

**NAME OF PROJECT:** *Italian Canadians as Enemy Aliens: Memories of WWII*

**DATE OF INTERVIEW:** June 21, 2011

**LOCATION OF INTERVIEW:** Sydney, NS

**NAME OF INTERVIEWEE:** Dominic Nardocchio Jr.

**NAME OF INTERVIEWER(S):** Nick Sehl

**NAME OF VIDEOGRAPHER:** Louanne Aspillaga

**TRANSCRIBED BY:** Louanne Aspillaga

**DATE TRANSCRIBED:** October 12-14, 2011

**ACCESSION NO.:** ICEA2011.0047.0001

**PROJECT NOTE:**

**Please note that all interviews have been transcribed verbatim. The language in this transcript is as it was provided by the transcriptionist noted above. The project staff has not edited this transcript for errors.**

**KEYWORDS/TAGS:**

Sydney, CapeBreton, CapeBretonIsland, NovaScotia, Italy, FirstWorldWar, WorldWarOne, WWI, WW1, SydneyMines, Philadelphia, SteelPlant, immigrate, immigrant, immigrants, immigration, English, England, Internee, Internees, Interned, Internment, Internments, InternmentCamp, InternmentCamps, Camp, Camps, WWII, WW2, WorldWarTwo, SecondWorldWar, ItalianCanadian, ItalianCanadians, Nardocchio, NardocchioJr, NardocchioSr, DominicNardocchio, DominicNardocchioJr, DominicNardocchioSr, BuddyNardocchio, Miranda, SacredHeartSchool, SacredHeart, shoemaker, hockey, FederalGovernment, navy, army, AirForce, MoxhamCastle, Scotland, SaintMarys, SaintMarysSchool, StMarys, StMarysSchool, Halifax, CNR, CanadianNationalRailway, GeneralMotors, Badeck, GlaceBay, NelgaBeach, June10, RCMP, RoyalCanadianMountedPolice, RoyalCanadianMounties, Canada, jail, NewWaterford, SiroMoro, Moro, Truro, Petawawa, CampPetawawa, welfare, RedCross, CanadianRedCross, MikeMartinello, MichaelMartinello, Martinello, MichaelLaPen, MichaelLaPenna, LaPenna, Dominion, TitoCommelli, Commelli, ItalianClub, ItalianClubs,

Montreal, ItalianConsulate, Consulate, Consulates, SydneyShoeRepair, SouthAmerica, nonItalian, nonItalians, German, Germans, States, UnitedStates, UnitedStatesofAmerica, America, coal, CanadianForces, military, citizen, citizens, CanadianCitizen, CanadianCitizens, CanadianCitizenship, apology, vaudeville, violin, violins, violinist, violinists, EmilioPace, Pace, musician, musicians

### **ABSTRACT**

Dominic Augustin (Buddy) Nardocchio Jr., was born on July 9, 1931 in Sydney, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. He is the son of Dominic Nardocchio Sr., a shoemaker, and one of the 22 men interned from Nova Scotia. Buddy recalls his family history starting with his grandparents. His maternal grandparents, the Vivas, first immigrated to Philadelphia, USA, before finally settling in Sydney Mines, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, Canada. There, Buddy's mother, Annie Viva was born and raised. Buddy's paternal grandparents immigrated to Sydney, Nova Scotia in 1916 from Miranda, Italy. At that time, Buddy's father, Dominic, was just 11 years old and did not speak a word of English.

Buddy recounts growing up in the 1930s and being around his father's shoe store and repair shop. There, he met different types of people and learned about the shoe trade. He says his father received a contract from the federal government repairing shoes for the Canadian Forces. At the time before Dominic's arrest, there was over 10, 000 dollars worth of goods already paid for in the upstairs storage room of his shop. When his father was arrested on June 10, 1940, Buddy was just nine years old and the oldest of eight children. He says his life changed quite a bit during the 21 months that his father was interned, because he had to help his mother out a lot. After his father's release, Buddy continued to be mistreated in school, and so he was sent to Halifax to finish high school. Buddy also talks about his automotive career, running a few dealerships for

General Motors in the Cape Breton area, surviving the recession of 1981-1982, before finally closing up shop and retiring during the 2009 recession.

