

106 Ann, Bill, John Karner

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

[0:00:00]

Interviewer: And the date today is the 26th of April. I am at 219 Major Street with Ann Karner, her brothers Bill and John Karner. So first of all, thank you very much all of you, because the two brothers came in from Mississauga for this interview, and I appreciate the trip that you took so that the four of us could have a conversation. And your parents bought the house in 1994, and it's been in [0:00:30] your family since 1944.

Respondent 1: Mm-hm. Yes.

Interviewer: I'm sure we have a lot to talk about, or you have a lot to talk about. So thank you very, very much.

Respondent 1: You're welcome.

Interviewer: I'm going to start with a question of how old was each of you in 1944 when your family moved into this? So...

Respondent 2: Okay. I was four.

Interviewer: So this is Bill speaking.

Respondent 2: Yeah.

Interviewer: You were four.

Respondent 2: Yes.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Respondent 1: And I was about six months.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Respondent 3: [0:01:00] I'm the oldest anyhow, so...

Interviewer: And that's John.

Respondent 3: Yes. Oh, I have to figure that out. I'm now eighty.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Respondent 3: So I don't really know.

Respondent 2: You were born in 1933, right?

Respondent 3: '33, yeah.

Respondent 2: Okay. So you would have been...

Interviewer: Eleven.

Respondent 1: Eleven. Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. So you were eleven years old. So – and you lived your – have you been here the whole time, Ann?

Respondent 1: I was away for about five years [0:01:30] in 1995 to about 2000.

Interviewer: To 2000. Okay.

Respondent 1: And then we got the house.

Interviewer: And Bill and John, when did you move out of this house?

Respondent 2: Okay. When I completed university, I was living in an apartment actually on St. George, and then shared because I started teaching [0:02:00] in Etobicoke. And then from there, in '75 we bought a house together in east Mississauga.

Respondent 3: Right. And I was...

Respondent 2: So we've been there since, and John was here.

- Interviewer:** So John, you were here until 1975.
- Respondent 2:** Right.
- Respondent 3:** Had to look after this one. [Laughter]
- Interviewer:** Keep her behaving well. Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** Well she always behaved well.
- Respondent 1:** Thank you John. [Laughter]
- Interviewer:** Do you have any idea – I mean you were all young and you were only eleven, being the oldest, do you have any idea what [0:02:30] prompted your parents to buy in this neighbourhood?
- Respondent 1:** Well they were renting, weren't they, on Huron? They didn't own that place on Huron.
- Respondent 2:** No, they didn't.
- Respondent 1:** And I guess they were looking because they were of Austrian background, our parents, and so they all lived around Dundas and Spadina in that area near St. Patrick's church, you know, on McCaul?
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Because that was the German church, right? And [0:03:00] so then...
- Respondent 2:** I also think because my dad was involved in the fish business, and he had the store, Bradford Fish, and John eventually got into the business. And I guess it was very close. I mean you could literally walk it.
- Interviewer:** Where was the fish business?
- Respondent 2:** Right in Kensington there, but on Spadina.

- Respondent 1:** Spadina.
- Respondent 3:** Right on Spadina.
- Respondent 2:** Between College and Dundas on the west side. 390, I think [0:03:30] it was. 390 Spadina.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Bradford Fish Company.
- Respondent 2:** Bradford Fish Company.
- Interviewer:** So he had a business here, and that was convenient that he could walk to work in ten minutes.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** It wasn't his business. He worked for a gentleman and then...
- Respondent 1:** Well he owned a quarter of it, right John?
- Respondent 3:** No. Not until later on. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Okay. But that's where his work was.
- Respondent 1:** Yes.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** It was a lawyer who owned half of it, and then I don't know...
- Respondent 3:** Weinberg. He lived on Palmerston. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. And then he had two [0:04:00] partners, my dad and Eddie, right?
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.

Respondent 1: Were a partner. Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. So you think that that was probably a big factor, that your father wanted to live near where he was already working.

Respondent 3: Yes. And I think also as Ann pointed out, St. Patrick's at that time, at McCaul, it was sort of like a community for a lot of the immigrants that had come in. Like our folks came in from Austria [0:04:30] in the late '20s, in 1920s, and so they lived in that area. So there was a large German-speaking community, and I guess part of that too is the proximity of still being close enough to that, you know, area.

Interviewer: To that community.

Respondent 3: So it's that community, you know, that was gathered.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. I think that's human nature.

Respondent 1: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

Interviewer: To need communities and to want to live close to people that we share so much with.

Respondent 2: Right.

Interviewer: So your [0:05:00] father stayed at that business and eventually he'd owned it?

Respondent 1: Yes. Part of it. Like they were partners.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

Respondent 1: And he became a partner in the business.

Interviewer: So 1944, your father was working there.

Respondent 1: Right.

Respondent 2: Right.

Interviewer: How many years did he continue to be part of that business?

Respondent 2: Until he died.

Respondent 3: Yeah.

Interviewer: When was that?

Respondent 3: He died when we were young, in 1948.

Interviewer: He died in 1948?

Respondent 3: Yeah. He was forty-four.

Interviewer: Oh. He was terribly young.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 3: It was quite a tragedy. Happened very quickly.

Respondent 1: Yeah. He got [0:05:30] pneumonia, and in those days they didn't have the medicines, right, that we have today.

Respondent 2: Yeah. And he would not stay at home.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 2: That's the way he was. If he was working there, he'll stay there.

Respondent 1: And then by the time he got into the hospital, he had – you know, his lungs were all congested, and he died of congestive heart failure. I think John and Bill, you looked it up. John looked up what caused our dad's death.

Respondent 3: Yeah.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: So the Market [0:06:00] brought you here, but your father died young, but here you were already living in this neighbourhood.

Respondent 1: So then my mother to meet, you know, bills and that, they rented out the house, right? The upstairs on the second floor was rented out to...

Respondent 2: And the third floor.

Respondent 1: And part of the third floor. Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. So slow down. Let's stay with that for a while. That means that the three children and your mother, you all lived on this floor?

Respondent 2: Yeah.

Respondent 3: Yeah.

Respondent 1: When we were – I can't remember, but...

Interviewer: **[0:06:30]** After your father died.

Respondent 2: You know what happened? We've always – I mean there are two bedrooms on the third level, so realistically when – because I can remember even when my dad was alive, because one of the fellows who lived on the top level with us, we had the big front room, John and I. That was our bedroom.

Interviewer: On the second floor.

Respondent 2: On the third floor.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent 2: And then Mr. Lupine, remember him?

Respondent 3: Yeah, that's right.

Respondent 2: He was **[0:07:00]** from Quebec or somewhere. He lived in the second bedroom, and actually he worked at the store.

Respondent 3: That's right.

Respondent 2: Right.

Interviewer: The store being the fish store?

Respondent 2: That's right.

Respondent 1: Yes.

Respondent 2: And then the people – they were Williams.

Respondent 1: That's right. Dorothy and Ross...

Respondent 2: Dorothy and Ross Williams.

Respondent 3: Ross. Yeah.

Respondent 2: From up around Port Credit way, or Port Elgin way. And they lived in there on the second floor.

Interviewer: There were two of them, or more than two?

Respondent 2: No, there was just two of them on the top level, and they had kind of the bathroom, [0:07:30] etcetera, etcetera on that level, and they had a bedroom, two rooms, and then a kitchen, right? So that income obviously helped to pay the expenses, and it was very good for my mom because that was there in place, right?

Respondent 1: Because she did go out to work at a cookie factory, but...

Respondent 2: Only part-time.

Respondent 1: Yeah. And then it just got too much because she – you know, so she just stayed home.

Interviewer: How old were all three of you when your father died?

Respondent 2: Well I was [0:08:00] – 1944, I would be eight.

Respondent 1: I was four.

- Respondent 2:** Yeah. I remember when we buried him...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. On your birthday.
- Respondent 2:** ...on my birthday. And then the family that was living up there...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. June and Keith. Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** ...they had all the kids in from the community, you know, around the street here that I knew for a birthday party.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. June said even though our father had died, that he was being buried, and my mom agreed that, you know, it was Bill's birthday. And it was on – the King was buried that day too.
[0:08:30] You know, like I think – wasn't it Queen Elizabeth's dad died and he was buried?
- Respondent 3:** Was it there? I can't remember. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Before your father died, did you have these other people already living here? Or was it after your father died?
- Respondent 2:** No, somehow we were living here.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Because Ross and Dorothy were living here, right?
- Interviewer:** So your parents already needed that extra income. Okay. So the two of you slept upstairs in the **[0:09:00]** big front room.
- Respondent 3:** Right.
- Interviewer:** And then the man who worked at the fish store...
- Respondent 3:** Mel Lupine was there.

- Interviewer:** ...was on the second floor with you.
- Respondent 1:** And I slept in the room here.
- Interviewer:** On the first floor.
- Respondent 1:** On the first floor. And mommy and dad had – like the front room, what I have is the front room. That was their bedroom. And then I had the one here.
- Respondent 2:** Which is the dining room.
- Respondent 1:** The dining room now.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah. And then there was a couple on the second...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. And there was no washroom here. There was like a big closet.
- Respondent 2:** That was actually a kitchen pantry.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. At one time. And then they turned it into [0:09:30] a closet, and they had closed this wall. So when we renovated, you can see where there was an alcove to go into there.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** And so everybody, all these people on all these floors, you shared one bathroom.
- Respondent 1:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** Or was there a second bathroom?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, one bathroom.
- Interviewer:** And kitchens? One kitchen?

- Respondent 1:** There was a kitchen. No, and there still is. Well, I mean, there's a sink up there, but I don't use it as a kitchen. But that used to be the kitchen where...
- Interviewer:** So there was a second kitchen on the second floor.
- Respondent 1:** [0:10:00] And we all used the one bathroom. Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** Now there are three. [Laughter]
- Respondent 2:** And only one person. [Laughter]
- Respondent 3:** How life changes, eh?
- Interviewer:** You have your choice. Every time you need to go to the washroom you have to choose, "Which one should I go?"
- Respondent 3:** Well most of the houses around here at that time were like that. There was one bathroom, right?
- Interviewer:** And a lot of people living in all the rooms. I mean I'm not surprised to hear that the number of people who were sleeping on this floor. That was...
- Respondent 3:** That's where – [0:10:30] earlier, when I know my folks came, when they lived down in the Grange area, you know where the AGO is now, I mean a lot of them, you know, they were a family on each level.
- Respondent 2:** That's right. Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** That's how they had to live in order to survive, right?
- Respondent 1:** Well, mom said they had one – like when they first came, they had one common kitchen, and you'd have one room. Like each couple had a room, and that's how they lived. You know? And they got along fine. And then maybe [0:11:00] one toilet, but everybody managed. And you know, they survived.

