

130 Rae Gold

Please note that any items that were difficult to transcribe are marked with an **[indiscernible]** tag.

Interviewer: The date today is the 9th of September, 2013, and I'm sitting in the home of Rae Gold who lived on Brunswick from 1932 to 1940. That means that you were the ages of fourteen to twenty-two. So the first thing I want to say to you is thank you for allowing me to come and listen to your stories. But I also want to say I'm sitting here with your daughter-in-law, **[0:00:30]** Elaine Gold, and Elaine's known you for many years and has heard some of your stories. So I've invited Elaine to participate, if she would like to. Okay?

Respondent 1: Okay.

Interviewer: Would you just start by telling us your age?

Respondent 1: I'm ninety-five.

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah. You're a beautiful ninety-five. [Laughs] You are a beautiful ninety-five. Do you have any idea what prompted your **[0:01:00]** parents to move to Brunswick? You were at Brunswick near Harbord, I think, right?

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah?

Respondent 1: My aunt was married – my mother's sister. And her husband died and left her the house on Brunswick Avenue. My father's a working man. He couldn't afford a house. But anyhow, my parents – my aunt was **[0:01:30]** not very efficient with English or anything, which my mother and father were. But I – that's why they bought the house because she couldn't – my mother could see she couldn't manage it, so my parents bought her house, and that's how we got to Brunswick Avenue.

Interviewer: Now did your aunt move away, or did she stay with you?

- Respondent 1:** No. Mima Hava stayed forever.
- Interviewer:** Mima Hava. So Mima means aunt, right?
- Respondent 1:** Mm-hm.
- Interviewer:** Oh, of course. [0:02:00] Mima Hava.
- Respondent 1:** Mm-hm. Mima Hava stayed forever with no children.
- Interviewer:** So she – your entire life, your aunt lived with you.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Practically. Since Brunswick Avenue.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Since we moved to Brunswick. She came with the house.
[Laughs]
- Interviewer:** Right. That's right. Right. And you had some – it was you and who else was – your parents and you – who else was in your family?
- Respondent 1:** Lou Jacobi and [0:02:30] my sister.
- Interviewer:** So Lou was your brother. Is that right?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. My brother. There's four of us. There was five, but one died when she was two years old.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** But yeah.
- Interviewer:** Well, certainly your brother was a well-known actor. I enjoyed his work enormously. Very, very much. Yeah. So you were three children.
- Respondent 1:** We were. Yeah. We were two girls [0:03:00] and two...
- Respondent 2:** Four.

Respondent 1: ...boys.

Respondent 2: Four. Lou.

Respondent 1: Five to start with the – one of them died, and...

Interviewer: Right. Okay.

Respondent 1: ...she was about three.

Interviewer: Okay. And your aunt. Were there any other people ever living with you, or that was a...

Respondent 1: Oh yeah. My brother – my mother sent for her brothers. Her brothers from Poland. They came. One brother was single when he came. The other one was married, and had three children that he left in [0:03:30] Europe. And then he was a young man, was having such a good time. So my mother – and he wasn't saving his money, he wasn't saving any for his family, so my mother insisted that every week, he's got to give her this money, and they had like a travel agent at that time that everybody dealt with. The travel agent. And my mother would go there every week and give the [0:04:00] travel agent the money until he saved enough to save for his family.

Respondent 2: And then the family came.

Respondent 1: Yeah. And then the family came. And you know, whenever it is, they live in the house until they can afford to move out.

Interviewer: So.

Respondent 1: My Mima was an exceptional caring woman, and we had a lot of people – whoever came. They're like Elaine and Peter. Open house.

Interviewer: Very welcoming.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Very [0:04:30] welcoming. So that's the ones that came from Europe and stayed until they could manage to move out.
- Interviewer:** So that was a family with children and they all lived under your roof on Brunswick.
- Respondent 1:** Oh, and t hey came, sure.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah. Right, right.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** How many bathrooms did you have?
- Respondent 1:** One.
- Interviewer:** [Laughs] Okay. And how many kitchens?
- Respondent 1:** There was a kitchen upstairs.
- Interviewer:** So they could almost have their own kitchen, but there were, like, a dozen [0:05:00] of you sharing a bathroom.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah. My brother – I have an Orthodox brother.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** He lived there. He lived at my parents'. When he got married, he married a girl in New York. They used to arrange these marriages. So he had two children, and my mother went to visit, they went to visit him, and he was really very unhappy there. So she says, [0:05:30] "I've got this flat. You'll come, you know, Mima Hava has a room, but otherwise you come." And they came with two children and moved out with seven.
- Interviewer:** But he lived there all those years as the family got bigger and bigger.

Respondent 1: Mm-hm. Yeah. He came from New York with two children. His wife and two children and moved out with seven. Yeah.

Interviewer: So that was seven of them...

Respondent 1: And they managed very well, [0:06:00] because we had an attic. There was an attic.

Interviewer: There was a third floor.

Respondent 1: And very big rooms.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Respondent 1: And even the bedroom was a big room. They could always put a crib in it or whatever.

Interviewer: And they did that quite often.

Respondent 1: And they had this kitchen. So they had, you know, the second floor.

Respondent 2: So that was in the '50s. Now we're talking about the '50s when her younger brother got married and brought the family – so Rae wasn't living at home anymore then. She would have already moved out and was married.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 2: And...

Respondent 1: The others were already [0:06:30] out. Yeah. Except Mima Hava. Mima Hava stayed forever.

Respondent 2: Mima Hava was still alive. And she was there. And this is mom's younger brother who became very Orthodox and he moved in with his family in the '50s, and they didn't move out until – we had seven kids when he moved out. So it must have been the '60s by the time he moved out. Trying to think when that would have been.

Respondent 1: I can't.

- Respondent 2:** I think it would have been maybe the early '60s when he would have moved out.
- Interviewer:** So that home stayed [0:07:00] in the family for a long time.
- Respondent 2:** They stayed in the family until bubbe died. The house was...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** The house was in the family until bubbe died, and bubbe died – what year did bubbe die?
- Respondent 1:** And there were four of us left with the house.
- Respondent 2:** Do you remember what year bubbe died? '78?
- Respondent 1:** No. Dates, I just absolutely don't remember.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. It was around '78 when bubbe died.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. And that's when they sold the house.
- Respondent 2:** And that's when they sold the – and you sold the house soon after that.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Yeah. [0:07:30] So it was in the family from...
- Interviewer:** 1932.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. '32 until '78. Yeah. So forty-six years.
- Interviewer:** Wow. Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** They probably bought it for something that sounds like nothing now.

Respondent 2: Yeah.

Respondent 1: Nothing. But at that time was a lot of money.

Interviewer: You know what? That is just what I was going to say because people say, "Oh, you bought it for fifteen thousand," or something, but at that time, whatever it was, people worked hard to save up that much. Yeah. Yeah.

Respondent 1: Yeah. **[0:08:00]** And that's how the prices went up and up and up.

Interviewer: Well the prices went up, and inflation just keeps moving.

Respondent 1: There's always inflation, and then it went down a bit, and you go and sell your house, and then, you know, it came up. And anyhow, that was how work wasn't – I think it still works that way.

Interviewer: Who made up the neighbourhood? What kinds of – what ethnic groups made up the neighbourhood? What religions were there?

Respondent 1: Well, the area, **[0:08:30]** we lived in just a block from Ulster to Harbord, so that was our area. And yeah...

Interviewer: You know, you put it so clearly.

Respondent 1: ...and we went to Brunswick, and we went to the Brunswick Jewish...

Interviewer: The Talmud Torah?

Respondent 1: Talmud Torah. Yeah. And you know, that was all right up to a point, but we still study Hebrew and whatever. But that was where we went.