**INTERVIEW**

**DN: Dominic (Buddy) Nardocchio Jr., interviewee**

**NS: Nick Sehl, interviewer**

**LA: Louanne Aspillaga, videographer**

[Title screen]

[Fades in at 0:00:11.8]

NS: Ok we'll start with your full name and your birth date?

DN: Uh, my name is Dominic Augustin Nardocchio. Born in July the 9th, 1931 in Sydney.

NS: Sydney? And tell me about your family, your parents, your grandparents, your siblings?

DN: Okay. [Clears throat] Now my parents are--were Dominic Nardocchio and Annie Viva Nardocchio and uh...my father immigrated from Italy in uh 1916 in the middle of the First World War. And my mother was born in Sydney Mines and her parents uh, uh--were, were--had immigrated from Italy to, to uh, to Sy--Philadelphia. And then Philadelphia my grandfather was working and he met my grandmother there and uh they became friends and became lovers and uh, and he asked her father for her hand and they got married. And they decided after they got married that his job was much

like slave work so he--they decided that they were advertising for workers at the steel plant in Sydney Mines. So they, they, they, they decided they'd immigrate to Sydney Mines! So they did, they got to Sydney Mines and shortly after they were there, they, for some reason or other, they decided that they would move the plant. They never opened the gate and they never, never fired him for it. And they moved the plant to Sydney so...He, he uh had a big building and he, he made some use of it and uh, and uh from there he uh he, he brought up a large family, uh, about 13 children and uh, they've all done well. And, and then my uh, paternal grandparents, he immigrated uh very young. Because at the time, the steel company in Sydney was owned by English people in England. And they moved--went into Italy looking to uh recruit workers for the steel plant in Sydney. Because, where my grandparent--father came from in Miranda, Italy, uh they were only getting somewhere around 10 cents a day for working in the fields so that wasn't much money. So he decided he would move to Sydney and uh, get a job in the steel plant and they were paying much more money-which he did! And so anyway, that's where he, my father, and his brother, came with him. And after they came here and settled here they met another boy, Anthony, and he became a school teacher. My father eventually became a shoe maker and a shoe repairman and my uncle became that so that's--and then uh in later years I got married in 1952 and uh we had seven children and we are now married 59 years and we have eleven--no we have seven grandchildren and we have eight great-grandchildren. So we've had a busy life! [Smiles]

NS: So going back to your childhood what do you remember most about your childhood?

DN: Well my childhood was uh of course being in a family of foreign people, I was uh brought up around the fields and how to plant. And uh then I, then I went to school. I went to Sacred Heart School which is down on York Street. And uh, and uh after school I

would come from school to my father's store. He had a store on Charlotte Street. And I would go in the store and see how busy he was and I would say, "Well dad. Uh, what time you going home today?" And if was late I'd get the bus, if not I'd sit down and wait for him. And I'd see all of the goings-on [Chuckles] and I learned all the goings-on at an early age! The people that would come in the store was unreal. And then as I got a little older, I begin shining shoes and things like that so uh...uh then from there, I uh [Sniffs softly] I went into...to uh Junior High and I played hockey and I became a pretty good hockey player. And then of course, in uh 1940, my father was interned after the war started and uh then my life changed quite a bit. I was the oldest in the family of eight children and uh at that time, when my father was interned, he had the shoemaker shop and uh he had uh--and it was a repair shop. And he had a contract with the federal government to repair the military shoes uh in around the Sydney area. And of course in those days, it was a navy, an army and air force and he was kept very busy. At the time, he had uh five repairmen working in the store. And as a youngster after school when I would go in the store, it would be nothing to see an army truck pull up from the store bringing three uh bags, like potato bags full of shoes, to be repaired. And so he was kind of building up to keep ahead of things and he had two rooms upstairs over the store, packed--jam-packed with leather, shoe findings, shoes, everything. As a matter of fact in [Says muffled] 1938, no 1939, before he was interned in '40, he had over ten thousand dollars worth of shoe findings and everything paid for. And at 70 years ago--

