

Eveline Garneau

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Interviewers: Colette Lebeuf & Don Bouzek

Camera: Don Bouzek

Q: Tell us a bit about yourself and your background.

EG: I was born in Amersfoort, Utrecht in the Netherlands. My mom, her name is Teuna, she was born in Rotterdam. My dad, his name is Jelle, and he was born in Harderwijk in Friesland, which is one of the provinces in north Netherlands. They met in Indonesia; they were both on a contract. My dad was an engineer, and my mom was a nurse. My dad played saxophone and oboe and several [other] instruments [including the accordion], and on the weekends, they had parties. [...] My mom was a nurse, and so the nurses would all go to a party every weekend that my dad happened to play in the band. All the women were saying, "Oh, this Jelle DeJong, he's a good-looking man." My mom said, "Hmm, I think I might have something to do with him," just hearing his name. Two years later they were married. Their contracts were six months or a year, and then they would have to go back to Holland to renew their contracts. So right after they were married my mom had to go back to Holland [for 6 months] to renew [her] contract. [It was almost 3 years until] I was conceived. It was sort of through contracts getting canceled and stuff that they ended up back in Holland. My mom had me, so I was born in May 1959. In June 1960 [we boarded] a big ship and came to Canada. My dad had a brother named Eiza who lived up in Barrhead, and they sponsored my parents. At that time, when you were coming from Holland you either went to Australia or you went to Canada; those were the two good options. I would tease my parents, "Why didn't you pick Australia?" In my mind I was thinking that would be a great place to live; but, no, I'm really glad they came to Canada. So we landed in Edmonton and went right away to Barrhead. My dad borrowed my uncle's car, came down to [Edmonton], and in one day he got a job, got an apartment, and there was something else – not a car. But he set out to do three things in one day, and he got all three things – oh, all the stuff that came on the boat, he had to arrange to have it sent to a storage unit or something. So that's what he did. We moved into apartments [on the location] that are now the Muttart Conservatory. There were

walk-ups there, and for about a half a year we lived there. The reason we had to move – and I read this in [her letters] – was because we were in apartments. The person below us worked shiftwork; I was learning to walk and I had special shoes to help me walk, and I made too much noise on the hardwood floor, and I kept this neighbour awake. The neighbour complained to my parents so then they said, “Okay, we have to buy a house, we have to get out of here.” Then they bought the old farmhouse, which was part of the Britannia-Youngstown community already. It was the original farmhouse; the fields around that area became the Britannia-Youngstown community. So we moved there June of 1961. My brother was already born, and then we started our life in Jasper Place.

Q: Was there a reason that your parents chose Jasper Place?

EG: Well, the job that my dad got – he’s an engineer draftsman – was downtown. The bus that he was able to catch was easy, because it was right on Jasper Avenue that the offices were. So, every morning he’d catch the bus and go downtown and come back at night.

Q: Do you remember which bus line he took, or the route?

EG: I think there was only one bus line at that time. He had to walk to... the bus had a turnaround. No, I’m not sure exactly which bus.

Q: Where was the house situated?

EG: The address is 16102 – 103 Avenue. When they were starting to make the streets in the neighbourhood, they realized that the house was not where it should be to work with all the other houses. There should be a street that would’ve gone right through our house. But because of that, they subdivided to give it a double lot. The driveway, if you drove down 161st Street or go north, you’d go right up into the driveway. It was always easy to describe to friends

how to get to our house, “Just pretend you’re going to head north, and you’ll go right into our driveway.”

Q: Can you describe the house and the area?

EG: They made very wide roads. We’re lucky compared to some of the other neighbourhoods; we can have cars parking on both sides and you can still go back and forth without taking a mirror off of your car or anything. But the yard itself, we had a huge garden all along the spare lot, right from the front sidewalk all the way to the back alley. Then where the actual house was set, previous owners had planted a circle of elm trees. In Grade 1 you got those little spruce trees for Arbor Day, well they’re now a hundred feet tall; they’re huge now. But back then, we had this circle for a front yard and a circle for the back yard. The trees must’ve been about this big when we first moved in. Well, you can’t hug them, they’re so huge now. Elm trees, you know how they are – the canopy. That’s what the whole yard is now, just one big canopy into the middle. It was a yard that as we grew my dad had the room to build the best swing set and the best sandbox and the best playhouse. It was a magnet for all the kids [of the neighbourhood]. I think they did it on purpose, because then my mom could keep an eye on us and not have to worry where we were, because all the [neighbourhood] kids were in our [back yard]. We had treehouses in several trees. One summer, I bought two baby ducks and I dug a pond in the back yard to house them for the summer, then I gave them to a farm in the fall. My dad built skating rinks in the back yard. Every spring when the snow melted there was a dip in part of the yard that we would take a piece of plywood and stick it on a rubber tube and sail around the world, because we had this big kind of pond in our back yard. The house itself is quite small by today’s standard. One of the letters I read that my mom wrote to her mom said that the bedrooms are small but there’s enough bedrooms for all the kids they hoped to have. So that was nice. I guess the whole house had linoleum in it, and when my dad ripped that all out, there was all hardwood floors. It had an attached two-car garage that, from the second floor, you could get onto the roof of. But it was so old and decrepit that we were not allowed because we could fall through. But in the summertime that was the best haunted house. When we planned penny

carnivals or had special events, we would turn that into a haunted house and charge a penny. It was so good, because it was so spooky in there already, we just had to add little things to make it even worse.

Q: Did you have all of the amenities in the house?

EG: We never had an outhouse, so we must've had that. But we did not have a basement; it was just a crawlspace. My dad one summer... it ended up taking over two years, but they had the house lifted on crossbeams. My dad and his brother, my uncle, came and hand-dug the basement out. We have movies of my dad hauling a big wheelbarrow with a lot of dirt. Then each of us kids had one lump of dirt in whatever we had, like a plastic wheelbarrow or a wagon. We all had one lump of dirt, and we would follow the leader to get the basement dug out. My dad had made these piles and piles of dirt, which became the best superheroes' playing ground. We were Wonder Woman and Batman and Superman, and these hills were just great to run over or ride your bikes on. So when my dad started to clear away the dirt to rebuild the garage, we were quite upset with that.

Q: How many years did that last?

EG: It must've been at least two years, because it took over two years for my dad to finish the basement. He laid every concrete block, and he poured the cement. He was a real handyperson. They planned his time off by what project needed to be done. If it was a project that could be done indoors, he didn't mind taking winter holidays. But if it had to be outdoors, he always asked for summer holidays.