- Interviewer:** Well, I mean it's talked about the kind of people money people had and/or didn't have. So people bought the homes, they were happy to be homeowners, but they couldn't pay for it on one salary.
- Respondent 1:** Right. Exactly.
- Respondent 2:** That's right.
- Respondent 1:** And in those days, the women didn't really work.
- Interviewer:** Did you know any women who worked? Or pretty much they stayed home?
- Respondent 3:** Well Dorothy worked upstairs.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. She – [0:11:30] yeah. But they were English-speaking, you see?
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** I mean my mom worked. She worked as a cleaning lady when John was a little baby. That's when they lived...
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. But that's when they lived – but she didn't work when they lived here.
- Respondent 1:** No. When she had, I guess, you Bill, she didn't have any – working anymore.
- Interviewer:** Well we're also talking about the socioeconomic description of this neighbourhood that your mother worked as a cleaning lady, and then she had a bigger family.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** [0:12:00] But now, it's such a different population here.
- Respondent 1:** Well I mean, then there across the street was the ragman. Remember?

Interviewer: Tell me.

Respondent 1: We had – the house across, not directly across, but the one next to – you know our friend. I don't even know – Eleanor, who told you to call me?

Interviewer: Okay. Yeah.

Respondent 1: And that house, beside her, he was the ragman. Remember he had a horse and a buggy? And he would go around and collect all the stuff. Remember?

Respondent 3: [0:12:30] Yeah. He was one of the last...

Respondent 2: Yeah. But they also came – like bringing ice in the back of the wagon.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 2: No truck. It was always horses.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 3: I remember when the first large Dominion opened up.

Respondent 2: Oh yeah.

Respondent 3: Prior to that, well you can see remnants. Like the house on this corner still has the front. So there was a grocery store here.

Respondent 1: Grocery store on the other side.

Respondent 3: The back over. The next street over on Robert, as you know, there [0:13:00] were three stores there, and you can still see on the house on the northwest corner, they still had the façade of the house. It was a tailor shop there, and that. So it was very much like Europe here, where every day you shopped. This was our old middle room in the back here was the back kitchen. Here we had an icebox, so every other day or every third day, a big block of ice

came. You know, and they had the icebox there, right? [0:13:30]
Coal was brought in.

Respondent 1: I even have the coal chute still out there.

Interviewer: You still have it?

Respondent 1: Well it doesn't come in, but we're the – the window where it is, yeah.

Respondent 2: And there was, you know, the big, big, big, big furnace. You know, that pipes up to all the rooms, right? But as a kid, I can remember, you know, before popsicles, we would – you know, the ice wagon would come along, and what did we do? All slide and got those slivers of ice and sucked on those, on those very hot days.
[0:14:00] That was a real treat for us as kids, you know? Yeah.

Respondent 1: And then the corner here, the corner house on the other side on Sussex, the north side, they had a ladies' wear shop in that window where all the plants are now.

Respondent 3: Yeah. Mm-hm.

Respondent 1: And I remember, you know, we would go to Eaton's of course, and Simpson's. I mean my mom would go down there, but we would always go there to see what she had to sell. And I remember my mom bought one of these lovely, long half- – like a half-coat, [0:14:30] and green. I can still remember the colour. It was so nice and comfortable. We bought it in that little shop.

Interviewer: Isn't that amazing that you remember so clearly?

Respondent 1: Yeah. Because, well you know, it was one of the first times I had, like, a jacket type coat, right?

Interviewer: Oh, she bought it for you.

Respondent 1: For me.

Interviewer: Oh.

- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Yeah. And we would go in, and the lady had all, you know, dresses, and underwear.
- Interviewer:** Was it children and adults?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** So it was just women of all ages. Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah. I remember going in there. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** These are **[0:15:00]** fabulous memories. I mean these slivers of ice. [Laughter]
- Respondent 2:** I mean you remember those things. I mean, you know, the horses, you know?
- Interviewer:** And think of all the different things that the horses were moving around the streets delivering. Tell me. Let's go to the horses.
- Respondent 2:** Well when the weather got good, and you know, getting into June where there was projects, vegetables came through.
- Respondent 3:** They would come in, right?
- Interviewer:** So it was an open wagon behind?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. It was a straight wagon.
- Interviewer:** So it wasn't some refrigerated truck. [Laughs]
- Respondent 1:** No.
- Respondent 3:** No, no, no.
- Respondent 1:** And we had milk **[0:15:30]** in the bottles. I still have some of the bottles downstairs. And in the winter, sometimes the caps were off because the ice – you know, freezing the ice. So it would come up, so the milkman came and he delivered the milk. Yeah.

- Respondent 2:** And the bread was delivered the same way.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So much was delivered.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. And then the horses out there, you know? They left sparrows there going through the old horse falls, you know what I mean?
- Interviewer:** Oh. [Laughter]
- Respondent 3:** Well I mean, it was food, you know? [Laughter] So there was that tradition that lingered here **[0:16:00]** for quite, you know, for a while. The ragman coming through.
- Interviewer:** What was the ragman?
- Respondent 3:** Well he was, I mean, today it's like the – out our way, when they phone up the Diabetes Association, they say, "Would you put," you know how – put clothing out because they're collecting it, you know, for whatever. He'd come along just shouting, "Rags." You know?
- Interviewer:** So your clothes that you were no longer...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Anything he took.
- Respondent 3:** Anything. Anything. And then also, there were people coming along collecting, like, old pieces of **[0:16:30]** metal. Like if you had an old icebox, or you know, anything of that nature that...
- Interviewer:** So they would take it away for you.
- Respondent 1:** They were the recyclers. Yeah. They were like the recyclers of today.
- Respondent 3:** And they probably made a buck out of it, right?
- Interviewer:** They were recycling. Nobody heard the word recycling at that time.

Respondent 1: I know. But you know, like the ladies on Borden, but we had every day that we put out the garbage, right? Somebody comes around and picks at all the tins and cans. Well they didn't actually, you know, because we didn't – I guess we had garbage pick-up, but you know, they didn't go [0:17:00] through the garbage, but people knew they were coming. So you put the stuff and they would get taken, yeah. And we had the lady who sharpened the knives?

Respondent 2: Oh yeah.

Respondent 1: The person coming around with the little stand and, you know, the grinder and everything, and she'd ring a bell.

Interviewer: She had a bell.

Respondent 1: And she went up and down the street ringing the bell, and then people would take out their knives to be, you know, ground and everything. Oh yeah.

Respondent 2: We still have that. They come through. I don't know if they come around in the city, but out in the, you know, we're in east [0:17:30] Mississauga, so there's a guy, John...

Respondent 3: That's right. Yeah.

Respondent 2: ...he has a truck and he comes through ringing his bell. And you know, if you've got, you know, any...

Respondent 3: Scissors...

Respondent 2: ...scissors, or any of the tools that you might use in the garden, they sharpen in areas, you know?

Interviewer: I hear that bell occasionally, but really occasionally in the neighbourhood.

Respondent 1: Oh, they're a truck too now. It's not like this – and it was a girl who actually did it. A young woman would do it, and that's how she made [0:18:00] money, I guess, for herself and her family. I mean

you didn't ask too many questions, right? You just wanted your implement sharpened. [Laughs]

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: These are very valuable memories because you're talking about the '40s, and the people I'm meeting, I'm not meeting too many people who lived here in the '40s or early '50s, so you're telling me stories that were so – are so colourful. And I'm glad that we're **[0:18:30]** recording all this.

Respondent 1: Well Nelly's was across the street. That was the store. Now there's no store there anymore. That's that big building there, you know, on the corner there? Looks like a house from out in the suburbs. You know that house on the corner, the north side of Sussex?

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent 1: Well that was Nelly's.

Interviewer: And what was Nelly's?

Respondent 1: Nelly's was like a little grocery store.

Respondent 3: Yeah.

Respondent 1: And so we would go to the show on Saturday. We were given, like, twenty-five cents to go...

Respondent 2: Ten cents, right?

Respondent 1: Well for you, but for my time, was twenty-five cents. Twenty-five **[0:19:00]** for me. And we would go to the Alhambra.

Interviewer: Where was the Alhambra?

Respondent 1: The Alhambra was – that was – and the Midtown was on the other side.

- Interviewer:** Of Bloor? College?
- Respondent 1:** That's where the Old Docs are now.
- Respondent 2:** No, it's Hot Docs.
- Respondent 1:** Hot Docs.
- Interviewer:** On Bloor Street. And on the other side was the Alhambra, remember?
- Respondent 2:** No. There were three shows there.
- Respondent 3:** That's right.
- Interviewer:** Three movie theatres?
- Respondent 1:** Three movies.
- Respondent 2:** Three movies. So what is now the Docs up there originally was the Midtown. And it's kind of interesting when you go in there. Up to Docs, we went up to see the Docs not too long ago, [0:19:30] and they'd renovated it, and they have pictures of what it looked like in the old days and what it is now, you know? And then across from that, they had the Bloor.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** And then west of Bathurst on the north side, oh, about three or four blocks in, that's where the Alhambra...
- Respondent 1:** That was opposite Honest Ed's now.
- Respondent 2:** Honest Ed's.
- Respondent 1:** Was Alhambra.
- Interviewer:** So you had three movie theatres in about five-minute walking distance.

Respondent 1: Yeah. Well you know if you walk on Bloor where they have the building [0:20:00] now that has all that drawing outside in the – what do they call it when they...

Interviewer: Tattoo.

Respondent 1: ...tattoo store. Next to the tattoo shop. That was the Bloor. And so you'd go to Nelly's, and you'd bring your nickel, and she would give you all these – you could pick the candies you want, like you know, and you'd get a little bag of candy. And with that bag of candy, you went to the store – went to the show, and you saw your movies. Like the Westerns...

Respondent 2: Serials, you know, [0:20:30] because they ran these Western serials. And then there were probably two shows, right? There was always two shows, so I mean every Saturday afternoon it was like you were there all afternoon.

Respondent 1: Comics too. Like, you know, like Popeye, you know? The Popeye comics, and the pigs, you know, and Donald – what's his name? Donald Duck, you know? And those things. Yeah. Great movies.

Interviewer: Did you go with your mother?

Respondent 2: No.

Respondent 1: No.

Interviewer: The children went by [0:21:00] themselves.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 3: Because they were essentially at shows geared for the kids.

Interviewer: But the children were allowed without parents.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 3: I mean those were the days when, you know, it wasn't all the talk now as we have where people are almost paranoid. And I mean it's understandable, but I know particularly in the suburbs, I mean, you know, the school could be down the street and people have to even drive the kid or walk it because they're concerned. **[0:21:30]** And I know the media and everything blows up a lot of this stuff, but that's a very different mentality from the day when, you know, we'd go up [laughs] and you know, just walk up there, and that was it, right?

Respondent 1: Yeah. And Shane, though, who was the house – two houses down...

Respondent 3: Two doors down. Yeah.

Respondent 1: ...like we used to play outside all the time. We played school, we played tag with all the other kids on the street.

Interviewer: So the children were out on the street without the parents hovering.

Respondent 1: No. And then her mother would call around five o'clock every night. **[0:22:00]** "Shayndle, come in for junket." [Laughs]

Interviewer: What's that?

Respondent 1: It was something she made. I don't know. And then remember we used to go to their house because the – not Shayndle's parents, but her grandparents were Orthodox Jewish people, and her parents – I mean they still did a few – I don't know whether her father went out to work. But we would go and light the stove for them, and turn on the...

