**Janet:** So today is October 31st, 1995 and I’m here in Concord, New Hampshire above the café neo brand. I’m very happy to be here with Peter Goulios who came here from Albania when he was 14 years of age.

**Peter:** 14, 15 years.

**Janet:** 14, 15 in 19...

**Peter:** 29.

**Janet:** 29.

**Peter:** In September.

**Janet:** In September and you came through Ellis Island at that time.

**Peter:** That’s correct.

**Janet:** You were detained in Ellis Island.

**Peter:** That’s right.

**Janet:** For about 10 days to 2 weeks.

**Peter:** Yes.

**Janet:** Something like that. Okay well I’m looking forward to whatever you can remember, I’ll start asking questions and then you can fill in. If you’d say again for the tape your birth date and where you were born.

**Peter:** I was born in Labove in October 8, 1914. You want me to mention the city too?

**Janet:** Yes.

**Peter:** Gjirokaster or Albania in Albania.

**Janet:** Gjirokaster was the big city.

**Peter:** City, yeah.

**Janet:** That the village of Labove was near.

**Peter:** That’s right.

**Janet:** Did you live in Labove up until the time you left for the United States?

**Peter:** Correct I went to school there and 4 or 5 classes school and then I want to leave and then I was 14, 15. But they didn’t want to leave me because they want for military. Pre-military handed us, somehow I managed to leave.

**Janet:** I see. Well do you remember the, did you live in a house?

**Peter:** Yeah in house, we had our own house.

**Janet:** You had your own house.

**Peter:** Yeah.

**Janet:** What was your father’s name?

**Peter:** My father’s name was Philip Bulios.

**Janet:** Your mother.

**Peter:** Sophie, Sophia.

**Janet:** Sophia. Do you by any chance remember your mother’s maiden name?

**Peter:** Yes Notides.

**Janet:** How do you spell that?

**Peter:** N-O-T-I-D-E-S, Notides.

**Janet:** Okay and brothers and sisters did you have?

**Peter:** I had a brother but he died. I don’t remember he died and a sister also when they were little. I was the only one who survived.

**Janet:** So then did you know them at all, your brother and sister?

**Peter:** No my brother was older than me, he died and then my sister was I think when I was little.

**Janet:** So essentially you were an only child.

**Peter:** The only child that’s correct.

**Janet:** Did you have grandparents that lived around where you did?

**Peter:** I did but they passed away before I was little, 4 years old or something like that. My grandfather.

**Janet:** You have any memories of him?

**Peter:** No little like I was about 4 years old not very much.

**Janet:** Right. How about your mother and father did they have sisters and brothers who were around?

**Peter:** My mother her father passed away early but my grandmother lived when I remember very well because I, my mother went to work in farming and when I came out of the school I go by my grandmother with my cousin. My cousin just passed away recently, he was little older than me about a year old.

**Janet:** What did you call your grandmother?

**Peter:** Well I have to spell it Zoitsa, it was from memos family. My grandmother family and she was a widow of early age and her brothers helped her until they were. I had an uncle too her brother and he was in Constantinople in Turkey, it used to be in Greece before and he had one, there I met him when I was young.

**Janet:** What do you remember about him?

**Peter:** Well he was a nice person, very nice person.

**Janet:** Was that something special that he would be living in Constantinople?

**Peter:** Well our country was very poor and they all go immigrant, but at that time United States was closer years ago to Istanbul. They were closer, they worked up there, a lot of our people they had stores there something like that one after another one, see.

**Janet:** How about your uncle did he have a store?

**Peter:** My uncle, well my grandfather had a store in Constantinople and my father and uncle was there but after my uncle-I don’t know they used to give in credit. He was a big butcher and he gave credit. The way I heard they gave credit to these officials they wanted to monthly pay.

The way I heard and then they move from here there they lost or the wars I don’t know. Then the old age he came in the village I remember very little.

My uncle came 1905 from Constantinople over here and then my father came in 1916 or something. The time I was born after I was born.

**Janet:** Yeah now what did you say you called your grandmother again?

**Peter:** Zoitsa.

**Janet:** How do you spell that?

**Peter:** Let me write, can I write?

**Janet:** Yeah.

**Peter:** Grandmother.

**Janet:** Yeah now does that mean grandmother, Zoitsa?

**Peter:** Yeah.

**Janet:** Okay great and now do you remember any-like when you came home from school you went to your grandmother’s is that right?

**Peter:** Yeah for lunch. We used to go to school in the morning then go home lunch and then go back in the afternoon, not like here. 3:30 or 4 o’clock we finish.

**Janet:** What do you remember like when you came home and you went to your grandmother’s house, what would she be doing or what would you?

**Peter:** Yeah she would give us something food and then…

**Janet:** Like what, what would she give?

**Peter:** Well food regular food I don’t know what she cooked but one time this is good to tell you because my cousin, me and my cousin was a year older. He just passed away God bless him and we used to play, but he made some kind of- in a fry pan.

Something like how do you call with flour, I don’t know it’s something. So, I was younger, I don’t know whether I was going to school or when my mother leave me there and he pushed me and I got a mark over here. So then I almost died they told me but I don’t remember nothing and that’s the story.

**Janet:** Now what was this cousin’s name?

**Peter:** Janie Jan.

**Janet:** Jan.

**Peter:** Yeah Janie he just passed away recently now I just got a letter from his wife.

**Janet:** So you knew him from the time you were young?

**Peter:** We were raised together yeah.

**Janet:** How about your grandmother what do you remember her doing, what kind of things did she do?

**Peter:** Well she was a very nice lady but she, her husband passed away and she got married again just to because she was poor to get a house. All men marry her just to support him, help him. I remember the way I was told when he died like in Thursday and my mother married- died on Thursday and my mother married in Saturday but he had a daughter with another woman before like a step sister. Then everything prepared for wedding the way I was told and then she start dancing regardless her father passed away even though he was old. I was told the stories that they enjoyed the wedding.

