the same...
- Interviewer:** Qualities.
- Respondent 1:** ...qualities, **[0:27:30]** characteristics because he grew up with this other family.
- Respondent 3:** He assimilate a lot of George.
- Interviewer:** Oh, so those are very nice characteristics then.
- Respondent 1:** It was. It made Nick a very successful man, you know? He learned a lot from his uncle.
- Interviewer:** But then when he was thirteen he chose to go live with his family?
- Respondent 1:** Yes. He asked – and it wasn't that he was upset with the family that he was **[0:28:00]** living with. It was that – it's a long story, and to make it short, I'll just say that his grandfather passed away, and Aunt Mary and Mrs. Poretta, the sister, went back to Italy, and they were living on Harbord Street and Uncle George was taking care of Nick alone, and Nick was at home alone one evening and **[0:28:30]** he got broke into. And Nick got really scared, so he went to his father, because his father lived very close, and he said, "I can't stay there because it's broken," you know, the house got broken into. So the father decided he wanted his son back. [Laughs] And he took

him back, and it really hurt Aunt Mary and Uncle George because they loved Nick.

**Respondent 3:** Oh my gosh.

**Respondent 1:** It was more than I son.

**Respondent 3:** More.

**Respondent 1:** If I can even say [0:29:00] that.

**Respondent 3:** More.

**Respondent 1:** And it really, really hurt. But you know, when you're thirteen and you've got three brothers living with your parents, you know, he wanted to be with his brothers because he wanted to play and be with them.

**Interviewer:** Oh sure. It's much more fun.

**Respondent 1:** Yeah. It's much more fun. But you know, I mean they always, always, always stayed extremely close.

**Respondent 3:** Close. Oh yeah. Very close.

**Interviewer:** Interesting story.

**Respondent 1:** Very close. So – and to me, [0:29:30] they're like my in-laws because we did a lot with them as my – Nick and I when we got married, we did everything with Aunt Mary and Uncle George, and we celebrated all celebrations and everything with them.

**Interviewer:** Mm-hm.

**Respondent 1:** Mainly here in this house. [Laughs]

**Interviewer:** You talked a lot about the family. Whoever came started at [0:30:00] 93 Harbord, and then you got your own places. And the family spent a lot of time together, both generations – your

generation and your children. Was there much interacting with other people? Or did you really stay with the family only?

**Respondent 2:** Most of the time it was the family.

**Interviewer:** The family.

**Respondent 3:** Not too many people came along, no.

**Respondent 2:** The neighbours.

**Respondent 1:** The neighbours.

**Respondent 3:** **[0:30:30]** Some neighbours. Or some, you know, on occasion or festivities, some people from back home came over to visit us and only stayed for afternoon like this, but really.

**Interviewer:** So it was family. Now I want to ask another question that's related to this. It sounds if the Fudas were in your – were kind of part of your family.

**Respondent 3:** Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

**Respondent 2:** We have a lot to do with them **[0:31:00]** because they have the store. We shop there, we were in and out, so – and then they asked me, like I said, they played together and they worked together a lot.

**Respondent 3:** Very nice people.

**Respondent 2:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** What about Italian people and Portuguese people? Was there much interaction? Or mainly the Italians stayed with the Italians?

**Respondent 3:** Not when we were here.

**Respondent 2:** There was not much.

**Respondent 1:** The Italians came first. Like there were a lot of – actually, there was a lot of Jewish families here first.

**Respondent 3:** Yes.

**Respondent 1:** Then the Italians came in, [0:31:30] and immigrated in with the Jewish people, so they became friends amongst each other because everybody sat outside in front of their houses, so they all became friends. And I believe, if I'm not mistaken, the Portuguese families, they came in the '70s. That's when they started to immigrate over from Portugal. I'm sure there were some that came before that.

**Respondent 3:** But not on Harbord.

**Respondent 1:** But not in this area here. It was sort of like late '70s.

**Interviewer:** Oh. So a [0:32:00] lot later.

**Respondent 1:** A lot later. Yeah.

**Respondent 2:** When we were here...

**Respondent 3:** I never remember any one.

**Respondent 1:** No.

**Respondent 3:** Not on Robert, not on Manning, not on – no. No.

**Respondent 1:** We still have some Portuguese families on our street, but not – a lot of them have moved out as well, yeah, so.

