

087 Zaezilia Chumarow and son John Chumarow

[0:00:00]

Interviewer: The date today is the 15th of January. I'm at 93 Willcocks with John Chumarow and his mother, Zaezilia. John was born in 1967, so he's been at 93 since 1967. And Mrs. Chumarow, would you just tell us what year you bought the house? Oh, go ahead.

Respondent 1: I was born in 1928, so I'm eighty-four. I was just eighty-four in **[0:00:30]** November now.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Respondent 2: And when did you buy the house, Ma?

Respondent 1: When did I buy the house? Oh, went to the – oh, I don't – ears are no good.

Interviewer: Okay. I'll talk louder to you.

Respondent 1: 1952.

Interviewer: 1952.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: That's half a century ago.

Respondent 1: Yeah. That's a long time ago. Yeah.

Interviewer: It's more than half a century. Sixty years ago.

Respondent 1: Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer: When you bought the house, **[0:01:00]** had you just come to Canada? Or had you been here for some years before that? When did you come to Canada?

Respondent 1: 1949.

- Interviewer:** You came in '49.
- Respondent 1:** '49. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Okay. And you bought the house in '52. Do you remember why you bought the house on this street?
- Respondent 1:** Well because when I looked around the places, we liked that place here. So that's why we bought it here.
- Interviewer:** **[0:01:30]** And were you married at that time, or not yet?
- Respondent 1:** Pardon?
- Interviewer:** Were you married at that time?
- Respondent 1:** Oh yeah.
- Interviewer:** You were married.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** And was your husband working?
- Respondent 1:** My husband was working at the Hydro. Ontario Hydro.
- Interviewer:** So that was quite close. Where was Hydro at that time? On College Street?
- Respondent 1:** [Laughs]
- Respondent 2:** He worked all over the place. He was a foreman. He had to go to all them. He set up **[0:02:00]** all the transformers in Ontario.
- Respondent 1:** He went all over the place.
- Interviewer:** And when he went all over the place, how did he travel from one place to another?

- Respondent 1:** Car.
- Interviewer:** Oh, he had a car.
- Respondent 1:** We had bought a car. Yeah. But I don't even know which make or anything.
- Respondent 2:** Well you've got pictures here of some of the old cars. We've got some pictures.
- Interviewer:** I'm going to make some copies.
- Respondent 1:** Some place I guess. I don't know. [Laughs]
- Interviewer:** Did you have a garage to park the **[0:02:30]** car? Where did you park the car?
- Respondent 1:** We some time had garage in the back. Double garage.
- Interviewer:** So you had a double garage that far back in 1952.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. But we bought it together with my father-in-law, that house.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. So did your...
- Respondent 1:** Because we didn't have the money when we came over here. Like my husband and I, we were young too. Like we didn't have the money.
- Interviewer:** So when you bought it with your father-in-law, did your father-in-law live here with you? **[0:03:00]** Did you all live together?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. My mother and father-in-law, they lived downstairs and I lived up here.
- Interviewer:** Okay. And how long did you live that way with your husband's parents downstairs and...

Respondent 1: Oh. [Laughs] Until they died. [Laughs] We're always looking, my husband, but I knew he didn't want to leave, you know? And the mother-in-law, she didn't want him to leave either.

Interviewer: So your mother-in-law wanted you to stay.

Respondent 1: They wanted us to stay here. **[0:03:30]** Yeah. And we had our children here too.

Interviewer: How many children do you have?

Respondent 1: [Laughs] How many? Three children.

Interviewer: Three children. What number are you, John?

Respondent 2: I'm the third.

Interviewer: You're the third.

Respondent 1: Yeah. And Alec. Yeah.

Respondent 2: The three.

Interviewer: So you were – your mother-in-law and father-in-law were downstairs.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: And the five of you were upstairs.

Respondent 1: Well we weren't here yet. [Laughs]

Interviewer: But eventually.

Respondent 1: First my eldest son, at that time was – he was **[0:04:00]** – how old was he?

Respondent 2: Well he was born in Austria, then he came here with you in '49, so yeah. So he was already born in Austria. Ella and I were born here in Canada.

- Respondent 1:** Yeah. They were born here. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. So after everybody was born, there were two people downstairs and five people upstairs.
- Respondent 2:** Well no, because...
- Respondent 1:** We had lots of people in here because we didn't have the money.
- Respondent 2:** Tenants too.
- Respondent 1:** We have to rent out the rooms, **[0:04:30]** you know? We have to rent the rooms, some rooms. Yeah. So we kind of living...
- Respondent 2:** They were renting out back in the '50s and '60s.
- Respondent 1:** Well it's hard when we came here. When I came here, my husband brought him here first. Canada took him for the work at the Hydro. He came first, and I had the baby. So I had to wait there for one more year.
- Interviewer:** So you – **[0:05:00]** but you were there by yourself.
- Respondent 1:** By myself, yeah.
- Interviewer:** And you had your first child here.
- Respondent 1:** And then my husband got me over here, and then we lived by the church near that – on Dundas Street.
- Respondent 2:** Peter?
- Respondent 1:** Where there – was it a Catholic church? I don't know if you remember that or not. You don't remember that, no.
- Interviewer:** I don't know. And Dundas is a big street. Yeah. So you lived near the Catholic church for the first...
- Respondent 1:** No, no. Not at the **[0:05:30]** Catholic church. In the house...

Interviewer: Close.

Respondent 1: ...close by, and we only had one room, and everything in it, you know? Everything was in there. The kitchen, the bedroom, the baby, the – everything, you know? Was a hard life. At first, when I came over here, it didn't look nice here in Toronto when we came driving in. It was raining and everything was – I don't know.
[0:06:00] I didn't like it. [Laughs] It wasn't looking nice, you know?

Interviewer: How long did it feel that way that it didn't look nice?

Respondent 1: Well we had to go out and everybody had to work and do something, you know? Like I went at work at the post office there. Not all the time, like just for Christmas and for the – I have to look after the baby at home here. But I mean there was always something to do.

Interviewer: And who would take care of your baby **[0:06:30]** when you were working? Who took care of your oldest son when you were working?

Respondent 1: When I was working, well the lady who owned the house there. Yeah.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. And then you bought this house.

Respondent 1: Yeah. Then we bought this house.

Interviewer: With your in-laws. You all bought the house together. You and...

Respondent 1: My mother-in-law, she came later. My father-in-law came from Austria too. He was Russian.

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent 1: **[0:07:00]** And he came, and my husband. No. I think he got himself and he was in Winnipeg first. He had to go to Winnipeg, and he was there, and then he got the mother-in-law over to Winnipeg.

That was after there. But first my husband and I were here in Toronto here. Yeah. And – what did you ask me?

Interviewer: Okay. So when you lived **[0:07:30]** on Dundas in that church, you lived in the...

Respondent 1: Not in the church.

Interviewer: Near the church.

Respondent 1: Near the church. Yeah.

Interviewer: But it was crowded. You, and your husband, and your baby all in one room.

Respondent 1: Yeah. All in one room. You know, it was kind of [laughs] – it felt – you cooked there, you slept there. You did everything, you know? It was hard for us at first, you know, when we came over here. Really hard.

Interviewer: **[0:08:00]** Then when you bought this...

Respondent 1: Then we came here. Then we lived here and then my mother-in-law, she came here, like, she brought here together – like when the husband came here to Toronto, we bought that house – my husband and him, then we bought this house here together.

Interviewer: So then at that time you had one baby that you brought from Austria.

Respondent 1: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: Then you had a second baby, and a third **[0:08:30]** baby.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: But you said you rented out some rooms also.

Respondent 1: Yes.