Interviewer: Oh. On the Saturday.

Respondent 1: ...on the Saturday.

Respondent 3: That's right. Saturday morning.

Respondent 1: Yeah. And then we would get our nickel. We would get our nickel.

- Interviewer:** They wouldn't [0:22:30] pay you at the time. They would pay people.
- Respondent 1:** No, they would have it on the counter. It was ready for you. Like you know...
- Respondent 2:** Uh-huh. Sometimes honey cake.
- Respondent 1:** And honey cake. Yeah. [Laughter]
- Respondent 2:** That's right.
- Respondent 3:** I don't mean next door, but some, like Lloydie next door...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. I didn't go to Lloydie. I just went to Shayndle.
- Respondent 3:** He became a rabbi then, remember? You know. But that was kind of a fascinating time because it was very much still a very strong Jewish presence, and you know, the history there. And if you can see, there was almost on every other street a synagogue.
- Respondent 1:** [0:23:00] Yes.
- Respondent 3:** You know? So, well there's still one functioning south on Robert Street there.
- Interviewer:** On Brunswick.
- Respondent 1:** On Brunswick.
- Respondent 3:** I'm sorry. On Brunswick.
- Interviewer:** Just north of Harbord.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. And it's the...
- Respondent 3:** And there was one there on the north – just north of Sussex there.
- Interviewer:** On which street?

- Respondent 3:** It's a learning centre.
- Respondent 1:** On Brunswick. Brunswick and – yeah. That corner, Brunswick and Sussex, the east side, that was a synagogue too.
- Interviewer:** A smaller one? Or...
- Respondent 3:** Well that building that you see there is [0:23:30] the same size, right?
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh.
- Respondent 3:** And there were a lot.
- Interviewer:** So there were two synagogues on Brunswick.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Woo.
- Respondent 1:** And there's some – like if you go into the Jewish Y, you can see the pictures of the various synagogues that they have, because I go into that building. Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So there were two synagogues on Brunswick, and what about churches?
- Respondent 3:** Well the closest one for us because we were Roman Catholic was St. Peter's, which is right at Bathurst and Bloor.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So close.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.

Respondent 1: Yeah. And then there was an Anglican one [0:24:00] on Lippincott near – wasn't that where you played floor hockey?

Respondent 3: Yeah.

Respondent 1: And then I...

Respondent 3: I think it was the Salvation Army actually.

Respondent 1: And then now it's a Philippino Baptist Church, I think, and that was there.

Respondent 3: And then of course up here, the United Church.

Respondent 1: Yeah. Trinity United here.

Interviewer: Has that been there?

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: This has been that long. This was here...

Respondent 3: Oh yeah.

Interviewer: ...in the '40s.

Respondent 3: Yeah. Yeah. They were all functioning.

Interviewer: That's used as a church, but also as a community centre.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 3: And plus [0:24:30] the Tafelmusik.

Interviewer: Tafelmusik. Yes. Yeah.

Respondent 3: I'm glad they're staying there because they were originally thinking of going over to Koerner Hall, and the atmosphere would not be the same.

- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 1:** But Shayndle's grandfather – remember he used to make a **[indiscernible 0:24:45]** in the backyard? You know, like – and when it was the holiday time, you know...
- Interviewer:** Sukkot. Yeah. So she would make that...
- Respondent 1:** He would make that in the backyard. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** The little cabin kind of thing. Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** And now again were the sort of the grandparents, **[0:25:00]** you know, that were more – and the – I remember Shayndle's grandmother, she still wore the wig, you know?
- Interviewer:** A wig. Oh, so they were really Orthodox.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. Very, very. And we did it for a few houses here, or you know...
- Respondent 1:** I just did Shayndle's house. [Laughter]
- Respondent 3:** Well you were...
- Respondent 1:** Everybody had to get a bit of the money, right, so we could go to the show. [Laughs]
- Interviewer:** So you were working. That was child labour. [Laughs]
- Respondent 1:** No, it wasn't. No. We would have gone without anything.
- Interviewer:** Turned on their stove and turned on the lights.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Like Shayndle...
- Respondent 3:** We were with our **[0:25:30]** friends.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 3: And we had a clubhouse out the backyard, and so you know, it was good fun because we had different holidays, so we took advantage, each of us, and we played a lot in the big house on the corner. And then oddly was in the corner here, and you dealt – you played with each other, even though you might not have been going to the same school with them, right? So there was a lot of that integration, and so...

Interviewer: [0:26:00] So tell me, did you speak German in your home, or did you speak English?

Respondent 1: Our mom spoke – was in German. And we all sort of answered in English, so mom learned English, but we also learned – we went to German school.

Respondent 2: I didn't.

Respondent 1: No, you didn't, but we went to German school up here in Trinity United. They had a German school for – and we went for a couple of years.

Respondent 2: Were you in that?

Respondent 1: Yeah you went too.

Respondent 3: Well I went, I remember, but I can't remember – I don't even remember where it was.

Respondent 1: It was in Trinity [0:26:30] United.

Respondent 2: Okay. Yeah.

Respondent 1: And they had classes in there, like they set up a little school and we went and learned how to read and write.

Respondent 3: I think it's very similar to a lot of the people coming into Canada when they want to continue their culture and connection, so you

know, they have Saturday school, so it was very similar to us. You know, it gave us learning how to write German and...

Respondent 1: And to read.

Respondent 3: ...and how to read.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: So your mother spoke German to you, and you responded in English to her.

Respondent 1: Mostly. [Laughs]

Respondent 3: And [0:27:00] my mother then wouldn't – you know, like a word here in English, or a word in German, you know, it was that sort of thing. You know, so it was almost like interchangeable, right?

Interviewer: Yeah. Well who else lived here? So you talk about Shayndle and her Orthodox grandparents. Her parents.

Respondent 1: Right.

Interviewer: Who else was here? So your family was here, German-speaking or English-speaking, and Jewish.

Respondent 1: Mm-hm.

Interviewer: Who made up the neighbourhood at that time?

Respondent 3: Eastern European families.

Respondent 2: [0:27:30] Yeah.

Respondent 3: Right? Some of the house – I think they were what? Ukrainian.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 3: And then there were also Canadian families.

Respondent 1: There was a black family that lived about three storeys down, but I think that was in the '60s.

Respondent 3: They were coming in alter.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 3: But, I mean, a lot of the people here were essentially Jewish people.

Respondent 1: Mm-hm. Until they started moving north.

Respondent 3: You know, up to Lawrence and areas north of there.

Respondent 1: And then you have all the, like, Greek families [0:28:00] moving in, the Italian families.

Respondent 3: Yeah.

Respondent 1: A few English.

Respondent 3: A few English.

Respondent 2: People had came – leaving their countries, they came here. Then the people – places they took were the ones that came at the time before.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 2: So it keeps going around and around.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: What do you think that was about? You said that the Jewish families moved north.

Respondent 1: Well maybe their synagogues – you know, bigger synagogues opened up there. And maybe a bigger home like, [0:28:30] you know, here. And you know, renovations or whatever. And you know...

Respondent 3: Maybe they got into better jobs and business so that they can go to a different place or a better place than they had.

Interviewer: Now your sister and brother are younger than you.

Respondent 3: Mm-hm.

Interviewer: Talking and telling me so many wonderful stories. Do you have any memories from those same years? But you were a few years older.

Respondent 3: Mm-hm.

Interviewer: Is there anything that comes to **[0:29:00]** your mind that they haven't talked about?

Respondent 3: The only thing I did, I went to school and then I went to work at the store where my dad was.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: And how old are you when you began to work?

Respondent 3: Oh.

Respondent 1: You were probably eighteen, John.

Respondent 3: Oh no, no, no, no.

Respondent 1: Because dad died, and then you quit that year that dad died school and you went to work.

Respondent 3: Yeah. Well that's always...

Respondent 1: Yeah. So you went to work.

Interviewer: So you started working at that fish store at a young age.

Respondent 1: Mm-hm.

Respondent 3: Mm-hm.

Interviewer: And then after [0:29:30] your father died, you came out of school to work full-time?

Respondent 3: Not right away, but I did work. The fellow that my dad worked for, the Jewish couple, they were very kind to us and to me that I could work there, and not a bad wage. So I stayed in there until I finished my school and then I moved on.

Interviewer: Until you finished your school, meaning high school?

Respondent 3: [0:30:00] Yeah.

Interviewer: So you worked there after your father died until you finished high school, and then you got a full-time job?

Respondent 1: Mm-hm.

Respondent 3: Yeah.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Respondent 3: Well then I worked the fish business anyway...

Interviewer: Oh yeah.

Respondent 3: ...because I had the experience. I might as well work.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Respondent 3: And then I got a much better salary, that's for sure.

Interviewer: And were you working in a fish store in Kensington Market?

Respondent 1: In the same one my dad had.

Interviewer: No, but after you said when you finished high school and you got a full-time job in a fish store?

- Respondent 3:** Yeah. Well it was on Spadina too.
- Respondent 1:** No, in the same.
- Respondent 2:** Same building.
- Respondent 3:** My dad...
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** So they wanted [0:30:30] me, and I...
- Interviewer:** Oh, they kept you on as a full-time employee.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** At eighteen or nineteen years old. Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** And then he became a partner eventually.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** And did you stay there until the end of your working days?
- Respondent 3:** I'm not sure. Yeah, probably.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 2:** What happened was I guess into the late '60s and into the '70s, you know, there was all [0:31:00] the problem with mercury, remember? So a lot of the fresh fish – because they had expanded, they were into importing. They had storages down at the waterfront, you know? Like as the cultures changed and immigration changed where more people came from the West Indies, as people came in from particularly Portugal and Italy, he got into much the seafood. So they did [0:31:30] octopus. You know, all of that whole – so and then – so as well as having the Jewish business, that was the Japanese holidays, you know, they did Jewish weddings. They had

[indiscernible 0:31:42], which was a store up in the north up there in Bathurst area, way up there, where a lot of the Jewish community was. There was a store they had up there. And then also you dealt with Dominion store, so it became quite a large complex.

Interviewer: [0:32:00] So this fish business grew.

Respondent 2: It really grew.

Interviewer: And provided fish. Supplied fish.

Respondent 2: It really grew, so all those different cultures and all of their different holidays, so...

Interviewer: And you were able to take care of the Jewish ones.

Respondent 2: Everybody. Everybody.

Respondent 1: Chinese.

Interviewer: Whoa.

Respondent 2: They sold fish.

Respondent 3: Yeah. We sold the fish. Yeah.

Respondent 2: We had a massive tank with live carp...

Respondent 3: Carp.

Interviewer: Oh.

Respondent 2: ...and they brought in the carp, and massive tuna. So that's what I think was very successful. But then [0:32:30] John had two partners. They were older than him. Eddie went right back to working when my dad was still there. He was too just an employee, and then they had the opportunity to get involved when Weinberg no longer wanted to deal with that, so they bought him out. And so one fellow died, and then the other partner had – because they

were much older than John, so John wound up doing all this business.

