

00:00:00:14 - 00:00:03:03

My name is Nicholas Leblovic.

00:00:04:15 - 00:00:05:21

I'm 80 years old.

00:00:05:21 - 00:00:09:00

I was born in England

00:00:10:15 - 00:00:13:04

in 1944.

00:00:13:04 - 00:00:14:15

My mother was English.

00:00:14:15 - 00:00:17:13

My father was Czechoslovakian

00:00:17:13 - 00:00:21:26

They met during the war
because my father was stationed in England

00:00:21:26 - 00:00:22:16

During the war.

00:00:22:16 - 00:00:27:14

Initially, we went back to the war.

00:00:27:15 - 00:00:29:21

We came back, which would be (19)45.

00:00:29:21 - 00:00:32:21

I think. We returned to Czechoslovakia.

00:00:34:06 - 00:00:37:06

We stayed there

00:00:37:10 - 00:00:40:25

I think 2 or 3 years

or 4 years that we came to England.

00:00:40:25 - 00:00:43:25

And in (19)49 I came to Canada.

00:00:45:01 - 00:00:48:14

Well, my father, as I said, was in government
in Czechoslovakia, so we would have,

00:00:49:11 - 00:00:50:19

we were if we went back.

00:00:50:19 - 00:00:52:04

He went back after the war.

00:00:52:04 - 00:00:55:11

We had a home there. Very nice home.

00:00:56:12 - 00:00:58:24

It was
in the second city called Bratislava,

00:00:58:24 - 00:01:01:24
which is the second largest city
in Czechoslovakia.

00:01:03:01 - 00:01:06:06
Unfortunately, several years
after we moved there,

00:01:07:09 - 00:01:10:08
the communist government came in

00:01:10:27 - 00:01:13:27
and we had to leave the country.

00:01:14:01 - 00:01:17:09
My mother had the foresight
to put me on my own passport, which,

00:01:18:29 - 00:01:21:29
not normal when you travel that age.

00:01:22:08 - 00:01:25:01
She for some reason did that

00:01:25:01 - 00:01:28:01
which allowed me

to leave the country

00:01:28:28 - 00:01:31:05

as a British citizen.

00:01:31:05 - 00:01:33:18

If we were a Czech citizen,
which I would have been presumed

00:01:33:18 - 00:01:36:18

to be without a passport,
because my father was Czech.

00:01:37:16 - 00:01:38:21

There would have been restrictions.

00:01:38:21 - 00:01:40:29

And my father actually did.

00:01:40:29 - 00:01:44:04

Was not allowed to leave
for about 2 or 3 months after,

00:01:44:04 - 00:01:47:03

he was actually put in jail,

00:01:47:05 - 00:01:50:07

about a year
got released, then came to England

00:01:50:07 - 00:01:53:23

for my maternal grandparents
there.

00:01:54:13 - 00:01:55:22

My mother was English, as I said.

00:01:56:23 - 00:01:57:17

We lived with them

00:01:57:17 - 00:02:00:17

for under a year I believe.

00:02:01:10 - 00:02:02:20

And then we had

00:02:02:20 - 00:02:06:03

my mother had two aunts

00:02:06:09 - 00:02:09:05

who lived in Canada, one in Ottawa

00:02:09:05 - 00:02:10:22

and one in Burlington.

00:02:10:22 - 00:02:13:21

And I can tell you a little bit about her,

00:02:13:21 - 00:02:16:21

lived here and they

00:02:17:00 - 00:02:20:00

I don't know if they sponsored us, but we

00:02:20:11 - 00:02:23:10

we went and came to Canada,
which would be in (19)49.

00:02:24:10 - 00:02:27:10

And, that's how we came to Canada.

00:02:28:02 - 00:02:30:08

And so it's a little bit of

00:02:30:08 - 00:02:32:10

drama of

00:02:32:10 - 00:02:35:10

the first five years of life.

00:02:35:15 - 00:02:39:18

Well, we wanted to come to, I mean,
we wanted a stable family relationship.

00:02:39:18 - 00:02:40:02

Okay.

00:02:41:08 - 00:02:44:06

In Czechoslovakia,
it was obviously not accepted.

00:02:44:06 - 00:02:48:12

Local communist would not have, would have
been difficult to find a profession.

00:02:48:13 - 00:02:51:20

I went to school there in early years,
so I like it.

00:02:51:25 - 00:02:55:15

I did speak the language. I've totally,
I've basically forgotten it since then

00:02:55:18 - 00:02:58:18

we didn't use it for much. But,

00:02:59:28 - 00:03:01:20

they wanted some stability.

00:03:01:20 - 00:03:04:20

England was just coming out of the war.

00:03:04:20 - 00:03:07:16

It was very difficult to get a job.

00:03:07:16 - 00:03:12:28

There was discrimination against people
with foreign sounding names.

00:03:13:28 - 00:03:17:12

My father, I think, had difficulty,
even though he was a trained lawyer

00:03:18:08 - 00:03:20:26

or had been in the government,
he couldn't find a job.

00:03:20:26 - 00:03:26:10

So we were sponsored to come to Canada
by one or more of my great aunts.

00:03:26:20 - 00:03:28:11

Which I have mentioned

00:03:28:11 - 00:03:31:17

And, my father had to work and learn

00:03:31:17 - 00:03:34:14

a new profession and did so and did very well here.

00:03:35:23 - 00:03:36:17

That's why we came to

00:03:36:17 - 00:03:39:19

Canada,

because it was, it had more opportunities.

00:03:40:15 - 00:03:43:17

And we've had a great,

00:03:43:17 - 00:03:46:08

wonderful life here.

00:03:46:08 - 00:03:49:08

We actually came over for
what would have been a troopship.

00:03:49:25 - 00:03:52:25

We came over in the North Atlantic in

00:03:53:14 - 00:03:55:17

I think it was November.

I can check the date.