[0:06:27.7]

NS: [In the background, unclear]

DN: --So you know, that was quite a bit so he was kind of planning for a rainy day coz everybody knows the wars are going to be over so and uh, and his contract would,

would, would kind of fade away. So, so then when he was interned uh...he uh...he was one of 21 that was interned--

NS: Uh before, before we get to there. Okay, sorry. Um, just staying with your childhood, because we'll get to the internment in a sec--

DN: Okay.

NS: --Where um, where did you live specifically? Your neighbourhood?

DN: Pardon?

NS: Your--the neighbourhood you grew up in? Where did you live specifically?

DN: In Sydney. On, on King's Rd. On S--and you know it was strange, uh, uh Sydney was known for its Moxham Castle. And Moxham uh came here as the President/Manager of the steel plant and he had a son in the United States at the last steel plant that he was at. Now, the castle that came to Sydney it's the third time it was moved. It was--in made in Scotland then he went to Philadelphia I believe. And his wife said, "I will not go unless you take my home with me." So they had to dismantle the castle and bring it to Philadelphia. Then came to Sydney. Same thing. They had to dismantle it and bring it to Sydney. So after they got it in Sydney and got it all erected, they decided to bring their son here. So, the house that my father bought...in 1936, it was the house that Moxham built for his son. And much of the, the supplies, the equipment, like the stonework that was used for the foundation and the woodwork was used in the house and uh, and it was a very nice house. And when it was built and, and set up there, the son came to work at the steel plant and about six months after he came here, he got killed in a, in a,

an industrial accident. So...uh, Mrs. Moxham couldn't take it. They packed up and left. Then it was there over the years and a few people had it and then one year, a person that was uh special needs person or whatever you ca--you can say, burnt it. And that's what happened to our castle. It was a nice building. And as a youngster, I-- the people across the street that looked after it, I was--I grew up with some of them and uh, we'd go over. And from the garage where it was made into living quarters for the care keepers, there was a tunnel going down across the--underneath up into the castle. And we used to go over and play in there. [Laughs softly] So, that was one of our [Unclear]. They'd talk about the castle, I know a lot about it! [Laughs]

NS: Know a lot about it. And you've mentioned on working on shoes. Well, at what age did you begin to work?

DN: Did I start--

NS: Yes.

DN: --to work? I started to work--well after I come out of--after my father was uh released in March of '42...uh school--I had a hard time in school because I was uh...looked upon as my father being [Laughs softly] you know, uh, a war criminal and everything so I didn't--I would--I didn't get along in school. I wasn't treated very good so one of his friends, uh, a lawyer--he asked his lawyer, "What am I gonna do?" he said about the situation. He said, "Buddy's having a hard time in school." So he said, "Look Dominic." He said, "I'll tell ya." He said, "You're not going to get anywhere with it." He said, "If he wants to go to school, you're gonna have to send him away." So, that's what he did. So he uh, sent me to St. Mary's in Halifax and I finished my high school there and I come home. And of course, like I said before, belonging to a foreign parent uh, I was uh

