

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Romanian Culture Project

Romanian Culture in Mahoning County

O. H. 447

JOHN V. POPA, JR.

Interviewed

by

John Muntean

on

May 8, 1975

JOHN V. POPA, JR.

John V. Popa Jr., was born March 14, 1912, in Spelter, West Virginia, the son of John and Opreand Popa. His parents had migrated to this country from Tau, Romania, and located themselves in West Virginia because of job opportunities. John remembers his childhood in the small town as being very enriching and the community in which he lived was predominantly Romanian.

The family moved to Youngstown when John was fourteen, mainly because his father wanted his children to be more familiar with the Romanian culture. Youngstown would provide a chance for the children to become involved in the church and the societies that embraced the Romanian way of life. John graduated from East High School in 1930 and because of the Depression could only find work here and there. In 1935, he found permanent employment with General Fireproofing and continued to work there until retirement.

John is an active member of the Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, located on Wick Avenue. He is also actively involved in the Eagles, the Eastern Orthodox Men's Society and the Veteran's Legion of Romanian-American Volunteers. John has seen a multitude of changes take place in Youngstown over the years and he feels that people of all nationalities and religions should become more involved in their culture. John and his wife, Helen, whom he married in 1950, currently live in Youngstown and enjoy all the customs, dances, music and food of the Romanian people.

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Romanian Culture Project

INTERVIEWEE: JOHN V. POPA JR.

INTERVIEWER: John Muntean

SUBJECT: Heritage, Culture, Development of the church on  
Wick Avenue

DATE: May 8, 1975

M: This is an interview with John V. Popa Jr. for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program regarding Romanian Culture in Mahoning County by John Muntean at 418 Idora Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio, on May 8, 1975, at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Could you tell me what part of Romania you or your parents come from?

P: My parents came from Tau, Romania. It was a small village, county Tirnava Mica they call it.

M: Is it more or less in the mountain region of Romania?

P: It's almost right in the central part. It's close to Cluj and Blaj. It's not too far from Alba Iulia. My dad came here in 1910 by himself. He went back to Romania and got married and came back in 1912.

M: What did he do in Romania? In other words, was he a farmer or . . .

P: Well, he was like a servant. I don't know if you would call it a slave, just a peasant working for the rich.

M: Did he ever tell you what a typical day in his life would be like?

P: He said he used to be a servant to some priest over there in Romania. He worked for this priest most of the time around the house and then driving, stuff like that. He was an orphan. When he came to this country, he didn't

know too much. He got a job here and went down and settled in West Virginia.

M: You already mentioned that he came to this country in 1910.

P: Yes. Then he went back to Romania again and got married.

M: What motivated him to come to our country in 1910?

P: Well, I guess he heard about all of the other young people coming over here. It was a chance for them to get somewhere in this country, for more freedom.

M: What was the reason for him to go back?

P: To get married. Then he came back and settled here in West Virginia.

M: When he came over here, the second time, was it still 1910?

P: No, it was 1912.

M: Did he go back to the same occupation he had in Romania?

P: Yes.

M: So he was a servant for two more years for the same priest?

P: Yes, I think it was the same priest.

M: When he came over here he was already wed. Did he have any difficulty in changing to the American way of life, in other words, learning the language or finding a job?

P: No, he got acquainted pretty good with the English language and then they sort of made him a foreman. He worked down in West Virginia and he had about seventeen or eighteen Romanians working under him. He understood the language a little bit. He learned a little bit.

M: Did he learn it over here?

P: Yes, he learned it over here.

M: Was it from schooling?

P: Well, he just picked it up like that. He knew a little more than the others. He wasn't that good at it, but understood it real well. He could read and write.

M: What about your mother, his wife, did she have a pretty good knowledge of Romania at that time?

P: Oh yes, but she only had a grade school education over there too.

M: When she came here what about her learning the English language?

P: In those days, the ladies mostly stayed at home. We had a lot of boarders. Most of these people who worked under my dad, boarded with us or two of the other Romanian families there. They each had, maybe, seven or eight boarders. It was just like a little Romanian community with maybe four or five houses. They had a bunch of Romanians working there.

M: Was that in West Virginia?

P: Yes, West Virginia.

M: In other words, those people, at that time, worked together with one another and, as you mentioned, like the boarders. Did they help each other out financially too?

P: I don't know how they helped each other out. My dad never did say that. They lived together. They drank together. They really enjoyed themselves. There weren't too many girls around or anything like that; just a few of the ladies, and the ladies were married. But they would get together and, I guess, talk about the things over in Europe, their relatives and stuff like that.

M: Did they ever communicate back and forth, do you know, with anybody in Romania, to find out how things were going?

P: Yes, my dad had some property over there and they kept sending some money to pay their taxes and stuff like that.

M: Did he retain it until the time the communists took over?

P: Yes, he kept it. He even had money in the bank and lost that, I guess. When the communists took over, they took everything. Before they took over he decided to turn the property over to one of his uncles, so we never heard any more after that. We don't know what happened.

M: You haven't heard from that uncle at all?

P: No.

M: That's strange.

P: That's right. We've tried to find out about the money in the bank and we couldn't get any satisfaction. He just lost everything. I told my dad to just forget about it;

that he was living here and we would get along with what we made here.

M: Could you tell us what you remember about your parents and family in regards to coming to Mahoning County?

P: I came here when I was fourteen years old. My dad thought that we were growing up and he wanted us to learn more about the Romanian language. Down in West Virginia they didn't have any Romanian churches or Romanian societies. I came down from close to Clarksburg, West Virginia.

M: Were you born in West Virginia?

P: Yes, I was born in West Virginia. My dad was religious and there was no Romanian church. He wanted to come here so we could be raised up in the Christian way of living, with going to church and all that. That was the main reason why he wanted to come to Youngstown. He heard that there were quite a few Romanians here and the Romanian church. He wanted us to get to know more Romanians.

M: What kind of a job did he get?

P: Here, he got a job as a laborer at Truscon Steel. Mr. Vasile Bogdan got him a job there. He was a godparent to one of my brothers; he baptised one of my brothers. He got him a job there and he worked there until 1930, when he got laid off during the Depression. Then he went out to the farm and was working out at the farm.

M: Where? In Mahoning County?

P: Yes, out in Austintown.

M: In other words, he had a farm and he was a farmer?

P: Yes, a small forty acres.

M: Did he have any animals?

P: Well, he had about three cows, raised about five or six pigs, and maybe 100 or so chickens.