00:03:55:17 - 00:03:58:23

You can probably check the dates
better on the paperwork I have here.

00:03:59:27 - 00:04:00:24

It was a very --

00:04:00:24 - 00:04:04:23

The North Atlantic in November
is a very, very difficult trip.

00:04:05:18 - 00:04:08:18

They didn't have good stabilizers
for ships back in those days.

00:04:08:29 - 00:04:10:05

I think it's very rough.

00:04:10:05 - 00:04:13:05

Most of the people were seasick
most of the trip over there.

00:04:13:14 - 00:04:16:13

My father
and I did seem to avoid that. But.

00:04:16:13 - 00:04:17:17

So we came over it.

00:04:17:17 - 00:04:20:17

Well, we had, didn't have, like,
joint sleeping quarters.

00:04:20:18 - 00:04:22:09

I slept with my mother.

00:04:22:09 - 00:04:25:16

The males were all
put down in the hull of the ship.

00:04:26:21 - 00:04:29:09

So, like, barracks type, kind of transportation

00:04:29:09 - 00:04:33:16

So it was very much, it wasn't a
cruise, let's put it that way.

00:04:33:24 - 00:04:36:05

Ok so, came to Canada.

00:04:36:05 - 00:04:40:14

It was, as I said, we landed in Ottawa
and as we were sponsored,

00:04:41:04 - 00:04:42:10

we came to Burlington.

00:04:42:10 - 00:04:45:10

I was put up by my aunt

00:04:45:25 - 00:04:47:04

who lived here.

00:04:47:04 - 00:04:51:03

Took me for - we were separated
my mother and my brother,

00:04:51:03 - 00:04:54:28

and father went to go live
with my aunt in Ottawa

00:04:56:01 - 00:04:57:25

for the first while.

00:04:57:25 - 00:05:00:29

And then I lived with my aunt
here in Burlington for

00:05:00:29 - 00:05:03:29

I think it would be about six months.

00:05:04:08 - 00:05:06:22

Well, I can tell you the most difficult
was my father getting a job.

00:05:06:22 - 00:05:09:22

I mean, there was no social services
at all.

00:05:09:22 - 00:05:13:19

They didn't have government medical care, you didn't have private medical care.

00:05:14:25 - 00:05:18:10

I assume there was some minor support.

00:05:18:21 - 00:05:22:01

And most of the support

for people who didn't have

00:05:23:29 - 00:05:26:09

was probably from private charities.

00:05:26:09 - 00:05:28:27

I think that was where...

00:05:28:27 - 00:05:32:08

Now I'm surmising that

because, they said there was no

00:05:32:14 - 00:05:35:21

there was no government pensions,

there was no government Medicare.

00:05:36:04 - 00:05:38:19

So you had to pay for your own doctor

and so on

00:05:38:19 - 00:05:43:25

And if you didn't have a job, you

went into a home somewhere, right?

00:05:43:25 - 00:05:46:25

I mean, there wasn't--

00:05:47:13 - 00:05:51:17

there wasn't, government money being

provided for those kind of things.

00:05:52:08 - 00:05:53:16

That would be the most difficult thing.

00:05:53:16 - 00:05:56:16

My dad,

who, as I said, was a trained lawyer.

00:05:57:03 - 00:06:01:24

He also worked for a senior government official, had to take a job selling door

00:06:01:24 - 00:06:07:12

to door stuff by car. A broken down car travelling all over Ontario to sell

00:06:08:19 - 00:06:11:19

some sort of,

00:06:11:25 - 00:06:13:25

trinkets and things like that.

00:06:13:25 - 00:06:15:03

He had some contacts.

00:06:15:03 - 00:06:19:15

There was a, there was a,
my father was very fluent

00:06:19:23 - 00:06:22:23

in about six languages,
as a lot of Europeans are.

00:06:22:28 - 00:06:25:28

He could speak Czech and German, Polish and

00:06:26:21 - 00:06:28:11

a little bit of Russian
and that kind of stuff.

00:06:28:11 - 00:06:32:03

So, and there was a,
there was a smaller growing,

00:06:33:19 - 00:06:37:00

European population
that had come over the area,

00:06:37:00 - 00:06:41:27

north of New Street between Dynes Road,
Cumberland, lot of truck farms there.

00:06:42:17 - 00:06:47:24

And people who were immigration set up for
had farming background

00:06:48:11 - 00:06:51:21

would set up so that he had a
he had some connections with that

00:06:51:21 - 00:06:55:20

and it was very helpful in his later
business years where he was able to

00:06:56:20 - 00:06:57:24

sell to the community.

00:06:57:24 - 00:07:00:14

So, yeah, the difficulty was getting jobs.

00:07:00:14 - 00:07:02:25

My mother had two children.

00:07:02:25 - 00:07:03:24

She had to stay home.

00:07:03:24 - 00:07:06:24

She did some,
she did some light house work for my aunt.

00:07:08:08 - 00:07:09:08

Well, I think it was difficult.

00:07:09:08 - 00:07:10:12

As I said,

00:07:10:12 - 00:07:14:01

there was no, you had to
you had to make it on your own.

00:07:14:01 - 00:07:14:22

Yes, we came here,

00:07:14:22 - 00:07:17:23

And it's a wonderful land
of opportunity and nice.

00:07:18:02 - 00:07:22:22

But I don't think there were the support
mechanisms that you have now for people.

00:07:23:18 - 00:07:27:03

You see people,
immigrants or refugees coming in here.

00:07:28:06 - 00:07:28:23

The government

00:07:28:23 - 00:07:31:22

steps in or private charities
step in and provide

00:07:32:19 - 00:07:34:28

a lot of support in terms of jobs

00:07:34:28 - 00:07:37:28

and monies... that wasn't there.

00:07:38:02 - 00:07:39:20

You had to make it on your own.

00:07:39:20 - 00:07:41:08

You either

00:07:41:08 - 00:07:44:08

became a farmer

or you had to find a profession.

