

092 Celia Denov

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

[0:00:00]

Interviewer: Today is the 7th of February 2013. I am at 77 Brunswick with Celia Denov, who's lived in the neighbourhood two different houses at different times. And I just want to say thank you very much for giving us some time to listen to your stories.

Respondent: Oh, it's a pleasure. It really is.

Interviewer: Could we start by you telling me the [0:00:30] dates that you lived in this neighbourhood and the streets please?

Respondent: Well I moved to Borden Street in 1969 and was there until 1978.

Interviewer: And what ages were you?

Respondent: I was twenty-six when we bought the house on Borden Street, and I can tell you a bit more about that.

Interviewer: Sure.

Respondent: I moved away because our children were at a distance from their school, and then moved back into the neighbourhood in 1984 when I bought a house on Brunswick, and I've been here ever since.

Interviewer: [0:01:00] And what story – so what are your stories?

Respondent: Well the stories is that both my first husband and I were born in Toronto, so my husband was actually born in the Market, and he lived at the corner of August and Oxford with his grandparents, and the aunts, and the uncles, and the cousins. They all lived in one house, and in fact that house remained as a house until very recently. It's just recently been turned into a kind of restaurant grocery store, but 64 Oxford. So [0:01:30] finally, his parents managed – his father was a taxi driver, and his parents managed to

scrape enough money to move to the suburbs, and they moved way out to the 401 and Keele. It was not a great area, and they managed to have this older child go through university, and that was terrific. So when we got married and we actually first went to Africa for two years, when we returned, we decided that we wanted to live downtown, which was not usual at all at that time. It was really unusual. [0:02:00] And when we told them that we were buying this house on Borden Street, Al's mother said, "Oh no." I mean they considered it the biggest slight to actually move back to this neighbourhood at that point, and in fact, we were really unusual because there was no young kind of English-speaking families then. Almost none. Within a year – I haven't even told you this, Eleanor, but within a year, we had three children because within the first year, we adopted a brother and sister [0:02:30] who were three and five years old, and then I was pregnant at the time, so within a five-month period we had three children.

Interviewer: Oh. [Laughs]

Respondent: So you know, we – it was interesting, because when I would take the kids to that little park on the corner of Ulster and Brunswick, I would be the only parent there that spoke English. There were tons and tons of kids. Every family had loads and loads of children in the house, but no English children. No English-speaking children.

Interviewer: So what were the languages?

Respondent: So the languages were [0:03:00] Chinese, Portuguese, Italian, Greek, Chinese, and I will show you pictures of all the children that used to be here. A year later, the Gilberts came, moved in, and they, you know, obviously were somewhat similar to us, and then slowly it was interesting. People bought houses in that street and in the neighbourhood, and they were all interesting people because it seemed like only interesting people would want to live in that neighbourhood at the time. It was fabulous. I mean, there were Italian grocery stores on [0:03:30] College Street just between Borden and Brunswick that don't exist anymore. The other interesting thing about the neighbourhood at that time was that it seemed to be at the end of the Jewish era, and there was still a

number of Jewish shops, Jewish shopkeepers there, so there was a cigar store, kind of a convenience store. Jewish owners there.

Interviewer: There being what street? On College?

Respondent: That was College, yeah. There was still a Jewish butcher on College Street. There were certainly Jewish butchers in the Market. **[0:04:00]** There – on Brunswick just at Harbord, there was a big Jewish meat market, and I think it was Tennenbaum's. I've just forgotten. But there was a funny story because behind that, there was a poultry store that was definitely Tennenbaum's, and I remember once – this was sort of also the hippie kind of era, and I remember once being in the poultry store and buying a chicken, and this girl, this beautiful young girl came in with a long skirt and she said to this **[0:04:30]** Jewish owner, this big guy, "How much are eggs?" And he said, "They're such and such a dozen." Sixty-nine cents a dozen, I think he said. And she said, "How much is one egg?" And he said, "One egg?" [Laughter] I always remember this. It was so funny. So the neighbourhood had still quite a Jewish flavour to it which, you know, slowly started to disappear. There were Jewish funeral homes on College and on Spadina at College, as well still then. So I think that we caught the end of that era, **[0:05:00]** and then kind of slowly saw it move.

Interviewer: But when your families learned that you were here and they were upset, what do you think their thinking was?

Respondent: Well their thinking was that they had spent their entire life trying to get out of this neighbourhood, and they saw it as basically a slum. Not a slum. I don't think they would have said it was a slum, but they sure thought that it wasn't – it wasn't very nice. And I remember – I have an older sister who's twelve years older than me, and I remember saying to **[0:05:30]** her, "Oh, don't worry. One day, this is going to be trendy," and she reminds me of that all the time now. So...

Interviewer: And would you describe it that way now?

Respondent: As trendy?

Interviewer: As trendy.

Respondent: Yeah, yeah. Definitely. Anyway, you know what we paid for that house on Borden? We paid thirty-four thousand dollars. For thirty-four six, six hundred, and that seemed like a fortune at the time, and we negotiated over that six hundred. That six hundred was very important, you know, whether it was going to be seven or four. So we moved into this beautiful house. **[0:06:00]** I always thought that we picked one of the best, and it was a ten-room house.

Interviewer: Oh my. What number Borden was it?

Respondent: 77. Well it's...

Interviewer: 77? The same as this?

Respondent: Oh no. Sorry. Excuse me, it was 69. Excuse me.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: That house is still nice actually. It's had only two owners since I sold it. One, and then the one that's been in it for a while. It had four bedrooms on the second floor, and two on the third floor.

Interviewer: Oh, so that's a large home.

Respondent: It was huge. Yeah. And it had a kitchen on the second floor as well, which – so for a while we rented – **[0:06:30]** we rented out some rooms, and then as our family kind of expanded and we had also two nephews that came to live with us, so at one time we had four kind of, you know, kids ranging in age. We filled up the house, and that house became kind of almost a meeting place. Kind of a community centre. And all our friends, and all our friends' kids kind of went in and out of that house. It was sort of like a circus, you know? Because we were young and we didn't mind. You know, we were very happy to have all that.

Interviewer: Yeah. **[0:07:00]** Were your friends living in this neighbourhood?