M: Was that off of Route 18?

P: No, on Kirk Road, west of Smith Corners. There were about eight of us children and he lost his job. In 1930 it was hard to get a job, so he decided to go out to farm. We went out there and rented that place and later on we bought it. It was only forty acres, but at least we got to raise our chickens, pigs, cows, and make our own butter. My mother made cheese and we had enough of meat, food, and

dairy products to carry us over.

M: Where did you attend school?

P: I attended eight grades in West Virginia. I came to Youngstown in 1926 and I went to East High. I graduated from East High in 1930.

M: Did all your brothers and sisters do likewise?

P: My other brother graduated from East. When we moved to Austintown, my three sisters and another brother graduated from Fitch.

M: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

P: I had three sisters and five brothers. One of them got killed after he came back from the service.

M: Was that after World War II?

P: World War II, yes.

M: During World War I, was your father affiliated with the armed forces or anything?

P: No.

M: Later on I'm going to get into your little venture in WW II, but before that I would like for you to tell us a little bit more about what Youngstown was like when you were a child. You said you came here from West Virginia and you were a little bit older than a child when you were being reared here. Could you tell what conditions were like in Youngstown compared to where you were in West Virginia? In other words, compare them a little bit.

P: Well, there was no Romanian life down there for us. I think our family and there was one other one there; they only had a daughter; we were the only two families that had any children. That was one of the many reasons that my dad wanted to come here so that we could go to a Romanian church. We enjoyed our boyhood life down there, playing like ordinary kids. When we came here we enjoyed going to church and we had gotten acquainted with the Romanian people around here. We also enjoyed it here because every Easter and Christmas they used to put on programs, theatrical parts. People used to get together every holiday and during the summer they used to get together on picnics. If our church wasn't going to have a picnic, the Catholic church had a picnic, or the Society had a picnic, or some other organization had a picnic. Every week there used to be a picnic. Something was going on all of the time. We

always had a chance to meet Romanians that you don't see every day.

M: Did he have friends in Youngstown that he chose Youngstown to go to rather than Pennsylvania someplace?

P: Well, he had Mr. Vasile Bogdan.

M: So in other words, they spoke highly of this area and many have influenced him in coming here instead of maybe going to Pittsburgh or some other city?

P: Yes, because Bogdan lived here.

M: You mentioned about the Romanian life and so forth, but what did Youngstown look like at that time? In other words, other than Romanian people living here and Romanian people living in West Virginia, what was it like in regards to . . . through your eyes what did you see in Youngstown? Were there a lot of automobiles in West Virginia in other words, what was the make-up in this town in comparison to one another?

P: Down there it was mostly mining towns and they didn't have many cars. Even the grocers would deliver their groceries with a horse and a wagon. They had very few cars in. That was before 1926. All the farmers would come around in town and sell their products to you. There were about 325 homes in this town.

M: Is this in West Virginia?

P: Yes, in Spelter, West Virginia. They had a chemical company called Graselli Chemical Company. That was where everybody worked. They only had one doctor in town and everybody contributed \$1.50 a month for his income. The company would collect that for him. If anybody got sick he would go over there on foot or by horse and buggy. He was, you might as well say, a general doctor. He would take care of your teeth or any illness you had.

M: The school there that you attended . . . you mentioned you went up to the eighth grade. Was it more or less like the schooling was in Youngstown at that time or was it a type of schoolhouse that they call a one room schoolhouse?

P: No, it wasn't. They had more rooms. It was a wooden school, but they had more than one room. They had up to the eighth grade. Every grade had their own room. They had a gymnasium.



- M: Did they have a high school at that time?
- P: No, they didn't. You had to go seven miles away to go to high school.
- M: Did you walk to school?
- P: Well, we lived close; we lived across the street from the school.
- M: Did most of the students walk or did they have a bus?
- P: Oh yes, because it was just a small town with 325 houses. It didn't take anybody any longer than fifteen minutes to get to school, the ones that lived the farthest away.
- M: Were the stores general types of stores?
- P: Yes, general types of stores. They handled everything. They had one theatre, one bowling alley, one poolroom and about four or five grocery stores or general stores.
- M: Which church did your family attend over there in West Virginia? Do you recall at all?
- P: We went to the Presbyterian church, and the Catholic church because there was no Orthodox.
- M: So there was a variety of churches?
- P: Yes. Whenever we had a chance we went. If this neighbor said, "Let's go to church," we went with this neighbor. If that neighbor said, "Let's go to church," we went with that neighbor. We were Orthodox and my dad wanted to see us go to church. He wanted us to go to church, so we went to church regardless of whether it was Catholic, Presbyterian, or what. That's one reason why he wanted to come to Youngstown, because he knew there was a Romanian church here. He wanted us to grow up in that culture.
- M: When you came to Youngstown when you were fourteen years old, what was your first opinion of going into Youngstown? What was your opinion of Youngstown moving from West Virginia, where you were living for the first part of your life? Were you happy to come here or were you kind of regretful in leaving West Virginia?
- P: No, I got acquainted. We had pretty good neighbors here and we got acquainted pretty good with the boys our age.
- M: Were they Romanian families then?
- P: No, where I was on the east side, they were mostly Slovaks.

- M: You didn't move into a Romanian community when you came here?
- P: No, not real close to Romanians. Two or three Romanian families were only two blocks away from where we lived.
- M: Regarding the way of life which you mentioned in West Virginia--more or less a small, closely knit type of community . . . Youngstown was a larger city. When you would go to downtown Youngstown or anything like that, you would probably look around and see many different buildings and so forth. Since I was not around at that time, could you give me a little description of what Youngstown in the early 1930's and late 1920's appeared like to you?
- P: Well, I liked it because they had about seven or eight theatres and you could walk up and down the streets with no fear of anybody or anything like that.
- M: Didn't you have a theatre in West Virginia?
- P: No. You knew most of the people in town even at that time from going to school and through church and that; you met quite a few people and you would meet them downtown. We used to walk downtown almost every night. At night stores would be lit up until midnight and the people would be walking up and down the streets. They had all kinds of restaurants downtown, all the theatres were downtown and it was safe. You didn't have to worry.
- M: Were there a lot of automobiles downtown?
- P: No, there weren't.
- M: Were there horses?
- P: No, I don't remember any horses downtown.
- M: You mentioned that down in West Virginia there were.
- P: Yes, in West Virginia they did.
- M: So there was a difference in that West Virginia had horses, whereas in Youngstown either you walked, rode a bus, or took a streetcar.
- P: I walked to school. I walked a mile to school in the morning and I walked home for lunch and back.
- M: What was your father's occupation, once again, when he came to Youngstown?

