

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL

**Memórias – Preserving the Stories of
Lowell's Portuguese Community**

Oral History Interview with Renato Lima, September 17, 2016

Biographical Note:

Born on the island of Faial in 1939; one of four children (three boys and one girl) of Joaquin and Antonieta deLima; Renato Lima was educated in the Faial schools and graduated from high school on Terceira island; began playing soccer as a boy and became one of Faial's highly skilled players; moved to the island of Terceira after the devastating eruptions (1957-58) of Vulcão dos Capelinhos; after working in a governmental job for the water department on Terceira, and playing soccer for the successful Sport Clube Lusitânia, Mr. Lima immigrated to the United States in 1962, settling with Portuguese friends in Lawrence, Massachusetts, where his brothers and sister would also settle; Mr. Lima obtained a factory job in Malden Mills (in Lawrence); moved briefly to Taunton, Massachusetts, where he was paid to play on a Portuguese soccer team (Taunton Sports Soccer Club), but returned to Lawrence after one year and worked for a rubber and vinyl manufacturer; he married a Portuguese woman whom he had met on Terceira and who immigrated from Terceira to Lawrence to marry him; remained an avid soccer player and fan, and was also active in Lawrence's Portuguese-American Club.

Scope and Contents:

Interview conducted by local historian Mehmed Ali, this interview covers the aftermath of the volcanic eruptions on the island of Faial and the effect on the largely agrarian population; much of the focus is on the Portuguese community in Lawrence, the various factories where Portuguese émigrés worked, the city's small Portuguese Catholic parish (Saint Peter and Paul Catholic Church), and the relationship between Lowell's Portuguese and those in Lawrence.

INFORMANT: RENATO LIMA

INTERVIEWER: MEHMED ALI

R=RENATO

A=ALI

A: Okay, this is interview with Renato Lima, (R: Yes) on September 17, 2016. So thanks again for sharing some memories and stories.

R: Yah, okay. We'll try to go a good job on that.

A: Oh yah. First a little bit of background information. Where and when were you born?

R: I was born in Faial, Azores. (A: Okay) And I was born on December 29, 1939.

A: Okay, wow, right when World War II was happening. It just started.

R: That's right, yes.

A: And (--)

R: And I come over in May 1962.

A: Okay, good. And tell me about the place where you come from.

R: It's a small island. (A: Yah) Yah, and we went through bad times with a volcano.

A: Okay. Do you remember that?

R: Yah I remember that, yes.

A: What happened exactly?

R: Well we had a few episodes of that you know what I mean? It was real bad for one year. And then the United States government, you know, opened up a visa program for I think it was, I think it was 10,000, 10,000 or, 5,000 or 10,000, something like that. And the Island lost a lot of people then, yah, oh yes. It was close to 12,000 people. You know it came down from 29,000 to 17,000.

A: Really? (R: Yes) Wow. So what happened with the volcano exactly? How did it impact people?

R: Well most of the, most of, well what do you call (--). It's, farm land you know was covered with ashes. So they couldn't produce anything.

A: Okay, okay.

R: So most of the people come over.

A: So do you remember the ash coming down?

R: Yes.

A: What did you think at that time?

R: That time was scary, very scary yah, and the lava and all these things. Oh yah, it was scary. A lot of people move out of the island because of that.

A: Did people move off of your island on to other islands first?

R: Other islands too, yes.

A: Before they came to the U.S.?

R: Well the people that came to the U.S. they came over right off the island. You know, they just, and a lot of people they just shut, closed everything down and moved. That's it.

A: Really.

R: They never went back.

A: They just locked their house?

R: Lock everything and that's it, yah.

A: Oh wow. So what else can you tell us about the volcano? How did it impact your family specifically?

R: Well let's put it this way. The city people, which I was, you know, I used to live in the city, not on the country. Not on the country, you know, in the city. The city people, was a matter of jobs. There was no jobs for, and we just move, you know, try to find a place to work and you know, organize our life, you know what I mean?

A: Yah, yah.