- Respondent:** Yeah. We developed a lot of friends in this neighbourhood, and I mean the Gilberts would remember this, you know? They would remember those days very well. And we had parties, and – because most of our friends didn't live in this neighbourhood, so we were considered to be somewhat avant-garde, I would say.
- Interviewer:** Oh.
- Respondent:** Very much so. I mean no Jewish families lived down here. Not young families. None at all. I shouldn't say none, but certainly in this immediate area. And once, I went to – [0:07:30] someone told me that there was kind of a residents' association and I should come to a meeting, and it was the Sussex Residents' Association. So I went along, and I said to them, "You know, maybe you should change the name, because I'm from the lower part. Maybe we should call it Sussex-Ulster." So that's how the name came about.
- Interviewer:** Oh.
- Respondent:** And then a year later when I met Richard, and Richard was actually a scientist at the Addiction Research Foundation at that time, and I told him about this thing, and so I [0:08:00] took him to his first meeting, and...
- Interviewer:** So was there a residents' association at the time?
- Respondent:** Yeah. It was – like became the Sussex-Ulster.
- Interviewer:** And you were on the board?
- Respondent:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** And then Richard joined.
- Respondent:** So then Richard joined, and then Richard got very involved in municipal affairs, as you probably know, and became an alderman and maintained that. So – but you know, he worked at the ARF for a while, and then he left.
- Interviewer:** Well he told me he'd done a degree in psychology or something.

- Respondent:** Yeah. Oh, he's a psychologist for sure. He's a [0:08:30] phara-psychologist.
- Interviewer:** Psychopharmacologist.
- Respondent:** Pharmacologist. Yeah. Whatever. Whatever. Anyway.
- Interviewer:** He's worn a lot of good hats.
- Respondent:** Yes. Yes. Absolutely.
- Interviewer:** I was interviewing somebody who was very grateful for the streets going back and forth, the maze of streets...
- Respondent:** That was him.
- Interviewer:** That's it.
- Respondent:** Yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** So this is an interview I did with somebody on Borden north, south of Bloor, and she was grateful. And I'm okay, Richard, I hope you hear this.
- Respondent:** Yeah. You know, it's interesting. I remember the first day it came into effect, his wife Rosalyn and I were walking up the street, and all the cars were going [0:09:00] crazy because they weren't used to it, and we were – I remember we were sort of chuckling that they were – you know, they're having trouble with this.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Well he's been – he's very helpful with the history committee.
- Respondent:** Yeah, I know. I know that.
- Interviewer:** He's one of our leaders. You said in 1969 that was sort of the end of the Jewish era in this neighbourhood, and when you went to the park there were so many different languages. What were the languages, and also who was with the children? Was it nannies? Was it [0:09:30] the parents? Was it grandparents?

Respondent: Oh, there wasn't a nanny in sight, and that – you know, as I've sort of watched the movement of this neighbourhood, I mean the advent of fancy cars – I mean we never saw a fancy car, and when we saw the first fancy car, you know, like a BMW or something like that, I thought, "What are they doing here?" You know? They're sort of – they're in the wrong place. So they – who looked after the children? Grandparents and sometimes nobody. Sometimes the children were on their own. I remember that there was – [0:10:00] next door to us, the – another big house was owned by Chinese people, and they had a lot of roomers in that house. And I remember there were these two – I guess they were a Yugoslavian family with two small children, and those children used to be alone, and I could see them from the window.

Interviewer: At what ages?

Respondent: Because their parents were both working. They were little. They were little.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. Yeah.

Respondent: And that wasn't – I mean that was not the norm. That was unusual, but they were big, extended families. Every single one of those houses.

Interviewer: [0:10:30] So the houses were quite packed with people.

Respondent: Yeah, yeah. Oh, absolutely. And so the street life was very lively. Much more so than now, and that's why I wanted to show you these pictures, because they're not pictures actually of the houses particularly, but they're pictures of all the people that lived in those houses, and...

Interviewer: And used the streets.

Respondent: Yeah. And so we got to know them all, you know? And my son, Bobby, was very gregarious and so he learned Portuguese, and everybody kind of adopted him, and they had Italian friends, and they had, [0:11:00] you know, everybody. Everybody. It was just

one big conglomerate. And then there was one house where there were very close friends of ours, and he was actually an Anglican priest who was doing his PhD at the U of T from the States, and they had two small boys and they were, you know, an integral part of the neighbourhood. And when they left, all these families just wept, you know? All these...

Interviewer: Oh.

Respondent: ...you know, Italian, Portuguese families because they'd become so, you know, so much a part of the life around here.

Interviewer: So you're saying [0:11:30] the different whatever backgrounds people came from, they got along well and enjoyed each other.

Respondent: Well to some extent. I think that in some – to some degree, some of the original kind of, you know, I don't know, biases probably remained, but the children all meshed. And you know, the Portuguese families, you know, kept to them – to some extent, kept to themselves and the Italians kept to themselves. But there was no, you know – on the street, [0:12:00] everybody was very polite...

Interviewer: Mm-hm.

Respondent: ...everyone else.

Interviewer: I guess it's quite – and also, a lot of those people were immigrants and they probably...

Respondent: They were all immigrants.

Interviewer: ...spoke Italian at home or Portuguese at home.

Respondent: Oh, they were all immigrants.

Interviewer: So the children learned English more quickly than their parents, most likely.

Respondent: Yeah, yeah. Oh, to this day. I mean, there are very few people on this street now that were there when I was there, but there are a couple and we always wave to each other. But their children now have grown up and are very Canadian, and – [0:12:30] but there's still a lot of Portuguese families in the area.

Interviewer: Mm-hm. Mm-hm. Mm-hm. You and Richard were on the board of Sussex-Ulster.

Respondent: Mm-hm.

Interviewer: What was that like? And how many people were on the board? Could you talk about that please?

Respondent: Yeah. Well there were some real characters at that time, and the neighbourhood had some very major characters. I don't know if you've run into Rosie Smith or Rosie Schwartz?

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Respondent: Yeah. She was – and Cyril was another one. Or Cyril's wife actually. Joan Doiron – do you know of her? [0:13:00] Joan lived on...

Interviewer: I met her on a train between Montreal and Toronto many years ago.

Respondent: My first husband was a town planner and he knew some of the other town planners in this area. Pierre Beekmans was another one. He lived on Sussex. I'm not quite sure if he's still there.

Interviewer: No. When we're finished I'm going to write these names down and see...

Respondent: Okay. And Max Voss was another town planner. He lived on Brunswick. And there was one other person who lived actually in the Market, and his name was Allan Schwamm. Have you run into his name? Well Allan [0:13:30] had lived there all his life. In fact, he'd been born in that house. He lived on Oxford and he was a town planner as well, and he was a really farsighted guy, and he was responsible for a lot of the development in the Kensington

Market in terms of urban kind of thinking. Kensington School didn't exist when we first lived there, and they built it very soon after we arrived because we didn't want children crossing the road to King Edward.

