

**051 Rosie Schwartz**

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

**Interviewer:** I'm in the home of Rosie Schwartz at 257 Brunswick. She's been here since 1967, but from 1950 to '67, Rosie lived at 255.

**Respondent:** By the grocery store.

**Interviewer:** Brunswick. We'll talk about that.

**Respondent:** Oh.

**Interviewer:** So Rosie has been in this neighbourhood since 1950. She's an authority. And Rosie's just saying...

**Respondent:** '40.

**Interviewer:** Since 1940?

**Respondent:** Yeah. I lived at **[0:00:30]** the corner.

**Interviewer:** Oh.

**Respondent:** This is what I'm trying to say.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So tell me that.

**Respondent:** Well my parents had a grocery store there. We moved in there in 1940 from College and Beatrice, and it had a grocery store there. We lived at – there was four of us, and then five, we lived in two-and-a-half, three rooms downstairs and rented out the rest. And me and my brother, we start working when we were, oh, eleven years old, you know, delivering orders and **[0:01:00]** bootleg booze and whatever. [Laughter] Well in those days, you know, you made two cents on a quart of milk. What are you going to do? And my mother was – well, she was an excellent cook.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So one minute. So in 1940, your father had a store.

**Respondent:** Yeah. My parents. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Your parents had a store. It was a grocery store.

**Respondent:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** At College and Brunswick.

**Respondent:** No, no, no, no, no.

**Interviewer:** Where?

**Respondent:** At Sussex and Brunswick.

**Interviewer:** Sussex.

**Respondent:** The corner here.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Respondent:** That's what that picture is.

**Interviewer:** **[0:01:30]** And you lived...

**Respondent:** Behind the store.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Respondent:** Like everybody did in those days.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So you lived behind the store. So you've been here since 1940.

**Respondent:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** In this neighbourhood. Fabulous. And your family lived behind the store, and you used to work at the store at a very young age.

**Respondent:** Oh yeah. After school. My god.

**Interviewer:** So tell me again who lived – you said it was very crowded living conditions.

**Respondent:** Not really. I mean we were – when we lived on Clinton, [0:02:00] me and my two older brothers slept on the pullout couch. I mean it was just accepted.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.

**Respondent:** You know? You weren't out on the street. We never knew hunger, so, hey. My parents in those days, you know, that generation, you didn't gamble, you didn't drink. Maybe you went out once every three, four months at a Jewish something. Victory Theatre or whatever it was called then, you know? But never felt crowded because eventually we were five kids. [0:02:30] It's just four more kids to fight with. [Laughs] That was tough. [Laughs] But yeah. You made your own fun. Most kids did. And I would say to people I never had a doll. "You never had a doll?" I said, "No. I had brothers I could beat up. Why do you need a doll for?" [Laughter] So.

**Interviewer:** Do you have any idea what prompted your parents to move to this neighbourhood?

**Respondent:** Well, [0:03:00] they lived at – oh, what was it? So long, the address. 682 College. It's on the corner of Beatrice. And they were there for two years, and the building was owned by, well, the grandson, Reisman, would not – Rose Reisman. Pardon me. But we lived there and the grandparents lived there on the third floor, and it was just a war started, so they wanted it because in the back was a [0:03:30] huge garage, and you could put all kinds of junk there. So in those days, you had to move and that was it. So they moved here. All I know, in probably 1942 they bought that corner for twenty-five hundred, but that was a lot of money when you don't have any.

**Interviewer:** Oh yeah. It was a lot of money. Yeah, yeah.

**Respondent:** Yeah. So that's why they ended up here.

- Interviewer:** So you grew up here, you got married here, you divorced here, you're still here, you're eighty years old.
- Respondent:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** And Brunswick has been your home for **[0:04:00]** many decades.
- Respondent:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** This has been my home. Brunswick has changed. Well, the whole world has.
- Interviewer:** Okay. But would you just talk about that?
- Respondent:** Well, you know, in the '40s, if an older person – first of all, the Jews didn't mix with the non-Jews. You had a few non-Jewish customers, but, like, the house on the corner, southwest corner Brunswick and Sussex, **[0:04:30]** there's an old – what's a cottage. Like really a dump. But there's an old English couple there, been there from day one. And my parents wanted to buy it because they bought the one next door. It was, you know, whatever. They would never sell to a Jew. But that's okay because when he died, what's his name? I forgot his name. A Jewish guy bought it.
- Interviewer:** But they were explicit about that?
- Respondent:** Oh, in those days, you had a little – in your deed, not to sell it to Jews or coloured or Oriental. **[0:05:00]** And I think Frost had that removed. I'm not sure what government had it removed.
- Interviewer:** And when you were growing up here, I gather it was predominately Jewish when you were a young child.
- Respondent:** Oh, it was predominately Jewish probably until around the late '40s, '50s, and even then, you know, everybody – you know, they saved money like mad, and they moved up to the bungalow.
- Interviewer:** I know.

- Respondent:** And we were going to move up there. We looked at a house, was very nice, and then my dad – [0:05:30] like he had one hand, but when he had to hit us, he held us between his knees. So we survived, but he had a hand like a baseball mitt.
- Interviewer:** What happened to his other hand?
- Respondent:** Well in the – I don't know, before or after I was born, so it would be early '30s, '31 or '33, he had a horse and wagon selling fruit and vegetables, and he was in an accident. And in those days, you know, he was a welfare case, so he had gangrene and everything and the arm came off.
- Interviewer:** Wow. But he lived [0:06:00] a long, productive life after that.
- Respondent:** Well he had a stroke at forty-eight. So.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent:** But he was very, very heavy. Oh god.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** Anyways, yeah.
- Interviewer:** But okay, so Rosie, where any other kinds of people lived here when you were in school, did the families mingle? Did you play with other kids? I mean...
- Respondent:** Yeah. We played with other kids.
- Interviewer:** But I mean the non-Jewish.
- Respondent:** Not really. The only one – well, when I went to [0:06:30] high school, then you played not with the Anglos, but with the Italian kids. And I know in public school there was one or two black kids. You played with them, and the teachers were terrible. I mean, you know, you used to cringe. Well, you know, you wouldn't say

anything because you'd be next because they weren't crazy about Jewish kids.

**Interviewer:** Oh, so the teachers discriminated, you're saying.

**Respondent:** Well and also the principal. The old principal, Mr. Miter or whatever his name was, [0:07:00] he was there for anything but. The secretary of the school was very empathetic towards immigrant children. Very good. Plus you had some good children that understood. Because they knew if the kids didn't behave and they had to tell the parents, the kids were dead.

**Interviewer:** So the parents always sided with the school.

**Respondent:** Yes. You didn't go there to have fun. You know.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** So yeah. And you had some very good teachers. The second principal, Macintyre, when there was the one hundred – no. [0:07:30] One-hundred-year anniversary, nobody went to the room to visit him because what did you used to do? I was in grade seven or then, me and other kids – so he used to snap our brazier.

**Interviewer:** The principal of the school did that.

**Respondent:** Yeah. Macintyre. So who are you going to tell? Your parents? To say, "I don't believe you." Well didn't that happen to the kids who were sexually abuse?

**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.

**Respondent:** You know. Okay. So nobody went to see him, and yet [0:08:00] the grade eight teacher, Mr. Scott, I didn't know he was still alive. This was in the late '80s. And there were tears in my eyes, and his too. He saw all these kids.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

- Respondent:** He was, you know, Canadian, but he was a human being. He understood and...
- Interviewer:** So you're talking about Mr. Scott.
- Respondent:** Yeah. Grade eight.
- Interviewer:** But not Mr. Macintosh who did this to the girls.
- Respondent:** Oh god no. Macintyre.
- Interviewer:** Macintyre. What a horrible thing. Right now he would lose his job for sure. **[0:08:30]** Maybe go to jail.
- Respondent:** Not really. They'd get him in a corner and finish him. I've got – a small one. Sorry. Yeah. So that was that.
- Interviewer:** When your family moved, did your family always live by itself, or were there sometimes boarders when your family lived on Brunswick?
- Respondent:** Yeah, well, down at the corner we lived on the first floor and there was rooms upstairs, **[0:09:00]** so unfurnished. So they rented the whole thing.
- Interviewer:** Right. Right.
- Respondent:** I think at some point, because he took a room off the corner in a store, and then we moved upstairs and rented. And you have to understand in the '40s, there was – god, I forgot her name. She was from one of the islands in West Indies or some sort. She was black. And nobody ever rented, but we had black – I say black. I hate that term, **[0:09:30]** but anyways. We had three families on the street, and they were neighbours, you know? And she was very, very nice, and she was going to university, and she had a boyfriend who was going to university, but at ninety worked as a typesetter in those days. Says, "Well what does he do?" I says – because he felt you have a good education, you've got to have a trade, which is true.

**Interviewer:** Mm-hm.

**Respondent:** And so yeah. You rented out a couple of rooms. There was [0:10:00] one person when he came into the grocery – those days, the grocery store was like a community place.

**Interviewer:** Oh, that's fascinating.

**Respondent:** Yeah. Like you know, here you go. So you knew everybody. And well, I didn't see Mrs. Cohen. Go see what's doing there, you know? If she's sick or whatever, who knows. And Mr. Sinclair, he had, you know, he had polio as a kid, so he shuffled. And he comes in the store and he says to my father, he says, "Do you know where I can rent a room?" Like you know, furnished room. [0:10:30] So my father said to him, because my father was handicapped too, so he can have the...

