

INTERVIEWEE : Georgette Pied

INTERVIEWER : Elizabeth Blood, Salem State University

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LOCATION: at the home of Georgette Pied, in south Salem, Massachusetts

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW: 52:18

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

00:00

EB: Can you tell us a little about the history of your family, how did they get to Salem?

GP: Yes, it was really my grandparents, on both sides, mom's and dad's, and so it's interesting with mom's parents because they came from Rimouski, and my grandmother, she used to take in people who came. Often people came, men looking for work, then they would return to get their families. They tried that. Sometimes it didn't work. They would return—they would come back. So because of that, mom knew a lot of Franco-Canadians in Salem. And often we thought they were relatives but—sometimes it was a cousin. And on dad's side, my grandfather and grandmother, they lived around the North Adams area. And one day—this is the story that my grandfather used to tell me—he saw this woman walking downtown, and he said to his brother, "I'm going to marry that woman". And that's just what happened. And so it was Napoleon Pied and mother, she was Sillina Nouri, also called Sillina Parmentier Nouri. So that's that, regarding the history that I told you about. And the French and—that's it—

1:43

EB: And how did they get from North Adams to Salem?

GP : That I'm not sure about.

1:50

EB: Did your grandparents work here? What did they do?

GP: No. My grandfather worked in Beverly, in the Cummings Center, where that is now, so I know he took the train. There was a stop on Canal Street, just where the McDonald's is. There was a train stop, so he traveled by train. There was no car.

2:18

EB: And what did he do?

GP: Shoes. A shoe factory.

2:25

EB: Perhaps he came for work?

GP: Maybe. And my other grandfather was a cobbler.

2:35

EB: And the grandmothers?

GP : The grandmothers didn't work. But mom, she was the oldest of five girls, and at dad's house there were eight children. Two died very young. They had mysterious conditions, the oldest and the youngest. So young means, it was—My aunt, Cecile, she was grown up and my uncle, they called him Champ because he played all kinds of sports. He had a motorcycle and he died fairly young, in his thirties.

3:19

EB: And so your parents were born here in Salem?

GP: Yes.

3:24

EB: They grew up here?

GP: Mm-hm.

3:26

EB: And how did they meet?

GP: I think that—There was one of dad's cousins named Georgette and also—I think that there are two stories. My aunt on my father's side, Stella, she had met mom at some point. So, I don't know exactly if it was the cousin, or two of them, who spoke about each other to my parents. Since they both lived in Salem, it wasn't very hard. So mom, she worked before getting married, at Sylvania, which was downtown near—on the corner of Bridge [Street]. And dad worked several jobs. But mostly he delivered milk—there was a factory just near the entrance to Marblehead, Whitings Milk. It was in competition with Hoods at that time. And his brother, Raymond, worked at Hoods. So it was funny.

4:45

EB: And where exactly did they live in Salem, when they got married?

GP: That I'm not sure about. They had—My grandparents on my father's side, they lived in Castle Hill, but I don't know exactly where they lived. I know that when mom was very young, it was on Prince Street. Because during the summer—I think that she was maybe one or two years old when the Great Salem Fire happened. And dad was still living in Castle Hill. They had a big house at that time. So, several of them just stayed there until they married.

5:43

EB: Did anyone tell stories about the Great Fire? What happened to the family?

GP: Yes, the story that mom told me was that the fire on Lafayette Street or around there—that the fire stopped on Prince Street, just before, maybe two or three houses before theirs. And dad, I don't remember any stories. But he often said how lots of people had tents at Forest River Park and on the Commons for months they lived there, but I never spoke with my father about that, unfortunately.

6:33

EB: So you were born in Salem too, and where did you grow up?

GP: Here, yes, just on Hazel Street.

6:47

EB: Hazel. So that's South Salem?

GP: Yes.

6:53

EB: Do you have any childhood memories? Did you have a lot of contact with other francophones? What did you do for fun, to pass the time?