**Respondent 3:** Not at the time. No, no.

**Respondent 1:** No.

**Respondent 3:** I don't even remember not even one. The first...

**Respondent 1:** A lot of Jewish.

**Respondent 3:** ...of the Portuguese family I met [0:32:30] was when I moved on Brandon Avenue.

- Interviewer:** Well when I lived here, I shared a wall with Benny and his – Fatima who married Fernando.
- Respondent 3:** Yes. I know.
- Interviewer:** Portuguese family that I shared a wall with. But just to my left and right across the street were Mario, who's Italian.
- Respondent 1:** And Mario was good friends with my father-in-law.
- Interviewer:** He sat outside – talking about front porch – and he watched.  
[0:33:00] And he always said to me, "If you ever need any help, I'll come."
- Respondent 1:** That's right.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 3:** No. I must say we were all Italian. Like exactly like Sylvia, she's saying, with the Jewish. We have the...
- Respondent 1:** And they all got along. Everybody was very...
- Respondent 3:** We never have no problem, no fight, no screaming, not jealous. I don't remember nothing? Do you remember anything?
- Respondent 2:** I don't remember nothing.
- Respondent 3:** Never, never. [0:33:30] We – meantime, if we left our door open during the night...
- Interviewer:** So you're saying it felt very safe.
- Respondent 3:** Oh my gosh. Unbelievable.
- Respondent 2:** Very, very.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. We protect one to the other, you know? It was amazing.

- Interviewer:** Now you talked about the front porch. Can we talk more about that? How people used the front of the homes, the back of the homes.
- Respondent 2:** The front, was sometime at night in the evening we sit down, we [0:34:00] talk.
- Respondent 3:** In the summer until two, three o'clock in the night, talking.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah, people walking around.
- Respondent 3:** The kids going around, you know?
- Respondent 2:** We watch the kids, we're sitting there in the front door, you know, to take care of them. We would talk, we laugh.
- Respondent 3:** Even if the kids were on – I never remember the kids fight, you know? They just play, that's all.
- Respondent 2:** They play. Like I say, my son I still remember here is a happy life.
- Respondent 3:** Oh yeah. And my [0:34:30] son too.
- Respondent 2:** So we never forget it.
- Respondent 3:** He – son born...
- Respondent 2:** My son.
- Respondent 3:** ...the 21st of August, 1965. And my son, the 23 1965. We were in the same hospital.
- Respondent 2:** We were the same. We have pictures. We both big, go around. Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** I have all [0:35:00] a very sad story.
- Respondent 2:** The first child.
- Respondent 3:** The first boy. We came in, we married. She married – in the beginning from Italy we decided we were going to get married

together, you know? I don't know her. I know only my brother-in-law, so – but they call me and say, "Oh, Emanuele got to get married on this date. It's all..."

**Respondent 2:** Yeah. But it's the same all the time. George, Maria staying to do this.

**Respondent 3:** **[0:35:30]** That was the who organized everything. So they organized the marriage together, you know? We should marry the same day. But unfortunately, when I went for the visa, they don't give it to me because they want to know – I don't remember what they wanted more, so my flight was to come here in the beginning of November because at the **[0:36:00]** end we're going to get married. What date you married?

**Respondent 2:** 27 October.

**Respondent 3:** So on November, they don't give it to me. So in October can't be here, so don't decide to get married.

**Respondent 2:** No. 27 October. It's my birthday. The 20.

**Respondent 3:** Yeah.

**Respondent 2:** I did the seven days after my birthday.

**Respondent 3:** Then, you know, finally they give it to me the visa, on December. **[0:36:30]** December 10. So I have the flight already, I came in with the plane, and they came December 15, 1962. And then I – we arrange again the marriage because we cancelled the thing because we have all the invitation for that date, and everything and the hall, everything. You know, so we cancel **[0:37:00]** and those were the money at that time, lose the money. But it was a big deal.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent 3:** And then finally I marry December 29, 1962.