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Respondent:** He says, "I'll tell you what. You take a bath every day, keep yourself clean, and I'll rent you on the third floor. The room."

**Interviewer:** Uh-huh.

**Respondent:** That was it. Four bucks, five bucks a week. Or nothing. So that was okay, you know? So then when my parents sold the corner, [0:11:00] not my parents. My mother did when my dad was passed away. So my mother bought a big house on Kendal. Excuse me, and that was a lot of money in those days. Twenty-two thousand, you know, in the '50s, early '50s. And that was a rooming house. So then my mother – when my mother's second husband passed away, so he lived – now the basement, the room there was nice. It was paneled, and there was a toilet in the basement and a shower in the basement, you know, [0:11:30] because previous owners were from Finland, so they had a steam bath.

**Interviewer:** Are you talking about this man who had polio?

**Respondent:** Yeah. Sinclair.

- Interviewer:** So he moved with your family.
- Respondent:** With my – yeah. With my mother. My dad passed away. So then when my mother sold that house, my brother was – oldest brother was going to take it over and he was going to make a move. I said, "Don't you dare," because I remember my father telling Mr. Sinclair when he first moved in next door, he says, "Sinclair, as long as I'm alive, you'll always have somewhere to live."
- Interviewer:** [0:12:00] Oh, so you wanted to upload that.
- Respondent:** Well I told my brother, "You do that, and I call the inspector."
- Interviewer:** Oh. [Laughs]
- Respondent:** No really.
- Interviewer:** So but you were honouring your father's word long after your father had died.
- Respondent:** Yeah, but even just to be menschlich, you know?
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** So.
- Interviewer:** You know what I'd like to come back to? You said that...
- Respondent:** See, it's a good thing you're a social worker because I'd go...
- Interviewer:** All over the place.
- Respondent:** Well eighty years, you know?
- Interviewer:** Not garbage. Good stories. But you said that the corner store your parents had was like a community centre or something.
- Respondent:** Yeah. People would [0:12:30] come in.
- Interviewer:** Okay. I want to hear more about that.

**Respondent:** Yeah. Say after the war, they would come in and say Schwartzie, I need a job. And what do you do? So you phone, and I don't recall – maybe we did get people jobs, maybe he didn't. I don't remember. And then you had the guys who wanted a dime for a glass of beer at the Brunswick. So they'd come in, and they knew they wouldn't get a dime unless my father would say, well, okay. "Just wash those shelves over there." Now we're talking about people who were making fifteen, twenty cents an hour, you know? **[0:13:00]** Whatever. And fine. Did an hour's worth of work, do this, do that. And he'd give them the dime, or he'd make them a bologna sandwich because they were hungry, and giving whatever the pop was. I don't know. The cheap pop. So they knew Schwartzie would – not that we're so many, but what do you call it, they would get it done. Also in those days, okay, for our family, my mother always picked out the bruised stuff.

**Interviewer:** Uh-huh.

**Respondent:** But we ate good, you know? What is a little bruise here? But **[0:13:30]** sometimes when you're trimming veggies, you would save and poor – you know the family was poor. In fact, it was the Marshalls who had I don't know how many kids. Who knows. And they would pay a quarter for big, not even a quarter for a big potato bag full of stuff, and the only reason you charged a quarter, because their – not dignity.

**Interviewer:** Yes. Yes.

**Respondent:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Oh wow. So really you're saying it was like charity, but you charged them something so they felt they were like everybody else, and they were paying.

**Respondent:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** **[0:14:00]** Wow. Yeah.

**Respondent:** So.

- Interviewer:** So it was like...
- Respondent:** It was different.
- Interviewer:** ...a community, and it was like a social service agency. [Laughs]
- Respondent:** Well sort of. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Lovely. Yeah.
- Respondent:** And don't forget, there was a grocery store on the other side. Major Street had a grocery store kitty-corner, and except for Robert, there was only on the southwest corner.
- Interviewer:** So.
- Respondent:** There were all those stores, and they all made a living.
- Interviewer:** And these were all small, [0:14:30] personal family grocery stores.
- Respondent:** Yeah. They lived in the back, and then Loblaws came along. During the war, they all got credit for money, you know, because they all got a pittance of a cheque once a month.
- Interviewer:** So explain that credit. Tell me what you're...
- Respondent:** Well it would be written down. Say you bought something...
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** ...they didn't buy it like you buy now. And then when they got the cheque at the end of the month, then they would pay it off, or sometimes they couldn't pay it off. So fine, it was like a running – like a credit letter. Like the letter of credit or something.
- Interviewer:** [0:15:00] Yeah. Yeah. But they knew your father and your father knew them, and he trusted them.
- Respondent:** Yeah. You know, sometimes he went after them.

- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** If you can't pay the ten dollars or whatever it was, two dollars. Like **[indiscernible 0:15:12]**, you know?
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** So then Loblaws was – or Honest Ed's is on a corner, southwest corner of Bloor and Bathurst.
- Interviewer:** Well there was a Loblaws there?
- Respondent:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Where Honest Ed's is.
- Respondent:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Okay. I never heard that. Yeah.
- Respondent:** **[0:15:30]** Well that's another story too. Honest Ed's. Anyways, so they would sell something a cent cheaper, which was a lot. Or two cents. So that's when they went – a lot of parents used to send – that's the three older kids to Loblaws to buy that stuff because my parents would make two, three cents on something. So it was a joke. Anyways, it wasn't a joke, but.
- Interviewer:** So did that affect all these corner stores when Loblaws...
- Respondent:** **[0:16:00]** Yeah. Because they only came to the stores for credit. Pretty well. Not always, you know?
- Interviewer:** Did your father stay in that business until he died? Or did he get rid of the business because of Loblaws taking the customers away?
- Respondent:** Well no. I don't have the time date when they gave it over to someone else, and then my father was doing nothing. He was like in his late forties.

- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent:** And you know, how many times – he used to be – even the old cigar store was a community place. Zeit's used to be on – Zeist? No, not Zeist. [0:16:30] They were on Harbord. And so, you know, reopen a store and that's where he had the stroke. It kept him busy.
- Interviewer:** Mm-hm. Mm-hm.
- Respondent:** And my brothers didn't want to come and help. You know, just, you know, move cases. And they lived next door when that was reopened.
- Interviewer:** But you know, even already you've given me some charming stories like if somebody wanted ten cents to buy a beer, your father would say, "Okay. I'll give you the ten cents, [0:17:00] but do twenty minutes of work first."
- Respondent:** Well there wasn't time on it. Just.
- Interviewer:** Sure. But they had to earn that money.
- Respondent:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. So your father – they knew they could – would likely get the money from your father, but...
- Respondent:** Or a sandwich, a bologna sandwich.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** Because they were hungry.
- Interviewer:** So they would work for it.
- Respondent:** Yeah, like when they come for the Boy Scouts or whatever, the students, you know, because they make thirty percent if they sell something. You know, knock on the door or even over the phone because I worked for – I had [0:17:30] maybe twenty-five jobs and each one was better, more whatever. See, I can't think of the word.

Anyways, so then the Boy Scouts – he used to make me mad. I said, "You want to make money?" I said, "Years ago, when I was a kid, they would come and clean your yard, do this, do that." And now...

**Interviewer:** They don't earn the money.

**Respondent:** Yeah. I don't know. Or you know, they come in and they say – and all sorts of things. Now I put the sign up again. "Leave me alone." I said, "I don't give my family [0:18:00] money, why should I give you any money?" [Laughs]

**Interviewer:** So Rosie, you're talking about – you talked about all these corner stores, and you live quite close to Bloor.

**Respondent:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Could you talk to me about the stores that were on Bloor?

**Respondent:** Oh, it was great. It was – most of them lived in the back. Mom and pop – I call it the mom and pop.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** I don't think there's any left on Bloor. They're all beer places, or sushi, or whatever. And so...

**Interviewer:** So the owners don't live behind the store or [0:18:30] upstairs from the store.

**Respondent:** No. They just hire kids for ten bucks an hour.

**Interviewer:** But what were some of the stores that were here?

**Respondent:** Fruit and vegetable.

**Interviewer:** Uh-huh.

**Respondent:** You know, I can't even – clothing.

- Interviewer:** Any theatres?
- Respondent:** Well there was the Midtown, and I remember when that was built in the mid-'40s. They said it was built turn of the century. It's full of crap. [Laughter] It was the mid-'40s.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent:** Early '40s. During the war.
- Interviewer:** So was that where the Bloor Cinema is now?
- Respondent:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** So that's been there a long time then.
- Respondent:** **[0:19:00]** Well now they changed it. When I met – during the one, they had something around two years ago and then they had to do some later. Her husband was the manager of the theatre, and this is like, you know, in the '40s or '50s or whatever. I said, "Did your husband have a moustache," and he was – and I had – my memory is shot. She said, "Yeah." I said, "Ugh. He wasn't very nice."
- Interviewer:** Oh, I see. You remember her...
- Respondent:** No, as a manager. Like, you know, he was **[indiscernible 0:19:27]**.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent:** So.
- Interviewer:** **[0:19:30]** So you talked about the corner stores, a lot of corner stores. Your father being...
- Respondent:** Oh, two drugstores.
- Interviewer:** On Bloor Street.
- Respondent:** Yeah. And Shoppers just, you know...