Interviewer: Oh, I see.

Respondent: And I think he was involved in a lot of that. But the reason I mentioned his [0:14:00] name is that the first day that we came to this area, I think we'd gone to Mars restaurant to eat something, and we met Allan and he said, "Welcome to the neighbourhood." And I was so shocked because I didn't think it was the neighbourhood. I mean I thought it was just, you know, like downtown. And of course, I learned it was a neighbourhood, but I didn't think so at the time.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Respondent: So what was the board interested in in that time? Oh, they were – I mean the street, you know, the street maze. One of the things that we did, which [0:14:30] the remnants of it are still here, is I was in charge of the parks whatever it was portfolio, and we were trying to establish little parks around the area, so that thing at the bottom of Brunswick was one of them. And south of the playing ground on Robert Street, just as – south of Bloor on Sussex, there's a little park area. That was another one that we, you know, kind of developed. The other thing that we did was we [0:15:00] had the first picnic in 1974 actually. And I have a picture of that. We didn't have any picnics after that for a long time, and when I moved back we started doing it again.

Interviewer: And where was that picnic held?

Respondent: That was a sort of large summer picnic in the...

Interviewer: On Robert Street?

Respondent: No. It's in that little park. The Margaret Fairley Park.

Interviewer: Oh, and that's still used a lot.

- Respondent:** Yeah. And we still have that annual fall fair.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** I started that actually.
- Interviewer:** Oh really?
- Respondent:** Yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** You're a major contributor to our neighbourhood.
- Respondent:** Yeah. [Laughs]
- Interviewer:** Our neighbourhood.
- Respondent:** **[0:15:30]** Oh yeah. No I had – I actually worked my head off, and then I was so tired of it that I kind of thought, you know, I've sort of done enough, I think. I'll let someone else do it. And then I went onto the board of St. Stephen's, and I was on the board of St. Stephens for a long time. I was the president there for about three years.
- Interviewer:** That's where I'm supervising six students...
- Respondent:** Oh are you?
- Interviewer:** ...doing a master's degree right now, and I'm there on Wednesdays.
- Respondent:** Oh, that's why you went down there. Oh. Oh, that's wonderful. And then I went to – after that, I went to the Social Planning Council, and I was the chair there for the last four years. So I've tried to **[0:16:00]** always do something that's, you know...
- Interviewer:** Well, did you bring Richard to St. Stephen's?
- Respondent:** Yeah.

- Interviewer:** Yes. Because I knew that he was...
- Respondent:** Yeah, yeah. Although, his wife had been on the board before me.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh.
- Respondent:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So you're a very active person in the community.
- Respondent:** Mm-hm. Well I try to be, yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. But you were involved in, as you say, the parks portfolio because it's such an important – we live in a very concrete neighbourhood, and those parks – I've brought my grandchildren here.
- Respondent:** Is that right?
- Interviewer:** I have ten grandchildren, and [0:16:30] I have one grandchild here. He's nearly thirteen.
- Respondent:** To this one here?
- Interviewer:** To this one here. Sure. Many times. And when my other grandchildren come in, we come to this park.
- Respondent:** Oh that, yeah. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** Well this one down here sort of was a disappointment because I had very young kids when we planned it, and I sort of pictured that mothers with strollers could use it, but it very quickly deteriorated, and unfortunately, you know, the poor Aboriginal homeless people kind of took over there, and then other people, I think, were frightened to use it. My one daughter was really scared to walk up the street, and she used to always [0:17:00] take the Wellesley bus because of that. She just was afraid to walk by them, so that was too bad.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Respondent: But anyway, it's getting redeveloped now, and new people have come in...

Interviewer: I know that.

Respondent: ...and you know, Richard Longley is phenomenal.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent: And he's making something gorgeous there, so.

Interviewer: Well there was this competition, and there was so many people who submitted ideas.

Respondent: Yeah. He's incredible. He's just amazing. And he's the one also that, you know, developed these historical designation initiatives, so all these houses [0:17:30] now on this street are historical. You know, they're heritage properties.

Interviewer: And my house has a plaque.

Respondent: Does it?

Interviewer: 1881. And I'm just so proud of it. It's right on the house. I love it.

Respondent: Oh, that's great.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. So that's – you know, here I am, a member of the board of directors of Harbord Village, and you were...

Respondent: Oh, that's great.

Interviewer: ...and you actually helped rename it to Sussex-Ulster.

Respondent: Well I also helped rename it to Harbord Village because at one point, when – I'm not sure why – how it was precipitated, [0:18:00] but there was some sense that the organization needed to kind of

regenerate, and there were a group of us who kind of sat down for a while and tried to renew it, and one of the things they decided was that Sussex-Ulster didn't make any sense. Nobody – I mean we were being called the South Annex all the time. Nobody really understood what this area was, and one day – I remember this, and one of the people that was involved in that was Sue Dexter.

Interviewer: Oh yeah.

Respondent: But there were some others. And one day, someone walked in. I think [0:18:30] it may have been Gus, and he said, "I've got the name." And I thought, you know, that sounds awfully presumptuous, you know? And he said, "Harbord Village." And everyone said, "Yes. It's perfect. It's perfect." And so I'm on that committee that kind of – it never – but it's that committee that would oversee the board if anything happened that would kind of, you know, be the backup to the board. So I haven't been active very much on this board because once I – I think once I had run the picnic [0:19:00] for a number of years, I just, you know, I thought I was exhausted, so I thought I would turn it over.

Interviewer: That's a huge – I think Gus does that now.

Respondent: He does it now. He loves it. He's amazing. He's just amazing.

Interviewer: It takes a lot of hard work. Coordination.

Respondent: And I used to do it a little differently. I think maybe he does it better in a way, but I still look for donations because I wanted to keep the price down in case there were families that couldn't afford, you know, a lot of money to take their kids there, so running around for donations is very exhausting. So now I think [0:19:30] they buy the food. I used to get it donated, so it's probably better this way.

Interviewer: Well I want to say thank you for all that you've done.

Respondent: Oh, you're welcome.

Interviewer: I mean I love this neighbourhood, and you've done so much for it.

Respondent: Well many of us, you know?

Interviewer: Yeah. What about the safety of the neighbourhood? You started here in 1969. It's 2013. How does that compare? What was it like then and what's it like now?