**Janet:** Well now when your grandfather died you weren’t born yet?

**Peter:** No I was born but I don’t remember I was very little. He was a big butcher in Istanbul but he lost everything from the wars or from the trust credit or something I don’t remember but the way I was told, I’ve never been in Istanbul, my uncle was telling me and my father same.

**Janet:** Yeah what do you remember about Labove.

**Peter:** Well Labove it’s a nice town we’ve got a beautiful church 1500 years old church and it was built by some I think it was king or not king but someone from Istanbul but I don’t know he’s originally from Labove or something but he made 3 churches like Saint Sophie if you heard.

Now in Istanbul they’ve got, how do you call it in Turkish museum, Saint Sophie in Istanbul and is similar big and so forth and was, people used to come and visit. They celebrate 8th of September they’ve got Saint Mary’s they used to gather from all the villages or cities. They had a big mass there to dancing and what have you after the church.

**Janet:** So, this was September 8th.

**Peter:** Yeah that’s the day I left, me and some other friends that they left for America. People who went because we had to catch the boat.

**Janet:** But describe the festivities on September 8th what would happen?

**Peter:** Well I didn’t go at that time but they used to have food and dancing and what have you celebrate. People used to come from evening and they slept in church, they were believers.

**Janet:** What was the significance of the day?

**Peter:** It was a names day, they celebrated the name day of the church or something I’m not too religious.

**Janet:** I see so this was…

**Peter:** September 8 every year. But now calmness when everything closed down and the church is still there but we’re trying to repair it because it deteriorated from.

**Janet:** This is the Christian…

**Peter:** Orthodox Church yeah.

**Janet:** It was Saint Sophia?

**Peter:** No Saint Mary [unclear 00:11:38] I think Saint Mary you could call Saint Mary. I’m not sure because I think because that’s 8th of September, I don’t remember.

**Janet:** I see yeah. So that would be the name day, it was named.

**Peter:** The name day of the church and they celebrate every year before the war. After the war they closed up, communism was there.

**Janet:** Well now the house that you lived in, can you describe it in Labove?

**Peter:** Well it was my father built it or my grandfather I don’t remember. But was about 1, 2, 3, 4 room house up but downstairs they had for it animals. Yes and it was a good…

**Janet:** What kind of animals?

**Peter:** Well like cows and goats and whatever sheep or something. They put the animal into it.

**Janet:** What was the house made of?

**Peter:** Stone but good built house it was not, it was a good.

**Janet:** Solat.

**Peter:** Solat yeah solat that’s it with windows with all kinds of drapes and what have you and we, my father came and repaired more, made some for the clothes and all that.

**Janet:** Well now your father left for the United States what year?

**Peter:** Well, I don’t remember exactly but 19…

**Janet:** When you were a baby.

**Peter:** Yeah I was a baby but 1916 or before I don’t know, but he was there a couple years in the army soldier and what have you. Then he came but my uncle came direct from Istanbul 1905 direct here.

**Janet:** Do you mean to say that your father came here and then he was in the first war?

**Peter:** No, he was Balkan wars after that, but my uncle came direct from Istanbul the way I was told.

**Janet:** I see. So when your father came back to serve Albania after he came here.

**Peter:** Yeah 1924 he came back, he stayed. I was 10 years old that time and I was so happy.

**Janet:** So that’s the first thing you remember of him.

**Peter:** Yeah that’s right.

**Janet:** When you were 10.

**Peter:** Yeah I was 10 years old, he stayed I think at that time I don’t know he stayed 10 months or some like somewhere like vacation time.

**Janet:** What do you remember about your father from that short meeting memory?

**Peter:** Well he brought me good clothes and nice something that I said I’d never forget those clothes I was so young.

**Janet:** What was he like when you first saw him?

**Peter:** Well he was a nice, good hearted person hard working. But too bad that this language is very hard to learn it. He was grown up when he came and he was working over here as a pent. He couldn’t stay inside work, he bought a horse and wagon. He sold coal in summer time, he sell ice cream and something like that for the kids.

But it was a problem because the summer were short here and then the horse wants to eat all year around, and you made little money but more in the summer but you have to feed. He soon will feed the horse and himself, it was all continuative.

But in one time it was first New Year and we were living in some house or apartment for, apartment inside in there same building. They celebrate for New Year they celebrate and they shoot some guns and they killed my father’s horse. It was across in the garage but they were good enough at pointing at the horse. Then the horse is there…

**Janet:** Was this in Chicago?

**Peter:** In Chicago yeah was all the horses and wagons there. So the milk man used to bring the milk here with horse and wagon. They bought another but I never forget because he used to take me like when didn’t have no school Saturday, Sunday with him.

Because it was a big wagon, he used to sell or I sell because I learnt the language more than he used.

But then the horse was funny because he look at the light red light, my father didn’t see the light and it was even though he was old. He was into he was the kind of horse.

**Janet:** Well you remember that horse?

**Peter:** Well definitely.

**Janet:** What was the horse’s name? All right well.

**Peter:** No, yeah it was a red horse, this is silly.

**Janet:** A red horse yeah with like a chestnut.

**Peter:** Yeah, chestnut.

**Janet:** Nice well let’s go back...

**Peter:** But they were nice people and they bought a new one.

**Janet:** Yeah that was nice. Let’s go back to Albania first and is there anything about the town when…?

**Peter:** The one store for food and the store for food and the coffee shop or something like that but it was not, there was 2 of how do you call them? There was 2 villages close by but one is about 10 minutes it’s up near the mountain, in the mountains, in the end of the mountains or a little down.

