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ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

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**INFORMANT: MANUEL BARROS, JR.
CONDUCTED BY: BARBARA FERTIG
DATE: NOVEMBER 15, 1987**

**B = BARROS.
F = FERTIG**

LFP BF-A001

F: Hello, I am interviewing Mr. Manuel Barros, Jr.

B: Yes.

F: Thank you. Um, tell me where you were born, and approximately when.

B: I was born on May 20, 1937, on Auburn Street, in Lowell.

F: Here, that's back Central? Is that [unclear]

B: That's off of, it's a block off of Central. In between Central and [unclear]. (F: mm-hm)

F: Were your parents born in this country, too?

B: Yes they were.

F: And your grandparents?

B: No, they were born in the Madeira Islands.

F: In Madeira. The Madeira Islands. Um, what language was spoken at home? Did you speak English? Or (--)

B: My grandmother and grandfather lived upstairs from us. We lived on the first floor. English was spoken on the first floor and Portuguese was spoken on the second floor.

F: Did you learn Portuguese from them?

B: Yes. According to some people, at one time I didn't speak English.

F: When you were very small [unclear]?

B: I was raised by my grandmother. In those days your grandmother and your grandfather lived with you. So they watched me while my mother and father went to work. So conversely, my first language probably from what I was told was Portuguese.

F: Um, brother and sisters?

B: None. [Pause] In case you're interested, before we go too far, that's my father.

F: That's your father!

B: Yes.

F: Oh. I wouldn't mind talking to him too. [B: Unclear] Can that be arranged? It doesn't have to be today.

B: Yeah. You can go and talk to my mother and father. They my mother works here too.

F: Terrific!

B: Yeah.

F: Okay. Ahm.

B: Today would be difficult because we're trying to get out of here at one, you know.

F: Okay.

B: And I have some (--) He's got things he's got to get done.

F: Okay. Ahm, I'd like to know about your childhood in relation to the bakery.

B: Ah, around the age of nine I had a normal childhood. Obviously. And I went to uh, Central Street School, which is now closed, for three years, first, second and third. Then I went to St. Peter's School to the eighth grade, which was on Gorham Street. The first bakery we owned was next to St. Peter's School, which is now, you know, uh Central, or [unclear]. (F: oh, uh-huh) So immediately around the age of nine or ten, right after school I went to the bakery, because it was right next door. And it was obviously for supervision. And then I began to learn to do different things at that time. At a very, very young age I was able to work. Hold my own, you know. In a bakery. It was matter of finances and supervision, of course. Keep the kids close to you and every little bit counted. Especially in those days I guess. Of course I wasn't aware of every little

bit counted at that time, you know. I thought it was just, you know, come from heaven, but it wasn't so. You know. (F: Ah-huh) And then around 1949 or 1950 we bought this bakery, which was our competitor. Supposedly our competitor. It was the only bakery other than ours. So then we bought this one and moved over to here. And by this time I'm at Keith Academy, which since has closed. In case you're wondering, every school I've gone to in Lowell is now closed. Ah, Central Street School, St. Peter's School and Keith Academy. (F: Mm-hm) From there I went to B.U., and graduated from B.U. (F: Mm-hm), and I came here.

F: What did you take at B.U.? What was your (--)

B: Liberal Arts.

F: Were you thinking all along of coming into the bakery business with your parents?

B: No. (F: No?) No, I never gave it much thought. Just something I had, oh couldn't remember not doing it. You know, so it wasn't like a decision. It was kind of like a migration rather than a, you know, this is what I'm going to do, you know. There was no what am I going to do with my life trauma. [Few words unclear]

F: Uh-huh. Do you have family in other parts of New England or other parts of the country?

B: No.

F: No. So your whole family (--)

B: Not the kind of family I think you're talking about. No.

F: Your whole family is here. And do you still have family back in the Madeira Islands?

B: Yes.

F: And have you visited them?

B: No. No. We have family. My mother's three relatives. (F: mm-hm) In the old country. There are some left. There. (F: mm-hm) Ah, my father's mother and father who are both deceased at the time uh, spent a great deal (--). They emigrated to Brazil and spent time in Brazil. And then emigrated from Brazil to this country even though they were from the Azores. You know? (F: mm-hm) So, (F: mm-hm) ah, that's you know, so I don't know what I have in Brazil. Have I ever seen them, or talked to them, or did I know their name? No. I don't. (F: mm-hm) Even in the Azores, I wouldn't, couldn't tell you who they are. (F: mm-hm) I've seen them. They come to visit us once or twice but, like my mother's third cousin and you know, my grandmother's sister you know. But of course, I was in my forties when I saw them so no registered, nothing registered, there was no registration of, or our family you know. They're

F: They're here now?