Q: Was there flooding?

EG: No, no flooding, not that I can remember.

Q: Were all the roads in your neighbourhood paved?

EG: I don't think they were paved right when we moved in. The back alleys took a long time to get paved. I remember the sidewalks were all cement; we didn't have wooden sidewalks. [...] All the kids in the neighbourhood would bring whatever wheeled thing they had, and we would have parades up and down the sidewalk. I'm sure the mothers were all sitting on [their front porches] looking out and watching us go back and forth.

Q: Can you describe the farmland around the house?

EG: When we moved in there was no farmland, it was already all developed. The daughter of who used to live in our house had come one time. She had never been in that house; it was her grandparents or something that had lived in the house. She'd only remembered some pictures of it. She said she would've never been able to recognize the neighbourhood at all, but the house itself she could recognize. My dad had added onto it and had it raised, and tore down the old garage, so there were a lot of changes to the house; but we basically kept it the same colour. Even two years ago we had to have it re-shingled and my mom goes, "It's always had a red roof, so we will keep it a red roof." It's kind of unusual to get red shingles. But no, they kept it to the way it was.

Q: What was the community like around you?

EG: Pretty well everybody had five kids; that's what it felt like. My parents met and started having kids a bit late, so I think most of the neighbourhoods that had kids our age, the moms and dads were a little bit younger. But we all took swimming lessons together and we all played, our games spanning several blocks. If we were playing kick-the-can, we didn't stay in one yard, we spread out two blocks. If there was going to be a football game or a baseball tag kind of game, we all would call across the street and say, "Meet you at the field." The field, it's on 160th Street between 103rd and 102nd. There's just two or three lots that are open, and it stayed that

way forever and it's always been known as "the field". I'm sure it has an official park name, but there's no sign there saying it or anything.

Q: Is it still a park area?

EG: Yes, they've turned it into an open dog park now. You don't see kids playing in there anymore. Our parents, if they didn't know where we were, they knew we were there. It was always just filled with kids playing games, and it was great. I feel sorry for today's kids.

Q: So it was mostly single houses with large families?

EG: Yes.

Q: Do you remember the composition of the population?

EG: We knew all the families on our block. Mrs. Rand, she taught everybody piano lessons. Mr. and Mrs. Heinicker, they named all their girls starting with the letter C and all the boys were the letter D. Mr. Stewart was one of the teachers at our elementary school. I have a fond memory in that going to school; whoever was farthest away would pick up the first person and then pick up the next one and the next one, and by the time we were a block away from school, we would all be arm in arm. I don't know if you remember, "We are pals, pals are we," when you walk, you step over top of the next person's leg. So we would go down this street heading to school singing, "We are pals, pals are we," and doing the funny walk – well, we didn't do that every day. So everybody knew everybody over three or four blocks heading to school.

Q: Tell us about your school days.

EG: I went to Youngstown for elementary school. I had a hard time at the beginning because Dutch was my first language, and we spoke Dutch in the house all the time. My dad learned

English quite quickly because of his work, but my mom, she was around other moms but not as much as around us; she was mostly a mom. So in one of the [letters](#) [my Mom wrote], it describes how the other kids would teach me a word and I'd go home and teach my mom what the word meant. Then I, in turn, would teach them Dutch – my friends. The first couple of years I was having to really learn English, so it was a little bit hard. I remember that because I was embarrassed not knowing how... like, for instance, “vacuum cleaner,” this is one word I really remember. I didn't know what a vacuum cleaner was; in Dutch it's *stofzuiger*. I was embarrassed, so I started to cry in class. This was Grade 1 or something. They took me to the nurse and thought I was not feeling well, so they brought me home. This happened two or three times and my mom got mad, saying, you this isn't an easy way of you getting out of school, this is not right. So she explained to them saying, no she's just more embarrassed that she doesn't know a word, so leave her at school.

Q: Were there others in the classroom who had not been brought up with English?

EG: Not that I can remember. I was always the tallest as well in my class, so they always put me in the back of the classroom. I don't really remember that anybody else had a problem with not knowing the language. But I learned pretty quick. By the end of Grade 2 or 3 I was, “Yeah, don't worry.”

Q: So that was your elementary school?

EG: Yes, until Grade 6, then Britannia was my junior high, and JP Composite High School was my high school.

Q: Was your junior high also in the community?

EG: Yes, actually half a block behind my house, so I could hear my mom calling if I wanted to listen hard enough.

Q: When you started high school at JP Composite, how did you get there?

EG: If there was no snow on the ground, we rode our bikes. Again, friends would pick us up on the way or we would pick up friends on the way, so by the time we got to JP there was usually about four or five of us that were in a bunch. I remember one time we were riding along and we saw that there was a city bus coming across. I stopped and my brother stopped, but his friend darted ahead and almost got hit by the bus. We kind of all were shocked. The bus was gone and we went up and he said, "Did you see that? I almost took out a bus." I'm sure he was scared too but he wanted to pretend that he could've taken out the bus.

Q: What was life like at JP Composite High? Was it different from your junior high?

EG: Oh, big time. I think my graduation class was 900, whereas at Britannia I think there were only three Grade 9 classes or something like that, so you knew everybody. But not at JP. I don't know why, but I think everybody knew me. I was the tallest girl, first of all, and I played on the sports teams, and we did good. [...] For years after [graduating], somebody come up to me and go, "Oh, you went to JP and you played on the volleyball team." I'm [thinking], "I have no idea who this person is." [So] I think I made an impression on a few people, I guess.

Q: Did you have any memorable teachers or coaches?

EG: All of them. They all opened doors for me, that's for sure. I'm an artist, and I finished Art 10-20-30. I'd finished that already halfway through Grade 11, because I had to have Art every semester. They picked eight students that they saw had real potential and gave us a whole afternoon for a semester that we could try anything – pottery or drawing or painting, anything. Whatever we wanted to try, they allowed us to try it. It was just wonderful. It was on the top floor of the tower of JP, which means you had great views too. Wow, there's no other building that was that high at that time. At the end of the year, they took all our artwork and had a big

sale. They displayed our work as a show, and it all sold. I have nothing left over from that year. It was pretty cool that the school decided to allow us to do that. I played on the volleyball team all three years. I don't enjoy basketball all that much; I played in Grade 10, but I'm more of a volleyball player. I went into track, so sports and art. I got through all the other classes, the ones you have to get through, I got through those as well.

Q: You mentioned that you were the only Dutch speaker in your elementary school. Did your family participate in the Dutch community in Jasper Place?

