

Transcription of Langburt

Thank you for agreeing to talking to me I really appreciate that and you're a child survivor right?

Langburt: Right I'm a child survivor.

And you are a child survivor ok so that's good particularly the next phase of my project is to focus particularly on child survivors because I just found that their situation is so unique that they just really struggle both in terms of their family seeing their struggles and in terms of being different

Langburt: Trying to protect their parents.

Parents at the same time they were survivors as well. So lets begin with some background information of who your parents were? Where they lived? Where they grew up? A little bit to get to know them.

Langburt: My father came from Slavituch? (1:01) and my mother from Warsaw. My father's father passed away when my father was very young. He contract cholera and my father was seven or eight at the time and he moved to Warsaw. There was more opportunity and he was able to go to a school you know?

In Warsaw?

Langburt: In Warsaw, a trade school. He was an apprentice so he lived with cousins who were not very nice to him, because it was another mouth to feed and he met my mother I guess when they were teenagers.

When was he born?

Langburt: Slavituch? (1:58).

When?

Langburt: 1910.

He was born in 1910 and your mother?

Langburt: 1912 and I can honestly say my parents it was a love affair from get go you know? not like some survivals that were paired up after the war and so they were really a love affair and my brother was born in Poland. I am getting sentimental I'm starting to cry.

That's ok, when was he born?

Langburt: 1936.

And when did she get married?

Langburt: My parents got married in 1935.

1935 and were they like what families were they from? like were they middle class?
Religious?

Langburt: They were all religious and I guess for the times it was middle class. My mother's father my grandfather he used to rent out orchards. So if the crop was good, he made a living if the crop was bad, he didn't make a living and my mother was a seamstress. So she worked in Poland and my parents got married when my brother was born I mean it was the first grandchild on all sides and my mother had 3 brothers and a sister my father had a brother and a sister you know he was terrific kid with everything going till the war happened.

Did they speak Yiddish to one another or Polish?

Langburt: You know what we spoke, I spoke Russian, Polish, Swedish and when we came here my mother said, "we are not speaking that language anymore we're speaking Yiddish" so when we came to Canada we spoke only Yiddish.

And you knew Yiddish?

Langburt: I learned it.

Here

Langburt: Here.

But not

Langburt: No because when we lived in Russia I had to speak Russian. When I lived in Sweden I went to nursery. I had to speak Swedish.

So what did your father do? You said he went to trade school, but what did he do?

Langburt: My father was in sheet metal in Poland you know he made ornamental things out of metal you know something like this he would make and when he came here there was no demand for that couldn't get a job and he ended up being a roofer, because all of that was a French trade he begged they should teach him to become a presser, because that was already a Jewish trade and for a whole year he didn't work when we were here.

K so we will get to that shortly. So your mother worked as a seamstress too? Or

Langburt: Yeah she was a designer and a dressmaker yeah.

And they both worked

Langburt: They both worked.

The war came and you clearly went to Russia

Langburt: Well they ran away.

They ran away

Langburt: They ran away. They were begging my parents to leave my brother.

Who your grandparents?

Langburt: My grandparents because they said, "you don't know where your going? Where are you running to? You don't know where you're going?" and their house was bombed.

In Warsaw

Langburt: One of the first houses bombed. So I don't know if my grandmother survived. I was told that my grandfather and one of my uncles were in the ghetto, but we never found we never heard anything.

So your mother father and your brother ran to East right?

Langburt: East.

And where did they go? Do you know?

Langburt: You know my brother would know a lot better than me. I know that he was in prison with my father. He was put in a church that they put on fire. He was you know on the way my mother my brother would bring him food, but I don't know which towns and by the time they went through the different towns they were sent by train to Siberia.

Is that where you were born?

Langburt: That's where I was born.

And what year was that?

Langburt: 43.

43 so they were in Siberia until

Langburt: Until 45.

And then what happened?

Langburt: And then we went back to Poland, found out that nobody was there and we got out of Poland right after they had ? (7:01-7:04) they left Poland and we went to Czechoslovakia Austria ended up in Germany.

So you were going from one DP camp to another DP camp

Langburt: I asked my brother, "how did we get to different places?" he said one of the places we were smuggled out in an ambulance you know I don't remember obviously I was too little, but my brother did remember that and he would carry me most of the way.

Your brother

Langburt: My brother yeah.

Cause he was what eight years older than you?

Langburt: He was seven years yeah. I think he had the hardest time. I mean my mother had a very hard time. She was we were fortunate that my father Rachell? (7:53) worked in a bakery so we were able to get bread and my mother because she was a seamstress she sewed for the Russian officers wives. So we had a little bit more and it was an open house there were people constantly coming because there was bread in the house others were starving.

What was your name? Your family named you?

Langburt: Rotenburg.

Rotenburg

Langburt: (spells out loud) R O T E N.

So you ended up in Sweden you said?

Langburt: Well after Germany, when we were in the DP camp in Germany a cousin found us.

Do you remember the name of the DP camp?

Langburt: ? (8:40) so a cousin found us and brought us over to Sweden and subsequently they came to Canada and brought us over here.

So when did you go to Sweden?

Langburt: Probably 45 46.

To Stockholm?

Langburt: No Uppsala? (9:05).

Langburt: Uppsala my parents where my mother went to Sweden after the war as well.

Where to ? (9:12)

Langburt: Well that's where she landed spent a bit of time, but then ended up in Stockholm and her sister brother-in-law and her mother ended up living in Sweden.

They stayed there?

Langburt: They stayed there yeah they stayed there.

Langburt: My parents didn't want us well they were very good to us when they came the Swedish people were very very good to us and but my mother didn't want to stay there there weren't that many Jewish people and it was very difficult for her.

And what did they do there?

Langburt: My father worked in the knitting factory. I don't know if he was the mechanic and I think my mother too my mother too and I was in daycare.

So your first street language was Swedish

Langburt: Was Swedish.

Do you still speak it?

Langburt: Nope and what's interesting there's a rabbi here rabbi Cahonae ? (10:09) who has since had a major major stroke a young man and he was a rabbi I mean he was in Sweden also and I told him I also came from Uppsala he says to me, "do you know why you landed in Uppsala?" I said, "no" he says, "the Swedish people didn't want you in Stockholm." So that was not the experience that we had we had a wonderful the people were very good to us and my childhood recollection which we would go one week to the Canadian consulate and one week to the American consulate.

In Sweden

Langburt: In Sweden.

So you would have to go to Stockholm

Langburt: We would have to go to Stockholm. So to tell you how wonderful they were my parents would leave me in the park by myself and the king Ugustuv ? (11:04) would go horseback riding in the park and I had blond curls. I was very you know little and he'd pick me up and he took me on his horse horseback riding.

Do you remember this?

Langburt: I do, no I do. My parents weren't there I mean that's my memory you know and he had little little black candies ? (11:37) candies that I remember.

So when did they immigrate?

Langburt: We came here in 51.

51 and your cousin sponsored your family so your parents didn't come on some work scheme? Or

Langburt: No no my father's cousin they never new each other they had never met before the war and they found out that my cousin was hidden they owned a factory that made breaks ? (12:04) and they were hidden by the peasants that worked there they were hidden underground and that's how they survived and they ran away to Sweden when the war ended and you know they made us papers to come here.

So you came in 51 by boat or plane

Langburt: By boat.

To Halifax

Langburt: To Halifax.

? Ester Rosaburger ? (12:36) arriving with children Herman and Sonia on February 14th 1951

Langburt: This is how were getting off the boat.

Oh I need to get a photo of that ok we'll keep it and that's you Sonia?

Langburt: That was me. When we got to Sweden and this was me in Sweden. And this was my brother before the war. When we got to Sweden, I was totally I would take a glass of tea I mean tea was the big thing, I would fill it up with sugar till here till I became like this. Now in Sweden in those days I don't know about today there were no heavy people and I became a balloon ? (13:33) and they sent me to the hospital for all kinds of tests, because it was not normal and the doctor looked at my mother it was an old doctor and he said to her, "just give her whatever she wants you know if that's what

she's eating and that's what her body craves give her whatever she wants and eventually it will."

So who wrote that up?

Langburt: This came from Halifax. This?

Yeah

Langburt: I went to pier 51.

Oh so that came from Halifax

Langburt: Yeah I went to pier 51.

And you were able to get your sorta records?

Langburt: Yeah every ship that ever came into pier 51 is recorded. So I knew the name of the ship and its interesting because I have not been there it doesn't say the year I had not been there since arrival and we get to pier 51 and I tell my husband I said, "you know there was a train here, and there was a train track, and I remember going from the ship to the train track" "yeah yeah" you know the way they listen to you? And as I got to the other side, there was a train there and a train track and I just remember Sweden was very clean and the snow in Sweden was pristine white and when we got to Halifax especially in 51 from the coal mines it was dark and grey and dirty and February and cold. I sat up all night I wouldn't sit down on the train, because it was dirty. I sat the whole night with paper towels with the brown paper towels washing the seats I think Paula might remember that.

You were on the train with her?

Langburt: We were on the same boat this is her father here. This is my husband Harry who had very very similar similar experiences.

Hi Harry your welcome to join us if you like?

Husband: It's her business her story.

Langburt: No, you have your story too.

Husband: Well my stories have been told many times before already.

So did anyone greet you in Halifax?

Langburt: No no.

No so you just got on a train got to Montreal

Langburt: Windsor Station.

And when you got off the train in Winsor Station?

Langburt: I think the cousin must have been there. I mean he was here before I remember about Halifax my father had to by sandwiches on the train and it was white toast bread and it was awful.

That was your first introduction to white bread

Langburt: And we called it ? (16:35) that was the first introduction and nobody would eat it.

So for you it was a shock

Langburt: Yeah because it was grey dirty you know specially I mean now they've cleaned it up there, but at that time it was really not not nice.

Did anyone in your family speak English or French?

No not a word.

Langburt: Not a word not a word.

So you get to Montreal and

Langburt: And we moved in with our cousin and

Where did your cousin live?

Langburt:? (17:23).

Ok so you weren't in the ? (17:27) Esplanade

Langburt: No but we only stayed with them for I think two weeks.

Ok and then what happened those first days?

Langburt: We rented a room. We couldn't stay with them she had just had a baby. She had a 9 month old baby and my other cousin is a year or two younger than I am so it was yeah.

So where did your parents rent a room?

Langburt: On Esplanade near Vanhorn ? (17:56) they rented a room. They paid more rent for the room than these people paid for the whole house.

Do you remember how much it was?