00:07:44:15 - 00:07:45:08

And it was, it was.

00:07:45:08 - 00:07:48:08

And then I mean, as I said, my

dad was a lawyer.

00:07:48:17 - 00:07:50:22

The law profession is totally closed.

00:07:50:22 - 00:07:52:02

It still is to some extent.

00:07:52:02 - 00:07:56:21

If you don't graduate from here,

you don't get a job as a lawyer.

00:07:56:29 - 00:07:59:29

We have different
people brought up in a different

00:08:00:23 - 00:08:03:23

legal system,
which the European system is.

00:08:04:00 - 00:08:07:07

So you can't just put up a shingle here
and start to practice law.

00:08:07:07 - 00:08:09:16

You have to go through the schooling
and get it.

00:08:09:16 - 00:08:13:01

And you can't do that when you've got
a family and two kids to support,

00:08:13:03 - 00:08:16:15

or three kids at some point.
So he had to find another profession.

00:08:16:16 - 00:08:17:28

He ultimately became

00:08:17:28 - 00:08:21:20

went into the insurance business and did
very, very well from the top producers.

00:08:21:20 - 00:08:25:27

for his company, did very well.

00:08:27:03 - 00:08:28:03

Gave us a very

00:08:28:03 - 00:08:31:03

comfortable life after we got established.

00:08:31:27 - 00:08:33:22

But it was difficult to get established

00:08:33:22 - 00:08:36:22

and as said, you had to make it on

00:08:36:23 - 00:08:38:16

You had to make it on your own

and find a way.

00:08:38:16 - 00:08:41:05

A lot of people have families,
which we did.

00:08:41:05 - 00:08:44:05

Which did give you some sort of support

00:08:44:15 - 00:08:47:05

but otherwise, you know,

00:08:47:05 - 00:08:50:28

you had to do what--

whatever you could do to.

00:08:51:26 - 00:08:53:20

There wasn't any difficulty.

00:08:53:20 - 00:08:55:19

No. I mean, yes, it was traumatic--

00:08:55:19 - 00:08:56:24

You know what

the most difficult thing was?

00:08:56:24 - 00:08:58:26

I had to leave

my dog behind in Czechoslovakia

00:09:00:17 - 00:09:02:02

couldn't take it with me.

00:09:02:02 - 00:09:04:04

I mean, I

that when you were five years old.

00:09:05:14 - 00:09:07:17

What's the most important thing?

Your pet. Right.

00:09:07:17 - 00:09:10:16

I didn't have any brothers
or sisters at the time.

00:09:10:16 - 00:09:13:04

So I had a small dog. I had to leave it.

00:09:13:04 - 00:09:14:06

That was very sad.

00:09:14:06 - 00:09:16:01

That was the hardest thing for me.

00:09:16:01 - 00:09:19:14

My parents, you know, my parents were.

00:09:20:05 - 00:09:23:05

It was circumstance, which
probably we would have never left there.

00:09:23:27 - 00:09:25:14

But for the fact that, the communists came

00:09:25:14 - 00:09:28:14

My father was well-established,
had a beautiful home

00:09:28:29 - 00:09:30:19

I was going to school there already.

00:09:30:19 - 00:09:33:03

I was getting, understanding the language.

00:09:33:03 - 00:09:33:26

I would have been.

00:09:33:26 - 00:09:35:24

That would have been my life
there, probably.

00:09:35:24 - 00:09:40:14

But the fact that the government changed,
made it impossible for us to stay.

00:09:41:11 - 00:09:42:17

I don't regret it.

00:09:42:17 - 00:09:45:01

I mean, it's a wonderful journey
here in Canada as well.

00:09:46:27 - 00:09:48:07

Although I'll tell you what the most,

00:09:48:07 - 00:09:51:18

the most difficult thing
was having a foreign last name

00:09:52:20 - 00:09:57:00

that was--there was a lot of a lot of..
you know, and we didn't have this

00:09:57:09 - 00:10:00:09

cosmopolitan population as we have now.

00:10:01:07 - 00:10:02:23

So you had. Yes.

00:10:02:23 - 00:10:06:24

You had some people with foreign
sounding names coming in,

00:10:06:24 - 00:10:10:04

but the population was mostly Anglo Saxon.

00:10:12:03 - 00:10:15:18

And there was, you know,
when you're eight or ten there's

00:10:15:18 - 00:10:18:18

all sorts of discrimination, you know, a
funny name and that kind of stuff.

00:10:18:18 - 00:10:20:10

So I got bullied a lot.

00:10:20:10 - 00:10:23:10

And it was sort of this. But, you know,

00:10:24:03 - 00:10:25:17

it made me.

00:10:25:17 - 00:10:28:17

What doesn't kill

you makes you stronger

00:10:29:18 - 00:10:31:08

I think just it--

00:10:31:08 - 00:10:33:16

My father had a good education,

so he was

00:10:33:16 - 00:10:35:28

Well, he had a good grounding.

00:10:35:28 - 00:10:38:24

He didn't--

he didn't start from. So he could

00:10:40:00 - 00:10:41:23

he could move from what

00:10:41:23 - 00:10:44:26

profession he was in to something else.

He ended up being in

00:10:45:05 - 00:10:48:05

he had a very successful insurance

salesman, did very well.

00:10:48:19 - 00:10:52:15

You know, we had lots.

We didn't want for anything in terms

00:10:52:15 - 00:10:57:01

of like terms of food

and clothing and holidays

00:10:57:01 - 00:11:00:01

and all that kind of stuff.

00:11:00:23 - 00:11:02:15

So I think the transition

00:11:02:15 - 00:11:06:12

was, would be easier

than for other people who came here

00:11:06:21 - 00:11:09:21

who perhaps didn't

speak the language or something like that,

00:11:10:06 - 00:11:14:06

or couldn't find a job easily
or had to go into menial work, the mines

00:11:14:18 - 00:11:17:26

a lot of people who came here
at that time ended up in Sudbury,

00:11:17:26 - 00:11:21:04

in the mines, in places like that,
because that's where the jobs were.