EG: No, not that much. First of all, in Jasper Place there wasn't that big of a [Dutch] community. My mom and dad were under the understanding that, when in Rome do as the Romans do, so when in Canada, you're Canadian. I think that might be because they'd traveled quite a bit before settling down; before even meeting each other, they'd traveled quite a bit. I think between the two of them they knew seven different languages. So I think, "Now that we're in Canada we'll learn English and we'll be more Canadian." I don't know. We started going to Ebenezer Church when we were really young. My mom found it hard to get all five children ready on a Sunday morning. We were going, and then they changed the time to make it even earlier, and mom said, "Forget that." It was funny because when I was eight or so I organized my first penny carnival. We'd get a jar of pennies by the end of the day, and I wanted to donate it to the church or something like that. Every time I would go to give it to the church, the priest or minister or whoever it was would say, "You should be going to church." They would reprimand me for wanting to donate, "No, I'm not a churchgoer, but I'm willing to donate these pennies." I would go home almost crying. Mom would say, "Good thing we're not going there anymore. If they make a little girl feel bad, we don't need them." I don't know why they would make a little girl feel bad, but I think they were digging real hard to get some followers or something.

Q: What about shops? There was a Ben's Meat and Deli.

EG: I'm not sure where my mom went, it was along Stony Plain Road. We would start at Safeway. My dad would drop us off at Safeway and my mom would get a cart and throw all four of us kids in the cart, or whoever was old enough to hold onto the sides. Before going to Safeway, she'd go up and down Stony Plain Road and use the Safeway cart, then we would finish with Safeway. My dad would know that after two hours he had to be back to pick us up. There's a funny story. My mom was getting us ready to go to Safeway and my dad was out working in the garden. My mom, what she said was, "Go get dad, we're going to Safeway." What I must've heard was, "Go get dad, he's at Safeway." So I was, I think, three or four at this time, and I walked all the way to Safeway, and they couldn't find me. They called the police, and Safeway phoned the police saying, "We have this little girl." Three hours later they find me. At that time Safeway had a counter with little stools that you could sit around and have a lunch, so they found me eating donuts at Safeway. Scared my parents for a few hours.

Q: Do you remember some of the places that your mom and you all stopped at?

EG: There was a shoe repair man there that had been there for years, and we'd stop there. Most of us had to wear orthopedic shoes, so that was a stop. Ben's was always on Saturday. When you're with your brothers and sisters you're not really paying attention. You're either fighting or wanting to race them or something like that, so I don't remember the names of too many places.

Q: Were there any corner shops, in your neighbourhood?

EG: On 163rd and Stony Plain it was Western Flowers for the longest time, but before that it was called "The Chinaman's", which I know that's not allowed anymore, but that's what we called it. It was the Mah family that had it. Part of our allowance was spent every week there. Bubble gum was a penny, so you could get quite a few bubble gums with your ten-cent allowance.

Q: How much did you get for your allowance?

EG: I think it started at five cents a week and then ten cents. Every birthday you got a few more pennies. My sister and I... I have two sisters and one brother, and I have a foster brother, which was another thing. There was the family across the street got a foster son and was saying, "This is wonderful, I don't have to have the empty nest syndrome." All kids were going to school, so she got a foster son. Then my mom decided, "Oh, I'm going to do the same thing," so we got a foster brother. He's still my foster brother. He never reunited with his family. Well, I think in the last year he finally reunited with some of them. But yeah, there were two foster boys in our neighbourhood. What was I talking about before?

Q: The corner shop.

EG: That's right, and the allowance. Every birthday we probably got an increase. Two of my siblings were great savers. All the Easter candy, they would just take a little nibble every day. But myself and my sister, no; we spent all our allowance, and we ate all our Halloween candy as soon as we got it. We would be so upset with the brother and sister that were good savers, because they had a stash of candy. They're still very good savers. I think it's called willpower. My sister and I, we were not given any willpower.

Q: Anything else you'd like to share about your childhood?

EG: My parents sent us to day camps through the YMCA or Continuing Education and things like that. The other kids in our neighbourhood I think financially they weren't able to go to day camps. At day camps you learn all the best camp songs. So when our day camp was finished, we'd teach all the neighbourhood kids the songs. Our playhouse had a really easy roof to get up onto, and we would give concerts [from up there]. We would teach the neighbourhood kids the songs and then we would give concerts for the whole neighbourhood. All the moms would come and sit in their lawn chairs, and we would sing *Little rabbit foo foo* at the top of our lungs. We entertained our parents so much, it was great. The water hose and the sprinkler system in

the summertime, some yard always had a sprinkler going the whole time. We would just kind of go from yard to yard and play in the sprinklers. We were pruned by the time we got home at night, because we were in so much water. Then Broadstock Pool had great swimming lessons and swim times, so we were always there too going to all our swim lessons and stuff. It was a good neighbourhood; nothing was too far away. Playgrounds were close by, and the pool.

Q: Jasper Place Sports Centre was very close to the high school. Did you go there at all? Were there concerts that you went to?

EG: No, I think that was a bit before me. I went to sporting events, but it was mostly track and field that I was involved in. But that was the make-out bowl. You didn't go there if you didn't have sports to do, because that's where everybody went and necked. You didn't want to be embarrassed by going in there [alone].

Q: In the bowl?

EG: In the bowl area, under the bleachers, that kind of thing.

Q: Don, is there anything you'd like to ask about this period? [...] Just a couple of questions about the house. Was it a wood frame house with clapboard, or what was it?

EG: Wood frame house, wood siding, sawdust insulation, really bad windows. That sawdust insulation is still in there. My parents never decided to strip the inside. They did so many things but they did not upgrade [the insulation]. All the new parts that my dad built to it is all good. But if you wanted to put your hand on the front wall of the house facing south... I think maybe he decided that he didn't want to go through it because it's south facing so the sun is hitting it all the time and it's not so bad. But yeah, if I dug a hole in the wall right now there'd be sawdust all over the place. It's a two-storey house, well three-storey if you count the basement. The upstairs has a very high peak roof. You can walk down the middle, you have about three feet of

clearance, but then it goes really steep. That's where the beds were tucked in. If you got up quickly in the night and you didn't remember, you'd bang your head. The [only] bathroom[s] doorway didn't reach the ground, so there was about an eight-inch space that if you wanted to watch somebody go you could crawl and look under. There was one time, and I read it again in the letters, that my parents had company over with kids and they sent us upstairs to play, because that's where all our bedrooms were. It became too quiet and they decided, "Okay, what's going on up there?" We had taken all the toothbrushes, and we were scrubbing the floor with the toothbrushes. From that day on, my dad always kept his toothbrush way up high in the closet. Even when we were adults, he kept his toothbrush way up high.