- Interviewer:** Wiped them out.
- Respondent:** And there was one on Brunswick and Harbord and one at Borden and Harbord. They all – they made a living. They didn't get rich, but that's what...
- Interviewer:** So you're saying that Loblaws and Shoppers really changed things for all these small store owners.
- Respondent:** Oh yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent:** I mean slowly. Not right away.
- Interviewer:** [0:20:00] Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** Now they say business isn't good. You know, you see for lease, for rent. That's crap. Who can – how much do you have to sell to pay a rent of six thousand plus rent for a two-by-four store? The politicians would never say that.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** You know? It's nonsense because then you – there was a beautiful cheese shop there. The lady was...
- Interviewer:** Where? Where was that?
- Respondent:** On Bloor just a second block.
- Interviewer:** Okay.
- Respondent:** With a big cow in the window. Do you remember?
- Interviewer:** I remember that. Yeah.
- Respondent:** From Georgia, [0:20:30] Russia, or whatever, you know? She was so happy because they were playing a Georgian film at the Bloor Jewish Film Festival, and I got two tickets when it's all sold out and

everything. She couldn't believe it. She wanted to give me a big hunk of [indiscernible 0:20:44] because I bought it. [Laughter] I said, "No, no. Just give me a little piece." You know? I don't...

**Interviewer:** I love [indiscernible 0:20:48]. [Laughs]

**Respondent:** Oh, we were kids. Used to – in a pail, used to be in the fridge and we used to...

**Interviewer:** I love it.

**Respondent:** ...eat all of it. [Laughter] Anyways, so actually – absolute blank.

**Interviewer:** [0:21:00] So we've talked about the – what about Harbord? Were there any stores there?

**Respondent:** Oh yeah. There was a...

**Interviewer:** What was there?

**Respondent:** ...fish store, and two bakery shops, or two fish stores and two bakery shops, and Tennenbaum's.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So one bakery shop is still there. That's Harbord.

**Respondent:** Yeah. That's that miserable son. Oh, he's terrible. I forgot the last name already. The father, I remember seeing him in the latter years when I used to go in there. [0:21:30] And he – like he got up at three in the morning to do the baking and he worked hard. The son, he was like a teacher. Who knows? The daughter, the one daughter worked, like, forever and I think she's still there.

**Interviewer:** Susy. Yeah.

**Respondent:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.

**Respondent:** Very quiet and everything, and then the son adopted someone from the Philippines. Some kid. I don't know.

- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** But no, I never go in there anymore.
- Interviewer:** No. But there was an – you were saying there was another bakery on Harbord.
- Respondent:** The Brunswick Bakery [0:22:00] on Harbord and Brunswick, on the north – how do I remember? North – what's – east corner.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. But certainly that has changed, the number of...
- Respondent:** Oh.
- Interviewer:** ...restaurants.
- Respondent:** Restaurants.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** And now the restaurants are, you know, and the soups are five bucks a plate. I said, "I'll sell you my soup for three bucks."  
[Laughter] My tenants used to love my soups. In the winter, I make soups.
- Interviewer:** The people who live here with you now, how many – [0:22:30] you have students living here.
- Respondent:** Yeah. Four.
- Interviewer:** Four students. And is it – do they have access to the refrigerator?
- Respondent:** They have their own kitchen on the second floor.
- Interviewer:** Okay. So you have four of them with a bathroom and a kitchen, so this is your space on this floor.
- Respondent:** Well I mean, and also I have a shower and another – in the basement. And now the basement is a cellar.

**Interviewer:** Uh-huh.

**Respondent:** Very few kids. They come from the bungalows – but the toilet and a shower room and everything is all tiled and really nice. [0:23:00] It's day and night from...

**Interviewer:** From the rest of the...

**Respondent:** ...all the junk in the basement. Yeah. And now they leave the end of April, if the school term is over, except one is staying for May and June. And then I have my old handyman who used to – he was marvellous. He used to do the cleaning, the gardening, whatever I wanted, you know? My son used to ask him, he says, "Dan, doesn't my mother drive you nuts?" And my son would answer – and I mean Dan would answer, "But your mother pays me."

**Interviewer:** [0:23:30] Yeah. [Laughs]

**Respondent:** He has a job, you know?

**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Respondent:** And I mean I had to make him vegetarian. Well, he liked my vegetarian meals for lunch.

**Interviewer:** But you're saying that you sometimes make soup.

**Respondent:** Oh, in the winter. But a lot...

**Interviewer:** But you'll share it with them. You don't cook for them, but you'll sometimes...

**Respondent:** Oh no, no, no. They would like for me – what happens, a lot of times – like there was a time when oh, whatever I made they took because I made, you know, I'll give them a little bit of something. But in the [0:24:00] last few years, well we had one Chinese student. He loved my soups. In fact, I went to his wedding in China because we still keep in touch and everything.

- Interviewer:** You went to his wedding in China?
- Respondent:** Oh yeah.
- Interviewer:** Oh. Quite a trip for a wedding.
- Respondent:** Well, it was worth it.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** No, because I went – two years, three years earlier on a tour, which tours are all right, but you know, leave me alone at seven in the morning. You know what I mean?
- Interviewer:** Oh, they start too [0:24:30] early. What languages, what did your family speak at home?
- Respondent:** Well when my parents were fighting, it would be Polish. [Laughter] Otherwise it would be Yiddish and with us it was Yiddish and English.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent:** But we didn't speak Yiddish back. And now I wish, you know, I had "The Joys of Yiddish." Did you ever read that book?
- Interviewer:** Yeah. It's lovely. Yeah.
- Respondent:** Oh. I keep reading it over and over.
- Interviewer:** It's a beautiful book.
- Respondent:** And this – when my uncle and family lived on Major after the war, so I had to speak Yiddish. [0:25:00] And about – when I went to Israel to visit, which I've been there what, around four, five – I don't know how many times, I had to speak Yiddish. But then if they feed you all the time, it's very limited what you have to speak.
- Interviewer:** But you heard a lot of Yiddish, except you responded in English to your parents.

- Respondent:** Oh yeah. It's like Italian kids. They don't speak Italian back unless – sometimes, but not.
- Interviewer:** In the years since you've been here, what are the different waves of immigration, [0:25:30] and who has been here at different times since you've been here since 1940?
- Respondent:** Well, as far – you see, your area would be Harbord, Bathurst...
- Interviewer:** College.
- Respondent:** Yeah. No, not College. Well sort of.
- Interviewer:** Oh, your area was where you lived.
- Respondent:** Yeah. You would play with the kids and everything. You know, whatever. You knew the people. What's it called? For – oh. Anyways. Casement area, is [0:26:00] that it? [Laughter] Not casement area. I don't know.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. That is a term that used to be used.
- Respondent:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** Okay. So that's who it was. You played – mind you, you played with – from school. Because I went to Lansdowne.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent:** And in fact, I was on a baseball team.
- Interviewer:** Oh my god.
- Respondent:** There's that horrible – what do you call it? Principal.
- Interviewer:** Right. Oh, that's him?

- Respondent:** Oh yeah. [0:26:30] I was good at baseball. I was very sport-like. At the Y I'd play a lot of badminton. I was very good. Even when I was six months pregnant, I still beat two people on the other side.
- Interviewer:** So you were an athletic person.
- Respondent:** Oh yeah. Baseball. Basketball just at the Y. Yeah. I played the...
- Interviewer:** I want to come back to languages and waves of immigration, and we'll come onto the other...
- Respondent:** Yeah, it's okay.
- Interviewer:** ...we'll come back to the other.
- Respondent:** See, am I easy? [0:27:00] Because I know I...
- Interviewer:** [Laughs] But you come back [laughs] when I ask you to.
- Respondent:** Well I'm surprised I have the memory. I mean that's unusual.
- Interviewer:** What's that?
- Respondent:** The memory part.
- Interviewer:** It's changing.
- Respondent:** Well with neuropathy and probably taking the depression pills, who knows, but neuropathy, you really are talking to blank.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** And...
- Interviewer:** What's that like when that happens?
- Respondent:** Yeah, but I'm all right. But that's another story.
- Interviewer:** Okay. So you're saying that [0:27:30] at home, Polish when your parents fought...

- Respondent:** Oh god.
- Interviewer:** ...and Yiddish, and English. And the other kids around, I guess you all spoke English when you were on the street.
- Respondent:** Oh yeah. Oh yeah.
- Interviewer:** Right. Yeah.
- Respondent:** You know, most...
- Interviewer:** But the waves of immigration, who was here? During your lifetime here.
- Respondent:** Jewish and Anglo.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent:** And the Italians were down by Beatrice. I mean we lived there, it was only five Italians.
- Interviewer:** Okay.
- Respondent:** So.
- Interviewer:** So you being here, south of Bloor, not very many **[0:28:00]** Italian people here.
- Respondent:** Oh hardly any.
- Interviewer:** Okay. And Portuguese?
- Respondent:** Yeah. First it was Italians in the '40s, in the late '40s.
- Interviewer:** Mm-hm.
- Respondent:** And they were dying like flies on construction places.
- Interviewer:** Oh.

- Respondent:** They had a separate benevolent society for the widows. It was just awful. They were getting a buck an hour.
- Interviewer:** Oh. So they were – they did construction and...
- Respondent:** They were responsible. The Jews who were the builders, and they were the workers. [0:28:30] Now the Portuguese, they sent them out to Kitimat, and put the railway line in northern Ontario and this and that, and they got paid a buck an hour. But then...
- Interviewer:** How many bucks an hour?
- Respondent:** One.
- Interviewer:** One.
- Respondent:** And then at the end of the week, you had to give five bucks to what they called the "Mangi-foreman."
- Interviewer:** Right. But you're saying that there were a lot of accidents and people were injured or killed.
- Respondent:** Killed. Yeah. In construction, the Italians were mainly. These were all mostly men from the south who were [0:29:00] farmers.
- Interviewer:** Right. Right. So...
- Respondent:** When I lived here, so we rented to three Italian men and they were sharp. Like you know, like the ones from Sicily or wherever. And that's the first time we ever ate proper spaghetti with sauce because we used to eat Heinz and thought that was great.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. But that...
- Respondent:** And they were very nice. And they worked very hard.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** Anyways.