00:11:21:11 - 00:11:26:11

They were good paying jobs, but your
lifetime tended to be a little bit shorter.

00:11:26:14 - 00:11:28:19

In fact, that's where you spent
your days and nights, so

00:11:28:19 - 00:11:31:19

So that's hard on it. So

00:11:33:14 - 00:11:36:09

You know, I think he had the skill set.

00:11:36:09 - 00:11:42:04

My mother obviously had family support

here, which helped us, to get together.

00:11:42:12 - 00:11:45:28

And then once we got a home
and my father got a job

00:11:45:28 - 00:11:48:29

and I got school, you just became part
of the part of the community.

00:11:50:10 - 00:11:51:23

Well, I don't

00:11:51:23 - 00:11:54:23

I think I don't,
I think when you come, like, here,

00:11:55:14 - 00:11:58:13

I think your dreams are probably
pretty focused on

00:11:58:27 - 00:12:02:19

on getting established and getting a home,

00:12:03:23 - 00:12:06:23

meeting friends, getting a job

00:12:07:18 - 00:12:09:18

so that when you come as a refugee,

00:12:09:18 - 00:12:14:01

I think those who have fairly low expectations and high hopes.

00:12:14:01 - 00:12:15:14

Right.

00:12:15:14 - 00:12:19:15

And I think, I think the community here,

00:12:21:05 - 00:12:22:25

it's exactly what we wanted or needed.

00:12:22:25 - 00:12:24:23

I mean, we could have got to Saskatchewan

00:12:24:23 - 00:12:26:07

British Columbia, who knows?

00:12:26:07 - 00:12:28:00

You could have who knows where you end up.

00:12:28:00 - 00:12:30:10

You end up here

because you've got relatives here, right?

00:12:30:10 - 00:12:33:10

So that's not there's

no there's no magic in it,

00:12:34:09 - 00:12:38:10

that we would have
of probably adapted to where we came.

00:12:39:02 - 00:12:42:02

And I think, I think we were very lucky
to end up in the situation.

00:12:42:25 - 00:12:46:13

And we stayed here, I said our whole
lives, so, we obviously we,

00:12:47:03 - 00:12:48:02

we like it here.

00:12:48:02 - 00:12:53:21

And I enjoy the community and lots of
friends here that it's been a great ride.

00:12:55:13 - 00:12:57:27

That's interesting because,
like I said, my father

00:12:57:27 - 00:13:01:11

would've--things like holidays
is the biggest for me.

00:13:01:11 - 00:13:05:15

We weren't a big religious family,
so that was never an issue.

00:13:05:15 - 00:13:08:16

My mother would've been born Anglican.

00:13:08:16 - 00:13:12:11

My father was probably brought up
in the Catholic tradition in Europe.

00:13:13:23 - 00:13:16:25

We never got--
we went to church,

00:13:16:25 - 00:13:17:21

We went to St. Luke's here.

00:13:17:21 - 00:13:20:21

It was the only Anglican church
just up here.

00:13:20:24 - 00:13:22:11

I can still remember it

00:13:22:11 - 00:13:25:06

.

00:13:25:06 - 00:13:28:06

was the minister there was deaf

00:13:28:10 - 00:13:29:11

.

00:13:29:11 - 00:13:32:04

And he sort of kind of ...

00:13:32:04 - 00:13:34:28

you know, we fit it into the culture here.

00:13:34:28 - 00:13:36:08

We brought our own.

00:13:36:08 - 00:13:39:08

Like we would have, some

I think we would have

00:13:39:14 - 00:13:43:11

because my father was Catholic,

we would have a Christmas Eve dinner,

00:13:43:29 - 00:13:46:29

which is consistent

with our European traditions.

00:13:47:22 - 00:13:52:12

Christmas Eve dinner, which would always

be seafood, because it's Christmas Eve,

00:13:54:16 - 00:13:56:28

and then we would have an English

00:13:56:28 - 00:14:00:03

tree and presents on Christmas morning
and go down to

00:14:00:12 - 00:14:04:09

presents with Father Christmas or Santa
Claus or whatever you want to call it.

00:14:04:16 - 00:14:07:08

So that mean those are holidays
are what we had

00:14:07:08 - 00:14:10:19

But, it was as I said,
a bicultural country of family.

00:14:10:19 - 00:14:14:09

And we lived,
my mother had to try

00:14:14:09 - 00:14:17:18

to adapt to my father's culture,
and he with my mother's

00:14:17:18 - 00:14:19:19

So it was an interesting mixture.

00:14:19:19 - 00:14:21:29

We had a

00:14:21:29 - 00:14:25:03

we didn't have a Canadian culture
for that.

00:14:25:19 - 00:14:29:00

We adapted to Canadian habits
and holidays and things like that.

00:14:29:00 - 00:14:31:21

But we had sort of a

00:14:31:21 - 00:14:33:15

multifaceted European culture.

00:14:33:15 - 00:14:38:00

We came we had in our family,
with the English side for my mother

00:14:38:18 - 00:14:39:26

and the European side for my father.

00:14:42:09 - 00:14:45:05

See, the thing is we came over to Canada
with next to nothing,

00:14:45:05 - 00:14:48:17

I mean as immigrants
when we left Czechoslovakia

00:14:48:27 - 00:14:51:12

we could take next to nothing
with us. We weren't allowed.

00:14:52:13 - 00:14:56:11

So, you know, you took your heirlooms with you.
That was all you got.

00:14:58:19 - 00:14:59:23

So here

00:14:59:23 - 00:15:03:14

I have a copy of my birth
certificate to show you.