- Interviewer:** Do you remember how many extra people lived here?
- Respondent 1:** Oh. I don't – see, we had some rooms upstairs too. She had some – we had, like – we haven't have the rest of the house. I don't know exactly which room was which, you know? And when I think about it, then maybe I...
- Interviewer:** And how many bathrooms did you have?
- Respondent 1:** **[0:09:00]** Two bathrooms.
- Interviewer:** So was one downstairs that your mother-in-law...
- Respondent 1:** No, wait a minute. Wait a minute.
- Respondent 2:** One in the basement.
- Respondent 1:** There was only one bathroom.
- Interviewer:** One bathroom.
- Respondent 1:** One bathroom. Yeah. The one bathroom up here.
- Interviewer:** So everybody used that one bathroom.
- Respondent 1:** Everybody used that bathroom. And she had to clean all the time. Like I was the cleaning woman. [Laughs]
- Interviewer:** So you had to clean often.
- Respondent 1:** I had to clean everything.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. So many people use it.
- Respondent 1:** All the time. Yeah. And it was – sometimes we got terrible people **[0:09:30]** in, you know, for the house too.
- Interviewer:** Did you have some – so you had some difficult people?

Respondent 1: Difficult people in the house. You know, like not that – which don't look after the place or anything. Like here we had somebody in here, and he had a German Shepherd, but at the end room, yeah? By my in-laws. And he peed in here, and he made **[0:10:00]** the floor all...

Interviewer: The dog peed on the floor.

Respondent 1: Dog. [Laughs]

Interviewer: That smells terrible.

Respondent 1: They did really terrible things – happened sometimes. And upstairs was a – I had some roomers upstairs. Some of the nights, you know, some of them looked out. I mean the rooms were cleaned, but you had to clean it, but it wasn't that bad, you know? And we had to wash the beds and everything all the time for **[0:10:30]** everybody, you know?

Interviewer: So you washed the sheets for everybody?

Respondent 1: Yeah. Here. Yeah, yeah. I looked after, cleaned the house, and washed the sheets. Yeah.

Interviewer: And did you cook for those people?

Respondent 1: No, no.

Interviewer: Or they did their own cooking?

Respondent 1: No, no, no. They went out someplace. I don't know where they ate.

Interviewer: Oh, so they didn't eat in the house at all.

Respondent 1: They just lived here.

Interviewer: They lived here, but they didn't eat here.

Respondent 1: They what...

- Respondent 2:** They didn't eat.
- Interviewer:** They did not eat here.
- Respondent 1:** No, no, no. Sometimes we feed them, but [0:11:00] made something or something, you know? But I mean I didn't eat – pay for the food.
- Interviewer:** Right. And they also didn't use your kitchen.
- Respondent 1:** No.
- Interviewer:** No.
- Respondent 1:** No.
- Interviewer:** Did some of them have a little refrigerator in their room?
- Respondent 1:** No.
- Interviewer:** No. Okay. So they went out for all their meals.
- Respondent 1:** They just had a room.
- Interviewer:** Right.
- Respondent 1:** And they just went to work, come home, and like slept here or whatever they did. They worked. They were out working too some place, yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. And did you and your [0:11:30] mother-in-law and father-in-law, and your family, did you eat all your meals together? Or did you cook separately?
- Respondent 1:** At first, I think we did it together. We did. But then once I did it up here, and they did it downstairs.
- Interviewer:** Do you have your own kitchen up here?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.

- Interviewer:** Oh, so you had two kitchens.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. It was a small room.
- Interviewer:** A small kitchen.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** **[0:12:00]** Did you always have extra people living here? Or did you eventually stop?
- Respondent 1:** No, no, no. No. After – when we could afford it, yeah, then we lived by ourselves only here. Yeah. And then we wanted to buy a house or with my husband and I. [Laughs] We always went to look for houses, and we didn't find what we liked, and so then I said at the end, I said to him, "You know what? **[0:12:30]** I think you really don't want to leave do you?" And he didn't say and didn't say no...
- Interviewer:** But he never found.
- Respondent 1:** ...but then I know, I guess, he didn't want to, so we just stayed here.
- Interviewer:** So you've been here for sixty years now, sixty-one years this year.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** Do you like it here? Or would you like to move?
- Respondent 1:** Well, sometimes I wanted to move maybe. Sometimes. But I like it here because everything is so **[0:13:00]** close. That's why I like it.
- Respondent 2:** Convenient and close.
- Respondent 1:** And here it was nicer down here. Everything was here, you know? The stores, the fish stores, the bread stores. Everything was here. And the doctors, and the doctors kept even the house, you know?
- Interviewer:** You get house visits. They came to visit here?

- Respondent 1:** They visited the house here and everything here. And I really like the – it's so nice, you know? If something [0:13:30] was wrong with the children and you call, the doctor came, arrived here, and that was it.
- Interviewer:** Did you use one doctor? Or did you have different...
- Respondent 1:** One doctor all the time, until he moved out, farther out too. Then I got somebody else because at the beginning, yeah, but then it was too much. It's always moving. You know, too far away, you know? But really nice. It was really nice even.
- Interviewer:** You [0:14:00] mentioned some of the stores. The fish store, the bakery.
- Respondent 1:** You had the fish store here on Harbord, on Harbord Street.
- Interviewer:** Harbord corner, Major.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Where the bread store is at the next...
- Respondent 2:** There's a restaurant there now.
- Respondent 1:** There, that was the fish place, and they had all kinds of fish what you like and everything. Delicious. You can't get it now like that. Now they don't make it like that. I don't know why they don't do it like that.
- Interviewer:** So they had the really...
- Respondent 1:** Now it's more [0:14:30] fish, but – I mean they don't...
- Respondent 2:** Better quality back then.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** ...fix it the way they did before. Yeah.

- Interviewer:** And what are some of the other stores that you remember in the neighbourhood?
- Respondent 1:** The bread store's here for so long here.
- Interviewer:** Harbord Bakery.
- Respondent 1:** I know the father, the mother when they were still here, when they were still alive.
- Interviewer:** That's Goldie and Albert? Her name was Goldie and his name was Albert.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. So you knew them.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** [0:15:00] We used to go every day to buy bread there.
- Respondent 1:** We still go there shopping, you know, for bread shopping, you know?
- Interviewer:** So do you know their children?
- Respondent 1:** The son is there and the daughter, and the daughter is there. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So you've been shopping there ever since you moved here in 1952.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Some other stores that you remember?
- Respondent 1:** Shopping?
- Interviewer:** Yes.

- Respondent 1:** It's just – [0:15:30] I think now. Before it was more bread and things like that. Now they have more bakery things and all kinds of different food.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. They have the prepared foods, and the jars of food.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. So that's one way that Harbord Bakery changed.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. That's how the Harbord Bakery changed. But I mean it's nice anyways. They changed with it, you know? Like...
- Interviewer:** Yeah. I guess the younger generation changed.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. [0:16:00] Yeah. That's right. The younger generation.
- Interviewer:** What about your street, Willcocks?
- Respondent 1:** No, Willcocks Street here. Here was a – when we sold the house here...
- Respondent 2:** When you bought the house.
- Respondent 1:** ...there was some people living in this house, but then they moved out too. Yeah. And I think Mr. Green was living here, and he went to New York. He sold the house.
- Interviewer:** So you bought the house from Mr. Green.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** [0:16:30] Yeah. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

- Respondent 1:** And his mother died here. And I don't know. There's – they put something at the door downstairs. I guess the Jewish people, they put something...
- Interviewer:** On the side?
- Respondent 1:** ...on the door.
- Interviewer:** A mezuzah.
- Respondent 2:** A mezuzah.
- Respondent 1:** Yes. They said you have to leave that there. You can't take it off, you know? We didn't take it off. We left it there, but I don't know. Afterwards when we fixed the house, like downstairs, **[0:17:00]** then they ripped everything out. They said they have to take the whole thing off.
- Interviewer:** But what the law is is if Jewish people are buying the house, if a Jewish person is selling, and a Jewish person buys it, then you have to leave it. If it's not Jewish people, you don't have to leave it.
- Respondent 1:** Oh.
- Interviewer:** So it was okay that you took it down. [Laughter]
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Is that what it was?
- Interviewer:** Yeah. But if you're not Jewish...
- Respondent 1:** Oh, I didn't know that.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Because **[0:17:30]** I even asked my mother-in-law, she was Russian too, and I asked her how come? I said – because I'm Austrian, yeah? And I asked her how come? "Why do they put this up there? Do you know that? Why it's put up there?" They put it up for some reason. But she didn't know either.