It’s almost one village but they have different ways to, when they go to see they have to pass through us and we’re all relative to each other.

**Janet:** Roughly how many people? Like what number?

**Peter:** Well it was about 100 houses or 200 houses at that time, maybe 2, 3 people in each house. Maybe 1000 people or something like that or maybe less.

**Janet:** Yeah, in Labove?

**Peter:** In Labove yeah because they used to come and go because before then they go to the cities. They used to work in the farms and they stayed home afterwards and normally they lived in the cities.

**Janet:** Yeah what were the farms growing?

**Peter:** Well there they planted wheat, corn and then all these vegetables and these and that but the pretty part about that country is like here it rains all the time, so up there 6 months 8 months no rain at all.

They work and they don’t even know rain it doesn’t grow nothing it burns everything and they couldn’t make it. When sometime it rains the weather you can’t judge it. So they make 10 times more you know.

**Janet:** Well like when your father was here in the United States how were you getting along you and your mother?

**Peter:** Well he used to help us always, send us but my mother worked hard.

**Janet:** She worked in the fields.

**Peter:** In the field yeah well not much but we didn’t have no cow, oxen they used to work with the oxen how do you call that?

**Janet:** Oxen.

**Peter:** Yeah oxen yeah but she didn’t have but she paid somebody for one day or sometime like I said my grandmother had big family and they used to give them the ox the worker maybe she pay more something. 5, 6 acres or something like that a small.

**Janet:** Do you remember any foods that your grandmother or your mother made that you particularly liked when you were growing up in Albania?

**Peter:** Well they made pita, how do you call that with cheese and all that and with meat, sometime they call Borek. I think those are Turkish name or Greek I don’t know.

They still make those, it’s still delicious, they make all kind of food with vegetable and they used to make with inside of a lamb and they used to call Pacha with garlic and all that.

During when they killed lamb or something like that they didn’t throw them away. So they roast meat they roast the lamb in the Easter or like that. Whenever they had weddings well maybe 10 rams they barbecue. Yeah they enjoy that’s the only enjoyment they got.

**Janet:** I was going to ask that what did the people for enjoyment.

**Peter:** Well yeah at holidays they go to church and they had names day, so go from one house to another they drink while they dance and so forth. They had lots of things years ago more now they don’t have nothing much. Well they probably now they start again but communism stopped religion.

**Janet:** Did they, what kind of instruments did people have?

**Peter:** Bouzouki, violin, mandolin and that clarinet how do you call it?

**Janet:** With the recorder or clarinet.

**Peter:** Clarinet yeah we had not too many not 2 of us, 2 or 3 people but all way but probably not.

**Janet:** Yeah so what do you remember about school?

**Peter:** Well school, that’s a good question. We had a good teacher when I was when I was much younger he was very strict with us.

**Janet:** Would you remember his name?

**Peter:** Yes his name was Angelo Vangjeli and he was a professor I don’t know whether is from Istanbul Turkey, Constantinople or something. But then always he was there and he was so strict but he really teach us and he called me professor, because the only thing the other people they were so afraid and he used to say that, “Who didn’t understand? I had always raised the hand because the other ones don’t have the guts to raise their hand.

**Janet:** They were afraid to say they didn’t understand.

**Peter:** Yeah they didn’t understand all they said he said again and he used to call me professor. Even I didn’t know but the other guys didn’t know either but count on me they learnt it too but he was very strict.

He used to say branch how do call them from the tree. So he used to say, “Bring a branch,” and not matter whether you brought the branch or something, if you does something wrong he hits you or he gets you to stay there for one hour with your foot up.

But he taught so good he was a professor and God bless him he was very nice. Then afterwards another guy was much younger and used to take us for picnics out and he teaches good but he was more young and he liked to sing and he was a very good teacher.

**Janet:** He wasn’t as strict as the first one.

**Peter:** No he was not. Well he was strict but not as much because he was old maybe we would get on his blood. This guy was young, we used to go he was a good teacher and he had the only son this second teacher.

He lost that son because he was gone to Gjirokaster because in high school or something like that or college and the three sons got drunk and he was to go home, the youngest son, and when I went back there I got married he used to like me a lot.

He invited me over and down he showed me his son’s grave and all that because I took him over to my house too. He’s very good but he died. He used to write me here I send him some money the only son I had and he was very good.

It was not a village but he came to our village, didn’t come every day he stayed there close by though. I went over, he had his son’s monument and grave and pictures and all that. He was very smart but he used to speak French too with his son.

**Janet:** Well you must have been a good student…

**Peter:** Well very good yeah. Yes very good, well I was quite and I want to confess my cousin was better than me but he was a little older. He was…

**Janet:** Were you in the same class with your cousin too?

**Peter:** No, he was a year older.

**Janet:** Okay I see. Well could you describe what you were like when you were 14 years old when you first came to the United States?

**Peter:** Well I was kind of little and the only son they told my mother why don’t you beat him? Because I had but I don’t know why. My mother just passed away not because- I was in Albania 20 years last lately because I got sick and stay there and I was there when she passed away.

**Janet:** I see.

**Peter:** They wouldn’t let me go out, they took my passport and they told I was an American spy. They were chasing me around.

**Janet:** Yeah well tell me why was it decided in 1929 that you would come here?

**Peter:** Well my father was here, my father was here and he wanted to take me but things were poor and he wants me, too bad he didn’t bring my mother at that time.

But we had a land we had house, good house and everything he didn’t want. They liked they were patriots. They don’t want to leave their land and their house and their family and their relatives it’s not like today. They had conscience.