Langburt: 55 dollars a month I do remember that that was a lot of money my father didn't work for a year and we came in February and then my cousin took us to look for places where to live and he took us on Colonial Street on to Bullion ? (18:28) you know where all the ? (18:32) were living at the time and were like I said he was driving the car he had a blouse factory they came from Poland they were able to sell the property and they came with a little bit of money. So he started a manufacturing and anyway he took us by car to all these places and at one point my mother saw a rat running across the street and she said, "I'm not moving here" and we my parents had friends that lived on Esplanade near the mountain so we would go visit them and I used to tell her, "can't we just live near here? Can't we just move near here?" so we found a triplex we lived on the third floor we moved to Esplanade and ? (19:24).

So you said your father couldn't find work

Langburt: He couldn't find work.

Do you know why?

Langburt: Well because whatever he did you had to have connections and whatever he did his trade was in French hands so he could not find work nobody knew anything about.

Steal metal

Langburt: Yeah.

So what happened that first year?

Langburt: Well my mother worked in a factory. She was making 18 dollars a week as an operator.

Piece work? or

Langburt: Piece work yeah and then once we moved into our flat she worked from the house also she worked in the factory and took piece work home.

So she would work in the factory while you were in school and then after school she would come home to do the work is that how it was? So there was no need for childcare

Langburt: Well I was in school already.

What school did you go to?

Langburt: Bankcroft ? (20:31).

You and your brother both

Langburt: No my brother went to Baron Byng ? (20:35).

Immediately when he came?

Langburt: Immediately.

Yeah so he was in high school

Langburt: Yeah he immediately went into Baron Byng. Had a very difficult time with French and very coincidentally the vice principle of Baron Byng mister Bent he was a pilot in the air force and he he happened to serve he happened to be in Sweden and my brother was very he was a wiz at math and he took a liking to my brother and he helped in a lot.

So he mentored him

Langburt: Yeah and my brother was told that to get into McGill

Your brothers name?

Langburt: Bent the teacher?

No your brothers name

Langburt: Herman.

Herman ok go ahead

Langburt: He was told to get into McGill, he would not need French, because he had just come from Europe and at the time they still had a quota system at McGill. So of course they wouldn't let him into McGill and my parents who were my parents were part of the workman's circle the Bunt my mother was a Zionist they knew a professor at Sir George at the time and my mother went to speak to him my brother's marks were high. He came in tops in the province in mathematics and his answer to my mother was and I will quote " ? "(22:13) you understand Yiddish?

Its not written anywhere in the books that every Jewish boy has to go to university

I see lets not put our expectations too high yup ok

And what did your mother say?

Langburt: What is she going to say? She was upset. My brother went to Sir George at night after and he got his chemical degree he is a chemist.

And she encouraged that?

Langburt: Absolutely absolutely.

And pushed that

Langburt: And my brother, when we came here, high school was not free. So my brother when we came here, was shoveling snow off roofs to pay the 2 dollars a month to go to school.

To go to Baron Byng ?

Langburt: To go to Baron Bing ?

You're the first person who made that point its interesting its true I know it was for free until the 60's early 60's right? But its funny how people forget that point how you take certain things for granted right? You take high school as free for granted but it wasn't free

Langburt: It wasn't free and 2 dollars a month when you're supporting a family on 18 dollars a week.

Husband: I'll leave you.

We would love to hear from you too

Husband: Pardon me?

We would love to hear part of your story too

Husband: My story is has been told so many times there's most of the Holocaust survivors lived through what I lived through, but hers is a little different.

I'm more interested in life in Montreal then the what happened in Europe this is a story that really hasn't been told we know there's been at least success right? But no ones really looked at, "how did that happen?" because it is a rags to riches story for many people right? And it happened very quick there was a very quick transformation for you know as you described 18 dollars a week extreme poverty to five to ten years later buying a house lets say in Cos Saint Luke ? (24:40) how did that happen?

Husband: That is because we came from times where we had to struggle to survive. So were full of energy we gave our shall we say 110 percent. If they required 100 we gave 150 percent. I can't put it into percentage like I started the same thing I was 17 years old and I came

Langburt: You might as well sit down

Have a seat we'll go back and forth

Husband: I was 17 years old I came to Canada on a used to be called a Stupendiam? (25:20) which is a scholarship from Israel. They wanted me to stay in Israel, but my father decided to come here, because of my sisters being in the United States and we couldn't go to the United States so he said, "if there is no ocean between us it will be easy to see them."

What year was that?

Husband: 52.

52

Husband: And we came and I went to the Jewish yeah I went to McGill and I showed my credentials whatever you want to call it and they said, "your just in the middle of the semester, why don't you apply in September?" I came in January to Canada so I said, "fine" and in the mean time, I went to look for a job. I went to the Jewish vocational service.

Did they help you?

Husband: They sent me to two places and I had a choice to start at 45 dollars a week to be a shipper or 25 dollars a week to work in a store. I asked my father's advice and he says, "in the store you'll meet people. You'll have a better chance to become something" so I worked for a place called Caplins Garrison Caplin? (26:43) and it was a whole sale dry goods and after six weeks he went to Israel as soon as I started and then he came back and after six weeks I overheard him say to the manager he says, "this kid works like he had 50 years of experience."

You were only 17

Husband: I was only 17 so he says he calls me Hershel? (a little unclear 27:08) he came to me he says, "your doing a good job I'll give you a raise" so he gave me a raise and then I worked whenever he wanted. He wanted me to stay late, I worked late. I never asked for anything and to make a long story short, after 2 years I was making a salary more than an engineer or a lawyer or anything like that, because I gave my my whole hush ? (27:40).

Soul

Husband: And then I forgot about school, because making good money. So what the hell why should I go to school an architect wouldn't make that.

Is that what you wanted to do?

Husband: Yeah.

What did your father do? And your mother?

Husband: My father at 57 he came here at 57 we felt that he was too old to work. So my brother and I worked and we didn't let him work.

And your mother?

Husband: My mother never worked. My mother was a she was very proud to be a woman of the you know household.

Langburt: Well she worked enough in Russia.

Husband: Yeah well.

Did your parents ask for any help when they came?

Langburt: There was not help when we came.

Husband: No No.

Jias didn't? (28:27)

Husband: No no we didn't ask for help we just my brother worked in Northern Electric and I worked for this Garrison Caplin? (28:40) and we finally my sisters were visiting very often and so on.

They were older your sisters?

Husband: Yes yes they were visiting coming here and visiting us.

And they lived in the States where?

Husband: In New York. In New Jersey yeah.

Langburt: You know what I remember? There was Jias? (29:04) I remember once my parents went to ask and they offered us metal beds with metal springs and we said, "thank you but not thank you" and that was all the help.

And they didn't help because your father wasn't employed? Or

Langburt: No no when I was little and summer time there was no school so my mother took me to apply to go to camp so that was subsidized and I remember how degrading it was and how awful this Miss Conn made us feel that were asking. She didn't believe that we didn't have money to pay for camp and of course we had to come with our tax returns and it was a horrible horrible horrible experience.

So that's similar to the experience my mother's story which started this whole research project. My mother died in 2005 and just about a year before she died she told me a story very similar and sorta I'm a bit of a critical thinker I liked to go to the you know I like to criticize everything and it never occurred to me how did this happen? Like why did this happen? Like here people came with nothing what happened? What happened the next ten fifteen twenty years right in their lives? You know what supports were available? Like I've heard them my father borrowed 300 dollars from my mothers logersschwester? (30:51) to set up a little tailor shop

Husband: I'll tell you what happened. There was a jealousy.

Langburt: Well to some people.

Husband: There was a jealousy here for

Langburt: The new comers.

Husband: The new comers. They used to call me a Greener there was a jealousy. We were 11 people on the floor. I was the youngest.

That's at Caplins

Husband: Yes and I was the youngest and he had people like in their 60's in their 50's the manager was about 45 there was a 60 year old man there was another 60 year old man and we were doing in those days over a million dollar business which is today like 70 80 million dollar business. So in those days, the jealousy of those people in my store, because I the owner came over to me and he said, "I want you to be manager" I said, "I can't be manager to direct traffic with 60 year old people. I can't tell them I respect them I can't tell them that what they should do."

And these were Gaylahs

Husband: These were Gaylahs.

Langburt: And he came with limited English.

Husband: I spoke as well as I do today.

Langburt: Not quite.

What did you speak?

Husband: I spoke 8 languages.

When you came but not English

Husband: Well I include English because in Israel they taught us. I spent four years in Israel and the educational system there was just like in Russia you know Russia you didn't have to have college. You finished ten years of school and you were educated. I mean to the point where I came here I went for one hour to Barerembank? (32:46) I finished high school there and I thought was a joke, because grade 11 was like my grade 8 or 9.

So qualitatively different

Husband: Yeah so I quit right away and because then I went to go look for a job.

What did you speak at home to your parents?

Husband: Yiddish.

And when you met? What did you speak to one another?

Langburt: You know what? We go from Yiddish to English back and forth.

Still now

Langburt and Husband: Mostly English.

But in the beginning?

Langburt and Husband: English.

Husband: I went in business after two years work.

After Caplins where was Caplins by the way?

Husband: On Saint Laurence and Saint Katharine's almost on the corner.

And it was just dry goods like clothing

Husband: Dry goods there was Austraf? Caplin and there was Schraders was across the street (33:30) and then was quite a few there was Schillers across the street.

Langburt: That whole street was dry goods some were shoes some were clothing.

So you were supplying whole sale to other stores?

Husband: We were selling to stores and I went in business to sell to stores.

Now how did you go into business? Your working for Caplins their they respect you and they say you're a good guy and now did you immediately go into competition? Or what did you do?

Husband: No you see what happened was my father that time already 59 year old and he didn't like that we supporting him and my brother and I my brother was 7 years older 6 and a half years older.

Where did you live?

Husband: On Clark and Barnard and my brother was my sisters came down and they say that my father is very depressed, because we don't let him work and he can't find work. He found work as a tomato packer. He used to put four tomatoes in a little cellophane thing and we didn't like that and I used to bring my salary and give it to him and he didn't like that you know that he's not.

He just wanted to be busy

Husband: Yeah so my sister said the only way my sisters came a little bit in those days you could consider wealthy to the United States their husbands did pretty well after the war so my sister offered me she said, "if your so good there your making such a good salary maybe there's a chance that you should go in business for yourself and take dad as a partner" and my brother was working so he would support to keep the family going with food and things like that and my father and I so I said, "I can't I can't tell if I'll be successful" I had a lot of customers that only wanted to deal with me when they came into Caplins and she says, "I'll give you money, what do you want to do?" I said the only way to do it if I buy a car, I put in merchandise, I travel on the road, and sell on the road and sell for cash only.

Salesmen

Husband: Salesmen with my own two stores, not as a peddler. It's almost like a peddler, but I was selling to stores instead of private people.

Its interesting peddler you don't use that word today its so 1950's you know it you know conjures up great images right?