involved with hockey in Halifax and I loved it and Marty Barry was the coach of the, of the uh St. Mary's juniors and...I would have liked to have gone back but no, it wasn't there. So I stayed home and I, I got a job. And I went to work at the, at the CNR [Canadian National Railway]. So, while I was married--got married--and went to work there and then in '64 I decided I would uh...uh, I would go and uh sell cars with my brother-in-law at uh Cape Breton Chrysler. So I was there for uh...oh 14 years. So while I was there, in 1978, uh General Motors came looking for me and they wanted me to open a dealership. And uh... [Says while clearing throat] so I said to my wife, I said to Zelia, I said, "You know." I said, "What are we going to do?" "Well," she said. "It's up to you," she says. I said, "The only problem is I'm working with your brother, Gerard." And I said, "You know, we get along pretty good." "Well," she said. "You know," she said. "He worked for his brother, Alfi, and he, he made a move and he thought he'd do better so..." she said. "I don't think he should hold that against you." So I did. I made a move! And I was in--eh I was in Badeck when I opened it in '78-'79, January the 5th, I opened my doors. And then in 19...middle of 1981 coming into '82, interest rest--interest rates went sky high. And some dealerships were going out of business. They had too many used cars and there's no money in the bank to run the business, so some of them were closing up. So there was a dealership in Glace Bay, Bay Chev Olds, and one Friday afternoon in February, I got uh word that they had closed up. So on Sunday, one of the boys from Moncton called me--GM. Said, "Buddy you interested in going to Glace Bay?" "Well," I said. "Depending on what it's gonna cost me." "Never mind what it's gonna cost you. Are you interested?" I said, "Yeah ok George." "Now keep your mouth shut," he said. "There's some legal tanglements--entanglements and when we got them straightened out we'll be back." So, I finally got in there on the 23rd of August, '82 and then I uh...2009 when they were closing dealerships I was one of the ones they picked so [Sniffs] I retired!

[0:13:34.5]

NS: Well done.

DN: Finally! [Nods and smiles]

NS: Yup.

DN: Finally.

NS: So just--oh this is breaking up finally. For your childhood, before the Second World War started, do you remember how the Italian community got along in your neighbourhood, if--was it active? And how it [Unclear] with other communities, Irish or other--

DN: Well, I didn't, I didn't, I, I did, I had some boys--some friends. We, we, we had--we played ball and after school. But, I always had a lot of chairs--chores to do.

NS: Yeah.

DN: Like I can remember one time, I--one summer, I, I uh, I uh liked playing ball or I liked going down the beach--Nelga Beach was just across the street from us and uh going down there. But before I would get to these places, I always had uh a row of, of work to do. And I can remember I was saying, the one--one week it took me! I had to dig a trench to plant a hedge. And I had--it had to be a foot wide by 24 inches deep. And it had to be good and clean or else he'd make me [Says laughing] do it over again. But, okay, I did it. And that's, that's the story you know--

NS: Yeah

DN: And that's how I got along...

NS: Yeah.

DN: [Says softly] Yeah.

NS: Was there, was there an idea of like Italian-type community and was there ever talk of fascism amongst the Italians or--

DN: Not really.

NS: No?

DN: Not really.

NS: No, and you never eh--you never faced resistance because of it?

DN: No. No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no.

[0:15:03.1]

NS: [Softly in the background] No, eh. Okay, so then, we'll, we'll move right now to more information about your father. When the police came for your father, what happened? What day was it when...

DN: [Pause] As I look back and think of June the 10th, 1940. I happened to be in the store waiting to see what time he would be going home.

NS: [In the background] Yes.

DN: Now here's a man that had, had a, uh uh a contract with the federal government to repair shoes.

NS: [In the background] Yes.

DN: And there was uh two RCMP officers walked in at about four o'clock...and after this happened, I had heard that this was a s--was a time that was set across Canada. This was done at the same time across Canada. Four o'clock here and three o'clock there and ten o'clock there and so on. It was all done at once across Canada. So, they went in the back shop. He was in the back shop and he was working on shoes. And the next thing I saw him come out and uh...I didn't see him from that time on until 19--March of '42! But anyway, they took them and put them in jail...and uh...then they were allowed to go home and gather suitcase and so on. So then that evening they were in jail and uh...uh somebody somehow put two f--young fellows from New Waterford into the jail. They were drinking and they were looking for trouble. And they were starting--wanting to start a fight. So, there was a gentleman by the name of Siro Moro and he went to the door and he knocked on the door and j--the guard came. And he said, "Look." He said, "These fellows in here I don't know who put them in here but they don't belong here. I'll give you 30 seconds to get them out, if not..." He said, "They'll be dead." And he said, "I mean it." And this Siro Moro, you know, like he's the kind of a fella that can lift a truck, load a coal. So, l--he said, "I'm not joking. I'm not fooling." He said, "We're not going to take any trouble." So they did, they took them out and took them away. So then they