P: He worked as a laborer for Truscon Steel.

M: Then he became a farmer as time progressed?

P: That's right, when he got laid off from Truscon Steel. During the Depression, they laid off quite a few people all over because jobs were hard to get. They were cut down to two or three days a week and he didn't have any seniority then. We didn't have a union then either in 1930. The unions really picked up in 1937.

M: I think you mentioned graduating in 1930?

P: Yes, in 1930.

M: What did you start doing right after your graduation? Did you help out at the farm?

P: No, because we didn't go on the farm until 1932. I tried to get a job. I went out and I caddied at the golf course, Youngstown Country Club. Then I worked at a shoe store as a shoe salesman for three or four months.

M: Where? Downtown?

P: Yes, downtown. I worked in the Kreske five-and-ten down there helping the janitor, doing janitor work for about two or three months. You couldn't get a job. It was hard for us.

M: About how much was the pay at that time?

P: It wasn't much. I finally got a job at General Fireproofing in 1935 and even then it was only \$3.20 a day, for eight hours. It was a big difference in 1935 and now. Look at what the people make now.

M: Did you retire from General Fireproofing?

P: I retired last November, 1974.

M: What were you doing at General Fireproofing, basically?

P: I started off as a spray helper and then ended up spraying. Later on, I ended up as a material coordinator.

M: What was that?

P: Well, it's getting everything ready for shipment. They would call and give you the orders and you would get everything lined up and take it down to the shipping floor.

- M: Basically, what was it that you were getting ready? What kind of merchandise was it? Was it a variety?
- P: Yes, mixed: Xerox stuff, desks, IBM, whatever the orders called for. We had a lot of Western Electric.
- M: When you started there in 1935 was there a union at that time?
- P: No, the union didn't get started until, I think, the latter part of 1937.
- M: What were the conditions like at that time at General Fireproofing? Was it an eight hour day?
- P: Yes, it was an eight hour day. Well, in 1937 it really got slow. You were working two or three days a week but that didn't last too long. I stayed; I didn't get laid off at all since I started in 1935. I went straight through for thirty-nine years until I retired last November 29, 1974.
- M: When you worked at your job, did you find it difficult, at first, to find a position in which you really wanted to stay in? I know, at that time, jobs were scarce and everything and you really were working for money and you probably were not working for enjoyment. Did you find a job that you really enjoyed at General Fireproofing?
- P: I really enjoyed the last job I had as a material coordinator. Up until then you had to take what you got. You had to enjoy it. Working conditions were a lot better then.
- M: How were conditions when you first started? In other words, was the repertoire between the bosses and the workers . . . were they friendly?
- P: Everybody got along real good. Even before you worked people used to get to work fifteen minutes ahead and they would talk about baseball, football, or whatever the season was. All kinds of sports, but things have changed. Nowadays you can't even talk to your buddy working next to you. That's how they are nowadays. That's why so many people are retiring now. They are getting disgusted for the way they're being treated.
- M: In other words, they're being pushed around?
- P: They're being pushed around. The bosses are being pushed around by the higher-ups so they carry it one down just like in the Army, right down to the working people.
- M: So when you started, it was more or less like having friends. You were working and enjoying it because you were working with

your friends. As times progressed, it changed and the people themselves were pushing everybody to make a little bit more than they made the following year, the company in other words.

P: It was just like a rat race later on and that's the way it is now. They don't care how they produce the stuff. They just get it out. They want production.

M: Were there any Romanians working at General Fireproofing at that time?

P: Well, not too many. There weren't too many.

M: Your tie with Romanians, at that time, was basically through the church?

P: Yes, mostly through the church.

M: In regards to your ties with Romanian people, thinking back to when you first came to Youngstown--because you said you had very few ties with them in West Virginia--what was your family's association with the Romanian community and perhaps the Romanian church which, right now is on Wick Avenue, but at the time, I think, it was on Wilson Avenue? Was that the first church, do you know, or was there one previous to that?

P: Yes, as far as I know, where we started was Wilson Avenue and as far as I know that was the first one.

M: Is it still in existence?

P: The church is still there, but I think the colored people took it over now. They remodeled it and they made a pretty nice church out of it from what I see by driving by.

M: Do you know if that church was built by the Romanian people or was it a home?

P: I don't know if it was built by the Romanian people or not, but I know that I helped dig the cellar out. It was George Radu, me and Mr. Tom Fleaks. There were a bunch of us there, during the Depression, when we weren't working or anything.

M: The church on Wilson Avenue started in the 1930's?

P: It started before that, but that's when they decided to put the hall down beneath the church. That was when we dug the cellar.

M: Oh, in other words, the church was already built and then

they had to add a basement to it.

P: All they had was a furnace room down there before, so we dug out the rest of the cellar and made a little hall down beneath the church.

M: In regards to that church on Wilson Avenue, thinking back if you can a little bit, did the priest live in the church or did he have residence elsewhere?

P: No, he had residence elsewhere, across the street.

M: The church, itself, what did it look like inside? Were there seats to sit down on?

P: No, when we came from West Virginia they just had those seats along the side and along the wall. People would purchase them, donate so much. The more you would give the closer you were to the front. I guess as you got along towards the rear they were cheaper. We stood up; we used to stand up during the services.

M: Was there an altar as they have in the present church?

P: Yes, there was an altar there. They didn't have altar boys, but these older people who would take care of helping the priest.

M: Was there any kind of religious decoration inside the church at all or was it just an altar?

P: It was just the altar, icons on front.

M: There were no religious pictures?

P: Well, the windows were stained glass from what I can remember.

M: Was it heated by a coal furnace at that time or did you have a fireplace?

P: It was a coal furnace inside down there. That's the only thing I remember. It had that coal furnace down in the basement.

M: That's why they dug the basement then?

P: Yes.

M: They didn't have any rooms in there or anything?

P: No rooms and they dug the basement out and made a little hall down there. That's where they used to meet, the church council.

