Carol Dougherty

Where: Wheeling Center Market & Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Catholic Church

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Date: June 21, 2016

Location: Wheeling, WV

Interviewer: Emily Hilliard

Transcription: Emily Hilliard

Length: 54:41

Carol Dougherty

Carol Dougherty is an elder in Wheeling's Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Church. She was born in Wheeling, WV in 1938 and was raised by her grandparents, who were immigrants from Lebanon. She is a traditional Lebanese home cook, a member of Our Lady of Lebanon Women's Society, and will be teaching a folk dance and *dubke* class for children at Our Lady of Lebanon's 84th annual Mahrajan Festival in August 2017.

EH: Emily Hilliard

CD: Carol Dougherty

00:00

EH: So, just for the tape could you say your name and introduce yourself?

CD: Okay, my name is Carol Dougherty, I was born and raised here in Wheeling, West Virginia and my grandmother and grandfather were immigrants from Lebanon.

EH: Okay.

CD: I don't know what else to say right now. You better ask me…

EH: Sure, sure. And when were you born?

CD: I was born in 1938.

EH: And could you tell me this story again for the tape?

CD: Actually, Our Lady of Lebanon School—that was probably the last year that it was open, right there in 1946. I call it our version of a Montessori school because first, second, third, and fourth grades were all in one room. So when we heard questions being asked to people in the fourth grade, say we were in the 1st or 2nd grade, it sort of piqued our interest. Made us a little bit more creative and challenged our minds a little bit more. So I really enjoyed going to that school. And it was more like a family than it was a school because we knew everybody, were raised with everybody. Upstairs, the priest lived upstairs also, but his rooms were adjacent to some of the schoolrooms there, and that was 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade schools. 8th grade classes I mean.

EH: And where was that?

CD: It was right behind the church—I'll show you when we go up there. Okay? Right now, our school room is the conference room, so that's where we hold meetings, etc. etc. What I would like to do is show you around this area here in Center Wheeling because so many of the immigrants opened their businesses right here in this very area. And Wheeling at that time, I think was the perfect model for an enclave city. Because you could almost tell by the person's address what nationality they were. Center Wheeling was mainly German, Lebanese, Syrian, and Greek. Now East Wheeling—a lot of Italians lived there. South Wheeling you had the Eastern Europeans like the Polish, Croatians, Slovaks and the Ukrainians. Also they had churches indicative to their nationalities in that area. Our church up here, which is Our Lady of Lebanon Church, is the only Maronite Church in the state of West Virginia. Okay? And then the Ukrainians down in South Wheeling, they had St. Mary's and it was a Byzantine church. So that was the focal point of the immigration population at that time. Everything they did, whether it's spiritual, or social, centered on their churches. Okay? And I would have to say that the early

immigrants, they more or less stayed with their nationality, but the next generation that came up, they sort of branched out. Not a lot of them married within their nationality—some of them did, some of them didn't. I'm a product of that. I'm half German, Lebanese, and English. So that's the way it went after that. But I was raised by my grandmother so I have a lot of the Lebanese traits. And the cooking skills, etc. etc.

EH: Nice!

CD: Okay?

EH: And are the communities—like the neighborhoods—do they still fall along those lines or not so much?

CD: No, the neighborhood where I live is basically gone. Okay? Like a lot of cities, it's transitional, you know, it moves on, they move out to the suburbs. Practically all the Lebanese population or what's left of it like me, moved out to the suburbs. You know they're not… at that time, nobody owned an automobile. Everybody used to walk to everybody's home, they used to walk to the church. The church didn't even have a parking lot at that time. That was the school's playground! But now we have a parking lot. So everybody is on the outskirts now. So…

EH: Well I'll just leave this on as we go on a little walk.

CD: Let me show you down here. That uh, that red building right there with the awning. That was Minehm Kalil's Grocery Store. It was called Sunshine Grocery. Why it was called Sunshine Grocery? That was his nickname.

EH: Okay.