packed them in cars and took them to Truro...by car. Then they put them on the station there in Truro and put them on the train and took them to Petawawa. So they all get in there and got settled in and that's when we, we heard where they were and we didn't know where they were going or what was happening. So...anyway, we uh, in the meantime the provincial government under rule of the federal government appointed my Uncle Tony, the school teacher, to look after the store. But after the store got going and of course they cancelled the, the contract immediately [Clears throat] And uh [Pause] all the stuff started to miss--go missing. The ten thousand dollars worth go missing, you know. So anyway, it was--went empty. Nothing. No money coming in, no shoes, no nothing and uh, we were on welfare. You know, I can remember as a youngster, going to the grocery store, getting the...the grocery order that on welfare and I remember going to the Red Cross and getting an extra quarter milk and it wasn't easy [Shakes head].

NS: No.

DN: [Clears throat] And you know June when he was interned, we had uh, I had uh brother three months old and he was sickly. And he--I re--I can always remember he was taking um [Clears throat] Excuse me. He was taking convulsions. And my mother had him in the tub and she would say to me, "Now hold him up Buddy. I have to go and get some--" I don't know what they used to get then to put in the water but anyway, and, and it was quite a worry. Very--lot of worry, you know. But anyway, so uh...that's you know that's, that's about...that's--now this thing about everything being missing. Uh, I know where it went. I saw it going and after my father come home from the camp and uh, he had no money to get started so he started and he--I had to give him credit. Because he started with nothing and he was known as a good, good tradesman and people respected that and I think they might s--might have felt that, yes, you know.

Okay, he was wrong. He did wrong. In order for him to have gotten that contract with the federal government to repair shoes and everything, he must have been doing something right. And you know after they cancelled the contract on him, instead of giving it to anybody else in Sydney, they took all the shoes to Halifax to repair.

[0:20:11.3]

NS: Yeah.

DN: So you know, it wasn't easy.

NS: And just--on the um, first day, were--was your father or mother given any formal reason? Was he being charged with being fascist? Did they have evidence or did they just--

DN: Nothing [Shakes head].

NS: Nothing at all.

DN: Nothing. As time went on...uh in his case and in some other cases, it was people that were kind of jealous of him and they made remarks and to people and, and you know and, and that's how that happened. Now you know like when you think about it, why would they give uh, uh any, any reason or anything. Like I can remember some fellows in there that were...illiterate. They couldn't read or write! Some fellows had very little English, you know and it was kind of a shame. Like they wouldn't hurt a fly, you know! And I can remember one fella. There were two down--two--these two fellows down the pier. Uh, can I mention the name? [Pause] Okay, two fellows. One fellow was

Mike Martinello who was a devil. And he was, he was illiterate [Unclear] But a good guy, a comical guy. And there was Michael La Penn [La Penna] and this fella was an angel. [Chuckles] And they were always arguing, back and forth, carrying on and everything. And this Michael La Pen [La Penna] you know, he was a saint on earth. Why?! Why?! Why?! [Says laughing] You know. Everybody used to say, "Oh my God! Somebody, somebody made a mistake with his name 'cause they don't mean him!" You know and there were a lot of fellows like that. There was another fella--I remember a fella from Dominion-Tito Commelli. And uh, there was no reason, no reason for any of them! Coz they could never find anything against them.

NS: So, when he was taken to the camp, where was he interned and for how long?

DN: My father?

NS: Yes.

DN: He was interned in Petawawa, Ontario. And he was there for 21 months. July the -- June the 10th, 1940 and released in the twe--on--in March of '42.