- M: Did they have electricity inside of the church or was it basically just candles?
- P: They had electricity. When I came here father Podea was here and that's where I first learned to talk Romanian, not to talk Romanian, but to read and write a little bit. My dad taught me quite a bit too at home. My dad said that it doesn't hurt to learn how to read and write more languages if you can, so he taught me how to read and write Romanian. The Father John Podea started a Romanian school and a few of us went there and he taught us Romanian.
- M: Was it like a Sunday school?
- P: No, he would just teach us the Romanian language, how to read and write.
- M: In the evening?
- P: Yes, and on Saturdays. I learned quite a bit from him.
- M: Did your mother, by that time, have a pretty good knowledge of English or was it still lacking?
- P: Well, she still lacked quite a bit. She understood it. We always spoke Romanian in our family and in the house. We children, among ourselves, spoke English, but with my mother and dad we always spoke Romanian.
- M: When they would see other people that were Romanian . . .
- P: When they would see other people they always spoke Romanian.
- M: So in other words, she more or less picked up some English from talking to the neighbors who were not Romanian?
- P: Also from listening to the children talking to each other in the English language.
- M: Did you have a radio in the house that you would listen to?
- P: Well, when we came from West Virginia we had what you would call a battery radio. They used to have these professional boxing bouts. Jack Dempsey and . . . we used to get together. Nobody had any radios so you would get the whole neighborhood over there. It was battery run too. We didn't have a telephone when we came here. It was pretty tough.
- M: Yes, I guess it was. Did you depend upon a newspaper at that time for what was occurring then?
- P: No, not too much, a little bit.

M: Were the people, at that time, interested in national affairs as they are now or was it just what was happening in the neighborhood?

P: No, I think they were interested all of the time in national affairs, presidents, elections, governor elections, or any election. They were interested in all of the elections, I think.

M: When the Romanian people would get together and talk, did they talk about what was happening in the Romanian community or did they also speak about national affairs?

P: Once in awhile. I mean, most of them would get together and talk about their old childhood back in Romania. That was what they remember. Over here, I don't think they talk too much about things here unless it was, maybe, about the church, or if they attended a wedding, or something like that.

When I first came here, after I went to high school and I went to church, I got to play baseball with them on the Romanian team. We played Campbell which had a Romanian team, Alliance, and Canton. We played each other. I played basketball with the Catholic church. Mike Mitchell was the principal at Woodrow Wilson. He and I and my brother played together. Nick Bucila used to referee basketball games.

M: Were these Romanian teams?

P: Yes, they were Romanian teams. John Boila, from the Catholic church . . . our church didn't have a basketball team so we played basketball with a Romanian church on Prospect. It was about four or five of us Orthodox against the Catholics, all Romanians though.

M: Were there many Romanian organizations at that time? For instance, now we have AROY in existence.

P: Well, they had the Young People's organization.

Pantelimon was the fellow's name who managed the Romanian team. He lived over there in Powersdale. He managed the Youngstown team in baseball.

M: Was it hardball or softball?

P: It was hardball.

M: What field did you play on? Did you have your own field?

P: No, we used to play on Victory Field. We played in Campbell



on Gordon Park. I think Gordon Park and Victory; there were only two fields at that time. It was a good experience because you met a lot of other Romanians in these different towns. Even Cleveland had a team. Youngstown played at Campbell. We played at Alliance and Canton. We went over and played in a tournament in Canton. It was all Romanian. That was in basketball. We met quite a few people like that in these towns.

In those days, you would go to dances. You would go to dances in Alliance, Canton, Akron, Ellwood City, Sharon, or Warren. In those days, young people used to go around from one town to another.

M: Was it basically the Romanians?

P: It was all Romanians and it was all Romanian dances.

M: Did they mix with other nationalities?

P: No, it was strictly Romanian. Nowadays they don't seem to do it anymore. They've gotten away from the picnics. They've gotten away from those dances in different cities. I think a lot of that is because of these intermarriages. They don't hire a Romanian orchestra anymore hardly. It's always, "Hire an American orchestra because they don't play any Romanian music." Even at these weddings, you attend some of these weddings and they try to get them to play at least one number in Romanian and have a hard time getting them to do that. Times have changed quite a bit.

M: When you got a little bit older, you were involved in WW II and after the war you became a member of an organization. Could you tell us a little bit about that veteran's organization?

P: Well, I didn't join until later on. I didn't join until 1960. I was in the service for three years and two months, in the Air Corps.

M: Where?

P: I was here in the States. I took my basic training in Utah. Then we went to Arkansas State College for eight weeks. Then they sent me away to Jefferson Barracks Air Base. Then I went to Newfoundland for nine months. I came back to the States to Bangor, Maine for two years. I worked in headquarters all of the time, in the personnel office.

M: Were you drafted or did you volunteer?

P: I was drafted.

M: What was your idea or opinion at that time?

- P: Well, at that time, when I was drafted, it was pretty bad because I was deferred for a little while. Because of my parents not having any work or anything much, they deferred me for about five or six months. Then I was drafted.
- M: Which year were you drafted?
- P: I went in Christmas 1942, the day after Christmas.
- M: When did you get out?
- P: I got out on Lincoln's birthday. He freed me too. (Laughter) That was in 1946. I was in three years and two months, in the Air Corps.
- M: Did you enjoy the Air Corps?
- P: Oh yes, I enjoyed it.
- M: Did you want to go into that branch?
- P: Well, I didn't know what I was going to get into, but I was glad that I got into the Air Corps. I enjoyed it and I think I got a pretty good deal out of it. I was fortunate, in a way, I didn't have to go to the front lines or anything like that because I happened to get into headquarters. I worked in headquarters all of the time after I got in it.
- M: After you got out of the Army and everything, did you come back to Youngstown?
- P: Yes.
- M: Did you get your job back at General Fireproofing?
- P: Yes, I got my job back.
- M: In the meantime, were you married?
- P: No. I got discharged in 1946 and I got married in 1950.
- M: Was your wife a Romanian girl?
- P: She is a Romanian girl. She had Romanian parents and she understands Romanian, but she doesn't speak it. She can a little bit.
- M: Did you meet her at one of these functions?
- P: I met her at one of her cousin's weddings. She was a bridesmaid and I was an usher.

M: You got together because of that?

P: Yes.

M: When you came back and started to work again at General Fireproofing, after the war was over, did you notice any changes that had started to occur in the Romanian community with the church or the people themselves? Before the war you mentioned that you had all kinds of baseball leagues and the people went to events and dances. Did the people pick up again where they left off or did it take awhile to get going again?