**Janet:** So, you just came by yourself?

**Peter:** All by myself I had some friends.

**Janet:** From the same village.

**Peter:** The same village yeah, the two brothers here.

**Janet:** What were their names, what are their names?

**Peter:** Jimmy Botches is his name. Christian Chaves was his name but he was young 6 years old the other was about my age and their mother just passed away last year. She was only 100 years old.

**Janet:** She came also with you?

**Peter:** Well definitely once she had but I don’t know exactly whether- because her husband was in New York and picked them up and I don’t know whether they went Ellis Island or not.

**Janet:** So how many people were travelling that you were travelling with, how many were there?

**Peter:** Well we were 4 from our village and 2 others from another village and I’ve got to tell you this too maybe it’s interesting. This other fellow from this other village had his sister and niece, her daughter. He spoke little Italian or French I don’t know this other person but he didn’t come, but he took his sister up to France Cherbourg.

Put them in a boat like I did too and then he, but the funny part is in the middle of the trip he asked us to pay 10 dollars more because they raised the price or something. I don’t know how the, and I didn’t want to pay. I said, “We’ve got the ticket we don’t need to pay,” this lady she said, “You better pay me because they’re going to leave us here,” and that was that.

**Janet:** You mean he took- he went as far as Cherbourg with you.

**Peter:** Yeah with his sister and niece but it was like we were like a group together, but we stayed, we went from I don’t know [unclear 00:28:20]. We went to [unclear 00:28:23] northern Italy and we went to France in some city that they call Lyon, France and we stayed about 4 days there.

4 days and we didn’t pay nothing the company. Some English boat Leviathan was the name and we stayed 4, I don’t know 4 or 5 days in Lyon. They feed, they slept there then from there we went to Paris we stayed there one night. We seen that grand central there, we went there one night.

Then they took us to Cherbourg is in the ocean Atlantic Ocean across from England, and there we got the boat in 6 days we were in New York it was a big boat, English boat Leviathan.

**Janet:** Now was this, what was that stewardship company that paid for the whole thing?

**Peter:** I think so, we paid one ticket but only this guy took us about 10 dollars more to get this so he could buy something for himself with that.

I didn’t want to give it to him and she would say, “Don’t give them because they’re going to leave us here in the shores you don’t know.” So I gave maybe that’s interesting too, right.

**Janet:** Yeah that’s right. Well tell me about September 8th which was the day that you left.

**Peter:** I left.

**Janet:** What was happening would you remember of anything about that?

**Peter:** Well yeah. Well my mother was crying and other people and the other people were enjoying dancing and we go through the church in the middle of the city, not city but the town or village.

We went through all this and people trying to divide with us and the other people were enjoying everybody saying, “Good bye.” It was yeah.

**Janet:** How did you feel when you were leaving?

**Peter:** Well, I was going to my father but I met my father in 1924. He came up there and I missed a few months. God bless his soul I don’t know I was before, I don’t know whether they 10 years somebody was teaching me how to smoke or something. He caught me he beat me up and I never smoked even today. God bless his soul.

**Janet:** That was a good deed. So do you remember what you took with you anything that you brought with you to the United States?

**Peter:** Well I don’t know some little handbag or something with a few clothes that’s what I remember.

**Janet:** Do you remember anything about that trip from Labove all the way to Cherbourg?

**Peter:** Well yeah like I told you we went to [unclear 00:31:16] I think and we stayed there one night but everything was established, reserved.

**Janet:** I see.

**Peter:** We went there we ate we slept and then they took us but everything was paid. The train went through northern Italy and we arrived in France through Milan, it’s the northern part of Italy. Then we got to France.

**Janet:** Then you went to Lyon.

**Peter:** Lyon that’s right. We stayed there few days I don’t know I think 4 days or 5 days.

**Janet:** Do you remember what you did those days?

**Peter:** Well yeah we were eating we were looking but we liked better Paris because we only stayed one night fortunately but we see that Eiffel tower.

**Janet:** The Eiffel tower.

**Peter:** In there see and then they took us all to not take us but with the train we went to Cherbourg. We stayed there may be a day or so I don’t know until boat I don’t remember very well.

**Janet:** Do you remember anything about the voyage?

**Peter:** Well voyage yeah that’s true. Now this friend of mine that like I said these two brothers. One was about my age and this other guy was 6 years old. Me and him at the voyage we were travelling first class second time because we were in the 5th class tourist or whatever you call it.

So this guy is still living over here and he’s strong, he was big. He was even I think a year older than me. So, the day he got on the boat he tried vomiting, it wasn’t bad. He never got up from his bed and his brother was young 6.

We used to go travel from first class, second class all we enjoy because they had a pool in the boat. They had I don’t know you eat so many times dinner and after coffee or whatever and we enjoyed very much. But those years they took long time this boat is so fast. Years ago it used to be take a month or 15. We 6 days we got to New York.

**Janet:** You got in 6 days to New York?

**Peter:** Yeah that’s right it was a big boat, English boat Leviathan was the name. When we got here then like during the, I was all right during the trip.

But when I got to New York the doctor examined. I don’t know I had a little temperature or something. My father didn’t come here with them [unclear 00:34:04-4].

**Janet:** Well tell me when you, do you remember when the boat came into the New York harbor?

**Peter:** Yeah, we see the Statue of Liberty look so small but when you go there you see it’s so big. Because I went through nearby, it was so tall but you see it from distant.

**Janet:** Did you know what it was when you first came?

**Peter:** No I didn’t know about. It’s a big city, New York used to have millions people never seen and I was astonished.

**Janet:** Then when you came to Ellis Island what was your impression of that place?

**Peter:** Well I don’t remember well but they took me there and with no language is very difficult I didn’t know what to eat. My mother used to teach me, so feed me some eggs or something like that. Give me bananas and some like I forgot what kind of pancakes or something, what they feel is good. Nothing to complain about but they didn’t know I wasn’t used to that food.

