

**023 Rose Rodrigues****[0:00:00]**

**Interviewer:** Rose Rodrigues, I want to thank you very much for agreeing to be interviewed. You know that I'm on the Board of Directors of Harbord Village Residents' Association, and we have this history committee, and we want to gather as much information to see the changes that have occurred. And you've spent a lot of years here. As you told me, there's a lane already **[0:00:30]** named after your dad. So I think I'd like to start with just asking if you have any idea what brought your family into this neighbourhood.

**Respondent:** When my parents first came into the neighbourhood, there was a few Slovenians in the neighbourhood. Most of the people actually on the street when we moved in was predominately a Jewish area with a few European immigrants coming in. So there was **[0:01:00]** actually a Slovenian church in the area until...

**Interviewer:** What year was that?

**Respondent:** My dad came here in 1955, and my mom and I came in 1957.

**Interviewer:** Wow.

**Respondent:** So we actually bought the house on Major in 1960, and we've been there ever since. I didn't move out of the house; I just moved my husband in. [Laughs] And then we have two children, so it's three generations in there right now. My dad passed away in **[0:01:30]** 2002 of cancer, so my mom – you know, we're still with my mom.

**Interviewer:** Did we say your father's name on this tape?

**Respondent:** No.

**Interviewer:** So why don't you just name your father?

**Respondent:** My father is Louis Laki, and we were fortunate enough to have a laneway after my dad right behind our house, and it's named Louis Laki Lane.

**Interviewer:** Why was it named after your dad?

**Respondent:** Actually I was thinking about this for quite a while, and [0:02:00] I wanted – my dad was such a big part of the neighbourhood, and he did so many things for the neighbours. He wasn't anybody that owned a business. He wasn't anybody that was known in the theatre world, but he was well known in the community. And I thought it would be a real honour for his grandchildren to have a legacy of a hard-working European coming to Canada with nothing, with a little suitcase – and sorry that I'm getting all kind of teary-[0:02:30] eyed. That came with nothing, but worked really hard for his family, so I was – you know, I got a letter written up and I spoke to one of our neighbours, and actually it was the neighbours right along with me that did a lot of the legwork in getting a lot of the signatures for it. Like one of the neighbours got the whole other side of the street. Another neighbour got Robert Street [0:03:00] where the laneway – Major Street and Robert Street – they meet each other, so we had one of our neighbours on Robert Street doing all the signatures on Robert Street. And then I had a lot of neighbours that wrote really lovely letters about how they knew that the seasons of the year were by what my dad did in the laneway. He would wash his barrels, and bring in the grapes, and make the wine in the backyard. Or he [0:03:30] would chop the wood in the laneway and things like that, so they knew what the seasons were. He would bring in things to work in the garden, so they always knew what was happening, and nobody really walked past our house without my dad inviting them to sit on the verandah and have a glass of wine with him, or just a little chat or whatever. So that's basically how Louis Laki Lane got started.

**Interviewer:** But there [0:04:00] was a petition. People requested it because they wanted to have this legacy.

**Respondent:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Not only for your children, everybody.

**Respondent:** Yes. I actually had I think about a hundred and fifty signatures. I think it was around a hundred and fifty.

- Interviewer:** Well also your father was doing what we all love about this neighbourhood, and that is being outdoors, and chatting with people, and gathering with people, and gathering people.
- Respondent:** Yes. And it's funny. We were just [0:04:30] talking to somebody that has moved into the area just recently into our neighbourhood, and they had this big, humungous house in the suburbs. I think it was Aurora they said they came from. And they moved down here because their children have finished school and they're kind of living in the area, I think. And they said in their area they didn't have community. And they moved down here and it's like [0:05:00] people that don't see you for a while, "Are you okay?" And that's what they didn't have for all the time that they lived in the suburbia.
- Interviewer:** And they learned it so quickly as soon as they arrived.
- Respondent:** Yeah. And they learned it so quickly. So it's not really the fancy houses and things in suburbia, or the big humungous properties. It's the people that are in the communities that really make a difference.
- Interviewer:** And using the sidewalks, and using front porches, and using the lanes. I [0:05:30] loved your description of people knew what season it was according...
- Respondent:** Yeah. Well that was actually – and it was funny. I did bring some of the things about Louis Laki Lane. I have a whole thing there and I just kind of brought that with me. And that's basically – you know, people even have – we have barbecues in the laneway. We're going to be starting it not in Louis Laki Lane, but in one of the other lanes right across from us because it's wider and [0:06:00] it stopped at the other end. I think the proposal for – it's the one just down from Rowers? It's not Rowers. It's Harbord – used to be. I'm still thinking of the old name to it.
- Interviewer:** I know which one. Harbord Kitchen? Or?
- Respondent:** No, no. It was where Dessert Trends is. It's just east of there. It's Harbord House now. Used to be called Rowers, and I'm thinking of

the old name. That laneway is a lot wider, so every year we [0:06:30] have a sort of community, a neighbourhood barbecue back there because the cars can go. It kind of stops. Not like Louis Laki Lane can sort of go out one and then come out the other. So we actually have a barbecue. Everybody brings the dish, and we put tables in the middle, and pets come out, and the kids come out, and we just have a barbecue. And you don't always do that.

**Interviewer:** And it's right on the lane that's named after your father.

**Respondent:** No, no. We're going to be doing that with Louis Laki Lane. We haven't done [0:07:00] that yet. But the other one, one of the names that isn't proposed, right across from us. Just down from Harbord House.

**Interviewer:** Well and you're talking about community.

**Respondent:** Right.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. And that's what these people are enjoying, and that's what your father helped create. Yeah. So when I asked what brought your parents here, anything?

**Respondent:** Another thing that brought them – there was Kensington Market, which my parents at the time, and they still do call it, the [0:07:30] Jewish market because most of the merchants at the time were all Jewish. And it's funny, there's still a few merchants in there that were there. Very few of them, when I was a child, and they still remember me as a child going in there with my parents. And now my kids are older than I was when I was in there, and they'll still ask, "How's your mom doing?" And the lady that sells the nuts, when I go in and buy all the different nuts for all the baking I do, she still knows the whole family, so it's still [0:08:00] community. You know, "How's your kids? How's your husband? How's your mom?" and things like that. It's still a community. Well a lot of the people went to Kensington Market because they had a lot of the foods and things that they were accustomed to.