P: I think, for awhile, they kept on like they were doing before. I think as time went on with people and more intermarriages people started getting away from everything. I think maybe people got to be too busy with wives working and husbands working. Before, I think, it was only the husbands who used to work. During the war, all these ladies got these jobs in these different plants and they never did go back to their housework. They just kept on working and I think that's what changed a lot of--in my opinion anyhow--this home life, and the people the way they are living nowadays.

M: When did you notice the changes starting to take place in the Romanian culture and the church itself, because you did mention that today it's not as it was during your early youth.

P: That's pretty hard to pinpoint about what time.

M: I don't mean a year, but was it during the 1950's or the 1960's?

P: As far as the church life goes, I think maybe the church has been going on the same but their activities have been neglected a little bit. These people are not participating in these theatricals like they used to have every Easter and every Christmas. Just like everything else, I think, people got involved in other things or so thing and were too involved that they just didn't care for them anymore. I can't understand it.

M: Do you know about the development of the new church? Well, it's not new now, but the church itself . . . I think it was 1945 on Wick Avenue. Can you tell us anything about the development of that church? What caused the people to want to build a new church on Wick Avenue to start off with, do you know?

P: That was too small over on Wilson Avenue.

M: In other words, it grew?

P: Yes, we had to have a larger building.

- M: About how many families were there back during the time . . . first of all, when you moved to Youngstown, when you were fourteen, about how many families were in that church? Do you have any idea? Were there about a dozen, two dozen?
- P: I would say that there were about one hundred families or maybe better, but I couldn't tell you; I'm figuring.
- M: As time progressed it got bigger and bigger?
- P: Yes.
- M: So they needed a new church?
- P: Yes, they needed more space.
- M: Do you have any idea what made them decide upon Wick Avenue?
- P: They figured that was a cultural area. They told Vasu, the real estate man, to look for a place and he thought that was an ideal place and a nice building. It may cost a little bit to remodel, but he thought that that would be a good spot.
- M: It was a house, I understand. Do you recall who lived in it previously?
- P: I know it was the Arms family.
- M: The Arms family from the Arms Museum next door?
- P: Yes, the Arms family owned both of those places.
- M: When they took over that building what did they do to the building itself, in other words, to make it into a church. Did they have a basement at that time too, to start with?
- P: They had rooms, but we had to do them over. We had to put in walls and they had all this sandstone, all standstone walls, big blocks. We had to close all that in and fix them all up, and divide them up into more rooms.
- M: Did they tear the building down?
- P: No, they just remodeled.
- M: In the remodeling of the building itself, about how long did it take? Do you have any idea? Was it a year or two years?
- P: I don't know. They didn't do all that at one time. I think it was later on they decided to fix the rooms downstairs

for the Sunday school.

M: In the meantime, when they were remodeling it, the building that they bought, did they continue to have services on Wilson Avenue?

P: No. Well, until they got that one ready, yes, the church part.

M: When they had the church part ready, then they moved and they sold that other one?

P: Yes.

M: You mentioned that in the old building on Wilson Avenue, it was more or less a bare altar without any seats for people to sit down. What was the church like on Wick Avenue in comparison to the old church on Wilson Avenue? Could you describe what it looks like inside for people who have not seen it?

P: It's pretty hard to describe. Outside of the altar, all I can remember was we had to stand up. I know we had to stand up a long time and some of those services, some of those priests would . . .

M: Do you mean the one on Wick Avenue?

P: No, I mean on Wilson Avenue. The service was so long and you stand on your feet for a couple of hours, you used to get pretty tired.

M: The new one on Wick Avenue that you were moving into, what did it look like inside? You mentioned the other one was barren. What does this one look like inside?

P: It's just like you see it now. They didn't have all of those pictures in the other one because we just had a small altar there. I think Father Stanila designed . . . I guess, it was his idea what pictures . . .

M: Was this the Father who took over after . . .

P: Yes, he's the one who took over here.

M: Was he at the Wilson Avenue church?

P: Yes, he was at the Wilson Avenue church too. When I came here there was Father Podea.

M: Did he retire?

P: He went back to Romania. Then there was Father Julius

Holder. He didn't stay here too long. Then Father Stanila came in; he was over in Farrell.

M: Then he came over here?

P: Yes.

M: If you can, can you paint a little verbal picture of what the church on Wick Avenue--the one in which the people moved into in the 1940's--looks like?

P: I would say there is a big difference. Just like you mentioned before, that we have all of these religious [pictures on the] altar: the apostles, the Lord's Supper, the Lord, the Mother Mary. All of those are on the altar, in front of the altar.

M: Are they pictures hanging from the wall or are they paintings that are part of the wall?

P: Some of them are paintings and some of them are pictures.

M: Were they painted by hand?

P: They were painted by hand and on part of the ceiling they have the Lord holding his hands wide open showing that everybody is welcome. A picture like the angels, those were painted. I can't remember by whom, but they had them done and I think they were pretty expensive.

M: You said that Father Stanila had a part in the pictures. What was his part?

P: He's the one who selected what pictures should go where. He understands . . . with his religious background, he knows where the Lord's Supper should go and the apostles and the Lord's picture and all that. He arranged where they should go in front of the altar and all that.

M: Did the people have to stand up in this new church on Wick Avenue or did they have seats?

P: No, they had seats installed. They had different families donate the seats.

M: They're not folding seats are they?

P: No, they are not folding. They are permanent. They had different families donate one pew.

M: Are they donated for themselves or for the church?

P: They are donated for the church, but the donor had his

plate put on top of the back: "Donated by such and such."

M: For honoring him and so forth?

P: Yes. Some of the windows were also donated by certain families.

M: The choir, at the new church, where were they situated?

P: In the back, upstairs. We have about three or four steps up there.

M: Is it like a balcony type of thing?

P: Yes.

M: Did the old church, the one on Wilson Avenue, have any special place for a choir?

P: No.

M: In other words, just the congregation, itself, sang?

P: Most of the congregation sang over there all of the time. The people joined in.

M: Did they have a special choir then?

P: No, they didn't have any special choir.

M: The new church has a choir?

P: Right.

M: Did the old church have any Sunday school?

P: No, not that I can remember. They had school with a teacher, like Father Podea. He had one to teach if you wanted to learn how to read and write Romanian.

M: Did anybody continue that afterwards or was it just dropped?

P: I don't remember. I don't think it was started until we got back here on Wick Avenue; then Father Stanila started it over.

M: At this church on Wick Avenue over here, what kind of lighting do they have? Did they have candles or electricity or a mixture of both?