**Interviewer:** So you were already married. So you couldn't do it together because you couldn't get here on time.

- Respondent 3:** No. It's a little bit confusing maybe the way I say, but that's...
- Interviewer:** No, it's clear.
- Respondent 3:** That's okay?
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** So I married December 29, which was fifteen below zero, and I was dying to my wedding dress. [0:37:30] St. Agnes on Dundas and – is it Dundas?
- Respondent 2:** And Grace?
- Respondent 3:** And Grace.
- Respondent 2:** Grace.
- Respondent 3:** There's a church, a Catholic church.
- Respondent 2:** Used to be...
- Interviewer:** At Dundas and Grace?
- Respondent 3:** St. Agnes. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. So that's where you got married.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. And she got married there too.
- Respondent 2:** No.
- Respondent 3:** No? You didn't get married there?
- Respondent 2:** No.
- Respondent 3:** See, it was years – I don't know.

- Respondent 2:** No. I got married on Dufferin. Santa Maria Di Angeli. It used to call. [0:38:00] Now it's different name too.
- Respondent 3:** The one where I used to live at, I used to live on Brandon.
- Respondent 2:** On Dufferin.
- Respondent 3:** Dufferin and...
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Where you used to.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** St. Clair.
- Respondent 3:** Okay.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** Not Davenport.
- Interviewer:** Okay. So you're saying that – I'm going back to the sitting in the front and you used to sit [0:38:30] outside until one, two in the morning and that was very pleasant, because that doesn't happen anymore.
- Respondent 3:** No.
- Interviewer:** Much less. Yeah. When I lived on Robert Street we used to sit outside and talk, but that really has changed. What did you have behind your houses at that time? Behind the back?
- Respondent 3:** What do they have now? Just the garden.
- Respondent 2:** Just has a little bit of garden. The backyard was very small, you know? Over here, there's not much backyard, you know?
- Interviewer:** Did you grow anything back there?
- Respondent 2:** No, no. Not really.

- Interviewer:** [0:39:00] And did you grow anything?
- Respondent 3:** No.
- Interviewer:** Oh, so you didn't use the back.
- Respondent 3:** No. Just the grass.
- Interviewer:** Right. So you used the really – really, you used the front porches more than anything.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. Used that a lot.
- Respondent 2:** No, we didn't stay much in the back.
- Interviewer:** And what about the back lane? Did anybody use the lanes?
- Respondent 3:** Not really.
- Respondent 2:** My house there's no lane.
- Respondent 3:** They don't have no lane. We have a lane, but we have a garage. No. We always – our life was in the front of the house. Never in the [0:39:30] backyard.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh.
- Respondent 3:** No. Even the kids they play because there was no danger.
- Interviewer:** Yes. So they played in the front.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** You could see them in the back. You couldn't see them because the garages cut your view.
- Respondent 3:** I have a little backyard, which they play. They have most of life was in front of the door, no. Back to my story, so when I married, you know, and we got pregnant together. [Laughs]

- Respondent 2:** [0:40:00] Even the first time, when my daughter...
- Respondent 3:** The first time, that was – talk about the first time. Unfortunately I wasn't very lucky, you know? She got the girl, Rosalia. I got a baby boy, which died the day, you know. That was...
- Interviewer:** So you gave birth to that boy?
- Respondent 3:** Yes. They did. They destroy me because it was – my doctor was on holidays. Was [0:40:30] a very young doctor who take care of me, but did very bad things. It was me at the St. Michael's Hospital. I have a very bad memory. And so actually no, he's supposed to doing something very quick, but you know, decide...
- Interviewer:** So the baby died.
- Respondent 3:** ...and the baby died, you know?
- Respondent 2:** Was supposed to go Caesarean, you know, if it's...
- Interviewer:** Oh, should have done a Caesarean and didn't do it.
- Respondent 3:** [0:41:00] They supposed to do it. I was running the hospital up and down. I don't even want to say, no. I was – the condition it was. The baby was off, you know. Anyway, finally when they took the baby out, you know, the baby was suffocated by the birth...
- Interviewer:** Oh. I'm so sorry to hear that.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. And yesterday I went to the cemetery because they baptized right away him.
- Interviewer:** They did.
- Respondent 2:** [0:41:30] Imagine. We were happy for my, sad for her, so it was...
- Respondent 3:** She was happy with a little girl, I was crying.