**Interviewer:** Oh, from Europe.

- Respondent:** From Europe. And for the longest time, even though they may have moved out of the area, they still came back to Kensington Market to get the kerchiefs, you know, that the women in Slovenia wore. [0:08:30] When they went back for holidays they brought some of them with them because it was cheaper here to buy them here, and take them there than it was actually to buy them there. So they would take them because they would all come in. And the men that would work in the construction would go into Kensington Market or to the jobbers and get the old – you know, the long-johns, and the undershirts and things when they were working outside. So Kensington Market was a real community place too for a lot of [0:09:00] the immigrants to go. It wasn't just the Slovenians; it was the Italians, it was the Portuguese. Then later, most of the people – the whole change of it was the Chinese that moved into Spadina. And I think my mom when she first came here, I think she even worked at a chicken place on Spadina.
- Interviewer:** Your mother worked there.
- Respondent:** My mother. Mostly my mother was basically [0:09:30] at home with – she was a...
- Interviewer:** Homemaker.
- Respondent:** ...homemaker. She was at home taking care of me, and then other friends' children, and that was what she did.
- Interviewer:** So you have no sisters or brothers.
- Respondent:** No. No.
- Interviewer:** But your mother took up care of other people's children.
- Respondent:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So you had other children around you in your home.
- Respondent:** Mm-hm. And everyone still is very community-oriented. And it's like things that you sort of saw in the TV show the [0:10:00] Cleavers, and things like that. You know, if you run out of sugar you go

across the street, or they come to your house for sugar and milk, or butter, or whatever they run out of. You know, our door's still always open to anybody that needs anything.

**Interviewer:** So this apple didn't fall too far from the tree.

**Respondent:** [Laughs] No.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. What kind of work did your father do?

**Respondent:** My father worked for forty years in a foundry grinding steel, and he hardly ever missed a day of work. Even when he was not [0:10:30] feeling very good he still made it to work. And it wasn't an easy job because when he first started, you were grinding steel and aluminum without all the protective gear that they had years later. So what they ended up saying is, you know, why don't you start smoking because when you cough, you can cough up all the sediment and things that you breathe in?

**Interviewer:** Oh my god.

**Respondent:** So once my dad started smoking, I think he started smoking in his [0:11:00] twenties, late twenties because that's when he started working there. Or mid-twenties. It was hard for him to quit and he ended up having throat cancer.

**Interviewer:** Oh my god. What a cure for working. Oh.

**Respondent:** But then later on, different laws became and you now had to wear a mask when you were grinding and things like that, where when he first started, none of those things were available.

**Interviewer:** Right. So he was obviously a very reliable person. I mean as you [0:11:30] said, he worked there for decades and had to go to work no matter what.

**Respondent:** Yes. And we had a lot of people. Our house had a lot of immigrants from Slovenia that came and didn't have a place until they got established and on their feet. They stayed at our house. So I think every room when I was a child had somebody there.

- Interviewer:** So he was a people person, a very welcoming, and very [0:12:00] compassionate man.
- Respondent:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. That's quite a story because we all feel so strongly about community here, and your father was an early person here, and he practiced it. He lived it..
- Respondent:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. So you have been here pretty much all your life.
- Respondent:** Yes. In the area – because it was Lippincott and then from Lippincott it was Major Street.
- Interviewer:** [0:12:30] And I was going to ask who had lived there? And you said many people lived there because who ever needed a place, until they got established, got a little room of their room of their own whenever they stayed with you. This is a global question and then we'll come to more specifics, but because you've been here all your life, I'm wondering if you can try to describe some of the major changes that you've seen. I'll be more specific [0:13:00] soon.
- Respondent:** Okay. In which? The people or the buildings?
- Interviewer:** Whatever comes to you, that's what I want.
- Respondent:** Okay. There's been a lot of different changes in buildings and things where the Brunswick Park, Margaret Farley Park, that used to be a synagogue that I remember as a child, and they took the synagogue down and they put – it was vacant [0:13:30] for the longest time. And the neighbourhood parents used to flood the park and we used to skate there as children, so that was like a little community park. Now a lot of the corners had variety stores. There was on Major Street alone between Harbord and Ulster, there was like three of them – little corner convenience store. Three or four. At [0:14:00] Harbord and Brunswick where Dessert Trends is right now used to be Budapest Bakery. And right across Budapest

Bakery where the pottery studio is, just behind it used to be a very old drugstore where you'd go in there as a child and you'd see the big glass containers with the different colours of red, or green, or blue in them, and then you had the very old pictures [0:14:30] of operations and things. And you used to go in there as a child. And I remember it vividly going in there quite a few times with having to pick up something for my parents. And then on Major and Bloor they had the Starkman Chemists where Kinko's is right now. And if you still go over you can still see the Starkman sign.

**Interviewer:** At Kinko's somewhere?

**Respondent:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Oh. I have to look for it. Okay.

**Respondent:** [0:15:00] It's right on Bloor Street just before you get to the framing shop. Right over there you can still see it. And it was really funny. I was looking through tidying up some of my mom's and dad's paperwork, and my dad still had a few very, very old tax receipts, water, hydro I think it was, and he even had in it an invitation to go see the [0:15:30] first colour TVs. I think it was at – it was either Simpson's or Eaton's. Got an invitation. You actually got an invitation to come and see coloured TVs. And he actually had even in there a couple of prescriptions for Starkman's. And then what else did they have? Where the cleaners is at Brunswick and Harbord, that used to be a little Portuguese variety store. [0:16:00] Right across from there where they have the Francisco Driving School used to be a dry cleaning. I think it was Drecshler. Miriam and Bruno. Now Miriam still lives on Robert Street and she was just in the papers not too long ago where somebody came into her home to pretend they were doing some work and managed to get her – I don't know if it was seven – [0:16:30] quite a bit of money anyways from her.

**Interviewer:** They robbed her? Or they...

**Respondent:** For her to pay them to do it, and she never really went downstairs that they really didn't do any work. And she couldn't apparently go to the bank, so she sent this person with her permission to go to the



bank. And then after she found out that he had – you know, somebody went downstairs to apparently check the work that was done and nothing had been done because the person didn't do it, but he swindled her out of [0:17:00] quite a bit of money. But I think the bank eventually did get it back for her.

**Interviewer:** Oh what a story.

**Respondent:** But they had that business in the area, and she still lives in the area.

**Interviewer:** Is she somebody I could meet?

**Respondent:** She probably – you know, if I see Miriam, she's quite a spunky person. She's on in years, but she's pretty spunky. So when I go past her [0:17:30] house, I'll knock on her door and I'll ask her if she's willing to do that.

**Interviewer:** Thank you. So you're saying there are a lot of corner stores, a lot of small stores. What was your relationship with the people in those stores? Did you get to know them? Or was it strictly business?

**Respondent:** No. You got to know them. Where the convenience store is at Robert and Harbord used to be an Italian family-run grocery store, and what ended up happening is a lot of the people went in there and they [0:18:00] were able to get things on credit. So when, I guess, the paycheques came in at the end of the week or whatever, they would go to the little book and they had a little book and they would write in so and so picked up twenty-five cents or a dollar for whatever, and at the end of the work that slip came clean when you paid for it. So it was all...