P: They had all electricity. Do you mean in front of the altar and all that?

- M: I mean in the church itself. Was it basically electricity? Did you have any lights hanging upon the ceiling or anything? Did you have candlelight for services too?
- P: No, they didn't have any candlelight. They had candlelight on Wilson Avenue. They used to have a pull down. They used to pull them down and put the candlelight out and they would put it back up to the ceiling. When we moved over here, I think, Mr. Tom Fleaka donated those center lights in honor of Carolina Fleaka, his wife.
- M: Are they supposed to represent the Holy Ghost?
- P: Yes.
- M: What about in front of the altar, do you see any candles or anything situated there?
- P: Well, they have four large candles in front of the altar and then they have a candelabra on a little table. They have two of them that are lit that have electric bulbs in them. They are like in the shape of candles.
- They have a Requiem Mass for people six weeks after they pass away.
- M: Did they have candles for special services on Wilson Avenue also?
- P: Well, they had candles on the altar and only two in front of the altar.
- M: Was this on Wilson Avenue?
- P: Yes.
- M: When they came to Wick they continued that?
- P: Yes, but they added more. I think they have four stands now in front of the altar with large candles. They have one candelabra that holds five candles or seven, I'm not sure, on the little table. They use that when they have these masses six weeks after the person has passed away.
- M: In other words, there were changes that occurred then, in the church itself, in that it became more modernized and tried to accommodate more people.
- P: Yes, and now we have one stand for these large eight-day candles, the red candles. We have that in church too. Then we have these votive candles as you go into the church. We have two stands of those. People light them up in memory when somebody in their family is sick or



has passed away or something.

M: Now when the people started to come to this church on Wick Avenue, the priest you mentioned before, was still living elsewhere. Do you recall when they started living about the church?

P: As soon as they moved in over here.

M: When they started to have services, the priest moved at that same time also?

P: Yes.

M: In the building, you have a social hall. What do you use that hall for, what kind of functions?

P: They have these banquets. Before they wouldn't allow them to use it for any kind of a reception. Now they use it for receptions. The society used it for meetings and veterans use it for meetings.

M: Do any clubs use it at all for anything?

P: Yes, different clubs. The society uses it, the veterans use it. We use it for our annual party.

M: You mentioned that you became a part of this veteran's group back in 1960. I meant to ask you previously when we were talking about WW II, what is this veteran's group? Can you tell us a little bit about it? What is its main function and how is it connected to our church?

P: I didn't get into it until 1960. I'm sorry I didn't get into it before, but . . . I don't know. Nobody asked me to and so I never joined until Mr. V. Bogdan finally asked me one day, "Why don't you join?" Since I joined I was secretary for about fourteen years. I finally gave it up because of my eyes the year before last. It's supposed to be that any Romanian can join it as long as one of his parents is of Romanian parentage; both parents don't have to be Romanian. It's just to continue our Romanian culture and to help out the veterans and to help each other out.

M: What kind of activities or events do you sponsor to try to preserve this Romanian culture?

P: So far they aren't doing too much. I don't know, there's a little, I wouldn't say conflict but . . . some of these First World War veterans don't agree with what some of the Second World War veterans would like to do. The Second World War veterans, I think, a lot of them would

like to help out somebody, even to contribute to either one of the two churches.

- M: What about the older ones from World War I, what do they want to do?
- P: I don't know. They don't want to see you spend any money.
- M: They want you to keep it in the bank?
- P: They want you to keep the money in the bank. They don't want to see any of that get away. They are even entitled to three hundred dollars; their beneficiary is entitled to \$300 when one of the First World War veterans passes away. The other veterans, if they pass away, are only entitled to \$200. They brought that about because they were afraid. They got a little money in there and they were afraid they weren't going to get the benefit of it being that they were there when they organized the club.
- M: In regards to the club once again, when you people meet and everything, are most of your meetings done in English or in Romanian?
- P: They're mostly in English now. They used to be in Romanian, but they've cut that out now. It's mostly in English. One or two of the older fellows may get up and say something in Romanian, but then they switch to English.
- M: In other words, conversation has changed from Romanian to English.
- P: That's right.
- M: What about the church itself, do you see the services to be under different reverends back in the 1930's and 1940's when it was basically almost all Romanian? Has it changed somewhat too?
- P: It used to be all Romanian but now it has changed like half-and-half. In my opinion, it should continue in half-and-half. There is some talk that they should at least have one in all English, but then you're going to disappoint the older people and we have more older people going to church than young people. I think it should continue the way it is right now. The first part is all Romanian and the second part is all English. The younger people don't get to church until later anyhow.
- M: Why do you suppose that some of the younger people, like in their early teens and maybe early twenties, don't go

to church that often; to the Romanian church that is?

- P: Before I think that they didn't understand what was going on. Most of the sermons were in Romanian and now, I think, with Father John . . . he is a very good speaker. He has only been in this country five years and he does a wonderful job, an excellent job. I think he'll get the young people to come a little more regularly to church.
- M: You mentioned about the different changes that occurred from Wilson to Wick Avenue in the sense of development and everything, also that the people themselves contributed heavily to the development church and so forth. Yet these older people who were instrumental in making the church, at that time, are getting up in age and some of them are no longer with us and the young people are starting to take over. Are there any changes between the generations that now are in command of running the church other than Father John and the people who were in command of the church in the culture and functions and aspects during the time of the 1940's or early 1950's? Do you see any differences or do you think that they are following through the same?
- P: No, I think the older people felt in a way that they couldn't trust the younger people to take over. They've seen that the younger people are taking over and they've seen that they are doing a good job. They're willing to even stay off of the council and everything; they are not anxious to be on the council anymore. They figure they did their share while they were in their younger days. They helped out all they could. They see that now they are in able hands. People are doing a good job. First, I didn't think they trusted them, but now that they see that things are going along okay and they are handling it pretty good, they are willing to stay away and just attend church and functions and leave the running of the church to the younger people. That's the way it seems to me.
- M: Have any of them voiced their opinion about the services being part Romanian and part English to you?
- P: There was one service we had this year past, all in English and some people complained about that they should have done it half in English and half in Romanian. Otherwise, as long as he does it half-and-half, I think he'll satisfy everybody.
- M: Have some of the younger generation voiced the opinion that it should be more or less in total English rather than in Romanian?
- P: I've attended a church in Beaver Falls, a Polish church,

and they have two services. Of course they have a larger community. Now the Romanians can't even fill the church up by having only one mass. Over there there are so many of them that the first mass at eight o'clock in the morning is done all in English. All the young people attend that. The second mass, at ten o'clock, is done all in Polish. They have enough people that they fill the church at both masses. We don't fill ours up with one mass. If you go, and take your mother, well, you don't expect to go to one mass and then come back and go take your mother to another mass. I think one mass for our community here is enough. We don't need two. That's why I say to have one mass and have it half-and-half. I think it'll satisfy the people.