Q: When you first moved into the house, were there any other houses in the immediate area around it?

EG: Yes, it was a neighbourhood. I don't even know if my parents realized when they first bought it that it used to be an old farmhouse. [...] It was when the family came to visit that they got more history of what the house was. My mom told me that, [when they bought the house], the whole house was crooked, that they could put a pencil on the floor and it would whip right over to the other side. My parents had brought rolls of bamboo carpet [to Canada], little strips of bamboo all woven together. That's what they put on the floor, over the hardwood floor. It was just loose; they were big, but they were loose. When they decided to renovate more, they took this bamboo carpet and put it up on the wall. So when you walk into our living room now, it's still there. We crawled when we were young, and it was on this hard bamboo. I have the ugliest knees in the world, because I crawled and learned how to walk on that bamboo carpeting.

Q: You're still living in that same house, so the second generation in the house. Are there other people in the neighbourhood that are the same, or has everybody sort of turned over?

EG: I think it's all turned over. I just moved back because my mom... well, my dad had passed away in 2019. At that time, I was kind of flexible on where I wanted to be. I said, "Well, I'll come and I'll handle all the yard work and stuff like that." Then my mom passed away last March, so I just decided to stay. It's kind of nice, a nice big yard to work in and play. Close to work.

Q: It's interesting to meet somebody who has stayed in the neighbourhood.

EG: Even my shop, I set up shop here. I like Jasper Place. I know there's some beautiful other neighbourhoods and stuff. For instance, a friend of mine was saying that they were looking for an acreage in the west, and that the prices have gone up so much. I said, "Yeah, but if you go past Sherwood Park the acreages are not as expensive." He goes, "I don't want to be breathing all that refinery second-hand air." It's true. We've got nice fresh air coming from the mountains, well, north of the mountains.

Q: As a child, did you ever go out to movies or bowling alleys?

EG: The Jasper Cinema had movie and popcorn for 25 cents. So yeah, we went there for the movies. Because I was the oldest, I was responsible for the younger ones. And bowling too, my dad would take us bowling when my mom needed a break. My parents were also in a bowling league, and that was every Friday night. So, parents left us with one bag of popcorn twists and one bottle of Happy Pop, and we had to share it equally. If we didn't, there were fights. I'm glad my parents had date nights and things like that, and they trusted us. I think as soon as I hit 13, "She's old enough now to look after the kids."

Q: Where did they go bowling?

EG: I think they went to the bowling under what's Revolution Cycle. They went there, but also Bonnie Doon. My dad, through his work, I think he was on a bowling league through his work there. We were just talking about that this morning, because we just finished doing the whole

Santa area. That was one of our jobs [this year] is to [refurbish] the whole Santa area. I just finished it last night at 11 o'clock, so we were talking about that.

Q: Where did your dad work?

EG: He worked at a drafting shop, an engineer place downtown. I think it was right across from Hudson Bay. It was great, because Klondike day parades we never had to be on the street, we got to watch from up in the office building. It was only a two- or three-storey building; it wasn't a high-rise or anything back then. He worked there I think until I was in my teens, then he got a job with Strathcona Refinery, Esso. He was a structural engineer for them until he retired. If you count how many jobs he had for his whole life, it was neat. He was an engineer in Indonesia and an engineer in Holland. It was kind of cool that he was able to try a lot of different things.

Q: And your mom was a nurse in Indonesia and Holland?

EG: Before that, yeah.

Q: Did she ever work as a nurse here?

EG: No, she was a mom by then. Back then it was stay-at-home mom time. As soon as we were all in school though, she started volunteering at the Misericordia Hospital. She did that I think at least once a week that she was a volunteer there. My mom hated to drive. When the time came for us to start getting our learners and things like that, she had to get her license because she had to be the licensed person in [the car]. Forgive me mom, but it took her nine times to get her license. She hated it so much. My dad drove for whatever had to be done, or my mom took the bus or whatever. But when it was our turn to start to drive, we had '65 Rambler Station Wagon. It was Armstrong everything; you had to really torque on the wheel and you had to really push the pedal to get it to stop. My mom, you could tell when she wanted a person to stop, because she'd start banging the floorboards [with her feet] to stop the car. She didn't have a brake, but

we got the message. As soon as all of us got our license, she stopped driving; she didn't want to drive anymore.

Q: Tell us about the garden that your family had.

EG: When they first moved in, there was no garden. They had to hand dig. I think the lot is 150 feet, and our garden was 150 feet by easily 25 feet. To get it started, they would do three shovels down worth by one row. Every night my dad would come home, and before he did anything he'd do three shovels worth one whole row. Within a month they had it all done. My uncle came down and worked over a weekend and stuff like that to help get the garden going. My mom would tell her mom every year how many beets they canned and how many beans and potatoes and all the rest. The garden was a huge part of our eating. Even the groceries that my mom lists in her letters, it's not telling the price of vegetables, it's telling that bread was this much or sugar was this much, because we got all our vegetables from the garden.

Q: What about your protein?

EG: I've been a vegetarian my whole life, so I never really paid attention. I was forced to eat meat until I was about ten years old, and then my parents basically said, "Why waste our money?" I would put it in the back of my cheek and spit it out in the toilet when I was excused from the table. But maybe Safeway was their meat provider. Or Ben's Meat, that's where they went every Saturday morning. We always had pets, too. Because we had such a big yard, it was easy to have dogs and cats and mice and gerbils and all sorts of things that we would let play outside. One time I caught a wild mouse and I was holding it in my hand, and it was biting my finger as I was bringing it home. We put it in a jar right away, because I wanted it as a pet. My dad spent the rest of the day making a lovely cage, all wood with mesh. We were all excited. We put it in there, and the next morning I go to look for the mouse and it had dug a hole and escaped. My dad had put so much effort. But in Holland... here, kids like to trade trading cards. Well, where my dad grew up, they traded mice; if it was a different coloured mouse that was

kind of special. They made the most elaborate cages with elevators and all sorts of things in it. So, for me to have a pet mouse was not anything unusual for my dad. I think he felt bad that he rushed it, and he didn't make a proper cage. The frog ponds that were where Woolco used to be – do you guys remember Woolco – Centennial Mall, which is now Mayfield Common, just north of that, had the best biking hill called BeeBee Hill. When we turned into teenagers, that's where we would go. It was the best dirt biking that you could do in the neighbourhood. But just on the other side of what's now 170th Street was a farmer's field, and it had the best frog ponds. You could wade right in right up to your waist and catch tadpoles and things like that. It didn't have leeches in it. It was really a nice clean pond to be able to muck around in. So that was always a springtime activity as well, was to get enough tadpoles so you had a few frogs for the summer as pets. [One] time, my parents were working in the garden and a budgie landed on their shoulder. It was a tame budgie, so we had a pet budgie for the next while. Lots of animals.