Respondent 1: He would have died.

Respondent 2: And all [0:33:00] of this. And I think you always had this feeling, because my dad died very young. He would...

Respondent 3: Yeah. I was thinking I'm going to go too.

Respondent 2: ...never live past forty-four. So when the Chinese community were moving out of Elizabeth Street and all those places close to City Hall, and expanding into the Spadina area, and a lot of that Hong Kong money was starting to read the writing on the wall...

Respondent 3: Yeah.

Respondent 2: ...you know, [0:33:30] because of China taking over, they were bought out by a Hong Kong Chinese company.

Interviewer: The fish store was bought out?

Respondent 2: Right.

Interviewer: And this whole expanded business that you had created.

Respondent 2: Yeah. And so John retired at the wonderful age of forty-four. [Laughter]

Respondent 3: And I'm still retired. [Laughter]

Respondent 2: Ann, can I have more coffee? I'd appreciate it.

Interviewer: You retired at age forty-four, but you sold a successful business.

Respondent 3: Yeah. Very successful, yeah.

Interviewer: You must have been a good businessman because [0:34:00] there were so many different – you expanded it in so many different directions.

- Respondent 3:** I was very lucky because everybody I worked with, they all could do the same thing. So we could all – if I did something the one day, the next one wasn't there, then another person there and I'd go there. We'd work each way.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. But John, at the end there, you were working – like you would be going to the airport getting fish at seven or six o'clock in the morning.
- Respondent 3:** That's right.
- Respondent 1:** And then you'd be working until seven or eight. He was like skin [0:34:30] and bones. He wouldn't have survived.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Would you like a coffee or a tea?
- Interviewer:** No, thank you. I'm very happy with my water. Thanks a lot.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. So then I retired, so I had nothing – I had nothing to do since...
- Respondent 1:** Oh, you did a lot, John. You used to come out – I taught school and he – you know, we had to get people for trips, right?
- Respondent 3:** That's me.
- Respondent 1:** And nobody wants to go with seven- and eight-year – grade seven and eights, right? Nobody wants – so luckily he came along. If he hadn't come, we wouldn't have...
- Respondent 3:** I enjoyed it.
- Respondent 1:** ...been able to go.
- Respondent 3:** [0:35:00] It was good. The kids were good. The kids weren't bad. Not with her around, boy. [Laughter]

- Interviewer:** Strict teacher?
- Respondent 3:** Oh yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** Yes, yes.
- Respondent 1:** We had to be with seven and eights, right? I mean...
- Interviewer:** Did you teach in this neighbourhood?
- Respondent 1:** I taught down at St. Francis of Assisi, which was on Dundas and Manning.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. I taught down there. They were basically Italian children.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. So what schools did you all go to in this neighbourhood?
- Respondent 1:** We went to the St. Peter's. You know the one that's being ripped down?
- Interviewer:** **[0:35:30]** Oh, you all went to that one.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Because I went on the walk last year. You know, the Harbord Village walk?
- Interviewer:** Yes. Yes.
- Respondent 1:** And this man was saying, talking about, oh, you know, they're going to build this building here. It's going to be four storeys high. And he sort of pooh-pooed the idea of the school. And I said, "You know, we went here and we had great fun here for many years before it became like Loretto." It was the old St. Peter's, and then St. Peter's went to Dominic Savio, which is not there anymore. And then it became **[0:36:00]** Loretto College campus. You know Loretto Brunswick?

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent 1: It became a campus there. And then it became a school for, I think, adults, you know? And now it's being ripped down, and it's being built into a huge four-storey, I think, apartment building with stores on the bottom and three floors of apartments.

Interviewer: Oh, that's had a lot of different incarnations, that building.

Respondent 1: [0:36:30] Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 1: So. You sure I can't get you some tea or something?

Interviewer: No, thanks. I'm happy with this. Kensington Market was a part of your life because your father had a business there and then you worked there. I'm asking you to talk some more about Kensington Market. How your family used it.

Respondent 2: Well, you provided the stores, the fish stores in the Market. One was called Cohen's, wasn't it?

Respondent 3: Yeah.

Interviewer: Called Cohen's?

Respondent 3: Cohen's. Yeah.

Respondent 2: Whether it's still there – [0:37:00] but they provided, you know, the fish for those places, as John did through all of these fish stores. Really. I mean you were one of the main distributors of live and – well, live fish as well as fresh fish that came from different parts of Canada, you know, because fish was a large part of the Jewish diet, right?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 2: And for holidays, like, gefilte fish. And you made gefilte fish, right? [Laughter]

- Respondent 3:** Right. That's right.
- Interviewer:** You made gefilte fish?
- Respondent 3:** We didn't cook it, but we...
- Interviewer:** But you made the combination.
- Respondent 3:** ...skinned and boned the fishes, [0:37:30] and...
- Interviewer:** And chopped them up for them?
- Respondent 3:** Well if they wanted we did.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. They had a grinder, you know?
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. So you would combine all the two or three or four kinds of fish?
- Respondent 3:** Well, they'd have an opportunity to pick up what they want and...
- Interviewer:** Oh, they would come and said like that?
- Respondent 3:** Or just like saying, "I want twenty pounds of fish," or five, five, and five, so I would make out that and that's it.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. And if they wanted you to grind it, you would do that too?
- Respondent 3:** [0:38:00] No, we did not grind it.
- Respondent 2:** I thought you ground it.
- Respondent 3:** We skinned and boned them.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. And then they would take it home and grind it themselves.
- Respondent 3:** They would grind it and they would – I could trim up all the bones too and the heads.

- Respondent 2:** John, I...
- Interviewer:** They wanted the heads for what?
- Respondent 2:** They ground it.
- Respondent 3:** Well they used them, like, for soup, so they took that out.
- Interviewer:** Mm-hm.
- Respondent 3:** Not everybody, but some.
- Respondent 1:** Well don't forget, in those days you'd use everything if you could, right? Because you're paying for the whole fish.
- Respondent 2:** But they would make soup with it.
- Respondent 1:** **[0:38:30]** Soups and everything.
- Respondent 2:** And all of that stuff.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** But I find it so amusing, you talking about turning on and off the lights on the stove, and gefilte fish. [Laughs] You knew your Jewish neighbourhood. Your Jewish neighbours.
- Respondent 3:** They wouldn't do it. They were very religious. They would not turn the lights off or on, you see? So if you were around, we'd go and you know? I don't know what happened when there was nobody around.
- Respondent 2:** Well I think we were around. Always around. [Laughter] Because we were still **[0:39:00]** here. I mean...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** And it wasn't so much that it was an imposition. We knew...
- Respondent 1:** No, they were our friends.

- Respondent 2:** ...we played with these kids. So they would say, you know, "You're going to come in, you know, and do it"...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** And it just became much the same as you go out and pick up the paper or something. You would go around. A great little book, I don't know, a friend of mine, Teddy Schmidt, wrote a book. "The Sabbath Goy."
- Respondent 1:** Goy. And that [0:39:30] was us.
- Interviewer:** Oh, "The Sabbath Goy"?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. Have you read it?
- Interviewer:** No, I haven't.
- Respondent 2:** Well that's a book that you might want to look at, because that's what we were, "The Sabbath Goy," you know? [Laughter] And I mean, we didn't think anything of it, and you know, it was kind of a fun thing. And you got that extra nickel or piece of honey bread, you know, and it was something to look forward to.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Did some of these families or the parents speak Yiddish at home?
- Respondent 1:** Oh yes. Oh yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Did you learn any Yiddish words?
- Respondent 2:** Oh yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Well, because some of the Yiddish is close to [0:40:00] German, right?

- Interviewer:** Yes, of course.
- Respondent 1:** So we could understand them. Like I mean, Shayndle's grandparents spoke Yiddish, and I'm sure her parents spoke it, but the parents spoke fluent English as did, you know, Shayndle.
- Interviewer:** Of course, the word "Shane" means "beautiful."
- Respondent 1:** Does it? Oh, I don't know.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** Schoen. Yeah, Shoendle. So yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Schoen. Yeah. That's right.
- Interviewer:** That would be similar to the German.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So what other languages did you hear [0:40:30] as you went in and out of your friends' homes?
- Respondent 3:** Well I think probably a lot of the Slavic. Probably Ukrainian.
- Respondent 2:** Some Italian.
- Respondent 1:** The Italians came in the '50s and the '60s. Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** Well I mean, obviously there were people here that were Canadians. I mean, I don't know how long in terms of generation, but you know, the corner house over there, there's a young gal. [Laughs] I [0:41:00] remember one Easter, not Easter but Halloween, because he moved out to Mimico, you know, it was like a big loss. And then going out to her place, and it was like ooh, out in the suburbs.

- Respondent 1:** Big trek.
- Respondent 3:** You know? Yeah. Stayed over even, you know? It was sort of fun. Being a little kid at that time. So obviously there were English families. I think there were some French-speaking families, but you know, I think predominant was people probably from Eastern Europe, you know?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** [0:41:30] And a very strong Jewish presence here, you know?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Those were the kids we grew up with. Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** Had settled here and, you know, they had the synagogues, and they had their own community probably from where they were, living in, you know, whatever part of Europe, Eastern Europe. And so they obviously gathered as community, you know? And so, you know, on the Friday night and then Saturday going to the shuls, you know, they would have – just put on their shawls and [0:42:00] with their books and run off.
- Interviewer:** [Laughs] I love the fact that you use the word "shul." I mean people would call it a synagogue, but you're using "shul" because that's what they call it.
- Respondent 3:** That's what it was called, you know?
- Respondent 1:** And some of the – because I remember the elderly couple that lived across the street, and I guess, you know, they were – you know, Holocaust survivors because I never remember seeing any kids, and the lived – you know, they lived too in their eighties or late eighties, and I remember – I still have the vivid memory of the lady coming [0:42:30] home. She must have had beginnings of Alzheimer's or something, and she didn't know where she was, you know? And she was coming home late at – but I never remember that family having children. So you know, they could have been people who came from the Holocaust time and the, you know, were able to – like our parents – buy that home, and they lived there.

And you know, then eventually they moved away because she – you know, she needed care.

Interviewer: Yeah. [0:43:00] Do you remember people – you described that people lived in their own little communities. But you played with Shayndle and...

Respondent 1: Oh yeah.

Interviewer: Generally, did people get along? Did they go into each other's homes? The children, the older people? What was the atmosphere amongst all these different groups?

Respondent 3: Well I think we as kids...

Respondent 1: Mm-hm. Played.

Respondent 3: ...went into homes.

Respondent 2: Yeah.

Respondent 3: Like I remember Lloyd's family, the first, [0:43:30] the second house, or the first house beyond the store there. They got the first TV, I think it had to be the early '50s. Well, obviously if they came [laughter] – and we were all there. I can remember, it came on around four o'clock or something, "Howdy Doody." I mean, we didn't get a TV until much later.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 3: And so that obviously was a gathering point, and everybody would show up there. But I think people – it was like [0:44:00] on the street. You saw somebody, and our folks would talk to somebody, but I mean, there wasn't like they're coming over here for dinner. But I can remember going over to eat in some of their places, like, and I think I came here too.