- Respondent 2:** Crying because then it was not really happy because she would see my baby too, you know? Anyway, she didn't have hers.
- Respondent 3:** A baby. Beautiful baby, you know? Healthy, you know? It was late. He was doing something. As a matter of fact, the people in the hospital, they ask us to do an inquiry, right? But we lost the baby. We lost the money [0:42:00] because at the time, my husband was working, at the beginning was working the bank. Was not making big salary, so we have to have the lawyer. We have to destroy the little cute baby for doing what, you know? So we decided to not do nothing. So – and they bury him. I still have the Mount Hope cemetery.
- Respondent 1:** Mount Pleasant.
- Interviewer:** Mm-hm.
- Respondent 3:** No. Mount Hope.
- Interviewer:** Where's that?
- Respondent 3:** It's right – a little bit – [0:42:30] it's the Mount Pleasant. It's a little bit up of the cemetery, Mount Pleasant.
- Respondent 1:** Oh, I was mistaken.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. It's Mount Hope Cemetery. Yesterday I went because I want to be buried there because my baby's, they are, so I want.
- Respondent 1:** You have to go and show me.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** And then you have three healthy sons after that.
- Respondent 3:** And then after I got – really God really give a blessing. Three other boys.
- Interviewer:** But what a difficult time that you had a healthy baby, and your baby died, [0:43:00] so.

- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** What a hard time.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. That was very – that's why I said to you in the beginning, and beginning it was not...
- Respondent 2:** And then we got pregnant again together. [Laughter]
- Respondent 1:** You know these brothers, I think they had some...
- Respondent 2:** Two days, three days apart.
- Interviewer:** Oh my god.
- Respondent 3:** One night and two days. [Laughter] They born. And then finally George came along, which is my [0:43:30] joy. Oh, the other one. They both grow up together. And that was it. And I put it – like you can see, I put George, my first son, the one after my brother-in-law.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. But I can see the two of you as sisters-in-law are good friends.
- Respondent 3:** Oh very good friends.
- Interviewer:** Family. You're friends.
- Respondent 2:** All the time.
- Respondent 3:** But now good friends. Just now, from the beginning until today. You know. I don't know Silia. Sometime maybe [0:44:00] we should find. [Laughter]
- Interviewer:** It's never too late.
- Respondent 2:** No.

- Interviewer:** So when you come here, what are some of the changes that you see from when you lived here in the '60s and '70s, and now you see Harbord Street. Are there some changes that you notice?
- Respondent 3:** You talk about always in Canada? Or...
- Interviewer:** Here, in this neighbourhood.
- Respondent 2:** Just when we are now. It's a lot [0:44:30] of front, this. Changing, fixing. The stores now. It's not just...
- Respondent 3:** It's more crowded, it's more popular, more other...
- Respondent 1:** Well there's established businesses now on Harbord, and there wasn't then.
- Respondent 2:** College and now this, you know, because there's a lot of students. Still a lot of young people.
- Respondent 1:** And I believe there was cobblestone on the Harbord Street. There was [0:45:00] cobblestone.
- Interviewer:** Really?
- Respondent 3:** At the time, they're all big – thing was Kromer Radio.
- Respondent 1:** Yes. Kromer Radio was at the corner of Robert and Harbord, where Hutoshi restaurant...
- Interviewer:** That was Kromer Radio?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** Oh yeah.
- Interviewer:** And it moved to Bathurst.
- Respondent 1:** Yes.
- Respondent 2:** Yes.