Langburt: Well there was a big store on Saint Laurence and everybody used to go there and the peddlers used to get commission you had a code I don't know if you remember Brown's department store.

Yeah except my mother wouldn't go to department stores

Langburt: Well it wasn't really department it was the peddlers.

Yeah I know

Husband: So I travelled with my father. I bought a car a brand new car for eighteen hundred dollars was brand new a Pontiac.

Pontiac and this is 1953

Husband: 54.

So you were 21? 22?

Husband: 54 I was 19 and I took my father as my co pilot and I took out the back seat from the car and filled up the whole car filled up the trunk.

And what kind of goods did you have?

Husband: Dry goods.

I know but what kinds of stuff? Like what did you know you wanted to carry?

Husband: Well underwear, ties, socks all kinds of

Nylons

Husband: Ladies nylons there were no pantyhose then.

And what direction did you drive?

Husband: I drove all the way to Matenn Remuscki Matenn Beck and Eastern townships like Tettward Mines and Grandbee and Sherbook ? (37:31-37:42) used to go like that. I learned how to drive and I drove and I spoke a little French and I went to my customers, but before I quit Caplins I told them I'm going for myself, because somebody else offered me a job wanted to take me out from Caplins and he heard about me and it was a fellow by the name of Rose Dry goods and he wanted to give me higher salary even then Caplins, but people told me that if your sick a day he's gonna come with a thermometer and put in my mouth and check if your really sick so I asked my father, "should I quit my job?" at that time before I went to business he says, "you know a stone is on the same

spot moss grows on top” he says, “don’t quit your job” and then my sister and I my father didn’t know we were discussing going in business.

You were plotting

Husband: So then when I went in business I went to Caplin before I went I said, “listen, I’m going for myself and I would like you and I would like to be able to buy from you.”

That’s what I was going to ask yup

Husband: And he said, “there’s a story that your going to quit and go to Rose job” and I said, “no I had never accepted it. I had contact with him, but I never accepted it.” He says, “well if your going for yourself good luck to you” but he says, “don’t go to my customers” I said, “I won’t, unless they call me for something unless they you don’t have something and I have it” so he says, “good luck to you” and I went I went on the road.

What did you call yourself?

Langburt: Nothing Harry.

No what did you call your business?

Husband: Nothing. I didn’t have a name.

and your Dad’s name?

Langburt: His name was Laib Lang.

Laib L A I B? (Spelling)

Husband: Yeah so we were travelling, some weeks were fantastic, some weeks were bad, and I was 180 175 pounds and I went down to 140 pounds from driving and skipping lunches and things like that and worries and my father said, “this is not going to work I don’t want you to get TB.” You know in Europe, it was a thing when you became to skinny you all of a sudden you get TB that was the thing the thinking of the people in those days.

You got fat

Langburt: That was after.

Husband: So he says, “if you were good on the road, you’ll be good in Montreal just sell in Montreal to stores” I went around Montreal I was making a salary like I used to make when I was on the job, but not as much as I was doing on the road. So I didn’t like that and my father insisted, “no you’re not going anywhere” and listen as a young man I would listen to whatever he said.

So do you think that's more a outcome of being you know well you were a survivor as well but as a child survivor of protecting do you think that listening would be different today for example?

Husband: Today, kids don't listen to your parents or to grandparents. Maybe they do I shouldn't generalize it cause some children do and some children, but in today's day

Langburt: Its different times you can't.

Husband: In today's day and age children today they think they know more then their parents.

I guess I was wondering if children Jewish children growing up in Montreal Galla kids if they listened in the same way that you? Or

Husband: No there's no way.

I guess that's what I'm getting at your not sure

Husband: There's no way that today's children.

No no then in the 50's

Husband: I don't know, I didn't have contact with

Langburt: Well you did yeah I mean Gerry listened to his parents.

Husband: Gerry I couldn't understand why Gerry had to pay at home he had to pay

Langburt: Rent

Husband: Rent and food he was working the same job that I had

Langburt: But on the other hand, when you were working, you would give your father the whole paycheck. That's the same thing as paying rent and food.

Husband: No no no, but he had my father didn't tell me, "you owe me 20 dollars this week" I give the whole check my father asked me, "how bout you need?" I said, "give me 2 bucks that's all I need" and he didn't like that.

Ones being asked and ones against giving right? Ones from a family of need and ones probably not from a family

Husband: I'll tell you why the new comers even today's new comers whether they are Jewish or not Jewish they were successful ? (42:30) (too many voices at once to fully understand).

Go ahead just follow that through

Husband: The people here feel that the new comer is intruding on their territory. Where we came, we were looking for whatever there's a possibility to be successful and if you made money that's the reward of success.

Langburt: It wasn't only money. If you got into the schools if you whatever whatever we did we tried harder I think.

Husband: Well its because we were so we were so the background when you have it so bad the better it became you wanted more and more and more and more and more and more.

And that drove you?

Husband: That drove you yeah. So the more successful.

Langburt: And you wanted your parents to be proud of what you are doing and

And that they feel no hurt no pain no suffering

Langburt: Right you tried to protect.

Husband: Regardless of where you come from, if you don't have any ambition that person is just living his life without any rewards. You have to have ambition and some people are happy with what they have. I admire them that's wonderful can you live like that all your life? Fine that's wonderful too, but I I didn't work for myself. I wanted my kids to be I wanted to build for them a good foundation and that was it I for myself I don't need much what do I need? Three meals a day and that's it.

Langburt: No but you know if you take Israel today ok? Take Israel after the war they were very accepting and the new comers came to Israel they were taken immediately to the front you know to build. The second wave came and there was already discrimination. So it started the Moroccans are no good then the Yemenites are dull this one is lazy and this one steals the Russians came so the Russians are no good and now the French are coming in so the French are coming in with attitude and the same thing happened when we came here. When we came here, the people that were here there was a small group that were very wealthy, but the ordinary people worked in factories the way we did when we came here and they were not well to do and all of a sudden we came in well lets see they paid me five dollars a week less than the other person and the other person was let go you know the unions weren't as strong and there was definitely discrimination.

Was your mother in a unionized job?

Langburt: No no, but there was discrimination they didn't and my mother didn't get as much you know everybody was going to take home work, because it was piece work. So she would sit at the machine till 11 12 o'clock at night. Plus she sewed for private customers and I have a very good friend of mine a very good friend of mine ? (name 45:57) we moved into this place on Esplanade? (46:02) believe me it was nothing gorgeous.

Can you describe could both of you start with you Sonia describe your house that you lived on Esplanade? (46:12) It was a room

Langburt: Well that was a room we lived in a double polar that was disastrous. So we were there from February until May.

And why was that disastrous?

Langburt: Because my mother was kosher. It was near Vanhorn. She got a job near Mount Royal. The street car tickets were 25 cents which was a lot of money and she would walk every day to work and come home to give me lunch, because I was only seven and then walk back to Mount Royal to work then come home at night. So in the mean time, she would stop at the butcher, start to make the meat kosher, I mean today you buy it kosher then you didn't.

Husband: You bought it kosher, but you had to kosher it more.

Langburt: You had to salt it and soak it you know so that took time and my mother would turn around and the people who we rented the room from the kids would take the meat and clean the floor with it they were two unruly kids and my brother would

Were they Jews? Gaylla? (47:25)

Langburt: No they were also ? (47:27) but they came before us I mean people started coming started coming in 47 48 and my brother walked to school every day I mean the bus tickets were what seven for 25 cents.

Husband: When I came it was 4 for 25.

For a student bus

Langburt: For a student bus, but he walked to school every day for Barambeam? (47:49)

Husband: So did I, to save the money.

Langburt: To save the 25 cents.

Husband: I walked from the corner of Bernard all the way to Saint Catharine every morning.

You would go down Saint Laurence

One second one second go ahead

Langburt: Well we moved to Esplanade and Villeneuve it was much better you know.

You had a flat

Langburt: We had a flat we were on the third floor.

Did you rent a room?

Langburt: We lived with boarders until I got married.

So they did. Did you need (48:20) to get the flat?

Langburt: Five hundred dollars yeah.

How did your mother have that how did they have cause your father wasn't working it was only your mother right?

Langburt: Yeah I don't know I don't know whether maybe the cousin lent us the money? I know we had to pay 500 dollars ? (48:34). We had an ice box no fridge and I don't know slowly they started buying. My mother also she sold privately also besides so and then my father got a job after a year and so I started to tell you my friend walked into the house and my parents had bought an area rug I mean maybe it was a little bigger than this.

How do you say that in Yiddish? It would be carpet in my house

Langburt: I don't know.

Husband: You adapt right away to the English.

Langburt: So they bought a little carpet and my friend came into the house and she said, "you see? All the ? (49:26) came with money."

And she was a Gayla? (49:32)

Langburt: She was a Gayla? (49:33) her father was a butcher and her mother never worked and her mother used to sit on the balcony every day a very nice lady I liked her a lot.

On Esplanade? (49:41)

Langburt: On Esplanade ? (49:43) across the street from me. She would sit on the balcony the beds were never ever made in the house never made in the house and the ? (49:52) would live in them.

Langburt: You have to air out the bed so you don't make the bed ok so money goes to money the ? (49:02) have the money.

What was your house like on Clark? Was it a room? Or did you have

Husband: No we had two double parlors and a kitchen and we rented it from a we also paid ? (50:17).

Do you know how much?

Husband: 500 dollars.

Langburt: I think that was the going rate.

Five to seven hundred I think

Husband: How we had the five hundred dollars is when we were coming to Canada we had to stop in England. So we were in London, and my parents my father was very shortsighted so this was a handicap so and I was on my fathers passport, because I was underage under 18. So my brother was older so they gave him right away the visa and they said to him, "you better go find yourself a job so you could bring over your family" so my brother came and he started working for a Jewish firm Atlashoustonbody (51:04) this was a company that was owned by the ? (51:12) company.

Yeah I came across that name a lot in the Jias? (51:17) case files a lot of people seemed to work at Atlas

Husband: So he worked for them and he accumulated some money and he gave a deposit, because we were coming later. He didn't know when we were gonna come and he got that third floor on a triplex.

Langburt: Yeah that's how we lived.

Husband: The bottom was the landlord, the middle was a Jewish lady with her daughter , and the third floor was us and we came and we did move we paid our rent, but before we really moved to that house, because it wasn't ready for us. We stayed at a cousins place for a couple of weeks 3 or 4 weeks I don't remember how long and I remember the style then was to have dark ceilings. So I had to paint my mothers kitchen ceiling. I painted it Navy blue.

I don't remember that

That was the style

Husband: That was the style.

So you have a white wall yellow like what was it?

Husband: White walls and I had to paint my ceiling Navy blue.