M: In regards to that same question, to culture, the way of life of the people, has there been a basic change between the way the people--back in the 1930's and maybe even the 1920's when you came, the Romanian people that is--mingled and participated in functions with Romanian people to the people of today's age? Do you see any differences? In other words, has it continued the same? Are they as closely knit as they were at that time or has it seemed to have changed a little bit?

P: I don't think it has changed that much. I think anybody who goes to church or has been coming to church, they work together and they try to get along together.

M: What about in areas of different cultural events other than . . . well, the church functions have some of them, like you have your dinners and some dances and so forth, but I mean the people, themselves, who know each other from the church, do they carry their friendship throughout the week or do they depend upon seeing each other at church to meet again? In other words, is the church the only meeting place for these people or . . . you mentioned about baseball teams then. Are the baseball teams now and different activities as such now as they were at that time that are weekly and everyday functions or do the people depend upon the church on Sunday to see who they saw last Sunday?

P: That's the way it seems to me. Of course the younger people now . . . I think the AROY has the baseball. It's a church group. I think they go out bowling or something like that and they have a little basketball too. I don't know too much about it. I don't belong to the AROY anymore. I think they've been getting along like that, but it's through the church that they are doing it.

M: Has it Americanized itself a little bit or do they still

continue some of the Romanian habits and so forth? The Romanians, when they met a long time ago, as you previously indicated, spoke only in Romanian. Have you noticed when these people get together now, other than the older ones, is the talk more English words or Romanian?

P: I think it's all English.

M: In other words, the Romanian language, the culture of the Romanian language has diminished somewhat in usage?

P: Yes. I think it's mostly because there are so many intermarriages now. When they get together, they don't feel like talking Romanian when you know the person next to you doesn't understand the language. So not to offend them, you're going to speak the language that they understand too and that's English.

M: Also at the different church banquets and dinners we have different Romanian foods. For instance, one of them at Lent was fish and mamaliga, which is cornbread that's done Romanian style. In your talk with other Romanian people of the area, have they ever talked about when they would go home what they were going to be eating in the sense . . . Are they still eating the traditional Romanian food, do you know or has it become more or less American style steak and so forth?

P: I think the older people still stick with the Romanian way. The Romanian young people who have been taught by their parents about Romanian cooking still continue it. This other younger generation may not, but I know I used to enjoy my mother's food all of the time. I even tried to get my wife to cook some of that stuff and she does. She likes the food too. She used to like the way my mother did things too. It's not everything out of the cookbook, I mean, they did everything to their taste, which was very tasty too. I think everybody enjoyed it and we still enjoy it.

M: You have mentioned and we have discussed that the English language is in more common use in our church. Do you know of any attempt to bring back and teach some people how to speak Romanian?

P: I see Father John has posted a paper on the board and getting people to sign who are willing to start a Romanian school to teach them the Romanian language. I see there has been twenty or maybe close to thirty people who have already signed up for it.

M: Are they more or less young people?

- P: No, there are some of the older people; most of the older people, in their forties or fifties, I think, no teenagers.
- M: You have mentioned that church itself serves the Romanian community, but the church has brought in many people through intermarriages. Do you know if any of these people decided to become a member of our church and take the Romanian culture itself?
- P: I don't know. I know through these intermarriages we have gained members, but we also lost members. You take quite a few of them there that aren't Romanian and they come to our church pretty regular. I think you might as well say, it's a fifty-fifty deal. We lose so many of our Romanians and we gain so many of the other nationalities.
- M: In other words, the church welcomes other nationalities to participate in their functions?
- P: Yes.
- M: What is the basic function of the church other than to serve as a meeting place to worship in? What would be another function, because that is a basic function of all of the churches?
- P: I think it's a good thing. It teaches you the right way to live the Christian life. If you lead a good Christian life then you're going to live a good community life. You're going to be able to get along with your neighbors and everybody else. I think that's the whole trouble in this world. Nobody believes in "do unto your neighbors as you would have them do unto you."
- M: It would be a good training ground for the young people too if they would adhere to it.
- P: That's right.
- M: If you could envision any changes that are in the church, would there be any changes that you would like to be done at the church itself in anything?
- P: The way it's going along right now, I think that they're going pretty good. I can't see them making any changes but going back to . . . instead of having half in Romanian and half in English. You can't change the services that have been the custom for centuries and centuries and you can't change that. So we have to go along and learn and do the things that we were supposed to do in our religion.

- M: In regards to the Sunday school program underneath Father Stanila, I recall as a little child--that was back in the 1960's a little bit--that the Sunday school was quite full. Then as time progressed it started to diminish. What do you think could be done to motivate some of these children to want to come to Sunday school or to motivate their parents to bring them to Sunday school?
- P: That's it. I think it's the parents. They are the ones who should bring their children to school. We don't have any children, but if you don't bring them to school and get them started when they are young, I think we're going to lose them all. As they grow older they won't even come to church anymore. If they don't come with their parents and listen to them, why, I think we're going to lose them.
- M: Can you think of anything that can be done to try to instill in their minds--these younger parents--to bring themselves and their children to Sunday school?
- P: Well, I don't know. I see some of the parents who bring their kids to Sunday school and then they go up the street and get a cup of coffee. They don't even stay at the services themselves. How are you going to train the young people to stay in church when their parents . . . all they do, some of them, is bring them to church and that's it. Then they take off or they stay in the halls. They don't even come in for the services.
- M: What do you attribute that to?
- P: I don't know.
- M: Have they ever voiced why they do it?
- P: No, I don't understand it. It's just something I can't understand.
- M: Some people drop their children off and then exit?
- P: That's right.
- M: They don't participate in it?
- P: They don't even participate in our services. Some of them will be talking outside; some of them will stay out in the hall talking when they should really be in the church instead of in the hall talking, carrying on conversations, and smoking. I don't know. You can't say anything because . . .
- M: Do they participate in the Romanian activities and in events, these parents? If there are dances or dinners, do they participate in them?