**Interviewer:** How has [0:29:30] Brunswick changed in the years that you've been here, which is many, many years?

**Respondent:** Well, it was all right when the families were living here, but you can – I would say at least half, maybe – I don't know. I didn't count. Say, thirty percent are non-ownership and they rent out.

**Interviewer:** To students? To...

**Respondent:** Whoever.

I So, and that's a change. In what way does that change your life?

**Respondent:** Well if they're – [0:30:00] because most of them are single, especially students in their twenties, they think because they live in downtown of Toronto, every night is a party night. Now next door, my brother owns that store. He rents it, and my son's supposed to look after it, so. I don't know why he was – and these are kids going to university. They would play music. Now this is double-brick between the two, and my bedroom is there. And I would hear boom, boom, boom. [0:30:30] So I called the cops, cops came. I said, "Before you go in there, come into my house." And they're standing in the hallway. "What's that noise?" I said, "That's from next door." So they went in, and first of all they didn't hear him knock on the window, and then there must have been around eighty people there running out the back, out the front. Like they could have been in the Olympics. So – and then it stopped for a little while, and then boom.

**Interviewer:** So you're saying the rentals, they don't care about the community. They don't care about noise.

**Respondent:** [0:31:00] No.

**Interviewer:** They're disrespectful.

**Respondent:** No, no. Like say across the road is three row houses, and it's very quiet. Like down here. On that side it's quiet. I think there might be – you know, like next door it's not too bad. They've had a couple of

parties. I've gone out in my pyjamas in the back. I've said, "Come on. Cool it." The one girl or, you know, young person says, "You're making most of the noise." So I went from my property, went up to her patio, I said, "Pardon me, but who said that?" And then, oh. [0:31:30] You know.

**Interviewer:** So she backed off.

**Respondent:** Well yeah, and then they were a little bit quiet.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** "Oh, I want to have some fun." I said, "Fine. Go to High Park. Leave me alone."

**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.

**Respondent:** And you see, Tranzac club, the Brunswick, and the patio. Well, where do you live on Borden?

**Interviewer:** South of Harbord.

**Respondent:** Oh, you're lucky.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. So I've certainly heard about the Brunswick, Brunswick House. Tranzac is noisy too?

**Respondent:** Oh god.

**Interviewer:** Oh. So you have a lot of [0:32:00] noise, especially once you start sitting on the front porch or opening your windows.

**Respondent:** Yeah. Well the thing is yeah, in the front – and especially if I have students, you know, and you tell the alderman – in fact, if you notice, only part of that patio, there's over a hundred. That's about one of the largest patios on Bloor.

**Interviewer:** You're talking about Tranzac.

**Respondent:** Future's.

**Interviewer:** [0:32:30] Oh, Future's. Right. Oh yeah, right.

**Respondent:** Now the Brunswick wanted a patio, and that was the one initiated no patios. And one day I said, "Let them have it and they can sit, drink your beer and watch the animals across at Future's at eleven at night." They weren't amused. Where do they get the money? I don't know. And when he finished, close at two, and they come down the street, I don't know. There's no cops. They get into cars or they're swearing. And [0:33:00] once I said, "Is that what your mother taught you?" And then the odd time someone will apologize.

**Interviewer:** But you live with a lot of noise is the bottom line.

**Respondent:** At night. Friday night and – okay, when school's out, university finishes. Okay. Well yeah, because the more you drink, the louder. You get deaf.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** The more you drink, you get deaf.

**Interviewer:** [Laughs] It affects your hearing. In the years that you were here, of course, your [0:33:30] father had that corner store. Were you aware of any kind of cottage industry? People working from home?

**Respondent:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** What kinds?

**Respondent:** Usually tailors.

**Interviewer:** Uh-huh.

**Respondent:** Mostly. Well my mother, she made wine or something [laughs] that's a cottage industry. Not really. And you know, people sold linens. You used to pay every week so much, and you would buy, you know, sheets or whatever you need. Like things you worked out of the home. [0:34:00] And also manufacturing because, well, they do that now. They take it to sew up stuff. They take it home.

- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent:** In terms of other things, not – you know, I wouldn't know.
- Interviewer:** But tailoring. Being...
- Respondent:** Tailoring and, like, I remember one lovely Scottish lady on Sussex on the other – on that side. And she knitted for two, three dollars she would knit you a sweater. I mean that was – and when she knitted, [0:34:30] everything was perfect.
- Interviewer:** Okay. Yeah. So she had her knitting business.
- Respondent:** Well, I mean, how can you make, you know – you didn't make big money. It was just – so I mean in terms of the cottage industry...
- Interviewer:** Not too much.
- Respondent:** No. Not like you have now. I mean...
- Interviewer:** From what you remember, were mothers working outside the home, or were mothers mainly taking care of their children and the house?
- Respondent:** Mostly at home.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent:** [0:35:00] There were some, like, working usually on Spadina and in manufacturing, or where they took in children to babysit for them.
- Interviewer:** Mm-hm.
- Respondent:** What do you call it? Four doors down. She took in children, but they were, you know, there was no rules. You played in the basement. I'm sure it wasn't finished.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.

- Respondent:** He sold eggs on a bike, and he used to say, like, "Here comes [0:35:30] [indiscernible 0:35:30]". [Laughter]
- Interviewer:** Very cute. Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** And he sold – you know. So you bought eggs. After when I moved back here, he would have a truck full of pears and apples. Like fruit that wouldn't go bad, and he sold it from the truck.
- Interviewer:** What – were there some foods that were delivered?
- Respondent:** Grocery stores. Mrs. Cohen forgot her celery for her chicken soup for Shabbos. We had to run in, you know, just along here.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** To deliver it.
- Interviewer:** Right. Yeah.
- Respondent:** [0:36:00] Yes, sir.
- Interviewer:** I'm wondering what you have behind your house, and what a lot of these people have, and how you have used these through the years when you were raising your family, when you were a child. What's behind the house? Gardens, garages, what?
- Respondent:** Well, first of all, I didn't live here. I lived [0:36:30] in a flat for around four years, then when I moved back here – so you started – there was a big double-garage. Don't ask me why. The roof was going to fall down, and I told my younger brother, "Do me a favour. I've got two-by-fours. Fix it." So I wake up one morning, it's on my car, the roof.
- Interviewer:** Oh.
- Respondent:** Anyways, that's okay. So I – don't ask me why I tore it down. It was crazy, but I did. So next door, he was getting rid of his garage. I said, "How much do you want for the garage?" [0:37:00] He says,

"Two hundred bucks," so I said, "Okay." So the guy had the front load and moved it over to my space.

**Interviewer:** Oh.

**Respondent:** It's a good way to get rid of wood. So anyways, okay. I started growing a few vegetables, flowers, and like tomatoes. Corn really grew, but the squirrels loved it. There's some fruit there. Please, help yourself.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Thank you. Maybe after. So you're saying you used your back garden for growing flowers, vegetables, fruit.

**Respondent:** Yeah. Like the front used to be grass, [0:37:30] and forget it with the tree.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** That's the second tree because someone hit it with a car, the first one. Like that was one neighbour, you know, they had a plan and they planted evergreens here. Not – you know, like – it's really nice. Somebody – they had the big sale on flowers, impatiens. I bought a whole – so. Where's that?

**Interviewer:** [0:38:00] So these are pictures you took that – of your...

**Respondent:** Yeah. But I don't do that anymore. I mean I can.

**Interviewer:** Oh, yeah.

**Respondent:** Because when I was...

**Interviewer:** Oh, these were beautiful. Oh my god. So how long ago was this?

**Respondent:** Oh, around – what's the date here? A long time ago.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Okay. But they were...

**Respondent:** But I did it for, until around five years ago.

- Interviewer:** So until you were seventy-five.
- Respondent:** Yeah. But then I didn't have the [indiscernible 0:38:24], you know?
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent:** You don't see all the junk.
- Interviewer:** [Laughs] But it's beautiful. [0:38:30] Oh my god. Gorgeous garden.
- Respondent:** Well not – if you look at it now. When we were growing tomatoes and beans and everything. And this was the front. That was – oh god. That was Kitty Cat. And she was part Manx.
- Interviewer:** Part what?
- Respondent:** Manx. You know, without the tail?
- Interviewer:** Oh okay. I never...
- Respondent:** That's another story. But anyways, yeah. After they did all that thing, so I went to Loblaws, got a bunch of flowers, and I didn't know they were going to grow so big. But...
- Interviewer:** So you had flowers [0:39:00] in back, and fruit and vegetables, and beautiful flowers in front.
- Respondent:** Yeah. And then I used to have at least once a week or two weeks, you know, have a barbecue with – doesn't look that good now. Don't worry.
- Interviewer:** Okay. But you're saying when you were younger and more vigorous...
- Respondent:** When I was healthier. Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. That you used your back, you made it very beautiful, and you also fed people there. This is beautiful.