NS: And how much was your mother kept [Unclear] of the situation there? Of where he was and what he was--

DN: Oh yeah, oh no, he wrote home and everything. I mean, they were, they, they--uh being in a concentration camp in Canada wasn't like the other parts of the world you heard about the concentration camps. I mean--and they put him in the shoemaker store and he got paid 10 cents a day. And he had uh, he, he had a good shop and everything

and he did the work for all the internees and all the, the, the soldiers and everything too, you know, so--

NS: And, and he was fed well and [Unclear]--

DN: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah.

NS: Um, did he have relatives in the camp or was he by himself with just friends or, did he meet anyone there that he knew, prior?

DN: Not--well he had all the people from around here-he knew them.

NS: Yeah, yeah.

DN: You see what happened, before, before the war started, uh they had a couple of Italian clubs, one down the pier and one in Dominion. The one in Dominion is still there! Still. So anyway, they had them and they used to visit back and forth. Now in Montreal there was a, a huge Italian population and they had a couple of uh consulates there. So they decided to send one down here. And there was a fella came here in 1937, late '37. His name was Rajjaki [?], I don't know how you're s'ppose to spell it, but, he, he came here. His name was Rajjaki [?]. And he got uh a--an apartment with an office over the old Royal Bank on the corner of uh Charlotte and Dorchester Street. And of course, when he got there, got settled in, he went to see the manager. He said, "Now." He says, "I, I." Told him who he was and he said, "I want to meet some of the Italian people." So he said, "How can I do that?" Well they said, "Just go up across the street to Sydney Shoe Repair." And he said, "Dominic Nardocchio. He, he'll take you wherever you want to go." So that's how my father got involved with him and uh...anyway they went

around all these clubs and uh he turned out to be a real shyster in the end, and of course, like these people that uh--these people that uh--these Italian people, oh they thought this was from heaven you know. God! Italian Consulate. But they come to find out afterwards, after they come out of the camp, and some of these fellows travel around a bit. Uh, they found out that this fella took a lot of money out of Cape Breton, out of the Italians, and Montreal. And he and his wife, and their little dog--they had a little white dog, they used to called Dollar. Very appropriate. They went to South America and that's where they lived. That's where they ah--wound up. So anyway, uh probably that was part of what, what, what could have happened but anyway those are things you know...

[0:25:37.2]

NS: Yeah. And just, just remembering stories about the camp. Did he ever say there was any non-Italians there? There was other people?

DN: Oh yes! Oh yes! There were Germans there.

NS: Yeah.

DN: And uh [Grins] I won't go any further [Laughs]

NS: So, so they didn't interact very well? They didn't have much a relationship in the camp or anything did they?

DN: No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. They, they--no, no as far as that goes with the, with the uh, the uh...staff, the military staff. Wonderful.

NS: Yeah.

DN: Like they used to come in and, and uh they'd have lunch with them!

NS: Yeah.

DN: They'd, they'd cook the Italian meals and everything for them, you know. So, but [nods] they did alright.

NS: And did anyone from this area ever go to visit them in the camp?

DN: [Pause, thinks]

NS: Or any relatives--

DN: I don't remember. I don't think. I don't think.

NS: Perfect. Ok, so that's it for that. Now, your home life. Um, who--the main breadwinner of your family, who would you describe as being, while your father was away in the camp?

DN: [Pause] Well my mother was...God love her. She's you know--and I'll tell ya. If it wasn't for her family I don't know what we would have done. You know there was uh-- at the time, eight children, no money coming in. If it wasn't for the Vivas, uh...bringing over food and the girls that were away in the States, picking up clothing. And uh the

boys, they had a truck they used to haul bootleg coal, keeping the coal bin full. I don't what we would have done.

NS: And specifically about your mother, this was great pressure on her. How did--

DN: Oh!

NS: --your mother react and what did she do during the time?

DN: Haaaa. Well, no. While he was away, there wasn't a heck of a lot that she could do. She--so much pressure on her, like you say. And so busy. And of course, I was, well 10 years old, I mean you know. I did what I could and she expected--not that she expected, but we--she showed me things what I could do and how I could help her and I did! You know, and then like I say. And as he--well after he got home and I started to look back as I got little older, I thought to myself, Oh my God! How did she do it?! You know, but she got through it.