B: No. My family is right here. My mother, my father, my wife, my kids. That's it. (F: uh-huh) You know. It's ah one of those things. Families are watering down you know. We have our own lives you know. (F: yeah) I have cousins I haven't seen in years. So you know, it's ah (--) It seems like more conveniences we get the less time we have. The more things that serve us (F: yeah) the less time we have to even think, you know? (F: That's true.) You know what I mean, to smell the roses. You get automatic this and automatic that and you still, you know. So, you know, we meet, you know, Christmas. Thanks, you know, stuff like that. (F: Uhm-hm)

F: Where do your kids go to school?

B: My children go (clears throat) one goes to Lowell Tech, one just left Gaudette College for the Deaf in Washington, and one goes to Moody School on Rogers Street.

F: You think they're coming into the business?

B: No.

F: No?

B: No. This ends with me. This is it.

F: Now, you said to me on the phone the other day, no, when we were talking ahm, that this is a French Bakery.

B: It's a French pastry, or cheese board. At the time I came here, we came here and we were going pretty strong. We, this had been originally the Lusitania Bakery, which made mos, which, 99% bread. (F: Mm-hm) When we took it over we started to pick up bakers that we needed. And the bread diminished. Kept diminishing because ahhm, for many different reasons, but the bread part of this diminished and pastries started to increase. And as we hired bakers to do this type of work, they were all French. Obviously doing what they knew (F: mm-hm) what to do, which was French. Napoleans, eclairs, [unclear], jelly rolls, angel cake are all French products. They're not Greek, they're not Lithuanian, they're French. Uhh, of course toll house cookie is an American thing developed (F: mm-hm) down here, but doughnuts are basically French. Baguette, you know it's a doughnut. (F: Mm-hm) It's a French product. Uhh, the type of cakes that we make, layer cakes and stuff like that, that's basically a French style. (F: Mm-hm) Uhh, but you have French meat pies, you have salmon pies. That's all French. So all these guys are French. (F: Ah-huh) So we're, we're, you know, we came to be, you know all the bakeries in Lowell do the same th (--) We make basically the same products. They're all French too. Even the Yum Yum, he's French. No matter what he wants to call himself. His name is Lou Kelly. (F: mm-hm) He's a French baker. You know. You know. Ahh, Benny Price who is Jewish, he has yeah, he has Jewish challah, he has Jewish rye, (F: mm-hm) he has pumpernickel, but in the counter he is French. That goes right back to the same thing, because that's what came along here you know. And basically when you go right back to it, an éclair is still French. No matter how you cut it (F: mm-hm), it's a French pastry. So that's where we are.

F: How much [massacevata?] do you sell?

B: Very little.

F: Really?

B: Very, very little. [Phone rings] On Easter we sell the massacevata with one egg in it. And at that time we sell very large quantities. We sell, you know, like uhh say, let me think. Uhh, I think it would be you know, four or five hundred loaves. Then that's it. Like challah, Benny Price sells on Passover, whatever, he sells tons of challah. Then he, forget it. (F: mm-hm) [Chuckles] After that you know one, you know two, that's about it. Bread has, in the last five years a decrease of over 50% of bread consumption in this country.

F: Really?

B: Yes. Doughnut consumption is probably at 50% too. This guy over here used to do 26, 2700 dozen of doughnuts on a weekend. Saul, which is a good friend of mine. (F: uh-huh) He's in Florida now. These people that are here now who are just as good, course with Dunkin Donuts they must adhere to a standard. (F: uhm-hm) It isn't like, like if somebody took over my business and they didn't do so well, well maybe I was better than them. But this is a franchise. So you got to do it the way that (-- I bet they don't do five, or six, or seven hundred a week, and that guy used to do 2200 (F: right) a weekend. Doughnuts are you know, a tough sell. (F: mm-hm) People are very conscious. They, they're not going to eat a dozen of doughnuts like they used to. Well, they, they, people used to work. They use to burn this stuff off. (F: Yes, that's true.) You know now there's diet clubs, diet, diet, diet, diet. People are you know, you do the laundry. You run down, you put in one machine, push a button, take it out, put it in the other, push another button. Whoa, I'm glad that's over! (F: yeah) You know, the more I, whew! [Unclear] the laundry today. [Tape wobbles here for about two seconds and the conversation is unclear]

F: How many, how many buttons do you push here? It looks to me like your father's doing pretty much everything by hand there.

B: No.

F: No?

B: Uhh, as opposed to twenty years ago you know, or thirty, well forty years ago, you know. We, I bought every major machine you can buy, you know, because I could see the handwriting on the wall. (F: uhm-hm) So we bought, invested in machinery. Probably every machine we have here represents one person I'd have to, I'd have to find, and (F: ah-huh, ah-huh) hire, and pay, you know.