R: Most of, some of the people, I would say all the city people was looking for a better life, for the job so they could go on in life.

A: Now when the volcano came did people from the countryside move into the town? Move into the city?

Mrs. Lima: (serves tea) I'm going to let you put your milk. (A: Sure) I don't want to put too much. (A: That's great. Thank you) And I put a little bit of sugar.

A: Terrific.

Mrs. Lima: Yah, they moved to the city. The volcano, the area where the volcano erupted, all the people had to leave.

R: Yah, they just couldn't go on, on those places. Village, what's the damn word, from villages, yes.

A: Now tell us about your schooling?

R: I went to high school, yes.

A: Okay. And public school, or catholic school, or?

R: Public school.

A: Okay. Do you remember any interesting teachers?

R: Oh yes, I had a few good ones too, yah, good ones.

A: Now what did you do for your first job over there?

R: Over there? (A: Yah) I worked for the city hall, (A: Okay) Water Department, yes, for about one year. And then I came over. That's it.

A: Okay, yah, and what were you doing for that job?

R: I was building the houses for the water you know, on the Building Department, yes. It was a good job, but.

A: Yah. Did you have to know somebody to get that job?

R: Yes. Yes. This job was on a different island. I immigrate, you know, I move to a different island to play soccer, you know what I mean? And they found me, they found me this job there, you know what I mean?

A: I see. I see. So which island did you end up going to?

R: I went up, go into Terceira.

A: Terceira, okay. And so you played soccer when you were younger?

R: In Terceira, yes. Yes.

A: Were you a good player?

R: Well I wasn't too bad. [Laughs] I wasn't a bad player, you know what I mean?

A: Tell us about your time playing soccer. What did that mean to you?

Mrs. Lima: Everything.

R: Oh it meant a lot. Yah, everything.

Mrs. Lima: Everything.

R: That's when I met my wife playing soccer.

Mrs. Lima: He was, I must interrupt him. He's very modest about his career in soccer, but he was one of the best players that came out of the Azores. The best!

A: Okay. Wow.

R: Well there were some good players that played like that you know. I wasn't the best, and I wasn't the worst one too, you know.

A: Yah, yah. So tell us some stories about playing soccer. Any interesting games you remember back there?

R: Oh yah, very good games.

A: Tell us.

R: I remember one game. I have the pictures downstairs.

A: Okay.

R: I'll get them.

A: Sure, I'll just put this on pause. Okay. So you've got some pictures here.

R: Yah.

A: Oh these are great.

R: This was the junior team.

A: Okay. And this is on Terceira?

R: Faial.

A: Faial.

R: Still Faial.

A: How did you get interested in soccer to start?

R: Well everybody is. [Laughs] (A: Yah?) Yah, and they still in the high school; this high school don't.

A: And so did you have some winning teams?

R: Yes, yes, in Terceira.

A: Okay.

R: Also Faial, you know, but Terceira was (--). That's the high school team.

A: Okay. Yah, so tell us, you were going to tell us about a certain game.

R: Yah, let me see if I can find that picture over here. It should be over here someplace.
[Looking through photos] Oh here, here.

A: What happened?

R: Okay, over here. I got really hurt on this one here. (A: Okay) And the guy wanted me to stay out okay, and this was on extra time, extra time.

A: Okay.

R: We were one hour extra time. And so I told him, you know, "How much longer to the end of the game? He said, "Four minutes." Okay, so I went in. You know, I couldn't even walk, but it happened that I scored the winning goal. So that's, this when the people, you know, came in over here. See this?

A: Oh, the people went on to the field?

R: Yah went on to the field and carried me out.

A: They were so happy?

R: Yes. Yes.

A: So how did you get the goal on the guy? Do you remember? Do you remember what was happening?

R: Oh yah, I got the ball, I got the ball from you know, one of my teammates. And I saw the goalie was, was not protecting, you know, the net the way he should be, you know. He should have been (--) And I says, throw out the ball over him, you know. It was, it was a nice score, yah.

A: Was he too far out in front of the net?