- Respondent:** Yeah. My friends and I, you know, I would provide the main course and they would bring the rest.
- Interviewer:** [0:39:30] Yeah. Yeah. Well I'm glad to have these pictures.
- Respondent:** I have, oh god, pictures.
- Interviewer:** And when you – oh, these are lovely.
- Respondent:** But now you know, the yard's a mess. I've got pansies. I planted in two pots and I was, like, wiped out. Like I could – if I could go from here halfway to Bloor, I'm exhausted.
- Interviewer:** So your health is poor.
- Respondent:** Well. The breathing, whatever you want to know. That's another story.
- Interviewer:** Okay. When you were growing up here, when you were twelve, when you were ten, did [0:40:00] you use the back of your home at all?
- Respondent:** I didn't live here.
- Interviewer:** So where did you live?
- Respondent:** The corner.
- Interviewer:** Okay. So there was no back there.
- Respondent:** There was a backyard there, and we had – I remember my mother bought one of those – remember the swings?
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.

- Respondent:** That's the one. When we had time we would, you know – but my mother liked – and you didn't take – people would say, "Why didn't you get more pictures?" I said, "Who had cameras?" Like you know?
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** So on – there are three windows in the front, and there would be three [0:40:30] – here's Marcia, my postman.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. Postgirl.
- Respondent:** Yeah. I gave her, you know, for Christmas, some – and she gave me ten stamps and a special thing and thank you and everything.
- Interviewer:** Oh, lovely. Yeah.
- Respondent:** Yeah. Yeah. So they'd be still full of flowers. And they were really, you know, she was very good at not designing – whatever word. And you would reach them from the windows. [0:41:00] So that was always very nice.
- Interviewer:** I just want to come back to the gardens and the front of the house. Yours was a store. When you were with your friends, say, when you were eight, twelve, fifteen, where did you hang out? What did you do?
- Respondent:** On the verandah. You never went in the house.
- Interviewer:** So the verandah was...
- Respondent:** The verandah outside. You played on the street. There were hardly any cars.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent:** When you were, I would say, up to around twelve years old or whatever, thirteen, fourteen, you know, by the time you were sixteen on [0:41:30] a Saturday night at someone's house, you know, they'd have a – I didn't have a record player, but they would

bring a record player with the thing, and you'd serve some pop or something, you know?

**Interviewer:** But you're saying it was front – people lived in the front. You talked about the verandahs.

**Respondent:** Oh yeah. They were always sitting on a verandah.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** And you always heard [laughs] – I don't know what it is. God bless the Jewish man, but you would hear him calling your kids, **[indiscernible 0:41:56]**. [Laughter] Like you could hear **[0:42:00]** [Laughter] – and you know, then you would have the fish man would go – I don't know before. Oh, maybe. He would push a cart with ice...

**Interviewer:** And fish?

**Respondent:** Yeah. And he would yell, "Buy fish. Buy." Like those were sounds of the street.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** And you get that in – what's that movie? Sounds of the street. And then watermelon. Like, "Watermelon."

**Interviewer:** Say it. Say it. I want to hear how he said it.

**Respondent:** Oh, I don't know.

**Interviewer:** **[Indiscernible 0:42:28]** is one.

**Respondent:** **[0:42:30] [indiscernible 0:42:30]**. Oh god. **[Indiscernible 0:42:35]**. This is the tenth time already.

**Interviewer:** Right. I'm not going to call you again.

**Respondent:** Yeah. Anyways, and you know, "Watermelon. Watermelon." And then you had, "Buy fish, buy fish." Now you had the real religious

Jews that couldn't work anywhere because they had – they have a horse and wagon, and I wouldn't – I forgot what they would say. But you bought rugs for them because they would pick up the rugs from [0:43:00] rich homes. Now the ends weren't worn. They were more money, and you had, like, runners all over the place. But the middle was more – was very cheap because it was worn out.

**Interviewer:** But these – they traveled along the streets with wagons?

**Respondent:** Horse and wagon.

**Interviewer:** Horses – horse and wagon.

**Respondent:** We had milk and bread, and Hayhoe tea were delivered by wagon. Hayhoe tea, they would have a pony and a little wagon and selling tea.

**Interviewer:** I never heard that one.

**Respondent:** See?

**Interviewer:** Okay. So okay. So tea and the [0:43:30] watermelon, all that stuff was being – horse and wagon.

**Respondent:** No. The watermelon and the fish was carts. You pushed the carts.

**Interviewer:** Oh, they just pushed a cart.

**Respondent:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Oh. I'd love to have some pictures of that, but I don't.

**Respondent:** I know. They don't have. And also ice. Like people had iceboxes.

**Interviewer:** Uh-huh. And how was moved on the streets?

**Respondent:** By a truck. And you know, that was hard work because half the place – I'm sure a lot of places they'd go to the second or third floor.

**Interviewer:** [0:44:00] And they would have to carry this big hunk of ice upstairs.

- Respondent:** Oh yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** And those kids used to wait because he had to chip it, and we'd get the ice, get the sawdust off it and, you know.
- Interviewer:** And what?
- Respondent:** And put it in our mouth, you know? It was cold.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** I don't know. Like – oh god. Years ago...
- Interviewer:** That's wonderful descriptive stuff by the way. It's beautiful. I can picture it.
- Respondent:** Well also one day we're coming back from a meeting, and from Cecil Street, me and my friends, and it was around ten years ago. And the...
- Interviewer:** **[0:44:30]** Ten years ago, or ten years old?
- Respondent:** Ten years ago, or twenty years ago because the Italians were moved in and they were fixing up everything, and they threw out all kinds of old dressers and everything because it was junk. And we're coming up Major and they're throwing out this wooden icebox. Oh. And I was with a friend and his wife, Josh and I don't know who. Him I remember. So – and we asked the people, "Do you want it?" "Oh no. Take it. Junk. Junk." **[0:45:00]** Okay. Except the rollers were broken. Anyways. So I said, "Okay, Josh. Let's toss because we both wanted it. Let's toss and see who gets it." Well I won. Well he was – like you know. Not me. If I would have lost.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. But he was upset to have lost it.
- Respondent:** Yeah. So – because he had to help me bring it up here. And it hardly rolled because the rollers were – so meanwhile like my

mother was sick. "God sent an angel." There was a [0:45:30] guy there. In the front of his bike, he had two wheels, but it was – you could put junk in the front.

**Interviewer:** Mm-hm.

**Respondent:** I said, "Hey man, what are you doing?" He says, "Oh, I'm doing what you're doing. Picking up junk." I said, "Oh. Don't you want to take this?" "No." I told, "Take this up to here." I said, "I'll give you a buck." He says, "Sure, lady. Anytime." So.

**Interviewer:** So he brought the refrigerator, that icebox.

**Respondent:** Yeah. I mean it was heavy.

**Interviewer:** I'll bet, but he had...

**Respondent:** But for him, yeah. So he put it in the house and three days later I see a cockroach crawling and I said, "I'll [indiscernible 0:46:00] [0:46:00] get out of here." [Laughter] So he moved, got married. It's his. Everything is his. I have a beautiful pew from the shul down here with the brass numbers on the side.

**Interviewer:** Right from the Narayever here?

**Respondent:** Yes. And – no. Not the Narayever. The [indiscernible 0:46:17] shul.

**Interviewer:** Oh my god. Wow.

**Respondent:** So we paid ten bucks or something. Then they were giving them away because nobody wanted them, but he has one there from downtown that's a piece of garbage. [0:46:30] But no, it's not – I used to have it there. It was great.

**Interviewer:** So it was a pew from the shul.

**Respondent:** Oh yeah.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. Where was the [indiscernible 0:46:39]?

- Respondent:** Right at the corner here at Brunswick and Sussex on the northeast corner. Right here.
- Interviewer:** So that was a long time ago.
- Respondent:** Oh yeah. And then the Sephardic group, like you know, bought it. And...
- Interviewer:** So that became a Sephardic shul?
- Respondent:** Yeah. When he first started coming to Toronto. **[0:47:00]** And I don't know. Have you ever heard when they're singing Friday night for Shabbos?
- Interviewer:** What?
- Respondent:** It's beautiful.
- Interviewer:** Oh yeah.
- Respondent:** Because...
- Interviewer:** You're saying the Sephardic tunes? Or any shul?
- Respondent:** No. The religious. No, the religious tunes.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** Because when I was in Israel, I stayed with a distant cousin and she's right next to **[indiscernible 0:47:20]**, and two doors away was a – I said to her in Yiddish, I said, "That Sephardic?" She says, "Yeah." Beautiful. So just before, I was there **[0:47:30]** for Rosh Hashanah or something and it was just like wow. It was great. So when they sold, so I was going in there and all of a sudden a guy took an axe and he broke where you had the torahs. That's – you're supposed to do that.
- Interviewer:** One minute. You lost me.

- Respondent:** No, you know where you have the torahs?
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** So it's a wooden door in front where you open it up.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** Yeah. Those doors.
- Interviewer:** The **[indiscernible 0:47:55]**.
- Respondent:** Whatever. Anyways, they split it with an axe **[0:48:00]** or a hammer. I don't remember. And that seems to be the custom, but for me, and I'm not – I'm a secular Jew. Wow. It really...
- Interviewer:** I've never heard of that or seen it in my whole life.
- Respondent:** Well you ask.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. I will.
- Respondent:** No, no. It just was like a knife in a heart.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** And like, you know. Anyways.
- Interviewer:** So you never went to any of these shuls, but you enjoyed the music that you heard from the outside.
- Respondent:** Well I never went to Sephardic. The other one, you'd go – **[0:48:30]** first of all, you didn't go on the holidays because cost, which for the – two of my brothers had their bar mitzvahs there.
- Interviewer:** At which one? At the **[indiscernible 0:48:40]**.
- Respondent:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.