- Interviewer:** It has a prayer in it. You see the little shell and then there's a little piece of paper in it with some prayers. Just wishing for health and happiness. Sure. Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 1:** You see, [0:18:00] you can always learn something, don't you?
- Interviewer:** Well and I just learned, just a few years ago, that you leave it if they're Jewish people moving in. So even I just learned – that's quite recent that I just learned that.
- Respondent 1:** You see?
- Interviewer:** Right. Right. So what are some of the changes that you see on your street?
- Respondent 1:** Here, on this street here? Well, some of the changes.
- Interviewer:** John?
- Respondent 1:** Well I don't know if it's better or if it's worse.
- Respondent 2:** Well not really.
- Respondent 1:** Oh, changes. I'll tell you the [0:18:30] changes. There's no more – not too many children here. I think just – but they are on the other side that they have a few children there.
- Respondent 2:** Young children. Yeah. I guess.
- Interviewer:** But they used to be...
- Respondent 1:** And you don't know the people so much anymore because...
- Interviewer:** Okay. So you're saying two things. One is there used to be more children, and two is you used to know the neighbours more.
- Respondent 1:** The neighbours. They used to come out, and even here at the corner, there was a man, he bought the house here. The corner house here. And he liked [0:19:00] the children. He was always

talking with the children and everything. And we would even have pictures. I don't even know where.

Respondent 2: Yeah. We have pictures.

Respondent 1: Get the pictures to look.

Interviewer: I'm going to look at your pictures when we finish.

Respondent 1: And it was nice. It was nice who was living here.

Respondent 2: There were different...

Respondent 1: And there were all kinds of people living here across the street. English people, Ukrainian people, [0:19:30] but they were – I think they were already here before we came here. They weren't here. They sold the houses. They had the house there too. And then our neighbour here was...

Respondent 2: Hungarian? Hungarian?

Respondent 1: Hm?

Respondent 2: Hungarian? No. Hungarian?

Respondent 1: Hungarian. Yeah, yeah. It was Hungarian. Yeah. [0:20:00] And that was Hungarian again. She's Hungarian, I think.

Interviewer: So when you think of who lived here, you mentioned some Ukrainian neighbours, Hungarian neighbours. Who were the bigger populations of who lived here? You're Austrian, and your husband was Russian. Who lived here?

Respondent 2: Portuguese too. I think lots of Portuguese, I think, on Robert Street. There were lots, quite a few Portuguese families.

Respondent 1: Yeah. [0:20:30] Not only Portuguese, but...

Respondent 2: Italian.

- Respondent 1:** ...Italian.
- Respondent 2:** Italian too.
- Respondent 1:** On Robert Street. Yeah. But here, there's more professors and things like that or something here.
- Respondent 2:** Now.
- Interviewer:** Now.
- Respondent 1:** Now, yeah.
- Interviewer:** Okay. So that's one of the changes.
- Respondent 1:** That changed.
- Interviewer:** Sixty years ago you didn't have.
- Respondent 1:** Didn't have before. Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** That was more labourers, I guess.
- Interviewer:** I see. So you're saying...
- Respondent 1:** There a painter living over there.
- Respondent 2:** Originally – I forget, of one of the **[0:21:00]** original eight painters.
- Interviewer:** Okay.
- Respondent 1:** I forgot now what his name was. The painters....
- Respondent 2:** The painter – the Group of Seven.
- Respondent 1:** ...were living over there.
- Interviewer:** From the Group of Seven.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah, yeah.

- Interviewer:** So one of the Group of Seven lived on your street.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Right across the street.
- Interviewer:** And you knew him? Did you know this man?
- Respondent 1:** I just – his wife, [0:21:30] was that his wife bought the house here, the corner house here after. And lived over here after he passed away. I don't remember. I think...
- Interviewer:** Okay. But you're saying that sixty years ago and fifty years ago, and maybe forty years ago, it was a more working class group that was here.
- Respondent 2:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** John, you're saying that.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** And you're saying [0:22:00] now there are more professors.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. No, but I don't know.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. More professional, I guess, because there's writers, there's artists.
- Respondent 1:** I think before we came here there were more Jewish people living here, I think, because now in the corner after – there was Jewish people too, but they bought it too early when we bought it around that time.
- Interviewer:** So there were Jewish people too in addition to...
- Respondent 1:** There were Jewish people too. [0:22:30] Yeah. And now I think at the corner is Jewish people too now, yeah?
- Respondent 2:** I'm not sure.

- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah. You know, the corner here.
- Respondent 2:** Well I don't know. I see the writer, she's a designer. I'm not sure.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** David and...
- Respondent 1:** David.
- Respondent 2:** ...Janice. But I don't know.
- Respondent 1:** Janet.
- Respondent 2:** Janice. Janice. Janice. It's David and Janice.
- Respondent 1:** Janet.
- Respondent 2:** But yeah. Yeah. I don't know. He's a writer and she's...
- Respondent 1:** Here on the corner. They're nice people.
- Respondent 2:** ...a designer.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh. So more [0:23:00] professional people now.
- Respondent 2:** Now.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. And just saying because with all these different nationalities living here now, and now I don't know so much because they're not talking to me. [Laughs]
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. They don't much.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. So you spent more time outside at that time.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. I spent more inside, and maybe they don't want to get that close now with these people.

Respondent 2: Too busy with stuff they were saying too.

Interviewer: [0:23:30] So you think...

Respondent 1: That is what I feel anyways. I don't know.

Interviewer: They feel less friendly? Is that what you're saying? Not so friendly?

Respondent 1: Yeah, yeah. I think so. I think so. I think before you're more talk to your neighbour over there, or over here, or over there, you know?

Respondent 2: I think it was a slower pace back then, forty, fifty years ago.

Respondent 1: Maybe it's not true. Maybe they're getting to it again.

Interviewer: Well John is saying that maybe people are more rushed these days. You're [0:24:00] saying it's a slower pace, you think?

Respondent 2: Back then, yeah.

Interviewer: At that time it was. People were less rushed and now they seem to be busier.

Respondent 1: Yeah. Maybe. Maybe. Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: I think at that time you described that your house had your mother-in-law and your father-in-law downstairs.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: And you and your husband, and one child, and two, and three, and other people. Are there as many houses now that have so many people under one roof? Is that...

Respondent 2: Well, there are lots of rooming houses.

Interviewer: On this street?

- Respondent 2:** [0:24:30] Well yeah. I think Robert and some on this street. We think they're rooming, but we can't confirm it.
- Respondent 1:** Everybody had somebody living there, you know?
- Interviewer:** At that time.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** At that time.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Because they didn't have the money to – really it was a lot of money, you know?
- Respondent 2:** There's still lots of people on this street renting out.
- Respondent 1:** You didn't have the money when you came over here, most of the people.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Did you sit outside on the front? Do you have a front porch?
- Respondent 2:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** And did you sit out? Did people sit outside in the front of the house?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** You used to sit outside?
- Respondent 1:** [0:25:00] Yeah.
- Interviewer:** During the day? Or in the evening? When did you sit?

Respondent 1: No, not during the day. Not during the day because people were busy working too, you know? I didn't – never sit outside during the day.

Interviewer: So you were busy. You were washing sheets, and cleaning the house.

Respondent 1: Yeah, doing stuff. Not only sheets, but you went shopping, you went this, and you went that. You know? You go to the Market here, you know? And then you have to cook. There's a lot of things to do, you know?