Interviewer: So the children...

Respondent 1: The children.

- Respondent 3:** Not the adults.
- Respondent 1:** Like they talked outside, but they didn't come into the...
- Respondent 3:** Socialize, etcetera.
- Respondent 1:** But don't forget, then, [0:44:30] like in the house, you had the bedrooms, bedrooms, the kitchen, and here was like the summer – well, what we called the summer kitchen. So...
- Interviewer:** So the only gathering place would have been the kitchen because all the other rooms had beds.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** That's right. Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** And so they would talk on the verandah, or they would talk out in the backyard.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Okay. Let's stop at the verandah for a minute. What was going on on the verandahs?
- Respondent 1:** Well...
- Respondent 2:** Well just about every [0:45:00] summer night.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Sit out there.
- Respondent 2:** I mean people would be sitting out and chit-chatting, and particularly the neighbours who were reasonably close, you know? Or across the street. Because I remember playing with a kid.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. There was a boy...
- Respondent 2:** I can't remember.

- Respondent 1:** ...up the – across the street that I used to play upstairs in their house with him. We used to play together.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. So it was fairly – excuse me – intense within, I don't know, two or three houses realistically because honestly, [0:45:30] I don't, as a kid, remember much. The other guy that – who provided stores with candy, and he was always dishing candy out to us, and he lived at what? At 207 Major, and I think that's about as far as I knew.
- Respondent 1:** And this was our little enclave. Like this, like north of Sussex...
- Respondent 2:** Beyond that first house.
- Respondent 1:** No. And, like, say past Shayndle's house...
- Respondent 2:** Was a fairly...
- Respondent 1:** [0:46:00] ...it was just in this little area here.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 3:** See with me, I couldn't go with them. I was too old, so I had to do something else. [Laughs]
- Interviewer:** So but the little kids and even the parents who were hanging around on the front porch, it was your little – the houses maybe three or five, four north of you or south of you, but...
- Respondent 2:** It was very tight.
- Interviewer:** ...it was a little tight enclave.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.

- Interviewer:** What about the children? Where did you play when you were playing as children?
- Respondent 3:** [0:46:30] Well, I'll say essentially – well I said, we had the little clubhouse.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** So we had one of the really old hockey games, you know? And you play on those. I can remember playing Cowboys and Indians...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** ...and throwing clumps of dirt. I mean you'd run up and down the lawns, you know, all that.
- Interviewer:** So you were playing on each other's lawns?
- Respondent 3:** No, on the street here.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** And hockey. I can remember on Sussex. Gosh, we'd be playing road hockey, you know?
- Interviewer:** On the street?
- Respondent 3:** Right on the street.
- Respondent 1:** But then...
- Respondent 3:** [0:47:00] We didn't have a net, but. [Laughter] That was too much of a splurge, you know? But we played road hockey, and the little kids sat and watched on the corner, and I can remember you – you can talk about what you guys did as girls.
- Respondent 1:** Well we played school, like Shayndle and I. We'd be out here and we'd be playing school. She was the teacher sometimes, or I was the teacher.

- Interviewer:** Now you're pointing to the back.
- Respondent 1:** Backyard.
- Interviewer:** You're talking about playing...
- Respondent 3:** Front and back.
- Interviewer:** Front and – so the back. You...
- Respondent 1:** **[0:47:30]** We used to play in the back.
- Interviewer:** ...used to play school.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. And then – but remember, I think Lloydie had a brother who was killed on the street. Like you know, I guess a car or something hit him and so I guess when that happened, you know, they didn't want us out in the front too much, so we had to play in the back.
- Respondent 3:** But that was only short-lived.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** Is there a back lane behind here?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** Yes, there is a lane.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So did the children play in the back lane also?
- Respondent 2:** No.
- Interviewer:** No.
- Respondent 3:** I think we were all – **[0:48:00]** excuse me. Always on the street or, you know.

- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Never in the lane. No, never.
- Interviewer:** So was the lane used in any...
- Respondent 3:** Oh yes.
- Interviewer:** How.
- Respondent 3:** We kept a horse down here, you know, and a wagon.
- Respondent 2:** A horse and wagon.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. A wagon and a horse down there, so they actually...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Even the ragman. At one time, there must have been a lane between...
- Respondent 3:** No, he was along here too. Wasn't he?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Or maybe – did he? Oh, because they don't have...
- Respondent 3:** He had his horse in one of these kind of garages down along **[0:48:30]** here. I mean nobody had – not a lot of people had cars in those days, very early days, you know? So there were, we had...
- Interviewer:** So there were horses in some kind of container. Some kind of...
- Respondent 3:** No, they were like, for better a word, like a makeshift stable or whatever, you know?
- Interviewer:** In this lane?
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Right here behind on Major Street?
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. Mm-hm. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** And wagons too?

- Respondent 3:** Oh yeah, they had their wagons.
- Respondent 1:** They had their wagons, of course. You couldn't leave them out on the street.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** Because we even had thieves then, you know? They even had thieves then [0:49:00] because when mom said when she moved up here, she hung the clothes out on the laundry. I guess there was no fence or whatever, and somebody stole my outfit.
- Respondent 2:** Just yours?
- Respondent 1:** Yes.
- Respondent 2:** Oh.
- Respondent 1:** My little outfit. [Laughter] Somebody needed it.
- Interviewer:** They stole it from the back...
- Respondent 1:** Mm-hm..
- Interviewer:** ...clothesline.
- Respondent 1:** So I guess that's when they put in the fence and the garage. [Laughs]
- Interviewer:** What did you have right behind your house here?
- Respondent 2:** Well there was my – my folks kept – they had a [0:49:30] garden.
- Interviewer:** With what?
- Respondent 2:** Well vegetables essentially. Maybe some...
- Respondent 1:** At the beginning.

Respondent 2: ...raspberries or tomatoes, and I think we had grapes along the...

Respondent 1: I don't know if I have a – let me see if I have a picture. John, excuse me.

Respondent 3: The thing is we have a good friend that...

Respondent 1: I can't through.

Respondent 3: I'm sorry. Okay?

Respondent 1: Yeah, thank you.

Respondent 3: And they were out in near Cooksville.

Interviewer: Say that again? Sorry, I missed it.

Respondent 3: We had a friends who had a farm out in Cooksville.

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent 3: So if we needed anything, we [0:50:00] could go out there, which was a big help for us.

Respondent 2: Yeah.

Respondent 3: They got different kinds of fruit and, you know, like cabbages or corn, and things like that.

Interviewer: So you bought those from your friend.

Respondent 3: Yeah.

Interviewer: But you also had a garden back here...

Respondent 3: A garden.

Interviewer: ...with some fruit and vegetables.

Respondent 3: That's right. Yeah.

- Interviewer:** And you ate whatever you planted.
- Respondent 3:** Oh yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Sure.
- Respondent 1:** Until they built this old garage. This was the old garage that was there.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** They built. It was an old garage. And then they had here their little [0:50:30] playhouse was here.
- Interviewer:** You know, when Richard or somebody comes around, I hope you'll bring out this album because I'm not making pictures...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. Okay.
- Interviewer:** ...copies of the pictures.
- Respondent 1:** And let's see, when we were talking about the summer kitchen, this was here the summer kitchen, you see? And this was a window. And this was a doorway.
- Interviewer:** And what I would really love to have is the way it is now and what it [0:51:00] was in 1945. So whoever comes around, please have them do this.
- Respondent 1:** Okay.
- Interviewer:** Okay.
- Respondent 3:** See this place is very different because – I mean the families obviously in those days with a house, I mean I was only four years when we moved in here, so I don't really know them that...
- Respondent 1:** Four years old. Yeah.

- Respondent 3:** I mean they used the whole house. Most of these families that lived here, it was like the family. And I mean economically, I think they were doing well, [0:51:30] whatever they were doing. And they had a kitchen. There was a pantry here. The middle room was the dining room and a living room, and they all lived upstairs, right?
- Interviewer:** The way it's being used now. So that family that your family bought it from had more money.
- Respondent 3:** That's right.
- Interviewer:** Yes. Because a lot of people I'm speaking to did it the way your family did it with bodies in every room, beds in every room, but the family that your family bought it from had more money.
- Respondent 3:** They were individual families who either – I was talking around because I think [0:52:00] – was it Shayndle's father? Was he a furrier or something?
- Respondent 1:** Yes, yes.
- Respondent 3:** One of them was. I think he was like – Spadina had a big trade of...
- Interviewer:** Oh, of fur.
- Respondent 3:** ...everything.
- Respondent 1:** And he was a cutter, if I believe. He cut the furs.
- Respondent 3:** So they had reasonably good jobs, you know? You know, in the trades. And so they did all right.
- Interviewer:** And generally speaking, when you were living here in 1945, '50, '55, what was the socioeconomic description? Who was living here, and how many families were living the [0:52:30] way you were with renting out extra spaces to help pay the mortgage? What do you think?
- Respondent 1:** Shayndle had nobody living in her house. It was the grandparents, her father and mother, and herself and her sister. Those were...

- Respondent 3:** Yeah. A lot of the homes were the same way. They had families that were living with them.
- Respondent 1:** And Lloydie didn't have – see, I think the Jewish families did not have renters. Like Lloydie's family was all by himself.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. But I think [0:53:00] also, because those families had a history here, unlike today where grandparents don't live, you know, there was like the whole family.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** So it wasn't like...
- Interviewer:** So it was three generations.
- Respondent 1:** Yes.
- Respondent 2:** It's not like sending off grandparents to a seniors' home, you know? Everybody stayed and would have died in their homes, you know? And so that tradition obviously continued, obviously right into the mid-'50s, [0:53:30] early '50s...
- Respondent 1:** Because I think after the grandparents passed away, that's when the Fishers moved away, you know?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** And you were saying – John, you were saying about who was living here at that time?
- Respondent 3:** Where? Here?
- Interviewer:** Just generally the neighbourhood, how it was...
- Respondent 3:** Well it was mainly Jewish people.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

- Respondent 3:** That's what it was. Mainly Jewish people.
- Respondent 2:** And Eastern Europeans, you know?
- Respondent 3:** And some Eastern [0:54:00] Europeans.
- Respondent 2:** They may not have been Jewish, but they were here. I mean there were obviously some English-speaking families...
- Respondent 3:** Not that many.
- Respondent 2:** No. No, not a lot, but there were some, and I don't know whether they were Canadian roots, but to me, I don't remember them as being British families, you know? They were people with roots here from previous generations, you see? I'm trying to think of who else was along here.
- Respondent 1:** See most of the kids – because I went to St. Peter's.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** [0:54:30] And there were not many kids that came to St. Peter's because they all went to the public system because I can remember playing with all Jewish kids. That's who I played with.
- Interviewer:** So in the '40s and '50s, it was predominately Jewish.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. And then, like, when our neighbour here moved out, then Italians moved in and they came as a group of big – you know, like they were all adult people. And [0:55:00] they all paid for that house, and then they would buy a house somewhere else for somebody, and they paid it like that's – they were the new immigrants. That's what they did.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** And then, like, our parents bought a house down the street. Not – like my mother remarried, and they rented out the rooms.
- Respondent 2:** 205 Major.