**Janet:** Were you with your friends or the whole time you were by yourself?

**Peter:** No they divide us because I think I had little temperature and my father didn’t come maybe they saw the people there, his father came. But then one day they take you there, they take one there they put your number or something. I don’t know exactly see, but I was all alone there.

**Janet:** Where you sent to the hospital during that time?

**Peter:** No.

**Janet:** You were in the dormitory?

**Peter:** Dormitory yeah with two, I think two, three people in the same room or something and we got good food, we got God bless America but I was so lonesome, I couldn’t speak language is very difficult thing. Like I said I never ate bananas before and they give us everything.

I was waiting for my friend to come I used to, because I was walking saw nothing wrong with it, I wait until the boat come. They come teach us the language is very difficult thing.

**Janet:** Yeah, so when you first got the banana, what did you do? How did you…?

**Peter:** Well, as you know the people peeling you know, there was waiters there whatever I don’t know. You know its good wide.

**Janet:** So, they were coming with smaller boats to Ellis Island?

**Peter:** Yeah, but you know it was small boat from New York, it’s close by see but you got to have a boat to get there.

**Janet:** So, your father came on the boat?

**Peter:** No, I said some friend of ours, my father must wrote him a letter or called maybe wrote him a letter that he knew that I was coming in that time, they know when the boat arrives. He found out that I was there and he used to come every day, God bless his soul, I’ll never forget him.

He was a very good person, he got a daughter now working for the federal building over here in the Concord, she is very nice too. His wife too was my neighbor, the smallest was my neighbor that’s his second wife, we were raised together we had gone to school together.

**Janet:** So, this man would come by a small boat.

**Peter:** That’s right.

**Janet:** While you were being held at Ellis Island?

**Peter:** Yeah, that’s right, well I was not held it was free but no jail or anything.

**Janet:** Yeah, but you couldn’t leave?

**Peter:** Well, I couldn’t leave because I had nowhere to go until they decided to call up my father or something. They took us from like I told you I had a cheque and I gave it to him and the next day they took me.

**Janet:** Why don’t you tell that for the tape about the cheque, what happened?

**Peter:** Well, I was worried I didn’t have no money and I had a cheque left over and I gave it to him to cash it for me so I could pay for the train to go to Chicago but the next day they took me and they, and the next thing they put in the train.

He got the cheque but he sent the money to my father. When I arrived at Chicago there was about 15 people waiting for me in the evening.

**Janet:** Where was the train that ride like what did you see or what was new and different when you first came?

**Peter:** Well, it’s so long because it’s 18 hours from New York to Chicago. I think I don’t know exactly when we started but I know we arrived in the evening and these people were notified.

**Janet:** Where you able to speak with anybody on that trip?

**Peter:** Well, they couldn’t speak and I didn’t know, I couldn’t speak English but they were very nice to me, they put a number or something you know card, so they knew that we were.

**Janet:** Where you were getting off.

**Peter:** Yeah, that’s right, and they even told the train man like the one that get the tickets and they say you watch this guy or something I don’t know. They kind of said like this Red Cross or something, they were nice people.

**Janet:** Yeah, how did you feel when you got off the train, when you arrived?

**Peter:** Oh boy, I got off the train but they were waiting for me but I was so happy it’s a lot of people waiting for me, my father, like a lot of friends of his you know. They took me home but we are very poor up there live in a house of framed building.

I don’t know well it was September yeah that’s it. It wasn’t so cold that time yeah, we lived three beds in one room. My father and me and another fellow you know, six people in one room.

**Janet:** Where you boarding at somebody’s house?

**Peter:** No, they had flat, apartment, an apartment but it was six people living, two three rooms, four rooms we went through a lot and it was different not like today.

**Janet:** Did you start school right away when you got there?

**Peter:** Yeah, good thing the school it was nearby and somebody took me up there registered me and they were so nice to me but the kids they make jokes at me, they told me I was from a foreigner land.

**Janet:** They made…

**Peter:** Joke at me.

**Janet:** What looked like horns for green horn or something?

**Peter:** No, they were something, they run around and but the teacher was so nice to me. Like I said they were so strict and made me write 10 times each word and even after 60 years I teach my grandkids now, I know how to spell American people broadly and they don’t know how to spell.

English language is very difficult to you it may be nothing but to a foreigner it’s very hard because definitely there is no other language in my opinion that the way you pronounce it you don’t write it. Then the other language you write it the way you pronounce you know.

**Janet:** So, was that the thing that was most helpful to you that you had to write it so many times with the teacher, is that what helped you learn?

**Peter:** Well no, I learned gradually but this is that, it got in my head that I will never forget the spelling of the words. That’s what I tell my grandchildren already, they go to school little too.

They are grown up, they work and they, I tell them go to school because if you don’t know how to write and how to read it’s no use because a lot of people don’t like it but then you can’t understand nothing.

**Janet:** So, in other words when you went to school the children sort of chased you and made fun of you but the teacher was fine?

**Peter:** Outside when there [unclear 00:42:11] time you know, for a few days because I was big, I went with six year old, seven years first class, I went to first class. I wasn’t so big but still 14 but the teacher was so nice to me, God bless him whoever.

**Janet:** So then, how long did you stay in school?

**Peter:** Well, I stayed a couple of years but I went to, because I knew my geographical, arithmetic, I knew everything only the language. I went up to sixth grade then I had to go to work because there was nobody working then I went to night school.

Another thing is I went, my uncle was very, he wanted me to learn Greek language too. So, I used to go from my American school in the evening I go to Greek school because a lot of Greeks in Chicago, half a million they got about 15 churches and I used to go that’s where I learnt the Greek language, he was a nice priest.