GP : I heard a story that just came to mind. At one point, my parents lived on Front Street, and it was a pretty little house, and that's where my father was born, and so when the time came to baptize him, my—the oldest, Claudette—they went to the St. James church, and the priest refused to baptize them because they were *francos*—descendants of *francos*. And he recommended that they go to St. Joseph's church or Ste. Anne's. So that caused problems, especially for my father. He never liked church people after that, it wasn't their fault but—

8:00

EB: So St. James was an Irish parish?

GP: Irish, yes.

EB: Irish.

GP: So, my childhood with the family?

EB: Yes.

GP: Well then, I was the fifth and my little sister, Bernadette, who is deceased—we were friends because the older ones, they had—the four of them exchanged activities, secrets. They decided that it was not safe to say anything about it that we would repeat to our parents right away. So that brought us closer together, my little sister and me. So, it was a joyous time for me. I remember there was always something to do. The boys had their little things to do, like

at that time we burned coal. It made a lot of ashes, and you needed to take the ashes out each week, so my brothers did that. My other brother, when he was old enough, delivered the *Salem News*. And he liked to work with wood and electricity when he was fairly young. And then he was fat before his adolescence, so he made a little wooden crèche to sell in the neighborhood. And he said it was so strong, so he would get on top of it to show that it was strong and a good product [laughs]. So he sold a good number of crèches for himself. Also at that time, at Saltonstall, [where] you could go sing and dance. And so my brother Paul, he is three years older than me. He liked to dance, so he danced. And me, I sang. That I remember really well because my oldest sisters used to get dressed and they put on a little makeup. That was popular at the time. So there was a big crowd and me, I sang like a star [laughter].

10:35

EB: In French or in English?

GP: That was in English.

10:40

EB: But you spoke French at home?

GP: No doubt about it. We couldn't speak English at home. And each night after supper, or during the month of May, during the month of October, we always said the rosary after supper. And we had aluminum glasses, each one with—had a special color. And my grandparents often came because it was their house. We lived on the main floor and in the beginning they lived on the main floor but by the fourth child they said, No, we're going to the second floor. So that was really interesting, and my grandmother—I was fascinated by her because she had really, really white hair that went down to her feet. And she also loved little birds—she always had birds in the house. And my grandfather, he smoked a pipe. And I think that was special. So each week my little sister and I, we brought up the check or the money to pay the rent, and they always gave me ten cents. And that was fantastic [laughter]. And it

was—it was good, the way we were raised. We could, like other families, play in the street until dark—there was no fear. During the winter we could go down Hazel Street and turn on Laurel, and there was a crossing guard on the corner because sometimes a car passed. But it was very safe. On the side of the road, there was an old barn so we could play there too. It was just a big field and on the left a big field—So it was really calm. And the majority—it was a rather mixed neighborhood, but there were a lot of Franco-Canadians.

13:04

EB: And with your friends in the neighborhood, did you speak English or French or both?

GP: Later but until—I don't know what age—I was maybe eight—before having a friend in the neighborhood. I had friends at the school and it was just two blocks from us, there was a little school that was part of St. Joseph's, and you could go there for kindergarten, first grade, and second, before having to walk to St. Joseph's. It was for little kids, so that was good.

EB: What was it called?

13:43

GP: It was the St. Joseph's school.

EB: The St. Joseph's school.

GP: Yes.

13:48

EB: What street was it on?

GP: Willow Ave.

13:58

EB: Hm. So you did that for the first two years and then you went to the St. Joseph's school?

GP: Mm-hm, until—I changed in third grade and fourth grade. I went to Sainte Chrétienne. So that was really interesting, and I learned a lot about the French language, the real French

language, because the nuns, there were some who spoke French really, really well. They had studied in France, so for me it was really special.

14:38

EB: And so at Sainte Chrétienne did you have classes in English or in French?

GP: It was a mix. At Saint Joseph's it was like, half in English and half in French, and at Sainte Chrétienne no, we had all the normal subjects. It was only religious women who taught. The last year I was there, they hired a man to teach Chemistry. So, that was really something extraordinary. There had only been nuns. So.