Interviewer: Yeah. **[0:25:30]** So your days were very busy.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: So you would sit outside sometimes at night?

Respondent 1: Just in the evening you get the sitting outside, you know? When you rest.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. Were there other people also sitting outside in the evening? Some of the other people sit outside also?

Respondent 1: Yeah. A lot of people were outside, but not – well, not every day of course. You know, like some – **[0:26:00]** you would go by and you'd see them, and sometimes, "Oh, hello, how are you? And so," or some come over and talk, and some – you know?

Interviewer: It sounds as if that must have been pleasant.

Respondent 1: Yeah. It was nice.

Interviewer: Now you mentioned Kensington Market.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: Tell me where you did your shopping.

Respondent 1: In the Market.

- Interviewer:** Did you shop there quite a bit?
- Respondent 1:** In the Market there was [0:26:30] – that was fish stores, all kind of stores, and meat store was there, and I think this meat store isn't there no more now. They just maybe if they went away now, they just saw that – because when I went there lately long time, and there was closed up. It was somebody else there. Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. And well, all the way, anyway, there's the cheese stores, [0:27:00] everything you could have there. And the bakery was there too. The lady that was a bakery there, and they had lots of stuff and everything too. It was nice to shop, you know? But it's nice in there. They do different things now.
- Interviewer:** You're saying that has also changed.
- Respondent 1:** The Market here. To go to the Market here.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Because Kensington Market now, they have, I guess – it's closed every – last Sunday of every month during the summer they have...
- Interviewer:** [0:27:30] Pedestrian Sundays.
- Respondent 2:** Pedestrian Sundays. Yeah. They didn't have that back then.
- Respondent 1:** Hm?
- Respondent 2:** Pedestrian Sundays where the whole street is closed. There's no traffic or anything.
- Respondent 1:** Oh yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 2:** So people can walk around.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Do you sometimes go – John, do you go to Pedestrian Sundays sometimes?

- Respondent 2:** Yes, I do. It's fun.
- Interviewer:** You ever take your mother there?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah, she's been there.
- Respondent 1:** Now that's nice that you go around and you – before that, before you went with the cars there.
- Interviewer:** So it's just – I think it's one Sunday a month.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. For the summer.
- Interviewer:** For about four or five months.
- Respondent 1:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** So you sometimes go to Pedestrian **[0:28:00]** Sunday?
- Respondent 2:** During the summer. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** That you go to – Pedestrian Sunday means when they close off the streets and everybody's walking outside.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. I have been there. I like it.
- Interviewer:** You do like it.
- Respondent 1:** And it's okay because you see everything and you know, all different things.
- Respondent 2:** We go for lunch and then we walk around and look at the stores.
- Respondent 1:** Everybody comes there, and everybody [laughs]...
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** But it's more for the younger people. There's a lot of young people there.

Interviewer: Oh, and dancing.

Respondent 1: And that's nice. [Laughs]

Interviewer: **[0:28:30]** But when you were raising your family, you shopped at Kensington Market.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: And you liked it there, you're saying.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. Yeah. Yeah.

Respondent 1: I liked it there for shopping. Yeah. Around here was nice. Here was – on the corner store here on the Robert Street, there was just a store here where the restaurant is here.

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent 1: On Harbord.

Interviewer: Right. Uh-huh. Yeah, yeah.

Respondent 1: On the **[0:29:00]** right side. Across the flower store.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

Respondent 1: That was a Ukrainian – he had the store there when we...

Interviewer: Okay. So that's where Massimo is now. There was a – a Ukrainian had a store there?

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: What kind of store was that?

- Respondent 1:** Anything you could buy. The food store. Food store too. But you could buy all kinds of stuff there.
- Interviewer:** But I think there was also a store [0:29:30] also on the southwest corner, another corner store.
- Respondent 2:** Right now where Momo's is, there was another store.
- Interviewer:** No, on the south side. I think the family Fuda used to own that store. Mrs. Fuda used to own a store there. So you had the little stores. Did you shop in those stores?
- Respondent 1:** I did.
- Interviewer:** You did.
- Respondent 1:** I did. They were nice. They were – they had nice things. They were friendly and everything, you know? It wasn't [0:30:00] – yeah.
- Interviewer:** What about churches? Did you go to a church in this neighbourhood? A church?
- Respondent 1:** A church? There was – not in this neighbourhood, I don't think so. Oh yeah, maybe there was. I don't know.
- Respondent 2:** No, no. You went to Manning Street, and now you're going to...
- Respondent 1:** Oh I was. Yeah, I was in Manning.
- Respondent 2:** On Manning Street.
- Interviewer:** So you went to a church on Manning? Manning near where?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Near Christie. Bloor and Christie.
- Respondent 1:** No, no, no. Wait a minute. It was a church here, but the university...
- Respondent 2:** Okay.

- Respondent 1:** [0:30:30] ...that was our church first. That's where we went there first.
- Interviewer:** On Spadina?
- Respondent 1:** They closed it up. On Spadina. Yeah. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yes?
- Respondent 1:** A little church there. Yeah. And they closed it up. Yeah. It's closed. Yeah. We went there.
- Interviewer:** So that was here for a few years?
- Respondent 1:** Oh yeah.
- Interviewer:** Many years.
- Respondent 1:** Many years because when we came here, I think they were here already. Yeah. They were here. And sometimes here. Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Okay. I don't know. That's [0:31:00] between 1950, 1960. I don't know.
- Respondent 1:** They weren't here.
- Interviewer:** You weren't even young yet. [Laughs] Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** So yeah, I know that church.
- Respondent 1:** I remember because he sat only on Christmas. He always sent a letter and he put the little Jesus child inside. You know? Like with the...
- Interviewer:** From the church that was near here.
- Respondent 1:** This little church here. Yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.

- Interviewer:** When you first moved here, did you [0:31:30] have a refrigerator, an icebox? What did you have to keep food...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. A refrigerator.
- Interviewer:** You had a refrigerator.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. We bought one. It wasn't here, but we bought. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh. [Laughter] Did you ever have your food delivered? Or did you always go by it?
- Respondent 1:** Food delivered?
- Respondent 2:** Milk was delivered here.
- Respondent 1:** They came. They brought the – the milkman came. They brought us the milk here and [0:32:00] everything, you know? And what else? Yeah. And they came around fixing the knives and everything.
- Interviewer:** Oh yes.
- Respondent 2:** Sharpening. Yeah. I remember that.
- Interviewer:** Now when they brought the milk, did they bring it – was it a truck, or was it a horse and wagon?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. It was a horse and wagon. Came around too sometimes with the – so.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** With some vegetables and fruits, [0:32:30] and apples, and from the farm I guess they came around. From the farm.
- Interviewer:** So was that also with the horse and wagon?

Respondent 1: They came also with the horse and wagon. They came by with the little wagon and they came around if somebody wants to buy something.

Interviewer: So would they bring a bell? Or how did they get your attention?

Respondent 1: I guess the people know already. We found out that the – you hear that. There must have been some bells I guess or something because he heard it when they were here. You heard something. [0:33:00] But I don't remember that well.

Interviewer: Okay. But you do remember that.

Respondent 1: They came. Yes, yeah.

Interviewer: The food came to you sometimes.

Respondent 1: Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. Do you have a back lane? Is there a lane behind your house?

Respondent 2: Yes.

Respondent 1: Between the house.

Interviewer: Between the house.

Respondent 1: No, but with the house you just have to...

Respondent 2: The laneway behind our backyard, yes.

Respondent 1: But we go through our garage out.

Interviewer: Now was it paved when you moved here? Was it paved? Did it have concrete?

Respondent 1: Paved?

Interviewer: Or did it have mud?