F: So at this point since you don't have to worry about bakers being French, or Portuguese, or (B: yuh) anything else anymore you're pretty much doing whatever your clientele wants, right?

B: Yes. Yes. (F: yeah) Right. Exactly. Yuh. [pause: 5 sec.] Exactly. Yuh.

F: And what they want is a combination of meat pies and (--)

B: Pastry. [Both talking together and tape wobbles] Pastry, pastry, birthday cakes. Birthday cakes are (--). See I'm a neighborhood bakery [banging starts in background] and we have fierce competition at the supermarkets. Off the shelves. The modern housewife, you know like the European housewife, she goes shopping, she goes to a butcher and selects this, she goes to a baker and selects that. She goes to a cheese shop, she selects that. (F: mm-hm) Now. You know. It's good enough. I ain't got time. You know. That's all you hear is "I ain't got time." What they do I don't know, but "I ain't got time to, I ain't got time to run down, I ain't got time to run over you know." Go to Demoulas, pile it all up, never look at the laborer, God forbid. (F: chuckles) I mean, I was at my neighbor's house one day and sh (--). "Oh, look at this, man, you should make some of these. These are terrific." You know. And so she took out this product. Pastry, a piece of pastry. And I says, yeah, I should. I says you know. "Well, why don't you?" I says, why don't you read it, Maureen. Ascorbic acid, uh [unclear] you know it went on (--). It was a list of chemicals this lo, this big. And I says, I don't want to make that stuff you know. I couldn't even make it. I couldn't even buy that. I don't even know where to go. Where do you buy this stuff? The drug store? I mean, you know where (F: chuckles) do I, you know I have to have a druggist call on me to get all this stuff. I says, do you realize that that's two or three weeks old? Made that way? I says, you're feeding this to your kids. I says, the fact of the matter is I ain't got time to run down, I ain't got time you know. (F: mm-hm) Okay. What are you going to do?

F: So is your neighborhood clientele here mostly Portuguese still? Or (--)

B: No. Not anymore. No. It's going down and down. We're getting (--). All of Lowell is. If you go to the Greek section, you know like I hear the Acre, the Acre there, there's no acre. What are they talking about? The Greeks have left. They live up in Belvidere. They live in the highlands. [Unclear] You know the Acre, the Acre, there's no Acre. There's Puerto Ricans, Columbians, Bolivians, Thailand, Irish. You know there used to be 15,000 Greeks living in the Acre. You couldn't find 1500 down there. (F: mm-hm) They came to this country and they went there because it was cheap. They could live there for three, four bucks a week. They worked their ass off and got out of there. And bought a house. (F: mm-hm) Just like we did. My father was in Tewksbury. [Unclear] I was raised at 733 Central Street. (F: Mm-hm) Nice house. But back Central. And her and him, they worked and worked, and worked, and they moved to Tewksbury. Bought a nice house with two acres of land. So you know neighborhoods now are getting homogeneous. There's no French neighborhood like across th, that's the Lithuanian Club across the street. (F: Yeah) Go outside and you won't find ten Lithuanians within a mile of this place. You ain't going to do it. You know? (F: mm-hm) They bought, they live in Pelham, Dracut. (F: mm-hm) They bought farms, homes, two acres, this type of thing. Like we all [unclear-tape jumps] the American dream. You know. It doesn't exist. So Portuguese, there are a lot of Portuguese people here. You know what I mean?

F: Yes.

B: As opposed to the highlands. But there aren't a lot of Portuguese. As opposed to the rest of the people in this neighborhood. You know. Because when you trade with me, if you buy a birthday cake, you have to have one of those slips. See? (F: Oh yeah) You have to fill that out. (F: yeah) So now we know your name. (F: Uh-huh) If, for [unclear] you walked in and bought whatever you did outside, I would never know who you are. It's not my business to find out what your name is, fill out a form. No. But here you have to write down. Now there's Georgette Bacon and Gaynor Hugh. You know I can go through all those slips. You know. Out of fifty slips there's four Portugee names, five Portugee names. (F: Mm-hm) There's ten Irish names. Twenty Puerto Rican names. You know. It depends. Puerto Rican people are big occasion cake eaters you know. They want huge cakes, you know what I mean. They have a christening, they want a cake for a hundred people. You know. They like them. (F: Mm-hm) So we see their names up there. It's not--you know Portuguese that's fine. I would think about ten years ago you would get Portuguese kids in here. You know they don't even understand Portuguese. They don't speak it.

F: Who supports St. Anthony's Church then? Do they commute?

B: The nationals. See, you know (--) Are you Catholic?