- Respondent 1:** And Mr. Kromer was very good friends with George.
- Respondent 3:** Oh yeah.
- Interviewer:** So he was Italian? Or he wasn't?
- Respondent 1:** No, no. He was German. He was German, but they became very, very close friends. Mr. Kromer had a **[0:45:30]** bit of a difficult start as well, and Uncle George and, you know, helped him out.
- Respondent 3:** Oh yeah. He helped everybody. And then he became bigger and bigger, and all this Kromer Radio. You can see now it's...
- Respondent 1:** Well now he's retired.
- Respondent 3:** He's a multimillionaire business now. And the very young man. And I remember him. Very handsome too, you know, and he become a very close friend to my brother-in-law. **[0:46:00]** And my brother-in-law, he learned English so quick, it's unbelievable, you know?
- Respondent 1:** Well Mr. and Mrs. Kromer did a lot of – they entertained with them a lot.
- Respondent 3:** Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. And very nice people, and then after many – he was not married, no. And then after a little bit, he got married, a girl from Austria, I think. The wife was from Austria, you know?
- Interviewer:** **[0:46:30]** So, but you're saying it seems more crowded now with people?
- Respondent 3:** Absolutely. Are you kidding me?
- Interviewer:** With stores? In what way?
- Respondent 3:** People – home business, you know? The room was here, there was no restaurant. There was no – the first – one of the first big restaurants I think was Poretta.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. We were the first ones.

- Interviewer:** So it was a quiet street.
- Respondent 1:** Very.
- Interviewer:** Harbord Bakery was here and Kromer Radio.
- Respondent 1:** [0:47:00] Yeah. Harbord Bakery. Kromer.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. The Bakery and the store, Fuda.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** And then the...
- Respondent 1:** Fuda, and then you had a drugstore.
- Respondent 3:** And on the corner of the other street was like a convenience store.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** The one where the kids – the convenience store.
- Respondent 1:** It was a drugstore.
- Respondent 2:** Supposed to go to the store on Bloor.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** But you're saying Harbord Street was a much quieter street.
- Respondent 3:** Oh my gosh. You better believe it. So quiet.
- Interviewer:** [0:47:30] Very commercial now...
- Respondent 1:** Very commercial.
- Interviewer:** ...with so many restaurants.
- Respondent 1:** Lots of cars. Yeah.

- Respondent 3:** I think the reason why it was very quiet because there was only family living on Harbord. There was not a big business thing.
- Respondent 1:** A few stores.
- Respondent 3:** Few stores. There was not – my brother-in-law was big after because the beginning, [0:48:00] in the first floor, he wanted to open a barbershop. This was my husband, he would take care – I have a picture of him. And then after the barbershop, they open, like, a grocery store. Grocery store. Something like this.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. But for very small time. And then finally he decide to develop, and use the house for [0:48:30] his own – and building in the back of the house all the magazine where he was working, you know, because my brother-in-law was working with the wood.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. It was my bedroom when they give to us for present when I got married.
- Interviewer:** Made your furniture, you mean?
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. He was an artist, my brother-in-law.
- Interviewer:** Handcrafted furniture.
- Respondent 1:** I got a [0:49:00] dining room table handcrafted with inlay. It was all done in inlay wood.
- Interviewer:** So he was a master.
- Respondent 1:** It was part of my wedding gift.
- Respondent 3:** A little bit – how to say – no.
- Respondent 2:** Credenza or something.

- Respondent 3:** No. Little things. By now it doesn't come to my mind. And the words with the sign...
- Interviewer:** Yes. Inlay.
- Respondent 3:** ...with the house and stuff like this.
- Respondent 1:** He was very big with the inlay.
- Respondent 3:** And that's why, you know, [0:49:30] he became very big, you know? And the friend ask him to teach at the Ontario Art College because he was a really an artist.
- Respondent 1:** He was a master.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** He was a master woodworker, you know?
- Respondent 3:** Very good. Yeah. Many people in downtown, in the office they have my brother's work. Like you know, lawyer office.
- Interviewer:** Well I guess it's expensive to buy that if it's handmade and it's made slowly.
- Respondent 3:** Exactly.
- Interviewer:** And by one person, so that's why it would be lawyers [Laughs] [0:50:00] who can afford it.
- Respondent 1:** [Laughs] That's right.
- Respondent 3:** It's a little bit confusing because the way we say to you because it's a lot of things, you know, attached to the time, you know?
- Respondent 1:** Attached to that time. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Where did your children go to school? What schools did they go to?

