

## VOULA STATHOPOULOS

Interviewee: Voula Stathopolous, Kingston September 30th 2017, Duration: 1:06:08

Interviewed by: George Katinas; Summarizing by Angeline Boswell

min:sec

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Interview Time	Chronology	Place	Description
0:50	1947		<p>Her father came to Canada in 1947, and a year later her mom and the children came to Bellville. Brother, Sister, Her (8), and younger brother.</p> <p>Parents names were Elias Anagnostopolous and Georgina Fountas. Her uncle, who was already in Bellville for many years, brought her dad over during the civil war. He was a police officer, and they were 'chasing him', so they came over.</p> <p>Had to wait 6-7 months for papers; hard for mom because we lived in an apartment which was 4 rooms, and there were many people living there. They brought others over from Greece who lived with them.</p>
3:20	1960s		<p>Her cousin (George) married Dianne Karis. He later on became mayor of Bellville.</p> <p>Voula finished school around that time and wanted to go to university, but they didn't have money. So they worked together to send Peter (brother) to university, in Queens.</p>
5:00			<p>Voula was 21 when she moved to Kingston, because she had her sister living here and she got a promotion in work which led her to Kingston. Her parents didn't want her to be by herself, so they moved to Kingston too.</p> <p>She was working at Loblaws, and was making a lot of money for those days.</p>
6:30			<p>Her parents were pushing her to be married around this time. Her sister was already married at 19, and her parents thought "nobody would want her because she is 24".</p>
8:00			<p>Her uncle had a successful Baklava store in Toronto. He happened to be delivering a cake to a wedding in Kingston... her father always told the uncle to be looking out for a groom for Voula. They used to bring suitors to the home for Voula to choose. She didn't</p>

			<p>want to marry someone Greek, since she always saw Greek women staying at home and she didn't want that. One time they brought someone from Montreal, who her father liked because he had money and a nice car, and Voula said "Dad, today he has money but tomorrow maybe he won't, and then what do I have? Someone I don't know?" She used to battle it all the time.</p> <p>So when her uncle was bringing the cake to Kingston, he brought Tom Stathopolous who he knew from Toronto to the house. She liked his personality.</p>
10:00			<p>Afterwards, Tom phoned the house. He was persistent. He came down to the house again. He said: "you know, Voula, you don't know me and I don't know you, but I think if we are married we will be a good couple." She said "how do you know?" He said we will try our best. He used to come down every week to visit with her uncle. He asked her to marry him and promised her he would be the best husband. That was the start of their life.</p>
11:45			<p>They went to Toronto and bought a house there. She worked at a grocery store until they had their family. She would call her father every day at 10:00 am. She missed him, as she was always close to him. Her father wanted them to be in Kingston, so they could be closer. Especially after Voula had John, her son. John didn't know his father because Tom was working so much. John was 2. They decided they needed to be working less to be with the son more often.</p>
15:00	1973		<p>They went back to Greece so Voula could meet Tom's parents. Firstly, they went back to visit Voula's family, and Voula's father convinced Tom to move to Kingston.</p>
17:00			<p>They moved to Kingston in 1973. Tom bought 'the restaurant' from Voula's brother. Voula found the illness (cancer) and death of her father very stressful. She visited him every day. A few months later, her sister Mary fell sick. They had hardships. But we were a close family. Nowadays people don't know their second cousins.</p>
22:00			<p>People laughed at her because she was more Canadian than Greek. But she took her kids to hockey lessons, She also took them to Greek school. Pavlos was the teacher. He taught 75 kids by himself... Greek dancing, language, etc. And now her kids "speak better Greek than her"</p> <p>She felt she was losing her Greek, and her mom always urged her to keep her language so she doesn't lose it. She laughs, remembering that her mother was pushing her to learn English, and now she was pushing her to learn Greek.</p>
25:00	1950s		<p>It was difficult when she first came, not knowing English. She used to come home from School and cry. Her parents would tell her to not worry about that - to only worry about being on the right path and being good kids, and if she did that she would be okay. They would tell her to just do as much as she can, and she would be a good person: to not look too much at work, but to also look at her family.</p>