F: No, I'm not.

B: Okay. There's two kinds of Catholic churches. There's this dioc, ah, ah the parish church. (F: Mm-hm) Which means if you go to the chancery, or to the parish you see they will tell you by your address where you belong. (F: Mm-hm) You understand?

F: Uh-huh. Yes.

B: So you live on such and such a street, well you belong to the Immaculate. That's where you have to go. Go register at Immaculate. But I am a national. It means anywhere I live in the city of Lowell, I belong to St. Anthony's Church. Anywhere. I could live in Pelham, I could live anywhere I want and I would belong to St. Anthony's Church, because that's a Portuguese national church. On Rogers Street there's St. Joseph's Lithuanian church. Now, the Lithuanians have moved out of Rogers Street and Perry Street and Concord Street many years ago. (F: Mm-hm) But they're still the Lithuanian Church. So follow the Lowell wherever the Lithuanians live they belong to that church. See?

F: Yeah.

B: So that's, that's why. And that's a very strong church, a well supported church. They, they (--) You know they're very strong. You know that's a major force in the islands, is the church, in Portugal, is the church. (F: Mm-hm) Major force. So when they come here they bring it with them. mm-hm It's a very strong (--) Well St. Anthony's (--) St. Peter's is close. St. Anthony's has flourished you know. That's the way it goes.

F: How about organizations? Do you belong to any Portuguese organizations?

B: Holy Ghost Society. That's about it. That's about it. That's a club. The old (--) That goes back to years and years ago. If you go around the corner and up the street you'll see clubs. Mmm-hm And that use to be kind of a, that was like a social thing. You went to work, you came home, you cleaned up and you went to the club. Mm-hm. And they had soccer, and they had functions, and sometimes they had dances and stuff like that. But that died. That's, you don't go to the club you know. There's no young people there. Some of the immigrants go because in the old country that still exists. (F: Yeah) And you just, it's gone by the boards. You know what I mean. Uh-huh They have nothing. They go and they drink. (F: Mm-hm) Well I don't know. I think you can see that in the VFW and the Foreign Wars. You see the diminishing, you know what I mean. There's so much to do now. There's TV, there's the Cape, there's the mountains, there's a car. Let's go out and just sit in a bar and drink and all that it implies. Younger people. The guy across the street was over. The guy up the street, the one on the left is the Polish Club. It's the White Eagle, or I don't know what they call themselves now. It used to be the White Eagle. But it's a Polish club. And he was down last week. We were talking about it. How things change. Because see I lived up on Central Street. 733. This is 434. And then down right at the end of the street was where all the Moonies were. So this is where I lived. Up and down this street. Even St. Anthony's. I mean, I lived next door to Central Street School. I jumped the fence, I was at school. St. Peter's is right over there and there was the bakery. Then I moved over to here. So I remember going into the (--) You know when we were kids we could go into those clubs if we were cold, or go in, we'd go in shoe shines and go in there and you know you'd be with somebody and say "My dad's in there let's go in." And see if I can get him for a nickel or a dime you know. So we'd go into the club. You could sit there. And they had food and you could eat. Do whatever you want. So they used to be jammed. Looked like they were giving away money. (F: uh-huh) You know people drift a, drift away.

F: So, and why do you hold on to your membership?

B: Who knows. Who knows. I have no idea.

F: Do you go to the feasts?

B: Sometimes. I drop in you know. I have a home at the Cape. So in the summertime and spring I'm out of here into the Cape as quickly as I can. Mm-hm So sometimes I have work on the weekend I might drop up, get a linguice sandwich, certain things that I like you know. In the older, a few years back like my grandmother worked there in the kitchens and the old ladies who traded here lived there. So I would go in and I'd pay and I'd eat in the kitchen and I'd go home. You know what I mean. (F: Mm-hm) It's very stratified. It's not my generation. You know what I mean. The old ladies sit in one section and watch the young girls. The, you know like, and you know she has to kind of like, you know if she likes that boy she does this and you know. And they have this sign language and where you know, I wasn't raised that way, you know. Hi, how are you? My name's Manny. What's yours, Jane? Yeah. What are you doing tonight? I mean if they ever did that up there, hmph, there'd be a holy war. [Unclear] He said, what? Are you crazy? I mean that's [unclear]. So that's not, that's not my generation you know what I mean. That's not, I'm not saying it's bad. No. I'm not saying, but that's the way they do things you know. (F: Mm-hm) There's a little dancing done. Mostly the girls dance with the girls. The boys watch. You know and then from there there's a little, that's how it's done. I go up, I

enjoy the food a little bit, I'm out of there.

F: Where is the clubhouse? It's not all the way out of the park is it?