**Respondent 3:** No, our kids when I left it was already – you know, because when I left from here, I wanted to go and live in the States in Chicago. My [0:50:30] family was in – in the meantime they immigrated there. So left Canada to the United States. We stayed there one year, and my husband was working the bank again because he used to work in the bank here too. But after one year we stay in Italy, my husband had decided to go back in Italy and became like a nostalgic about his home country, go back in [0:51:00] Italy now after eight years, after. And we went back in Italy for one year. We lived there and after you leave your country for many years, there is no way you can reconnect all the things, no. So finally we decided to come again in Canada, which was the best for us, you know? And then I never regret. I'm very happy now.

**Interviewer:** So at that point, being back, the United States wasn't as [0:51:30] good, and Italy wasn't as good for you.

**Respondent 3:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** So...

**Respondent 3:** Canada to me was the best at that time. And then, you know, when I came, my old boy was six.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. So you didn't live in this neighbourhood then?

**Respondent 3:** Yeah. And went to school to St. Mary of Angels on Dufferin and Davenport.

**Interviewer:** Right. And what about Silia? Where did your children go to school?

**Respondent 2:** Yeah. That's what I was saying. I don't remember the name, [0:52:00] but they were on Bloor. They went to school on Bloor. I don't know what the name...

**Interviewer:** Was it a special Catholic school?

**Respondent 2:** It was Catholic school.

**Interviewer:** So they didn't go to the local school down here on Robert Street.

- Respondent 3:** No, no, no.
- Respondent 1:** They went to the local Catholic school across from – was it across from Honest Ed's? On Bathurst?
- Respondent 2:** I think so.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. I think it was that – it wasn't Loretto College.
- Respondent 3:** No.
- Respondent 1:** It's where they're making those new condos.
- Interviewer:** Yes. I don't know the name of it either.
- Respondent 1:** Okay. But that's where **[0:52:30]** they went.
- Interviewer:** So they were still in the neighbourhood...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** ...it just wasn't down the street.
- Respondent 1:** Nick's family, all the boys, they went to Lord Lansdowne. I think Nick went for one year to the Catholic school, but the nuns were a little hard on him. [Laughs] So he went back to Lord Lansdowne. [Laughs]
- Respondent 2:** I know. I remember when my son was in high school, then when we moved, he just – I put – you know, I let him go to the **[0:53:00]** Catholic school, then he says, "That's enough. I don't want to go anymore." He wants to go to the public.
- Respondent 3:** No, my kids they went to all Catholic. Also my oldest one went to St. Michael's College. He graduated from there and went to university too, St. Michael College, you know? And they finish, they graduate and all. He has two degree, and he has a big job. The old one. The second one, he got his **[0:53:30]** diploma too on St. Michael College, but the third one say, "No way." [Laughs]

- Interviewer:** So what did he do?
- Respondent 3:** He went to this school here for many years. What do you call? On Harbord?
- Interviewer:** Central Tech?
- Respondent 3:** Central Tech. You know.
- Interviewer:** So he learned something.
- Respondent 3:** Introduce himself with – he like working with the hands, you know? And he has a good job, but like I [0:54:00] say, you know, how different they are, two brothers. You know what I mean?
- Interviewer:** It's incredible. Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** It doesn't really matter. No, they are happy. This is the most important thing.
- Interviewer:** Well, and everybody has to work, so he found away...
- Respondent 3:** Exactly.
- Interviewer:** ...to find something he likes.
- Respondent 3:** Giorgio, my oldest one, was naturally. Nobody pushed him to go so high in the school, you know? So the other one, you know, especially the little one, they finish school, or they graduate, or stuff like this, but see, they are happy.
- Respondent 2:** [0:54:30] My son, he is – he went to – he's a big business man. You know, put the furnace, so those things. My husband also doing this work.
- Respondent 3:** He also got diploma for doing this job.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. He went to school.