CD: Okay? This building over here, the three story building right there, that was Mrs. Amon's boarding house. Okay? She was a really friendly lady that you know, opened her doors to everyone. She rented those rooms. Across the street over there was the Swan Café. Thomas John opened that up. Up the street was Maroon's Clothing Store. Okay? Where the Wheeling Flower Shop is now? That was in business for years—well most of these were in business for years and years. And a lot of the Lebanese lived on this street too, like the Thomas family, and the Kahlil family lived by the, up over their store—raised their family there. Now my grandfather, he had a coffee—it's no longer there—but he had a coffee house down there on this street, on this side. So a lot of, and then Mr. Ghaphery had a grocery store down around the corner. So, they were… if there was a store front open, okay, and they could scrape together a little bit of money, they went in and opened the doors and opened a business. They were very good vendors. I don't know if that was because they were descended from the Phoenicians who were the first sailing vendors or what, but it seemed like to be inherent in them that they could sell goods. Okay?

What I would like to do now is to take you up to the church. There it is right there—you can see it.

EH: Oh yeah, okay.

CD: Do you mind walking?

EH: Sure!

5:21

CD: Okay.

EH: Um, is there, what kind of coffee—was there a special Lebanese coffee?

CD: My grandfather used to—his coffee, it was a combination coffee house/confectionery. He sold ice cream, potato chips, candy, you know, all that stuff. But then the men used to come in and he used to make them Turkish coffee. It was brewed in that little brass cup—oh, strong as could be, but the men used to sit there and play cards and drink their coffee.

EH: Cool.

CD: That was a meeting place for the men, I mean, they spent their days there. The ones that were retired.

EH: And if they weren't Lebanese community, if they didn't have a business or a shop, what were other trades?

CD: Wheeling Steel mainly.

EH: Mmhm.

CD: They worked at Wheeling Steel. Oh, one of our men, of our immigrants, had a pushcart and a horse and he used to go around, he used to sell vegetables and fruits. And his sons eventually opened Saseen's Restaurant up there. It's closed now, but that was a staple here in Wheeling for many, many years.

EH: Ah! Was it Lebanese food?

CD: No—totally American.

EH: (laughs)

CD: We didn't really have… we had one Lebanese restaurant and that was it. But it was very basic. I see you're not getting out of breath, but I am!

EH: (laughs)

CD: (laughs)

EH: And now, is the Lebanese Bakery one of the only…

CD: It is.

EH: Remaining…

CD: It is. The closest other one would be Pittsburgh.

EH: Okay.

(car sounds)

CD: Most of the women, that I know anyway, their families have passed down their cooking skills to them and they prepare their own food.

EH: So what are some of the things that you learned to make and still make?

CD: Kibbee—that's the national dish. Uh, a lot of things. I can bake the bread. I can make the pastry, the chicken and rice, the Lebanese chicken soup, many, many different things. And then a salad too, which is unique.

EH: Mmm… what's in that?

CD: (catching breath)

EH: We can stop!

CD: You know what, it's hard enough for me to walk let alone talk!

EH:… and talk at the same time! We can wait 'til we get up there.

CD: I gave you the date of my birth, honey!

EH: (laughs) I didn't remember!

CD: Have you spoken to anybody else yet?

EH: I am meeting with Nick… uh…

CD: Nick Ghaphery. Yeah.

EH: Mmhm.

CD: I just didn't want to be redundant.

EH: Oh no.

CD: He has a lot more photographs than I do.

EH: I knew, so… Mary [Mary Monseur, my former co-worker at Smithsonian Folkways whose parents are from the Wheeling Lebanese community], um, told me a little bit about it, especially when I got this position and moved from D.C. She told me a little bit about the history of the church and the miraculous painting.

CD: I'll show you that. Father left a Lebanese drum there too. And also the thing that they drink water out of.

Now that right there, that was our playground.

EH: Okay.

8:49

CD: We just redid this out here.

EH: Nice.

CD: We had about 400 parishioners at the time. And out of those 400, 62 served in WWII. 10 died in WWII so our church did its part. This was the original stone, but the façade is new.

EH: Ah.

CD: I'll show you inside later.