B: What clubhouse?

F: The Holy Ghost. Is this what you're talking about?

B: Yes. It's up on Rogers Street. Off Rogers Street between Cawley Stadium, near Rogers Street.

F: Oh, it is! [Phone rings] It's, it's at the park.

B: Yes. It's a huge, it's a, not a huge, but it's a, it's a beautiful place. A huge, beautiful kitchen. It seats about 300 people. It's a hall. And then they have a good size grounds. You know, parking. (F: Uh-huh) It's very well kept. [Loud banging in background makes it difficult to hear] Very well. A lot of money. They have all kinds of money. They run the feast. We do some of the bread. We used to do more than we do now, but I'd like to get away from it. And they, you know they have trucks. I mean buses come up from Taunton, Fall River, sometimes. It's, it's quite, you know, four or five thousand people can get up in there when they really get going, you know. (F: Uh-huh) But there's, and then they close it. It's, you know. (F: Uh-huh) They have, I think they have bingo once a week. That's it. That's the only time. Then like I can go there for my daughter's wedding, or my son's wedding, or my (--) I can, I can, I can go there. (F: Mmm-hm) You can't. You couldn't rent it. They don't rent it to non-members, put it that way. (F: Mm-hm) It's not available. (F: Mmm-hm) But if I want to have my daughter's wedding there, or reception, or anything I want. For I think it's twenty dollars, or something. The whole thing.

F: Really?

B: Yeah. Yeah. And they have a bar. I could have the bar. I had my mother and father's fiftieth anniversary there. 250 people. We do catering, so we did the cooking ourselves. (F: Mm-hm) And we had the bar. We get to keep the bar too. So any monies that come into the bar, we, we get it, which you know, offsets (F: Yeah) the cost. (F: Yeah) It's really a nice thing. There's a lot of politics like anything else, from what I hear. I don't, I don't go to the meetings. I don't involve myself. I don't care what they do. You know, it's, I know that they run it well. It's well kept, (F: Mm-hm) clean, and something they should be very proud of. So whatever they've done, they've done it well. You know. Whether I agree, or didn't agree, or whatever, (F: Mm-hm) they have done a nice (--) When it comes to (--) Now they're not (--) They geared most of their monies from, to the church. They subsidized the church school and the church itself. From what I hear the church is very well off because of them. But they are not, they're separate. Even the priest cannot, he does not, he is not asked and does not volunteer any opinions at the meetings, or anything else. (F: Mm-hm) You know. I guess they run it. You know they run the Feast of St., St. Anthony, make five, six, seven grand, they give it to the priest. And he does what he wants with it. You know. He runs the church. Runs the schools. So it's a good thing for them. The bingo is the same way. I guess they give it to the church. But

it's completely separate, you know. It has nothing to do, it's not the church hall. It's not the church grounds. (F: Yeah) It's the Holy Ghost Society. Pretty nice.

F: And it's used by all of the other functions like St. Anthony and, and um (--)

B: Anybody who's a member.

F: Oh! So, as, as a member then you can, the other organization that you want to be able to use it comes in on your membership? Is, like (--)

B: No, no. They would stop it. (F: Oh) They would stop it. If I wanted to go in, if I was I guess (--). All right, put it this way. One day I asked, we wanted to run a big thing. I was a coach in the Little League (F: Mm-hm) and I wanted to run an, a field day you know, for the kids to raise money, you know. But if I wanted to run a, a Portuguese couples dance I could do it. (F: Mm-hm) They would let me. (F: Right) And they have done it. Because there used to be uh, St. Anthony's Couples Club. But the thing was, 99% of everybody there was a, was a member. (F: Uh-huh) But there were many people who weren't. I shouldn't say that. There were many people who weren't. [Unclear] was immediately, go ahead. (F: Mm-hm) And they ran Couples Club dances. (F: Mm-hm) They're very simple you know. And I, it's, it's, you got to be one of us. You, that's there strongly. (F: Mm-hm) You know what I mean. Like I, like I do a lot of wedding cakes here. And if you was looking for a place to go, you know, for your daughter or somebody, I couldn't (F: Yeah) say, "Well I got a place for you." (F: Yeah) No, you know. So.

F: Now, what, what you were describing a couple of minutes ago, um about young women being chaperoned and dancing with each other, was that, that doesn't go on any more, or that (--)

B: Yes.

F: It does?

B: Yes, yes it does. (F: Yeah) Yes. It's less, but it's still very strongly. This girl here couldn't go to her girl friend's house if she wanted to. [Unclear]

F: Is that Ann? You said that's Ann?

B: No. Here.

F: Oh.