Navy blue and so that just really wasn't to keep grease off the ceiling it was just a style and it was a style she had seen or you had seen in Montreal? Or in England?

Husband: In Montreal so she said to me after that I put her cloud on top of her head, because it was Navy she didn't like it it was too dark so.

That's a lot of work

Husband: Well I didn't even have a roller I painted it with a brush anyway.

The rollers won't in sortave invented then

Husband: Well this was it. So from there we moved. When I went in business we moved to Park X and we stayed in Park Extension I didn't even know that there's a thing like that that exists because we only new Barnard to Mount Royal and everybody was walking there.

Langburt: The worst worst possible experience that I had we finally got a telephone

This was when? 50

Langburt: 55 maybe we had a party line like everybody else and they were Jewish and you can tell when you pick up the phone if somebody is speaking right?

Party line amidst how many?

Party line is you share a phone

I know that I'm just asking how large was the parties? Were they two or three families?

Langburt: They were usually two families.

Husband: Two families to one phone line

Langburt: On one phone line and I was talking and the woman picked up on the phone and said, "Hitler should have killed you."

Husband: Me too, I had the same thing.

And these are Jewish Canadians?

Langburt: Yeah.

Husband: No I had it when we were living in the third floor and you know the stairs outside.

Langburt: These wonderful stairs that were so Quebequa.

Husband: So I used to take a shovel and shoveled down the stairs, but I shoveled and I cleaned the second floors landing and from the second floor she was supposed to clean the stairs, but she didn't she wanted me to clean. So I was young I used to take the two rails and just slide down and I didn't even touch the stairs, I just slide down so she saw what I did and she didn't like that I didn't clean her stairs and she said, "you know Hitler should have killed you too" and she was a Jewish lady.

Jewish Canadian

Husband: Yes yes so what am I going to do? I'm gonna start a fight with her? But that was the animosity, but I'll tell you I didn't experience too much of you know I found a lot of jealousy.

Langburt: Well that's where the animosity came from jealousy.

Husband: Because I had a job and she mentioned Gerry had a job

Gerry is a

A friend a buddy of his

Husband: He was my age and he was making maybe half of my salary.

Why was that?

Husband: Because he didn't do what I did I did. Everything that was necessary I made I mean

Langburt: You know what? They worked their time and then it was movie time and get together and go to Dunns

Socialize

Langburt: We couldn't afford a social life. We didn't have the money. I mean when I went to Bankcroft school my few Gaylla? (56:09) friends that I had not too many went every Friday they had lunch at Bankcroft at Beauties Today's Beauties. I mean we never ate out we never ever my parents never went to restaurants we didn't know what it was to go out to eat.

Husband: It was a different mentality the mentality of people Israel had the same thing.

Langburt: That's what I just said.

Husband: Israel I came there in 1948 where I went to school and the kids were bullying me I mean really I couldn't speak any Hebrew and they were ? (56:55) you know that's a new comer a new comer.

Langburt: Grayner? (57:00)

Grayner? The Israeli version (57:01).

Husband: And then when I got into high school, I got into a very very prestigious high school where you couldn't get it and I got in somehow and the kids there didn't want to sit with me because I was ? (57:17) ,but when they realized that I do as well or better than them they started being next to me.

So that they could study and look at what your doing

Husband: But I didn't know any Hebrew so I went to a Hebrew teacher after school that taught me grammar, because grammar Israeli grammar was very difficult for me and I went to him and I remember his house was a you call it today a pent house. He had four walls of books outside books that were the walls and a ruff that's all. It's not a pent house its just build himself a little sukkah on top of his and that's where he lived.

Langburt: The people in those days were living in tents so

Husband: Yeah but he was a genius. He was a person that was just just total days and nights in books and he was single so he taught me the grammar and when I passed my grammar exam I got 100 because he prepped me for it.

Langburt: We came here with clothes like this the kids all made fun of us.

Yeah I was going to say tell me about your first few days weeks in school

Langburt: In school?

When you started the did you go to Kienyeti? (58:39) first? Or was it Bankcroft from the get go?

Langburt: No I went to Edward the Seventh.

I mean Edward the Seventh so what was it like the first few days? Weeks?

Langburt: You know what? I was lucky a few doors down I met a very nice girl so I was in her class and were still friends today you know she was very very nice and we spoke Yiddish, but it was it was very very difficult because you don't have the language, you don't understand what's going on, your sitting like uh and you couldn't participate. I couldn't do anything. By the time I came to Bankcroft, my language was a little bit better Bankcroft was more of a mixed school there were more kids that came from Europe. I remember walking down the street and I met another very good friend of mine she came from France and another fellow that came from Belgium they had a common language French, but we spoke Yiddish so we walked to school and speak Yiddish.

And what was the support in the classroom? Like how did the teachers work with you? Did your mother walk you to school?

Langburt: My mother went to work she didn't walk me to school no.

So you had to walk yourself at age seven

Langburt: Yeah I walked myself to school and yeah we walked we picked friends as we walked along you know you start.

Packs

Langburt: Yeah and you start you know.

Did your mother go to work before you left for school?

Langburt: Yeah I think my mother started work at 8 o' clock.

So you had a key were you a key child?

Langburt: No no the door was open the door was open we lived on a block the door was open and we had very nice people living downstairs our landlord the son is a Rabbi in Toronto and downstairs I don't know if you know judge Seal if you've heard the name she lived downstairs from me so you know but they were all Gayla? Around nobody was ? (1 hour 51 seconds) but we had in grade I don't remember who my grade 2 teacher was I remember in grade 4 we had a Jewish teacher and it was compulsory to do religious studies which their trying now so hard to and the religious studies I mean she was Jewish we could have done any prayers any songs anything she made us sing Jesus Loves Me

I remember onward Christian soldiers

Langburt: Onward Christina soldiers marching off to war.

Harry did you start a business just we'll go back to this a second cause you seem anxious to go so just to finish off did you start a business in Montreal?

Husband: Yes.

When did you start?

Husband: I started a clothing store. When I started selling to stores in Montreal I found I did not have enough capital, because you had to give credit and I didn't have I mean my whole capital in those days was about twenty thousand dollars and if I give it out I'll be left with nothing those days twenty thousand dollars was a lot of capital, but not to run the kind of business that I ran and I didn't have the kind of experience taking bank loans so what I went I went one day to a store this is a story that she hear a hundred times.

Langburt: Or more

Husband: I went to a store and he was sitting like this on a chair by himself a man in his late fifties maybe mid sixties and he was an angry man and he said to me, "why did you come to sell me, buy my store, I can't buy anything you buy me out" so and I joke I said well looking around, "I'll give you three and a half thousand dollars for it" he says, "you must be kidding" I said, "I don't know if you have empty boxes or full boxes" plus all the boxes you know shirt boxes sock boxes empty or full I said, "I don't care I'll take a gamble I'll give you three and a half thousand dollars" he says "give me five" I said, "no, I already made you an offer and I never move three in a half take it or leave it" he got up he took the keys and he locked the door and he said, "lets go to a lawyer to buy the business" I said

And where is the store?

Husband: On Vernon avenue 4906 Vernon Avenue and I said to him I found it a little suspicious, but I called my father and I said, "go and get me three and a half thousand dollars please go to the bank and take out because he wants a certified check" and I said to him, "if I'm not in the bank he can't certify the check so" I said, "go take out money" he took out money and he comes to me and he says, "you're crazy what did you do? You bought a store?" I told him the guy was sitting he had no customers nothing I said, "I'll take the merchandise he has only a six month lease left over I'll take the merchandise its 125 dollars a month" I said, "if it doesn't work 6 months 750 dollars I'll have to pay I have no problems, but whatever he has whatever I saw I'll be able to sell." So he says anyway but he never discouraged me he was a pusher my father was saying take chances push yourself and you'll succeed. So I went to the lawyer, he gave me the keys the guy we signed the bill the lawyers bill was 60 dollars and I had to pay it and I was arguing with him why do I have to pay it? You sold me the business anyway fine and then I said to myself what did I do? What am I gonna do with all that? I mean it sank in and I decided to make a going out a business sale and it was on the other side was a church and

I went ahead and I made myself bake signs store closed Bailys Men's and Boys clothes were going out of business and I left it like this standing for a couple of days I didn't rush. Monday morning I was supposed to open up. I drive up by myself, my father was at home, and I see a line up around the block. People are waiting. Whens it going to open? So I rush down, I picked up my father, and I called my brother to take a leave of absence from Northern Electric and come to the store, because I won't be able to handle the crowd handle the crowds and it was fantastic. The first day I had my money back plus and I still had a lot of merchandise left and this guy was just looking at he said I robbed him you know because I bought the business and he didn't know if I took out the whole money already and slowly I closed the store after six months and I liked it. I liked what I did so I started looking for other stores so I bought a store ? (1 hour 6 minute) West and then I opened a few stores myself.

And what were they called?

Husband: Doug Alexander and Son because the ? (1 hour 6 minutes). I liked the name. His name was Alexander and he was like a very liked Englishman and he was working at Eatons before and he opened for himself and I took the name and I bought stores on Saint Katharine I put on the same name Doug Alexander and in 1969 I closed them.

And who did you hire to work the stores? Just anyone?

Who did I hired? People like this Gerry worked for me I hired Jewish boys mainly and my brother we those days we had two to three people in the store you didn't have like a big amount of people like two people my father stayed in one store with a young man we opened across from Eatons store and in 1968 my father saw the political situation here when Trudo was speaking on Fletchers field he was stoned by people he says in those days there was the

Langburt: FLQ

Husband: FLQ he says, "I don't like it here get out buy your business in Ontario to live here is fine" so I sold the stores and I bought stores in Ontario and from then on I didn't have anything in Quebec except live here because of the children.

Langburt: Big mistake we should have moved out.

You think?

Langburt: We didn't move out because of our parents. I mean our kids had a great great schooling here everything, but now their going through the same thing and their children are talking of moving.

Husband: Yeah it's politically. This province is being killed and people don't realize that.

I would love to be in Montreal

Langburt: Well Montreal is a great great city.

Husband: Right now its exactly the same thing its never going to go away never gonna go away.

Do you think new immigrants today would be able to do what you did then?

Langburt: They have to they have to.

Husband: Yes yes yes anybody can do it.

And the same do you think opportunities were the same?

Husband: There's even more today the same except

The cost is so much

Husband: No what today is it's a different kind of world. You have to know where to throw yourself where you going everything is high tech high tech high tech and even a doctor today has to be a businessman, because if he's not you know he has to have the proper computers and this costs a lot of money. This takes away a lot of your profits to operate all those things.