This is where all of the women bake the bread and [unintelligible] and everything else. I brought some finger cymbals for you to see.

EH: And so now when you're getting together to bake bread, is that for Easter?

CD: We don't bake bread anymore. (laughs) We don't do that! We do do the pastry. Yeah, 1922. And then the fire happened in '32.

EH: Okay.

CD: And that was when the new building was dedicated. That's this building here.

EH: Nice. They did a good job of…

CD: Yeah, we won the award from the Friends of Wheeling that we kept it sort of in the same style as the original church. (unlocks door) I'm going to lock it so nobody else can get in.

EH: Thank you.

CD: Okay. This is the same statue that was in the church when I was crowned May Queen at 16 years of age.

EH: Wow.

CD: Now over here, these are some of the banners that the clubs had.

EH: Beautiful!

CD: This was my grandmother's club [St. Joseph's Society]

EH: Wow. Was that a women's club?

CD: Yes.

11:08

So was the Christian Mothers. Holy Name [Society] more or less was men. When I was a little girl and I used to come to church, most of the men sat on the left hand side of the church and women sat on the right hand side. This is Cedar Tree of course, that's the emblem of Lebanon. (sounds of footsteps) And this is all new here too. And this entrance is new.

EH: Wow.

CD: I don't know where these lights were. This is probably stairway. (muffled small talk about the lights)

Do I hear somebody?

EH: Sounds like tape.

CD: Yep, there's somebody here. Good morning!

Mike: Good morning! How are you today?

(small talk)

EH: Hi!

CD: This is Emily, honey, she's the folklorist in the West Virginia Dept. of Humanities.

EH: Hi!

CD: And we're doing early Lebanese history.

Mike: Good. Want me to turn on the lights or anything?

CD: Yeah, please.

EH: I'm gonna set some things down.

Wow.

CD: It's pretty isn't it?

EH: It's really beautiful.

CD: Now in 1932, the inside was really horribly damaged by the fire. Okay? These windows, these are irreplaceable. These stained glass windows.

EH: Ah.

CD: Yeah. Now this is the portrait up there. Up in the center? Now. When they had the fire, I think she was hanging over the side wall here, it was clear up at the top. The flames did not reach it, even the water hoses wouldn't reach it. The water turned sideways when they aimed the hose at it. Now I checked it with the fireman who was on duty that night—he was my next-door neighbor—he says it's true. She fell from up there, all the way down, not a scratch on her.

EH: Wow.

CD: Mmhm. Yeah. Most people come just to see that.

EH: And when was that painted, do you know?

CD: It was dedicated during the time the church was first built in 1922, but I'm not sure when it was painted. But that's Our Lady of Lebanon. She's revered. I mean that painting is revered. I'm gonna show you this. This is glass now, but the Lebanese used to use it made out of clay? And this is how they used to drink water. It's really sanitary—they didn't put it up to their mouth, they would just (motions).

EH: Oh!

CD: You know, like that (laughs) Course I don't know if I'd be able to do that or not. But this was their water pitcher, they called it a ebrik.

EH: Okay. Was that used in the mass?

CD: No. No it's not. The chalice is used in the mass.

EH: Okay.

CD: And the priest is the only one who drinks the wine in our mass.

EH: Oh, okay!

CD: Now the Lebanese, the way they write, they don't write like we do. They go from right to left, okay? Don't ask me to read this, I don't know. But that's the way. Father said "be sure and show her." I says, okay. They go from right to left.

15:00

EH: Wow. And the characters are so pretty too.

CD: Aren't they pretty? Difficult.

EH: Did you learn. Yeah, did you learn?

CD: (sighs) I don't know how to read and write, but my grandmother used to speak to me in Arabic, I would answer her in English. And she thought that was really funny. But I tried to and then my words would get tangled up and they would laugh at me, so I quit.

EH: (laughs) Cause Mary said that her father spoke Arabic at home until he went to school. So your school was probably in English at that point?

CD: It was. It was.

This is what they call a darbakke, honey. Now this is not traditional. Traditionally it used to be covered with a sort of an animal skin?