**Interviewer:** They trusted each other. They knew each other. There was a personal relationship there.

**Respondent:** Yes. And then that's basically with [0:18:30] Harbord Bakery too. I've known them since I was a child. I worked at Harbord Bakery when I was in grade school.

**Interviewer:** Oh my god.

- Respondent:** And I have some pictures actually with me and Goldie, which was Rafi and Susan's and Roz's mom.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. I know Goldie. Yeah.
- Respondent:** She did the counters and her husband worked in the back.
- Interviewer:** And they did that same kind of if you can't pay now you can pay it when you get paid?
- Respondent:** I'm pretty sure they did, and they still do that right now. I'm [0:19:00] sure if somebody goes in there and they're short a couple of bucks they'll say, "If you don't have it now, bring it to me later," or whatever.
- Interviewer:** But you're saying that a number of the stores had that kind of relationship. They got to know you, you knew them.
- Respondent:** And it still is like that in quite a few of the stores. On Major, the drugstore at the bottom [0:19:30] of the street – they know you by just seeing your face. And the hardware store at Robert and College knows you by just seeing your face and things like that, and I'm sure that if I ever need to go in there and I'm short a couple of – they'll just say, "Don't worry. Whenever you come in bring in the money."
- Interviewer:** But you're saying there were a lot of those little family-run stores.
- Respondent:** Yes. Which there aren't as many now as there were [0:20:00] then. Like I said, there was on Major Street alone, there was three little family stores. And then at Major and Harbord where the sushi restaurant is, that was run by a Jewish couple and they were there for years and it was like a variety store where you can go in there, and at the time I guess buy cigarettes, and newspapers, and magazines, and ice cream, and pop, and whatever. And [0:20:30] they ran it for years until I...
- Interviewer:** Would they have known your name?

- Respondent:** Yes. We knew them. They were Jack and Rose. We knew them by first names.
- Interviewer:** So that's a difference about now. Now it's less likely that they would know your name or you would know their names.
- Respondent:** I probably would because I like going into places and it's still community. When I make something, at Christmas I'll [0:21:00] bring it into the different stores in the community and stuff. So it's still community for me, whereas they may not know quite a few of the other people – only because I probably bring her a lot of times – and I still have that old community spirit, I guess, that my dad and my mom instilled in me, and community, and neighbours, and friends.
- Interviewer:** [0:21:30] Now that we've been talking about the stores, I was going to talk about that later, but we're on that and it's obviously a significant area of what it used to be like, and the changes. So I'd like you to think a little more about College Street, Harbord Street, Bloor, and [0:22:00] in terms of the stores and the other thoughts that you have – places that were here, how they've changed.
- Respondent:** One of the things that I recall quite vividly is where the Loire restaurant is right now used to be a fish store, and we used to remember as children when the fish truck was coming because they used to fish out the big huge live fish, and sometimes they'd fall out of the net and flop on the street. [0:22:30] And we used to love it as a kid seeing it when the truck was coming, and these big fish were – you know.
- Interviewer:** Oh my god. Squiggling around.
- Respondent:** Yes. And then they'd try to have to get it back into the net again to try to get it in to take it in. I'm trying to think of what other big stores that have gone. The people that owned Budapest Bakery on Harbord Street also owned [0:23:00] the Hungarian Castle, I think it was called, on Bloor Street, which is now a bookstore between Major and Brunswick. And the owners of it – something happened. I think one of the owners may have something happen to them, so the properties were left for a long period of time where they were

vacant. [0:23:30] But that was a big – a lot of people went in there. And then there was a lot of restaurants on Bloor Street that were Hungarian restaurants. There was quite a few of them, and they used to have a big area where you could have a wedding. And so I remember going to actually quite a few Slovenian weddings of people that came over from Slovenia and they were getting married here, and they wanted to have a wedding. So they had a few...

**Interviewer:** So it was a hall.

**Respondent:** It was a restaurant, but it was a big part – there was a big [0:24:00] area in the restaurant where you can have quite a few people at a wedding. So there was quite a few Hungarian restaurants between Spadina and Bathurst Street.

**Interviewer:** So that's a big change.

**Respondent:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Now there's one Hungarian restaurant.

**Respondent:** There's one Hungarian – at the time there may have been five or six, and you had Hungarian butchers. Elizabeth Meat Market, which was [0:24:30] on the north side of Bloor Street between Brunswick and Borden, which is on the other side – the north side is not Borden. I can't remember what the north side of Bloor Street is.

**Interviewer:** Howland.

**Respondent:** That's it. So between there they had that Elizabeth Meat Market, and then a lot of people came from out of the area to get some of the Hungarian pastries, and the Hungarian sausages [0:25:00] and meats.

**Interviewer:** I used to come to buy the dobos tortes [laughs] with the crispy top.

**Respondent:** Mm-hm. Those were good. And well you had Harbord Bakery now. Harbord Bakery used to have a little diner in there and it used to be open a lot later. It used to be open sometimes until eleven o'clock at night where they had this little diner. And I remember Goldie and

I making certain sandwiches that [0:25:30] people used to come in where they have Calandria now, just a little – where Calandria's now used to be a hairdressing salon.

**Interviewer:** Oh my god. So many changes.

**Respondent:** So many different changes. And they used to be an Italian hairdresser, and I've known her since I was a kid and I still – every now and then still run into her. She still lives in the community too, and she had her salon in there.

**Interviewer:** [0:26:00] So there were many small stores, and now where there are so many Japanese restaurants and Thai restaurants...

**Respondent:** Yes. And it used to be a lot of European restaurants, and bakeries, and hairdressing salons.

**Interviewer:** So those are all big changes that have happened.

**Respondent:** Yes. Now where Harbord Street is a lot of restaurants. Very classy restaurants. [0:26:30] Where Messis is used to be a pizza parlour, Porretta Pizza.

**Interviewer:** Oh right.

**Respondent:** And the Porretta family still owns the building if I'm not mistaken, and that's how the laneway right behind that got named Porretta Lane. One of the daughter-in-laws, Sylvia Porretta, initiated it because Mr. Porretta passed away and her husband, Nick. So she was instrumental in [0:27:00] getting that name, Porretta Lane.

**Interviewer:** I remember Mr. Porretta on his three-wheeled bike because I used to live on Robert Street.

**Respondent:** Oh did you? Oh I didn't realize that. Yes.

**Interviewer:** I rented on Robert for many years.

**Respondent:** Okay. Yes. He used to go with his – and then he used to go to the market and have fish in the back of his little three-wheeler.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So you've talked about the stores a lot. Anything else you want to say?