R: Yah, he was too far. He thought I would never get to the ball, because I couldn't run then. You know what I mean? So he move out to get to the ball, and I got to the ball. And he paid for, yah. [Both chuckle]

A: Now what year was that? Do you remember?

R: Yes, it was just before I came over in 1962.

A: Okay. So the folks on Terceira they recruited you to come over to play?

R: From Faial to Terceira, yah they did.

A: What was the name of the team?

R: Lusitânia [Sport Clube Lusitânia, located in the municipality of Angra do Heroísmo, on Terceira].

A: Okay. And what was the team that you beat on that game?

R: Was the number one rival. [Laughs] (A: Really?) Was Angrense [Sport Clube Angrense, also located in Angra do Heroísmo] was the other, the second best team.

A: Okay. Good, good. So what made you decide to immigrate to the U.S.?

R: Let's see. Well the job I had was good for one people, one person only. You know what I mean? (A: Yup) If I wanted to raise a family it would be hard. So I said well, I took a chance.

A: Was the process difficult do you remember?

R: At the time yes, yes.

A: And were you thinking about coming to a certain place in the U.S.?

R: Well I had friends over here in Lawrence.

A: In Lawrence, okay, and what were they doing for work?

R: Well they were regular workers, you know, factory workers. At the time they (--) At the time there was three good companies in Lawrence, you know, and they were working for one.

A: What were the three major companies?

R: The three was Malden Mills, and Frank C. Meyers, yes, and Western Electric. (A: Okay) They had a huge shoe shop which was the biggest in the country then called "Lawrence Made". There was a lot of Portuguese people there too.

A: Okay. And so when you came over where did you live first?

R: I lived with two friends, you know, one was (--) Two was high school friend from high school. You know what I mean?

A: Okay.

R: And I went to live with them, you know what I mean, until I got married. Then I moved out.

A: Okay. And what neighborhood were you living in at that time?

R: It was North Lawrence.

A: North Lawrence.

R: North Lawrence. Well they had a Portuguese Club, and all the Portuguese used to be around the club, you know, they lived around the club.

A: Okay.

R: Saratoga Street, Bennington Street, and then Chestnut Street, all in the same area.

A: Okay. And where did you go to work when you first arrived?

R: When I first arrived I started at Malden Mills for a month or two, two months. And then I moved to a different city to play soccer, but then I come back to Lawrence, you know. It was just one year try and I come back to Lawrence. And then I went to work to Bolta Products [established in Lawrence in 1930 as the Bolta Rubber Company, by the 1960s Bolta Products manufactured plastics and vinyl goods]. (A: What was it?) Bolta Products. (A: Okay) It was a good place too, oh yes. It was a very good place.

A: So before you talk about that, tell us about this time that you went to go play soccer. Who did you go play for?

R: I went to Taunton, Taunton Sports. Yah, they paid me. Not, well at the time it was good money, you know what I mean? And but I tried for one year and that's it. (A: Umhm) I come back and then my wife came over from Azores. We got married and I just stick around.

A: Sure. I have a friend. His name is John Bertos [a Greek immigrant who settled in Lowell in 1959 and, soon after, formed the Lowell Astros soccer team, which had a number of Portuguese-speaking players and became one of the best teams in New England].

R: Oh yah, I know John.

A: Do you know him?

R: I know John, yes.

A: In fact we're (-- He has a lot of old photos and we're borrowing them and scanning them, and giving him back the originals so we can preserve the history. He's got a lot of interesting stories.

R: Oh yes, John. He's a good man.

A: Did you ever, did you ever play against him?

R: Oh yes! I played against him and I played for the team that he, he owned the team. Yah.

A: Oh you played for the Astros?

R: Not the Astros. Yah, Lowell Astros, yes, not for a long time, but you know. And John was a good man, good man.

A: Yah, yah. They've been having reunions.

R: Oh yah?

A: Yah, they're going to have a reunion next year. So I'll let you know.

R: I'd like to see John. I haven't seen him for a long time.