15:17

EB: And so after, were there traditions in the family that were Franco-Canadian?

GP: The food was always Franco-Canadian. We ate—for New Year's day we cooked a lot of meat, and it wasn't with a sauce. And at Christmas normally we had supper really early when we were little, but the older ones went to midnight mass, and then [?] le *Réveillon* with *tourtières*. And so we wanted to grow up fast for that. And the tradition that my father did was interesting also. He played Santa Claus so that—since he always got up really early in the morning between two and three o'clock to go to work. So, on Christmas mom always told the same story. We started to talk and hand out little gifts, et cetera, and she always said, "Oh no, I forgot to wake up your father, you know, your father is really tired so—I'll go wake him up." So we stayed there, in the living room. And my father, he went upstairs to my grandparents', and he would put on his costume and he arrived and said, Merry Christmas, and it was an old costume. And that went on for a pretty long time with us, and when me and Bernadette started to question a little bit, we made a plan: we had to pull his beard. It was clear that it wasn't a real beard but we didn't know who it was, and it was terrible to realize that it was my father [laughter]. So after he did that, he would go out and come back in and we had—mom would say, "Oh, girls! Finally he is awake. I'll go—" [laughter] So, one time I

had read a story or someone had told me that if you were bad, you could get a piece of coal in your stocking, and our stockings were socks, big socks that stretched. So mom always put fruits and she put old newspaper in between because it stretched a lot, a little candy and a lot of nuts so—I forgot, what was I going to say? Oh, one time I had been bad and I found in my sock—I found a piece of coal. I was very, very ashamed. My father thought that it would be funny, but I still believed in Santa Claus at that time. So I hid and I threw the piece of coal in the furnace. But after that, he regretted it. He thought I didn't believe anymore. It was before we had pulled on the beard, so there were certainly doubts. And we always went—there was the chapel also on Willow Street, near where the church was, The Saint Joseph Chapel. So we went to church there. It was really convenient, especially during the month of Mary, and if you were little and you wanted to sing, you could always go up and sing with the choir, with the adults, and I loved that. And my big sister Claire—there was Claire and Claudette—we got along really well so she was the one who introduced me to architecture in Salem and to the arts. We used to go listen to music, and we walked and she told me about the history of Salem, and she was always interested in foreign things. Both my parents were interested. Sunday afternoons, often mom would have a map, an enormous world map, and she would say, “Oh, me, I'd like to be someone who would go visit Africa, Northern Africa, that would be super.” In fact, my sister, Claire, went in Peace Corps in Ethiopia for two years, and we all had the idea that it was a good thing to travel and to meet other people, even if the Franco-Canadian world, the Franco-Canadian heritage, was small. And my father loved to invite people—when he delivered to restaurants and in Gloucester and Rockport, a lot of people who worked, fisherman, were of Portuguese origin. And so my father he could imitate accents really, really well. So often if he would meet someone from Europe, English people or whatever, he would invite them to our house for supper. And so he never warned mom, and so she always said—it was always the same story—“Emile, I don't care if you invite someone

but tell me in advance so I can prepare. I have nothing extra for us.” And he said, “But add some water to the soup, that’s all, no problem!” So she would say, “Emile, that’s not reasonable” [laughter]. It was very innocent. And I—

21:06

EB: It wasn’t common for—according to what we’ve heard, that Franco-American families would be interested in the arts, in travel, and do you think that it was different from other families?

GP: No, I never realized that, except my cousins often visited us for the weekend, and the majority of families, even if they were of Franco-Canadian heritage, they didn’t make their children speak French. So, I didn’t understand that. But why? So. And my cousins say that they really regret it tremendously. In fact, my cousin who lives in Salem—we get together often to speak French because he wants to try to relearn his French. So that’s good. It’s a chance to visit.

22:10

EB: And your sisters? What became of them? What did they do?