Interviewer: **[0:09:00]** So all the children in your family...

Respondent 1: And I think we went – we went to also – the Zionists. What were they called at that time? We went to their religious school to study Jewish.

- Respondent 2:** Where were they? Were they on Baldwin?
- Respondent 1:** They were on Cecil Street.
- Respondent 2:** On Cecil. That's what I meant. Yeah. Cecil Street there.
- Interviewer:** So they had a kind of cheder there?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. They had. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** But they were, you know, [0:09:30] like not that religious.
- Interviewer:** They're more left wing and...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Right, right.
- Respondent 1:** So that's where we went for Jewish, but the Brunswick Talmud Torah was...
- Interviewer:** So Brunswick Talmud Torah you learned Hebrew, and when you went to this whatever cheder was called, you learned Yiddish there.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. It's like across the street from the old folks' home.
- Interviewer:** Was there any Yiddish spoken in your home?
- Respondent 1:** Oh yeah. All the time.
- Respondent 2:** Her parents...
- Respondent 1:** We spoke Yiddish all the time in the house.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: [0:10:00] So that...

Respondent 2: Her parents just wrote in Yiddish.

Respondent 1: Yeah. My parents – my mother and father could speak English not bad, but my aunt not that good. We spoke Yiddish while I was living there. All the time.

Interviewer: That was your first language then.

Respondent 1: In the house. Yeah.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. You learned English. Then what? At about three or four or five years old, when you played outside or when you went to school?

Respondent 1: You know, I never really – oh, when we went to school we [0:10:30] spoke English, but I remember my mother talking about my brother. The oldest one. And she says that she sent him to school and he couldn't talk a word of English. When we were living on University.

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah. I guess he learned it pretty quickly.

Respondent 1: Yes.

Respondent 2: That's what she was talking about.

Respondent 1: He was born here and brought up here, couldn't speak a word of English.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 1: I remember that.

Respondent 2: Yeah. [0:11:00] Yeah.

Respondent 1: Certain things I remember. I remember we lived – when we lived on University – I don't remember this at all, but I remember my mother

saying my oldest brother went to school, everybody walked to school.

Interviewer: Mm-hm.

Respondent 1: So he'd stop at University, he'd go across to the, you know, to the island of University, and she says he ran back and forth. He didn't know how to cross the street. She says [laughs] running back and forth. And I'm sure nobody helped him. **[0:11:30]** He worked it out for himself.

Respondent 2: He eventually figured it out.

Respondent 1: Yeah. But I remember hearing certain things, you know? You talk about – because my mother thought that was very unusual.

Interviewer: So that was a favourite story of your mother's? Of your brother trying to get across the street?

Respondent 1: Yeah. Getting – trying to get across the street. Yeah. And he probably was – I don't know. He probably was five years old or – yeah. Because I was born on University.

Respondent 2: **[0:12:00]** On Brunswick where you lived, was everyone on the block Jewish?

Respondent 1: Well, the next-door neighbours were not.

Respondent 2: Oh okay.

Respondent 1: We lived in the duplex, and our next-door neighbours were Anglo-Saxon.

Respondent 2: No, on Brunswick. I'm talking about Brunswick Street.

Respondent 1: You're right. What are you asking me again?

Respondent 2: I'm going to ask again. On Brunswick Street, was everyone **[0:12:30]** Jewish?

- Respondent 1:** The neighbours – yeah. One of them was Chinese.
- Respondent 2:** Okay.
- Respondent 1:** Because eventually, you know – as far as I know, all of them were pretty well Jewish.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** But then some of them started moving out, I guess.
- Respondent 2:** Mm-hm.
- Respondent 1:** And my mother's next-door neighbour were Chinese.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** For quite a few years.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Well, you know, that's typical of **[0:13:00]** any neighbourhood where immigrants live. They go where there are others.
- Respondent 1:** You see the pattern.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. You do see the pattern.
- Respondent 1:** Sure.
- Interviewer:** But the years that you were there was a very strongly Jewish neighbourhood.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. They were Jewish. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** I think all of them. And there was the grocery store, there was a butcher shop, and there was a fish place at the corner.
- Respondent 2:** Right.

- Interviewer:** So these were...
- Respondent 1:** On Harbord.
- Interviewer:** Okay. So talk to me more, please, about what you remember about those stores.
- Respondent 1:** Well, [0:13:30] that's what I remember. We shopped – we'd shop at a grocery store at McCaul and Elm Street. There was a grocery store there.
- Respondent 2:** When you were on Brunswick?
- Respondent 1:** No.
- Respondent 2:** Try to remember on Brunswick.
- Respondent 1:** On Brunswick, oh yeah. You see, on Brunswick.
- Respondent 2:** You were on Brunswick.
- Respondent 1:** I'm thinking first. On Brunswick...
- Respondent 2:** There was a fish store.
- Respondent 1:** There was a store at Ulster and – yeah. There was a store and there was also a butcher shop and a bakeshop, and a fish store there.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** The fish store was...
- Respondent 1:** I'm getting confused with...
- Respondent 2:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. [0:14:00] But that's what – on Brunswick.
- Respondent 2:** On Harbord Street there was...

- Respondent 1:** Yeah. There was on one corner was a grocery store, and across the street was the butcher, and there was the fish store. And on the other side was the bakeshop.
- Interviewer:** And...
- Respondent 1:** And further in, they're still there on Harbord Street. Is it the bakeshop?
- Interviewer:** Harbord Bakery.
- Respondent 2:** Well the Harbord Bakery is still there.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. It's still there. But that other one.
- Respondent 2:** But the butcher's gone.
- Respondent 1:** Gone.
- Respondent 2:** [0:14:30] The butcher's gone. The butcher was there in the '70s.
- Interviewer:** I'm in the midst of organizing an interview with that butcher.
- Respondent 2:** Ah. The butcher was there in the '70s I remember.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** And the fish store was there...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** ...into the '80s maybe. The fish store was there a long time.
- Respondent 1:** And so was the bakeshop was there for quite – yeah.
- Respondent 2:** So that's a different bakeshop. Not Harbord Bakery. A different bakeshop.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Different one.

Respondent 2: A different one.

Respondent 1: And they were very popular, but I can't think of any.

Interviewer: Did your family shop **[0:15:00]** in the Market? Kensington Market?

Respondent 1: My mother was not – she was not – what do they call the Market? Kensington Market?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 1: My mother was not that type of woman. She didn't go out to the markets looking for bargains. She bought in the grocery store. And you know how you bought, because my father was a tailor at that time. You bought, and at the end of the week, you paid.

Interviewer: **[0:15:30]** Oh lovely. I remember that.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: I grew up in Montreal. We did that quite often.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: So she would – they would keep an accounting on a piece of paper.

Respondent 1: Yes. Yeah, yeah. Yeah. And I remember on that street there was a family, very Orthodox, and one of their daughters married somebody. An Italian fellow or something. In the States. Yeah. And she was dead as far as they considered.

Interviewer: Oh.

Respondent 1: **[0:16:00]** They never talked about them, but she had an older sister, so – because I'm – I didn't know this, but the oldest sister, you know? I knew the older sister, and the odd time she'd say, "My sister," and I said, "What sister?"

Interviewer: So you never met that sister.

Respondent 1: No. I never met her. Never. You know, she probably was about eighteen. Who knows. Or maybe they were an older family than [0:16:30] we were.

Interviewer: But that's a clear memory. So you had some emotional response to it.

Respondent 1: Some things you kind of remember, you know?

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Respondent 1: I also remember the grocery store eventually moved.

Interviewer: But your mother wasn't a market person; she liked to go into a cleaner store and get...

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: ...something from the shelves.