Langburt: No but you have them coming from all different countries. I mean in Quebec their allowing mainly people that are coming form French countries so its Jamaica French Africa I mean their doing job that people like us the Gayla? (1 hour 10 minutes) find demeaning and this is the same thing that we did when we came. I mean we took jobs that people didn't want to do.

Yeah but I'm just wondering if they could start their own businesses with the same ease

Langburt: They do they do.

Husband: If they have a little capital if they want to start a small business they could a lot of the you look at most of the preneurs are all either from

Langburt: Vietnamese

Husband: Vietnamese Pakistani most of the restaurants are

Langburt and Husband: Greek

Husband: most of the landscapers and builders are Italian. The French Canadian here are really left behind. They are left behind not because look I'll give you an example I

bought a store in Hoxberry at the time when I moved out I bought a store that was a Jewish owned store with twelve employees.

We interviewed Ben Younger was that his store?

Husband and Langburt: He was next store.

He was next to you?

Husband: He was a competitor.

He was a competitor we just chatted with him two days ago we met him he talked about going to Hoxberry

Langburt: His daughter is a very good friend of ours.

Husband: He is a competitor of mine and we had spoke to one another

Oh I'm sure you would have your in Hoxberry right?

Langburt: Hoxberry's a French speaking town by the way.

Husband: He had the more upscale store and I had middle class store so we were not really competitors.

You weren't selling to the same folks

Husband: No competitive wise we had 50 percent the same kind of merchandise and the rest of it was he had higher and I had lower, but because my store was like that and I didn't want to change the image, because I'd bought a very good store so what I

Langburt: We had a manager

Husband: We had a manager and I said look I have other stores I had 11 people Ben Younger had 3 people so I had a bigger store and I said to my manager, "listen, I want to come here once a week. You run the store you run the store before all I want you to do is I want you to have 25 percent without putting down any money you own 25 percent, but I want you to be an owner so I could come in and be your equal partner and you'll make whatever you'll share the profits you don't have to put any money in no sir" I said why? I still visit him I still go to see him many times so why? he says, "when I close the store at 5 o' clock I don't want to have it on my head I wanna come home I want to sit with my wife like I'm going to work tomorrow morning" he said, "but you are gonna come home and you think what did I forget, what didn't I do, whatever else"

Langburt: What do I have to bring, what do I have to get.

Husband: That's the difference and he didn't want so I'm showing you the difference between new comers and people I offered him he would have made I paid him well but he would have made a lot more he was a wonderful guy he was working very hard the hours that he worked after hours he didn't work.

Langburt: When you go into any ? (1 hour 13 minutes) lets say their Vietnamese or Greek its like when we came the families working its not just you know? And then as soon as they get a little bit on their feet it changes they become a little more lax and a little more comfortable.

Husband: Even now my children have stores now and they want to find to if to open a store they want to find people that would become a partner its impossible to find.

Of responsibility take some of the heat with them yeah

Langburt: It's impossible to find. I mean you want to open a store and you should be a partner you have we will supply the merchandise we just closed a store in New Brunswick.

Husband: Yeah

Langburt: And now were are closing one in

Husband: In Peterborough

Langburt: In Peterborough

Husband: Our business is going down because its there's no more shall we say

Langburt: The retail is not what it used to be.

Husband: No people buy online. People buy on sale most of the time and there's no more profit in it. My son calls me yesterday I don't want to mention the name he says to me, "you know dad, a firm that we dealt since we started business is closing down is not closing down he's giving it to his employees" and he says, "dad I was so sad to say goodbye to him I went in I bought some stuff from him I was so sad" a big manufacturer a huge manufacturer closing down he's getting out of it and giving whatever is left to his employees. If they want to run it they will run it. Another one closed down it was Utechs big manufacture doing hundreds of millions of dollars of business, because its not so you have to adapt yourself you have to be futuristic.

Langburt: And theres no schmata's ? (1 hour 15 minutes) to trade here at all in Montreal where when we came it was all schmata's ? (1 hour 15 minutes).

Yeah my parents would always go to the factory to buy it

Langburt and Husband: That's right.

I hated it I just wanted to go to Eaton's

Husband: Well Eaton's closed down. They saw what's happening.

Do you know my mother used to go and I you know even as a small child I couldn't stand it right? was a store called Esters Dry Goods

Husband: No.

Langburt: Esters.

Not in a good sense it was a store and I can't remember I seem to think it may have been on Fairmount or

Langburt: Park Avenue and Fairmount.

Could be could be

Langburt: It was on a corner. It was like a house with a window I think.

I can't remember

Husband: What did Ben Younger tell you? Any different? The same stories that I have.

We need to talk with him a second time cause we showed up and he talked a lot about pre Montreal and during his stories in Montreal and we want to go back and have a different conversation start with him coming to Canada which will include more Hoxberry more of his life here so that's unfortunately it was a truncated interview

Husband: I still see him we're still friends.

Yeah what a nice

He seems lovely

Husband: He had a hard time with a he has a wife that is blind? (1 hour 17 minutes).

Langburt: His wife is blind ? (1 hour 17 minutes).

Well that as part of our sorta

Well that was obvious

Husband: That was his he lived through a lot.

Langburt: But you know what? He goes and speaks to schools.

And he seemed to do that really later in life like he said it was 2006 when he first talked

Langburt: Yeah because he was commuting every day.

He's a good storyteller and that's why we want to go back cause the details that were hearing from you are really important for us

Langburt: You know what? They used to commute you never commuted with him.

Husband: I commuted with Joe Cronin.

Langburt: Yeah there were a few guys from ? (1 hour 17 minutes) an hour 45 minutes a way they commuted in one car back and forth so even though they were competitors they were all.

Husband: I went once with Ben Young he was a Joe Cronin had a he still a

Langburt: Optometrist.

Husband: Optometrist and he used to share we were sharing the same apartment Friday night. We used to close very late so instead of coming Montreal we had a six bedroom apartment in the building. So I had a bedroom, he had a bedroom, and we had a pizza together.

Ben paid more for his car his new car he showed us his receipt for a 52 it was twenty one hundred bucks he paid for a new Chevy that he bought

Husband: Well maybe he took a luxury.

Well ok

Husband: I had a pat finder a pat finder I remember brand new. I went all the way to the East end where those refineries are ? (1 hour 18 minutes) Motors and I paid eighteen hundred dollars for my first car brand new.

So he had his receipts so when you told me that my jaw dropped

So talk to me about your social life we'll get back to school soon what was your social I mean you worked all the time how did you have a social life?

Husband: I was an old bachelor I married at 26.

Excuse me were in different generations that's eight years difference

Your eight years different?

Yeah

Well that doesn't matter

Husband: I married at 26 and I was considered an old bachelor.

He's working and she's still in school when were starting I'm trying to get this

Langburt: I was in school when we met I was at McGill still.

So when you were 17 18 19

Husband: I used to dance with ? (1 hour 19 minutes).

Where'd you go and dance?

Husband: I used to go to ? (1 hour 19 minutes) we went

Did you go to Sidney? Soltag? He told us the similar story

Husband: I used to go to ? I used to go to Shay Pari? Danbi ? (1 hour 19 minutes) I used to love night clubs I used to love night clubs.

Why with the ? (1 hour 20 minutes) why not the Jews?

Husband: Jews used to dance too I used to come to here where they?

The Y?

Husband: No it used to be Saturday night dancers at Spanish and Portuguese synagogue.

Spanish and Portuguese synagogue and that's here where?

Husband: Spanish and Portuguese synagogue is where the what do they call it?

Langburt: Where the Y is its on Saint Kevin.

Husband: Saint Kevin there's a school now the Hertz Lia? (1 hour 20 minutes) and that synagogue used to be Saturday night on the dancing.

In the fifties?

Husband: Yeah so we used to dance with Jewish girls.

Langburt: Oh no we didn't go there we went to the Y well we played on the street. We would go for walks that was the big big thing. We would walk to the mountain.

On Sundays?

Langburt: Yeah we would walk.

Friends your young friends

Langburt: My young friends yeah.

Husband: Don't put that in the thing their are gonna think I'm a ? (1 hour 21 minutes) I used to go down I could tell you one thing I was a good dancer.

You were a good dancer

Husband: Yes so.

And people wanted to dance that's all and you want to dance that's ok

Langburt: I mean today they sit like this. In those days we went my friends and I we would get together we would walk into the nice areas we would walk up to Maplewood you know behind

Coat Saint Katharine ? (1 hour 21 minute)

Langburt: Coat saint Katharine ? (1 hour 21 minute).

This is about 1958 for you 57 your about 15

Langburt: No no no even before 54 55 56 we would walk.

What about Sundays the families would you all go to Fletcher field?

Langburt: Yes but we all got together like everybody was a cousin and an aunty, because we had none and we would get together and I always went with my parents always get together at peoples houses and on Sunday or Saturday. We would go to the mountain. We never called it Fletchers field. We went to the mountain specially in the summer and everybody gathered or we walked up and down Park Avenue.

Husband: That's what mainly

Langburt: During the holidays.

Husband: All our friends all my friends we used to Friday night everybody after Friday night dinner we used to walk.

Would you dress up?

Husband: We were always dressed nice those days it was important.

Langburt: My mother sowed my clothes. I always dressed nicely.

Probably beautiful be old fashioned be ? (1 hour 22 minutes) tailoring as we would say now

Husband: You know even I remember my mother I was working for a you know a whole sale job and she says, "you don't have a suit" I grew here I became totally different my body changed and in those days a suit was important. So I said oh I'll go into Schrallers ? (1 hour 23 minutes) you know where the peddlers were and I'll buy the suit there "no no no I want you to have a good suit" so she says, "you know any tailors?" and I said "yeah there's a tailor coming to my boss Caplin and he takes his measures in the store and makes him a suit" so my mother says, "well why don't you?" I said, "mom its so expensive" so she says, "you tell him I'll go and pay for it" I mean where did she get the money?

Langburt: But in those days he and my brother they came we used to call them pumpoisen ? (1 hour 23 minutes) did you ever hear of that expression?

Pumpoisen nickers

Langburt: Nobody wore long pants. So my brother walked in to Barembeem ? (1 hour 23 minutes) wearing nickers and everybody looked at him like he is

Someone else shared a similar story they said we'll give you a go a let this time if you come again with those short pants we will beat you up

Langburt: Right my brother got beaten up, but he was strong. He hit back so they didn't bother him again.

Why did he get beaten up?

Langburt: Because he looked different. He dressed differently. He didn't speak the language.