Q: Tell us about your post-secondary years after JP High School.

EG: I loved the way my dad printed. You know how an engineer/architect's handwriting is? I thought... [and this] sounds bad, but that's the reason why I applied for architecture. I went through NAIT in Architecture, and I did that for two years, and I did four sets of house plans for friends when I graduated. This is before computers, so if they decided to change their mind, "Let's move this window over four inches," it wasn't just one drawing, it was 12 drawings that you had to change – all the elevations and site plans. Anyways, I couldn't stand the fact that people kept on changing their minds, so I decided not to continue. [But] I've used it every single day of my life, because I'm asked to draw sketches and things, so it was not wasted. But I then decided to get a job with Alberta Transportation. I was hired to make their reports pretty. A lot of small towns needed to show which roads went into the small town and went out, and I did all those drawings and stuff for about a year. Then I got the travel bug, and I bought a backpack, and I hiked around Australia and New Zealand and Hawaii and the Southern States for about a year and three months. When I came back, I decided to go back to school, to Grant MacEwan. Back then [the program] was called Visual Arts and Communications [...].

Q: What year was that?

EG: That was '86. I went through the first year, and one teacher asked for an assignment. It was due the next day and I knew exactly what I wanted to do but I knew I didn't have the materials. So I jumped on the bus, went downtown, and Burlington Art Supplies was the king back then; they had the art supplies that I needed. I got there about five minutes too late; they had closed and locked the doors. I still saw people inside there so I'm going, "Please, please." I got down on my knees on the cement going, "Please, please, just one thing." [...] They would not open for me. I went home, and at that time I was living with my boyfriend, who became my husband. I said, "They need an arts supply store right across the street from Grant MacEwan College that will open at 11 o'clock for a student if they need something." Three months later, Artra Art Supplies was opened. We opened in '86, which is right in the middle of the recession. We realized very quickly that everybody needed to buy groceries, but not everybody needed to buy art supplies. We were right across the street from Grant MacEwan College, which was great in September and the next semester in January, but in between there it was kind of dicey. We knew we had to diversify. I'm still going to school at this time, and I took an eight-week class in the evenings on sign design and layout, and I opened up a sign shop [...]. By that time, I knew I couldn't handle the store and full-time school and everything else, so I actually quit in my second year; I didn't finish. But every week I would run over and see what my classmates had done, and I'd learn from that. My favourite class that I'd taken the year before was a Methods and Materials class. Anne Gurney taught it back then. I realized I didn't want to be in a store window. This Arts and Communications was basically a window display program or store merchandising and stuff. I knew I didn't want to do that, but I loved making the things that went into the windows. I kept in touch with my classmates, and I started making props for them; then they would tell other people and other people. Some of my biggest clients are event planners and store merchandizers and things like that. So I didn't graduate, but of all my classmates, I'm the only one that really went into the industry.

Q: Where did the other classmates go?

EG: Quite a few of them got married and decided that they didn't want to pursue it. They just went into other things – theatre or... The people that are displaying Manulife Place or Commerce Place now or Rogers Place, they're all people that... they had gone through the program after me, [...]. I came back [for a year to MacEwan as] a proctor in the Methods and Materials class that I loved. I was pregnant with my second son, and I came and I was their helper; I wasn't so much their teacher, but I was a helper – a proctor, I think that's what it's called. A lot of that class [became] store displayers and things like that. You're an art store and all the students are coming over all the time; then being a sign person and a prop builder, the students got to know us. Quite often they would come and be in tears saying, "I don't know what to do with this project." I'd go, "Oh, settle down, let's talk it through," and we would help them.

Q: So you set up Artra Art Supplies in 1986.

EG: Yes.

Q: And you're still going as an art supplier as well?

EG: No. We had Artra Art Supplies, Artra's Art Gallery, Signs by Artra. That's what my sign shop was called before. And we opened a school, Artra's Upstairs Art School. That was upstairs in the apartment. Then my husband had his glass carving and stone carving business, so we actually had five businesses in that building. Really, we were burning the candle at both ends. The school would go late into the evening. The store had to be opened before classes started, because kids needed things before classes. It was usually 8 in the morning until 9 at night every day, and I was getting tired. I was thinking, "What do I love most of all these businesses?" It was the sign shop, the prop building. So we gave away the school to Frank Haddock – he's a well-known artist in Edmonton – so we gave away the school and the gallery to him, and we closed the store

part in 2000. Then we decided to do the name change to Signworks Plus, and my husband kept his part of the business and that was it.

Q: Can you talk about the building? You said it was historic.

EG: It's in the Glenwood neighbourhood. It was owned by the Van Leeuwen's before we bought it. He was a sheet metal worker. The building itself, you can see that it started off built as just the front of the building, then they added, and then they added. I think there were actually four additions as it went. Certain walls were a lot thicker, so you knew they [used to be] exterior walls. This is all before. When we moved here it was already at the bigness that it was. I never saw those additions. So Peter Van Leeuwen, he and his wife sold it to us; Edith was his wife's name. Back then the interest rates were really high so we didn't go through a bank, we went through them. I think our interest rates were 8 percent back then, so that was still high, but I think the banks at that time were 15%, so it was still pretty good. The fact that the building had the metal shop inside there plus us, [...] things shifted; we were always kind of shifting to make it work. For three years, "Let's have a bathroom here," and then shift and move it, and that kind of a thing. When Peter retired, his son-in-law took over the sheet metal business. At that time, he probably just made a whole lot more noise, and we had mentioned that we needed to do a double insulation thing. He went ahead and started doing that. We had an alarm system that, from the very back of the building if we were working back there, we could hear if the front door opened. While he was putting this extra drywall up, he screwed through that wire; so for the next week, every time we turned on the vacuum cleaner, we blew a fuse. We were going, "What's going on here?" We didn't know. We'd tried to buy the building a few times before this, but he was asking a lot of money, more than we'd had it appraised; he was asking for quite a bit more than what it was appraised. We said, "Okay, we're going to buy our own spot of land," which, at that time, the little house right next door came up for sale. So we bought that with the intention to build our own building up there; so we moved out, because we had been living upstairs up until that time. We moved out to live there for a while until we could make enough money to start building. Then, in December 1995, our building caught on fire; there must've

been a spark or smoldering in the wiring. so we had a major fire in the building. Because the building was not to code, we ended up saying to our landlord again, "Sell it to us as is, and we'll fix it the way we want to do it." He agreed to it, so we lucked out.