00:15:03:14 - 00:15:06:14

It's a British birth certificate
that showed me when I was born

00:15:06:20 - 00:15:09:17

who my godparents were.

00:15:09:17 - 00:15:12:01

My mother, my father.

00:15:12:01 - 00:15:13:22

I don't know where the
godparents are on here

00:15:13:22 - 00:15:14:26

Anyway, here it is.

00:15:14:26 - 00:15:16:24

Here my mother, my father, and so on.

00:15:16:24 - 00:15:20:21

And that's,

00:15:21:26 - 00:15:24:11

obviously just a standard piece of paper

00:15:24:11 - 00:15:27:11

And then this is,

00:15:28:23 - 00:15:29:17

my passport.

00:15:29:17 - 00:15:30:23

My English passport.

00:15:31:21 - 00:15:34:15

I got that when I was,

00:15:34:15 - 00:15:37:15

I guess I would be about four
when I got this, four.

00:15:38:23 - 00:15:40:22

And, my mother had the sense

00:15:40:22 - 00:15:43:22

of putting me on my passport in order to,

00:15:44:00 - 00:15:44:24

in order to make sure

00:15:44:24 - 00:15:47:24

that I had a tie to Britain because
we were going to a foreign country.

00:15:48:22 - 00:15:50:04

I was born in England, so.

00:15:50:04 - 00:15:53:17

And it was very useful
because we had to leave Czechoslovakia

00:15:53:18 - 00:15:57:24

because I had this, I had no problem
leaving what was a communist country

00:15:57:24 - 00:16:01:20

at that time to get,
because we were so

00:16:02:01 - 00:16:05:01

and I used it
obviously to immigrate to Canada.

00:16:07:18 - 00:16:09:28

Picture of me when I was small

00:16:09:28 - 00:16:12:13

And now this is just my Canadian citizenship

00:16:12:13 - 00:16:13:11

I got when I was

00:16:14:10 - 00:16:16:21

16 I think.

00:16:16:21 - 00:16:19:21

So (19)65 ... (19)44

00:16:20:05 - 00:16:23:17

So, So 21 I guess it would be

00:16:23:17 - 00:16:26:23

21, you know, back in those days,
21 was your day

00:16:26:24 - 00:16:28:21

So I got my Canadian citizenship.

00:16:28:21 - 00:16:31:21

So I have dual

citizenship, I was born in England.

00:16:32:00 - 00:16:34:27

So anyway, that's a little bit
of background on all of that

00:16:36:04 - 00:16:38:16

I mean, having the connections

00:16:38:16 - 00:16:41:21

to family in Burlington helped very much.

00:16:42:22 - 00:16:43:27

Gave me a place to stay,

00:16:43:27 - 00:16:46:27

as I said.

00:16:47:05 - 00:16:47:21

In terms

00:16:47:21 - 00:16:50:25

of the community organizations, I'm
trying to think what my what

00:16:51:02 - 00:16:55:08

the church, we were involved very much
with St. Luke's Church at that time.

00:16:55:08 - 00:16:58:09

It was the only Anglican church in Burlington.
My mother was Anglican.

00:16:59:24 - 00:17:01:24

My dad was married in the Anglican church.

00:17:01:24 - 00:17:05:02

And that was community

00:17:05:02 - 00:17:08:02

activities associated with that

00:17:08:14 - 00:17:10:29

Not so much for the children,
but certainly for the adults.

00:17:10:29 - 00:17:13:14

They had,

00:17:13:14 - 00:17:16:20

book clubs and other things like that.

00:17:19:27 - 00:17:21:01

My mother didn't get

00:17:21:01 - 00:17:24:01

get too involved in community activities.

00:17:24:19 - 00:17:27:19

My dad, as I said, was,

00:17:28:14 - 00:17:30:09

insurance salesman.

00:17:30:09 - 00:17:31:09

And he would have,

00:17:31:09 - 00:17:35:00

He would have gone
and had more connections

00:17:35:00 - 00:17:38:01

We had a lot of friends in Burlington,

00:17:38:01 - 00:17:39:20

family friends,

00:17:39:20 - 00:17:42:04

which we were associated
with a lot of European.

00:17:42:04 - 00:17:46:15

There was a couple of other families
which have a lot of connection.

00:17:46:15 - 00:17:49:14

There's a family called 'Stefani?'

00:17:49:14 - 00:17:51:27

Doctor Stefani was a

00:17:51:27 - 00:17:54:27

medical doctor, German.

00:17:55:12 - 00:17:59:12

Lived close to... at the time I knew him,
on Lakeshore.

00:18:00:03 - 00:18:01:14

just east of Walker's Line

00:18:01:14 - 00:18:04:09

The home is still there,

00:18:04:09 - 00:18:07:00

but we socialized with them
because my dad spoke German.

00:18:07:00 - 00:18:10:16

So it was an extended cultural connection.

00:18:10:16 - 00:18:15:08

And we still know them, I still know

00:18:15:08 - 00:18:19:01

the family. The family
still lives in Burlington.

00:18:19:01 - 00:18:21:06

Part of the family
still lives in Burlington.

00:18:21:06 - 00:18:24:06

I know them so we have that connection.

00:18:24:06 - 00:18:27:22

I joined the cubs and scouts
and things like that.

00:18:27:22 - 00:18:30:22

That was the kind of activity you did.

00:18:30:22 - 00:18:31:28

I moved from.

00:18:31:28 - 00:18:34:27

I moved from,

00:18:36:14 - 00:18:38:17

From,

00:18:38:17 - 00:18:41:17

the Anglican church in
downtown Burlington here

00:18:41:28 - 00:18:47:02

to the church on Guelph Line
which is where we were

00:18:47:02 - 00:18:50:13

our home, our extended family's

00:18:50:13 - 00:18:53:13

home was there, just up Guelph Line

00:18:53:17 - 00:18:55:21

And they had a much more youth oriented

00:18:57:17 - 00:18:58:12

focus.