Respondent 1: The corner stores. We used to buy from the corner store. Even at Ulster, there was always a store down there too. Ulster [0:17:00] and Brunswick.

Interviewer: Do you have any particular memories about the fish store or the butcher? Any specific memories about those? You do, Elaine. [Laughs]

Respondent 2: Well, Peter talks about because bubbe would buy the live fish. She'd bring home the live fish, right?

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 2: She'd put them in the bathtub.

Respondent 1: Yeah. Yeah.

Respondent 2: So the one bathroom, and the fish is swimming in the bathtub, right?

- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Well that's how you bought live fish.
- Interviewer:** Oh my god.
- Respondent 2:** At that time, you made gefilte fish. You buy the live fish.
- Respondent 1:** **[0:17:30]** You buy the carp. Especially carp. The others, they weren't live fish, but I think the carp was always a live fish.
- Interviewer:** So when the fish was swimming...
- Respondent 1:** It was a big fish.
- Interviewer:** ...all those ten people couldn't take a bath. [Laughter]
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Isn't that wonderful?
- Respondent 2:** It was a big bathtub. That's what Peter's – Peter remembers that. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** And then bubbe would make gefilte fish from the fish. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Always from fresh fish.
- Interviewer:** So in one respect, she was **[0:18:00]** more of a lady. She didn't want to go to the Market, but she rolled up her sleeves and she made gefilte fish.
- Respondent 1:** Oh yeah. She was a good cook and a good homemaker. Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** She was a good cook.
- Respondent 1:** Another thing I remember is the grocery store finally moved away and my mother went looking for them because she owed them some money. And she found the address where they were,

[0:18:30] and she went and – and the people said that she was about the only one that came and paid off her debt. So I say my mother was a very exceptional woman.

Respondent 2: She was an exceptional woman.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you know her?

Respondent 2: Yes.

Interviewer: You did.

Respondent 2: She lived until about '78, so no, I knew her. And there are at least eleven girls named after her.

Respondent 1: Oh yeah.

Respondent 2: At least eleven.

Respondent 1: Yeah. Vumey's – yeah. Vumey's children. **[0:19:00]** Her grandchildren, whenever the first child – the first girl was named after their bubbe.

Interviewer: Yeah. What was her name?

Respondent 2: Feige.

Interviewer: Feige.

Respondent 2: Yeah.

Interviewer: So they're Feige's. Yeah.

Respondent 2: My daughter's middle name is Feige.

Interviewer: Oh.

- Respondent 2:** Yeah. And at these family events, all the Feiges can gather together. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Because she was...
- Interviewer:** What a way to honour somebody.
- Respondent 1:** Well, in the first place, seven of them lived in the house. Eventually had ten.
- Respondent 2:** That's right.
- Respondent 1:** But seven – until [0:19:30] there was seven, they lived in the house.
- Respondent 2:** So they were very close to their bubbe.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** They ran up and down the stairs, they broke the stairs, they broke the piano. But in my sister-in-law's house, my mother would – one weekend, she says, "Bubbe, you hold onto the banister. You don't hold onto the wall when you climb up the stairs." That was Hilda. Hilda kept a meticulous household.
- Respondent 2:** Very clean house.
- Interviewer:** [0:20:00] Oh, so she didn't want the wall to get...
- Respondent 2:** Want fingerprints on the wall.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. But in their bubbe's house, they would – kids ran rampant. [Laughter] Yeah.
- Interviewer:** When your Mima Hava lived with you, was she like a second mother? Or was she...
- Respondent 2:** No.

- Interviewer:** What was she like?
- Respondent 1:** My Mima Hava.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** I don't think he ever washed a dish. She sat there and she'd watch my mother wash the floor, and she never brought anything into the house. But [0:20:30] oh, but that's what it was. That was Mima Hava who thought about it. Only when I got older did I think, you know, here's a woman lived in the house...
- Respondent 2:** And did nothing.
- Respondent 1:** ...did not do anything. Didn't really do anything. She had a bed. And well, like I said, she came with the house, so.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** But she was that kind of person.
- Interviewer:** Very, very different from your mother.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Different.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** But very nice. Everybody was her friend.
- Interviewer:** [0:21:00] But she lived off your family.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. She used to go to Lou's Bakery and sit for his children, so you know.
- Respondent 2:** Oh, you mean your cousin? Your cousin who had the bakery?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Well they're not – they're related to us. They're related to my mother. Yeah. Lou's Bakery.

Respondent 2: Yeah. Lou's Bakery. Yeah.

Respondent 1: Was mishpucha.

Respondent 2: They're mishpucha.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 2: So where was their bakery?

Respondent 1: Theirs was on Bloor Street.

Respondent 2: Oh. They were on Bloor.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 2: Do you remember?

Interviewer: Bloor near where?

Respondent 2: **[0:21:30]** Was it near Spadina? Where was it on Bloor? Do you remember? Lou's Bakery.

Respondent 1: Let me see. Between – I think it was north of Bathurst. I think it was north of Bathurst.

Respondent 2: Wait, wait, wait. I can't be north of Bathurst if it's on Bloor Street. That doesn't make sense. You mean it was on Bathurst?

Respondent 1: Oh, I mean west of Bathurst.

Respondent 2: West of Bathurst. Okay.

Respondent 1: [Laughs] Okay.

Interviewer: Okay. So for my purposes...

Respondent 1: **[0:22:00]** It was on the north side.

Interviewer: ...it's on the wrong side.

- Respondent 1:** It was on the north side, but it was...
- Respondent 2:** On the north side, but west of Bathurst.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Okay. All right. Out of the area...
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** ...it would have been.
- Interviewer:** How would you describe the financial situation of the families who were living there?
- Respondent 1:** Oh, they were all working people there. I don't know anybody on the street that had a business.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. So they worked for other people, you're saying.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. No, we moved there when we were later – we were seventeen. I was seventeen. So you didn't get to know the neighbours [0:22:30] that, you know? And you'd go to school with the kids. It's when you get to know the neighbours really well. We knew the Teppermans on this side, and the Naimans. Yeah. Anyhow...
- Respondent 2:** But you knew the Magers.
- Respondent 1:** Because we – the Magers. We lived across the street from the Magers.
- Respondent 2:** You lived across the street.
- Respondent 1:** But then, like I said, I moved in when I was...
- Interviewer:** Fourteen. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** ...going to high school.

- Interviewer:** Right. Do you remember whether any of the mothers [0:23:00] were working? Were the mothers stay-at-home moms? Or did some of them work?
- Respondent 1:** Nobody worked.
- Interviewer:** The mothers were not working.
- Respondent 1:** The mothers did not work.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. And your father worked as a tailor.
- Respondent 1:** My father was a tailor.
- Interviewer:** Did he go out to work, or did he have something in your home?
- Respondent 1:** Oh. He went to Eaton's.
- Interviewer:** Oh, he worked for Eaton's.
- Respondent 1:** Every Jewish tailor worked for Eaton's, but not in their store. They had a factory.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** And all the people they came – all the people [0:23:30] working in their factory were Jewish because, you know, one recommended the other probably.
- Interviewer:** Of course. Where was that?
- Respondent 1:** But not in the store.
- Interviewer:** And where was the factory?
- Respondent 1:** Where was the factory? Oh. One of the downtown...
- Interviewer:** So it was downtown.

- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** On Spadina. Was it on Spadina? I think...
- Respondent 1:** No. The factory was not. It was closer to their store.
- Respondent 2:** Oh.
- Interviewer:** College. A little east maybe.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Back in there, closer to where their store was, but it was not on Spadina.
- Respondent 2:** Queen Street Store.
- Respondent 1:** [0:24:00] Spadina had the other Jewish bosses.
- Respondent 2:** Where did Zaida Gold work? He was a tailor too.
- Respondent 1:** I don't remember.
- Respondent 2:** You don't know if he worked for Eaton's.
- Respondent 1:** No.
- Respondent 2:** I think he did.
- Respondent 1:** But he became a chazzan later on.
- Interviewer:** Who became a chazzan?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Mm-hm.
- Interviewer:** Who?
- Respondent 2:** Her father.
- Respondent 1:** My father.

- Interviewer:** Your father.
- Respondent 1:** Had a lovely voice.
- Interviewer:** Oh, lovely. So did he continue to work as a tailor?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. He worked as a tailor, and he'd sing in the choir, and he'd sing, you know...
- Interviewer:** **[0:24:30]** Where did he sing in the choir?
- Respondent 1:** In the theatre, you know? In the theatre on Spadina? The theatre. And they put on these shows.
- Interviewer:** So that was...
- Respondent 2:** There was a theatre on Spadina.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. But I'm not from Toronto. [Laughs] I don't....
- Respondent 2:** But you're doing this research. [Laughs]
- Interviewer:** So there was this theatre.
- Respondent 1:** So many years ago. And he'd sit there in the synagogues. He'd sing in their choirs. But...
- Interviewer:** So he sang in the Jewish theatre and in synagogue?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** **[0:25:00]** And he sang at Shomrai Shabos, right?
- Respondent 1:** Oh yeah.
- Respondent 2:** At Shomrai Shabos.
- Respondent 1:** Not at – no.

Respondent 2: But he sang at Shomrai Shabos, didn't he? At the shul. At the shul on Brunswick.

Respondent 1: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Respondent 2: That shul on Brunswick.

Respondent 1: Yeah. And that's where...

Respondent 2: You know the Shomrai Shabos?

Respondent 1: ...he went the holidays. And that's one of the shuls he – he dies blowing the shofar.

Respondent 2: Yeah.

Interviewer: Whoa.

Respondent 2: Do you know where Environment Probe is right now?

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent 2: That's an old shul.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Respondent 2: That shul was called Shomrai Shabos. **[0:25:30]** They're now up on Glengrove, but they used to be on Brunswick, so they're – the Narayever – both shuls were functioning. The Narayever and the Shomrai Shabos on the corner.

Respondent 1: Well you know, they came from Europe from the shtetl. Everybody came to Toronto and opened their own synagogue.

Interviewer: [Laughs] Yeah. I know there were a lot of shteebles around.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yes. Yes.

Respondent 2: But he sang at Shomrai Shabos and he died on Rosh Hashanah blowing the shofar.

Interviewer: It's quite a lovely way to die.

Respondent 2: It was unbelievable.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: Unbelievable.

Respondent 1: He died. Yeah. **[0:26:00]** Look it, the Jewish religion probably is a mitzvah really. Something. He died blowing the shofar.

Interviewer: Must have been so traumatic for everybody in the shul.

Respondent 1: [Laughs] Yes, it was.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 1: Yeah. And they called the ambulance and they go, and they drive him to the hospital, you know. When it comes to health, that comes above everything.

Respondent 2: Of course.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Respondent 2: Even though it was Rosh Hashanah, they called the ambulance, right?

Respondent 1: Yeah. Yeah.

Respondent 2: Yeah.

Respondent 1: Yeah. As he'd get older, he was **[0:26:30]** blowing the shofar. And he'd go out of town during the holidays and be a substitute chazzan, you know, in their synagogues.

Interviewer: So he really became...

- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** ...a chazzan...
- Respondent 1:** Because he...
- Interviewer:** ...because he could sing all the songs.
- Respondent 1:** Because he really liked it.
- Respondent 2:** Where did he go?
- Respondent 1:** He went up north. Up north.
- Respondent 2:** Like to little towns?
- Respondent 1:** No. Not to – to big towns.
- Respondent 2:** Like to Barrie?
- Respondent 1:** Up north.
- Respondent 2:** You mean like to Barrie?
- Respondent 1:** Further. Further north.
- Respondent 2:** North of Barrie?
- Respondent 1:** North of Barrie. North of...
- Respondent 2:** Like Sudbury? **[0:27:00]** North Bay? Timmins? Where did he go? North Bay? I wonder who would know.
- Respondent 1:** A place with two names.
- Respondent 2:** North Bay.
- Respondent 1:** No, not North Bay.

- Respondent 2:** Sault Ste. Marie. Thunder Bay. [Laughter]
- Respondent 1:** Thunder Bay. Sudbury.
- Respondent 2:** Two names.
- Respondent 1:** I don't know. It was quite a bit up north.
- Respondent 2:** I wonder what has two names.
- Respondent 1:** Was a trip. But I can't remember.
- Interviewer:** But he could really do the service. He was well educated. I mean...
- Respondent 1:** Oh yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** ...he had a beautiful voice, but he also knew how to do the service.
- Respondent 1:** Well listen, what's a rabbi? A teacher.
- Interviewer:** [0:27:30] Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** And he came from Europe full-grown, and he came from an Orthodox family with – well educated, but he was not...
- Respondent 2:** He was not a great tailor.
- Respondent 1:** He was a sharp guy. [Laughter]
- Respondent 2:** He was a much better chazzan than he was a tailor. [Laughter]
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. He's the kind that went to New York, you know? And my brother would invite him to New York, and he'd take him to the theatres and take him to the nightclubs, and my father would enjoy it. [Laughs]
- Respondent 2:** [0:28:00] Because when Uncle Lou was on Broadway, he would bring his parents to see him in the shows, so he'd come to New York, other parents would go to New York and go to the shows, and...

- Respondent 1:** Yeah. He was a very good son.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Considering that he was, you know.
- Respondent 2:** A big star.
- Respondent 1:** An actor and pretty famous.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. You know they'd go...
- Respondent 1:** Bring them out to Hollywood. Bring them...
- Interviewer:** Yeah. So they must have shep nachis galore.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Yeah. They enjoyed it.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** They did. Even though they wanted him to be a violinist they were...
- Interviewer:** Did he play the violin?
- Respondent 2:** He [0:28:30] played the violin.
- Respondent 1:** What's that?
- Interviewer:** Did Lou play the violin?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Played the violin. He won medals playing it when he was a young boy.
- Interviewer:** Oh. So he was a talented violinist.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. And he was invited in the theatre.

- Respondent 2:** Mm-hm.
- Respondent 1:** On King Street. They used to have an old theatre there, and they had a Jewish company playing, and they needed a boy playing the violin, so they – that's where he started. The violin and the [0:29:00] he acted well. My father used to put him on the chairs and tables and get him to sing.
- Interviewer:** Oh really? [Laughs]
- Respondent 1:** When he was little. That's the story I heard.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. I'd hear that often. He'd go buy a house and you'd hear the gramophone or whatever it was, and he'd stop and listen and he...
- Interviewer:** That's your father or your brother now?
- Respondent 1:** My brother. My brother.
- Interviewer:** So he loved music.
- Respondent 1:** As a child – he got this from my father because...
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Clearly.
- Respondent 1:** ...I think my father was the [0:29:30] frustrated actor or something. [Laughs] But then...
- Interviewer:** Well, so he must have been proud that his son could at least do it. He was...
- Respondent 1:** You know how it is. You get married when you're very young, and when you're young you have a family. You don't take – you can't become a chazzan because I don't think they paid them very much either.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.