Q: In spite of the fire.

EG: Every disaster, there's a silver lining after. I can see why they say that, because every disaster that I've had in my life, there's always something great that came out of it.

Q: This building, the Orange Hub, must have been relatively new when you were a student. What was it like being in this building as a student?

EG: I loved it. As soon as you walked in, it had the right atmosphere. It had all these plants that, actually, I snatched little twigs off the plants and I still have those plants. There was always music playing and there was always people being really crazy. Theatre people are always crazy, over-the-top kind of expression. So I loved it, I loved it. That's why I kept on even though I had to quit school because of my circumstances. I was back every week to learn and just wander and look. It was great. My two favourite teachers were Alice Switzer and Anne Gurney. And I had Leslie Frankish. She only taught for one year, but she designed the original Christmas Carol staging at the Citadel [...]. She did all that design and the costume designs. It was so great to learn from her. She even hired me between the summers. I was doing renovations [on the weekends] for our new store, I was doing full time work at Strathcona Refinery – at that time they hired the children of the workers there. Then in the evenings I worked for Leslie Frankish on a giant popup book that was part of a set for live puppeteers. They would wear masks, and they would behave like puppets. It was called *At the Beach* or *A Day at the Beach*. Each page would open up, and then open up, and then everything in there was flipped down. It was like a giant popup book that we built. Leslie hired me to help build that, so that was a wonderful summer experience. Then she went to Toronto and did lots of theatre sets, but she worked a lot with the Citadel as well. To have teachers like that, you just absorb, you want to learn more and more

and more. Anyway, she took me under her wing. I don't want to say I sucked her dry, but I learnt something every day from her; it was so neat. And Anne Gurney, she's probably a bit like me. I can get excited about something but then, "Squirrel," and I'm ready to go in that direction. Anne Gurney was exactly like that too. If you took a class from her and she'd start the class saying, "Today we're going to talk about this," well, yeah. for about two minutes, and then she'd go on to this and this and this. You had to really concentrate when she was giving talks. But the best part of Anne Gurney is that you just would watch her do things. At that time, she was in her leg braces, and she could hardly walk, and she'd roll a scooter all the time. But she was still, "Hand me this," and she'd have it on her lap and she'd be sketching wonderful sketches of set designs and costumes. So inspirational that it goes into you and you just... actually, I'd love to show you what I made last week, but my phone is turned off. And Alice Switzer, she was known as the "Purple Lady," because she wore purple every single day. Her sculpture skills were just phenomenal. She and her husband have done beautiful art pieces in Edmonton all through clay sculpture and stuff like that. Again, you want it to morph into you, their talent; you want to absorb it. I think that's what made this facility so special, that all the instructors were allowing you to do that. I'm glad I was an older student by that time, because I was 24 or 25 when I went there. I feel sorry for the students that just got out of high school because I don't think they realized how lucky they were with having the instructors that were here. They're, "Oh, dad made me go to school" – that kind of attitude. Or, "My parents made me take this program," or something. No, they should've just sat back and absorbed. Grant MacEwan did something right.

Q: Did you follow any of the musicians who played in the area?

EG: No, I was really into sports still and homework. You had tons of homework always with school so, no, I wasn't much of a partier. They had parties here. I had two very good friends in my class, and one of them met her husband at one of those parties. They're still together and we still Facebook each other and all the rest of it. Some good things have come from those parties. But I was more... at that time, I was playing club volleyball; no hold it, I'm wrong. I

wasn't at that time playing club volleyball. What was I doing? I can't remember. Starting a store, life was happening.

Q: Were you one of the few MacEwan students who lived near the school, or did many of the students live in the area?

EG: I think there were a couple of students that moved nearby while they were going to school, then they moved back home, one of them being this friend who met her husband – Lorette. She was from near Blackfalds and after school she moved up north to the Northwest Territories and never pursued what she learned; she got into other things. Tammy, my other friend, she was from Tomahawk area and, again, moved. No, I'm wrong; she got married and moved to Tomahawk. [At the first intersection in Stony Plain, her parents] have a farm that's really close to Stony Plain, and you can see their silos almost from the highway. Through the Methods and Materials class, Anne Gurney and Alice Switzer hired me and a couple of other students to help them. That year they made a giant nativity scene for City Hall, and it was all drapery with cement and cloth, making things look like stone. All these figures, we had to make them to look like stone. City Hall had hired Anne Gurney and Alice Switzer to help with that and they, in turn, hired us to help them. So, learning from that, we built Tammy's parents a whole nativity scene the same way, and they've had it out in front of their farm for years and years. All the whole town of Stony Plain knows about this wonderful nativity scene. There's a movie that came by that they were making here called *Santa's Slay*. I don't know if you ever heard of it. It's horrible. No, I guess it's got its place. But it's spelled "Slay", not "Sleigh". It was said that Santa was only nice and jolly for a thousand years because he lost a bet, and then he turned into what he was really like. Part of the scenes were that he didn't have reindeer, he had a bison that pulled the sleigh. One scene was that he had to go through a nativity scene that was, like, a big nativity scene. Well, they hired me to build three nativity scenes, like, all the figures, but I used my knowledge from learning from Anne and Alice how to create these figures to make them look like stone. It was all fluff and foam and something that wouldn't hurt a buffalo, because they

used a real buffalo to run through these scenes. It was kind of interesting, learning, and then reapplying it and reapplying it to other situations.

Q: Where was that filmed?

EG: Here in Edmonton.

Q: In this area?

EG: I think it was throughout Edmonton. Sort of like *Snow Day*, when they filmed that here, it was more in the Glenora neighbourhood. But even West Edmonton Mall, what was that one called now? *Winter Wonderland*? No. Gosh, my brain is going. Anyways, I've worked on a few movies that have happened here in Edmonton, and again, thanks to Grant MacEwan for teaching me the means.

Q: Can you talk about your participation in the community or clubs, and in Jasper Place Gateway Foundation?