A: Really? Okay. We'll I'll tell him you said hello.

R: Yes, please.

A: Any memorable stories about playing soccer here in the U.S.? What do you think peoples' ideas or reception for soccer was way back then in the sixties?

R: Well in the sixties it wasn't a favorite sport, you know what I mean? We had bad times and hard times finding places to play, finding fields to play, you know what I mean? The city wouldn't let us use the stadium, would damage the grass. They would say, "Well you play football on the field?" But forget it. It was, what we did was, it was a Monastery over here on Shawsheen, and they had a soccer field, and they let us use the soccer field.

A: What monastery is that? Is it still there?

R: It's still there. It's apartments now.

A: Was that for Catholics, or?

R: Yah, yah.

A: Good. So you did soccer for about a year or so.

R: Over here in this country, a little longer, about five.

A: Okay, but full time you did for five?

R: No, no, part time.

A: Part time, okay. Any other stories you want to share about soccer?

R: No. [Laughs]

A: So you kind of settled down in Lawrence.

R: In Lawrence, yes.

A: And you were working for Bolta Products.

R: That's correct, yes.

A: What did they make?

R: They used to make upholstery vinyl for seat cars. It was a good place, yes.

A: Describe what you did on a daily basis.

R: I was on the shipping and receiving department. And I went from entry level to supervisor. And I worked until they moved out of the city. They went to Columbus, Mississippi.

A: Oh really.

R: They invite me to go, but I wouldn't go.

A: What did you do after that?

R: Well after that I just made time, you know, to retire. I work here and there, you know what I mean? I worked at Raytheon for eight years. And then I worked at Wyatt, which is Pfizer now.

A: Oh yah. Those are good companies.

R: Were good companies, yah. I work up here in Vicor [Vicor Corporation, manufacturers of electrical power equipment].

A: Yup. Okay. Good.

R: Just making time until I reach the age to retire.

A: Do you have any recollection of your kind of first experience coming to the U.S.? You flew right?

R: Yah, I come propeller.

A: Oh propeller, no jet huh!

R: [Laughs] No jet yet.

A: So where did you guys go? You didn't go right across directly then?

R: Oh yah, we come from Azores to Boston.

A: Direct?

R: Yes, yes.

A: Okay, and your friends (--)

R: Yes, was eleven hour flight.

A: Oooh! Your friends were there to pick you up?

R: Yes.

A: What did you feel when you got settled in coming to the U.S.?

R: Well my first, the thing I couldn't miss was the weather. It was hot. Hot, because I came over in May. And I got one of those hot days. Oh my god, this is real hot! Yah, yah, and then the winter weather was real cold. It was hot and cold. [Laughs]

A: That's what we're all about.

R: It was, my first impression it was on the weather, yes.

A: So what's your perception of the Portuguese community of Lawrence when you arrived?

R: Was a small one, but you know, it was a good one. You know, people used to help each other. Yah, it was nice. Nice. They filled me in. They, you know, they broke me in slowly. Yah, it was nice. Nice.

A: So they took care of people that came?

R: Yah, they showed the church, the club. The church, they had no priest then. Then we got one, yah. We used to have Father deSilva from Lowell, yah.

A: Okay. Father deSilva one, or two?

R: One. I think it's the first one, yes, yes.

A: What kind of a guy was he?

R: He was good, yah, very good, very helpful, yes.

A: So they didn't have their own full time priest at first?

R: No, no, no.

A: Had they had a priest previously?

R: They had one, yes, but then the group, the ethnic group got smaller and they lost the priest.

A: I see. I see.

R: And then later on, you know, around early 70s we got the priest back, yes.

A: So the church must have been started from people that came like (--)

R: Yes, yes, they build the church.

A: Like fifty years before then or something?

R: Before yah, I think it's (-- I'm not, I don't want to lie, but I think it's 1906.

A: Okay, and what was the name of the church?

R: Saint Peter and Paul.

A: Okay and it was set up as a Portuguese Parish?

R: Yes, yes.

A: Is the building still there?