- Respondent 1:** Anyhow. He was – and whatever my brother has, he got from my [0:30:00] father, so. You know how the genes work.
- Interviewer:** Oh, the genes are powerful.
- Respondent 1:** But you know, you're putting a kid on the table to sing for everybody. [Laughter]
- Interviewer:** I think there was more of that then than now.
- Respondent 1:** Of course. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** I mean you'd meet people, and you'd sit down, you'd talk, and you'd sing, and you know. I don't think he even played the record player. They'd have a bottle of – a thing [0:30:30] of beer, a barrel of beer, and you went and spent evenings at the mishpucha.
- Interviewer:** Mm-hm.
- Respondent 1:** Oh. Mishpucha.
- Interviewer:** What – was there quite a lot? Was there other family? Were there – did he have lots of cousins?
- Respondent 1:** We had – we were related to the Frudmans and related to the – my god. The Solishes.
- Respondent 2:** They have a big cousin's...
- Respondent 1:** [0:31:00] Yeah. And some big family, extended family, and that was your people.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** But they also had that – what did they call it? The Nisht Gedayget .
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. [Laughs] Club.

- Respondent 2:** Club.
- Respondent 1:** It was a club.
- Respondent 2:** Right?
- Respondent 1:** Nisht Gedayget club.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Nisht Gadayget. And who was in that cub?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. He was one of the original members there or whatever it was, and they had a place out in the country.
- Respondent 2:** Really?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. And we used to take the kids out. Yeah. I think he...
- Interviewer:** So this was your **[0:31:30]** extended family getting together.
- Respondent 1:** Oh. Well the Solishes – that's where we went. We went to extended family that lived in the area within walking distance because everybody lived within walking distance.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. So...
- Respondent 1:** Like everybody did.
- Interviewer:** So that neighbourhood was a real community of your family too.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Listen, how far did they go? I had the Frudmans living up at – oh god.
- Interviewer:** **[0:32:00]** But you're saying in that neighbourhood.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. But mostly they were younger. Maybe when they were older they moved to – my aunt and uncle bought this nice place, so that's what they did.
- Interviewer:** Did you go to the Y, the YMHA, YWHA? Did you go there at all?

- Respondent 1:** That was my home.
- Interviewer:** Oh. Now was it on Brunswick or was it at Bloor and Spadina?
- Respondent 1:** On St. George. **[0:32:30]** Community Centre, they called it.
- Interviewer:** On St. George.
- Respondent 2:** Oh, is that the YMCA? Was that the...
- Respondent 1:** No. YMCA, no.
- Respondent 2:** The YMHA?
- Respondent 1:** YMHA.
- Interviewer:** Because I know that there was one at Brunswick at College, and fifty years ago, or sixty years ago, it moved to Bloor and Spadina. Sixty years ago.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Not until 1950.
- Interviewer:** Okay. So what did you do there when you said it was like a second home? What were the...
- Respondent 1:** In the community centre?
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Oh. **[0:33:00]** You'd go there for mostly for sports, I went there.
- Interviewer:** Were you athletic?
- Respondent 1:** Played – yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.

- Interviewer:** What did you...
- Respondent 1:** Actually, we had – we won Canadian championship.
- Interviewer:** Whoa. Good for you.
- Respondent 2:** In volleyball. Volleyball or basketball?
- Respondent 1:** Basketball.
- Interviewer:** Whoa.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Basketball.
- Interviewer:** Oh good.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. I have one picture.
- Respondent 2:** You had one picture of your team, don't you? Do you know where it is?
- Respondent 1:** It's there near the...
- Interviewer:** [0:33:30] Let's look at it later.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Okay.
- Respondent 1:** And I was the tallest. Five six and a half.
- Interviewer:** Oh. You were tall, especially for your generation.
- Respondent 1:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** Definitely. You must have been many – quite a few inches taller than most of the other women. Girls.

- Respondent 1:** Well, you'll see in the picture, everybody's this big.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** And I'm the tallest.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** But they were good players. They were fighters. That's me and that's the – what do you call?
- Interviewer:** Principal? **[0:34:00]** Coach?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. The coach. And that's his wife. But that's me there.
- Interviewer:** Oh. So you are the very last one because you're the tallest.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. I was the one, you know, that jumped for the ball.
- Interviewer:** And you won the city championships.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Congratulations.
- Respondent 1:** Ontario championship.
- Interviewer:** How old would you have been there? About fifteen?
- Respondent 1:** Probably.
- Interviewer:** I guess so.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So you were playing basketball?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Yeah. Because I even – even when I was older, yeah.

- Interviewer:** So was this at school? Or this was at the Y? At the community centre.
- Respondent 1:** That was at the [0:34:30] community centre.
- Respondent 2:** Junior championship, Ontario championship.
- Interviewer:** Oh my god.
- Respondent 2:** '35, '36. [Laughter]
- Respondent 1:** There we are.
- Interviewer:** Oh my gosh.
- Respondent 2:** Oh, so was everyone here Jewish?
- Respondent 1:** They were all Jewish.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. This whole team was Jewish. There you go.
- Respondent 1:** All Jewish. We were old-fashioned. Oh, they name you properly. We'd know their families.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. But I don't need their names right now.
- Respondent 1:** But they were – and you can see this little one. They, oh, they were such fighters. I'm telling you.
- Interviewer:** Those tough girls. [Laughter]
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. [0:35:00] Yeah. And look, it's a different kind of basketball now than it was then.
- Respondent 2:** So did you meet dad there? Where did you meet? Where'd you meet Ben?
- Respondent 1:** Oh, Ben. People used to have parties. Girls would have parties, and my sister was very outgoing, and talkative, and friendly, and she had a party at her house, and I happened to be out [0:35:30]

with somebody else, and I said goodnight to him outside, and I came in and joined her party. [Laughter]

Respondent 2: On Brunswick? In your house?

Respondent 1: Yeah. On Brunswick. Yeah. Because we had a piano in the living room, and then, you know, and then he said – then Ben said, "We all went home. We were talking about you, but nobody invited me out." And then I met him somewhere **[0:36:00]** else at another friend's house, and we went out for four years.

Interviewer: How old were you when you met him and started to go out with him for that four years?

Respondent 1: I think when I first met him at seventeen, I went out with him until I was twenty-two. We got married. Yeah.

Respondent 2: So he was athletic too. That's why I asked about...

Interviewer: Oh. That's what they had in common. Two jocks.

Respondent 1: Yeah. [Laughs]

Interviewer: Did you play other sports too?

Respondent 1: **[0:36:30]** What else did I play? No. I just swam. Yeah. And no, I didn't play tennis.

Interviewer: But you swam.

Respondent 1: Whatever it was. I played baseball.

Interviewer: Baseball, swimming, basketball. I'm guessing that for your generation, not a lot of the girls were doing that.

Respondent 1: No. But you know, this community centre was a pretty busy place.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Respondent 1: But you know, **[0:37:00]** it's like everything else. You used to do it.

- Interviewer:** Yeah. Right.
- Respondent 2:** You're not playing baseball anymore?
- Respondent 1:** I used to do it. Oh yeah, I don't play baseball anymore. But listen, I talked to my friends and they say, "Oh, remember I used to," "I used to do." "I used to do that?" [Laughs]
- Interviewer:** The other thing I like to hear is "For your age."
- Respondent 2:** Oh, for your age.
- Interviewer:** For your age.
- Respondent 2:** For your age. That's right.
- Interviewer:** "Used to" goes with "for your age." When you went to this community centre, were there dances or parties there?
- Respondent 1:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** [0:37:30] Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. They had parties and they had dances. I didn't go to – I can't remember going there, but I know I was talked into this basketball because I was tall. [Laughter] Yeah. Yeah. Because I was – listen, I was a pretty shy girl. Not very talkative.
- Respondent 2:** [0:38:00] So can we talk about Central Tech? Because I'm...
- Interviewer:** Please. Yes, yes.
- Respondent 2:** So was it unusual to go to Central Tech? Like these days Central Tech...
- Respondent 1:** Yes, it was.
- Respondent 2:** It was. So how did you...