GP: My oldest sister had three children very young, but when they were—I think, when the youngest was about ten, she started to work, and she was very strong, but she had married at age eighteen, so she didn’t have the chance—eventually she went to school and she became a nurse anesthetist. She did that for several years. Now she is retired, but she married a nice man of Polish heritage and it was a bit of a scandal. And it was because of my sister Claire, that she met him because—the youngest on my father’s side, uncle Wilfred, he became a priest and he really liked—I think that that’s the reason Claire liked art so much, because when I got older he really liked to bring his nephews and nieces to see the arts, to travel. So, it went both ways on both sides. And so his first parish was St. Jean de Louis—I think it was in in Lynn at Perleped (23:40), and he was really excited. It was his first parish. He used to

say—he used to organize a lot of activities for teens. And it was popular at that time to go roller skating, but that was inside not outside. And so one night Claire went and he always invited Claire to go, and Claudette too, and there was this young man who used to go almost every night they were open, but people—they let him in because of that, and he met his wife. So the story is kind of interesting, but it was bizarre to marry someone of Polish heritage. Really. I think—me, I was the only one to marry someone of Franco-Canadian heritage.

24:37

EB: Really! So, you went to Sainte Chrétienne and after that?

GP: After? I—when I was little, mom sewed really well and she used to knit, and she said to me many times, “When I was young, I always wanted to be a nurse.” But even with the four girls, she used to say this to me. And one day I came home from kindergarten and she had sewn me a little dress with a big red cross, and at that time they always wore hats with a red cross. And she used to say “Maybe one day you’ll become a nurse, since I never did that.” So I became a nurse. That was a powerful story for me. So I went—they already had college programs where you could get your RN and bachelor’s degree. But I didn’t have the money so during the summers I used to work here and there, to earn enough money, and someone told me that you could go—that lasted three years and you could work in the hospitals—so it was in Beverly. So we got a lot of experience, did rotations also at Boston Children’s and Mattapan State, which no longer exists, and so it was a good experience. I was independent even if I was just in the next city, but after that when I tried to go to the university, they said “Oh no, we changed the programs and all that. You’ll need to work for a year and a half.” I said, “That’s not so bad”, so I went to **Ste-Anne** but then they changed the program again and I had to stay there two and a half years. So, but I didn’t have any money so what did they do—here was a position. They had an infirmary open twenty-four hours a day, so they hired women from the neighborhood during the day, from three to eleven, and during the night if

you were already a nurse you could go work. So there was a little apartment and I shared that with another nurse and that paid for my school. And after that, I wanted to continue but I went back home and I met my husband. So that never happened at that time, just go work as a nurse. And eventually, I went to Simmons to continue but I didn't like—by that time, I no longer liked working as a nurse. A lot had changed and I saw the direction, so I decided that I would just like to teach French. So that's what I studied. To be a French teacher—and that's it.

27:51

EB: And at what age did you get married?

GP: I was—oh, I was old among my friends. I got married at 25. I was afraid I'd never find someone.

28:05

EB: And you had children?

GP: I have a son and a daughter, Nathaniel and Rebecca. We chose names, old names. Nathaniel mostly because of Nathaniel Hawthorne. And I had the good luck—We had friends who took care—their parents took care of the Ropes Mansion that did not belong to the PEM at the time. So there were trustees. I don't know how to say that in French. And so the parents of my friend, they had a crisis in the family. They came from the Mid-West and had to leave immediately. And there was just one other couple interested in living there and taking care of the house. My husband was studying to become a lawyer at that time, so it's—we moved there—

28:58

EB: On Essex Street?

GP: Yes, and there were twenty one rooms and it was my job to give tours, six days per week, and Nathaniel was eighteen months old, and there were people who came from Boston,

businessmen (29:00), photographers, all kinds of people. It was interesting, and so we stayed there until the time when they finally decided to acquire the Ropes Mansion. Then it's—I think it was still the Essex Institute at the time. So we were very sad even if it was a lot of work. But that gave us the chance to buy this little house.