B: No. Uh, very strict. It's still strict. (F: Mm-hm) And then we have two or three more like that. (F: Mm-hm) I think some of it is, of course it's had some very bad results. Some of these kids [whistles sharply] gone. We've had, you know, I've heard of, I don't know, you know, but they, they, you see they're dealing with two forces there. They're dealing with at home, then they're going to school. (F: Yeah) Then they're hearing and seeing, and you know, and then they go home. And then there's the (--). (F: Mm-hm) So, it's very traumatic for some of them.

Very, very difficult. Of course the parents come in, you know, and they kind of, and they you know, I mean they're saying, "what's going on here?" They're seeing what's coming through the TV and they come from a little island off the coast of Africa. [Chuckles] "You're not going nowhere. You know. You stay right there." (F: Sure) So now it's, it's, there's no right or wrong in here. There's no right or wrong, because if you talk to these people, you, you know, you'd be wasting your time because they're, they're mortified. You know what I mean? (F: Mm-hm) They're, there's this, you know. Who's to say they're wrong. But then the kid goes out. Her girlfriend's, "Hey Jimmy and Jack's going to pick us up in a car." Like I could never drive her home. Ever. [Unclear] I'll offer. It's like, no thank you. She wouldn't [Unclear]. The last (--) It'd be the last day I think she'd ever work here. If I ever pulled up in front of her house, and I'm fifty years old, I know better. Sometimes they used to come here, the fathers, pick up the daughter, walk them home. Up the street. (F: Mm-hm) It's still there. Still there. Still around. They (F: Mm-hm) bring them in. There was a nice little girl came in looking for a job the other day with her father. Not her mother, her father. (F: Mm-hm) [Someone interrupts to ask if something should be taken out of the machine] [Phone rings] What's your first name?

F: Barbara.

B: Barbara, that's my father.

F: [Unclear] I'm glad to meet you! [Mr. Barros, Sr. says "Same here"]

B: This is a study they're doing on how it used to be years ago I guess.

F: And [unclear] and how it is now. We're interested in, [both talking at once] in how it is now. Ahh, let me leave this with you and maybe your Dad can [Mr. Barros, Sr. talking in background] [Unclear] Well yes, we were talking about that. You're still doing a lot by hand over there I saw. [Mr. Barros, Sr. explains what he is doing] I'd like to come back and talk to you about how it used to be and how you see things. Uhm, have you got any free time this week?

B: Monday.

F: Monday?

B: Yes. We don't, he doesn't work Monday.

F: [Mr. Barros, Sr. asks if interviewer will be coming to bakery] I can come anywhere you want me to. [Mr. Barros, Sr. asks what time] You say. I am free on Monday. Tomorrow. [They agree on 9:00]

B: Yeah. Call. She'll call before. See if you're here. (F: Okay) [Unclear]

F: Ahhm I don't even live here at all. I'm, I am imported for this job. Uhhm the Library of Congress is the main backer behind this. And uh, and they want folklorists to be doing the work. They want people who have studied folklore. Uhm and there aren't enough people in Lowell so they've hired some people from outside. I live in Connecticut. (B: Oh) So it's not for, it's two

hours for me up here. (B: I see) But I'm staying overnight at uh Town House Inn. You know where that is?

B: I see.

F: So, no it's not very far from there.

B: No, it isn't. No, because I was going to do this, that, and the other and then I looked and I saw you there. I figured I'd, you'd be here another hour or so.

F: [Laughs] I should have warned you. Let me see. Uhm I can ask your dad, too. I'm interested if you (--) [Tape ends]

[Transcriber's note: The first side of the tape ends here and there is a break in the conversation. Side two begins with Mr. Barros in mid-sentence.]

B: [Unclear] all these clubs and organizations.

F: Ah-huh. Of Portuguese men?

B: Yeah. Yeah. All Portuguese guys. (F: Yeah) So he's got you know all kinds of stuff. You know, photographs of the band and the places they went to and, and this place and stuff like that, you know.

F: Terrific.

B: I think. You know (F: yeah) I've seen them at his house. (F: Okay)

F: Okay. Well, I'll talk to him about that tomorrow then. Tell me about what the most important events in your life were.

B: Gee. I'm still waiting. [Both laugh] I don't know. When you grow up in a, in a neighborhood type thing, ah you, you go to work in the neighborhood. It's kind of like business. It's, there's no trauma, traumatic ah, very few things you know. You know. I don't know. I was, it's, it's a lot different you know. (F: Mm-hm) It's, you're very sheltered. You're, you're very taken care of. Everything we wanted was here from groceries to clothes, you know. My aunt and uncle lived upstairs, so they watched me. My mo, grandmother and grandfather lived upstairs. They, I had a mama and father watch me. (F: Mm-hm) The movies were at the end of the street. I got older there was a pool, and over here I played. And there's a place where we all as young guys went and had a few drinks and stuff. There's kind of you know, there was no uh, like I moved to L.A. you know and went to work for IBM, or something. (F: Yeah, yeah) [Unclear] want another?