00:18:58:12 - 00:18:59:10

So it was good.

00:18:59:10 - 00:19:04:00

I was in my teens, late, early teens,
and it was a social activity.

00:19:05:07 - 00:19:08:07

I joined the Scouts and the Cubs
and that kind of thing

00:19:08:08 - 00:19:11:07

when I was younger,

00:19:11:15 - 00:19:14:15

went to camp a couple of times

00:19:15:01 - 00:19:18:01

we had family holidays in summertime.

00:19:18:05 - 00:19:21:05

On some of the lakes and so on.

00:19:21:16 - 00:19:24:18

but we spent a lot of our
spent summers in Burlington

00:19:24:18 - 00:19:28:06

because we had, you know,
we had a swimming pool, my father put in a swimming pool

00:19:28:06 - 00:19:31:01

so it was a great place to spend.

00:19:31:01 - 00:19:34:05

And invite your friends to to your houses
and so on, family

00:19:34:05 - 00:19:37:05

parties and stuff like that.

00:19:38:08 - 00:19:39:06

Burlington was a nice place.

00:19:39:06 - 00:19:42:06

It was very small.

00:19:42:18 - 00:19:45:09

I can remember Brant Street

00:19:45:09 - 00:19:46:15

walking down Brant Street.

00:19:46:15 - 00:19:47:14

There were no

00:19:49:08 - 00:19:51:13

food markets in Burlington then

00:19:51:13 - 00:19:54:13

You shopped at the local grocery store,

00:19:54:19 - 00:19:57:17

and the grocery store on Brant Street was

owned by a guy named Charlie Showers

00:19:59:08 - 00:20:02:07

Halfway up between Lakeshore and

00:20:03:09 - 00:20:04:15

just north of Lakeshore.

00:20:04:15 - 00:20:07:15

Maybe half a kilometre

00:20:07:27 - 00:20:09:09

Where the parking lot was

00:20:09:09 - 00:20:12:05

that's up there.

The city parking lot was there.

00:20:12:05 - 00:20:14:29

And, we, you know,

we knew all the little stores that

00:20:14:29 - 00:20:17:15

were on there

00:20:17:15 - 00:20:21:19

I'd go to the movie

house, the Roxy Theatre.

00:20:22:11 - 00:20:25:11

Which is still the building

is still there, but not a theatre anymore

00:20:25:17 - 00:20:28:02

but it's the kind of thing you did.

00:20:28:02 - 00:20:30:24

You played a lot with your friends.

00:20:30:24 - 00:20:33:11

I played tennis,

I would--we joined the ...

00:20:34:04 - 00:20:36:29

We played

tennis at the Roseland Club for a while.

00:20:36:29 - 00:20:39:04

We never got full membership.

00:20:39:04 - 00:20:43:04

We'd go over there and play

and that was close to where

00:20:43:09 - 00:20:46:11

my parents last home was so, we enjoyed that

00:20:47:13 - 00:20:48:14

Got into Scouts

00:20:48:14 - 00:20:51:05

and Cubs and that kind of stuff.

00:20:51:05 - 00:20:53:11

So that's a little bit

00:20:53:11 - 00:20:54:03

but most of the important
things we did.

00:20:55:18 - 00:20:57:20

Well, it's totally different.

00:20:57:20 - 00:21:01:18

I mean, it was

it was very it was I mean, yeah,

00:21:02:01 - 00:21:05:27

it was mostly white Anglo-Saxon

Protestant communities.

00:21:05:27 - 00:21:10:13

And, I'm using the word Protestant but not necessarily, there were
the Catholics as well, obviously,

00:21:10:23 - 00:21:13:28

but it was very English and white,

I think mostly,

00:21:13:28 - 00:21:19:20

obviously there were European
components,

00:21:19:20 - 00:21:23:08

culturally different
because they, they came over after the war

00:21:24:04 - 00:21:27:27

from the north
and a lot of them were in farming,

00:21:29:10 - 00:21:33:07

which would be like in the areas
I could think of

00:21:33:07 - 00:21:38:12

were between Guelph Line, east of Guelph Line
and north of New Street.

00:21:38:12 - 00:21:41:21

There was a whole area
where you have Cumberland and Dynes Road

00:21:42:07 - 00:21:45:10

Those are all farm country, farming,
truck farming, right.

00:21:46:11 - 00:21:48:24

My father, as I said, was

00:21:48:24 - 00:21:51:24

Associated with those who had business connections
with people there.

00:21:56:02 - 00:21:57:26

Burlington - was not

00:21:57:26 - 00:21:59:28

there was no highway at the time.

00:21:59:28 - 00:22:02:28

When we first came here.

00:22:04:13 - 00:22:06:24

As I said, it was very little

00:22:06:24 - 00:22:09:25

north of New Street

had been farming right up to the Queen Elizabeth

00:22:09:29 - 00:22:12:29

All that area,

00:22:13:08 - 00:22:15:09

or right across from

00:22:15:09 - 00:22:18:09

which is now obviously developed

00:22:18:18 - 00:22:20:22

right up the Queen E to the north

00:22:20:22 - 00:22:21:22

There was nothing there

00:22:21:22 - 00:22:24:21

It was all farming or

00:22:24:24 - 00:22:26:27

I don't know what land, but

00:22:26:27 - 00:22:29:15

it was certainly undeveloped.

00:22:29:15 - 00:22:31:00

The population base was all down

00:22:31:00 - 00:22:34:00

close to the lakes.

00:22:36:26 - 00:22:37:11

You know,

00:22:37:11 - 00:22:40:11

you know, as I said

you didn't have a lot of

00:22:40:26 - 00:22:43:21

in terms of social services.

00:22:43:21 - 00:22:46:10

There was very little government services.

00:22:46:10 - 00:22:48:17

I mean, there were
private social services

00:22:49:27 - 00:22:50:15

that you could

00:22:50:15 - 00:22:54:01

get into, some either
religious based or not.