**Interviewer:** For sheet metal. So did your son take your husband's business?

**Respondent 2:** Well my husband was working for somebody else.

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Respondent 2:** Bu they didn't want to work for somebody else. He started with a job, then he wants...

**Respondent 1:** He [0:55:00] flourished.

**Respondent 2:** Flourished for himself. He wanted to start for himself. My husband give a hand, give help, and thank God he went big with that.

**Interviewer:** So your son's doing well.

**Respondent 3:** Oh yeah.

**Respondent 2:** Thank God. Yeah, yeah.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent 2:** So.

**Respondent 3:** Our kids, they are not too bad. Your kids too, thank to God.

**Interviewer:** Not too bad. [Laughter]

**Respondent 3:** No. We're not – we can't complain. They are good kids. You know.

**Interviewer:** [0:55:30] You know, I see that you have all kinds of pictures, and I'm wondering if you would like us to look at the pictures now, and then maybe the pictures will make you want to tell me some more stories, so I think what I might do is – first of all, I want to say to Vittoria, to Silia, and to Sylvia, thank you very much. This has been so interesting to listen to. But what I'm going to do is put this on pause, [0:56:00] and as we look at the pictures, you might want to tell me more, unless there's something right now that we haven't talked about that – anything that we haven't talked about?

- Respondent 3:** I don't know. The only big thing on Harbord was the harmony and the love we have, one to the other. We were not jealous even. You see today, life and everyone **[0:56:30]** – people got house, and with even relative, they got jealous about the house or whatever more. But here, everybody was happy with what they have. We have a small house.
- Respondent 1:** Didn't matter what the...
- Respondent 3:** And it doesn't really – we never was think about furniture, house. We were think about more with the valued things. Love, and...
- Respondent 2:** Take care of the family.
- Respondent 3:** ...take care of the family, take care of the kids and all. **[0:57:00]** Make sure that when the men come from work, found the food ready at the table. You know what I mean? I don't know where. Don't you think?
- Respondent 2:** We were used to – like the old style still.
- Respondent 3:** And we have a lot of fun too, okay?
- Respondent 2:** Just to do, you know?
- Interviewer:** Wait, wait, wait. You had a lot of fun? Silia, please repeat what you were saying.
- Respondent 2:** We were used to. Our mother, father teach us how to do it. Take care of the house, take care of the kids, take care of the husband, you know? **[0:57:30]** So.
- Respondent 1:** Tradition.
- Interviewer:** But you had good role models.
- Respondent 2:** Role models. Yes.
- Interviewer:** That it was the families, for them to be loving and to have a nice community...

**Respondent 2:** Exactly. Exactly.

**Interviewer:** ...and to have feelings...

**Respondent 2:** And for a long time, that's how was going on then. When you go to work, it's a different story, you know? You have to manage different style.

**Interviewer:** So did you go to work too? I mean Vittoria talked about going to work. Did you do the same? Did you go to work?

**Respondent 2:** Well I work for – before I had the kids a little bit, and then I stop. Grow up the kids, and [0:58:00] then when they grow up, then they went all day at school, I got bored and so I went to work again.

**Interviewer:** Mm-hm.

**Respondent 2:** So, and I work for a long time.

**Interviewer:** And what work did you do?

**Respondent 2:** Well I started with – before, when I started with – when I came in Toronto, like my brother-in-law introduced me to this family to make toys. And I worked on [0:58:30] Pape?

**Respondent 1:** Pape.

**Respondent 2:** Pape Street. All the way from Dundas every day, go with the buses and everything. So – and he teach how I'm supposed to – George. Take the buses, how to travel back and forth.

**Interviewer:** So George taught you that.

**Respondent 2:** He taught me that, yeah. Because when you reach here, what do you know? You don't know nothing. You can lose yourself, so he taught me how to do back and forth with the [0:59:00] bus, and what bus to take. And that's the first when I arrived here. Then I got married, like I said, and I had another little job for where they make stockings. Remember?