Respondent: Well I've always felt that this neighbourhood had kind of, like, two faces. I mean this [0:20:00] part is getting more and more gentrified all the time, but there is a very, you know, there's a very – I wouldn't say violent, but you could almost say that. There's a very sort of edgy area at Spadina and College, and there always has been. It's always been there for generations, and so you have to be a little bit careful, you know? And I mean I tell my grandchildren and things like that, you know, that – just to be careful. So you know, we've had some break-ins years ago, but normally I don't think about it. I mean I walk home, I walk [0:20:30] home. If I had young children, I'm not sure. I mean the kids now, as you know, I mean kids now are much more protected than – my kids played out all the time. I mean they were outside, you know, all the time. They came and went. Children aren't really handled like that anymore. I mean you know, you have play dates and nannies and all that stuff, so...

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And they don't start usually using TTC probably until about twelve years old.

Respondent: That's right. That's right. And I was much younger than that, and our kids were.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Respondent: Our kids were. But there's also fewer kids. [0:21:00] Many fewer. I mean I don't see the, you know, children pouring out. This is my granddaughter walking in actually.

Interviewer: Oh. [Laughs]

Respondent: She's living with us. She's going to Seneca.

Interviewer: Oh. Lovely.

- Respondent:** And she's living with us. Yeah. You'll see her in a minute.
- Interviewer:** Good. When you lived here all those years ago, were there any cottage industries? People working at home from their homes?
- Respondent:** Oh, there may have been. There may very well have been. I wasn't aware of it particularly, but there may have been.
- Interviewer:** And were you aware of whether women were [0:21:30] working, or was it mainly the men who were the sole supporting, you know, going out of the home to work?
- Respondent:** Yeah. It was mostly men, I would say. I don't think the immigrant – well that's not true actually. I guess obviously some immigrant women went to the factories on Spadina. You know, there was one family, I still know them actually, and he was a popcorn man. They were Italian, and his wife – and her name was Angelina, I think her aunt – and anyway, she used to make the popcorn in the basement, [0:22:00] and they then much later managed to buy a small restaurant on College Street, so that was a cottage industry.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** And you know what was interesting? At one point, my son was going to this private school and they took the kids to the museum, and Joe was outside with his popcorn truck and he saw Bobby, and you know, they were so happy to see each other. They gave all the kids popcorn, and so Bobby was a real hero because he knew the popcorn man, you know? [Laughter] But I thought [0:22:30] at the time it's such a difference, you know? And do you know, another interesting story about just the difference in class actually, Bobby had a little friend and his name was Dean Darnell, but Dean was actually Portuguese. I think his mother had married someone who was not Portuguese, but I don't know what happened to that guy. And he was being brought up in an extended Portuguese family, and he was a really cute kid. Anyway, we bought this house on Croydon, and we bought it in the summer, and we were about to have a family wedding there. And the people that we bought [0:23:00] it from had a gardener, and I thought how am I going to manage all this? So I thought, well, we should keep the gardener

for at least the summer, you know? So we did, and who should show up but Dean and his extended family. They were the gardeners.

Interviewer: Oh.

Respondent: And it was sort of poignant actually, you know, because all of the sudden we were employing this family that we'd been neighbours with, you know? And it was embarrassing because Dean actually came with them. He came with his grandfather to help and I felt badly for him, you know? It must have been hard for him. [0:23:30] So there was always that mix, you know? There was always that...

Interviewer: And the neighbourhood still has that mix too.

Respondent: Yeah.

Interviewer: People who have been here for fifty years, although you've been here a long time. But people buying it now are certainly a higher socioeconomic crowd.

Respondent: Oh yeah. I was too. I mean, we were from a different – exactly. A different socioeconomic bracket. You know, it was interesting. The woman that sold us that house was – the 69 Borden one – was a Greek lady, and she – [0:24:00] when she sold it to us, she said, "Now you can rent out every room." And I said to her, "Well, I don't think we will." She said, "Don't tell me that. I don't want to hear that." She said, "My family bought a house and now they have six houses because they rented out every room." And I mean it was a different way of looking at life, you know? We lived more easily. We didn't – we weren't living as rough or as tough.

Interviewer: And when I interview people, immigrants bought these homes.

Respondent: Mm-hm.

Interviewer: Like this space that you have here, these would all [0:24:30] be bedrooms.

Respondent: Yeah, absolutely.

Interviewer: There was a kitchen.

Respondent: Yeah. I bought this house actually from a woman who works at the Western Hospital as a kind of sort of a female orderly, and she was Ukrainian. She was lovely, and this was a rooming house. And there was a sink on the third floor that, you know, the people that lived in the rooms used, and it was – I mean this is a beautiful house because it's got all the original wood, but other than that, it didn't look like this. [0:25:00] You know?

Interviewer: [Laughs] I'll bet. Look at the beautiful windows.

Respondent: Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. You talked about the – what Richard had done with – what was happening on the streets? What precipitated that?

Respondent: What?

Interviewer: The roads.

Respondent: The maze?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent: People were using these side streets as alternatives to Bathurst and Spadina, and they were speeding up and down, so to get to work in the morning, they used to go down on Borden. Like they would just [0:25:30] car after car after car, and we were worried because our kids were young. So Richard came up with this notion of developing a maze, and it worked. I mean the cars – after the first day, when Rosalyn and I saw them kind of running like rats, they figured out this was not a good thing to do, so. This is Amber. This is Eleanor.

Voice: Hi, how are you?

Respondent: You're on tape, so.

- Voice:** Sorry, am I interrupting?
- Respondent:** You're on tape.
- Voice:** Oh. [Laughter]
- Interviewer:** But that must have been a huge amount of work for Richard [0:26:00] to get...
- Respondent:** He loved doing all that stuff. You know, I mean I'm sure it was, but he loved sitting in his study up there and, you know, figuring all this out.
- Interviewer:** Talking about the roads, in terms of numbers of vehicles, kinds of vehicles, how they were used, and then public transportation, could you just go into all of that?
- Respondent:** Yeah. Well there were a lot of cars, and parking was always a problem. And I mean the Gilberts were, I think, unusual and [0:26:30] somewhat really in – saying, "We're not having a car, and we're going to take TTC everywhere." I wasn't quite as good as that, and I think I'm even worse now to tell you the truth, but...
- Interviewer:** So you like the convenience of having four wheels.
- Respondent:** Yeah. Although we walk a fair amount.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** But people use the streetcars. Our kids, you know, use the streetcars and the buses, and...
- Interviewer:** I do too.
- Respondent:** Do you?
- Interviewer:** And my bike, and my legs...
- Respondent:** Well you look terrific.