F: Oh, I'm still working on this one and it's fine thank you.

B: Okay, okay. You want a Danish or a, ah?

F: No thanks.

B: You sure?

F: I ate too late last night.

B: There's a real nice place around the corner from here to eat, the Appleton. Did you see it?

F: I wondered what that was.

B: That's very nice inside. There's a little restaurant. Fifty people. (F: Uh-huh) They have a lunch. You'd like it. It's very nice.

F: Thanks for telling me.

B: Just go the opposite way.

F: Yeah, yeah. I noticed it when I (--) [B: So go underneath and you'll see it] [Both talking at once] Yeah, yeah.

B: You'll like it.

F: Terrific.

B: Matter of fact they have a little library. It isn't, it's, it's like a, a lobby, not a lobby, but it's like a room. And you can go in there and have a drink and you know, study or do, it's just gorgeous, absolutely gorgeous. Know what I mean? You know? (F: Yeah) You know he, it's one of my favorite places, you know. Go in to have a drink and it's (--) They have a fireplace and they have nuts and stuff, you know.

F: It sounds wonderful!

B: They have like chairs you'd have at home, or wish (F: yeah) you had at home. (F: yeah) You know. (F: yeah) And it's like a, like a living room. It's like somebody's living room. (F: mm-hm) You go in and you can have a drink or whatever, or even have nothing if you want just to sit there, sit there. (F: mm-hm) They don't bother you.

F: Terrific!

B: Yeah, you'd like it. Yup. (F: I will) [Both talking together] Especially if you're, you're here alone?

F: I'm here alone. (B: [unclear]) [Both talking together] Well there are a group of us working together but basically I am, yeah.

B: Oh, you'd love that place. You'd love it.

F: Yeah, I didn't, there we go. I didn't take a look at (--) You live out of town? You live on (--)

B: No, I don't.

F: You live on Hoyt Avenue.

B: Yes.

F: And where's that? What? Is that (--)

B: Do you know anything about Lowell?

F: A little bit.

B: Do you know where Shedd Park is?

F: No.

B: You know where thirty-eight is? (F: Yeah) Going to Tewksbury. (F: Yeah) There's a huge park on thirty-eight. It's called Shedd Park. I live adjacent to that. (F: Uh-huh) One house in. Very close.

F: Sounds nice.

B: Very nice. It's gorgeous. (F: Yeah) Very nice. (F: Yeah) Nice. There are two parks. There are, there's Fort Hill Park then there's ah, and then it goes (--) Fort Hill goes this way and then goes up and over. (F: Mm-hm) And then it picks up Shedd Park and in the middle is a clump of houses, a neighborhood, and that's where I live. You know. You just ah, you have a car? (F: Yeah) If you was to take the next right, go to the end and take a right, when you come to the next intersection [phone rings] that's thirty-eight going (F: Mm-hm) to Tewksbury. Or thirty-eight going to uh 495. Yeah, it's nice up there.

F: Can I ask you, is your wife Portuguese?

B: No.

F: No.

B: She's an English. She's uh, [clears throat] she's (--) Her grandfather, or great-great grandfather was Lane who colonized Billerica, or had a king's grant from, for like a hundred acres given by the king. Billerica. So she's got (F: uh-huh) one of these lineage type things. Matter of fact we've been to (--) It's a, a national monument, his house. And that's her great-great grandfather. You know. So she's a Yankee. What we call in this neighborhood, a Yankee.

F: You do.

B: Yeah. Yeah.

F: I just learned how to pronounce that too. Billerica?

B: Billerica. Yeah. (F: Billerica) Bill, Billerica, yeah. (F: yeah) Yeah, Billerica I guess was Wo, part of Woburn. Billerica was immense. (F: Mm-hm) And it would stretch forever. And that's where (--) [Interrupted by Manuel Barros, Sr. who asks why the interviewer wants to talk to him. She explains that the material will be archived for the use of students and scholars]

F: Okay. Is there anything that you do in the way of Portuguese traditions? Would you say your Christmas celebration is Portuguese in any way? Or (--)

B: No. (F: No?) It's just Christmas. Christmas tree. Who's, who owns that, you know, or whatever. You know, nothing. That [unclear]. I just got a few glimpses of that. A Portuguese tradition is they go from house to house Christmas Eve drinking and with all kinds of spreads everybody has. And they go from house to house and they play games [unclear], musical instruments and they go from house to house all night long. And uh, I only seen that one or two times then, then it went, then it went [both talking at once. Mr. Barros' words unclear] (F: Like when you were very small?) Very small. Yup, yup. (F: Uh-huh) Christmas Eve was the big thing. Christmas Eve. Great celebration. But I on (--) Like I said, I only seen it once or twice (F: mm-hm) and then it didn't happen. There are certain foods ah, I don't know how to describe it. Pork, pork cooked in wine, that's Christmas Eve right after midnight mass. (F: mm-hm) That's it.