**Respondent:** Well at one point, a lot of the people that lived on our [0:27:30] street too were Europeans, and then for a while there used to be quite a few students that lived in the area because they were so close to the University of Toronto that a lot of the houses were rented out, and they're rooming houses – students. And now there's not very many students that live on this street anymore. A lot of the houses are being renovated, and a lot of the people whose parents moved out of the neighbourhood, the kids [0:28:00] or the grandkids are moving back into the area. So you know, it's funny that you said you know when they started talking – like one of the neighbours that just moved in right across the street from us, they had family that lived in the area and they moved out. And now the grandkids moved in and they've had aunts and uncles that lived on the street or the next street.

**Interviewer:** Oh that's such wonderful information. I guess those people felt [0:28:30] when we finally have some money we'll get out of here, and they got out of there, and now the next generation or two generations later...

**Respondent:** Are moving back into it because we're so close to everything.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Oh yeah.

**Respondent:** And it was like we were discussing before, it's community.

**Interviewer:** Oh yeah. What were the different waves of immigration as you recall it? Who were the different ethnic groups?

**Respondent:** Okay. The ethnic groups that – there was Portuguese, Italian, quite a few of them that [0:29:00] came in sort of around the same time. The '50s and the '60s that our family came from Europe – immigrated from Europe now. Then there was a lot of students, and then we had a lot of Chinese for quite a while, and now there's a sort of – there's quite a few professionals. The doctors, lawyers, judges that work in the area and they [0:29:30] wanted something

for their family that's in the area and they don't have to commute. They're close to their families pretty quickly at the end of the day.

**Interviewer:** And what kind of work were the people doing? When you were here as a child...

**Respondent:** A lot of the women worked as domestics. Quite a few of them worked in cleaning homes.

**Interviewer:** So some of your friends' mothers.

**Respondent:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** So they went to other people's homes.

**Respondent:** Yes. And my aunt, my dad's sister, she used to live on Brunswick [0:30:00] Street and they've moved to suburbia and stuff, but we're still very, very close. She started being a domestic I think when she came here when she was maybe not even twenty, and she's seventy-something now. And she's had some of the same people for all those years, and she's still going out because some of them – she now has the daughters and other [0:30:30] family members of people that she had.

**Interviewer:** I bet those people feel that she's like family and she must feel that way about them.

**Respondent:** Yeah. And a lot of the different recipes and things she's gotten from them. You know, sort of Slavic recipes or different recipes and things that she's gotten from them. And you know, like we all share different things in my garden, she share things from her garden. And different people will – she'll get things from their garden.

**Interviewer:** [0:31:00] Okay. So if the mothers worked, the ones that you knew worked helping clean other people's homes, any other kind of work that the mothers did?

**Respondent:** A lot of factory work. My mom cleaned chickens for a while and she even ended up going to work in a tobacco farm when she first came here.

**Interviewer:** She left Toronto?

**Respondent:** Mm-hm.

**Interviewer:** Really?

**Respondent:** I stayed here with my dad, and that was a job that [0:31:30] was available. And there's quite a few...

**Interviewer:** Where did she go? Do you know?

**Respondent:** She went to – I think is it Delhi in Ontario that has a lot of tobacco farms?

**Interviewer:** So she would go for a few weeks at a time.

**Respondent:** Yeah. And then my dad would take me to visit her.

**Interviewer:** And what about the fathers? What kind of work were those...

**Respondent:** A lot of them were – a few of them were at farms because there were still quite a few farms in the area, so [0:32:00] when they first came, some of them were on the farm and then they moved to the city and stuff. So they would sometimes on the weekends still go and help certain farmers on the weekend in the Niagara Escarpment with grapes and things, potatoes, and different other vegetables and things. And then a lot of them work in factories, carpet factories. Another one worked in aluminum factory. Another one [0:32:30] worked in plastic factory. Another friend of ours worked in making kitchen cabinets, so a lot of them were in factory.

**Interviewer:** So that was kitchen cabinets. That was quite a skilled – but a lot of factory work you're saying.

**Respondent:** Yes. Or painters, gardeners. A lot of domestic.

**Interviewer:** And what you described as now, the new people moving in, a lot of them are professionals.



**Respondent:** [0:33:00] Yes.

**Interviewer:** So that's a huge difference.

**Respondent:** Yes. And that was one of the things too about me wanting to do Louis Laki Lane because my dad wasn't a – I mean he was professional in what he did. He did his job to the best of his ability and things like that, and he was a really good provider, and he was a really good friend of everybody in the community, but he wasn't somebody that now probably when they're naming the laneways, it wouldn't be somebody that [0:33:30] got the Order of Canada, or was the first black postman in the area, or had written books, or directed movies, or anything like that. He was just a hard worker, and I'm very privileged to have been able to have that named after him.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Well I'm touched by your whole story and I'm delighted to meet you.

**Respondent:** Thank you.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So we talked about what the women who worked did, and the men who worked did. [0:34:00] You also talked about all the different waves of immigration. What do you see now in terms of who makes up this community?

**Respondent:** There's quite a few Jewish families that have moved back into the area that I said were in the area when we first moved into it that are coming back into the area. There's an awful lot of Anglo-Saxons. [0:34:30] By that I mean at one point there was a lot of Jewish, like I said, and then there was – the Europeans, most of them were Catholics because we had the Slovenian church, we had the Catholic church on Bathurst Street, St. Peter's. There was a Hungarian church at Spadina and Dundas, which is now the Dragon mall. That used to be a big Hungarian church because there was [0:35:00] a lot of Hungarians in the area. And now it's quite a few Protestants. I shouldn't say just Protestants. There's quite a variety of different religions now. Presbyterian, Lutheran, Protestants, Anglicans.

**Interviewer:** Socioeconomically it's changed because of [0:35:30] different...

**Respondent:** There's a lot of professionals now in the area instead of immigrants that didn't really have a profession because they came from a lot of farms in Europe.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Now you were talking a little bit about all these different churches, so I'm going to move onto that since you introduced it – to ask you to talk about the religions, and the churches, and the synagogues as you recall how they were then and what's still in existence now.

**Respondent:** Okay. One [0:36:00] of the ones that I can remember, there was a synagogue at Ulster and Brunswick. I can't – I don't remember the name of it, but I could probably find out. People that were living in the area at the time, they would probably remember the name of it. And that came down and I'm not really sure why it did, but then there was a vacant land there where the neighbourhood parents would flood it and we'd have a skating rink there for kids to play. Where there [0:36:30] was no playground in the summertime, we just made our own games and things. And there was no pool, so we just made up our own games.

**Interviewer:** Where did you play?

**Respondent:** We played on the street, which kids don't do very much anymore now. We knew that when the lights came on you had to be inside the house for dinner. That was our cue, you know? Like before the lights came on you actually had to be inside, and we probably had later dinners because our parents were working, [0:37:00] so it wasn't like we had dinner at an early time where our parents came home early because most of them didn't. One or the other would come home later, and by the time they're both there to have dinner it was probably later. So when the lights came on you had to be home. And it was really funny because my husband and I were talking and he may have lived in our house from the time we were married, but before that he lived around the Christie Pits area and they had the same thing. They had a certain time when they knew that they [0:37:30] had to be home, and they were lucky there.