- P: They go to that, yes. Otherwise, I don't know what they should do to bring them to Sunday school.
- M: Do you think by having the services as Father John is trying to do, one Sunday totally in English, might bring some of them back?
- P: I don't know. What would you do? You would only bring them for that one Sunday. If that would be a reason for bringing them, they would come that one Sunday and the next three Sundays they won't be here. That's why I think we still should continue half-and-half. Like I said before, the young people don't show up until later anyhow, and that's when he does most of the service in English; he also gives the sermon in English. So, they don't miss anything.
- M: Do you attribute this to a lack of [emphasis on the] Romanian heritage in the sense of following through with culture? What would you attribute it to?
- P: I don't know. It's not only the Romanians. I think everybody is getting away from the religion. Other nationalities are doing the same. They don't know what to do to trap the people. Look at the Catholics, they're changing their mass around. They are changing the services around and they have different commentators, not only the priests. Now they have the lay people go up there and commentate and do different things and they have the people sing as an audience, which they've never done before. They're trying to ease up on a lot of their compulsory things that they have in their church. Well, I guess, its through these ecumenical councils between the different religions that are trying to get together and attract more people. They don't know what to do themselves. I think it's in all the religions now.
- M: How do you see the Romanian heritage? Do you think that the young people of the Romanian heritage are ashamed of being considered Romanian?
- P: I don't think. I think, maybe, some of them are. I don't think there are too many. I think most of them are glad. They love their parents and they are glad they are Romanian. Maybe some of them even change their names; they don't want to have a Romanian name or something, but I don't think there are too many of them.
- M: How do you feel about your Romanian heritage?
- P: I feel real good. I'm glad I'm a Romanian. I think we should all be proud of our nationalities. After all, our parents all came from different countries. I think we should all be proud of our nationality.



- M: In regards to the Romanian community in Mahoning County today, the people themselves, you mentioned they don't mingle that much and that the people, for instance, stay away from church and you said it was found in other nationalities. What would you, if you had a chance, try to do to try to instill in not only Romanians, but other nationalities, to enjoy all their heritage and also to attend church? Would you have crusades? In the sense of religious crusades, I mean services and social services, or would you try to change everything to the way they want it? In other words, like you mentioned the Catholics changed their services. Would you change everything, do what they wanted, or would you keep it the same and hope that they might . . .
- P: I think that the best thing to do is to keep it the same and hope that they come back to church. Father has special services now and people don't come to the services. He said he doesn't care if there is only one person there, he's still going to hold the service. Still people just don't show up. They're too occupied. A lot of them work and have other interests. They're not as religious. A lot of them think they are, I don't know. It's something that they don't go to church.
- M: I know on campus there are some people who look at people-- other students who believe in Christianity, in God, or even if you're Jewish and so forth--as being somewhat wierd in a sense. Do you see, when you're talking to some of the younger generation, in our church or elsewhere, as something to be a basic cause for this? Do you see anything that would cause them . . . from people back in the 1950's and 1940's who attended church, not maybe regular all of the time, to people who are in the 1960's and now in the 1970's who want to stay away and very seldom go to church, who are going from Christians to almost atheists? Do you see any reason for this change?
- P: I can't see it, but I know it's happening. That's why I think all of these different religions are trying different things to attract the people. Now the Catholics even had those groups that play banjos and guitars and everything to try to attract the young people. They don't know what to do. They find a musical instrument . . . they even play trumpets and whatnot in church. I don't think that's right to my way of thinking, to have all that hard rock in the church; I don't think that's the place for that kind of stuff.
- M: When you were a child, did you attend church in the sense of wanting to or were you more or less forced by your father?
- P: When it came to Sunday, my dad said that was the day to go

to church. My dad brought us up like that even on the farm. Sunday we would go to church and that was it. We wouldn't do any work or anything.

M: Part of this might be attributed to the parents of the younger generation who felt, well, we want a church and I'll give you the benefit of the doubt then if you don't want to go or not . . .

P: Well, that's the way it seems today that the children don't listen to their parents anymore. That's it. They say, "I don't want to go," and they don't go. Before, I think, the parents used to take them by the hand and say, "You come with me," and that was it. Now it's not like that anymore.

M: Is it a lack of respect and parental guidance?

P: Right. I think that's the whole trouble now. Nobody listens to their parents, nobody listens to their teachers or anybody. They don't respect their elders or anything like that.

I belong to the Eastern Orthodox Men's Society too. We go along with the Orthodox churches regardless of whether you're Romanian, Ukranian, Russian, Greek, Serbian et cetera, and we tried to organize and form a club. The club has been organized since 1962. We bought some property on the west side and we're going to try to put up a little hall and meeting place. We have an Orthodox priest to council us and give us pointers.

M: Are there young people in that group?

P: Yes, there are young people. Everybody from eighteen on up is eligible to become a member for ten dollars a year. So they're trying to get the young Orthodox--all the Orthodox people together that way. We have annual installation of officers and they give awards for the "Orthodox Man of the Year," and the community award too. I think this year they're giving it to Bill Cafaro, developer. The "Orthodox Man of the Year" is Mike Baltic from Girard. He's pretty active in Orthodox doings around here. He helps the young people in bowling, the golf league, and different things, trying to keep the young people together in the Orthodox faith.

M: Do you have anything else that we didn't cover regarding the church or Romanian culture that you might want to mention or bring up?

P: The only thing that I can say here is when I first came here, by holding all these various holiday programs, like on Easter . . . every Easter they had a dance or a theatrical part and then Christmas too. In the summer they had picnics where the people were able to get together and everything

was done in Romanian.

M: Was this organized by different groups?

P: Yes, different churches. Our church would hold one and the Catholics would hold one, the society, et cetera.

M: Well, it was church itself, not different organizations, church organizations?

P: The society would hold it too. The society had both Catholics and Romanians.

M: Romanian Catholics?

P: And Romanian Orthodox both put on programs too for the society. Everything was done in Romanian and the people enjoyed the things and used to get nice crowds. Now they're falling away from that.

M: In other words, do you think it might be the American way, their life . . . at that time you didn't have television and you didn't have too much of that?

P: No, then the women didn't work and now all of the women work. I guess when they come home they're tired and stuff like that. They don't participate in these things anymore. Everybody used to take a pretty active part in putting on these plays. You have to go to practice and stuff like that. Now they've gotten away from that. Everybody is too busy doing other things.

M: Thank you for the interview.

END OF INTERVIEW