00:22:54:13 - 00:22:57:13

But if you couldn't support -
people who needed it,

00:22:58:17 - 00:23:01:28

Kids made their own toys

00:23:02:14 - 00:23:04:05

You didn't have helicopter parents.

00:23:04:05 - 00:23:09:04

We went off when I was a kid, I
go off at eight or nine or ten, I'd go off for the day.

00:23:09:04 - 00:23:11:23

My parents didn't expect to see me until dinner.

00:23:11:23 - 00:23:13:20

They didn't know where I was.

00:23:13:20 - 00:23:15:10

A lot of times I was down on the lake.

00:23:15:10 - 00:23:17:21

I went down to the lake
and walked along

00:23:17:21 - 00:23:20:21

walked right along by the lake,
where the embankments were,

00:23:20:21 - 00:23:23:29

m parents, didn't worry
that I might fall in the lake and drown

00:23:24:09 - 00:23:28:19

Just go off and enjoy yourself and come
back at dinner at 5:00 wherever you go. So

00:23:31:13 - 00:23:34:13

I think you have to have.

00:23:35:28 - 00:23:38:28

I think you have to be adaptive

00:23:40:02 - 00:23:43:06

because it's a cosmopolitan culture here.

00:23:45:26 - 00:23:48:09

I think many other countries

00:23:48:09 - 00:23:52:25

in both the European and perhaps even more

00:23:52:25 - 00:23:56:00

so in the eastern cultures are very,
you know, cultural.

00:23:57:04 - 00:24:00:04

So you, you, when you come here,

00:24:00:12 - 00:24:04:09

you get exposed to a much broader, diverse

00:24:05:12 - 00:24:08:25

type of experience because that's--
so you have to have patience.

00:24:09:11 - 00:24:12:12

You have to have acceptance, flexibility.

00:24:13:11 - 00:24:15:15

I think it's a wonderful thing actually

00:24:15:15 - 00:24:18:17

to have multiple
multicultural experiences.

00:24:18:18 - 00:24:22:28

I mean, just in terms of the food and
the restaurants, you can go to theatres,

00:24:22:28 - 00:24:26:19

you can go to the book club,
you can go to all those kind of things.

00:24:27:06 - 00:24:29:18

It's, it's it's very it makes you

00:24:31:08 - 00:24:34:08

it makes you a.

00:24:34:18 - 00:24:37:18

Give you a broader
perspective on the world.

00:24:38:00 - 00:24:39:21

I mean, I think having

00:24:39:21 - 00:24:42:21

I said that had

I think, I think those countries

00:24:43:07 - 00:24:46:07

coming here, it was, it was, it was,
it was like

00:24:46:07 - 00:24:49:08

allowed people who were

00:24:50:24 - 00:24:54:17

either unsuccessful or oppressed
in other countries to come here.

00:24:55:02 - 00:24:57:22

Allowed them to continue to live

00:24:57:22 - 00:25:00:15

their own cultures,

00:25:00:15 - 00:25:05:07

and also become exposed to the cultures
of your neighbours and friends

00:25:05:12 - 00:25:08:12

and it makes you,

00:25:09:08 - 00:25:11:02

I think, a more complete person.

00:25:12:16 - 00:25:13:12

Oh, I think

00:25:13:12 - 00:25:17:23

I think the government has,
is looking for immigration

00:25:18:16 - 00:25:21:16

We can see that in,

00:25:23:07 - 00:25:27:18

in some of the government policies
which are allowing people to come here,

00:25:30:00 - 00:25:31:20

and get established without

00:25:31:20 - 00:25:36:02

going through the rigorous process
that some other countries have.

00:25:36:13 - 00:25:39:13

If you want to go live there.

00:25:41:25 - 00:25:44:24

I think there's more opportunities
and there are challenges.

00:25:45:05 - 00:25:48:20

I think the challenges are
the cost of living here is pretty high,

00:25:49:14 - 00:25:52:03

and it's getting more, getting higher.

00:25:52:03 - 00:25:54:21

Lack of affordable housing I think is

00:25:54:21 - 00:25:57:21

particularly something
which is a challenge for.

00:25:58:02 - 00:26:01:02

We were very fortunate
to be able to buy a house.

00:26:01:06 - 00:26:03:13

My parents did,

00:26:03:13 - 00:26:06:13

you know, within five years of,

00:26:06:22 - 00:26:09:22

five years coming here, buy a house.

00:26:10:08 - 00:26:13:02

and, even me,

00:26:13:02 - 00:26:16:05

the next generation

was able to afford a house.

00:26:16:15 - 00:26:20:13

So I think it's a hard thing right now

for people who come here.

00:26:20:17 - 00:26:23:05

Unless you've got family here

to accommodate you.

00:26:24:06 - 00:26:25:06

I think it's very hard.

00:26:25:06 - 00:26:28:05

I would say that getting a job, obviously.

00:26:28:09 - 00:26:31:11

you don't want to be stuck at, but I mean,

I would think that a lot of people,

00:26:31:11 - 00:26:35:13

especially those educated,

don't want to be getting into basic jobs

00:26:35:13 - 00:26:39:26

like farming and agriculture,
seasonal type work.

00:26:39:26 - 00:26:43:15

And so I think getting
established is hard,

00:26:43:15 - 00:26:47:23

especially if you're a professional,
because you have to, if you're a doctor

00:26:47:23 - 00:26:51:13

or a lawyer or something else
in another country.

00:26:52:07 - 00:26:54:28

If you come over here,
you don't automatically open up your own shop.

00:26:54:28 - 00:26:57:28

You have to go through the accreditation
process.

00:26:58:06 - 00:27:02:00

Those are sometimes closed
shops in terms of like, actually,

00:27:02:00 - 00:27:03:06

especially if you're changing law, I mean,

00:27:03:06 - 00:27:06:21

if you come from a European country,
you're brought up in the Napoleonic Code and then here

00:27:07:02 - 00:27:07:29

come here. Totally.