They had the big park, Christie Pits, so they had the big park to play in whereas we had the street.

**Interviewer:** Did you use the lanes at all as children?

**Respondent:** We did. We did play.

**Interviewer:** In what ways?

**Respondent:** We played hide-and-seek. We played hop-scotch and skipping, and whatever the elastic – you know where you put [0:38:00] all the elastics on a big rope and then you put them – you know, you attached them and then you had to sort of jump with those? So we did that. We played – in the fall we made our own necklaces and things with the chestnuts. We drilled holes in them and we made another game. What was it called? Knockers – with the chestnuts. Where you put a string on it and you tried to do different things with it. And [0:38:30] then you pretended that you had – the boys pretended that they were smoking a pipe because they would put a stick at the end of the chestnut and put a hole in the top of it and that was their pipe. Quite a few of us made our own times. You made your own go-karts and things like that, whereas you don't do that anymore now. You basically – our parents didn't have the financial things that we do now. Like I think of my own children and I don't think there is something that they don't have, and [0:39:00] I think we probably compensated a lot for the things that we didn't have growing up because our parents came here as immigrants with nothing, that when our kids came along we made sure that they probably didn't miss out on anything.

**Interviewer:** But you played on the sidewalk, you played in the front porches, you played in the back lane, and you had a lot of good times with less supervision than the children have now. But there were a lot of kids around.

**Respondent:** Yes. There was a lot of kids around when I was a child, and [0:39:30] when our kids came around in the eighties, for a while there wasn't very many children on the street. And now again there's an awful lot of children.

**Interviewer:** I want to talk about one other – about playing. Did you have some kind of back garden?

**Respondent:** No. My dad had the car parked in the backyard.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So could you talk about that a little bit? How people used that – whatever that strip of land [0:40:00] behind their houses were, your dad used it as a place to park the car. How did other families use theirs?

**Respondent:** Quite a few of the other families either had a little garden in it. Like we had a part for the car, and then there was just the little part that we had in the garden. Not a very big area for it, but we still had an area where we grew vegetables. We had grapevines that are still there now that grow grapes on it. We had tomatoes, and peppers, and cucumbers. Now it's [0:40:30] mostly flowers that I have with a few little vegetables growing in between, but most of it then was you grew quite a bit, and quite a few of the other neighbours had the same thing, whereas now a lot of the gardens are more visually appealing. You know, you have your deck chairs outside, and you have your flowers and you sit outside. I don't think we probably sat outside that much then as kids. I guess I probably just thought of what I did as a child and we played in the back laneways, and we played [0:41:00] in the front yards. We didn't really have a chance to sit in the backyards.

**Interviewer:** And when you think of what the other people – how they use their backs, your father had his car there and then you had...

**Respondent:** A bit of a garden.

**Interviewer:** You grew food.

**Respondent:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** And your friends, how did they...

**Respondent:** They had basically the same thing. They had...

- Interviewer:** So that was a practical piece of land for your cars and for growing food to eat.
- Respondent:** Yes. Yes.
- Interviewer:** So where did **[0:41:30]** the adults hang out if they wanted to be outside?
- Respondent:** In the kitchen.
- Interviewer:** Oh.
- Respondent:** And then they probably did because there was more people in the neighbourhood that maybe had a little bit more of a bigger backyard. And then I remember as a child where a lot of the friends came over and they just sort of all sat around outside.
- Interviewer:** In the front?
- Respondent:** In the front or in the back.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. But the kitchen was a gathering spot.
- Respondent:** Yes. And it still is. That's where you sort of **[0:42:00]** all talk together and see how their days were going, and what they were doing and things, and what their kids were doing. And you'd share meals.
- Interviewer:** Oh really?
- Respondent:** Mm-hm.
- Interviewer:** So not only the children. Not only if you were playing with somebody they would say, "Do you want to stay?"
- Respondent:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** But the adults would come too.
- Respondent:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. So it was...

**Respondent:** Then we went to the corner store and you got things, but you also made a lot [0:42:30] of your own things. You may have gone to Kensington Market to get some of the meats to make your own sausages, or we as children went to the farm. I remember my dad going to the farm and getting chickens, and pork, and beef and things like that, and cutting different things up and putting it in the freezer for the rest of the year. And curing the sausages, and [0:43:00] curing the prosciutto where you would make the cured hams and things that they were used to doing in Europe because they didn't have the refrigerator, so a lot of the things that they did, they had to cure it so that it would be there for the rest of the year. And then they would put it in either oils if you had oils, or they would use up every part of the animal that they had to either preserve it or make, [0:43:30] you know, the foods out of it. So I remember doing all that as a child. And then we would make cabbage where you would buy, I don't know, bushels and bushels of cabbage and you would make your own sauerkraut, and you'd pickle your own heads of cabbage so that you would do cabbage rolls. So we did all that, and it was community also because if you needed help you would go to the next [0:44:00] friend that was getting it and you would help them. And when somebody was coming over and helping you, you'd give them a roast and they would take it home with them. Well my dad would go and cut up somebody else's things and they would give him some sausages that they made, or a roast, or some cutlets, or whatever. So they kind of – it was all communal and people shared that, and you shared it with some of your neighbours. You know, if you were cutting up something, if you were making sausages or whatever, and they [0:44:30] made Italian sausages, which are a little bit different than the Slovenians or the Portuguese ones so you would share your foods and things.

**Interviewer:** And mainly with the people on your street, I assume.

**Respondent:** Yes. And the community – it would be the Slovenian community and things because they lived in the area still before they moved out, so you'd go and help each other because when you'd be

grating cabbage there was a heck of a lot of cabbage that you'd have to grate to make a whole big [0:45:00] barrel of it.

**Interviewer:** You didn't throw it into a Cuisinart either. [Laughs]

**Respondent:** Nope. We did it all by hand. And then the wine, that was quite a job to wash all the barrels, and my dad washed them in the laneways. And you know, chopped his wood in the laneway.

**Interviewer:** So the lane was an active part of where people functioned. You played there, you worked there, you sort of cooked there.

**Respondent:** Mm-hm.

**Interviewer:** [0:45:30] Were there a lot of languages?

**Respondent:** There was quite a few languages. Well the majority was Italian, Portuguese, there were some Polish, Ukrainian. Those were the major European ones. Hungarian, sorry. Quite a few Hungarian people. And you know Tom that owns [0:46:00] Tom's Place in Kensington Market?

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Respondent:** Well I have known the family when his father still had a shop. His father had a little shop in Kensington Market, and I remember his mom and his sister – he would have vendors that would come to your door with their wares. You didn't even all the time have to go out. They would sort of have different things and you could choose what you needed. [0:46:30] So I remember, and I was actually talking to him not too long ago about it. I said, "I remember your mom and your sister coming to the door."