- Interviewer:** But I like to have a car. [Laughs]
- Respondent:** Do you have a [0:27:00] car?
- Interviewer:** I have a car. I have a car, and I don't use it nearly as much as I use my legs and my bike.
- Respondent:** Well that's right.
- Interviewer:** And TTC, but I still like to have – my husband describes I like to have a car for, well, for the supermarket and funerals. [Laughter] That's his description.
- Respondent:** That's true. That's true. Well you know, that's interesting because when I grew up, I grew up at Ossington and Davenport, approximately, and we didn't have a car. My father was a tailor who worked on Spadina and he took the bus and streetcar every day. [0:27:30] And so when I finally got a car, I appreciated it so much, and every time I get in that car to this day, I think oh wow, how lucky am I.
- Interviewer:** It is convenient.
- Respondent:** So I've never taken it for granted, but maybe that's why I use it so much because I'm so thrilled to have it.
- Interviewer:** I don't know if you have a back lane here.
- Respondent:** Oh yes, we do.
- Interviewer:** Is there a back lane?
- Respondent:** Oh yeah, sure.
- Interviewer:** Is the back lane something that you or your family used in any way?
- Respondent:** All the time. Well...
- Interviewer:** In what ways?

Respondent: Well first of all, we park in our – we have a two-car garage.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Respondent: And we [0:28:00] use it, and so we go in and out all the time. But you know, in terms of the lane at Borden, I remember so well that I would run up that lane every morning because at that store at the corner of Ulster and Brunswick was a Portuguese store at the time, and every morning they had fresh buns. So about seven o'clock in the morning, I would run out the back, run up the lane, and get fresh buns and run back, and then you know, make breakfast and make the kids sandwiches. So we used the lane all the time, and they were not as fancy as they are now. I mean, now [0:28:30] people have fixed up their garages, but it was very picturesque, you know?

Interviewer: Were they always paved? When you moved here in 1969 they were paved.

Respondent: Yeah, yeah. They were already considered to be, I think, sort of municipal property. They weren't like Croft, which is actually, you know, has homes on it, but yeah.

Interviewer: Where did the children play?

Respondent: They played in the street, they played at the park.

Interviewer: So you mean on the sidewalk and on the road.

Respondent: Yeah. Yeah. And they played in the backyards. They played all over.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. [0:29:00] What about the heating? All these years that you've been here, has the heating changed, or is it...

Respondent: Well it's interesting that you would ask that. When I bought this house, there was a big, huge furnace just below us. I guess it was oil, and I had this contractor that was helping me kind of fixing up

the house because when I bought it, it was kind of in its 1880s form.

Interviewer: Wow.

Respondent: In the kitchen, the kitchen was an 1880s kitchen. It had only a sink in it, and it had no cupboards, nothing. [0:29:30] So he'd advised me, this was really poor advice, but he said, "Why don't you get electrical heat," because it was cheap at the time. "And then you can heat the rooms you're in, but you don't have to heat the whole house." So I followed that advice, which turned out to be terrible advice because electrical heating became very expensive. So after a while, we put in a gas furnace, so this actually has forced air and it's a forced – a gas forced air furnace.

Interviewer: So it's gone through several stages.

Respondent: And it's very small compared to what was [0:30:00] there before.

Interviewer: Mm-hm.

Respondent: And now we have apartments in the basement where that furnace was. So that worked out financially and in a good way.

Interviewer: You talked a little bit about the stores.

Respondent: Mm-hm.

Interviewer: What I've found is people talk about the stores that they lived closest to. So if they lived near College, they'd barely use the stores on Bloor.

Respondent: Mm-hm.

Interviewer: But I'm wondering if you could talk a little more about the colourful stores that were in the neighbourhood and how you [0:30:30] used them.

Respondent: Yeah. Well Harbord Street, I was just talking to someone about this yesterday. Harbord Street has changed enormously. It used to be

quite a dreary street, and it had streetcar tracks on it. I don't know if you knew that. And actually, Richard was interested in this, and once asked me about it. When I used to go to university, I used to take the Harbord streetcar and it was unusual in that it went diagonally across the city, so I started out at Davenport and Dovercourt, and I ended up at Spadina and College on that streetcar. It just went that way. **[0:31:00]** [Laughter] So every day I went along Harbord Street, and Harbord Street was really a depressing street. And the only business that was there that's still there is the Harbord Bakery, and when we first moved in, probably in the early '70s, Rafi, who's the owner, actually fixed it up in the way that it is now. He was very farsighted, because the way he designed it, it still looks new. It's amazing. But there wasn't a restaurant in sight, and I used to wish that there could be a really good, you know, restaurant around here.

Interviewer: Whoa.

Respondent: And when **[0:31:30]** Free Times – well when Free Times opened, I thought, wow, that's unbelievable. So I'll tell you that where the Boulevard Café was, that was a grocery store with sort of pinball machines in it.

Interviewer: Oh.

Respondent: And I sometimes tell them that when I go there.

Interviewer: Oh.

Respondent: And that opened in about 1978, and it was popular right away because of the terrific patio. And where Loire is right now, that was actually called the Harbord Fish **[0:32:00]** Company. It was a fish store, and apparently Rafi had the opportunity to buy that and decided not to, and then regretted it ever after because the first thing that went in there after the Harbord Fish Company was another bakery. It didn't last that long. [Laughs]

Interviewer: I'm not surprised.

- Respondent:** It was a really sort of Anglo-Saxon kind of fancy cakes, and it just didn't – it didn't – I guess it couldn't compete.
- Interviewer:** I didn't know that.
- Respondent:** Yeah. So then the next thing that went in was this restaurant called Idefix, which was [laughs] – it was spelled I-D-E [0:32:30] F-I-X, and it was quite good for a while. And the man that ran it said that the reason he called it that was that he'd always had this fixed idea of having a restaurant. It was Idefix.
- Interviewer:** Oh.
- Respondent:** The first restaurant actually on Harbord is where Tati is now, and that was called Major Robert.
- Interviewer:** Oh, I remember that.
- Respondent:** Yeah. And that was good. That was very good. Anyway, and then just to tell you one last thing, where Messis is, that was Poretta's Pizza. And we used to go there for pizzas. So the area has really changed. [0:33:00] And what was so interesting was that at the time, we thought that Bloor was going to be the sort of fancy street, and it's turned out to be just the opposite. Harbord for some reason has managed to get this, you know, strip of very nice restaurants with a very nice clientele. And Bloor has remained kind of studenty, and you know, much lower priced in terms of the shops. That's not what we pictured actually. We thought it was just going to be the opposite. And College has always had difficulty. I mean it was [0:33:30] interesting to me that Little Italy kind of, you know, went trendy and became quite, you know, popular, but after you go to Bathurst Street, it remained kind of poor and grubby, and it still is to some extent.
- Interviewer:** Well, and Lippincott is a problem. Lippincott and College.
- Respondent:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's right.
- Interviewer:** With the clubs there, and people who live near there are having difficulty now.