			<p>There were only 4 Greek families in Bellville at the time. They had already been there 30-40 years before they came. Had a priest coming from Ottawa every so often.</p>
27:00			<p>When we got married, the church wasn't quite ready yet so we got married at St. George's. People worked very hard to get our church ready in Kingston. Her brother, Tom, worked very hard. The people who work the hardest, behind the scenes, don't really boast.</p>
28:00			<p>She describes her father dying. The priest of the time, Father Psihos, told Voula to not be with her father all the time because she was stopping him from dying (and he was suffering). She was annoyed that he'd said this, but the moment Voula left her father alone, he died. The priest had been right.</p>
31:00	70's? (Guessing)		<p>The had the SUPERIOR RESTAURANT. One day the man whose life she saved in the hospital while she was visiting her father (by pointing out that this man had fallen onto the ground) came into the restaurant and thanked her. It felt very good to know she had done something like that for someone. She believes life is beautiful, but we make it difficult.  Voula describes herself as more Canadian than Greek, although she is proud of her Greek heritage.</p>
35:00			<p>She found it important for her children to have both education and fun. She wanted her children to have an education because she never did. When John started going to Queens, to congratulate him she insisted that Tom take John on a trip to Greece to spend time with his family there.</p>
40:00			<p>She says she is different than other Greeks in how she raised her children. She found that people didn't see the value in her taking her children to hockey and piano. She also describes how she taught her sons to do chores (laundry, making the bed...) something her mother said was wrong, because those were chores for girls. Voula jokes that her daughters-in-law and very grateful, though.</p>
42:00	Present		<p>Material things are not as important to Voula as other things. She always insists for her children that family is the most important, and you need to take time out of your day to do so.  She finds it sad that hardly anyone takes their children to church now. She thinks a big part of this is not having as organized of a system as some other places. She has been involved in Philoptochos for a year now, and has been trying to implement better systems. To clarify: she means that people do not establish/adhere to many rules.</p>

44:00			<p>If we involve younger people, this will help.          We need to involve people who understand the <i>Canadian way of life too</i>, to get the younger people in. She sees it's difficult to draw in (and keep) younger people to the community.          She really hopes she can do something to bring younger people in. She's trying.</p> <p>We need to realize that we have two lives (Greek and Canadian), and we cannot choose just one side.</p> <p>(On being in Philoptohos):          Everyone needs to be flexible; everyone needs to work together and accommodate different ideas.</p>
50:00	Late 1960s?		<p>They are working on raising money to fix the roof of the church. It is important for everyone to help out.</p> <p>She finds that not all members pay their dues. Or people spend too much money elsewhere and not enough on our church, whereas this should be something we donate to.</p> <p>She thinks our Greek church/community can be strong again. She reminisces on the times we had folklore, events, a bigger community, people attending/supporting more...          If people gave more time and money to the church, we wouldn't have any problems.</p>
53:00		<p>Philoptohos:          When she was in philoptphos, we had dances, fashion shows, bake sales...          Today, we hardly have anything. We run the coffee after church, buying coffee and cookies.</p> <p>There is a lot of criticism in the church: for example, Voula got a volunteer to do the flowers outside and they criticized her so she quit. The criticism isn't nice. We need to be more welcoming.</p>	
55:00		<p>Voula likes the current priest and presbytera (at the time: Fr. Matthew and Catherine Penney). They are very nice.</p>	
		<p>Their wedding: in Kingston.          At St. George's, because the religion is close to ours.          All the relatives came for it.          Tom's Greek is better than hers. When they moved back to Toronto after they got married, she remembers the family (especially Tom's brother) making fun of her Greek. It was fun, because she was the youngest and the newest into the family.</p>	