**Interviewer:** Okay. So once you're talking about that, you know, the vendors coming to your door, there were no big supermarkets at that time.

**Respondent:** No.

**Interviewer:** There were small shops where you got to know the owners and they got to know you. What about delivery? What do you remember about delivery?

**Respondent:** They would do free deliveries. [0:47:00] A lot of the Portuguese that I know that lived on the street had all the grocery stores in Kensington Market that would do the free deliveries.

**Interviewer:** How? Walking?

**Respondent:** No, no. They had trucks. The people that lived on the street would go down to the supermarkets. They had a little bit bigger ones, not the really big huge ones that they have like Dominion or Loblaw's, but they had the small ethnic Portuguese [0:47:30] ones that would have the different spices that we probably would have a hard time finding anywhere else. You'd go there and you'd find them, and they always delivered. They always delivered home to the different people, and that was just...

**Interviewer:** That's a thing of a past. There's very little delivery now, right?

**Respondent:** No. No. There's still a few people that I know in Kensington Market, if I'll say to them – like if I'll go to the food store or whatever, [0:48:00] they'll, "Rose, well I'll just deliver it home for you."

**Interviewer:** Really?

**Respondent:** And they'll deliver it home.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. So you're special.

**Respondent:** [Laughs] Well I'm sure they probably would still, but that was just common. A lot of the people didn't have cars.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Right. Education – your parents' generation, your generation, and what's happening now.

**Respondent:** [0:48:30] Our parents' generation didn't go to – my mom, in fact, is illiterate. My mom can't read and write. My dad was able to speak a few languages and things, but he escaped Slovenia to Austria and



then he was in a working camp in Austria for about a year or so before he got a place to come to. Like they had to see whatever was taking [0:49:00] immigrants.

**Interviewer:** So he could read? Your father can read.

**Respondent:** Yes. Yes.

**Interviewer:** What languages did he speak?

**Respondent:** My father spoke Hungarian fluently. He spoke Slovenian. He could understand Russian, Polish, Ukrainian.

**Interviewer:** And his English was?

**Respondent:** His English was not too bad actually because he was out working with people all the time, whereas my mom wasn't.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. And [0:49:30] your dad spoke English. Your mother? What happened with her?

**Respondent:** My mother still speaks not that – I mean she had to speak English because my husband doesn't speak Slovenian, so she had to learn more English once they got married to communicate with him and my in-laws and stuff. And my in-laws got along really well with my parents, which I was really fortunate even though it's two different nationalities. My in-laws showed my parents how to do Portuguese things [0:50:00] and vice versa.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. That is. And do you remember your friends' parents? Did they speak English?

**Respondent:** They learned how to speak English later. At the time they didn't, and then even my dad used to tell me he was – because some of the alphabet in Slovenia is a little bit different than the alphabet in English, right? Certain sounds. And he was trying to teach me certain things. And when he went to meet the teacher night, the teacher said, "Just let us do it," [0:50:30] because he was just confusing me too much at school.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. What schools did you go to?

**Respondent:** From kindergarten, from grade one to six I went to a Catholic school, St. Peter's on Bathurst Street, which is now going to be the condos. That used to be St. Peter's Catholic school. Then for seven and eight I went to Lord Lansdowne. And then from nine to twelve I went to Loretto College, [0:51:00] and then I went to – for grade thirteen I went to Central Commerce where I met up with my husband because he was in Tech for four years. And then for the thirteen he went to Central Commerce also, and that's where we met and we've been together since. And then I did my ECE, my early childhood, and my husband went to university and he's worked for the bank, and he [0:51:30] ran a couple of businesses. Actually a business in the area. He bought a Jewish bakery. He bought Quality Bakery on College Street. He owned that for a while, so it was kind of funny. Him and his two brothers, some Catholic boys running a Jewish bakery. [Laughter] But they ran that for a while, and then they sold it and ran some other businesses. And then my husband went back to school.

**Interviewer:** At what age?

**Respondent:** [0:52:00] He went back to school in his forties I think. Now he's got his masters in electrical.

**Interviewer:** Wow. Good for him.

**Respondent:** Mm-hm. And our kids had gone to schools in the area. My daughter's working for a bank, and my son is working at the Rogers Centre.

**Interviewer:** And where are your children living? How old are your children?

**Respondent:** They're both at home. [Laughs] My son will be twenty-nine next week and my daughter will be twenty-eight this year. [0:52:30] They're just at home saving money and travelling.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Well the price is right when you live at home. And you're working; you can save money.

**Respondent:** Mm-hm. So that gives them an opportunity to put a nice nest egg aside and buy something when they're ready to do it.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Any thoughts about the traffic in the neighbourhood?

**Respondent:** There was not very much traffic as us kids growing up [0:53:00] because you could be playing on the street and there wasn't very many cars. But then when our children came around there was a lot more people that had cars. There was very few people that had cars because my dad was one of the ones that had a car, but he used to take people places because there was very few people that had one. Whereas now, some houses have two cars on the street, and then there was a lot of cars coming off our street, so we ended up having the maze [0:53:30] put in because of all the traffic going down the street...

**Interviewer:** Zipping along.

**Respondent:** ...zipping. And now they're just zipping in the wrong direction.

**Interviewer:** You know, you're not the first person who mentioned that. And I see it too.

**Respondent:** I mean I don't know the other streets, but I sure as heck know from ours, people that come up from College Street, they're supposed to turn on Ulster. Well they don't. They make it up the street, and they make it so quickly and it's hard sometimes when you're not – like you're [0:54:00] thinking the cars are just going to be coming south from Harbord and they're coming – you know?

**Interviewer:** And maybe some of them it's a mistake. A lot of them are just doing it because it's convenient and dangerous, of course.

**Respondent:** Yeah. It is. It is. Because there's a lot more children on the street now too. And a lot more pets.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. But the main difference, you're saying, is many more cars than when you were growing up here.

- Respondent:** Yes. And you didn't have permits to park your cars on the street and [0:54:30] things like that because there wasn't very many people that had cars, and you could find a parking spot without any problems. Now it gets to be a lot more challenging, and there's a lot more businesses...
- Interviewer:** It's just what I was thinking. Yeah.
- Respondent:** ...in the area that people come from, you know, suburbia to come down here to go to the restaurants. And we have a hard time finding a spot.
- Interviewer:** I certainly had that with living south of...
- Respondent:** Boulevard.
- Interviewer:** Boulevard here and then Messis. [0:55:00] Yeah. For sure.
- Respondent:** Where did you live? North on Harbord or south of Harbord?
- Interviewer:** South of Harbord.
- Respondent:** Okay. Oh. I guess I just – I usually see people in the neighbourhood. I don't remember seeing you on Robert Street.
- Interviewer:** I was at 158 with a Portuguese family just to my left and a Portuguese family just to my right, and an Italian family across the street.
- Respondent:** Oh okay. Okay. So the Cabrals? You mean the Cabrals? Was it the Cabrals that lived close to you?
- Interviewer:** [0:55:30] Yeah.
- Respondent:** Okay.
- Interviewer:** I lived south of where the Porretta family lived. Across the street. I was on the west side.