- Respondent:** Oh, I'm sure there are.
- Interviewer:** There's a store there that's having difficulty because [0:34:00] these guys come out drunk at night, and then they just make a mess right in front of the store, so.
- Respondent:** Well, that's true. Which store was that?
- Interviewer:** It's a little corner store that used to be a pharmacy for decades.
- Respondent:** Oh yes. Yeah, yeah. I remember the pharmacist.
- Interviewer:** Right. And after her husband died, it's a little second-hand – she calls it a junk shop, is what she...
- Respondent:** She's never there though. It's sort of odd, isn't it? Do you know what's also interesting? You know where that restaurant, Aunties & Uncles is?
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** Well my father's brother had a barbershop right there, and it was called [0:34:30] Sid's Barber Shop.
- Interviewer:** Right where Aunties & Uncles is.
- Respondent:** Right there. Right there.
- Interviewer:** So your uncle had a barber shop.
- Respondent:** Yeah. Well that's what's so funny about it. And when we moved in, my uncle died in '68, I think, but when we moved in in '69, that barbershop was still sitting there. I mean, it hadn't been – I guess it hadn't been bought, or I don't know why it was still sitting there. And for many years it sat there, and then somehow this restaurant came into effect. So once I was there, and I thought I should take a picture of this. So I was taking a picture and a guy came running out and he said, "What are you doing?" [0:35:00] And I said, "Well, I'm taking a picture because this was my uncle's barber shop." And

he said, "Oh yeah, I heard that." [Laughs] So it was sort of ironic that it was called Aunties & Uncles.

Interviewer: That's right. I know one of the people who works there, and he's been working there. He's a musician, but he's been working there for a very long time and really loves the restaurant, yeah.

Respondent: I don't know if I've answered your questions.

Interviewer: Oh, you're answering fabulous. What's the influence, or is there any, of the University of Toronto [0:35:30] on our neighbourhood?

Respondent: Well, I mean a lot of people live here who work at the university, and I mean there's always a threat, I suppose, that they're going to kind of build something big. And, you know, you probably know this. I have friends who live on Huron just across from the Robarts – and the university owns all that property. They have for years. So I personally don't feel it. I know someone like Sue Dexter probably feels it more, you know, more intensely than I do, [0:36:00] but I – you know...

Interviewer: So it's not a problem for you.

Respondent: No, no.

Interviewer: Yeah. What about Kensington Market? Do you use it? Have you used it? And what do you feel our relationship is with the market?

Respondent: Well I have used it intermittently, and Robert used it. I haven't used it all the time. I mean I know people who use it much more than I do. I love it. I think it's wonderful, and you know, being so much a part of St. Stephen's, I mean they're an integral part of the Market. So you know, I think it's precious. I hope that it stays for a long time, and [0:36:30] that you know, it's able to be retained as kind of what it is, and not get too globalized. I mean, not have these huge stores go in. I mean that's the threat right now, as you know. You probably saw it in the paper this week that oh, they're worried about – there's a condo that's going in on College. Do you know where that Buddhist temple was?

Interviewer: Mm-hm.

Respondent: Well there's going to be a huge condo there and apparently the story is that there's going to be a Loblaw's at the bottom, and the people in the market are very worried about this because they think it will [0:37:00] take their business from them. And it also changes the nature of the Market, you know?

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah. Because I see the market changing a little bit with the cafes and...

Respondent: Oh, it's changed a lot.

Interviewer: But it still hasn't lost its soul.

Respondent: Yeah.

Interviewer: There's still enough of the old stores, and people just love hanging around a lot more in the street.

Respondent: Well it's changed. I mean every wave of immigrants has changed it. I mean it used to be the Jewish Market.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent: And it used to be called that by not Jews, but by others, and then it became very West Indian and then it became very, [0:37:30] you know, Vietnamese and also South American. And now it's become quite trendy. I mean there's a lot of restaurants, but people love it, and they go and there's also a very hard edge in that Market, as you know. I mean there's a lot of drugs. There's – I'd been to meetings where particularly related to St. Stephen's where the people who live in the Market are terribly worried about the drug situation there and want better policing and, you know. So it goes on and on, you know?

Interviewer: Yeah. And I know somebody who lives in that lovely [0:38:00] building on Baldwin, and if ever I visit and I'm there at night, I come home by bike. I would not walk home through the Market at eleven o'clock at night.

- Respondent:** Mm-hm. Well you're terrific that you ride your bike. That's wonderful.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. I do. Let's see. Rochdale. I guess you weren't here.
- Respondent:** I was.
- Interviewer:** Oh you were.
- Respondent:** I know Rochdale well.
- Interviewer:** Okay. So was that something that you feel affected this neighbourhood or interacted with the neighbourhood in any way?
- Respondent:** Well I wasn't in this neighbourhood during [0:38:30] the Rochdale days.
- Interviewer:** Mm-hm.
- Respondent:** I think I was more at St. George and Bloor at that time, but no, no. Not at all.
- Interviewer:** And the Spadina Expressway? Were you here during that time?
- Respondent:** Oh yeah, we were really active in that.
- Interviewer:** So tell me.
- Respondent:** God, I remember all that so well.
- Interviewer:** So tell me a little bit about...
- Respondent:** Well it was such an emotional thing, you know? I mean we thought that it was going to destroy the city. We thought that all the houses in its swathe were going to be taken away, and many of them were.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.