29:50

EB: Very well. And so did you ever finally work as a French teacher?

GP: No, only for—adjunct, as an adjunct here and there, and I tried at North Shore Community.

30:01

EB: Did you stop working after you married?

GP: No, I continued to work as a nurse because it was easy. There was a hospital close to us at Ropes and there was a retirement home near us. I worked there for a long while, and I became DON, and I did staff development, which I liked a lot. So, most of my career, it's—I always tried to find something to teach, that was also medical. It was not easy to find.

30:43

EB: At the hospital, was it Salem Hospital?

GP: I worked there for a little while, but more years at Beverly.

30:52

EB: And at home with the kids, did you teach French to your children?

GP: Yes, me, I decided because Richard's parents encouraged us to mix the two, and one of my brother-in-laws spoke five languages and his opinion was that if you are all alone with your children in the house, speak to them only in French, but naturally when dad was in the house with the family, you speak English. So, I did—

31:28

EB: He didn't speak French?

GP: No. It was he who encouraged me to do it. He had regrets because his father came from Newfoundland and his mother was really a cousin, to mom. I think that she was a fourth or fifth cousin. So I think that that's what attracted me to this young man because we had a lot in common, from the point of view of values and habits and all that. But because the father didn't speak French, his mother never insisted. So.

32:06

EB: Do your children continue to speak French with you now?

GP: My daughter not as much but my son very well. He is teaching his son to speak French. And I suggested what they told me but sometimes he speaks English and French. So I'm a little sad about that.

32:38

EB: Very well. So what else—in the city of Salem—because we want to identify Franco-American places in Salem—Were there places that were for Francos—where you spoke French in the city?

GP: Only—my experience was only with church things. Often they had the CYO, for example, for teens. That was—actually, there were a lot of Francos, but eventually it was in English because they invited other students to come too.

33:25

EB: Were there any restaurants or any—?

GP: Not to my knowledge, no. A lot of restaurants at Salem Willows, but there was nothing Franco, I don't believe. Unfortunately, but there was in the supermarkets, they sold *tourtières*. One of my aunts used to make *tourtières* to sell, like at Steve's and there was another little supermarket on Jefferson Ave and it was really for Francos. Fontaine's, it was called. They were friendly with my parents.

34:12

EB: And it's your aunt who made the tourtières?

GP: Yes.

34:19

EB : And so, what else? Do you—when you identify yourself to people, do you say that you are American, Franco-American, French Canadian, French? How do you describe your heritage?

GP: Well, normally people ask me because when my father was very sick, before he died, I took back my family name, in his honor. So when people see “Pied” or hear “Pied”, they ask me questions, but where do you come from, et cetera. So for sure I have an identification with French-Canadian heritage.

EB : French-Canadian?

GP : Yes.

35:20

EB: And what does it mean for you to be French-Canadian?

GP: Well, first of all, a love of the language. And the interest—I still have cousins in Canada, and one of my brothers, he lives near the border so he has a lot of friends in Canada. And, in fact, I went with him to Montreal last summer, and it was really good. I did a house exchange: a family of Francos came here and I went to their house. So it was really great.

36:00

EB: When you were young, did the family travel a lot to Canada?

GP: No, my parents liked the idea of traveling, but with six kids it was a little hard to save money, since mom didn't work. At the time, I remember a lot. My grandmother in Castle Hill, she had the—not only Franco-Canadian food but the furniture too. It was a format—there was the big oven to cook bread and all that. It was interesting.

36:47

EB: So your life changed a little, after you divorced?

GP: Mm-hm.

36:54

EB: Yes? And now you are interested in other things? How did your thinking evolve?

GP: About pastimes or attitudes?

EB: Yes, I know that you are interested in Buddhism—

GP: Yes.