- Respondent 3:** Oh my gosh. I know. That's the stocking business, and it wasn't a fun thing. I went to work there too. I was nothing yet, so she took me with her in this job.
- Respondent 2:** Oh, I have that job for a while. [0:59:30] Then what did I do after? Then we moved. Like I didn't work anymore. I grow up the kids, and when they go to work, school all day, then I went back to work and I did work in a factory making a sofa, chesterfields.
- Interviewer:** Mm-hm.
- Respondent 2:** So I was to work on the machine operator. And sewing operator. And doing cushions and this thing. That's how I...
- Interviewer:** So you both stayed [1:00:00] home, raised your children, and then you both went back to work?
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. I went to work just a little bit too.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Then she went to work in the bank. [Laughter]
- Respondent 3:** She took me to this factory to make nylons, right? And in my life, you have to understand in my life, I never knew how to do nothing because I was the little one in the family. I don't know nothing. My sister-in-law, Maria, she teach me how to wash clothes, [1:00:30] do the food, you know, for your husband and that was it. But when I went in this factory, it was funny because over there usually you have to work. I never know.
- Respondent 2:** Nobody take you.
- Respondent 3:** I want to know. I was working in Italy. I was a telephone operator. I was on my own. I was, you know – so when I went there, you know, they say you have to do this with the – do, do, do, do, do, do, do. Oh my god. Thank you, God, with [1:01:00] my way to treat people, I make friend there. I know so much friend. And the people they used to – remember the Rosa? They used to give it to me, a dozen of stockings already done to figure out what I was doing.

**Interviewer:** Oh.

**Respondent 3:** You know, she was helping me too because...

**Interviewer:** Because you couldn't do it fast enough.

**Respondent 3:** I can't. No. Then I give up.

**Interviewer:** So that must have been stressful for you.

**Respondent 3:** Oh my gosh.

**Interviewer:** Everybody was helpful.

**Respondent 3:** And but the funny part was my brother-in-law [1:01:30] and my sister-in-law, which they adore me, I adore them, then they said to me, "Oh okay." She say, "You go to Silia. You know the way." One day Silia was sick, so I have to work by myself. So I say, oh my God, you know, so Giorgio drive me out, you take the streetcar there, then you take this, then you take this, and then when you coming back you do this, when you see Kromer Radio, [1:02:00] you are home. Kromer Radio has the flashing light, right? You know? The only thing is when I took the streetcar to come back, I took the other way around. I was on Harbord, so I was waiting for Kromer Radio. Kromer Radio, Kromer Radio. Maybe Kromer Radio. I think to myself, okay, I don't know. I started to cry, you know? Silent. So I have to get out of the streetcar. So I get out of the streetcar, was in the street already dark. [1:02:30] Then I said to myself, "Okay Vittoria, no. Something you've got to do now." So one man that see me in the street already know. He came to me and he say in Italian, "Did you lost your way?" I say, "Yeah." So I explained to him. Thank you God he was speaking Italian. I explained to him, whatever. He said, "Don't worry about it. Take the same streetcar, but the other way."

**Interviewer:** [Laughs] Oh my god.

**Respondent 3:** [1:03:00] Finally I saw the Kromer Radio, and guess what? In the front door, there was my sister-in-law Maria and my – my sister Maria was crying. My brother-in-law was a little upset at his wife

because the wife was saying to him, "Go looking for her. Go looking. She must be lost." They were so much beautiful people. Oh. And that was the – but then, no. Everything was...

**Respondent 2:** Everything was an experience.

**Respondent 3:** [1:03:30] I think every single person who came in Canada has a bad story, good story, no. But it's a good country. It's a good country.

**Interviewer:** Oh good. A good country, and obviously...

**Respondent 3:** It's a good country.

**Interviewer:** ...you like this neighbourhood too when you were here.

**Respondent 2:** Yeah.

**Respondent 3:** Good country.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So I'm going to turn this off. We'll look at your pictures, but I do want to say thank you to the three of you. Thank you very much.

**Respondent 2:** You're welcome.

**Respondent 3:** You're very, very welcome.

[01:03:52]

[End of recording]