So this suit now one woman I did interview she when I asked she hated Montreal when she first came one of the thing she was from Warsaw very cosmopolitan her family you know very cultured and she said she couldn't understand how when you walked on the streets or went for a walk how you didn't dress up you know gloves and a hat and a suit and she said the Jewish Canadians were Schmata's ? (1 hour 25 minutes) they didn't

dress up they were sorta they didn't care what they wore and she said for her it was so symbolic

Langburt: You know what? I don't think that they cared. I really think that they didn't have they didn't have you know they had more than we have, but they also didn't have I mean we talked about the war experiences that we had they talk about the war the food stamps and the hard times they had. I mean you can't compare the two hard times, but they didn't have it easy. So I'm sure in those days if you went to Misses Rightman she was dressed and if you went to Misses Broughtmen ? (1 hour 25 minutes) she was dressed and all the other you know? But if your walking on Esplanade and on Saint Turben and your running back and forth from the factory you weren't dressed you wore a scarf on your head.

Yeah she was saying on a Sunday or on the evening you know

Langburt: Yeah but they didn't have we didn't either.

Husband: But you know it depends also on the family what they put

Langburt: What they put their values on.

Husband: Values a lot of people have I know some people today that are very wealthy and they dress like schleppers? (1 hour 26 minutes). To them it doesn't mean it doesn't matter and to us clothing was a an important part of our in my family I don't know in her family, but in my family my mother was very very and my father the same way very important to be presentable.

Langburt: Yeah first impression.

Husband: Presentable and that's why and cleanliness was really important to us you know? Because we lived in we lived in Russia with a floor that was made of I mean earth there was nothing there was no cover on it.

Was that in Uzbekistan?

Husband: Tajikistan it was in Tajikistan, but it's a different mentality the European that were come from Europe that were during the war in Russia the survival part of it was as far as I'm concerned was that everybody sticks together the whole family is alike the whole family has to work in order to survive and that what kept us going and then after that when we started getting a little bit money so appearance started coming in you have to appear clean. You have to appear well dressed even if you don't have money that was an important part of my family I don't say her family or anybody else.

Was that true for you Sonia?

Langburt: Yeah you know what? My father had a very dirty job. I mean being a roofer is not a exactly a clean job and my parents were very social.

Husband: Yes that's true.

Langburt: Very very very social my both of them belonged to two different organizations, but people from both organizations would meet at my parents house. So if my parents weren't out then somebody was in and my father when he would come home from work I mean he was black from the tar from the smootz you know. So I remember he would take off his uniform hang it on the back of the door in the bathroom and he would scrub and scrub and scrub I mean you never saw black nails its very hard to take that stuff off.

It's hard I've done ruffing its very hard its hard to stay clean

Langburt: But tar and stuff like that is very and he would not sit down at the table until it was clean.

How long did he do carpentry? I mean ruffing for?

Langburt: He retired he was what? About 70 68 70.

So he stayed on as a worker? Or did he start his own?

Langburt: No no he started his own place. He started his own place after a few years.

So when did you move from Esplanade? (1 hour 29 minutes)

Langburt: Oh when did I move? I think we moved in 59 58 59 to Saint Kevin? (1 hour 29 minutes) my mother really didn't wan to move.

So did you rent an apartment then?

Langburt: Yes and we had such a terrible landlord that it made my parents buy a house they bought a little little duplex on Carlton.

And that's where they stayed

Langburt: Yeah that's where they stayed after they bought the house after we were married they bought the house in 61.

Can we ask

One sec hold on and your mother continued working?

Langburt: Yes.

The whole time

Langburt: The whole time.

So she needed to work the whole time

Husband: Not when I married you in 61 she wasn't working anymore.

Langburt: She was still working when she was still sewing on Carlton.

Husband: Only for private not to make money.

Langburt: For private, but not in a factory.

Husband: Not to make money your father was in a good

Langburt: Yeah my mother always worked

Husband: but she didn't have to work.

Langburt: No, but she always worked.

What were you going to say?

I know we haven't filled your story out sorta from grammar school but I want to know when you met? how old you were? What was happening in your lives? Can I start with you? Can I start with your version?

Husband: Well I'll tell you what it was I had a very very responsible type of job even though it was my business. I was running it and I had to put in a lot of hours and a lot of work I said until I have a substance of something that I

Langburt: Well because you were supporting the family

Husband: I don't want to get married. I didn't want to get married. So I didn't want to go that doesn't mean in those days I was thinking like I don't know why I thought like that if I started going out I'm neglect the business. So I didn't want to go out so I went out to dance on a Saturday night with my male friends we used to go down five six eight guys Cope Cabana Down Bi Shey Parii? (1 hour 32 minutes) we used to go to shows and dance we used to go you saw five girls at a table you went over and asked one to dance. We had a good time.

And It was safe you weren't going to commit you know

Husband: Yeah yeah so then my mother was after me. My father was after me.

Your brother was he already settled with somebody?

Husband: No no my brother married in 1958 so and I didn't want to get married before him. I didn't want to get serious before him anyway so what happened is I somehow I went to a wedding.

Langburt: You were an usher at the wedding

Husband: I was the best no usher that's right for an employee of mine a Jewish wedding. He was working for me and he asked me to be one of his ushers. I went to that wedding her mother was there she new the mother of the bride she said, "whose this guy?" and somehow she made a schita ? (1 hour 33 minutes) her mother.

That's a match a schita's (1 hour 33 minutes) a match

Langburt: That's not my story.

So what's your story

What what

Hold on hold on

What year was the wedding? That's all I'm asking

Langburt: 61 so my story was we were all invited my parents and I were invited to this wedding.

You were 18 in 61 right?

Langburt: I was 17..

Husband: When you married you were 18 by the way excuse me.

Langburt: Yeah, but I was 17 we were invited to this wedding and my parents felt that if they didn't have anybody closer to invite, but to invite them they we had to go you know? Because we were all survivors and my parents really didn't know the people. I vaguely new her from school, but I was not friends with her and so my parents went to the wedding I was going to McGill anyways in those days McGill we went on Saturdays.

That was for teachers college

Langburt: Yeah so I didn't go to the wedding because she wasn't a friend of mine it was not somebody that I new. It was in November. It was dark. It was late. I was coming home from school late we could not afford we used to hitch hike home from school which was ? (1 hour 34 minutes) there was no circle like there is today like the Decarry

circle ? (1 hour 34 minutes). So it used to take us a long time during the week on the way there we paid graduate students to drive us one way the Gayla ? (1 hour 35 minutes) who could afford rented rooms at Saint Anndebll ? (1 hour 25 minutes) and came home on weekends. We could not afford that so a few of us we drove to school in the morning and back we would hitch hike and on Saturday it was very very difficult, because we went by provincial bus to Saint Anndebllview? (1 hour 35 minutes) and back we would hitch hike and Saturdays were a little bit harder and the wedding was on Saturday.

So your parents weren't religious at all post war?

Langburt: They were traditional.

Ok

Langburt: My mother was Kosher, but they were traditional. So my parents went to the wedding I did not and I finished my exams and my mother I was a kid I was 17 years old my mother felt I should you know go bring her up a little present and she lived not far you know my parents had moved already so I went up there and I brought her a little gift and apologized for not being able to go to the wedding. I was in the middle of exams and stuff and at the same time her husband was coming from work. So my husband was driving him from work and he was dropping him off at the house and he says, "you haven't seen our apartment and you haven't seen my wife since the wedding come upstairs for a minute" and I was trying to leave because I really had nothing in common with this girl she says, "my husband you didn't meet my husband my husband is coming up you know he's coming home from work come up wait he's coming any minute" so they walked in together and he took one look at me and he says to me, "what are you doing later" and I had a date and I said, "nothing" so he says, "ok I'm going home to shower and change I'll come up and pick you up" so we went out that night with this couple.

They were also Greene ? (1 hour 37 minutes)

Langburt: They were also Greene? Yeah (1 hour 37 minutes) that's why we were invited to the wedding, because they didn't have anybody and then again and each time he was paying for everybody and I finally I mean it was none of my business, but I finally had the courage to say to him, "do we have to go out with them every week? That you have to pay for them every week?"

Husband: If you write that please don't because

No no no

Langburt: And he thought that they were such good friends of mine that he didn't want to anyways so we started going out independently and that was it and the first weekend he said to me I don't want you to see anybody else.

Husband: I didn't say that

Langburt: No I did.

You said that to him?

You were thinking

Langburt: Yeah.

And then you got married

Langburt: Yeah.

Do you think that because a number of the women I interviewed who were born in the late 30s or 40s they married young do you think there's a relationship between that and I mean people married younger but it struck me as really like 19 18 19 20

Langburt: No all my friends married at that age.

Really?

Langburt: Yeah.

Husband: It was a fashion.

Langburt: I mean all the girls were coming in with engagement rings.

Husband: It was just the times.

Langburt: It was the times the guys were 22 you know 21 22 and the girls were 19 20 18 20 was already.

Husband: I was considered old.

At 26 yes you would be

Husband: My daughter married at 35 and she was considered young in the United States if you look at the

Langburt: In New York

Husband: If you look at the marriage announcements

Husband: In the New York Times

Husband: New York Times everybody is 39 38 bride 39 they had groom 45 you know? In that age that's when they marry and otherwise they hangout in bars before you know? That's the way they

Do you think it made a difference that he was a Greene? (1 hour 39 minutes) too? Or for both of you

Langburt and Husband: Yeah.

Langburt: Absolutely.

In what way?

Langburt: We had the same language not language

Metaphoric

Langburt: Yeah we understood each other. We came from the same background. It was the same values. It was the same the same type of family background. Absolutely we have four children two of them are married to Greene? (1 hour 40 minutes) they are already not Greene? (1 hour 40 minutes), but I'm talking about and even my grandchildren are different.

In what way?

Husband: Its hard to explain really I had a I was going out with girls from Gayla ? (1 hour 40 minutes) like you call what did you call Gayla I had a certain fear that they haven't got the same type of outlook on life that we had.

Langburt: It was different.

It wasn't easy it wasn't easy being

Husband: It was like going into totally into another another culture of you going out lets say if I was going out with a non Jewish girl in the Greene even though they were Jewish you had a certain not a fear, but some kind of hold back you know?

Langburt: It was different you know my son married an American girl she was not only was she an American girl, but she was 5th generation American and she thought that we were from outer space. I mean we might as well been from mars, because the family dynamics are we're closer were more connected were you know? I mean I hear people say I spoke to my mother three months ago. I mean that doesn't exist in our culture.

Husband: I'll give you an example, the job I was working at there was a girl in the office her name was Evelyn she was maybe a year older than me and she said, "I would never go out with a Greener ? (1 hour 41 minutes) she wasn't very attractive I would never go

out with a Greener (1 hour 41 minutes) so I said, “there’s gonna come a time where your gonna want to a Greener (1 hour 42 minutes) and he not gonna go out with you” anyways she married a Greener (1 hour 42 minutes).

Why do you think she said that?