- Respondent:** And then whenever there was a holiday, you know, they had for the kids.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent:** Whatever it is for, you know.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** So anyways.
- Interviewer:** What about the heating? How has that changed through the years?
- Respondent:** The heating?
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** Well, [0:49:00] when we lived at the corner, there was two furnaces – one for upstairs and one for downstairs for coal. And we had to – me and my brother, we would have to get it going, which wasn't easy. Fortunately having a grocery store, you had the boxes from the oranges and everything to get it started. And when they were tearing down a house or something, you ran to get the slats. Everybody did.
- Interviewer:** So those were easier to start the fire with, you're saying?
- Respondent:** Well it wasn't easy to go out a few times before you got [0:49:30] started. So then it would get going, and of course in the middle of the night it would go out.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** But you see, in the kitchen you always had a – what do they call them? Quebec heaters or something? You know, round little stove?
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** Plus you had a stove that was half coal and half gas.

- Interviewer:** Wow.
- Respondent:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Okay.
- Respondent:** So what do you call it? So that – you know, my mother got up very, very early, put everything, whatever clothes we had on us because you didn't have – now I still got the Hudson Bay blankets that she bought when they started having them coupled...
- Interviewer:** With the **[0:50:00]** stripes?
- Respondent:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** With the stripes.
- Respondent:** I still use it. I won't give it away.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** You know?
- Interviewer:** Yeah. My parents had that my whole life as long as I remembered they had those.
- Respondent:** Well I mean, they were worn, like, well. So yeah. It was cold. In the house, because it was stucco outside, the frost would be inside, especially in the kitchen where you...
- Interviewer:** So you'd have ice along the wall, you mean?
- Respondent:** Yeah, frost.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** **[0:50:30]** Not ice, but frost.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.

- Respondent:** Windows always frosted from the moisture.
- Interviewer:** And they had the single-pane windows. Not the double-pane.
- Respondent:** We had double, but that was a job putting them up.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** So we were always in the kitchen. You know in those days, everybody was in the kitchen.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** So you know.
- Interviewer:** What about dating? How did you and people in your friendship group – what happened?
- Respondent:** Well **[0:51:00]** I didn't hardly have any dates because I was a tomboy. [Laughter] And I was like one of the gang. Even my son with his friends, well if they went fishing, I went with. In fact, I have a picture somewhere. I caught the biggest fish, and one guy, Norbert, "Mine bigger." And a guy says, "Norbert, shut up." I got a picture of it. But we had fun, and I was invited to all their weddings, and they would get a bigger table. "Mamma Rosa, you sit right there."
- Interviewer:** **[0:51:30]** But in terms of dating you're saying...
- Respondent:** No, not for me. No.
- Interviewer:** They didn't want a jock. They didn't want a tomboy.
- Respondent:** I wasn't – first of all, I was such an introvert or a wallflower, believe it or not. I couldn't dance. And just didn't. It wasn't...
- Interviewer:** Were you shy at that time? Or you just...
- Respondent:** No, not shy.

**Interviewer:** ...insecure? What?

**Respondent:** Well insecure and everything. I didn't have...

**Interviewer:** Because you call yourself a wallflower and...

**Respondent:** Yeah. **[0:52:00]** I didn't – yeah. Wherever I went. You know, you just whatever. And I was never the – not flirtatious kind or something, you know? To me, they were like brothers.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. But then you eventually got married, so you...

**Respondent:** Well yeah. It was interesting. And because my friend says, "Come Saturday night to dance at the Y," I said, "Oy. Such a meat market. Leave me alone. I'm not going." First and last time I ever went. **[0:52:30]** So I met my ex-husband there, and for some reason you know you're going to marry that person.

**Interviewer:** How old were you at that time?

**Respondent:** Twenty-four.

**Interviewer:** Uh-huh.

**Respondent:** And of course, my mother drove me crazy. **[Indiscernible 0:52:41]**.

**Interviewer:** Oh, she was afraid you'd be an old maid. [Laughs]

**Respondent:** Well at one point, you know, I had the wedding invitations in the car. You know, things happen. I said – and you know, in those days you didn't talk about philosophy or whatever you want to call **[0:53:00]** it, you know?

**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. Values.

**Respondent:** Whatever. Yeah. And I said, "Well, you know, I won't mail the invitations. Oh no, no. I love you, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah." So he fell for it. But you know, we had two children. To me it was a very bad marriage. For me. Because two years before, I had a mental

breakdown or I had, what do you call it, the electric [0:53:30] shock treatments.

**Interviewer:** Mm-hm.

**Respondent:** Which there's a certain part of your memory you don't get. And I told him about everything. Oh you know, I was working and everything, and everything was all right. I wasn't on medication or anything, but he never let me forget once we got married.

**Interviewer:** Oh. So he used it against you.

**Respondent:** And of course, I didn't have any worth because my mom always said, "You're worse than the four boys. I wish I had four more boys." And as a kid under ten or something, she was always going to send me to reform school and I was, "What did I do bad?" In those days, reform [0:54:00] school was a really scary...

**Interviewer:** Oh yeah. I remember. Yeah.

**Respondent:** So there's that whole...

**Interviewer:** So you have a lot of old stuff.

**Respondent:** That I got rid of. [Laughs]

**Interviewer:** So your mother said, "I should have had more boys and not you."

**Respondent:** Oh yeah.

**Interviewer:** And then your husband rubbed in the fact that you had treatments.

**Respondent:** Well, just that and I come from a crazy family, and you're guilty. He was a Belarusian.

**Interviewer:** Mm-hm.

**Respondent:** And the guilt. What do you want from that? You know? He's just – you know.

**Interviewer:** [0:54:30] So you got out of that marriage.

**Respondent:** Oh yeah, after three years.

**Interviewer:** Three years.

**Respondent:** I would have gone out completely. One weekend, I just couldn't take it and I took my son, he was around a year or so, and I just left. It was a weekend and I left him with the baby and I went to one of his friends' place somewhere in the country. He had a farm. I stayed there for two days. I just – I figured...

**Interviewer:** You needed – yeah. Yeah.

**Respondent:** I didn't abandon him because the father was there.

**Interviewer:** Right. Right.

**Respondent:** You know?

**Interviewer:** Anyway, but you had to get away from him, you're saying.

**Respondent:** [0:55:00] Yeah. But I mean I couldn't take – where would I take the kid? I mean I knew he would – even now, one thing, he loves his son, his son loves him. It was never – for me, it was never used as a weapon because the first thing in my mind, the benefit for the child. In a lot of cases, like my son would hear stories. He couldn't understand, you know? Because he went fishing with his father, take him to Florida, take him here. You know. On a weekend, [0:55:30] took him.

**Interviewer:** So you're saying your son lived with you, but he still had a relationship with his dad.

**Respondent:** Oh yeah. Oh yeah. Even, you know, even now, for Passover – so I used to go to my cousin's for the holidays, but he went at his father's because his father and friends had children and everything. My late cousin – they were all adults, so.

**Interviewer:** Well I think you were very nice about that. I agree with you.

- Respondent:** Oh yeah. Whatever was, you know?
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.
- Respondent:** But then I don't know. **[0:56:00]** Like if they had – my ex-husband's wife made an engagement party. Shouldn't I be invited?
- Interviewer:** She made an engagement party for whom?
- Respondent:** For my...
- Interviewer:** For your son?
- Respondent:** ...son.
- Interviewer:** Yes. Of course.
- Respondent:** Shouldn't I be invited?
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** And if I wasn't invited, my son should say, "Forget it. No way."
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.
- Respondent:** Yeah. That hurts.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** And other things. I mean I – in the last few years, except for the last year or so, I would call up my ex-husband and, you know, talk about Paul this and that, except **[0:56:30]** the last one he says, "You're going to make your son crazy just like you are." So I hung up and I lost it.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent:** Never marry a Russian from Belarus. [Laughter]

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Respondent:** Well he was a – he had a whole family killed and he had a rough time, you know, during the war.

**Interviewer:** So he had his baggage.

**Respondent:** Well yeah.

**Interviewer:** Several other questions. One is do you have any impression of the effect of the university on our neighbourhood [0:57:00] here?

**Respondent:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** What's that?

**Respondent:** Well I would always be on the university liaison committee. And one meeting I said, "You're much more fraudulent than the developers I dealt with." And this was in the '70s. And they are. They cry poor, but they have millions. Like they bought or traded with Greenwin, the Robert Street playing field. And we said, yeah, like we want to be able to use it. [0:57:30] Instead of the University of Toronto schools, we'll, you know – and the ice skating rink. So the city paid for the upkeep of both, but they owned a property. And then you know, in terms of us using it – and they tore down good homes. And so one neighbour, he says, "Well if they put up a fence, I'm going to attach a chain to my car and just rip it down," and you would never expect that from that person. But it was ridiculous. And even now, there's [0:58:00] empty space just west of Spadina on Sussex. Two homes they tore down that have been empty for years.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.

**Respondent:** And now the University of Toronto schools has to move out because their lease or – they're terrible. And if you would see what the students have to pay extra beside tuition and the food, the first-year residents – oh, if you're an international student, forget it. It's around ten thousand bucks. [0:58:30] And if you were at the Chester Street five-star hotel...

- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** I printed out the menu once. Like I'll go live there.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. [Laughs]
- Respondent:** But they've got to have money. It's very, very...
- Interviewer:** But you're saying that they have – they took down homes and they're not sharing that land.
- Respondent:** [Indiscernible 0:58:48], but it has to be fixed. The ice skating rink.
- Interviewer:** It hasn't been used for a few years.
- Respondent:** Yeah. Because it has to be fixed.
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** Okay. And I always kept telling the residents' group, "Get that zoned [0:59:00] parkland. Get it zoned parkland," you know? "Oh, we'll always be able to use it." Well that's not the case.
- Interviewer:** Well there's also that place that had all that sand right across the lane from the rink. There's a big empty space that's never used for anything. I don't know if...
- Respondent:** That's the tennis court, no?
- Interviewer:** No. The tennis court is the other side. Anyway, so you're saying...
- Respondent:** Well that's the empty space.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. That's it.
- Respondent:** Yeah. The two homes.
- Interviewer:** Nothing. Oh. So they [0:59:30] took two homes from there?

- Respondent:** Oh years ago in the '70s or something. Or late '70s. And also they were for the expressway, except one professor. He should rest in peace. Alan Paul.
- Interviewer:** I remember him.
- Respondent:** He lost his – he didn't get tenure because he spent a whole year with the students. That was the year the students were great.
- Interviewer:** Did he own Kensington?
- Respondent:** No.
- Interviewer:** That restaurant? He wasn't...
- Respondent:** Oh yeah. Major Roberts.
- Interviewer:** Major Roberts. Right.
- Respondent:** I did the accounting. He had no...
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** God. He had no restaurant experience. [1:00:00] It's one thing when you do it for a wedding, you're making one dish for everybody.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Right. Yeah, but I remember he owned that restaurant. Right. So okay. You referred briefly to fighting the expressway. What happened with you around that?
- Respondent:** Well me and two other people...
- Interviewer:** Yeah.
- Respondent:** ...we were the originator – not the originator, but we started the initiative of the first – well, what I initiated, the first meeting at Huron Street school. And Nolan, Nadine Nolan said, [1:00:30] "Who, you know, initiated this meeting?" I said, "We did."

**Interviewer:** Mm-hm.

**Respondent:** That was during one of the elections. I forgot which one. Well, '79. No, no, '69 or something. And then she wrote the book, "The Bad Trip." So we – and then we got people involved, and in those days, I don't know if you remember we were called – Denison called us a bunch of rabbits.

**Interviewer:** Rabbits?

**Respondent:** Yes. They just multiply where they [1:01:00] come from.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** And it didn't matter what political party you belonged to because it affects all of us like other things. So two days later, someone had the brilliant – made buttons with the rabbit on it, so we – there was rabbit buttons all over the city.

**Interviewer:** But you're saying you really fought that expressway.

**Respondent:** Well they kept saying, "Well, you're crazy. Leave it alone. Da, da, da." My tack was to make people mad enough to do something. Eventually they'd say, [1:01:30] "Well, maybe Rosie has something there."

**Interviewer:** So you really initiated that whole thing.

**Respondent:** Oh no, no, no. I didn't. There was other people involved.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. But you and some others. Sure because others...

**Respondent:** In the beginning.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** But you respected Jane Jacobs. I was the first or second person she met in Toronto.

**Interviewer:** Wow.

**Respondent:** Yeah. In fact, I don't know, I should give it to you. She endorsed – I ran four times, okay? The first time, I bowed out because the local – I'll [1:02:00] say it. The local NDP candidate and that whole riding screwed me because I didn't belong to the NDP anymore. I still support it, but that's another story. But I never answered what they wanted me to answer. You know, it's funny.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. But you're saying that you fought, you were one of the people fighting hard to – and also but – and Jane Jacobs. You were...

**Respondent:** Jane Jacobs was not a guru. She...

**Interviewer:** [1:02:30] Pretty close to it.

**Respondent:** Whatever she said, you know, was good. Was – I mean we have someone, you know – I didn't know how famous she was, you know, at that time. But you read her book, "The Life and Death of the American Cities." I said, "Boy, that's great."

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** But see now, a lot of people use her name and they're going to do – [indiscernible 1:02:55] they're going to do like a Venetian city like with canals and everything, and she [1:03:00], she helped plan it and everything.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** So I happened to tell her son, I said, "Your mother sold out." Well. [Laughter] Anyways, so a little bit later, I happened to drop by to wish her a Merry Christmas or something, so we started talking and she said, "You know you may" – she had a beautiful home on Albany. And she said, "You know, you made me feel bad." I said, "Why?" I said, "Yes. I said that. But that's the way I felt at that time that you were going to make canals and god [1:03:30] knows what. Who knows what and everything." And then she had two pies left over. One was a pecan pie and she said, "Would you like a pie?"

And I said, "Would I?" [Laughs] So she gave it to me. Yeah. She was very...

**Interviewer:** She probably respected you because you were an activist the way she was. Yeah.

**Respondent:** Oh yeah. And on a couple of times, say, when we appeared at meetings, and I would speak and then she would say something, and she says, "Yes, you know, I agree with Rosie." I mean **[indiscernible 1:03:56]**. And the best line I ever got was from a neighbour **[1:04:00]** saying, "Italian. Immigrant. Major." I said – I forgot her name. "Miss So, why don't you like it?" And she – oh god, I'm trying to remember. "Too much money. Too much dirt." Money, dirt. I forgot what the third one was. Very succinct. Never...

**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah.

**Respondent:** So I said that, you know, during my speech or a presentation at the OMB. And the one who's the chairman now, Susan Fisher, whatever her last name is...

**Interviewer:** **[1:04:30]** Oh, I remember her.

**Respondent:** Are you kidding? We're all Canadian, we're all colleged. They had nearly as many students as Branksome or Havergal, or one of them. And he charged a lot. So you know, it was at the OMB, and I told the group of people, Friends of Albany or whatever they were called, I said, "Don't get any professionals. Just have the neighbours explain their experience."

**Interviewer:** And they'll stay up on the point.

**Respondent:** Well no.

**Interviewer:** **[1:05:00]** Yeah.

**Respondent:** Because at the OMB when we were doing Spadina, oh, he passed away. Goodman, the furrier. He started – so Kenny the chairman said, "Pardon me. Are you a traffic engineer?" And of course he said, "No." He says, "Well just speak about what you know." Okay?

Because then now they're going to ask you. So that's what I said. I said, "Lynn," do you know Lynn Spink?

**Interviewer:** Yes, I do.

**Respondent:** Yeah. Say hello for me.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** [1:05:30] And yeah. She got me involved with all that. It was – so and Susan, my god, she was an NDPer then. Whatever. But she was very smart. I couldn't believe it.

**Interviewer:** Could we just talk briefly about Kensington Market?

**Respondent:** I was born on a house on Baldwin.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Okay. So just the – whether you feel it's been important to our neighbourhood, whether it is – just its influence and its usefulness.

**Respondent:** [1:06:00] Well first it started probably about '20s and '30s. I think it was predominately Jewish...

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** ...because the old – they were all houses. And it was always called the Jewish Market until some point they figured well, it's not good for tourists. So some said, "What about Chinatown?" You know? So they – Kensington. Kensington was just a small street with houses.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Respondent:** Baldwin – only stuff on Baldwin. So that's the way it was. I mean people probably lived in the back [1:06:30] with the rats and god knows what else, and it was all food places or clothing. Now, it isn't. You have the chains, you have a few – not mom and pop, but you know, individuals not chain stores, which some of them are.

**Interviewer:** More cafes.

- Respondent:** Or bars. That's not Kensington.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Certainly they're...
- Respondent:** Chinatown is better. I remember I was running in one election and someone says, "What are you going to do with the garbage in the Chinatown?" Because nobody ever, especially the elected people [1:07:00] – so at that time Dan Heap was the alderman and I said well, "Pardon me, you know, I don't have that job yet. Would you like to ask your paying alderman what he's doing about it?" [Laughs] Which is true. And then you have a civil servant going around they pick up paper. He says, "Well, the litter problem is less than it was the year before because they count what they pick up."
- Interviewer:** Yeah, right.
- Respondent:** They're crazy.
- Interviewer:** So do you feel that it's – what do you feel is our connection with Kensington Market?
- Respondent:** I don't have any.
- Interviewer:** You don't. [1:07:30] So you don't use it.
- Respondent:** Unless there's just the cheese shop on Kensington.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent:** I used to go to Daiter's. I remember Daiter's grandmother.
- Interviewer:** So you're saying it used to be very Jewish. They changed the name because...
- Respondent:** Well they know tourists – yeah, but then it became Portuguese.
- Interviewer:** Uh-huh.

- Respondent:** And there was only one store. Jeez. They sold only bananas for years because the person's husband passed away. Oh, Frances's late father. And she was a widow. This is in the [1:08:00] late '30s, '40s. So they all – Kensington people got together and she would be the only one who could sell the bananas to make a living.
- Interviewer:** Oh. What a lovely thing.
- Respondent:** Yeah.
- Interviewer:** Whoa. So nobody else had any bananas.
- Respondent:** No.
- Interviewer:** So they made it simple, but they also made people shop there if they wanted.
- Respondent:** For bananas. Yeah. So then slowly, I don't know if she was – I remember her. She was, you know, I guess it was her – not the daughter. I mean, yeah, the daughter. I forgot the daughter's name.
- Interviewer:** [1:08:30] Doesn't matter.
- Respondent:** Slowly starting in West Indian stuff because you're doing bananas and now you're getting West Indian people coming in, and slowly. So until – now it's closed anyways. The son, he sells mostly to restaurants. He swears like two truck drivers. Oh my god.
- Interviewer:** [Laughs] Rosie, what about the end of World War II? Do you remember when that happened? Do you remember what happened in the neighbourhood?
- Respondent:** Oh yeah. We were – wow.
- Interviewer:** Tell me.
- Respondent:** I don't – [1:09:00] Because of the treatments, I've gotten hurt. The whole part there that's...
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Right. Okay.