R: The building is still there, yes, the parish, no.

A: Now the people that were here before the kind of people, more recent immigrants, (R: before me) where, what part of Portugal were they from?

R: They were from Azores too.

A: From Azores.

R: From a different island, Graciosa, like the, you know, lower. Yah, Graciosa.

A: That's where most of the people were from?

R: Yah, and Saint Michael too.

A: And Saint Michael. (R: Yes) Okay.

R: And then the new wave was from Faial, yes.

A: Most of the people were from Faial?

R: Yah, yah.

A: Okay. And were there any differences between the groups, you know, the people from (--)

R: Well I think there's always difference. You know, some they have different ways of living you know. Yah, but then we melt everything together, you know what I mean?

A: What were some of the differences in the early days?

R: Well the early days was harder for them. When we come over there was plenty of jobs around, you know what I mean? Yah, they had a hard time. They used to say we had a hard time and you guys got it made. Oh yes.

A: Yah, interesting.

R: Because there was work all over the place, all over. You could choose I want to go over here instead of, well I don't like this one I'm going on this one. Yes. Now it's hard again. [Both laugh]

A: I know. It's something else I'm telling you. So tell us about the church, the people involved? The priests?

R: Yah, when we got the priest he tried you know, he tried, but then the older generation was moved. They moved out of the city, you know what I mean?

A: Not the people from Faial?

R: Not the new one, right.

A: But the older communities?

R: Yes.

A: And where did they move to?

R: Well some moved up north, you know, New Hampshire. Some moved to Lowell, yes. Some moved to Peabody, you know what I mean?

A: Okay.

R: And a few stayed. The ones that stayed, they used to work for the city. So they stayed.

A: Is there a Portuguese Community in Peabody?

R: Yes.

A: Okay.

R: It's a good one too. (A: Yah? Good) Yah, and a large one.

A: What was the name of the priest that came in the early 70s you said?

R: Matos. Matos, yah, M A T O S, Father Matos.

A: Okay, tell us about him, your recollections.

R: Well he tried hard, he tried hard you know, but it didn't work with him. And then we have a new one, he came over from Cambridge. (A: Okay) He was good.

A: What was his name? Do you remember?

R: Yah, I got to get his name.

A: Sure. So I'm sorry, I think we missed a couple of minutes there.

R: Yah, okay.

A: So you met your wife playing soccer (R: Uh huh), and then you had, you wrote letters.

R: Yes, yes, yes.

A: And then you went to visit her a couple of times?

R: A couple of times, and then we talk about it and the best way was for her to come over.

A: Okay.

R: And we would get married over here.

A: Could you do that? Was it easy for her to immigrate and then get married?

R: She came over as a visitor. You know, she came over to visit me, you know what I mean?

A: Yah.

R: And then we got married and I you know, I hold her over here for until I became a citizen. You know what I mean? I needed two years to become a citizen.

A: Oh two years?

R: Well I had three. I needed two more (A: I see) after I got married. Well it was a little hard, but at the time the immigration help us a lot you know, oh yah.

A: How so?

R: Pardon me?

A: How did they help?

R: How? Well they gave me ideas, you know what I mean, how to do it. And I did it, you know what I mean. And the last thing was Congressman, what was his name? Burke, Burke, something like that. (A: Okay) He wrote a bill and he sent it to Congress to allow her to stay here, and that bill never show up. So she had to stay until she got an answer. She never got, we never got an answer. Up to now we never got an answer.

A: Well hopefully they won't kick her out next month. [Both laugh]

R: Right!

A: So you got married at (R: Portuguese) Saints Peter and Paul?

R: Yes, yes, Father deSilva came down to marry us.

A: Okay, so Father deSilva would come from Lowell to do marriages and baptisms?

R: Exactly, yes.

A: And other sacraments.

R: Yes, yes.

A: You were talking a little bit about when the church closed. I wonder if you could tell us again.

R: When the church (--) We tried to keep it open, we really did. Some people went down to Boston, but to no avail. So they told us, you know, you're going to merge with a new parish. I think it was three ethnic groups together, three or four, and they gave a new name to the parish, Corpus de Christi.