NS: Did you stay in school during this point like--[Unclear]

DN: Oh yes!

NS: [Unclear]

DN: Yes, yes, yes. Ya.

NS: And how did your teachers and--

DN: Oh, I had a hard time with.

NS: That's what--

DN: Why, I, I, I put up with it because of my mother really. Wasn't because of my father 'cause he was away and that was it.

NS: Yeah.

DN: Yeah.

NS: And so, you have your family and--what about your neighbours, uh, your church? Was their leaders in the community that came to help or did they just stay--

DN: No, no, no. The, the people like I say the people that really helped were...the Vivas. They were the ones that really helped. You know, and it was strange you know. When I looked back and I, I had mentioned it to my father. I said, "You know Dad." I said, "I can't understand this." I said, "You know, Papa Viva called, called uh Papa Nardocchio to tell him, 'You know Jim' " --they used to call him Jim. His name was Eugenio. They used to call him Jim. And he said, "You know Jim." He said, "An--eh, Annie's in a tough spot." He said, "Dominic's in, you know imprisoned in, in Petawawa and she's gonna need some help." "Yeah well I know," he said. "But you know," he said. He said, "You know." He said, "Gus." He said, "It's your daughter. You look after her." [Throws hand up in defeat] So, he did--they did! They really did, no fooling. [Inhales]

NS: [Unclear]

DN: And you know what's funny? Okay, when we [Chuckles softly] we lived on the corner of Falmouth Street and Bentinck Street in a big house. My father rented the house and he, he took the upstairs apartment for he and my mother and myself. And then my sister, Eleanor, came along and then my mother got--expecting again so they needed to get a house. Downstairs there was his father, mother...and [his brother] John and [his uncle] Tony. Now, my father paid the rent, paid the heat, paid the light, paid the telephone, brought the food home. So that was okay. So then, ah, in 1936, when he decided, had to get a better house. Family was getting too big for that house. So he bought that house on King's Road. So after he bought the house on King's Road and we moved into the house on King's Road, he went out, my grandfather went out, bought a house and paid for it on 210 Union Street and a new car. [Smiles] Paid for it. So you know, like I say, those were things that--

[0:30:58.2]

NS: And, and speaking of relatives. And during this time while your father was away, you had relatives who were serving in Canadian forces?

DN: Yes!

NS: Yes.

DN: Yes.

NS: How did they feel? Were they aware of it? Did they know what was going on at home? Were they--how did they feel about it? Did you ever find out?

DN: No, never really found out, but I mean they knew.

NS: Yeah.

DN: And then they were, they were made to know.

NS: Yeah.

DN: That these boys, you know, they, they weren't shunned out because they were in the military.

NS: Yeah.

DN: You know, they, they--and they were workers. Now I know for a fact that Tony was a hard worker. He was a mechanic as he was, you know, in, in, in private life so, uh you know and they all worked. And Louie, Louie, was I think Louie was the first in. And uh, he died young. So...

NS: [Unclear] telling them about Viva and [Unclear]

DN: Yeah, Lou--Yeah. Yeah. But anyway, like I say they uh--yeah it was quite a time you know. [Chuckles] And as I look back at it, I don't get the opportunity too often to look back at it and think about it and it was quite a time, you know it's uh--

NS: Your world was upside down.

DN: [Says laughing] Yeah.

NS: So, when they--your father was finally released from the camp, um, what day was it and were you given any advanced notice? Did you know when he was coming or just--

DN: No, I didn't know. Uh...my mother knew and she didn't want to say too much. And uh, so anyway, uh he was being shipped down to Truro and she knew and they asked-- they gave her a ticket to go to Truro to meet him, to meet--a bunch of them coming. Na--there was like--not the 21, like, not, not the 21 but there was about three or four. And you know, the other thing about it, as you look back. Uh, they, they said that a lot of these, uh people that were interned were--they didn't have any Canadian papers. So, er, er or no--they had to had Canadian papers. Why, why were they interned? You know, they became Canadian citizen. They were citizens of Canada. My father wasn't so that could have been part of the reason and some of them were, were, were not uh Canadian citizens. But anyway, it didn't make any difference. And it was just a spiteful thing amongst a lot of people.