00:27:07:29 - 00:27:10:04

You can't just open up
a shop, you have to go back to school.

00:27:11:09 - 00:27:14:09

Those are the kind of
things, I don't think they're unique, again

00:27:14:09 - 00:27:15:27

I think they're there.

00:27:15:27 - 00:27:20:23

If you go to any places, foreign, culturally
foreign or educational foreign to you

00:27:21:08 - 00:27:22:12

You have to go through hoops again to get established

00:27:24:19 - 00:27:26:19

And language barriers might also

00:27:27:01 - 00:27:29:20

Language barriers are also a problem as well.

00:27:29:20 - 00:27:32:12

If you don't speak the language,
it's a problem.

00:27:32:12 - 00:27:35:08

If you don't speak English
or perhaps French.

00:27:35:08 - 00:27:37:05

It becomes even more difficult.

00:27:41:15 - 00:27:43:24

Yes. I mean, in 1 to 1 extent.

00:27:43:24 - 00:27:46:25

I mean, a lot of people are coming here
because they're

00:27:47:23 - 00:27:50:18

running away from something
and from the situation,

00:27:50:18 - 00:27:54:07

which is not necessarily
what they want to spend their lives.

00:27:54:07 - 00:27:57:02

They're looking
for more opportunity.

00:27:57:02 - 00:27:59:16

So that's sort of
similar to what we were doing,

00:28:03:15 - 00:28:06:15

however, we saw a lot of the people
coming here to live.

00:28:08:09 - 00:28:11:23

Coming here because of not
because they are running away

00:28:11:23 - 00:28:15:02

from something necessarily, but
because they see the opportunities here

00:28:15:25 - 00:28:17:06

and either because of family

00:28:17:06 - 00:28:20:10

or because of their own resources,
or they think they can

00:28:21:20 - 00:28:24:04

they don't have the economic struggle

00:28:24:04 - 00:28:27:04

getting to get to get established here.

00:28:27:07 - 00:28:30:07

I know there's even programs

the federal government has

00:28:31:05 - 00:28:35:14

to assist people who actually,

if you're setting up a business here,

00:28:36:02 - 00:28:40:20

to allow them to accelerate

their citizenship.

00:28:42:00 - 00:28:45:14

To get a place here.

00:28:46:08 - 00:28:48:09

Anyway,

00:28:48:09 - 00:28:51:02

I don't think it's the same

thing when you're

00:28:51:02 - 00:28:55:03

coming from a city in a war
ravaged community like Europe was.

00:28:55:19 - 00:28:56:14

I think there's a,

00:28:57:17 - 00:29:00:17

it's a different imperative,

00:29:00:27 - 00:29:02:16

that you go through,

00:29:02:16 - 00:29:05:14

when you're coming here because,

00:29:05:14 - 00:29:07:02

you just want a better life.

00:29:07:02 - 00:29:09:08

It'll give you a little more.

00:29:09:08 - 00:29:11:22

It's not quite so urgent.

00:29:11:22 - 00:29:14:05

You can come here and fit in,

00:29:14:05 - 00:29:17:05

especially if you've got family here
who can help you.

00:29:19:07 - 00:29:22:04

Acclimatize yourself

00:29:23:03 - 00:29:24:05

Get you integrated

00:29:24:05 - 00:29:26:10

Into the community.

00:29:27:26 - 00:29:30:26

I mean, I think I've given you
pretty much everything.

00:29:30:27 - 00:29:33:01

I think it's, I mean,

00:29:33:01 - 00:29:35:06

as I said, I'm

00:29:35:06 - 00:29:38:06

very happy to have been to come to Canada.

00:29:38:18 - 00:29:41:16

Very happy to have,

00:29:41:16 - 00:29:44:03

had an opportunity to see it

00:29:44:03 - 00:29:47:03

develop and grow.

00:29:47:05 - 00:29:49:00

It's given,

00:29:49:00 - 00:29:51:17

I've given, you know,

it's given me a lot back

00:29:51:17 - 00:29:53:21

I think my wife and I are very happy here.

00:29:56:26 - 00:29:58:12

Pleased.

00:29:58:12 - 00:30:03:17

Pleased we chose Burlington.

00:30:04:17 - 00:30:06:02

I'm going to make it--

I'm going to try to be neutral.

00:30:06:02 - 00:30:09:27

Some of the issues in living in

other metropolitan areas like Toronto.

00:30:10:17 - 00:30:12:28

I think we're very happy that we're here,

00:30:12:28 - 00:30:15:29

and it hasn't quite

got to that stage yet here in Burlington.

00:30:16:19 - 00:30:19:19

So we are we have a much more,

I think, a little more.

00:30:21:12 - 00:30:23:24

Relaxed, lifestyle here.

00:30:23:24 - 00:30:26:24

But I think it's, it's

00:30:26:26 - 00:30:29:26

it's just it's part of the community

00:30:30:01 - 00:30:32:17

it sounds like you've come here

in the same way I did.

00:30:32:17 - 00:30:34:00

Perhaps a little bit later than I did.

00:30:34:18 - 00:30:35:12

I enjoyed this.

00:30:35:12 - 00:30:38:29

And it's nice for me to sit back
and do a little bit of, you know, you're

00:30:38:29 - 00:30:42:19

so tied up with your day to day life,
you know its hard to think about.

00:30:45:19 - 00:30:48:18

The journey you've come through. And,

00:30:50:03 - 00:30:52:16

You know, you look back on it and say,
wow am I lucky?

00:30:52:16 - 00:30:55:02

I'm a lucky person

00:30:55:02 - 00:30:57:24

and that we still got
my wife and I still have our health.

00:30:57:24 - 00:31:00:16

So we're able
to enjoy the community as well.