EB: You do massage, you—

GP: Yes, massage, it was easy. Often my husband, my second husband, would say to me, “You should do massages” because I would give him massages. And so I thought about that, but I didn’t do anything. Eventually, since I no longer liked working as a nurse, one day I said to myself—I was still working as a nurse—there was a school just in Salem on Jefferson. My husband said, “Why don’t you go? Just try and see.” And so I took a class, and after a half hour I said to myself, “Ah yes, that’s what I want to do.” Because it was exactly the same idea as taking care of patients in the olden days. People had time—it was not so hard to be a nurse. If someone, for example, was dying and we couldn’t do anything, I could always rub their feet or hands. I just did that naturally, if it was okay with the patients and their family. And so giving massages is great. And eventually, lately, since last May, I go to the hospice house in Danvers and I offer massages for families, mostly because they are so tired, and also the patients if they want it. But it’s very different because they are so fragile. And that is really a gift. And I had thought it would be really sad, but I don’t feel like that. It’s really special because people who are dying, everything else disappears and their own beings, their heart, their loves and all that stays there, and they like to share that with us. So it’s—it’s also family.

The children and all the people who love the—who admire the person. So it's a real privilege, a little door to the heart.

39:42

EB: That's great. And you do that for—it's volunteer work?

GP: Yes. For now. I would like to do more but we'll see.

39:54

EB: Very well. And how did you get interested in Buddhism?

GP: Well, I have friends in Marblehead. When my children were little, and I was divorced, one young woman with a little boy moved in here behind us. And a little later, a man who just got divorced rented a room in this house. So we became like a little family. It was good, and the little boy became my godson, Justin, and the man, he was like—it was important for us because we were very friendly, but also it was a man who was around for my children when they weren't with their father. And so later she remarried but we used to go from time to time to retreats, her husband and she and I, and we went to a retreat by Thich Nhat Hanh. And it was a one week retreat, and I was married to my second husband at the time and I really liked that. So we continued. And at the end of the retreat, Thich Nhat Hanh always said, "It's really good to have a group, like five people with whom one can practice at least once a week. It helps us a lot so if you like to do meditation, I suggest that this would be a good idea." So we discussed it and we started with three. And so during the summer it's at my house, during the winter it's at their house, but once a—during the whole year we have a meditation at one house or the other—we switch once during the year. So it has become very special and I had the idea one day—I had helped out at the Episcopalian church, Saint Andrews. They built a labyrinth and they had asked me if I would help. So it was really interesting, and I said to myself, "Hm, one day I'm going to do that in my courtyard." But after the children left for college and all that, and later, I dreamt of a labyrinth. So the next day, I said, "Oh, it's time."

So I hired someone who understood all that, and it was—we had the computer but it wasn't so widespread at that time, and I built it. So that's a reason why they come during the summer here, the group, and so that it's really special and it has become like a little family. Because we always have people who come, who are curious, sometimes someone who continues to come but normally it's our little group, about ten people, but we could have a lot more than that.

43:02

EB: So do you also still practice Catholicism?

GP: No, I left the Catholic church a long time ago, because I had respect for the Pope but I didn't think it was really important and for other reasons. During those years there was no participation by women, that didn't exist. And that bugged me. So I said—I went to a service at Saint Andrews. There is a man there, Franky, now he has moved, but he had created this song for—in a group, for the passion of the Christ, and a lot of people had said it was marvelous. So I went there and I said, “Wow, this is a marvelous church.” So I've been there since that time. But sometimes I go to Emmanuel in Boston because I love the Bach songs. But my spiritual community is there, and it's also with the [inaudible].

44:17

EB: And it's interesting because—we are interested, my colleague and I, in how the Franco-American community changed during those years. Because traditionally women married, there was no divorce, she stayed at home, and people stayed Catholic and spoke French, and made tourtières and that's it [laughs]. But we realize that things changed for women in the whole country. But was it difficult to be Franco-American and to follow a new path for women?