- Respondent 1:** 205 Major.
- Interviewer:** So your mother remarried. She stayed here or she moved?
- Respondent 1:** No. She stayed here.
- Interviewer:** She stayed here, but she bought it and rented it.
- Respondent 1:** They bought it and then my mother rented it...
- Respondent 2:** 205 was another income house, you see?
- Respondent 1:** ...to people who [0:55:30] came from Europe, and they went out to work. And my mom would go over and clean their rooms and give them sheets and towels, and everything. And...
- Interviewer:** She rented, but she also took care of it.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. And then there was a family on the first floor, but every other room in that house was rented out.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 3:** And people...
- Interviewer:** That was a smart investment for your mother, I'll bet. She was a bit of a businesswoman then.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, well she and my stepfather, they bought it, yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** People tended to, I think [0:56:00] in those days, just thinking about it because we had June and Keith...

- Respondent 1:** June and Keith.
- Respondent 2:** ...Lack who lived on the second floor when we first moved in, and my folks rented it to them. And then that's how they came in. But they were here for, I don't know, ten, twelve years.
- Respondent 3:** Oh yeah. They really liked them.
- Respondent 2:** They were like family.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** So I mean it wasn't like – we went north with them and stayed with their grandparents...
- Respondent 1:** Grandson.
- Respondent 2:** ...because they had – they came from a farming family up **[0:56:30]** on the Bruce Peninsula.
- Interviewer:** So you became friends.
- Respondent 2:** We were – you know, that was that very closeness. And...
- Respondent 1:** And even my mom, like when she rented out those two top rooms there...
- Interviewer:** In the other house.
- Respondent 1:** No, in this house here. Like there were different people. Like we had a black person living in our – like everybody...
- Respondent 3:** Everybody. We know every...
- Respondent 2:** But only in the front room.
- Respondent 1:** No. But everybody got – there was no – nobody thought of discrimination. You know what I'm saying? We grew up in an area **[0:57:00]** which we were very lucky that everybody was accepted. It didn't matter who you were, what you were, what you believed,

what colour you were. Nothing. You know? Everybody was – so when I hear of – I find it really strange because growing up, we never had that feeling here. You know? Everybody was accepted. Didn't matter who you were or where you came from. We were all one.

Respondent 3: And you shared things too.

Respondent 1: Yeah. And yeah.

Interviewer: What's it like **[0:57:30]** now compared to then in terms of who's living here now in 2013?

Respondent 1: Here we have – we've got Chinese people across the street. We have Greek people. We have John and Tamara. They're leaving, and they've sold their house. She's, I think, of Ukrainian background. He's an American. We have a young couple next door who he was born in this house, and when mom passed away, he's taken it **[0:58:00]** over and renovated it.

Interviewer: I want to meet him. How many years ago would that have been?

Respondent 1: Oh, he's now about – Alexis, I think I told you about like – he's Barbara Godard's son.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent 1: And the street lane is going to be named after Barbara.

Interviewer: Oh good. Okay. I want to meet – but you're saying there's still a variety of kinds of people in this neighbourhood right now.

Respondent 1: Yeah. So and then down the street I know there are Italians, and there's Portuguese on one side.

Interviewer: You're saying it's still a mix in the neighbourhood.

Respondent 1: And there's a **[0:58:30]** Jewish family down the street that I've been into their home and I know, because she was telling me they have their dishes on one side. You know, one cupboards and that, so

they're here. But they've only been here for about maybe fifteen, sixteen, or twenty years. I'm not sure how long. So we have a little bit of everybody on Major Street. No, like from – excuse me. I can see from Sussex down to Harbord because I know those...

Interviewer: So it's still the small...

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Interviewer: **[0:59:00]** Talk about, please, the safety. What was it like in '44 and '54 and '64 and now, 2013? About safety in this neighbourhood, what are your impressions?

Respondent 3: We didn't have any problems. No.

Respondent 1: No. We played out on the street. We were into everybody's homes.

Respondent 3: Yeah. And I think...

Respondent 2: Not that I – I never – I mean there was never this idea of you're going outside – **[0:59:30]** to play until it got dark, and then you would come in and go to bed or, you know, go do your homework. Nobody. They just shout out. [Laughter] You know, "Bill." Or you know, "Go get your sister."

Respondent 3: Yeah.

Respondent 2: John was already – because there's that seven-year gap, that's a big time, you know?

Interviewer: It is for children.

Respondent 3: I'm working all the time. I've got that responsibility.

Respondent 2: Yeah. Well I worked too, you know?

Respondent 3: Oh yeah.

- Respondent 2:** I mean, we were very fortunate, Ann and I, [1:00:00] and you too because friends of ours that came with our folks from Europe, had bought farms.
- Respondent 3:** That's right.
- Respondent 2:** ...you know, in the Erindale area. You know, that Erindale Station Road and that area. And so up until I think I was seventeen, before going to university I think it was, I spent every summer on the farm.
- Respondent 1:** Me too.
- Respondent 2:** And the first farm was...
- Interviewer:** For, like eight weeks.
- Respondent 1:** Yes.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. [1:00:30] The whole – and we went out, and we picked raspberries. The first farm had poultry and then the other farm had fox.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** And he was the guy that always delivered eggs to the house.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. We had an egg delivery, and chickens.
- Respondent 2:** You know?
- Respondent 1:** You could buy chicken.
- Respondent 2:** We wanted eggs and chicken every week, and then I would come out and deliver...
- Respondent 1:** Buy chicken.
- Respondent 2:** ...eggs.
- Respondent 3:** I was working all that time. [Laughter]

- Respondent 1:** Yeah. No, and he not only did this area, like my friend Maria who lives on Clinton, her parents bought live chickens and eggs from him, so he brought [1:01:00] in his eggs and chickens from the...
- Respondent 2:** From west Toronto.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So you – okay. You bought live chickens?
- Respondent 1:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** Who would kill the chickens?
- Respondent 1:** Well mommy. I don't know if my mother did, but we would – when we went with [indiscernible 1:01:12], like they would go delivering their eggs and chickens on Saturday.
- Interviewer:** Oh. So would this be by horse?
- Respondent 1:** No. This would be in a truck.
- Respondent 2:** In a truck. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Okay.
- Respondent 1:** And so you'd come to the house and the lady – she'd pick out her chicken.
- Interviewer:** Oh my gosh.
- Respondent 1:** And then she would take it to someplace. [1:01:30] She'd wring its neck. And then she'd cut it and that was it.
- Respondent 2:** But they'd also, if I remember correctly, they did come through the streets with chickens and...
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, here too. Yeah.

- Respondent 2:** ...crates. You know, the containers.
- Interviewer:** So you'd have a half a dozen chickens in a crate.
- Respondent 2:** And you'd go out and you'd get your chicken, or you'd go down to – it was not unusual, people going down to the Kensington Market, and the chicken would be wrapped up in newspaper, you know, and you'd just carry it like a bouquet of flowers. You know?
[Laughter] With its [1:02:00] head sticking out.
- Interviewer:** It was dead by that time.
- Respondent 2:** No, no, no.
- Interviewer:** It was alive?
- Respondent 2:** Some people would come and keep it in a, you know, some sort of a container, you know, for chickens. And I don't know. I was trying to remember if some people actually kept chickens along here somewhere, along their backyards.
- Respondent 1:** When I had...
- Respondent 3:** Well they would maybe for a few days, but not for a long time.
- Respondent 1:** We never had a chicken pet, but when I started teaching, I started teaching in the early [1:02:30] '60s at St. Francis of Assisi, and across the street, one of my students in her home had a pet chicken. And she would bring this chicken out on the verandah there, and that was her pet. We had – you had – guys had pet rabbits here.
- Respondent 3:** Well yeah. In the backyard.
- Respondent 1:** In the backyard.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Okay. So you remember people walking with – the chicken was wrapped in paper.

- Respondent 3:** Yeah. That's the same as...
- Interviewer:** But it was alive and it would be squawking or whatever chickens do.
- Respondent 2:** [1:03:00] You want it totally fresh. So I mean, you might keep it sitting in, you know, like some sort of a box for two or three days until you're ready to...
- Respondent 1:** Sunday to cook it.
- Interviewer:** And somebody would then wring its neck and then cook it.
- Respondent 2:** Chop the head.
- Interviewer:** They cleaned it, of course.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, of course. You'd pull out – you know, they put it in hot water and pluck it.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** See, she knows.
- Respondent 1:** I remember on the farm, remember when Joe would get the eggs ready? You know, we buy eggs now in the store. You don't find the blood spot, right? Well there, they had [1:03:30] one of those oil cans, and they had cut a hole in it, and they put a lamp in, and every egg was turned to be checked that there were no blood spots on the eggs.
- Respondent 2:** Blood spots. Yeah. Candle.
- Respondent 3:** People wouldn't want to buy eggs with blood in it.
- Interviewer:** With blood still in it.
- Respondent 3:** So if you get a pile of them, you take the blood out and then you make a cake or something because there's nothing wrong.

- Respondent 1:** No, but people didn't want to buy those eggs.
- Interviewer:** So did they sell those at a lower price?
- Respondent 1:** I guess they did. They might have had them [1:04:00] and said, you know, there's a little blood spot. Yeah. Yeah. But he used – they used to candle before we go out and sell them.
- Interviewer:** Okay. So we digressed a little.
- Respondent 3:** Sure.
- Interviewer:** We're talking about the safety of the neighbourhood.
- Respondent 1:** Oh yes. Okay.
- Interviewer:** And you're saying that it was a safe place.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. I don't remember...
- Respondent 1:** I only remember one incident when I was coming home from school. I thought somebody was following me, and I ran quickly and I came home. And the other...
- Respondent 2:** When you were going to elementary school?
- Respondent 1:** When I was in elementary school. And then [1:04:30] one time, I was coming down Major Street and I was in my teens, maybe the late, middle to late '50s, and I thought a guy was following me, and I ran into Nelly's store. And I said, "I think somebody's following me," so he stood at the door and watched that I got home safely. And then I watched this guy. He went up, halfway up and then he went back. But...
- Interviewer:** So he was following you.
- Respondent 1:** ...he knew that, you know, Nelly's a person who was there.

Interviewer: But that's saying [1:05:00] something very significant about the neighbourhood because you felt frightened, and you stopped in the store, and the store owner knew you...

Respondent 1: Yes.

Interviewer: ...and you knew you would be safe there.

Respondent 1: Yes. Yes.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 1: And that was one thing, like because they were open late at night too, right? Because they – you know, people would pop in for milk or whatever, right? So they would be there for the customers, and so you were always aware that somebody would be on the street there looking [1:05:30] for you.

Interviewer: So that's part of being a community, a neighbourhood, a community.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 2: And because there were the older generation, there was always that presence. They were sitting on the...

Respondent 3: On the verandahs and that. Yeah. Yeah.