EH: Uh-huh.

CD: My grandmother used to play this, okay? She played the darbakke and before she played it, she would take it and go like this for a while to warm up the skin so she would get the right tone. Now, her brother played what they called a mizwiz. And they got the wood from that from the Assab. It was assab wood. And it was two reeds, hollow reeds, that they would sort of glue together with beeswax, wrap twine around it, put holes in it, and then they would blow it like a flute. How they did it, I don't know because they never took it out of their mouths. Their cheeks would go in and out, so it wasn't that easy to play.

EH: Right, wow.

CD: Now my grandmother and her brother used to entertain at all of the festivals. Okay? They used to play all day to have the people do the dubke, which was the traditional Lebanese dance.

EH: Okay.

CD: Okay. We still do that today, I love it.

EH: At the festival?

CD: Anytime we get a chance to!

EH: (laughs)

CD: (laughs) Anytime we get a chance to! I don't think there's anything of significance in here.

EH: Okay.

CD: But these windows were all donated here by the parishioners or by the clubs. The Lebanese population are very, very dedicated to their church. I mean extremely dedicated to their church. Not only then but now. These plaques that you see, these are for the recent renovations and everything, and we probably raised close to 3 million, over 2 million dollars we raised and paid cash for. For that new building, for a renovation of the church, the painting, the new carpeting, everything. And then of course for the, what I showed you on the façade outside there and then moving the monument, everything's been paid for. Everything. Yeah we have no debt.

EH: That's amazing.

CD: Yeah it is. It really is.

EH: So how big is the congregation at this point?

CD: Well I say before it was around 400. Now it's a little over 100. So it has shrunk significantly. But like I say, the people are so dedicated, is why they were able to… people are amazed that this little church was able to do that!

EH: Yeah.

CD: But they did.

EH: So is it people who have moved away who are also donating?

CD: Yes, some of 'em do. Yes they do. Uh-huh. Come on back here and I'll show you…

EH: After we talk I might walk some with the camera and take some photos.

CD: That's good.

(sounds of footsteps)

Father lives upstairs there.

EH: Okay.

CD: This was our classroom.

EH: Oh!

CD: I sat over here! And I remember raising my hand for the 4th grade question over there. Small classes, you know. But this was our classroom. Now this is our founder. This is Father Abraham. He eventually became ChorBishop and he was here for like 37 years and everybody adored this man. Absolutely adored him.

I got my first report card from Father Abraham when I was 6 years old. He came to our school room. He scared me. I was afraid of him. I thought, "what's he doing here?" You know? Then I

saw him handing out the report cards and I was so nervous. But luckily my grades were good, you know. And he said, "that's good, but why did you miss a day?"

EH: (laughs) One day?

CD: One day. (laughs) He called me on it! I says, "I was sick!" He said, "okay." Okay, but he… I have to tell you a funny story about my mother because she went to school here too. And in the wintertime out there in that alley that goes down? The boys used to make a skating track out of that when it was icy, and they would slide down there out into the street. Well my mother's job was to stand down at the end of the street and to wave them on when nothing was coming. Well they heard Sister ringing the bell but they didn't pay any attention to it. They just kept on playing. Well, little did my mother know that Father Abraham was coming up behind her. And she was going like this to the guys and he tapped her on the shoulder and he said "Cecilia, don't you know you're supposed to be in school, what are you children doing?" She says, "Father, I was telling 'em to come, they didn't pay any attention to me!"

EH: (laughs)

CD: There's baskets that wait… I do those baskets. We raffle those off every once in a while to raise some money, our ladies club does.

EH: Oh nice!

CD: Uh-huh. That's a seafood basket.

EH: And what's the… is it the same ladies club that your mother was in?

CD: No, this is another one. My grandmother was in St. Joseph's Society, my mother was in the Altar Society. This is Our Lady of Lebanon Women's Society. And actually, they're the pillars of the church. They have raised all the money with their bake sales and their dinners and you know, everything they've done. 'Course the Cedar Club has a rummage sale which raises a few thousand dollars too.