Husband: Because we were supposed to be the low part of the

Langburt: You know they have very low opinion they were jealous of us, but had very low opinion, because I mean I don’t speak I speak probably with a ? (1 hour 42 minutes) accent, but I don’t speak with an accent, but I belonged to Hadasa ? (1 hour 42 minutes) and we have in our chapter we have a few people like me who are Greener ? (1 hour 42 minutes) and we have a few people Greener, but one comes from Belgian and one comes from France and if you speak from a French accent its very attractive, but if you speak with a Polish accent its just not acceptable.

So There’s a hierarchy

Langburt: Yes absolutely.

Husband: It’s not any more today I don’t think.

Langburt: Oh yeah even today even today come on.

Ben Younger said he was called Mocky and I think Sidney

Langburt: Yes today they call Moroccans Mocky.

So what is Mocky exactly do you know?

Langburt: No no we were called Mocky’s.

But it was disparaging

Langburt: Yes yes it was all derogatory.

Husband: I new what it meant.

Langburt: Today, the next generation calls Moroccans Mocky or Morrocs. I mean it’s the same in Israel it’s the same here.

Husband: It’s all over the world the same.

So do you know when you were younger did people ask you about the war? Did the Jewish Canadians ask about the war? About the experience your parents?

Langburt: They didn't want to know they didn't want to hear and as soon as I think that generation as soon as they realized that they didn't want to know or that they didn't to hear or maybe they felt guilty because the standard answer was, "well we had food rations too" you know so you cannot speak at that point so I think

So that's silencing

Langburt: Yeah.

Husband: I wouldn't generalize though. There were some people who were

Langburt: Very few very very few

Husband: There were few not very few there's some people that were very generous.

Langburt: Oh I'm not saying they weren't generous.

Husband: They offered me loans. They offered me things in the beginning if you don't have I'll lend you.

But did they ask you about the war?

Husband: They new most of them that I came in contact new what the war was, because they had families in Europe like my boss Caplin he new he new he asked me my story and I'm sure I told him what happened to me during the war, but he new most of it they new.

Langburt: I don't think they

Husband: The younger generation maybe, but the older generation new about the war because

So in school the teachers did they talk about it to you?

Langburt: No.

Did they was there like some program to assist

Langburt: Nothing.

In terms of trauma or you know psychological adjustment

Langburt: There wasn't such a word in the vocabulary.

I know but in terms of dealing with children

Langburt: You know what's interesting? And I pointed this out to friends of mine we were a whole bunch of kids that went to Bankcroft and Bareembeem ? (1 hour 45 minutes) Bareembeem was 99 percent Jewish and I discussed it with my brother also and even the Greener ? (1 hour 45 minutes) kids we never ever talked about it.

To each other

Langburt: We new that we were Mocky's, but we never talked about where we were or where we came or where we lived.

My question is why why do you think so?

Langburt: I don't know.

Why do you think so?

Langburt: I don't know it was just something we never talked about. I mean to this day I found out people that I went to school with you came from Europe too. You know this woman was in my house two weeks ago and it was very funny because her husband sent me my very first valentine. So I remembered it because I was like you know my and I new he was a Greener ? (1 hour 46 minutes) I've known her for years never ever new that she was a Greener ? (1 hour 46 minutes) it was never talked about.

Do you think that that was an assimilation strategy?

Langburt: Could be I don't know.

Or it was a sensing that nobody wanted to hear or a combination?

Langburt: I don't know.

Husband: I had a card game here with all Greener ? (1 hour 46 minutes) used to be every night every one night a week we had one who passed away a friend who wasn't married and he never told me he was a concentration camp survivor he never said to us he never brought it up some people just don't like to do it in the end he came out.

Langburt: Yeah because all was involved in the Holocaust center.

Husband: No but he came we invited him a few times for dinner. At one dinner he came out and said he had nobody left just one person he was all by himself.

Langburt: And what's interesting we had one common friend a woman who was friends with a few of our couples and she went to visit him in the hospital. I thought I was going to strangle her and she says, "I can't believe that this happened and its impossible and I

can't believe that the Jewish people couldn't get out why didn't you all go to Africa?
Why did you stay there? I mean this

This was a Jewish Canadian

Langburt: A Jewish Canadian yeah.

Husband: They weren't informed enough.

Yeah But that's silencing right? Someone that you know tell you you know we struggled too

Langburt: Somebody today he died what ten years ago 15 somebody in today's time my age that would come out with I mean she's semi educated that would come out with such a remark I mean

That's like sheep to the slaughter right?

Langburt: Yeah I can't look at her.

No there's still a lot and some of the you know older survivors that I've interviewed say they still confront it today that total insensitivity that we struggle too why are you so special?

Langburt: Yeah.

Husband: Well look I'll tell you we were in Russia and Siberia we had bad bad years, but nothing like the concentration camps. I mean we were starving too. There were people dying in the streets too in Siberia, but nothing like concentration camps.

But you know there's an evolved hierarchy of suffering right? And no maybe some sufferings but I mean your lives were really disrupted

Husband: Yes.

And you were starving

Husband: Yes yes.

And you had nothing

Husband: But we had paradise next to what happened in Poland. I lost my grandparents. I lost uncles. I lost aunts and this but I but I lived through what we had.

Langburt: But you weren't systematically rounded up and killed.

Husband: No no so we

But you could have been

Husband: Yeah but we

You could have been that danger was there that the danger wasn't here

Husband: But we had paradise in comparison.

Yeah and they had paradise here in comparison to you

Husband: That's right.

You can't even compare

Langburt: No you can't compare suffering you can't.

I call it the Olympics of suffering yeah right? you know?

Langburt: I worked with a friend of mine at the Holocaust center and we were at another friends house for dinner and she turned around and she actually yelled at me she said, "how can you compare you were in Russia my parents were in Auschwitz how can you compare?"

Husband: She was right.

Langburt: No, but it's not a comparison?

Husband: You can't compare it. You can't compare it.

Langburt: We're not doing a comparison.

I mean you displace people I mean you go running to a different country you I mean your life is constantly at risk either through actual political danger or health danger I mean there was Tifiz ? (1 hour 50 minutes) there were all kinds of I mean your living in poverty there was no food

Husband: We were all impoverished. We didn't have anything, but what we heard and what we saw when we came back the thing is this that if a person doesn't understand it he can't have feelings towards you what you lived through. You take a child today even the Holocaust survivors children they go to Balyik ? (1 hour 51 minutes) and they

Langburt: They go to the march of the living

Husband: They teach them until they go to the march of the living it doesn't count they don't understand it you can't blame these people

Langburt: I was there you can't

Husband: You can't blame people them.

Langburt: You can't fathom the enormity of it. I mean when I went to Auschwitz I mean you say camp did you go to camp as a child?

Yeah

Langburt: I mean camp Auschwitz was a camp when you look at it and you stand there and you see how vast it is I mean its miles and miles of barracks and just planks of wood and in the winter time with no clothes in the snow its impossible to describe and its impossible to imagine.

Husband: And it's impossible to believe.

Langburt: And it's impossible to people who lived through it can't believe that they lived through that. It's not something that you can convey.

Husband: This is the same thing through history. There was there were all kinds of slaughters and things like that especially in Poland. Especially in the Ukraine there were programs? (1 hour 52 minutes) even after the war after we came back from Russia to Poland we heard of a program in another town after the war.

There were many after the war

Husband: You know you know and look my uncle lived through he was a leader of the partizans he was my fathers brother he was a very strong man and after the war the polats that were in his partizan group killed him and there was a cousin of mine from the other side of the family from the wife's side of my uncle he was in the same partizan he is passed away he went back and he killed the three guys that killed my uncle and he was only 17 or 16 years old when he went back took a gun and shot them he heard who it was so revenge, but what does it what good does it do? I mean he lived through a war.

But it doesn't bring them back

Langburt: When people talk about it and I try to tell them that it didn't happen I mean christalnacht ? (1 hour 53 minutes) happened things happened slowly it didn't happen all at once. I mean were living in a situation in Quebec. I mean god for bid a million times, but its not much different slowly slowly slowly they've taken away one right and another right and a third right and they keep taking away your civil rights until I mean nobody's standing up to say, "what the hell is going on here?" You know how many people live in Montreal? I mean not just Jewish people English people French people what are they

doing here? And this is what happen there they said, “ok we can live with the star. We can live with this. It’s not so terrible yet you know if it gets worse we’ll leave.”

Husband: Exactly.

Langburt: We can live in the getto. It’s not so terrible yet till it became so terrible that they couldn’t leave, but people don’t understand that.

Husband: There was appeasement and there was right now the United States is appeasing the wrong people appeasing the Russians the Russians are getting a foothold in the Middle East and its very very tough for Israel. It’s gonna be very tough for Israel because they leaving behind Israel for having a promise from Iran which is never its not even worth the paper that their write it on and they don’t understand it the same way as before the war. I was too young, but I read about it about Chamberlin going with Hitler making a deal.

Langburt: Because your hoping and hoping that its going to work.

Husband: And we see the mistakes, but these people its better to talk then to fight fine you don’t have to fight you put sanctions on keep the sanctions on until their gonna you know give in no?

Can I ask just bring back go back to 40s and 50s for a second what do you think should be the role of the state the government in helping immigrants?

Husband: What the role?

Yeah

Husband: Just let them in and give them freedom. Nothing else. Good immigrants I mean immigrants that come here to because they think there’s money falling like man from heaven their gonna find disappointment, but the people that really come here to live here and make a life for themselves just leave them alone give them freedom.

But what about like for survivors for refugees people who are victims of torture who’ve had everything taken away what could make a difference right?

Husband: Maybe you want another coffee?

No I’m fine no I’m good

What would have made a difference for your parents life for your parents life

Langburt: Listen today you come in you automatically have Medicare.

Not refugees though

Langburt: Yes they do.

No its been taken away

Husband: Harper.

Harper took away

Husband: A year ago.

Yes Steve yeah refugees aren't covered by healthcare now

Langburt: For how long?

It just happened

Till they become landed it could be years

Langburt: That's two years now landed.

Husband: So what do they do when they get sick?

It's out of pocket that's exactly the problem that's exactly like when you got sick

Langburt: That's what we had we didn't have anything.

And it's a sober reminder as I went through all the case file how important healthcare what a difference it would make specially for people who survived so many hardship whether in the concentration camps or in Russia people were starving their bodies that's gonna have an effect it catches up with you right? And the psychological too right?

Langburt: Psychological was not poor people cannot think of psychological.

But you know there was a lot of electric shock therapy in the 50s of survivors

Langburt: Of survivors too?

Of survivors too

Langburt: I didn't think they had the luxury of going.