GP: No, I had doubts in the beginning. I felt a little guilty, but when I saw that there were already preachers who were women. It was extraordinary! And at church, that episcopal

church, that is—what do they call it—it's a lower church but they have another church in Marblehead, St. Michael's, which seems like a Catholic church. They have the same incense, all that, and the clothes but—[the phone rings]—let it go. But no, it wasn't too hard. Sometimes I felt guilty, but I have a fairly close friend who lives in the neighborhood and even when I used to go to Sainte Anne's, I called myself « a second culture Catholic » because if I didn't believe in something, well, it's okay. But it was forbidden to speak about that to my uncle Pierre, oh la la—no, we couldn't do that [laughs]. And he was very Francophone too. And even if we went to the symphony or whatever, we had to speak French.

46:30

EB: And your parents were—brothers and sisters—they were okay with this, they supported you in your decisions?

GP: Yes, more or less, but in another way because we had learned this sense of adventure. My sister, she lived in Africa, and later she was here. The other sister lives in Danvers, but we're not very close—she's the oldest. As we got older, we became closer. And I have a brother in Maine, a brother in New Hampshire, and my little sister who passed away. So we talk and visit each other, but it's not so practical. I really like that, having—I have friends that their children are here. They have their grandchildren, and I'm a little jealous of that [laughs]. But I don't think that has anything to do with my Franco-Canadian heritage. It's just—we have a sense of adventure.

47:37

EB: Very well. I think that's all. Or, do you have other stories to tell, or is there anything that I didn't ask?

GP: I didn't talk a lot about food, like boudin and all that. And that, I love that, oh la la. And the cretons, we used to call that cortons, but that, it's marvelous. My mom made really good meals. But it was very fatty, the Franco-Canadian food. It's incredible that we survived.

[laughter]. But the boudin—my grandmother who lived upstairs, she's the one who made that for holidays. I loved that, just to see it and to smell it. But naturally, we ate a lot of pork. But now I'm starting to change. I'm almost a vegetarian and I might even become vegan, but that's really hard. So I don't know. But my parents would have said that this is ridiculous. Pork is good for you.

48:52

EB : [laughs] So there was tourtière, salmon pie—

GP: Oh, yes, the salmon pie was really good. I forget what they called on New Year's day—the big dish that they made on New Year's day with meat. It escapes me at the moment—maybe it will come back.

49:12

EB: People told us about a dish—I forget the name now—that has potatoes, and meat, and potatoes, and meat—

GP: Yes, like the Greeks, because—but for New Year's day—ragoût! It's ragoût. We had potatoes, sugar potatoes, we called them. There were—

49:36

EB: What's sugar potatoes?

GP: Sweet potatoes [laughter]. That was a literal translation—I don't know. There were onions. You could add anything, pork, beef, sometimes chicken or turkey. And the secret, it was that you took white flower [sic], and you put that in the—you roasted it, that turned brown, that gave the taste—the flour, I forgot—I meant to say white flour, and the smell was marvelous. It was a stew that stayed in the oven for a long time, since there was all that meat, so you put in the vegetables at the last minute. And that—the sauce—Oh, it was marvelous. I have some in the freezer because my brother, he makes it every year [laughs]. So yes, that's about it.

EB: Okay. Thanks a lot!

GP: My pleasure.

EB: It was really interesting to hear the story of a woman because we have a lot of stories from men, but few from women up until now [laughs].

GP: I need to add something. It's that my parents were very scandalized that I married twice [makes a face]. But it wasn't my idea to get divorced the first time.

51:10

EB: How is that?

GP: I said it wasn't my—I didn't want to divorce my first husband.

51:18

EB: It happened against your will?

GP: Exactly.

51:23

EB: And the second husband was Franco-American too?

GP: His mother was of Franco-Canadian heritage but his father was German and he was a psychiatrist. And that man, he was the oldest, so he lived on the campus of the hospital for people who were mentally deranged. So he thought that people—it was normal to be like that [laughter]. He was an interesting person but unfortunately it didn't work. [moment of silence]

So, there you go !

EB: But anyway, you have this pretty house and a beautiful life too.

GP: [smiles]

EB: Okay! Thanks!

GP: You're welcome!