- Respondent 2:** Yeah. [0:33:30] The lane.
- Respondent 1:** I think – I don't remember that.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** I don't remember that, if it was paved or not. Maybe they did it themselves. Nikolai – my husband – I don't know. I don't know.
- Interviewer:** You don't remember that.
- Respondent 1:** I don't know. Maybe they made it themselves.
- Interviewer:** John, do you remember you and your sister and brother – did you use the lanes in any way?
- Respondent 2:** I remember we used that to take the shortcut to school, like to Lansdowne or whatever instead of going down Robert Street. Sometimes we'd cut through the lane to get down to Lord Lansdowne.
- Interviewer:** Okay. So that was [0:34:00] one route that you walked to school.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** Did you ever play in the lanes?
- Respondent 2:** No. Not much, no.
- Interviewer:** No? Where did you play?
- Respondent 2:** Well probably down at the school in the yard at Lord Lansdowne there. They had a big yard there.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. And you and your sister and brother all went to Lord Lansdowne?
- Respondent 2:** Yes. We all did, yeah.

- Interviewer:** And after Lord Lansdowne, did you go to a high school?
- Respondent 2:** Well my brother and I went to Central Tech; my sister went to Harbord Collegiate.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. How do you think your family made that decision? Two of you went to Central Tech, one...
- Respondent 2:** Well [0:34:30] I guess that – I guess back then still it was the most convenient, closest schools to our area.
- Interviewer:** But your sister went to Harbord.
- Respondent 2:** Harbord. Yes. I guess for more academic. I guess I was more into the more technical stuff at the time. And it was more academic for her.
- Interviewer:** Do you remember what you studied? You said you were more technical at the time.
- Respondent 2:** Well right then it was all everything. You could – auto mechanics, whatever you wanted to do, so history and English. I think it was just basically a technical school.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. Did you find that you were pretty [0:35:00] good at one of these things? Like some of the practical...
- Respondent 2:** Well I like carpentry class. I liked taking carpentry at Central Tech.
- Interviewer:** And do you do any of that? Anything?
- Respondent 2:** Not now. Not that much now.
- Interviewer:** No.
- Respondent 2:** I enjoyed it back then when I was in school.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.

- Respondent 1:** John, excuse me, Ella didn't go to Central Tech.
- Respondent 2:** No. She went to Harbord.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, she did.
- Respondent 2:** I'm saying I went to Central Tech.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Who made the decision that Ella would go? Who made the decision that Ella would go to Harbord and your sons went to **[0:35:30]** Central Tech? How did you make that decision?
- Respondent 1:** I don't even remember who made the decision. I think Ella wanted to go to Harbord. Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** I think the schools too, because I think when I was at Lansdowne I think I wanted to go to Harbord but they said – I guess the grades weren't that good. I think you needed higher grades to get into Harbord.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** What did you say, John?
- Respondent 2:** I said still, I think you needed higher grades to get into Harbord Collegiate, because I think I wanted to...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Maybe.
- Respondent 2:** ...go to Harbord, and they said I didn't have the high enough grades to go.
- Respondent 1:** But I don't remember that.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.

- Respondent 1:** But I know that Ella wanted to go to [0:36:00] Harbord, and so she...
- Interviewer:** So she made that decision.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah. Was Central Tech a good school for you?
- Respondent 2:** It was good. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** In retrospect?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. It was friendly. Lots of good kids, you know?
- Interviewer:** Yeah. I don't know if you would know this. Did a lot of your friends from this neighbourhood go there?
- Respondent 2:** No. It was mostly from more north of the city. Not many people from this area went there. It was more northern and the west side of the city that went there.
- Interviewer:** They came to Central Tech.
- Respondent 2:** [0:36:30] They came to Central Tech.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Do you know why they came?
- Respondent 2:** Well I guess that's – they still were at that time. Like when I went like in the mid-'70s, there weren't that many – still that many high schools out west. That's what I understood, so they came to Central Tech.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Well, also it's a special school because it offers...
- Respondent 2:** Yes. Auto mechanics.
- Interviewer:** Yes. So it would offer special training.

- Respondent 2:** Correct.
- Interviewer:** So if you think you might not go to university, you could get some very good training...
- Respondent 2:** Training there.
- Interviewer:** ...and get a terrific job after.
- Respondent 2:** Right.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. So you're saying a lot of the people that you [0:37:00] hung around with or the children you played with, a lot of those did not go to Central Tech.
- Respondent 2:** No.
- Interviewer:** They went to Harbord then.
- Respondent 2:** Harbord. Yes.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** And the school here, that's the second school. There was the old school here. The Catholic school here. Public school.
- Interviewer:** Oh, and they made a new one, I think.
- Respondent 1:** They made a new one. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Right. Yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** You know that, don't you? You didn't?
- Interviewer:** Yes. I don't remember what it looked like before. We're going to look at the [0:37:30] pictures after. I would love to do that.
- Respondent 1:** I don't even know if I have a picture here.

- Respondent 2:** No, no. I'm saying we got the actual card when they opened Lansdowne, the invitation in 1961.
- Interviewer:** Did you do any renovations to your house?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** What kinds of things did you do?
- Respondent 1:** It was terrible in the cellar because it was with coal, you know?
- Interviewer:** Okay. Okay. So you changed the heating system.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** It was everything was black. Black. And inside when first my [0:38:00] husband, did downstairs at the front, he ripped everything out, and everything – he was like a black man. [Laughs]
- Interviewer:** Oh. He was covered with coal.
- Respondent 1:** He was really black, you know?
- Respondent 2:** With coal. Yeah. It was a real mess.
- Respondent 1:** And they get all that dust and take out, and so – it was terrible.
- Interviewer:** So your husband...
- Respondent 1:** Because of the coal – so we put the gas...
- Respondent 2:** Gas furnace.
- Interviewer:** So you changed it from coal to gas.
- Respondent 1:** We changed it. Yeah. We changed.
- Interviewer:** But your husband did it by himself?

- Respondent 1:** No. He [0:38:30] did the – not – when you had to clean out everything, yeah, by himself and so.
- Interviewer:** Oh, so he cleaned it out.
- Respondent 1:** He cleaned all – my husband and my father-in-law, they cleaned everything out in the cellar, all that coal and everything, you know? But then later my husband, when he fixed the walls, you know, downstairs too, when he cleaned the walls, you had no idea [0:39:00] how much coal dust was in there that was so black, everything, you know? Was a lot of work by himself. You know? Then he cleaned it and everything. Was a lot of work to do.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. A lot of work and dirty.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Really messy. Probably not good for your lungs either.
- Respondent 1:** And now, after one thing, I will show you downstairs how we made it.
- Respondent 2:** Well it's different, you know?
- Respondent 1:** Downstairs. Now we fixed it up...
- Respondent 2:** We had renovated the basement now.
- Respondent 1:** More my husband. He put something, and doesn't stand [0:39:30] up. It was kind of...
- Respondent 2:** Sinking down. He had to put some poles in in the basement, so it doesn't sink.
- Respondent 1:** And then my husband did a lot of work here, you know, by himself, you know...
- Interviewer:** So he was very handy. Your husband was handy.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.

Respondent 1: Yeah. Yeah. He was really handy. He was a very smart man.
[Laughs] Yeah.

Interviewer: But you remember well when you had coal and when you got rid of the coal. That was a big change and a lot of work for your husband.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: And your father-in-law.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. What [0:40:00] other changes do you remember in the house?

Respondent 1: In the house, the kitchen downstairs was – we had the other kitchen here.

Interviewer: You still have another kitchen here?

Respondent 1: Yeah. Do you want to see?

Interviewer: After we talk.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: After we stop talking I would love to see. Yeah, yeah.

Respondent 1: Okay.

Interviewer: So you still have a little kitchen upstairs...

Respondent 1: Little kitchen.

Interviewer: ...and a bigger kitchen downstairs.

Respondent 1: But – yeah. And there was – there's now – it's a closet, [0:40:30] and this closet, this closet that went downstairs...