- Respondent:** And we sort of thought the forces of kind of, you know, [0:39:00] it was good and evil basically, you know? It became very, very emotional. And when that decision was changed, I think we celebrated – we thought – it was like the coming of the Messiah, you know? I mean just before that, we had gone – the Allen Road there, you know, north of Eglinton, had been dug, but they hadn't paved it yet, and so all these people who were worried about it had this huge picnic in this pit.
- Interviewer:** Oh.
- Respondent:** And you know, we went with our kids. We used to have this huge poster in our kitchen. We had a very [0:39:30] hippie-looking house at the time, and it said, "Stop Spadina. Save our city." You know, it was a big stop sign. So anyway, we all went to this picnic and, you know, everybody was jumping and running and, you know, it was great. So then, when the decision came, I mean we just celebrated. We thought it was just phenomenal, and Dennis Lee wrote that wonderful poem, you know? I don't know if you know it, about the day we stopped Spadina?
- Interviewer:** No.
- Respondent:** It's a fabulous...
- Interviewer:** I mean I know Dennis Lee's work, but...
- Respondent:** Yeah, no. It's a wonderful children's poem, but it really captures that – you should look it up, Eleanor. [0:40:00] It captures that feeling of just jubilation that we had somehow done something that was so important to the whole North American society because other cities then took the lead of Toronto and just said we're going to stop expressways going through the city.
- Interviewer:** It really would have changed the city.
- Respondent:** Oh, it really would have. And it would have practically changed here because it was going to go straight through. I mean it would have been hideous. So all this area was very threatened, and we were thrilled. We were so happy. And Davis got an award, you know,

from the [0:40:30] Transportation Association of America, and you know, it was great.

Interviewer: Well those of us who love this neighbourhood are very lucky that that happened.

Respondent: Yes, oh absolutely.

Interviewer: It would just cut it in half and destroyed so many of these wonderful old homes.

Respondent: Yeah. Well we were very connected, I think, at the time to other residents' associations. There was that organization called CORRA, which was – are you familiar with CORRA? It was C-O-R-R-A, and it was the kind of coalition of [0:41:00] residents' associations. Rate payers' and residents' associations. And all the leading lights on that – I mean they were really brilliant people, you know? Mostly academics and things who got together because they were really worried about urban issues. That was really the era of the neighbourhoods. I mean it was the Crombie era, and the residents' associations were very kind of powerful and very involved in planning for the city, and they were listened to. I mean that was the nice thing about that era, that all these residents' [0:41:30] associations were very active and were very much a part of the city planning, so we all felt like we had a big voice, and we did.

Interviewer: We did, yeah.

Respondent: And it was a great time. I mean, you know, with Jane Jacobs, and it was a phenomenal time to be downtown. You know, I have to tell you another funny story about my father-in-law who was this taxi driver. He drove a Co-op cab, and that was the era of the Jewish taxi drivers. They don't really – you know, they don't exist anymore. They're probably all not living now. But anyway, he – somebody got in his car. [0:42:00] He was doing one of these surveys, you know, and they used to sort of poll taxi drivers about elections, and it was the Crombie election. And they said, "Well what do you think about Crombie?" And he said, "Well, my son has a Crombie sign on his house on Borden Street, so I'm going to vote for Crombie."

[Laughs] Excuse me. And so this went on the air, you know, and he was so proud. [Laughs] It was really funny.

Interviewer: Would you like to talk some more about your being such [0:42:30] an active person in the neighbourhood?

Respondent: Well I think I maybe have told you all.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: I don't know what more I could tell you.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent: But I mean we loved it. I think of it as – especially the years on Borden Street – as kind of the best years in some ways because it was, I guess, the end of that '60s, the beginning of the '70s. There was such a wonderful kind of, I don't know, vibe about life. And we were young, and our kids were young, and we just had a lot of fun. And we loved living here. We just loved it.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent: And we would have these enormous parties where we'd have a hundred. [0:43:00] Oh, I know what I can tell you. We would have a hundred people and we once had a party. This was so amazing, and we went out into our back porch, and all of a sudden we looked down and there was this huge fire that was coming from the fire hall. So everyone went racing down to the fire because the fire station was on fire. And it turned out that that was arson actually, and this was a very old fire hall, and some kids had gone into [0:43:30] the – you know, they had that hook and ladder kind of tower?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent: And some kids had gone up there and started a fire, and so what was so spectacular about that fire was that it was coming from the top. It was flaming out into the sky, and anyway, so that party was

never forgotten by any of our friends. They all still remember the party with...

Interviewer: They must have had some jokes about it.

Respondent: Yeah. Everyone at the fire station came. Anyway, it was very sad because that had been such an historic building. Anyway, the city chose to rebuild it, and so that fire station, which has that huge [0:44:00] tower, that's a new one. It isn't part of the old...

Interviewer: Wow. Isn't that the irony? Arson at a fire station.

Respondent: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent: Richard would probably remember that.

Interviewer: I haven't interviewed Richard yet.

Respondent: Oh, that'll be fun.

Interviewer: I think I have to interview him soon.

Respondent: Oh, you know what I remember him telling me? It was either him or Rosalyn. That butter had gone up to a dollar a pound. I remember him saying, "This is such a milestone. Butter is now a dollar a pound." So I don't know what butter is now, but it's a lot more.

Interviewer: Well I followed [0:44:30] potatoes and chocolate bars because those are two things I like.

Respondent: Oh, that's interesting.

Interviewer: So I know exactly what I paid in 1945 and 1950 and 1970.

Respondent: I remember going to the movies and candy was six cents, and the movies was twelve cents, and my mother would give me exactly eighteen cents. I mean I never got twenty-five cents. I got exactly

eighteen cents because it mattered, you know? I mean it was interesting.

Interviewer: Talking about movies – this will be our last question because I know you have company coming soon.

Respondent: No, no. It's okay. Don't worry.

Interviewer: [0:45:00] The theatres in the neighbourhood, I think that there were some theatres.

Respondent: Oh, there were. Well you know, this whole complex down here was not there. I mean that was built – you know, you should talk about the Doctors Hospital with some people because that was a major issue.

Interviewer: I spoke to the daughter of one of the doctors.

Respondent: Well that would have give you one aspect of it, but the neighbourhood, you should know this Eleanor, the neighbourhood fought that hospital for thirty years. They were horrible. They never cleaned their snow. Those doctors hated the people [0:45:30] in the neighbourhood. They liked the ethnic community, but they didn't like the new neighbours. And they resented them, and it was so interesting because we wanted them to do – they had grandiose plans for the hospital that the neighbours weren't happy about. They wanted to build a huge, huge hospital, and the neighbours weren't pleased. So this went on. This sort of controversy went on for years. We were in the OMB for a long time. It would really be interesting to get the true [0:46:00] history of all this. And I remember Rosie – actually we once went to a meeting at City Hall, and these doctors got up and they were giving their point of view, and then the residents got up and gave their point of view, and the doctors – maybe it was the lawyer for the doctors said, "If I hear one more middle-class professional telling me about this neighbourhood, I'm going to do such and such." So Rosie got up, and she said, "If I hear the word 'middle-class professional' one [0:46:30] more time, I'm going to break your legs." [Laughter] That was Rosie. It was so perfect, you know? So anyway, that – so what finally happened as you probably know is that the Ministry decided

to close the Doctors Hospital. The government – it was the beginning of the Harris government, and they were talking about amalgamating hospitals. As you know, they did.