**Janet:** This is your uncle from Istanbul or from…

**Peter:** Yeah, Istanbul but he was here, he was in Chicago.

**Janet:** Right from Chicago?

**Peter:** He died 102 years old1973 or somewhere there. He smoked three packs a day of cigarettes, didn’t bother him, no cancer no nothing. But I don’t know if it bother me, I don’t smoke but I suffer I don’t, can’t see, I got a lot of problems.

**Janet:** What was your first job when you came to America?

**Peter:** First job I went to some Greek fellows because I learnt little Greek first I was aha, this is good. There was two cousins and they had 24 hours open so I went there to wash dishes, but I used to work from 7 like morning to 7, 12 hours. In the evening you know they got a law there that women can’t work no more than 10 hours, you want me to tell you that?

So, one day, there was two cousins, one was very nice the other one was a little more brutal. So, I go there in the morning I go before time like the system I go drink a cup of coffee and go to work. Ooh, it was full, the kitchen with dishes because that woman left it, she used to work from 8:00 o’clock in the evening to 6:00 in the morning, it was 24 hours open.

She leaves at 6:00 where there is not too much work and night time but in the morning when I go at 7:00 everybody go for breakfast there. So, I drink my coffee and were almost done, in the evening the same different. I used to go eat before 12 hours, eat a little bit before I leave.

When I eat a little they had no place where to put the dish I go back there. I used to wait until this woman come otherwise you can’t that’s a lunch and then dinner hour, oh my God! So, I stayed there but that his cousin was very nice.

After a while I think he let me go to school a few hours so, and eat everything. The other guy the worse and all, his relative one guy like me, his name was Vasi. He was a funny, not funny but he was old man but he had no teeth and they had, they buy these pies, caster pies what have you.

You got to have logic that he buy the pies for the customers, well you could got plenty but he was like, if he had one there yes. But then he couldn’t say because his relatives at one time he says, “You kind of like this,” but he said, ‘Yeah,” I never forget that.

He told no to eat probably because it was for the customers. So, he looked at him he didn’t comment, then he look at me I couldn’t eat you know. So, the other guy was very nice and afterwards I went to school. What else did I do, I stayed there quite a while.

**Janet:** At the restaurant?

**Peter:** At the restaurant but I learn more on the language and like a waiter then I got to another restaurant and I worked there too. But then after a while, those relatives both Greeks and he told me he opened another restaurant he said, “Come by me up there,” I was like a manager there, a little place.

He had this cousin or something work with me and him. I used to close the store, give me the kids, but I had to go there 10:30 in the morning and until 2:00. Then go back at 6:00 and close the store and it was miserable because you are always working, never have a little time. Only had Sundays to go, I didn’t got no time and he used to cook himself, he was a nice man though.

**Janet:** This was in Chicago too?

**Peter:** In Chicago yeah.

**Janet:** Remember the name of the restaurant?

**Peter:** Yeah, it was, he used to make his like a mix of chilly, Chilly Parlor they call him but he had other stuff too and he made, but he made good chilly with peppers and all of that, they used to eat a lot of it up there.

**Janet:** You didn’t have a, did the restaurant have a Greek name or you don’t know what that is?

**Peter:** No, Chilly Parlor they call it, it was on 26 [unclear 00:48:08] the place and right next to the corner, corner of a cigar store next was the store. I stayed there quite a while.

**Janet:** Do you know long, when was it that you went back to Albania?

**Peter:** Well, I went back to Albania in 1938 I got married because I got sick and I went there and then I got married.

**Janet:** So, you got sick here in Chicago?

**Peter:** Yeah, it was there.

**Janet:** Then you, so when you were sick you went back to Albania?

**Peter:** I went back to Albania because my mother was there.

**Janet:** So, when you got sick, you wanted to go back?

**Peter:** Yeah, well that’s right, I used to spit blood or something, I don’t know and I went to Athens I got some shots or something. Then I got well and I got married.

**Janet:** Well, did you know this person that you married before you went back there?

**Peter:** Yeah, she’s from the village, my wife is Syrian see, she is from the village but it’s a big story because my father liked her she was nice looking too but my father was there, he went to Albania see, and he did some kind of business like lime or something and somebody want to, he was doing, he sold the stuff, he sold lime, you know lime?

**Janet:** Yeah.

**Peter:** He made the lime and they sold it, and he told him about my mother-in-law now that he wants some but she didn’t, her husband like my wife’s, my father-in-law was up here but didn’t send enough money. My father said well you find her because they know if you got money they send money or not they are going to let us.

So, my wife was there at that time and he told, he didn’t recognize her because from young she grow in her upper village like I told you before. He said well you find her you know and she was there because he was afraid that he won’t let credit and she won’t pay.

So, my wife was there and she told him that we got the money we find it get it for you because you couldn’t get that time from any place and boy, he made a mistake and she got to tell him because I didn’t want to spoil my, she was a beautiful woman though and I got married with her, this is a joke.

**Janet:** So, what was the wedding like? Did you have a real wedding?

**Peter:** Yeah, we had a big wedding yeah, that’s right. We, you like we bring the bride in a horse because it’s a rough road. Well, now they got cars too, you know the car and they fix it up a little better, but those days there were only with horses or mules or something like that, or horses mostly. They fixed the bride in a horse.

**Janet:** She was dressed in like a wedding gown?

**Peter:** Yeah, well they got different custom there and they have some kind of oriental or something, but they are very expensive. I don’t know whether they are, that’s not the rule they borrowed or something. Beautiful with gold or something you know trimmed.

I don’t know if you’ve seen in the antics they are used. Now they are used here all the gowns and so forth. So, you go there you pick the, well the bride with a group and you bring her down and somebody say they want to bring down they have to pay money to get her off the horse and you have to.