- Respondent 1:** They went to Commerce.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah, that's what I thought.
- Respondent 1:** I didn't want to be a secretary. What did you learn at Commerce?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** So I thought I'd go to Central Tech instead because nobody went to university.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** I mean you had to be able to afford it because the people that went to university had to work for a couple of years **[0:38:30]** or whatever it is before they can go back to school. But usually the people that could afford it sent their kids; otherwise, you went to learn a trade.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** You learned something so you could work.
- Interviewer:** So what did you study at Central Tech?
- Respondent 1:** Dress design. I took dress designing.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. The tailor's daughter took dress designing. [Laughter] And what did you...
- Respondent 1:** And I couldn't get a job. **[0:39:00]** On Bloor Street, you know they have these fancy dress shops? You can get a job as matching threads.
- Respondent 2:** It's because...
- Respondent 1:** I don't know. For two dollars or four dollars a week. I can't remember.
- Respondent 2:** So – because they wanted thread to match the fabric.

- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** If you had fabric for a dress...
- Respondent 1:** That's what I mean.
- Respondent 2:** ...you need thread to match the fabric.
- Respondent 1:** Could anything be less than that?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. [Laughs] Is that what you did [0:39:30] all day?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. But I went to work for an interior decorator.
- Interviewer:** So you...
- Respondent 1:** On Bloor. You know where Honest Ed's is?
- Interviewer:** Mm-hm.
- Respondent 1:** Right next door to Honest Ed there was a decorator. Yeah. I can't remember. Like I'll think of it later. I can't. And I worked for him for many years. I worked – no. I worked for an English lady from England and she [0:40:00] worked for the – you know, she made beautiful stuff, and came into the lovely homes. She was that kind of a decorator. And then that's what I made.
- Interviewer:** So, but you worked...
- Respondent 1:** I decorated.
- Respondent 2:** Curtains.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. I made curtains.
- Interviewer:** Oh. So you...

- Respondent 1:** And slipcovers. And I'd go out with her and do the measuring, and you know, I'd go with her and do what had to be done. Had to get a job.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Did you work [0:40:30] after you were married?
- Respondent 1:** Yes. I worked. I worked until I had – until I had the children.
- Interviewer:** Mm-hm. So you...
- Respondent 1:** A couple of years. Yeah. Listen, you married somebody. You couldn't make enough for two people.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** But that – that's what you used to do. You'd get married. I know – I remember my sister saying she wouldn't marry her husband until he was making ten [0:41:00] dollars a week. [Laughter] Does that tell you something?
- Respondent 2:** And was he making ten dollars a week when she married?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. They timed it. [Laughter] By the time they married, he was making ten dollars a week.
- Respondent 2:** Were there other Jewish girls at Central Tech?
- Respondent 1:** Well, there were just a few, but not many.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Not many. It was one black girl. That's how the blacks were not – you never saw any black people. Yeah. There was [0:41:30] one girl in Central Tech that was black. Like in my class. But I didn't see any black people there at all.
- Respondent 2:** Mm-hm. Were there Italian people there? Who was there?
- Respondent 1:** No. Mostly Anglo-Saxon.

Respondent 2: Mostly Anglo-Saxon?

Respondent 1: Yeah, really.

Respondent 2: Was it mostly boys?

Respondent 1: No.

Respondent 2: Oh, there were lots of girls?

Respondent 1: Oh yeah. A lot of girls. **[0:42:00]** A lot of girls and a lot of boys. Listen, that's where they learned how to – how big – you know, if you were Jewish you went to Central Tech and you – they studied to be an electrician or whatever. Or plumber or whatever it was there. You'd go out and you'd become a salesman. You wouldn't work at – you had to go to school and learn something. Because I know **[0:42:30]** a couple of Jewish – you know, that went to Central Tech, but they weren't workers; they were salesmen or, you know.

Respondent 2: Mm-hm.

Interviewer: So despite their studying and learning a trade there, that's not what they practiced when they left Central Tech.

Respondent 1: Well, isn't that what – when you go to university, you study, you learn, and then you have to go further and specialize in something before you can get a job. Well, it wasn't that way at that time. **[0:43:00]** But I know, I know a couple of fellows. There weren't very many Jewish people, but in my class, there happened to be a few girls.

Respondent 2: Yeah.

Respondent 1: And I know that these – he became a salesman. He traveled all over and made a very good living.

Interviewer: What were some of the strongest memories you have of that neighbourhood **[0:43:30]** during those years?

Respondent 1: Well like I say, I moved – I was seventeen years old. I didn't grow up on the street.

Interviewer: Mm-hm.

Respondent 1: So I didn't know any of the neighbours.

Interviewer: It is a different time when you're not playing on the sidewalk.

Respondent 1: Yeah. It makes a big difference. You buy a house where there's children, it's great because – we lived – when we lived on Corwin, there was an English family living across and he was a banker [0:44:00] and he had one child. And you know, in conversation, how did they manage to move there? She wasn't in any neighbourhood where there were no children, so she bought on this street because she saw children were playing, so that's – yeah. That's the one that Peter's good friends with.

Respondent 2: Yeah. Bert? But the teenagers hung out. Was it [0:44:30] mostly at the JCC? I mean you still met...

Respondent 1: Oh yeah. Yeah, yeah. Oh of course. If you had to go for practice or whatever it was there, and – but mostly I didn't. But I know they had everything there. A community centre.

Respondent 2: But the Jewish...

Respondent 1: They didn't have a swimming pool. They had, you know, like a basketball court and they had – you could go get all kinds of books there and it was – it was a place to go to.

Respondent 2: [0:45:00] Yeah.

Respondent 1: For young people.

Interviewer: I want to talk about the streets a little bit, and the homes. The front porches, the back lawns – did your family have a front porch? Did you have a back garden?

- Respondent 1:** We had a front porch, which my mother utilized all the time. Especially as she got older. She'd sit in the front porch and **[0:45:30]** she'd watch the kids, the young people go by. She says, "They're just like animals." [Laughter] They stop on the street and they're hissing, and she's just like [laughs].
- Interviewer:** She disapproved of that behaviour.
- Respondent 1:** At that time, disapprove anybody kissing. [Laughter] Nobody kissed at that time. You had to practically be married to kiss. [Laughter] So when – yeah. But I remember her sitting there. But we weren't – **[0:46:00]** we weren't very good neighbours. We didn't have friendly neighbours. Like I say, we moved there later in years on Brunswick Avenue, and they were all Jewish, and some were well-to-do, which I can't remember his name. They were a well-to-do family. But the odd one was well-to-do, but other than that. And I know the Magers lived across the street and they had one of the sons was like my age, so that's how I happened to know them. On the other side.
- Interviewer:** **[0:46:30]** Did you have a back garden or a garage? Or a car?
- Respondent 1:** No. We had a big garden with a sukkah.
- Interviewer:** Oh. [Laughs] At this time of year? That's nice.
- Respondent 1:** Sukkah forever. It's there. [Laughter]
- Respondent 2:** Oh, you didn't take it down? It was always up?
- Respondent 1:** It was always up.
- Respondent 2:** Oh.
- Respondent 1:** We didn't take it down. No.
- Respondent 2:** Oh. You didn't take it down.
- Respondent 1:** Well look it, everything's a job. At that time, they didn't have fold-up and...