**Respondent:** Okay. Okay. Yeah. Nick was a really super nice person. I knew him from a kid.

**Interviewer:** What about the renovations and changes? What would you see in terms of...

**Respondent:** Well the houses at one point used to be very colourful. When a lot of the Portuguese lived on the street, the houses were [0:56:00] very vibrant. I guess they brought some of those colours with them, so they'd be pinks, and reds, and greens, and all colours, whereas now they're not quite – they're more neutral colours than what I remember seeing them as as a child. Quite a few of the different gardens were a lot different than they are now. Some people even planted vegetables and things in the front yard. They made [0:56:30] every bit of space useful, so you'd see vegetables in the front.

**Interviewer:** And aside from the vegetables, the style has changed too.

**Respondent:** Yes. It's a lot more trendier gardens, I think, and a lot more flowers and things. I don't think there was as many before as there is now.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. What I see too is people who've lived here for many [0:57:00] years, Italian and Portuguese, there's a lot more symmetry in their gardens. Like they can have a tree with something around, and something around, and now it's...

**Respondent:** Now it's more waterfalls, and rock gardens, and wild gardens, which they weren't before. You'd had sort of a picket fence.

**Interviewer:** That's right. And very tiny.

**Respondent:** Yes. And a tiny little picket fence.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. What about heating? How...

**Respondent:** The heating is now a lot different. A lot of the [0:57:30] houses at the time had coal. I remember having coal delivered through a window in your basement, they used to come, and then they had for the longest time oil. And you used to know when they were

delivering oil to your house because you smelled it. And then they went to electrical and gas heating.

**Interviewer:** So you've lived through all those changes right around here.

**Respondent:** And they used to have the milkman actually. I remember the milk being delivered to your house, [0:58:00] and they used to come with a buggy, a horse and buggy, and that wasn't that long ago that they used to deliver. And a lot of the people – when I've gone with my kids and I said, "See those boxes that are nailed shut now? That used to have milk and cream and things delivered to your house." And then they had the dairy. They had the Grimsby Dairy on Robert Street, and they had the Borden Street Dairy.

**Interviewer:** [0:58:30] So these were little stores that sold only dairy products?

**Respondent:** No. They were actually dairies.

**Interviewer:** Oh. Where they made the milk.

**Respondent:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Oh. Okay. Whoa.

**Respondent:** They had dairies in the area, and they had a stable at College and Spadina, and it was just recently that that stable was taken away where they have – I think there's just an empty space right now with [0:59:00] graffiti paintings on the wall. There was a Credit Union. They had the Buddhist Temple, and then there's a Credit Union, and then there's a bagel place, and then there was a little laneway and that laneway – there was a dairy there. It was still there until just recently.

**Interviewer:** But you're saying there were also stables there.

**Respondent:** Yes. Yes.

**Interviewer:** Wow. That's a big change.

**Respondent:** Yep.

- Interviewer:** Of course the horses had to [0:59:30] rest somewhere, so they would need somewhere.
- Respondent:** And if some of the – if you go for a walk in some of the laneways you can actually see the coach houses. There's still a few of the coach houses where they used to have horses inside that they've now renovated, and some of them they've made it into apartments.
- Interviewer:** I find the laneways extremely interesting.
- Respondent:** I do. My husband [1:00:00] and I sometimes like to just kind of go through it. And then there's – like Croft Street, they've put some really nice buildings on Croft Street.
- Interviewer:** Down near College.
- Respondent:** Yes. Down near College. But some of those places there were like jobbers. Like they're garages where the immigrants could actually go and you'd have people that had clothes that you can get for pennies. You know, dresses and stuff. [1:00:30] When you came here, you couldn't afford to buy a fancy thing. And if they had a function to go to, they would go to the jobbers and pick up an outfit to go to it.
- Interviewer:** Were there some people who also had that kind of work at home? Are you aware of that?
- Respondent:** Like to sell things second-hand at home?
- Interviewer:** Or else working at home, sewing...
- Respondent:** Oh yes. There's quite a few.
- Interviewer:** Men, women, [1:01:00] both?
- Respondent:** There were some men. There's a friend of my dad's that worked actually – a couple of them that ended up opening their cleaners after, and one of them worked at Simpson's until I think close to when he retired doing alterations.

**Interviewer:** But he started operating from his home.

**Respondent:** Yes. Yes. And then some women would do the work from their home, and then a few of them worked at Sick Kids in the laundry department, and they did the mending for the kids. There was a few of [1:01:30] our friends that did that. And some neighbours – they worked in the factories on Spadina sewing clothes a little bit on the street.

**Interviewer:** What percentage of the mothers were working at that time from your personal experience?

**Respondent:** What percentage? I would say about ninety percent of them.

**Interviewer:** So those immigrants who came just could not live on one person's salary.

**Respondent:** No. Well they probably [1:02:00] could, probably a lot easier than you can now, but they just wanted to establish themselves so they worked so they could make a future here for their families. They didn't have somebody here that they can go to and ask them, "You know, I need this or that."

**Interviewer:** Yeah. So they worked. They wanted to buy a home I guess.

**Respondent:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** You [1:02:30] talked a lot about Kensington Market. What about the university? Do you feel it has any impact or had any impact on our community here?

**Respondent:** As a child it was probably another city [laughs] or another area. I think it was later on when I was probably in college and stuff that we probably go through there a lot more than we did as kids. We didn't go through – I didn't go through the [1:03:00] university as much.

**Interviewer:** So your world ended at Spadina.



**Respondent:** At Spadina and Bathurst basically. It was probably the same sort of Harbord Village area as the area that we – you know?

**Interviewer:** It is a village for some of us. Yeah.

**Respondent:** And we went further west when we went to the Slovenian church that's on Manning Street. That was when you ventured a little bit further over to the church. But otherwise most of the things were in the area that we lived in. The [1:03:30] stores, the little convenience stores were all in the area. Kensington Market was just south of us. We had all the different jobbers on Spadina that you need to go and get – the men to get their hats. I can't remember what his name was, but he was there for years and years. Or you know, men would get their fedora hats.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. I remember there were some places. I want to just talk about [1:04:00] the livability, the security. How was it when you were growing up? Did it feel secure? How does it feel now walking on the streets in the evening or alone?