EG: I didn't really do many clubs. I think having a store in the neighbourhood, everyone comes to you, and you promote things that you can help with. Anything to do with the arts, we would help whatever way we could. The Jasper Place Gateway Foundation, that was unique. All the... back then it was called BRZ's [Business Revitalization Zones], were starting to happen in a lot of the major neighbourhoods. At that time a whole group of us had gotten together saying, "We don't want to be taxed more; let's see if we can do this ourselves through volunteering and gifts or writing grants or something like that." So, for about ten years we had a very vibrant organization that brought positive change to the Stony Plain Road and area, which is now the BIA [Business Improvement Area]. It was a lot of work, a lot of man hours. But the things that we developed... personally I was involved in the special events. We had a Pastels on Pavement

Festival that ran for seven or eight years on the parking lot of Grant MacEwan College; we had it every year.

Q: What was that?

EG: [P]eople would register, all ages. They were given a three-foot by five-foot space on the parking lot. [...] [W]e supplied them all with the chalk, with a kneeling mat. What is that outdoor store? It's now called Breathe – [Campers' Village]. Anyway, they sponsored kneeling mats, and other businesses would sponsor with gifts for prizes. We would get judges – our city councillors and people of influence in the area, artists that were well known, they would be the judges. We had face painting and crafts, and they had a certain amount of time to be able to create masterpieces on the pavement, and they did great. We'd have 150 people all sitting doing artwork. It was great. So that was one of the festivals that we put on. The other one was called the Dirt Buster Derby, and that was a race between north side of Stony Plain and south side of Stony Plain. We started at [170th] Street and whoever showed up had a broom or something to be able to help clean the sidewalks. This was just after the snow had all melted, and there's so much gravel and stuff on the sidewalks that we wanted it all on the road for when the street cleaners could come and clean up. So we would let them know that we were having this race, and we basically swept the sidewalks all the way to Safeway [on 150th Street] when that was open. It was a good workout, but it was a good race too, and we had a trophy that had brooms and shovels sticking in it. Then we were involved with Halloween Alley. There's a family that lived on Halloween Alley that actually had a hearse. So we put... instead of Ghostbusters on the hearse, we did Dustbusters, like, a magnetic sign on the hearse. They put music and speakers so it would blast out while everybody was doing it. As we were going, we would encourage the shop owners to come out and help sweep in front of their place of business. We must've had probably 60 people come out for that, so 30 per side kind of thing. It was a real race, and one side wanted to win. Afterwards we'd all meet in one of the restaurants that were there, and we'd have our celebratory lunch. Other things that we did... Halloween Alley, the neighbourhood was doing that, but we wanted to help them by doing a park and drive. They

were finding that the roads were getting too plugged up. So we would rent a school bus and a driver, and make it all spooky inside, and people could park at Jasper Gates parking lot and then we would drive them and drop them off at Halloween Alley, and then they'd catch the bus back again. So that was a community thing. We would hold silent auctions to help pay for things; like, we did our own planters. We would hire people to make the planters and then the stores themselves were responsible to look after it. Now the planter system, the BIA hires somebody to water all of them. Well, back then, we figured, "If we give you a nice planter, you can at least water it once a week or twice a week." That went really well; we must've sold over a hundred planters. [...]

Q: Did you have murals painted?

EG: Yes, in front of the Telus building just across from Ben's Meat Market. That was sponsored by a Rotary Club, and they had a lot of the Rotary members come out and help us with that. There's the Wop May mural on what used to be the ATB. That was sponsored through the Gateway Foundation [and the Rotary Club]. The two murals that I have on my building – one has liquorice All Sorts and Canadian coins – that was sponsored through the [Rotary Club]. We did wonderful, wonderful activities. We held summer camps for computer kids in the area that didn't have access to computers back then. We set up stations where people had public access to computers. My store held three computers, and there were three or four other places in the neighbourhood that had that same thing. Everything was to bring improvement to the area. We got involved with the youth group through Westlawn School. CIA's, we called them – Community Involved Adolescents. They planned some great events, and again we would help out as much as we could. Even just getting treasure hunts around the area, getting people to realize what is in their own neighbourhood, and then having nice prizes afterwards. There's only one parking meter in this area, and it was inside Revolution Cycle. Back then there were no other parking meters. [...]

Q: You did publish a newsletter.

EG: Yes, that was ongoing, to let people know about the events that we were planning and to encourage them to come out and do things.

Q: What was the situation with businesses in the area at that time?

EG: There still is, but there were a lot of pawnshops and things like that. We were never saying, “We don’t want you.” What we always said was, “Let’s just improve the outside look, because that improves everybody’s outside look.” What we would encourage was, “What’s behind your front door is up to you.” We had peep shows and a lot of iffy businesses in the area. I had no problem that there were peep shows – or, I shouldn’t say “I”; the whole group, as a group. That was a viable business and that was their living, but the outside didn’t have to look shabby. We were trying, we had the flower beautification program, and we would invite them to our meetings and encourage them to bring improvements so that people didn’t have to feel scared as they were going down Stony Plain Road. I think it worked out. That’s how the façade program kind of started. When you go down Stony Plain Road there’s beautiful murals on some of them and fixed up very nicely. I’m sure there’s still shady businesses happening behind those doors, but I’m not scared to walk down Stony Plain Road anymore. I think there was a few times that I was a bit scared, being a single woman. We all have different issues now, don’t we?

Q: What does BRZ stand for?

EG: Business Revitalization Zoning, zones?

Q: So this area was a BRZ?

EG: No, it wasn’t. All the other areas were BRZ’s, and we tried to stop it from happening here by forming the Jasper Place Gateway Foundation. We didn’t want the businesses to be taxed any higher. We tried to do it through volunteers and stuff. We were successful for, like I said, ten

years. Unfortunately, it kind of... you know, they say a volunteer that gives a lot burns out after five years. Well, we had a whole lot of volunteers that gave a lot for ten years. And then it was just a burnout, and we just didn't have the people to come forward to take over. So we stepped back.

Q: What restaurants did you go to in the area?