- Respondent 2:** The stairs to the basement had been changed – the location led to the basement.
- Respondent 1:** And then you couldn't even go...
- Respondent 2:** It was at the front. Now it's at the back of the house.
- Interviewer:** Oh big change.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Before downstairs from the kitchen, you could go downstairs to the cellar. Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Now that it's not there no more now.
- Interviewer:** So you'll show me those changes.
- Respondent 1:** Now it's here, down here.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. We'll show you.
- Respondent 1:** [0:41:00] My daughter fixed it up downstairs for herself.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. When she moved in. With thirty-two thousand, she renovated the main floor.
- Interviewer:** So is your daughter living here now?
- Respondent 1:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** Okay.
- Respondent 1:** Downstairs. She's living downstairs.
- Interviewer:** So the two of you live up here on this floor?
- Respondent 2:** That is correct.

- Interviewer:** And your daughter lives downstairs.
- Respondent 2:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** And she has the whole floor by herself?
- Respondent 2:** Yes. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** She's downstairs by herself. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. So your son...
- Respondent 1:** It's my house.
- Interviewer:** It's your house. But she had moved away?
- Respondent 1:** She fixed it up [0:41:30] everything. She paid for it to fix it up. She had the house, she sold the house, and she came home.
- Interviewer:** So she moved away and in 2000 she came back.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. And it...
- Respondent 2:** And I was gone too for ten years between 1990 and 2000. I was in the – we were with the Bloor West Village.
- Interviewer:** You and your sister were together?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Okay.
- Respondent 2:** So we weren't here between 1990 and...
- Interviewer:** So you and your sister both lived in Bloor West Village together.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah for about ten – yeah.
- Interviewer:** And then you came back here?

- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Because they were getting older. My parents – my dad wasn't well, and...
- Interviewer:** [0:42:00] Oh, so you wanted to – you moved back to help.
- Respondent 2:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** So your sister has the main floor...
- Respondent 2:** Correct.
- Interviewer:** And you and your mother share this floor.
- Respondent 1:** Now we're all together.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. And is your sister working?
- Respondent 2:** Yes. Yes.
- Respondent 1:** When my husband passed away, my husband passed away, Ella came home.
- Interviewer:** When did your husband die? What year?
- Respondent 1:** Eight years ago.
- Respondent 2:** 2004.
- Interviewer:** Oh. That was very nice of you and your sister to come back. So your children came [0:42:30] home to be close and be helpful.
- Respondent 1:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** I don't know. I guess so. But I want to come home. [Laughs]

- Interviewer:** Yeah. But you know that you still own it. It's still yours. But your daughter fixed it up for herself the way she likes it.
- Respondent 2:** Yes. Correct. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** No, wait. It was nice the way it was before too.
- Respondent 2:** Well there was no bathroom on the main floor. The bathroom in the basement, then there's no shower, no nothing on the main floor.
- Interviewer:** So your sister [0:43:00] put a bathroom on the main floor?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Now it's different because before, that was just for one house, like one washroom, like I guess for...
- Interviewer:** So now she has her own washroom on the main floor.
- Respondent 1:** Now she has her own things, and we have up here our own. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. And where's your other son?
- Respondent 2:** He lives here too on the third floor.
- Interviewer:** Oh he lives here too. Okay. Uh-huh. And is he working now?
- Respondent 2:** No, he's retired.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Okay. [0:43:30] So you have all your children home.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. And who cooks now?
- Respondent 1:** And nobody's married. [Laughter]
- Respondent 2:** Mom and I cook together the meals.
- Respondent 1:** What can you do? [Laughs]

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Respondent 1: No grandchildren, no nothing. [Laughs]

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 1: They're bad.

Interviewer: Yeah. So that's a disappointment for you, you're saying.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 1: A little bit.

Interviewer: Yeah. [0:44:00] Yeah. Do you have...

Respondent 1: I'm okay. I'm okay.

Interviewer: Do you have any other family in Toronto?

Respondent 2: She has a sister in Mississauga.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. So did you come to Canada, and your sister came around the same time?

Respondent 2: No.

Respondent 1: My sister?

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent 1: She came here, lived in my house here one time just for month, I think. One month up on the [0:44:30] third floor. She had the one room. [Laughs]

Interviewer: Yeah.

- Respondent 1:** But then she moved out. She got the apartment and...
- Respondent 2:** With her husband to Mississauga.
- Respondent 1:** ...moved there, and...
- Interviewer:** So Mississauga's quite far.
- Respondent 1:** And they had....
- Respondent 2:** Well they had Dora at that time.
- Respondent 1:** ...she went home again to Austria. She didn't like it. She went home.
- Interviewer:** So she came to Canada, she went back to Austria...
- Respondent 1:** And then she had the boyfriend here. One friend, wasn't really [0:45:00] a boyfriend. I don't know. Maybe it was. Anyway, he came to me and he asked if I know Dora's address, and if he wanted to get in touch with her, you know? And so he went over to Austria, and he was a German, and he went to see his mother, and then he went to her. Visit her first and then to – anyway, they had the wedding there.
- Interviewer:** In Austria.
- Respondent 1:** In [0:45:30] Germany. They went to Germany. She didn't know first what to do, you know? So they went to – and then they get married. And then they came over here again because he was working on Bloor Street in the meat store there. And then he bought the meat store there. You know? And he was himself there for years with her. [0:46:00] They had – they owned that store and everything. And then they sold it, and they went to Mississauga and bought a place in Mississauga. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So was she older when she got married?
- Respondent 1:** And this is her two girls here.

- Respondent 2:** Her granddaughters.
- Interviewer:** Aww.
- Respondent 1:** Her two girls. Those are from her daughter.
- Interviewer:** Are they twins?
- Respondent 2:** Yes.
- Respondent 1:** Twins.
- Interviewer:** They are twins. They're beautiful.
- Respondent 1:** They look the same, but I tell you I can't – when I go there, when we go there...
- Interviewer:** You don't know which one's which.
- Respondent 1:** [0:46:30] ...I can't. I can't. No.
- Interviewer:** Identical twins?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Oh.
- Respondent 1:** And she sometimes doesn't know herself which one is which, but then together you know.
- Interviewer:** So sometimes identical twins play jokes on people [laughter] and they trick people.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. They've done that at school.
- Respondent 1:** And the son they have, a son too. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. So they're very...
- Respondent 1:** And the daughter has two girls and a son. Yeah.

- Respondent 2:** Your niece. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So that's part of your family too.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. We go there always for Christmas, [0:47:00] and so we go to take all us there. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** That's very nice. The whole family gets together. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** The family get together. Everybody.
- Interviewer:** Did you put air conditioning into your house? Do you have air conditioning in the house?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Just about six years ago, I guess.
- Interviewer:** Air conditioning?
- Respondent 1:** Air conditioning. Yeah. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Just about six years ago?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah, six years ago. Six years ago we got air conditioning.
- Respondent 1:** Six years?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Well it was after dad died. She had the double knee replacement in [0:47:30] 2006, so that was probably around the same time we got the air conditioning.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. I guess so. Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** You certainly...

- Respondent 1:** It's hot here all the time, you know, before. It was really sometimes...
- Interviewer:** You know, last summer was such a hot summer. You must have been happy to had...
- Respondent 2:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Sometimes it was real hot. Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. No, it was recently we got air conditioning. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. But I think to have air conditioning last summer was really worth it.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** It's been...
- Interviewer:** So you didn't rush into it. I mean, you [0:48:00] waited about fifty-five years before you bought air conditioning. [Laughs]
- Respondent 1:** It's not that, you know. You have to find the money. Everything costs a lot of money to...
- Respondent 2:** It was expensive to have air. Yeah. Very expensive. To install the unit and everything. To get the unit. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 1:** The working hard, everybody was working hard, so.
- Interviewer:** When you were first living here, [0:48:30] you had tenants here.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.