- Interviewer:** That's right.
- Respondent 2:** Was your sukkah made out of doors? [Laughter]
- Respondent 1:** I couldn't tell you. I [0:47:00] don't think so.
- Respondent 2:** Oh okay.
- Respondent 1:** No.
- Respondent 2:** All right.
- Interviewer:** Did your family grow anything or use it other than...
- Respondent 1:** Oh, my mother had a garden always.
- Interviewer:** A victory garden?
- Respondent 1:** Lettuce, and tomatoes, and radishes mostly.
- Interviewer:** So you ate from your garden. You ate from your garden.
- Respondent 1:** Yes. Oh yeah. We always ate from the garden. As soon as the lettuce came out, and tomatoes...
- Interviewer:** Really fresh.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. My mother had a garden.
- Interviewer:** What about [0:47:30] a back lane? Did you have a back lane?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. That – everybody had a back lane and no garages. Nobody had a garage. It was just a great big yard.
- Interviewer:** Did anybody use the back lane in any way that you remember?
- Respondent 1:** Oh, the – well, what do I have to do in the back lane? My father never had a car.
- Interviewer:** Mm-hm. So that wasn't used like...

- Respondent 1:** But you know, that's what they did with the back lanes. The garages were in the backyards.
- Respondent 2:** Did you put your garbage out in the back lane? **[0:48:00]** Did the garbage trucks come?
- Respondent 1:** I'm trying to think. I can't remember. I never looked after the garbage. [Laughter]
- Respondent 2:** Well, was there garbage pick-up?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, I couldn't tell you.
- Respondent 2:** Or did you burn it? What did people do with their garbage?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Maybe it was in the backyard. I don't know. I don't remember that at all. So obviously I was not the garbage lady.
- Respondent 2:** No.
- Interviewer:** What was the transportation like at that time? What buses or streetcars existed?
- Respondent 1:** Everybody walked to school. **[0:48:30]** They'd walk up to Commerce. You wouldn't think about it. It was three cents on the car fare at that time. Everybody walked. You walked from – you know, I'd go to school, I'd walk back. Up to Commerce, that's a big walk.
- Respondent 2:** That's a good hike to Commerce.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Was there a streetcar on Harbord?
- Respondent 1:** Oh yes, of course. A streetcar.
- Respondent 2:** Or was it a trolley?

- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** It was a streetcar.
- Interviewer:** There were streetcar tracks.
- Respondent 1:** There's the streetcar.
- Interviewer:** Oh. The streetcar. Three cents?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. **[0:49:00]** I remember. Ida Feinberg lived on McCaul Street, my sister from Murray Street, she'd walk up, and they'd walk to – yeah, to Commerce. Anyhow.
- Interviewer:** Do you have any recollection of how your house was heated? How the house was heated at the time?
- Respondent 1:** Coal furnace.
- Respondent 2:** Oh, it was coal. It wasn't oil? It was coal.
- Respondent 1:** Coal. **[0:49:30]** Everybody had coal.
- Respondent 2:** So did trucks come with the coal? Horses?
- Respondent 1:** Of course.
- Respondent 2:** Horses?
- Respondent 1:** Maybe the horses came. I think it's quite possible because they had a drinking fountain wherever you went to College and Spadina.
- Interviewer:** For the horses.
- Respondent 2:** Right.
- Interviewer:** Ah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. And they did deliver milk.

- Respondent 2:** With horses?
- Respondent 1:** With horse and wagon.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Did you have a refrigerator, an icebox? What did you have?
- Respondent 1:** [0:50:00] Icebox. In the summer kitchen.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** Not in the kitchen. We had a summer kitchen. Yeah. An icebox. And that was pretty good. No air conditioning. [Laughs]
- Interviewer:** So what did your family do in the hot days when the nights were hot too?
- Respondent 1:** Well you know, the children went out and did their thing. They went and took music lessons, they went to different things. Like I say, I went to play basketball. [0:50:30] You'd go after school. But...
- Interviewer:** But the house was...
- Respondent 1:** And then you had friends, you know? My sister played tennis. You'd go and play tennis. You know, kids never stayed home.
- Interviewer:** So life went on.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. After hours. After hours, away from home. You didn't sit in the house and...
- Respondent 2:** But if it was a very hot night did you...
- Respondent 1:** Oh, we'd go down to the Island.
- Respondent 2:** You'd go to the Island?

- Respondent 1:** We'd go to the Island. [0:51:00] Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** It was hot. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** And sit out there. Where did we go? One place I stayed out on a back verandah. I can't remember where. When it was hot, that's what you did.
- Respondent 2:** You'd go to the Island.
- Interviewer:** Or would you sleep on the back verandah?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** You would sleep out there?
- Respondent 1:** I can't remember on Brunswick Avenue where we slept. I can't remember about hot weather [Laughs] [0:51:30] on Brunswick Avenue, but I know there was one one day. I can't remember where I was, and we slept outdoors on the porch or something. But what was – what could you do?
- Interviewer:** Yeah. It would get horrible.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Did any of your neighbours have cars?
- Respondent 1:** Not on Brunswick Avenue.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** No.
- Interviewer:** So everybody [0:52:00] used their legs.
- Respondent 1:** Well...
- Interviewer:** Or public transportation, or they – or bikes. Bikes?

- Respondent 1:** Well, we couldn't afford a bike. Nobody. But if you got skates and things like that, you'd pass it down from one to the other, but we never had a bike. We had music lessons, we had – you know, I took the piano. You know. I used to go to Hebrew school. No bike. But other than that, like I say, we'd get the skates and pass them down. **[0:52:30]** The ice skates.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 1:** From one child to the next. And that's how we got...
- Respondent 2:** Skates.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Skates.
- Respondent 2:** You took piano lessons?
- Respondent 1:** Did I what?
- Respondent 2:** You took piano lessons?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Oh. How long did you take piano lessons?
- Respondent 1:** Oh, for a few years. Yeah. Listen, I didn't like the piano. I took it for a few years, but then, you know, I – like look, like **[0:53:00]** the kids. Take them up to a point. But I did. We all took some music. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** But you're talking about the importance of education. If your family had to choose between education and a bicycle, it was very clear what they were choosing.
- Respondent 1:** Well, I know my sister was an age where she dated. She liked to go out. She says, "Everybody's got a phone. We don't have a phone." She says. So my mother says, "Somebody wants to take **[0:53:30]** you out, they'll come and knock at the door." [Laughs]
- Respondent 2:** Oh, interesting.

- Respondent 1:** But I do remember that, you know?
- Respondent 2:** Right. Right. So you didn't have a telephone.
- Respondent 1:** Because my sister was a very sociable person.
- Respondent 2:** Right.
- Respondent 1:** She had lots of friends, so that's what she'd complain about.
- Interviewer:** Do you remember...
- Respondent 1:** We didn't have a telephone.
- Interviewer:** ...the year that your family finally got a phone? Any idea?
- Respondent 1:** It was not that important somehow. **[0:54:00]** I can't remember. I have no idea.
- Interviewer:** But you survived without a phone.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** You did.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. We lived on Brunswick and we didn't have a phone.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Like I say, my sister had to be old enough to date.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 1:** And we didn't have a phone at that time. It's – look, it's like anything else. You don't have it, you don't miss it.
- Respondent 2:** Exactly.