EG: There's locations that have changed restaurants. The one that we tended to go to for the Dirt Buster Derby was the first business in the building of the Revolution Cycle. I'm terrible with names, I have to write names down three times to remember it. It was sort of like a *Happy Days* kind of feeling place. The Ritz Diner, that was one of them; but then it changed and things like that, so there's a few. Or we would meet at our office. Our office was also where Wee Book Inn used to be, like, a couple doors down is where we had the Jasper Place Gateway Foundation office. What used to be the Saxony Hotel, which was then Howard Johnson, which is now who knows – they had a really great space that could house about a hundred people. It was sort of their banquet area. That was also a place that we would use quite often for workshops and special events and things. We got it for no charge. Then it was the Howard Johnson. That was how they gave back to the community, was to allow the community to use their facilities. It worked out well that way. Another event that we did... I'm going to talk about Candy Cane Lane. I wanted to help Candy Cane Lane by potentially expanding it. At that time all the poles, lamp poles, had a shape that was sort of like an ice cream cone on it. It was just a metal image and it had a sunshine at the top and it had blues and greens in it. I came up with the idea to build a sock to go over it. The first set of socks that we made, we must've made over a hundred of them, all done by volunteers, and they were of a candy cane. It slipped over top of the original... what's on the lamp posts. When we were building these, we approached the City saying, "We would like to do this to the existing lamp pole decorations." "Oh, no, you can't do that, the wind factor is..." blah blah blah. They were all upset about it. I said, "I can hold it on my pinky and there's already a flat surface, so there's no more wind being affected." Then they said, "Well, then you have to hire Epcor," or somebody at that time, "you have to hire them to install it." I

went, "All right, I'll phone them." Nothing against Epcor – they have to make a living – but I think they quoted us \$50 each to put up and take down. They were worried about all the electrical. I go, "There's no electrical." I said, "I can hold it with my pinky. It's a set of snaps. You put it on, you click the snaps, and then it's beautiful for the Christmas season." They went, "No, you have to do it this way," blah blah blah. Then we said, "Okay, we don't have that budget." So we borrowed a very large ladder and at 3 o'clock in the morning, six of us would carry the ladder from pole to pole, and one person would go up and hang it up, go down and we'd do the next one. We just did it all. We were sure reps from the City were angry with us, but it didn't matter; it looked wonderful. I think it was shown in one of our newsletters. Then we did one for autumn, and it was just a bunch of fall leaves. I think we made three sets overall. Who knows where they are now, but they were fun to make, and it was a real coming together of community. We had people sewing and we had people putting the stickers on them to make the images. It was a lot of fun, and it brought beauty. We hoped that expanding Candy Cane Lane, that all the businesses would pretty up their fronts with lights so that if somebody happened to be driving through Candy Cane Lane they'd say, "Oh, let's go down Stony Plain Road and see all their lights too." That didn't pick up quite as much, but I was always so proud when all those lamp poles had such a nice image on them. Lots of ideas.

Q: I can remember coming down years ago to the outdoor film showings.

EG: Yes, that was fun too. I wasn't that involved with it, that was later. But I know that they arranged horse carriages to go back and forth. Who planned that? Dianna, I think was her name. This is under the BRZ now. This was not part of Jasper Place Gateway Foundation. Before BIA.

Q: When you mentioned computers being put in some locations for public use, some people might say there was a danger of them being stolen. Talk a bit about the stereotype that Jasper Place had.

EG: They were not put in areas that were not unsupervised. We didn't want to have the computers damaged. We didn't think they'd get stolen, but they could've been damaged. So we chose locations that already had people able to oversee things. Same with the library, if you're sitting at the screen and you don't know how to do something, there's always a librarian to ask for help. So we chose places that had people able to help with whatever questions that they had. It went really well, they were very well used. Back then, not everybody had a computer. Most of them had a printer attached to it, so if they needed to write resumes to try and get a job, this is where they were able to come. A lot of times we had youth come in that had homework for school that didn't have a computer at home; they'd come and use the computers to get their homework down and printed off, like reports and stuff. It worked out alright. None of them got stolen, none of them got damaged, just normal wear and tear happened a few times. What happened is that the computers grew out of date, they got old. Things that the kids wanted to do on them, they couldn't do, because they were not up to date computers anymore.

Q: With murals, if the community is into it, it'll go well; if it isn't, it'll get graffitied within 24 hours.

EG: We found actually blank walls get graffitied. Muraled walls tend to... I think because they feel they're artists, they respect other artists. Even on our wall that we've had, there was one time I wanted to advertise the businesses in the neighbourhood. I had a friend – her name's Laurel Hawkswell – she does the best caricatures, the best. So I had her do caricatures of a dentist, the owner of the Flag Shop. I would just list some of the stores that we had along here, and she would just do like a bicycle repair person or a mechanic. So we had all these spaces and then underneath was this big area that a company could have their name put there. I was saying, "\$10 a month, advertise your business here." Back then that was, I thought, a very fair rate. It was all along the whole wall of my building. There must've been 20 of them, all different professions. We never had any graffiti on them. We never had somebody spray painting their own name in them or anything like that. But right past it on my blank wall, that's where they decided to do their signature sometimes. So I think we need more murals, because, in turn, I

think we'll have a lot less graffiti. The murals have to be done with the right materials. As soon as a mural is looking weathered and old, that's an invitation. You can tell. There's some murals that they put a lot of effort into making, but they were not done with the right materials, because they're all painted and now there's graffiti over top of that. That's unfortunate. But I think there's this unwritten rule that graffiti artists have said, "I will not paint over real artwork." The one on the Telus building still looks gorgeous, and it's never been touched with graffiti. The Wop May one, also. The top of his hat has blown off, who knows where that is. But nothing has been done on that one. So, kudos to the graffiti artists that have respect of other artists' artwork, because that is good.

Q: Is there anything you'd like to add?

EG: No, I'm going to go home and then think of 50 more things. I had a really happy childhood and I think 90 percent of it is because of the neighbourhood that we grew up in. The rule was you could stay out [...] until the [street] lights turn on. Or the rule was "Don't go farther than I can yell and you can hear me." Compared to today – even my own kids – I feel bad that they had to have that upbringing. They lived upstairs in the apartment, but we built a big deck on the back and they were able to play outside. But they didn't have the childhood I had. They didn't have the big yard or the neighbourhood kids to play kick the can with. We had some great games; they'd last for days.

Q: What changes have you seen in the neighbourhood over the years?

EG: Big fences. I think anything that's now being built, a big fence comes with it. We didn't have that. You used to be able to jump over the fences between yards. There's lots of changes, so many changes. Where we used to go tobogganing on the overpass that used to be by Mayfield Common, there was an overpass there that had a great toboggan hill on the side of it. When that came out, I know that all of us kids were just crying our eyes out, because they took away our toboggan hill. Some things are still kind of the same. Youngstown School has had a facelift

but it's still Youngstown School. Britannia is the same. Broadstock Pool has had some changes but it's still the same. A lot of the things that were big parts of my life are still the same. The little things have all changed. It's still a friendly neighbourhood. I'm glad that I talk to my neighbours. I know that that's not in every neighbourhood. But maybe that's just me.

[END]