Respondent 2: They were around, you know? So there was that sense of somebody – but I mean I don't ever remember...

Respondent 1: Playing as a child out here.

Respondent 2: ...feeling, you know, that there was a concern or that our folks showed a concern about being out, [1:06:00] you know? It was getting us in. [Laughter] You know? I mean...

Interviewer: So the kids could go outside and play.

Respondent 2: Because I remember late at night you'd play, you know, at the lamppost. You'd play hide-and-go-seek. That was a big game, you know? Everybody kind of ran off and trying to find people, so.

Interviewer: So the street was a big playground for you.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 2: It was.

Respondent 3: It really was.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 2: But yeah, things changed, and as I – after elementary school, **[1:06:30]** I went to a private school. I went to De La Salle up on Avenue Road, and then you went to St. Joe's, and I think, you know, people did different things. You went to Central Tech when we moved here...

Respondent 3: Yeah.

Respondent 2: ...because you were getting ready to go to high school.

Respondent 3: Mm-hm.

Respondent 2: And then I remember Lloyd, he went to, for want of a better word, I guess, a Divinity school to study. I think it was...

Respondent 1: Oh yeah. To be a rabbi. Yeah.

Respondent 2: He became a rabbi.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 2: So I mean, there was a separation.

Respondent 1: And then they **[1:07:00]** began to move out, our friends. Like you know, they were moving away because their parents bought homes somewhere else, you know?

Respondent 2: Yeah. So that changed, and then we were away in the summer, and then obviously you gravitated to, as you did, most of your friends were friends from the school. I mean...

Interviewer: From Central Tech.

Respondent 2: ...until this day, I mean, you know some of them now have passed away, but you still kept in touch with those kids, you know, even though they're out our way some of them.

Respondent 3: Mm-hm.

Respondent 2: And so [1:07:30] our friends in many ways, as you became a teenager, became the kids where you went to school. And I remember visiting some of them. Like Abbi. I can't remember. Somewhere in west Toronto he moved to. It wasn't up into the north area. And visiting. But that connection began to change, you know what I mean, as you got a little older.

Interviewer: When you were young, the connection was the street. The neighbourhood.

Respondent 1: Mm-hm.

Respondent 2: Yeah.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Respondent 1: And then they were – they went to their schools, [1:08:00] and...

Respondent 2: Yeah. They went to the Jewish schools...

Respondent 1: ...or wherever they went to.

Respondent 2: Where I went at St. Patrick's...

Interviewer: At four o'clock in the afternoon, you were on the street again.

Respondent 1: Oh, of course.

- Interviewer:** As little children.
- Respondent 3:** Yes, they were. [Laughter] They were younger. I was working.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 2:** But you brought – I can remember your bringing the...
- Respondent 1:** The guys, yeah.
- Respondent 2:** ...the people from Central Tech over here.
- Respondent 3:** Sure, why not?
- Respondent 2:** It was a real – and then I remember it was in your last year in high school. I remember because they did architecture, and you had built [1:08:30] these house models, you know? And then they had this big bonfire. We were burning all these things. [Laughter]
- Interviewer:** So you made these house models and then you burned them?
- Respondent 3:** Yes.
- Respondent 2:** I mean it was like a rite of passage. I don't know. [Laughs]
- Interviewer:** But you know, it's – I'm listening to you talk, and you were at Central Tech and you're eighty now, which means this was more than sixty years ago.
- Respondent 3:** That's right.
- Interviewer:** We're talking about...
- Respondent 3:** Sixty-five.
- Interviewer:** Because you went to work by the time you were [1:09:00] eighteen. Full-time.
- Respondent 3:** Oh yeah.

Interviewer: So that's – and this is 2013. That's like – we're talking about a very long time ago, and these stories are so clear. Your memories are so...

Respondent 3: Well they were strong memories.

Respondent 1: You know what I used to do, talking about Central Tech? Like this lady who goes around and collects the cans, I on the way home from St. Peter's used to go into Central Tech, just at the doorway, and bring all of their bottles, like pop bottles. Those older kids, they didn't want to carry the [1:09:30] pop bottle around. I would bring the pop bottle to Nelly, and she would give me a penny for each of those pop bottles. So I was like a, I guess like a collector of – yeah. But you know, and with that money we could...

Interviewer: You could buy stuff with one penny at that time.

Respondent 1: Yeah. That's right.

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah. How about the streets in terms of traffic? I mean I know the children were playing on the streets, but cars? What was...

Respondent 1: I don't remember.

Interviewer: [1:10:00] ...there?

Respondent 2: We had horses. I mean I remember like a couple of them here. This was getting on later on, but they literally parked their horses out here. You know, they put that piece of iron, which was almost like an anchor with the straps, and they plunk it, you know, and the horse would be out there for hours sometimes, you know?

Respondent 1: Eating.

Respondent 2: Eating on the street. So I mean we – dad had a truck, which was part of the business.

Respondent 3: Right.

- Respondent 2:** Right? Did he park it? I don't even remember him [1:10:30] parking in the garage.
- Respondent 3:** No.
- Respondent 2:** Did he park it? Where did he park it? He left it at the store.
- Respondent 3:** The store.
- Respondent 2:** Okay. And then the people upstairs, Ross, he had a car, and then Keith later on had a car as well, so they had these lovely sedans which they just parked on the street because there wasn't these signs out here now, "No parking," you know?
- Interviewer:** And there weren't very many cars.
- Respondent 3:** There weren't. No.
- Respondent 2:** That's why we – like, I mean you could – the odd car, if you were sitting out there playing hockey on the street, ball hockey...
- Respondent 3:** That's right.
- Respondent 2:** [1:11:00] ...coming – hardly a car came by. It wasn't like, you know, they just drive right through the stop signs now. [Laughter] And you're standing there, and you're lucky if you don't get out of the way, right? So that's a big change, you know?
- Interviewer:** How did you – if you needed to go somewhere that wasn't easy walking distance, what public transportation existed?
- Respondent 1:** The streetcar.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** You took the street...
- Interviewer:** On what street?

Respondent 2: Okay. I...

Respondent 1: There was a streetcar on Bloor Street.

Respondent 2: I took the Bloor car, and then I remember we [1:11:30] were on those old wooden streetcars where they had two conductors and a stove on it.

Interviewer: What? A stove?

Respondent 2: Yeah. Like a little stove on it, and they used to go up that big hill because it was on Avenue Road, you know, just south of St. Clair. And the school was still there, De La Salle. And we used to say, "This thing's not going to get up." And then I remember because it was still in my time, because it was when they built the Yonge subway.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 2: [1:12:00] Summerhill station.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Respondent 2: And then I guess it was either in my third or fourth year at high school it changed, so we would take the Bloor streetcar over to Yonge and on the subway, and then we were into the subway. You know, how quickly things were changing already, you see?

Interviewer: But you remember the streetcar with a stove on it.

Respondent 2: Yeah. It was those – you've probably seen them. They were like rectangular boxes, you know? And they...

Interviewer: And that's how they heated it.

Respondent 2: And how they heated it.

Respondent 1: And then when we [1:12:30] were on the farm, we would come into the Exhibition on a train. And we would walk to – like our friend's farm was right on the border of the track. Like you know where their

fence was. So we would walk. There was a little station. We would get the flag and we would wave the flag, and the train stopped. And we got on the train, and it would bring us down here to the Exhibition.

Respondent 3: Yeah.

Respondent 1: And then we'd get off and going [1:13:00] home, we'd get on there and we'd tell the conductor we want to get off at Erindale Station Road, and he'd let us off at Erindale Station Road. That's how we used...

Respondent 3: There were very good people at that time. [Laughter] Today they would tell you, "Get out." [Laughter]

Interviewer: Very personalized service.

Respondent 1: Yes. And here you'd have this huge train coming at you, you know, in the middle of just a little train station and fields. Now they're all houses. It's all built up, right?

Respondent 3: Yeah. It was all farm.

Respondent 1: So – and this huge engine coming at you, and you'd [1:13:30] think, oh, you're scared – a little kid, right? And we would come in every year to the Exhibition, and Theresa would bring us in and we'd spend five or six hours there, and then we'd hop on the train and go back.

Interviewer: Pretty special memories. What about the heating? You talked about the big coal chute.

Respondent 2: You know, that big furnace. The big round – you know, then we had the little – they called a jacket heater that actually fed, like, a tank holder that was for the hot water. [1:14:00] And so whenever you wanted hot water, you fired up this little jacket heater, you know? It's like a small little stove, and that had a special pipe leading to heat up the hot water.

Interviewer: That was downstairs?

- Respondent 1:** Yes.
- Respondent 2:** There was a special room, the big, big furnace with all of these big, round, big pipes going up to the ducts, you know? And that would...
- Respondent 1:** And the coalman used to come. Where the chute is, like there was that little set-off part.
- Respondent 2:** But it was a big metal room.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah. No, [1:14:30] it was big. And then he would bring enough coal. Like it would fill the whole thing for the winter, right? And you'd have this little shovel, and you'd take the shovel and throw it into the jacket heater to heat the jacket heater.
- Interviewer:** And who would do that?
- Respondent 3:** Well we would.
- Respondent 1:** We would do it.
- Respondent 2:** I would actually as a kid have a responsibility to – and then you had to stoke – you had the fire in the furnace, you know, to heat up. I mean there were a lot of houses along here. I think one good thing, and I can't remember whether we did it. Maybe we did it. I remember that a lot of these houses, even some of them [1:15:00] until maybe ten years ago, even some of them now, they didn't have full cellars and that's why you see a lot...
- Respondent 1:** They're still here.
- Respondent 2:** ...of digging out because, you know, they would have a parked cellar, but a lot of them now have made these cellars into living units.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** So they would bring the coal in on a wagon. The fellow would put them into these – on their backs.

- Respondent 1:** Mm-hm.
- Respondent 2:** And they'd come along the little alley [1:15:30] there and then it went into that lot, and so there was this big pile of coal.
- Respondent 1:** And they were always in black.
- Respondent 2:** For the whole winter.
- Respondent 1:** Like from all the soot and everything. They were all covered, and they did have this leather thing on, right, because he was getting all this – well, the dust off of the coals.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** And then we would shovel it into the furnace before we would go to bed.
- Interviewer:** So it would go down the chute into your home, and you would put it into the fire.
- Respondent 1:** And then you had like a pail. A big [1:16:00] heavy iron pail, and you'd fill that up, and you always left that at the jacket heater, so that when you needed to put some stuff in. And even here in our house, when we got it, when we inherited it, I remember it wasn't down deep, but we still had the beams coming down, and my mom hung the clothes down there to dry when she couldn't hang them outside, right?
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Would they get dirty?
- Respondent 1:** No, no. They were – no. Because the coal bin room was off.
- Interviewer:** [1:16:30] Oh. It was off the wall...

Respondent 1: It was all closed off. Like it was closed off. See? And so when we moved back here, they dug out a hole. Like maybe a foot or two to lower the floor...

Respondent 2: So that's somewhere around...

Respondent 1: Yeah. Because if you were a real tall person, you'd be hitting the beams with your head.