A: Okay.

R: And we there.

A: So you said they combined the Italians, Portuguese, (R: Polish) and Polish.

R: And there was another one. I don't know which one it was.

A: Oh there was four?

R: I think it was four. (A: Okay) Three for sure.

A: And they continued to have Portuguese language masses?

R: One (A: Okay). One. I don't know if it's weekly, or not.

A: And how about at the old church? Every day in Portuguese?

R: At the old church, yah, they had it every day, yes.

A: You talked about Father deSilva coming up from Lowell. (R: Uh huh) What was the, Lawrence's, Lawrence's Portuguese Community's relationship with Lowell?

R: Well Lowell, Lowell was bigger than Lawrence. If we wanted any services or any Portuguese food, you know, things like that, we would go to Lowell and get it.

A: Okay. Such as different foods? What about?

R: Shopping, you know, food shopping once a month.

A: Okay, what about like travel agency or (--)

R: Travel agency. Doctor no. Doctor used to be in Cambridge.

A: There was a Portuguese doctor?

R: Yes, in Cambridge, yes.

A: What was his name?

R: Doctor Branco. He was a good doctor.

A: Okay. So people would go to Lawrence?

R: Lawrence would go to Cambridge to see the doctor, yes.

A: Would people from Lowell go there too? Maybe?

R: Maybe. I have no idea.

A: So was Lowell kind of like a big brother (R: Yes) to Lawrence? Now would you folks go to Lowell for some of the big events?

R: Yes, yes, the one they have now, a three-day feast. Yah, that's a big one. That's a good one.

A: Now how about when you guys had a feast did people come from other cities to visit here?

R: Yes, some, yes some. Our Saint Peter and Paul Feast, you know, we would get some people from out of town, yes.

A: Okay. What, when was that feast held?

R: June.

A: June, okay, and it (--)

R: Around the 23rd, 24th.

A: And what would the church do for that?

R: Well we had a procession and then we have two, three days, two days, Saturday and Sunday festival, you know what I mean? Yah.

A: And was it held at the church grounds?

R: Yah, church grounds, yes, yes.

A: And where did the procession go? Do you remember the route?

R: Yah it would go a block, two blocks around the church. Yah, two blocks. It was a nice one.

A: Would people, like other groups come out to watch?

R: Yes, yes, yes.

A: Okay. Good. What other activities did the church do? Did they have organizations like sodality or men's club, or?

R: They had one I remember. That I remember they had one, "The Light of the World" [In Portuguese, A Luz do Mundo]. But then you know, then the people that used to run that they keep it secret. We didn't know anything about it, and when they die that's it.

A: Why would they keep it secret?

R: I don't know. I don't know.

A: And what did “Light of the World” do?

R: It was just like an insurance. You know what I mean? And if you want, you know, if you were laid off they would help you. They would help you with a funeral.

A: Okay.

R: It was nice.

A: Was this a national organization?

R: No, no, it was just local.

A: Okay. And what’s the name in Portuguese?

R: Luz do Mundo, Luz do Mundo, yah.

A: Luz do Mundo, okay. Very good. And tell us about the Portuguese Club [the Portuguese-American Club, which was established in Lawrence in 1933]. I’m very interested in that.

R: Yah, they help too, yah. It was a place where we would go to meet to play soccer you know. It was nice, they were nice. At the time they you know, they resent. They didn’t want us to go in and take over, you know what I mean?

A: You meaning the older community?

R: Yah, yah, yah, but then they took us in, yes. They needed us because they, the age difference you know was huge then. They were in late 50s. We were early 20s you know what I mean? So.

A: And what makes you say that they didn’t receive you at the beginning?

R: At the beginning, I don’t know, they were scared that we would take over the club and kick them out. [Laughs] We never (--) We didn’t have that in mind, but.

A: And how do you know they had that feeling?

R: Yah, they told us.

A: They told you?