They'd go to the Jewish General Hospital like totally psychotic and then they were sent to the Allen what was it called

Langburt: To the Allen yeah

It was as common as

Husband: But healthcare as it is now in Canada the United States England anywhere its not sustainable. You can't its impossible just leave it in the hands just make it freedom don't give make it for doctors and companies to run competition is gonna bring the healthcare down if its government its gonna be up and up and up why's it gonna be up and up? Because if you see if you ever look at what government is spending. If they could spend 900 dollars on a toilet or on a toilet seat that's what's going to happen.

Langburt: They were just talking on the radio about it that they have the exact number its 900 and something dollars to keep an elderly person in the hospital. How do they know the exact figure of what it costs per day, but they don't know what their budget is. They don't know what they are spending on other things.

Husband: But healthcare is not sustainable.

Langburt: Anyway that's not the topic.

So what would have made the difference? Your family was interesting your parents had two young strong motivated boys

Husband: Yeah.

And Sonia your parents had young children and your father couldn't find work right?

Langburt: What would have made a difference not to pay for school which we did in those days daycare.

Which was not available

Langburt: Not available at all which today here in Quebec its 5 dollars a day maybe 7 dollars a day daycare.

Which is the best in the country actually

Langburt: I'm sorry?

It's the best in the country

Langburt: It is so abused that it's ridiculous. It is totally totally abused, because it should be for people that need it for working mothers that need it not for mothers in Hamsted who want to stick their kids in a daycare center.

No that I agree

Langburt: And I know so.

Yeah I agree

Husband: You asked what the government should do for immigrants the first thing they have to do is

Langburt: Try and get them jobs.

Husband: Get them a job or when an immigrant flies to come in here take his file bring them in match them to a job and at least to have when they come in you could help them sustain themselves which they have to pay back when they get the job and that would be give them the money to sustain themselves food and shelter whatever, but when they get the job make sure that they pay back. I would have paid back I didn't get anything.

I think most people would most people would

Husband: I didn't get anything, but I would have paid back that takes away the expense of the tax payer.

Langburt: We were discussing this yesterday. I'll give you a little example we had the Russian the Moroccan wave of immigrants here and then the Russian wave. So there was I didn't happen to be at the meeting there was a meeting called an emergency meeting at somebody from the Y came because the Y was very responsible for the Russian people and got together the ? (2 hours 1 minutes) the Jewish community and they said, "we don't want any money from you. We don't need anything from you. The only thing that we would like is if you mentor a family now if a family comes in and they want information where to go to a doctor where to go to the dentist where to buy shoes for their children they should be able to call you not for money not for any if you want to invite them for Shabbat or if you want to invite them for a holiday or for a coffee that's fine, but you don't have to do any of that just so they should be able to have we can pair up a family with families they should have who to call if they need some information their language skills" do you know what their answers were most of them? "we will not let a Russian into our house."

Langburt: Here my hadasa ladies (2 hours 2 minutes).

Husband: Whatever.

So one woman I interviewed a survivor she was the only survivor of her hadasa ? (2 hours 2 minutes) group in the 50s and hadasa? (2 hours 2 minutes) raised hundreds of thousands then for Israel

Langburt: Yeah.

Which was a lot of money and they so when I asked, “what did you do for the survivor community?” and I asked this question five different ways and it was always nothing nothing it was never on the agenda

Langburt: No.

And that I cannot understand people didn't have clothes to wear right?

Husband: We didn't ask for anything. We didn't ask.

But why you

Langburt: There was nobody to turn to we had Jias ? (2 hours 3 minutes) to go for a job. I wanted a job for summer or for weekends.

Husband: No it was the Jewish vocational.

Langburt: The Jewish vocational yeah it used to be on Schurbert Street.

They only placed twenty five percent of people

Husband: What they gave you

They gave you some contacts

Husband: They gave you a contact. Here they looking here they looking this company go to see them if they hire you that's fine.

And that was the end people never came back

Langburt: I was so naive so stupid I went to apply to Eatons what school do you go to? Bareembeam I was in Bankcroft Bareembeam you know what room? What teacher? I new nothing, but we lied just to try to get something. Of course it didn't work, because they new more than we did but

They new the game

Langburt: But even today like in my hadasa ? (2 hours 4 minutes) chapter I mean it's a standing joke we serve on paper plates. So somebody calls me up serve on paper plates and my answer is I don't say, “I'm I say I'm continental I don't serve on paper plates.”

Husband: But now your gonna be a misfit you have to do what they do.

You've always been a misfit right? It's a comfort zone right? Being an outsider it's the comfort zone

Langburt: You know my friends laugh now I'm continental.

So school was tough those days

Langburt: Yeah yeah school was tough.

Did you talk to your parents about that?

Langburt: No.

Why not

Langburt: You know what? Our parents never went to parent teacher interviews. Never. I'm sure you must have heard that also first of all they couldn't speak to the teacher that was number one and number two the teacher was always right. We organized my friends Simon and I organized a strike, because we were the Mocky kids. I mean why does the Jewish teacher makes us sing Jewish Loves Me why can't we just say the Lords prayer?

That was bad enough

Langburt: You know what? To me the Lords prayer was not bad. I mean I'm not saying Jesus loves me I'm saying my own prayer but why? So I got sent to the principles office I can't remember his name

This was in Bankcroft?

Langburt: In Bankcroft school. I can't remember his name and my name is Rotenberg I mean Rotenberg, "oh there's a beautiful city in Germany your family must come from there Rotenberg" and I said, "yes."

So your parents didn't go to any parent teacher they weren't involved

Langburt: No I mean they knew they didn't have to be involved, because we knew what we had to do. so it wasn't necessary.

So they weren't a support if they were struggling in any way or

Langburt: You know what? I they had their group of friends and I had my group of friends and I don't think it would have even dawned on them that we were struggling socially that my brother was my brother more than me cause I was seven and everybody was my age that came at that time, but my brother came into high school with a bunch of tough kids you know not Greener ? (2 hours 7 minutes) it was much harder for him, but I don't think my parents even thought I mean it was such a privilege for us to go to school why would they think that we were struggling?

And the teachers never tweaked into that

Langburt: No no and you know what? I had a miss Pinski and I had a miss Spinklesten ? (2 hours 7 minutes) the only teacher that never said anything I had a teacher mister Colget ? (2 hours 7 minutes) that was very companionate.

And he was a Canadian? A Jew? A non Jew?

Langburt: Jewish yeah a Canadian I'm assuming he was Canadian yeah he was a very companionate type of person and you can see you know he treated us with a little bit more softness a little bit

Compassion

Langburt: Yeah.

One of the things we've been talking on our morning walks we do this long morning walk every day and I'm saying what comes to my mind is and I said the lack of compassion

Langburt: Yeah.

There was so little compassion

Langburt: But you know what? I find even there's so much out there now and even today I find people are so much blaze about it all you know. I don't think I mean they realized the war happened. There's all kind of literature. I don't think they realized how difficult it was coming here like I said for me I was young you know my other always made sure I had nice dresses nice skirt.

But she was never I mean she worked all the time

Langburt: She worked yeah, but you know what? If I were to tell my mother, "you know mommy I have a party tomorrow night do you think you could make me another new skirt?" it was no question I had a new skirt.

So tell me about your moms life like her daily life she would get up she would make breakfast I assume or food for the kids

Langburt: And then we would take our own whatever and then she went to work and

She'd come home from lunch to feed you

Langburt: She would come home to feed when I was little yeah she would come home for lunch that's a far walk from Mount Royal to

Vanhorn

Langburt: To Vanhorn that's a far walk and like in the middle of winter. We didn't take out our things from luggage. Our things came by you know big big containers from Sweden till the summer, because my parents specially my mother wanted to go back to Sweden it was very very difficult.

She didn't like it here

Langburt: She didn't like it here and when we finally moved into the flat on Esplanade and we unpacked these big crates in the middle of the street people were looking what these wealthy wealthy Greener's ? (2 hours 9 minutes) brought the ? (2 hours 10 minutes) caldron you know we brought the ? (2 hours 10 minutes) caldron you know what a ? (2 hours 10 minutes) caldron is? A down blanket.

That was big in Europe we had them the father blanket

Langburt: I still have them.

Yeah with the quilt blanket that has the diamonds

Langburt: Yeah yeah I still have them.

So she would do that and then supper would be on the table

Langburt: And then supper would be on the table and every night I don't know how she did it every night either they went to friends or friends came to our house every single night.

But she would also work

Langburt: And she would also work and there was always baked stuff in the house and every weekend there were people in and out of the house every weekend we always had a boarder.

And what about your father? That year he didn't work? What did he?

Langburt: He walked everywhere there was when I was in grade 10 I think yup I was in grade 10 it was the first time a ship had come in from Israel to the ports of Montreal and in came all the way from the East end where the refineries are and

You were so this was 1953 you were

Langburt: I was 14 or 15.

Ok so 1956 57 ok

Langburt: I was about 14 or 15 and I belonged to the Zionist organization. So we went down to welcome these Israelis and I remember I was with my friend Lynel. I insisted on walking home from there because my father had told me when I was a little girl that he walked everywhere by foot looking for a job and this was one of the places he had looked for a job. So I don't know I think we got home 4 o' clock in the morning. We walked from Schurbroke East the refineries past past the botanical gardens all the way.

You walked the walk

Langburt: We walked yeah.

Any more questions?

Just a surface question when did you go and get that ship picture? When did you go to Halifax to get that ship picture?

Langburt: When were we in Halifax? Well we know the Schwartz family in Halifax and she was instrumental in having pier 21.

She helped at the redevelop

Langburt: Yeah and when I was going to Halifax it was very important for me to go back to pier 21.

Well sure

Husband: She's not a Schwartz she's a Goldblume.

Langburt: She's a Goldblume, but she was maiden name was Schwartz.

Husband: She's married to the brother of Victor Goldblume the brother whose a physician and

Langburt: I mean your from Nova Scotia the you must the Schwartz family is very

I've only lived there seven years

Husband: Where in Nova Scotia?

Wolfville there's a small university Acadia its about 100 kilometers from Halifax it's a beautiful beautiful community just gorgeous

Langburt: It's a beautiful country. Anyway I mean Canada is absolutely gorgeous.

Oh Nova Scotia is and people don't come

Langburt: Well we've driven through. I said people go all over the world and we have such beauty here.

Yeah yeah

Langburt: Where are you from?

I grew up in Connecticut

Langburt: You're an American.

I moved to Toronto in 1974 and I've been here ever since

Husband: And you're from Toronto? You live in Toronto?

We did live in Toronto that's where I raised my kids and Zelda and I met and we six years ago we moved to Wolfville from Toronto but she grew

I grew up in Montreal and

Husband: So now are you visiting Montreal?

No so now I teach at a university I'm a sociologist