F: Anything in the way of pastries that's, that's particular?

B: No. I haven't ever seen uh, there's a place at the Cape in Provincetown that we go to that I go by there often. And it's a Portuguese bakery and he has all Portuguese pastries. That's the first time I have ever seen it. I had never seen it in my life other than (F: Mm) that place. There are all kinds of crazy things in there. Well, not crazy, but Portuguese things I, you know. [Pause 5 sec] We don't get, it's hard, it's, it's difficult to understand, but in every, every society like we have we don't get, the people who come here are not the people that used to go to bakeries and buy pastries. They were too poor. They would, you know, they used to buy a piece, my grandmother used to buy a piece of meat once a year, Christmas. And then she waited in line and was given what she was given. She didn't select it, she was given it. You know like Puerto Ricans now, we have a lot of Puerto Rican people coming into this country. They're not the people, the rich. They're not the middle class that frequents ah night clubs and bars and stuff like (F: Mm-hm) that and are well-educated. Those people stay there. Why should they leave? They're living like kings. (F: Mm-hm) The same thing with Portugal. In, in Azores [unclear]. I know very, very few people who come from Portugal. All the years of my life I only know two people who were born and raised in Portugal. Never met one. And it was very recently when, that I met the first one. (F: Mm-hm) The rest of them came from an island. And you can't believe what destitution they're seeing. These people are really poor. They eat bread, you know, that's it. Birthday cake, oosh. No. Forget it, forget it. See we don't, we don't, any, like even the,

the Greek people you know, like they're, it wasn't the Greek elite that came to this country. The Irish people. They didn't, you don't get those. (F: Yeah) You know. The rich and famous stay right where they are, and live off the lap of the land. So you, you know. It's you know, my grandmother and grandfather, I don't think they ever went to school. Ever. I don't think they went to the first or second grade, you know. (F: Mm-hm) I have uh, my grandmother's third cousin who came here. I think he went to the third or fourth grade. He was in school and his father come and got him. Get this, let's go. That was the last day he was ever in school. You know. This kid, he got a lot of static. Wanted to go to high school. You know. So you don't, you don't get those (--). I've been in Portugal proper. (F: Mm-hm) Lisbon and all, all through Portugal. (F: Mm-hm) It's like another world. It's like people I never knew. I can't believe that I'm one of those. (F: Hmm) I mean you know, they're, they're dressed, they're talking, they go in, they have a bar, and they're, they're eating out, stuff like that. [Unclear] don't know what a restaurant is, ever. I'm talking about forty years of being on this street. They still don't. Movie? Forget it. Go out and eat? Why? That doesn't exist in that, not in, they do, these kids do. Little while that kid will be [unclear] she'll get married, she'll have a few kids. Th, then it starts. Then America starts. But it doesn't exist right now for the people that, that we're talking about. (F: Mm-hm) They have their homes. They, they, they pour it on, you know what I mean. They, they buy it. They come to this country, the wife goes to work, every kid that can go to work, they put all their money together, they buy a home, they buy a car, they fix the house, aluminum siding. They get a bathtub, turn it upside down and make a little you know, with the Virgin Mary in the middle. (F: Mm-hm) Right there, that's it. They don't want to know from nothing. Nobody. They don't go nowhere. You know. That's, that's what we're dealing with. You know. It isn't ah, the cosmopolitan three-piece (F: Mm-hm) suit type Portuguese people that I've seen. [Unclear] (F: Mm-hm) You tell them to come to America and they say "Why?" You know, (F: yeah) what, are you crazy? Smog, eahh. Pollution, ugh. When I was in Portugal, I wanted to go out to a club and have dinner. I was by myself, you know. And the guy says "Yeah, well go ahead," you know. This was like seven or eight o'clock. He says "Well, go back inside", I asked the concierge. He said, "Go back inside and go to bed and we'll wake you up and you can go." I said "what do, it's seven-thirty at night." He says nothing opens before eleven. This is in Lisbon. (F: Hah) So what I, why? Well, the rich don't have to get up and the poor can't go. Nothing opened before eleven. Eleven A.M. This is like Monday or Tuesday, too. I'm ah, you know. (F: Mm-hm) I have to [unclear] (F: Okay) Okay? (F: yeah)