**Respondent:** I think at the time it was – I probably did a lot more travelling and stuff alone because my parents just didn't take me to a lot of the things. And I went to the libraries by myself, I went skating and things by myself. I knew probably the run of [1:04:30] the city a lot more than our kids did when they were growing up because we drove them everywhere. I mean they participated in all these things, but we were the ones that took them to all these things, you know? They weren't quite as able to go on public transportation as we did. We got on the streetcar and we got on all those things. We went everywhere by ourselves. I probably thought it was a lot safer as a child because we spent an awful lot of time outside. And you did [1:05:00] never hear of anything really happening on the street as you probably would do now. You know, there's probably more things that happen in the area that didn't when I was a child.

**Interviewer:** The media wasn't as active in reporting to everybody.

**Respondent:** No. Probably.

**Interviewer:** Did your family always lock the front door?

**Respondent:** No. No.

**Interviewer:** At night?

**Respondent:** Probably just at night. Probably **[1:05:30]** even sometimes at night they probably didn't do it, whereas now we do.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. So there's something that changed.

**Respondent:** Yeah. That's a big thing. And we would just walk into our neighbours' homes because they weren't locked. You know, you'd just walk across the street, or up the street, or down the street.

**Interviewer:** So locking doors. If you have to go somewhere, do you feel safe to walk home in the evening, say, after eight o'clock?

**Respondent:** **[1:06:00]** I still do. I still do walk, and our kids still do an awful lot of walking, and they still do come home on their own. But I guess in the back of my mind is still I just hope they're safe because I probably know the values and things that we've instilled in them, but it's probably not the same thing as somebody else. And a lot of the times the people that get into mischief aren't people that live in the area. **[1:06:30]** There's a lot of people that come out of the area too.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. There are two small categories. What kinds of changes and renovations have you seen in terms of people modifying the homes because you've been here so many years?

**Respondent:** A lot of the houses on our street have been gutted. Like before, there used to be a lot of people that lived in it **[1:07:00]** that were rooming houses, so you used every room in the house. Or you had rented a flat. A lot of the people rented flats for extra income so that they could save a little bit of extra money. A lot of the homes in the area people rented out so that the family would live downstairs and they would rent the upstairs, or you'd have students living downstairs or upstairs in a room, and an extra room and stuff, whereas **[1:07:30]** there's not that many that that's happening with now. People that have been moving in have been really changing

the outside appearance, the inside, and doing a lot of extensions to the houses, which weren't – nobody even thought about doing extensions before.

**Interviewer:** So whatever size it was you packed more and more people into that, which is what your father did for sure.

**Respondent:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. And in terms of the front, any changes that you notice seem to be quite universal or **[1:08:00]** quite...

**Respondent:** No. Like I said, the colours is one of the ones that is quite different now. They used to be very...

**Interviewer:** Colourful.

**Respondent:** ...colourful. And you knew where that person's house was. Like oh, the pink house. I live next door to the pink house on the street if anybody had a hard time finding your house.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. I just want to ask now – we're going to wind down – about just a few historical **[1:08:30]** things. One is the Spadina Expressway. Did your family have any thoughts about bringing it here? Or were they not...

**Respondent:** My parents really weren't into it. I was more aware of it than my parents were aware of it, and I knew that it got put on hold and stuff because there was an awful lot of community outpouring about it and how they were not happy in having it.

**Interviewer:** Did you have any thoughts about that? Or were you too young to **[1:09:00]** care?

**Respondent:** I think I was a bit young to really think too much about it.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. But the community didn't want this big road coming through.

**Respondent:** No. No.

**Interviewer:** I certainly agree with them. I wasn't living here at the time, but I certainly agree. Maybe you were too young for this too. Rochdale and the activism that was happening, and the people who lived there and hung out there.

**Respondent:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Thoughts?

**Respondent:** I was aware of that. I didn't partake in it, but yes, I was quite aware of it in Yorkville and things. Yorkville was not as trendy at the time.

**Interviewer:** Oh yeah. [1:09:30] Yeah. And Rochdale, that big building...

**Respondent:** That big building with the – there was quite a few. I had people that lived in there that I knew from college that lived in that building and stuff. And when you went in there, there was another name for Rochdale. [Laughs] It was Roachdale.

**Interviewer:** Oh my.

**Respondent:** [Laughs]

**Interviewer:** I'm sure.

**Respondent:** Not because of the bugs – well probably because of that too, but because there's a lot of people that lived in there that were...

**Interviewer:** I'm sure [1:10:00] you're right. It was a roach of both kinds. Yeah. Well, Rose, this has been wonderful. I certainly appreciate it. Before I turn off this little recorder I'm wondering whether you have any thoughts, anything that I have not brought up that when you were thinking about coming to meet me – where there were some areas that you thought you would like to talk about that I have not brought up today.

**Respondent:** No. I think we probably covered most of the things. It's just that I've always been [1:10:30] interested in the area because it does have an awful lot of history. Probably even more you'll find out that I don't even know about – probably from some of the different people that

you're going to be interviewing. But it always had a lot of history in the area. It was full of history before we even moved into it, so it would be interesting to see what happens with all your interviews and things.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Well I find it very touching that – one of the things I love so [1:11:00] much about it, and you do too, was the core of what your father stood for and what he practiced.

**Respondent:** Mm-hm. And it's still – you know, if you look at some of the old pictures and things, it was – I mean it was so totally different. Everybody got dressed up when you went to the movies and things like that. If you see some of the old pictures of people going to the movies, you've got a suit on to go to see the movies, and everything was a lot different [1:11:30] than it is now.

**Interviewer:** But there are also movie theatres around here I think. We didn't talk about that today, but I think there are a lot – that was different from now.

**Respondent:** Yes. There was even the burlesque theatre that they had at Spadina and Dundas. And they had the Shopsy's that everybody used to go to to get sandwiches and things on Spadina. And there was a lot of different foods and things Spadina had before all the Chinese [1:12:00] grocery stores and things. They had a lot of really ethnic Jewish stores that you can get different cuts of meat and different things.

**Interviewer:** Very much a lived-in part of the city. Inside the homes, people congregating with each other, and joining each other, and helping each other. And outside on the streets, on the sidewalks – yeah.

**Respondent:** Even when my dad moved in there was an awful lot of neighbours that weren't [1:12:30] able to do certain things, so my dad would help them change light bulbs, or fix something that they needed fixing in their house, or fix a fence or whatever. And even when my dad retired, he could never be just idle with not doing anything, so when all of the neighbours needed something to be fixed – the gate, the back gate or something like that – he'd always be the one that would do that.

**Interviewer:** Well I see you doing something similar. You know about [1:13:00] this project that we're doing, and you have given me some names, and I'm sure I'm going to get more names from you, so you're obviously similar to your dad in that way.

**Respondent:** Mm-hm.

**Interviewer:** And I would just want to say thank you very, very much.

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

[01:13:13]

[End of recording]