- Respondent 1:** Once you have it – look what they have now with the computers. My god.
- Interviewer:** [0:54:30] And with the phones.
- Respondent 2:** And the phones.
- Interviewer:** [Laughs] Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** I'm telling you. And they sit there.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. You mentioned, you know, your sister was social and your mother said they could come knock on the door. I wonder if you would talk just a little bit about what dating was like at that time. Like you met your husband. You were seventeen, you were with him for four years. But you had come back. Somebody else had just dropped you off at your door.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So...
- Respondent 1:** That's what you did.
- Interviewer:** What?
- Respondent 1:** Well, my [0:55:00] sister and I kept company. You know, she went with a fellow, we both went with a steady help and we'd sit in the living room, two couples. So what could go on? [Laughter]
- Respondent 2:** Lots could go on. [Laughter]
- Respondent 1:** Two couples.
- Respondent 2:** You're telling me what could go on? Lots could.
- Respondent 1:** And the boys left, and the boys left, and what does my mother say? She used to have a famous Jewish saying. She says, "Like, it's enough already. Go to bed." [0:55:30] [Laughter]

- Respondent 2:** Did you play games? Or did you – what did you...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Did you just talk? Or were you playing?
- Respondent 1:** No, that – we played games. We just talked.
- Respondent 2:** Oh, you just talked.
- Interviewer:** Just talked.
- Respondent 1:** As much as you could talk.
- Interviewer:** You moved too quickly for me. Your mother said the equivalent of, "It's enough already. Go home"?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Go home.
- Respondent 2:** She'd say to the boys.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** She'd say to the boys.
- Respondent 1:** She says, "Yeah, go home, panyudatten." [Laughs] You know that?
- Interviewer:** No. What is it?
- Respondent 2:** Go home.
- Respondent 1:** Panyudatten. You haven't heard that?
- Interviewer:** I haven't.
- Respondent 1:** That's a Jewish word. Like, "Gentlemen." Except younger gentlemen.
- Respondent 2:** Say the word again. I didn't...

- Respondent 1:** Panyudatten.
- Respondent 2:** Panyudatten
- Respondent 1:** Had to be Polish, from Poland.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah, yeah. It's Polish.
- Interviewer:** Oh, so she would just gently invite them to leave.
- Respondent 2:** Yes. [Laughter]
- Respondent 1:** That's enough already. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Okay. But the night that you met your husband...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** ...Ben, somebody had [0:56:30] just brought you home.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So where had you been?
- Respondent 1:** I left at the door.
- Interviewer:** No, but had you gone for a walk? Had you gone to a movie? Had you gone to a party?
- Respondent 1:** I don't think I remember.
- Interviewer:** But what...
- Respondent 1:** I don't remember, except I didn't date very much.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** I didn't date.
- Respondent 2:** But typically, did people go to movies?

- Respondent 1:** But I happened to be out that day.
- Interviewer:** And you came home to meet your husband.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. And we'd go for a walk.
- Respondent 2:** You'd go for a walk? Would you go to a movie?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. The odd time maybe you'd go to a movie.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** You might go to a movie.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** **[0:57:00]** Would you go out for a coffee the way people do today?
- Respondent 1:** No, I can't remember that. No.
- Respondent 2:** No.
- Interviewer:** Probably not, yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Go for coffee.
- Respondent 1:** No. That's not when I learned to drink coffee. [Laughter] Other things, yes.
- Interviewer:** Do you remember about the safety of the neighbourhood? Was it a safe place?
- Respondent 1:** Oh yeah. You wouldn't, you wouldn't even think about anything. **[0:57:30]** I mean it didn't matter where you went and who – nobody. Everybody walked to school, and walked wherever you went. And I say it – maybe it was because it cost three cents on the streetcar. I don't know. But you know, with young people, if everybody walks you walk.

- Respondent 2:** Of course.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 1:** And that's what they did. Everybody walked.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** And I'm thinking, you know, [0:58:00] walking to Commerce could take you a – it's long.
- Respondent 2:** It's long.
- Respondent 1:** It's a long walk. And yeah. Because yeah, my sister started at Commerce. Yeah. I think we were still on Murray Street.
- Respondent 2:** That's really a hike.
- Respondent 1:** I couldn't remember.
- Respondent 2:** That's a big hike if you were on Murray.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Look it, you know it's – yeah. Because I – yeah. Because she used to [0:58:30] pick up Ida Feinberg and walk to Commerce.
- Respondent 2:** That's a long walk.
- Respondent 1:** And Ida Feinberg lived on McCaul Street, so that's our memory.
- Respondent 2:** Wow.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Did you and my mother used to talk about going to Sunnyside on the streetcar?
- Respondent 1:** Oh yeah.
- Respondent 2:** You used to do that?

- Respondent 1:** Oh yeah. Go to Sunnyside. That was the place to go to.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** With family?
- Respondent 1:** They used to have dances there.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. They had on the waterfront, but everybody went [0:59:00] to Sunnyside, but I remember going to Sunnyside swimming, and they didn't let you in because you were Jewish.
- Respondent 2:** Really?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** So how did you get in?
- Respondent 1:** Well it got – became...
- Respondent 2:** Oh, eventually you could.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. But I remember there were no Jews. Well, like they had all over.
- Respondent 2:** Right.
- Respondent 1:** No Jews.
- Respondent 2:** Right.
- Respondent 1:** But that's like Eaton's. Their factory was full of Jews.
- Respondent 2:** Right. But you couldn't work at...

- Respondent 1:** But nobody in the store.
- Respondent 2:** No. Couldn't work there.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** So that applied to everything, [0:59:30] you know. Golf courses, whatever.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Listen, you read about that, it's everywhere.
- Interviewer:** Well, I remember that in Montreal very clearly too.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Look it up.
- Interviewer:** For sure. Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 1:** At that time, that's what it was. Same thing with the Negroes.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. And all kinds of quotas for schools, for...
- Respondent 1:** But especially the Jews. They're after the Jews. All the time it was – doesn't matter.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** [1:00:00] Well, Elaine, I don't know if you have any more thoughts of what you're curious about, or – when you knew that I was coming to talk about the years that you lived in that neighbourhood, did you have any thoughts about anything you might want to talk about? Or any memories? Any stories?
- Respondent 1:** No, no. The neighbourhood, I didn't spend that much time.
- Interviewer:** Sure. You were an adolescent.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: And a young adult, and...

Respondent 1: I was out. [1:00:30] I was in the house or I was out.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. I agree.

Respondent 1: And I was walking to the grocery store for my mother, or to the butcher shop or whatever.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 1: Because, you know, you were so used to doing that. You were kids. But we used to do that for my mother, no matter how old we were because she – but she used to go by herself, but the odd time – so, but that, no. On Brunswick Avenue, [1:01:00] I don't remember much about Brunswick.

Interviewer: Yeah. But you do remember the horses delivering all these different – the horses delivering...

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: ...all the ice, and delivering the milk.

Respondent 1: Yeah. And the coal.

Interviewer: And the coal. And groceries maybe? Or maybe not?

Respondent 1: No.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 1: Nothing like – oh, fruit store. The fruit.

Interviewer: The fruit wagons.

Respondent 1: The fruit. They delivered the fruit and vegetables, but that's by horses.

- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Was there a library? [1:01:30] Other than at the...
- Respondent 1:** Oh yeah. The library, you spent a lot of time in.
- Respondent 2:** Where was the library?
- Respondent 1:** St. George. Is it St. George?
- Respondent 2:** The one at St. George and College?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** They had, you know, the big library and the smaller one.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. So they spent a lot of time there. Yeah. Yeah. That was a library.
- Respondent 1:** That's where I spent time, at that – at the library there.
- Respondent 2:** Right.
- Respondent 1:** That's where you spent extra time. You'd go, sit around, get books or whatever.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. [1:02:00] Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** But other than that, I can't remember.
- Interviewer:** You have remembered a lot. And this will eventually be on our website, so when you want to listen to it, or anybody else wants to listen to it...
- Respondent 1:** You mean everything I said is down there?

Interviewer: It's all, it's all in there.

Respondent 2: It's a tape.

Respondent 1: Oh well.

Respondent 2: It's a tape. [Laughter]

Respondent 1: So I want to say thank you to you, Rae Gold, and to your daughter-in-law, Elaine Gold, for sharing all these wonderful stories with me.
[1:02:30] Thank you very much.

Respondent 1: It's my pleasure.

[1:02:32]

[End of recording]