**Janet:** Who has to pay?

**Peter:** Well, whoever wants, they go I give 500, or 600 who pays more this is proven the further they are bringing on. Then after a while she is covered up.

**Janet:** She has a veil over her face?

**Peter:** Well, [unclear 00:52:29].

**Janet:** Well, you have to pay again?

**Peter:** Yeah.

**Janet:** Wow.

**Peter:** So, but we had a nice house at that time but after a while it burnt down you know. After during the war and we are all, my wife suffered a lot you should my wife mob the house. Now she screws this, she was a couple of times in jail trying to run away.

**Janet:** How long did you stay there when you were [unclear 00:52:57]?

**Peter:** Well, that is about six month, ten months or something like that, six months we were quite well married you know. Now I think I stay a little more because I went to Greece like I said I was sick and I got some and my father has some money in Athens but they won’t give it to me.

All the money I gave to my father and he told me, give me permission to get this money but they won’t give it to me from Albania they won’t let the money go out. I said stay there quite a while, while I was treated getting some shots. Then I come back, when I come back my father had to, he told me he’s going to bring his money.

They had no bank in Albania at that time, so the only bank was in Greece that time. But I didn’t bring nothing, they won’t give me money just for one week next week come and get some more and those money went for nothing. Now they change your money I wouldn’t ask, it’s gone see it’s a shame the way they do things.

**Janet:** Well now, did you ever know what you had? What was the sickness that you had?

**Peter:** I don’t know, I got well with climate or something I don’t know. Maybe Jimmy, answer.

**Janet:** Well, we’ll stop here. Oh I guess he got it down stairs okay. So, then after six, seven, eight months whatever.

**Peter:** At that time.

**Janet:** You came back here and your wife came back with you?

**Peter:** No.

**Janet:** She stayed there?

**Peter:** She stayed.

**Janet:** That’s how she got into trouble?

**Peter:** Yeah, well she stayed there then 1939 I left, the war started, Italy came there, I had a hell of a time to get here because I had a modern passport, me and another fellow. We came together to America they won’t let you go with the war, Italy went to Albania.

I stayed a few, how long about a month with them. They both so much charming back and forth, they did travel. Then the Second World War started and I’m telling you I had the most miserable life in all humanity, without no family, without my wife where is she at, she suffered more. That’s where you go write a book.

**Janet:** Yeah, so in the meantime you came back here and then you wife gave birth to your son?

**Peter:** That’s right.

**Janet:** Immediately after?

**Peter:** She was only six months pregnant and she didn’t get pregnant right away.

**Janet:** Yeah, what is your wife’s name?

**Peter:** Fania, F-A-N-I-A, Fania.

**Janet:** What was her maiden name?

**Peter:** Veneti.

**Janet:** Can you spell that one?

**Peter:** Yeah, V-E-N-E-T-I.

**Janet:** And your son’s name?

**Peter:** Tanas.

**Janet:** Okay and you grandchildren name?

**Peter:** Yes, I have Philip and Yonola, Eleanor.

**Janet:** Well, how do you think it affected you the fact that you started out in Albania and lived there for 14 years and then you came here and went back and got married okay? How do you think the fact that you immigrated to this country affected the kind of person you have been and the person you are.

**Peter:** Well, I’ll tell you the person I am I have been here 65, 70 years no, yeah something like that I’ve never been in a police station, I’ve never had no problem with anybody, but I’m my own business and I worked. Maybe I pay because I had a car ticket or something like that, but never had no problem in my life.

**Janet:** How is this time in your life, this time of old age?

**Peter:** Well, like I told you I worked for, when I come back from Europe, when I got married I went and met my father-in-law here. From there after a month or so he passed away and it was 1941 evidently. So, they notified me, he had a sister of him this Concord and then they notify them and they send me a telegram and I went inside Bollington for a month.

Chicago they don’t bury nobody in Sunday’s and I was there may be waiting for the bus to go through. If I knew that they are going to bury her I didn’t get a text or something but I didn’t know that. So, I waited in Bollington and he was living Saint Albert for a month near boarder with Canada.

Because when I came like I told you, I visit him and there was a Greek fellow there a store and I managed too. So, when I, when they notify me I come to bury my father-in-law but when I arrived there Sunday evening they already buried him and they left, you know his sister and her sons or something, whoever got up there.

So, soon I got off the bus, I went to that Greek fellow was main street in a small town. So, I said “When do they have those the funeral?” He said, they buried and they left,” because he had, he was living, he had a little store there fixing, cleaning heads or shine, or something shoe shine. He lived in the back and probably he died two, three days before so they were forced to bury him.

**Janet:** So, this was in Saint Albert?

**Peter:** Saint Albert, Vermont. So, then I come back and I when his sister was not here, was in Connecticut, touring to 1941, a lot of people where there because they were preparing for a war but it didn’t, I think December start the war.

So, in December when Japan hit. So, I went to find out what happened by his sister, my wife’s aunt. So, I went there and they [unclear 00:59:14] Torrington, Connecticut.

So, I went there and like I told you I was manager of some restaurant up there. But I used to work every Sunday, everyday almost all the evening, everything. So, then they I think United States got in the war that time, I don’t remember exactly was in or not.

**Janet:** Wait let me just pause here for a second. Starting this again to say that this is the end of tape one.

**Peter:** Tape two.

**Janet:** I’m going to start tape two, I’m speaking with Peter Goulios and we will begin tape two and finish the interview there.

**Peter:** Yeah.

**Janet:** Okay.

**Peter:** How did you get in contact with Jimmy?

**Janet:** This is the beginning of tape two and I got in contact with Jimmy Papous through Caise Gilianas, he has the bakery in Manchester.