**Respondent:** All I know that we were very, you know, people were happy, they're coming home, and the thing is when the Veterans came home, they had to have jobs. So fortunately the government gave them money or land, or you know, they built a lot of the homes. But way out – I just – why do I remember Brown's Line? Because that's where a lot of the Veterans' homes were built. Don't ask me why.

**Interviewer:** [1:09:30] I'm just going to ask one more specific question and that is the general security of the neighbourhood. What it's like now and what it was like twenty years ago, at forty years ago, at sixty years ago. Safety, security, what about them?

**Respondent:** Well first of all, I mean there was one gun in the whole city. [Laughs] I mean to hear someone got killed, like wow. Like holy mackerel. Now, it's like, you know, you're scratching your rear end every day. It doesn't even [1:10:00] phase anymore. It's very, very sad because there are random killings, a lot of them.

**Interviewer:** But what about our neighbourhood here?

**Respondent:** It was very safe.

**Interviewer:** Still?

**Respondent:** Well now, I mean I would – mind you, I have tenants coming home two in the morning. You know what? Where is it safe?

**Interviewer:** Do you feel safe here?

**Respondent:** Yeah. You know, listen, windows and locks only keep honest people out. [Laughter] That's an old saying, you know?

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Respondent:** It used to be where you could leave [1:10:30] your door open during the daytime, or the back door, but there's so many crazies out there.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** Like I like leaving the back door to leave the screen door, you know, closed, but I do that. I figure they're going to get me, do it fast. Whatever you do, do it – you know what I mean? Like usually school – I haven't heard them. Would be around five or eight kids smoking pot or whatever in the laneway during the school time.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. From Central Tech.

**Respondent:** Yeah. I presume.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** So one day – and around ten or eleven in the morning, I'd go out there, [1:11:00] I'd say, "Pardon me, how come you're not in school?" Because you've got to be nice or else, whatever. "Oh, it's boring." I said, "Boring? Wait until you go to work. That's boring. And if you're lucky, you work with pleasant people who have a good sense of humour." So that was it. And then one day, I could smell it in my back door.

**Interviewer:** Oh boy.

**Respondent:** So I go there and I said, "Okay. Who has the big bucks?" "What do you mean?" "Someone bought really good, good hash." [Laughter] Because it was strong. [Laughter] So they laughed. "Oh, hey [1:11:30] mamma, would you want a puff?" I said, "No thank you." [Laughter]

**Interviewer:** Very cute. Now before I turned on the audiotape, you started to say something about the neighbourhood has become white something or other?

**Respondent:** White-ass liberals.

**Interviewer:** White-ass liberals. Okay.

**Respondent:** No, no. [Laughter] They put the – oh, well, look across the road, that house.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** And he wants 1.6 million. His father [1:12:00] built Bathurst and St. Clair apartment on the northwest side, so there's big, big bucks.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** They came in for two years and you sell it and make a capital of, like – if you make money on it, you don't pay taxes.

**Interviewer:** Well he wants 1.6 million?

**Respondent:** Yeah. But he put a lot of money in there. Like I've been in there briefly.

**Interviewer:** So it's beautiful, you're saying.

**Respondent:** Well the thing is it's like people wanted to renovate for themselves...

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** Unless they happen [1:12:30] to like that. The front should have been – even the people to the south of it who are very nice said, "At least he should have kept the façade of the verandahs."

**Interviewer:** I agree.

**Respondent:** It's like – and look about the house up here with the glass in the front.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** I mean that's [indiscernible 1:12:44]. But...

**Interviewer:** So when you say white-ass liberals, that – they're changing something.

**Respondent:** Yeah. They don't like when the immigrants used to put the false brick in front, or the [1:13:00] colours, or whatever they did. So one

of them asked, "Well how do we get – keep the white paint?" What was the expression? I forgot. How we – you know, like buying selling like – you know? I said, "Simple. Just put on a false façade and nobody's going to buy it."

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Respondent:** And he must be making big bucks. Who the hell could buy? Do you see the house, the set back, the blue?

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** Sold for over eight. [1:13:30] I mean an Israeli bought it, so when we start talking he tells me, "Well, you know, his wife wanted to live downtown," and I find that's really interesting. He lives in Thornhill somewhere. So next time I see him I say, "You know," whatever his name, I said, "I cannot think of any Jewish wife who wants to live on Brunswick," you know? Especially ones who've lived there. Like you know? Then he has two adult sons. I said, "I've heard this story a hundred times." So no, he hasn't done anything. I don't know [1:14:00] if it's a rooming house.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So anything that we haven't talked about that you think would be...

**Respondent:** The change in the city, the attitude of elected officials. It's just – you know, I always say we have as much corruption as any country in the world, only it's done legally and without shame. Without shame. And when it comes to money, there's [1:14:30] no limit. I mean they all say they work hard. When I worked on Spadina in the office, the people who worked hard were the men and women who worked at those bloody sewing machines.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah.

**Respondent:** You know? And in those days, the cleaning woman had to scrub the wax floors. They work hard. Now they're saying that someone – they make a million bucks, they're working hard. Give me a break.

- Interviewer:** But anything in particular about our neighbourhood that you might want to...
- Respondent:** Yes, it's changed. They say, "Well, if you're near the [1:15:00] university, you've got to expect the noise." I don't accept that.
- Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah. I agree.
- Respondent:** "You've got to accept the noise." God no. And I don't know. And then you've got five minutes to speak in front of a committee? I remember when I was in university, they wanted to build where the planetarium is.
- Interviewer:** Mm-hm.
- Respondent:** And I said, "Well, they can match the ugliness of the ROM," and everybody – [laughter] it is a – oh god.
- Interviewer:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Respondent:** And then [1:15:30] – so then Chow says, "You got – your time is nearly up." I said, "Olivia, at City Hall, you guys can talk for an hour. You want to shut me up? Just be lucky I'm not speaking in Yiddish and then you will have to get a translator." [Laughter] I think the next day there were pictures in the Globe.
- Interviewer:** Okay. I'm going to turn it off, but before I do that, I just want to say, Rosie, it's been a pleasure. You've given me lots of interesting stories.
- Respondent:** Oh. Not at all.
- Interviewer:** Good information. Very rich. Very colourful.
- Respondent:** Oh, I'm glad.
- Interviewer:** And I appreciate it.
- Respondent:** I enjoyed it. You know?

- Interviewer:** [1:16:00] Yeah. And so did I. Okay.
- Respondent:** Okay. I forgot the date. What were we talk...
- Interviewer:** What did you just say to me? You just told me that you're responsible for...
- Respondent:** Yes.
- Interviewer:** ...Kensington long-term care.
- Respondent:** Indirectly. Indirectly.
- Interviewer:** Okay.
- Respondent:** Okay. I think in the '70s or '80s, I don't know the time thing, they wanted to rebuild Doctors Hospital at a time when other hospitals were closing wards and it was a money-maker. And I'm alleging [1:16:30] that when foreign doctors came to Toronto, Doctors Hospital always gave them space to get the experience or whatever. So of course, when they graduated, what specialist are they going to refer to? Okay. Well, I went to the OMB and it was stalled, and stalled, and stalled. And even we had the lawyer Jaffrey. Didn't agree. I said, "A foundation is a separate entity than a hospital. It's like a corporation." He never agreed. [1:17:00] Well he's wrong. Anyways, so eventually they didn't want a hospital, and they had Macfarlane, who was the head honcho of doctors and he had a lot to do with here. And I remembered the meeting, public meeting, I said to him, "I allege, and in my opinion, you're a liar and a thief." And his lawyer was standing next to him. But if you say that, they can't sue you.
- Interviewer:** But how did it come – you said that Kensington – so how did [1:17:30] you move it in that direction?
- Respondent:** Well they had the land. They didn't pay for the land. Miller was Prime Minister. He gave money for the land on – two hundred thousand, I think it was, for the land on College. And also Doctors Hospital was paid for a long time ago through the – whatever the brothers were. I forgot.

**Interviewer:** Raxlen brothers.

**Respondent:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** So they didn't pay for land.

**Interviewer:** So what – how did you – what was your vision and how did you do it?

**Respondent:** [1:18:00] Well there was no vision for long-term care because – actually I forgot. I just – you know, I'm starting to throw out a lot. I've got boxes, and every time I look at something it's history.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** It's part of my history.

**Interviewer:** Right, right.

**Respondent:** But I've got to – how much can you keep?

**Interviewer:** Yeah. I'm going to turn this off for now, but anyway, I think the point you're making is you were influential in switching that from Doctors Hospital to...

**Respondent:** No, not switching. Delayed it long enough...

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Respondent:** ...that they couldn't build it. [1:18:30] Whatever. I said, "If you ever drop a bomb in downtown Toronto at Spadina and College, every hospital would be demolished."

**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay. I'm turning it off. Thanks again.

[End of recording]