NS: And to that point. How well did he adjust to his home life after being in the camp?  
[Unclear]

DN: Well, [Clears throat] for some time he was bitter but he was fortunate enough to have some, some people around the store, like people that he knew before he was interned. Like professional people, lawyers and doctors, and all this and, and uh, there was uh, uh, a lawyer especially. And he used to go into the store and talk to him. And he always used to say, "Dominic, times will be better." He said, "Take it easy." So [raises hand]...You know, so he, he got over it, eventually and uh, I used to hit him every once in awhile and tell him, "You know Dad, you worked pretty hard. You put ten thousand dollars worth of stuff upstairs." And I said, "It all went." And I said, "Do you know where

it went?" [Pause] He said, "I don't know." I said, "Yes, you do." I said, "What are you gonna do about it?" And he always used to say, "Don't bother me now." "Okay." So eventually, he told [?] the person what I knew. And--but that's as far as it went.

[0:35:10.5]

NS: So obviously, you're familiar now with the debate going on in Canada about this internment, about what happened 70 years ago?

DN: Yeah.

NS: How do you feel about it? And, what do you think of [Unclear?]

DN: Well [Laughs] you know. It's like the father says, "I suppose you go out with the car and get in an accident coz the brakes are bad. Well, you should have had the brakes checked before the accident." But I mean, this happened and uh, anyway, uh [Pause] There's the, there's uh eight of us still alive--one of my sisters passed away. And you know, I uh...okay, I've done pretty well and I, I don't know what they, what they would wanna do. Uh...what can they do? I mean uh, er, it's a hard--that's a hard question to answer. I mean, I suppose they can say, "We're sorry" and everything. But anyway, fine, this is 70 years ago. If it bothered me and it harmed me in any way, uh, I, I spa--I suppose I'd be, I could have become a drunkard, or drug alcoholic or something. But no, I, I forged on and that's what my background was about and uh, and uh I appreciate, I certainly appreciate those who did what they could for us. And uh...you know my mother was so good to us and my father in his own way. He was a, he was a different type of person. When he came to this country in 1916 he--no language and he take up English and he uh...he got the English okay. And then he, he went and worked with a

Jewish gentleman who taught him the trade, the shoemaking trade. Not just the repair trade, the shoemaking trade. Then, he met a gen--ah, another gentleman by the name of Mr. White-Professor White. He was a musician and uh, he took up the violin and he was an extremely good violinist. And at the time, there was a fella in Sydney named by the name of Emilio Pace. He had an orchestra. But anyway, before he put--got together with the orchestra, he and my father, before my father got into the shoe business, were on vaudeville. They travelled all over Nova Sco--all over Eastern Canada and into the United States. And of course, those were the days when the movies were playing, and there were sound--no, no sound. So there, so he--they used to play and play the music while the movie was on. So they were in the United States-I forget when-but anyway um [Pause] Al Jolson, the first talking picture, uh "Sonny Boy" came on. And that finished that coz there no need of them anymore [Says laughing] in the, in the theatres [Raises hands] because we got talking movies, so that's...So he come back and uh, and Emilio went on to, to have a band. But he was a very, very good violinist. He played all the string instruments and Emilio played all the wind instruments. And Emilio taught his son, Rudy, saxophone. And Rudy was one of the best saxophone players in Canada. Terrific. Yeah, so it's been quite a life! Quite a life. Yeah. So I don't know how much longer we'll move on. But from the other side [Sniffs] and from the Viva side you know...but anyway, no they were wonderful people over there. So.

NS: Thank you very much.

DN: Fine. No problem.

[Fades out at 0:39:13.9]