**Peter:** Okay.

**Janet:** Okay so, used to go there so you were saying about how you came to bury your father-in-law and he had already been buried when you got to Saint Albert’s, Vermont.

**Peter:** That’s right, then I went to touring to Connecticut to meet his sister that she was at the funeral, my father-in-law sister and the rest of them. So, I went there, and at that time in 1941, is it on now?

**Janet:** Yes.

**Peter:** So, up there they used to hire everybody for during the war you know, during the Japan attack United States. So, I was a young man, and they are hiring a lot of people and then they told me why don’t you stay here to learn the trade and all that?

But they like the rest of them, they didn’t have a school or anything, they put them in paints and all that. But God bless he was a friend of mine up there, he was a lathe hand but he knew from Detroit you know what a lathe is, it’s a machine.

**Janet:** A lathe?

**Peter:** Lathe yeah. So, I told them I’m going to go, they are going to put me in a paint to try out see how they, she said “What do you mean?” Paid and I was a young man that time, 24 or 26 something like that, 24 I think. So, he went down stairs with me, with the employment manager.

He told me because he knew I had school, I know language good and writing and like I told you so he went there and then they train me to learn how to run the lathe I stayed but, 10 months in lathe hand. Of course in the beginning I do all kind of jobs but I have instructor that show me a little bit and then maybe somebody finish up because that’s with millimeter very fine.

So, I stayed 10 months and then my father and uncle was in Chicago. They complain about me left them old people in this, but then they call me for the army I had to go. So, I left the job but that helped me a lot because you used to go in Chicago used to ask for job and you know what can you do, what kind of traits you got? So, I told like I have lathe, I have a point.

**Janet:** Are you saying lathe hand?

**Peter:** Lathe, they run a machine.

**Janet:** Lathe?

**Peter:** Lathe L-A-T-H, you know lathe hand, that guy that run the machine. Then the point that I want, they didn’t need nobody because it was for maintenance work, they had only one or two old people. But they told me if you want to, if I want to learn should be in every work it’s for maintenance.

You know what a maintenance you keep up it was a big plant 10,000 people. So, I went there and I got that job as a mechanic helper not as an instructor or something and I used to go to night school, high school mainly for sketches, drawings and all that. I stayed there like I told you 18 years but after three, four years and gradually I used to do work myself. I used to well, I used to figure out things.

**Janet:** What’s with the going in the army that helped?

**Peter:** Well, going in the army they, we went for examination then in core course. But if you missed one day so, a friend of mine we are from the same neighborhood, we went but you change your jobs at that time, you had a lot of jobs defense you know, he changed and they took him.

After we went they reject us first time, they didn’t take us they come call us later. So, I was working but I was told that if you miss one day from work, the next day you get telegraph from the president and write you not to force you to go for your country.

So, I worked up there until this friend of mine that time you know they train you one week and they send you to France and they got killed. So, I worked up there until, during the war I didn’t make too much money but I was learning the trade and I was going to school, at night school.

That’s why I got injured up there, I fell off six yards down I was on cast from here to here and my broken foot and a cast. I had heavy work, and now after 18 years they want to give me no pension, the union shut. But they close up 1959, ’60 they close up the plant and I, you stay a three, four weeks’ vacation that’s I used to come out here because I had a lot of relatives out here.

**Janet:** So, you are going to talk with someone about seeing about getting your pension?

**Peter:** Yeah, half of whatever is coming to me, I’m not asking for it for nothing you know. But if you read the letter you could understand.

**Janet:** Yeah, but just let’s finish this up right.

**Peter:** Yeah.

**Janet:** Let me just ask you a final question. How do you feel about having made the decision to come here?

**Peter:** Well, I like it very much you know it’s, America it’s a good country but you got to work. If you are working like I told you I worked 65 years and I never been in the police station here for anything.

**Janet:** Do you think America is like a melting pot?

**Peter:** Well, definitely it’s a melting pot but, the thing is that to my opinion nowadays they spoil the people with TV and with all killing and all guns and all that, and the all sex and all that. I don’t believe in that, I don’t know maybe I’m wrong.

**Janet:** Okay.

**Peter:** I’m in no authority to judge but I’m just saying.

**Janet:** You are saying your opinion.

**Peter:** Yeah.

**Janet:** Well, is there anything else that you would like to say before we close? Anything?

**Peter:** Well, God bless America, I wish my family to be good like me or better because I didn’t accomplish, I had a home in Chicago, I had a good job and everything, but I had to leave because the plant closed. I went I got different jobs, they, I don’t know there was a big plant but nowadays I don’t know.

They still, Armory Company is a big company, they still have armory men but if they see somebody else about was 3,000 people in general off I used to go there for air condition and all of the repair jobs.

**Janet:** Well tell me this, what makes you feel most satisfied that you’ve done in your life? What makes you feel good?

**Peter:** Well, in my life I did all I could and it was bad that I suffer my life because it was not America’s fault, it was communists fault you know that I was separated from my wife and my wife see. I love America and I hope my family enjoy the country and be prosperous, the work, they work two jobs.

I tell them now go to school, I tell them go to school because without school you can’t gain nothing especially when you don’t have nobody, nobody can help you unless you help yourself.

**Janet:** Okay, well I think that’s a good note to end that one. I want to thank you very much.

**Peter:** Okay.

**Janet:** Very interesting interview and I’ve been speaking with Peter Goulios here in Concord.

**Peter:** In New Hampshire [unclear 01:08:27].

**Janet:** New Hampshire and its October 31st 1995. Mr. Goulios is 81 at the time of this interview.

**Peter:** Almost.

**Janet:** Just had a surgery right? This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service and I’m signing off.

**Peter:** God bless America so much.

**Janet:** God bless America, thank you.