Interviewer: Oh yeah.

Respondent: And they were trying to close a number of them, and the only one – I worked in the Ministry of Health at the time, so I was quite aware of what was going on. [0:47:00] The only one that they were actually successful in closing was the Doctors Hospital, and part of the rationale for that was that if you looked out the window of the Ministry of Health, you could see seven hospitals from that window. There was the General, there was the Mount Sinai, there was Women's College, there was the Western, there was Sick Kids. There was just a lot of hospitals, and they felt that they didn't need...

Interviewer: Another one down here.

Respondent: But the Doctors Hospital claimed that it served a particular clientele. It served – it had many, many multicultural doctors, and it served the Portuguese [0:47:30] community, which was true – I mean this was all true. So they fought, but unsuccessfully, to have it closed. So then, the question was what was going to happen to that property. They had a very strong board, and actually the board was very connected. This was the board of the hospital. It was very connected to the Conservative government, so they still had some fairly prominent people. Anyway, what they finally got permission to do was to use that property for a home for the aged because long-term care was now deemed [0:48:00] to be an important, you know, issue, and they needed more long-term care facilities. So that old hospital was torn down, and then this whole question of what would happen in terms of a new building. So again, we got very involved in that because we were very concerned that they were going to put up another huge building. So what is there now is very much a compromise that – and we were happy with that. Between a tall building – we said, you know, it should fit into the neighbourhood. And so the first phase [0:48:30] that went in was okay, but not as good as the second phase. And when I met the architects actually at the opening of the second phase, he said to

me, "I wish we had learned more from you at the very beginning." Not me personally, but from the residents, "Because you were right," you know? It looks better. And interestingly enough, it's the same board, the same CEO who grew to hate me actually at one point because, you know, we were part of the neighbourhood that was really [0:49:00] giving him a tough time, but in the end it was a better result. And then interestingly enough, what happened was that they hired a new executive director, and he was much, much better with the community. He was really anxious to get along, and so ironically all of a sudden, the meetings for Harbord Village were there.

Interviewer: Oh, that's right. Of course. Yes.

Respondent: Yeah. And we'd been fighting for years. You have no idea how much animosity there'd been, but he really said, you know, "I want to get along with you guys. So – and there was a new [0:49:30] kind of leadership on the board of Harbord Village too, so everybody tried to do well, and they did. And then this latest thing is that that church that is now the hospice, that was the – do you know that?

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent: And that was the last remaining kind of piece of controversy because at one point – what did they want to do? I think they wanted to sell it to make it a condo or something.

Interviewer: Oh.

Respondent: And eventually, eventually they got – I don't know the actual details, but [0:50:00] they got permission to open a hospice, and they got funding somehow to do it. So they are actually good neighbours now. Ironically, it's true. What was a terrible relationship turned into a very good relationship.

Interviewer: Have you been inside the hospice?

Respondent: Yes.

- Interviewer:** It's beautiful.
- Respondent:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Oh yeah.
- Respondent:** Well I went on Open Doors. I didn't get into the actual clinical part. They didn't take people in there.
- Interviewer:** Well what happened was when they first opened their doors, they had a reception.
- Respondent:** Oh, that's right.
- Interviewer:** And they invited those of us who were on the board.
- Respondent:** That's nice.
- Interviewer:** So we got to see it and nobody had moved in [0:50:30] yet.
- Respondent:** Yeah. Oh, it's quite wonderful.
- Interviewer:** And it's built very attractively.
- Respondent:** Yeah. No, it's great. It's great. So there's been some very good things that have happened. I mean when I...
- Interviewer:** But we've had to fight. You've had to fight for the good things.
- Respondent:** Yeah, yeah. Oh yeah, but we had fun. I mean, it was sort of, you know, we were a pack and we were – it was sort of, you know, it's what we did. WE had a lot of fun and we did it. When I think of this neighbourhood though, I think, you know, it's been so wonderful to live here, and it has actually developed in a way that we hoped it would. I mean they're wonderful people, and they've looked after the houses, and [0:51:00] it's not as – I guess it's not as family-oriented as it once was, but that's life. I mean...
- Interviewer:** Yeah. I guess. So who do you think is living here then?

Respondent: Well I think – well there are still a number of student houses where the owners are absent. I think there's a number of people like us where there's two people in the house. This neighbour's right up here. There are two children actually next door, which is nice. So a lot of the houses are owned by people who, [0:51:30] you know, have money and can afford to own a whole house. There are still a number of immigrant families around.

Interviewer: Yes, yeah.

Respondent: And then there's a number of houses that I just don't know about. I mean I don't know – I don't know. And there's also expensive housing here. I mean, there's some people who have put triplexes and fourplexes into their houses, and they're charging very high rents for that, and they're making money.

Interviewer: Yeah. Well, people want to live in the neighbourhood.

Respondent: Yeah. And we've also had some controversies. I mean we – do you know Hy [0:52:00] Rosenberg?

Interviewer: Yes. Yes.

Respondent: He owned both these houses here. And he now owns the one – he sold this one here and the one next to it. He wanted to put in these fourplexes, and there was a lot of difficulty with the neighbours, including me with him. I mean he's not happy with me. But now the people that moved in here, interestingly enough, he started building a huge, huge addition without a permit, and that's recently been a big controversy and I actually didn't want to – [0:52:30] I didn't want to fight anymore, so we agreed to – we all went to the Committee of Adjustment and we agreed that he could keep the addition, but it's been, you know, it's been a concern, a real concern. So.

Interviewer: But you've had to fight to keep...

Respondent: Yeah.

Interviewer: ...a certain type of house here, and you got tired of fighting, you're saying.

Respondent: Yeah. Yeah, exactly.

Interviewer: Well I want to thank you, one, for all the work. Fabulous work you've done for our neighbourhood.

Respondent: Oh, that's very sweet.

Interviewer: And two, for **[0:53:00]** inviting me into your home and...

Respondent: Oh, well thank you.

Interviewer: ...speaking to me so candidly and so articulately.

Respondent: Oh, it's been a joy.

Interviewer: It's my pleasure.

Respondent: Well thank you.

Interviewer: Okay, thank you very much.

Respondent: Oh, you're so welcome.

Interviewer: And now I'll look at your pictures.

Respondent: Okay. Well I'll show you why...

[00:53:11]

[End of recording]