- Interviewer:** So you had extra work because you kept their rooms clean, and you washed their sheets. Did other people – any other people have businesses at home? Do you know?
- Respondent 1:** No.
- Interviewer:** People didn't have businesses at home.
- Respondent 1:** No. Businesses.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Working at home.
- Respondent 1:** No. I don't remember anybody having a business at home. I don't think they could have because I think this was just a...
- Respondent 2:** Residential. I guess if anything, they wouldn't allow it back then.
- Respondent 1:** I don't think you could have...
- Interviewer:** [0:49:00] Uh-huh. And were some of the other women working outside the home?
- Respondent 1:** Some of them were working. I guess so, yeah. Maybe they couldn't have too many children or something. I don't – not that I know any who were working.
- Interviewer:** Right.
- Respondent 1:** I was – first came over here, they work, everybody was with the children.
- Interviewer:** So the mothers stayed home with the children and the fathers went out and worked.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh. [0:49:30] I'm wondering if you can talk anything more – and you too, John – anything about the stores in the neighbourhood.

- Respondent 2:** The chains? I know that right on the corner there used to be a convenience store, like the two Chinese guys had – it was called Dick's, and we used to go there for a long time.
- Interviewer:** On which corner are you talking...
- Respondent 2:** Right at Spadina and...
- Respondent 1:** Oh yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** ...on the north side.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. They were right here.
- Interviewer:** Spadina and Willcocks. And it was called Dick's?
- Respondent 2:** Dick's. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** The corner store here. There was two brothers, Chinese.
- Interviewer:** [0:50:00] Uh-huh. And what did they have in their store?
- Respondent 2:** Things like chips, magazines.
- Respondent 1:** Oh long time. Long time they had that store.
- Interviewer:** So it was a corner store. A convenience store.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** And then the one brother died, and then he – and the other one, I think, went to the States.
- Respondent 2:** Right. Yeah. Well I know they were sort of – there was always, like – there was, like – they had the Morgentaler Clinic on Harbord

Street, and there was always, like, turmoil, and there was trouble, like, for [0:50:30] a few years always.

Interviewer: And what kinds of trouble?

Respondent 2: Oh, there were fires always, all the time, and there were lots of protests, and there was protests on – the street, was always closed due to protests and stuff.

Interviewer: So it was a difficult block.

Respondent 2: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. And you remember that well then.

Respondent 2: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. You remember the big fire.

Respondent 2: Yeah.

Respondent 1: What's that? I can't hear.

Respondent 2: There was a fire on Harbord when they had the Morgentaler Clinic, and there was the big fire there.

Respondent 1: Oh.

Respondent 2: They had to close off the block, and then there were protests, and protests for a while.

Respondent 1: I don't even [0:51:00] remember that.

Respondent 2: Yeah, yeah. I remember that. And now it's a bookstore I think there.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. And anything else you...

Respondent 1: Oh, I really – I don't know why.

Respondent 2: Well there where the campus now, I mean Willcocks and Spadina, there used to be a Doctors House, and now it's the campus for students.

Interviewer: So it was a doctor's office?

Respondent 2: Office. Doctor's office. It was like a...

Respondent 1: Oh, and another thing, here right across the street, on our street, yeah. And here is Spadina. **[0:51:30]** And across the street here where the university is, there was a doctor there. And then she sold the house here to the university and she had her – she bought a house here on Spadina and Bloor. Yeah.

Interviewer: So – and that became her office?

Respondent 1: Yeah. That became her...

Interviewer: So it was a woman doctor.

Respondent 1: Her house. Like her house and her office.

Interviewer: It was her – and her office.

Respondent 1: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Respondent 1: Yeah. I remember that too because **[0:52:00]** – it's all there. I went too.

Respondent 2: Because I remember it being the doctor's office, and I remember it being a security building for the campus for where the students lived, residence...

Respondent 1: After I went there. She wasn't my doctor, but my mother-in-law went to her. Went to her.

Interviewer: Do you feel safe in this neighbourhood? Safe? Is it safe?

- Respondent 1:** Now? Now?
- Interviewer:** Now and in the past.
- Respondent 1:** I don't know. I felt safe in the past. I don't know. I never even thought about anything. But [0:52:30] later on in life, like let's say – I don't know when. When it started, when the people, the young people they started lying around, you know, here when the streetcar goes, and underneath there they were lying there or under the trees, you know, here that you had to call somebody to look after them and see what they're going to do.
- Interviewer:** [0:53:00] So...
- Respondent 1:** Around here.
- Interviewer:** ...so it was young boys?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Young people. Not – maybe not that young, but I mean...
- Interviewer:** Like in their twenties?
- Respondent 1:** ...twenty years old. Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 2:** I think they were – with the Scott Mission just down here on Spadina, right?
- Respondent 1:** And that wasn't all the time that's happened. That's happening. Sometimes I went out, you had to phone somebody and ask them to look because they weren't even – they [0:53:30] didn't even look like as if they were moving or anything, you know?
- Interviewer:** So they would be lying around on the street? Were they lying on the sidewalk?
- Respondent 1:** On the grass outside. You know? They were even lying around. I think drugs, from drugs or what, I don't know.

- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 2:** Well now the problem is graffiti. The major problem in the last five years. Lots of graffiti. Now we started to paint the garage. Let's get together as a community and paint the garages to get rid of it. So.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. I know Sylvia [0:54:00] Poretta's very involved with that.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. And Sue here.
- Interviewer:** And Sue Dexter. Right, right.
- Respondent 1:** But when we first came here, I never...
- Respondent 2:** There was no graffiti.
- Respondent 1:** No, nothing. Oh. There was one thing, only one time, in College Street. There was – so a coffee shop there. I don't know if you ever heard that. I don't know who you here...
- Interviewer:** I've been here twenty-five years. In this neighbourhood.
- Respondent 1:** This – maybe that was before that. And there was a coffee shop there [0:54:30] in College Street, and there was a fellow always buying a coffee, and it cost ten cents. And you know, and he didn't pay him ten cents, and every time he pass by, he ask him, "Pay me for the coffee," and he was just laughing at him and he killed him.
- Interviewer:** Who killed whom? The owner?
- Respondent 1:** The owner.
- Interviewer:** Killed...
- Respondent 1:** Killed the fellow who didn't get him the coffee, pay ten [0:55:00] cents for the coffee. A whole ten cents for that – a lot of money, you know what I mean. For him maybe.
- Interviewer:** So this was a long time ago.

Respondent 1: Long time ago.

Interviewer: And he bought many cups of coffee that he never paid for.

Respondent 1: And it wasn't paid for too. That was in the newspapers.

Interviewer: So he shot him?

Respondent 1: Shot him.

Interviewer: Wow. So that would have been around 1952, '55? A long, long time ago.

Respondent 1: Yeah. I don't remember what year it was, but I just know it because I read it in the paper the next [0:55:30] day. We had the paper, and I read in the paper and it said that here on College Street in that coffee...

Interviewer: So you knew the man who killed the other man. You knew him.

Respondent 1: Well I didn't know them.

Interviewer: But you knew the coffee shop.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. So that was shocking for you.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: Upsetting.

Respondent 1: I'm telling you, it was terrible. I went for everybody around here, you know, because – I mean I wouldn't do anything like that. I mean okay, he didn't [0:56:00] pay him, and then he always ask him, "Pay me for the coffee," and the fellow didn't pay him, and so he was just laughing at him, you know? And laughing here again. You know, like to pay for the coffee. Ten cents. And just shot him.