Interviewer: And so then you changed from coal. When would that have been that you got rid of the coal?

Respondent 1: And then we went to oil.

Respondent 2: Oil was big. You know, they brought in those big tanks...

Respondent 1: The tanks.

Respondent 2: ...you know, where you go and get oil up [1:17:00] on...

Interviewer: And do you have any idea when that might have been?

Respondent 1: Oh, I can't remember.

Respondent 2: I can't either. When the big transition happened.

Respondent 1: Yeah. And then when I moved back, we put in gas. And...

Respondent 2: And air conditioned the house.

Respondent 1: Yeah. Because it was a huge tank, I mean down there in the basement.

Interviewer: So you've gone through all these different – from coal to oil to gas, and air conditioning.

Respondent 3: It was incredible.

Interviewer: A lot of transitions through the decades.

- Respondent 2:** [1:17:30] So when you hear people complain, you know, be up there on the third floor on those hot July days, you know, and little fan to blow in a breeze, you know? [Laughs] So now everything, you know, most...
- Respondent 1:** We just opened windows, remember? When it was so hot, you just opened the window.
- Respondent 2:** This is it.
- Respondent 1:** We never thought of – who complained? We were happy we had a bed and a room. [Laughs]
- Interviewer:** When did you put the air conditioning in?
- Respondent 1:** When we moved back in, and that was about [1:18:00] 2000.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent 1:** 2000. We renovated the basement. Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** Our folks didn't want it.
- Respondent 1:** No.
- Respondent 2:** So they were a little more...
- Respondent 1:** Even when my mom was still alive, and that was into the late '90s, this was a living room. Their living room, bedroom, and the kitchen here, and that was the summer kitchen.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So she continued to live – use – the bedroom was still on the first floor.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. But she didn't like change very much.

- Respondent 1:** Well I don't know. [Laughs]
- Respondent 2:** Were you upstairs?
- Respondent 1:** [1:18:30] Yeah. Yeah. I had the whole run of the second and third floor. [Laughs]
- Interviewer:** See? That's why she didn't want to move upstairs.
- Respondent 1:** Well she could have, but I guess not.
- Interviewer:** We talked about the Market. What about the university? Do you have any thoughts about the university as our neighbour?
- Respondent 1:** As our neighbour. Well I never went to university. I did my university at night school. I went to St. Joe's, and then I went to teacher's college for a year, [1:19:00] and then in night school – because in the '60s, they all said, well, you know, you get married. You don't need university. I mean, that's what some people thought, right?
- Interviewer:** Oh yeah.
- Respondent 1:** And so, I mean, so that's what we did. And then when I was teaching, I got my degree at night courses and summer courses.
- Interviewer:** Good for you.
- Respondent 1:** So I really didn't think too much of the university at that time.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. So...
- Respondent 2:** But you're talking about the encroachment, right?
- Interviewer:** Whatever.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. I mean, I had been...
- Respondent 1:** You [1:19:30] went to university right after high school.

Respondent 2: Yeah.

Respondent 1: Yeah.

Respondent 2: And – but I mean as I see some of these big towers going up and that sort of thing, I mean, but it's happening all over. It's just not in this area, but I hate to see maybe some of the older places getting ripped down. But the U of T is doing a good job, I think, in integrating some of the old into the newer structures, so there's some – still **[1:20:00]** that element of it. But it's unfortunate. I think Robert has been declared a historic...

Respondent 1: Street.

Respondent 2: ...so they won't touch. But I mean, you see increasingly – I know – the worst thing that happened around here was when aluminum became popular, and you can see some of the houses. I mean even this house, and then Ann changed everything and then put in wooden windows, but a lot of them still show the **[1:20:30]** remnant of the gouging where aluminum covered everything and it was the in thing to do. So so many houses kind of were butchered in the sense of that traditional. And then other people have come in who haven't got any sense, like this one on the corner over here. It's just one big rectangular box, you know, and they've got four families in it. But a lot of people, like they're – you were talking who were moving in? Well, I think something because of the price of the houses, the people that are coming in essentially **[1:21:00]** are people who are professional. Like there are two university people, I understand...

Respondent 1: That bought this house.

Respondent 2: ...moving in here next door.

Respondent 1: They bought this house. A family.

Respondent 2: And they're a lot – there are more people, I think, of that kind of moving in because they needed the money in order to afford these houses. You know?

- Interviewer:** Yeah. That has to force a change.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah. So that change is kind of...
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent 2:** So you're not having a lot of rental or such.
- Respondent 1:** Or I don't care if they rent, but like some of the houses along here, they've made, like, access from the front into the – so they've sort of [1:21:30] changed, like, the look of that house. I don't like that personally, you know? I wish this was also a historical street, and that's when my neighbours were selling. I was just – I said to her, "I hope it's not going to be, you know, divide" – because before they moved back in themselves, it was rented, three floors.
- Respondent 2:** Yeah.
- Respondent 1:** And I said to her – and she said, "Oh no, Ann. They have – it's all like one home unit. You know, so you can't really [1:22:00] rent it out. I mean they'd have to really rearrange everything to do that for my" – and next door...
- Respondent 2:** That's kind of interesting that it's gone cyclical now because in order – like this house next door just went for a million two hundred thousand, right?
- Interviewer:** Whoa.
- Respondent 3:** Yes.
- Respondent 2:** And another one down here, that white house I notice is sold.
- Respondent 1:** A million ten.
- Respondent 2:** So that's typical around here now. So a lot of people moving in may not have the resources, so just the same as our parents [1:22:30] rented out, they are now living probably in the house, maybe even the whole house, but in the basement they've been turned into a nice living unit.

Respondent 1: Oh, the unit. Like the basement unit is lovely. Like she was saying this floor could be used for a nanny, which it could be because the people moving in have two kids. But like when you change the whole – like along here, when you walk, if you walked down Major Street, you can see that people have made [1:23:00] access to the basement unit from...

Interviewer: Directly from the outside.

Respondent 1: ...outside. Yeah. And that sort of changes the feel of the place. Do you know what I'm saying?

Interviewer: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

Respondent 1: And I mean if they can do access from the back or something, or the side, it's a different story, right?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Respondent 1: Yeah. So I wish this was a historical street.

Interviewer: And then they would be limited in what they can do.

Respondent 1: You can't change the outside; you can change the inside or whatever, yeah.

Interviewer: [1:23:30] This has been wonderful. [Laughter] Okay. I'm wondering – I mean both of you made a nice trek from Mississauga, and you organized all this. When you knew that I was coming, were there some stories that you were thinking about just knowing that we were going to sit and talk for a little while? Anything that we haven't touched on at all that you thought about? And if so now's the time. [Laughs]

Respondent 1: I don't think you were [1:24:00] involved in that – either of you in the baseball thing that happened at Christie Pits where, you know, that was before our time. There was...

Interviewer: A big riot there.

- Respondent 1:** Yeah. The riot that occurred there.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. We used – that was another area where we would go and play because when there was snow, you know, they had the hills there. So obviously with the toboggan or a sled, you spent time there. I don't know what else in terms of [1:24:30] – I mean growing up, I mean as I said it was a fairly connected community, you know, around maybe four or five houses. And we interrelated and related, but there wasn't the sort of thing where, you know, like there would be, like, a street party or things like that. I mean it was pre-barbecue, and you know, all of that kind of thing that, you know? People sort of respected each other. They interrelated. They talked. [1:25:00] But it was sort of like mind your own – not necessarily mind your own business, but you know, you had your life and then, you know, socially we interrelated as required. But...
- Interviewer:** You played on the street and you came in. The children went into each other's homes.
- Respondent 2:** Yes, that's right.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** And so it was natural because as kids, you played. And I can remember with Lloydie's, I mean you talked about playing house, and I remember we used to have – do plays [1:25:30] in his backyard. You remember as kids, you know?
- Respondent 1:** And he would put them on for us. [Laughs]
- Respondent 2:** That's where I got my theatre interest, you know?
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 2:** So that kind of thing, you know, that you played.
- Respondent 1:** And then once the kids moved out, the people who moved in, they didn't really have kids like our age. Like they would have younger kids. Like my Greek neighbours moved in. You know, like they

married and moved in, and then they had, like, maybe had [1:26:00] little kids. So we had no connection with them. So there were no kids on the street anymore, like, to play with me because they were all gone. So, like, when I was, you know, fifteen, I went to work at Woolworth's.

Interviewer: And where was that?

Respondent 1: That was, you know, where the Dollarama is now?

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent 1: That was Woolworth's.

Interviewer: So you had no one to play with, so you went to work in your spare time?

Respondent 1: So I'm fifteen. Yeah. I got a job at Woolworth's, and you know, and [1:26:30] then I became a cashier there. And I worked there through all high school. So there were no more young people. Like the young teenagers...

Interviewer: The street life.

Respondent 1: ...that I would have – like Shayndle, she moved away, and nobody moved in...

Interviewer: Except for families with little kids.

Respondent 1: Little kids. So then you don't – you know, you got to know them and say hi and everything, but to play with or to go anywhere with, then you started high school and you met [1:27:00] friends there.

Interviewer: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

Respondent 2: Yeah.

Respondent 1: So it was different, you know?

- Interviewer:** John, anything that we haven't talked about that was – your life, as you say, was a little bit different. You were older and you went – you needed to go to work...
- Respondent 3:** That's right.
- Interviewer:** ...while they were playing on the street.
- Respondent 3:** That's right. Yes. [Laughter]
- Respondent 1:** Well he got cars. He bought cars.
- Respondent 3:** No, I bought car for myself.
- Respondent 1:** Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** I bought about three of them for my lifetime.
- Interviewer:** And how old were you when you [1:27:30] bought your first car?
- Respondent 3:** Oh, probably in my twenties.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh. And you parked it on the street in front here?
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. In one of those little English cars.
- Respondent 2:** English cars. Yeah.
- Respondent 3:** Mm-hm.
- Interviewer:** Was that one of the first cars around here? Or I mean not too many cars is what I really mean.
- Respondent 3:** Yeah. Well there always were some around here. Even now they're coming. Well now little ones. Parking is different.
- Respondent 2:** But I think – I'm sure – I was trying to remember what Lloyd's dad did. What did he – he wasn't a lawyer was he?
- Respondent 1:** I'm not [1:28:00] sure.

Respondent 2: I knew he had some sort of a professional job. I can't remember what it was. Yeah.

Interviewer: I think we'll stop. Do you all have the same last name?

Respondent 1: Yes. We're all Karners.

Interviewer: Karner. Karner.

Respondent 1: I never married.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent 1: Yeah, so yeah.

Respondent 3: None of us. We don't believe in marriage. [Laughter]

Respondent 1: No. Yeah.

Interviewer: So as I said, today is the 26th of April, and I'm with Ann, and Bill, and John Karner...

Respondent 2: Right.

Interviewer: ...and this has been a [1:28:30] pleasure for me to listen to your wonderful stories. Thank you very much.

Respondent 1: Oh, you're welcome.

Respondent 3: You're welcome.

[1:29:36]

[End of recording]