R: Yah, they used to tell us, “You guys want to take over and kick us out?” No, they did, yah.

A: Where was the club located?

R: Same place, Saratoga Street, same place. Still there, it’s still there.

A: It's still there?

R: Yes, yes, they're doing a good job now. They keep it up, yes.

A: What's it called?

R: Portuguese American Club.

A: Okay, okay, very good. And how long do you think that's been in organization? Long time?

R: Yes, yes. It's over, it's 1923. [Note: the club was established in Lawrence in 1933].

A: Okay, wow.

R: 1923 or 26, something like that.

A: Okay, good.

R: It's holding. It's holding the people together now yes.

A: Yah, do they have other people besides Portuguese?

R: Now? Yah, they have the Spanish going in you know. They support the club. They can be members because you have to be Portuguese or married to a Portuguese girl, or something like that. (A: Okay) But they support the club yes.

A: Can you rent it out like for (--)

R: Yes, yes, they have a hall, a big hall, yes. It's a good club, yah.

A: Do they do any activities at the club?

R: Yes, they have their annual picnic. They have the anniversary too, party. (A: Okay) Oh yah, they're doing a good job. All the young people, it's just like when we started over there. Now it's their turn. They go in and take over. They're doing a good job, a very good job.

A: Yah, other kind of community activities for the Portuguese in Lawrence?

R: What do you mean by that?

A: Like were they active in politics, or?

R: The previous president was active you know, with the government. Yes, yes. Good man.

A: What was his name? Do you remember?

R: Danny Mello.

A: And historically, how do you think the Portuguese Community dealt with the other ethnic groups in the city?

R: Well over here in the city of Lawrence, at the time the Italians they have their own club. And then the Greeks they have their own club. And they wouldn't get together. (A: No?) No, no, no way. No way. They have their way of running things. We have our way of running things you know.

A: Has that changed at all, or?

R: I don't think so. I'm not involved on that, but after my time no, no.

A: Do they, do the other groups still have clubs?

R: Yes.

A: The Greeks?

R: Well they Greeks they moved out. Most of the Greeks went to Lowell. They have in Lowell. Now they have a church over here up the street. St. Helen.

A: In Andover.

R: Yah, Andover. And but the Italians they're still in Lawrence, Methuen. No, Lawrence, Lawrence yes. They sold the club to Commonwealth Motors.

A: Okay.

R: But they open a smaller one. I think they opened in Methuen. (A: Okay) I'm not sure of it. But we never got together with them. (A: No) Even the Spanish people now, they have a big, big feast, annual feast over here in Lawrence, but that's it, that's the only time they get together is for that feast and that's it.

A: Do the Portuguese participate in that?

R: No, no, no.

A: No, okay.

R: The only ones that used to invite us to participate was the Irish.

A: Yah.

R: Yes.

A: For like?

R: Saint Patrick parade.

A: Okay, good. Any other thoughts about the Portuguese Community in Lawrence?

R: Well we have been peaceful. We didn't cause any trouble so far. And what can I say? We're so small in Lawrence. And then most of the people move out of Lawrence. So it was nothing that we could do, or participate on. We were so small, so small that they didn't even recognize us, you know what I mean? But we did our share for the city. Oh yes, we did our share for the city.

A: I think there was Portuguese strikers for the 1912 strike?

R: Yes, yes, yes.

A: I think that was one of the groups that helped out with the Bread & Roses.

R: Right, right.

A: That's interesting. So Renato, any final thoughts you want to share?

R: Well the only thing I can share and I can say, and I'm speaking for myself, I did the right move, the right thing, coming over to the country, yes. The country took good care of me. And I was a good citizen, you know, and I never caused any problem. And I can speak for the Portuguese too. Most of the Portuguese they think like me, you know what I mean? They're glad that they came over. They melt with the people, you know what I mean. They don't cause any trouble, you know, and they, they work for the good of the country. Yes, yes.

A: Good, I agree.

R: That's what they do, yah.

A: Well thanks very much for sharing some thoughts today.

R: Yah, you are welcome.

Interview ends