- Interviewer:** Yeah. It's a very sad story.
- Respondent 1:** Well I don't know if he shot him or he – he killed him anyways. I don't remember if it was shooting or if it was with a knife. I don't know. I don't remember.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. But he's dead. He was [0:56:30] dead. Uh-huh. Yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** But he's dead. He was dead anyways. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** That's a terrible story.
- Respondent 1:** Terrible.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. And at that – I know that story happened and it's a terrible thing.
- Respondent 1:** You know that?
- Interviewer:** No, no. I didn't know the story, but I'm saying that that happened. But did you feel safe at that time? Do you feel safe now? What do you think about the neighbourhood?
- Respondent 1:** No. I felt safe because I mean that was one thing. There's not that many people who would do a thing like that, is there?
- Interviewer:** And do you [0:57:00] feel safe now? Is it a safe – is this a safe neighbourhood?
- Respondent 1:** Well I don't know if it's a safe neighbourhood or not. I don't go out at night-time alone.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** Alone, I don't want to go out because if you go out alone, like sometimes when – if you have to go really out before, and when I see these people lying around outside, I didn't want to go no more.
- Interviewer:** Mm-hm. Yeah.

- Respondent 1:** You know? When you see those people lying around...
- Interviewer:** So John...
- Respondent 1:** ...young people.
- Interviewer:** ...who do you think – who **[0:57:30]** are these people?
- Respondent 1:** On Spadina, they were on Bloor Street. Like around Bloor and on Spadina, here at the universities and where the streetcar goes.
- Respondent 2:** I think it's the young teens, the runaway teens or whatever, I think.
- Interviewer:** But you feel that...
- Respondent 1:** But I don't know about now because I don't go out. I don't know.
- Interviewer:** ...scared about that.
- Respondent 2:** To go out, yeah. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Too, now there's lots of bars on College Street.
- Respondent 1:** I guess now there are more people.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Sorry. **[0:58:00]** There's lots of bars now.
- Respondent 1:** Now.
- Interviewer:** Okay. I'm listening to John for one minute.
- Respondent 1:** No, I just...
- Respondent 2:** I think there's lots of problems too we're having now with restaurants and bars that play loud music, and there are lots of drunks on the street late at night. We've been – the community's been complaining about that at our meetings.

- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 2:** That there are lots of...
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Uh-huh. Okay. So – well I know that there's a problem on College near Lippincott.
- Respondent 2:** Yes. Correct.
- Interviewer:** And maybe this place here on Robert Street, Robert and Harbord.
- Respondent 2:** I haven't heard about Robert and **[0:58:30]** Harbord, but I know there's Brunswick House there's trouble there. So.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** But I just read in the Gleaner, I think, that they now have some police who are going to be there at night.
- Respondent 2:** Okay.
- Interviewer:** On Saturday night. Yeah. I'm sorry. You were saying something.
- Respondent 1:** No, that's okay. That's okay. You said it too because now more people, I say, because that's why that's happening. You know, from all over the world, the people are here and so there's a different – don't you think?
- Respondent 2:** **[0:59:00]** Lots of gangs now. Yes, I think so.
- Interviewer:** Well I'm not sure what you're referring to. John is saying gangs.
- Respondent 1:** Gangs?
- Respondent 2:** Well gangs are different.
- Interviewer:** Okay.

- Respondent 1:** Maybe.
- Interviewer:** But you're saying people coming there.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. I mean more people than they were when we came here.
- Interviewer:** So it's more crowded?
- Respondent 1:** That's what I just want to say.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh.
- Respondent 2:** Too crowded.
- Respondent 1:** Now there are more people, there's more business, more everything, you know?
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** More people, more – those **[0:59:30]** high-rises and everything. They want the high-rises – before that many. They developed all that, you know? And they're all full with people, so something must happen some place, right?
- Interviewer:** Well what you're saying is there are more people, and it looks like more people means more trouble.
- Respondent 2:** More trouble and crime.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. There weren't that many people when we were here. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** First. You know? So.
- Interviewer:** When you were here, was there a subway at first?
- Respondent 1:** [Laughs] I don't think so.

Interviewer: No, I don't think so.

Respondent 1: I don't think so.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 1: [1:00:00] I don't remember going by subway at first.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. Did you drive a car? Or do you drive a car?

Respondent 1: John.

Interviewer: You did. I know your husband – you had a car.

Respondent 1: No, I didn't.

Interviewer: You never drove.

Respondent 1: No. I wanted to, and I said – and I made the driver's license, but I didn't make it the first one because of the one who taught me. He really taught me stupid. [Laughter] He said to – yeah, yeah. It's true. He told me to look back in the car and [1:00:30] make a line there where – how I have to park and everything, you know? Different things. And they told me, "When you go for your license, leave the car going right away," you know? And I get out, and that's what I shouldn't have done.

Interviewer: Oh.

Respondent 1: And he said in a week's time, he said do it again. He said to me.

Respondent 2: Do the test again.

Respondent 1: It was...

Interviewer: So you failed the first test, and then you took a test again?

Respondent 1: No, no.

Interviewer: You didn't take it again.

Respondent 1: [1:01:00] I didn't take it again because my husband said, "We don't have two cars." He needs the car all the time because he has to go to Sudbury, to here, to there. He had to go all over the place, you know, to – it's work. Yeah. And so we didn't have the money to buy another car, you know?

Interviewer: That means you used your legs or public transportation.

Respondent 1: That's right. Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Respondent 1: But I don't remember [1:01:30] going on the subway the first – when we came here. There's no subway.

Interviewer: No, I'm sure there wasn't. Not in 1952.

Respondent 1: But that's – everything is close here.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 1: You can walk everything. When you're young, you don't mind walking.

Interviewer: You know, all of us who live in this neighbourhood like that convenience that you're describing that you can walk and buy just about everything that we need.

Respondent 2: Yes.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: It's very convenient.

Respondent 1: I like that. I like to [1:02:00] walk around and look here, there, and so it's nice, you know? [Laughs]

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 1: And when we came over here first, it was a store on Queen Street. And when we were living on Dundas Street here by the church, there was a store on Queen Street and – no. There was a store. There was a movie theatre, [1:02:30] or whatever. I don't remember. Anyway, I won a basket of – I went there...

Respondent 2: To the movie theatre.

Respondent 1: I don't remember what it was. I won a basket of food.

Interviewer: Whoa.

Respondent 1: Boy, was I ever lucky. Happy too because it was hard. It was a hard life, you know, because I mean we didn't have that much money in the first place, you know?

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Respondent 1: And it was really nice that I [1:03:00] won that, you know? Because I remember always. [Laughs]

Interviewer: So when would that have been?

Respondent 1: I don't know. Was it a store and I got a ticket or something? And then they gave me that when I went to this movie and they gave me this ticket and I won.

Respondent 2: It was the thing about the movie theatre.

Interviewer: But you remember it made you very happy.

Respondent 1: Yeah. But anyway, it happened.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. And you remember it with the same kind of joy when you tell the story, it seems. Happy.

Respondent 1: Yeah. It was – gee, you know? You got something for nothing.

Respondent 2: They didn't have much back then, right? So.

- Respondent 1:** Didn't [1:03:30] have to pay for it, you know, because everything you have to pay.
- Interviewer:** So that was a happy day for you.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** And you remember it well.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** And I was young too then, you know? I mean it was really – yeah.
- Interviewer:** Well I think that I've asked you a lot of questions. I said I've asked you a lot of questions and you've had very, very interesting answers. It's been a pleasure for me to speak to you.
- Respondent 1:** [Laughs] I guess so.
- Interviewer:** I really, really enjoyed it.
- Respondent 2:** Thank you for coming.
- Respondent 1:** I said everything what [1:04:00] I know, but I – maybe some things I forgot. [Laughs]
- Interviewer:** No, but you remembered a lot.
- Respondent 1:** It was a pleasure talking to you.
- Interviewer:** Well it's mutual.
- Respondent 2:** It was our pleasure.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** You sure you don't want any coffee or anything? A cup of coffee?

Interviewer: Well, what I would like to do is look at – I'm going to turn this off.

Respondent 1: Okay.

Interviewer: I'd like to look at your pictures.

Respondent 1: Okay.

[01:04:18]

[End of recording]