21:10

This is the Sacresty, this is where Father gets dressed. 'Course these are some of his vestments.

EH: Wow. Was that made by someone here?

CD: I think, you know, I think he gets his from Lebanon.

EH: Uh-huh.

CD: It's got… that which represents the Holy Spirit on the back. These are some other ones in here.

EH: Oh wow.

CD: He's got some really beautiful ones, look at this one.

EH: That is beautiful.

CD: Mmhm. Different colors for different seasons in the church.

EH: Okay.

21:36

And red is that for summer?

CD: That's just for this particular season.

EH: Okay.

CD: See—and the baby Jesus has the red trim also.

EH: Oh yeah.

CD: I walked up the… I walked up the hill from down by Coleman's?

Mike: Yeah?

CD: And she expects me to walk and talk at the same time! (laughs)

EH: I'm sorry! (laughs)

CD: I says, "I gave ya my birthdate!"

Mike: So you showed her the pictures down at Coleman's?

CD: Yeah, I did.

Now these, honey, this is something else that men and women use these. You were interested in the instruments?

EH: Yeah!

CD: Okay, these are finger cymbals. And you put them on the thumb and the middle finger on both hands. And they do sound good.

EH: Do you wear them when you dance?

CD: I don't! But I mean I can do it, I know how to do it. But I don't wear them. It's what I told you… [unintelligible] belly dancer.

EH: Oh! (laughs)

CD: But that, like I said, we used to have one man who used to do this, he used to do the routine with the castanets and it was sort of a comedy routine and he would get a woman up and talk to her in Arabic and do the clicks. It was funny.

But like I said…

EH: Do you want to sit?

CD: Oh I don't care…

EH: And then we can chat.

CD: And I can pull these things out and show you.

EH: Yeah.

CD: The women were very industrious. I mean they were very busy. They didn't waste any time if it wasn't cooking, it was baking, it was sewing. My grandmother started crocheting when she was 5 and she did tablecloths, doilies, she would trim towels and everything. I saw her once have a tablecloth and she had 2 months work into it. But she saw a mistake. You know, she ripped that out and started over again? That's what they were like.

This was our centennial celebration. 100 years. You can have this book. Also this is some history about my grandmother. Um, she… my grandfather worked at Wheeling Steel and then his eyesight started to go. So he had to quit work. So he stayed home with the kids—they had 4 children. She went to work at Wheeling Stamping which is down on Main St. I can't tell you how many Lebanese women worked there. You can tell who worked there because some of 'em had fingers missing, some of 'em had tips of fingers missing, because they worked on the press. You know? My grandmother worked there for 27 years and she bought and paid for a house during that time. Now when my mom grew up and married, she and my dad took my grandfather to Johns Hopkins? They did some surgery on his eyes and they restored it pretty good. And that's when he opened the coffee house.

Now when my grandmother was born, she came from a little town, little village up in the mountains in Lebanon called Maamriyeh. There were 3 children in her family. The youngest boy died, but her brother and she did, they came to the United States. Now my uncle, great uncle Jim, he was younger than my grandmother, he joined the Army and he was a doughboy in the first World War. And then when he left the Army, he moved to Parkersburg, West Virginia. He opened up a tavern on Julianna St. down there and that's where he stayed until he passed away.

Uh, now the pastime of the some of the women's group was cards. They loved to play cards. And the game was called Basra and that was where the jack was the high card in the game. I'm not really familiar with all of it. But they used to get together and Father Abraham used to join

'em sometimes. They all cheated, included the priest. They did! They accepted it because they all did it. And they would wink and (clears throat) like that, and let the partner know what they had.

EH: (laughs) Was it a four-person game?

CD: Yes.

EH: 'Cause I've played a four-person game where the jacks the highest. But we called it euchre. Midwestern.

CD: Oh no, it's not euchre. Now another one of the instruments was… and this was the classic Lebanese instrument, it was called the oud. Okay? It was a guitar like thing, but it was an oval shape, a string instrument, and the back was sort of domed. And one of our parishioners played it, Johnny John—he's no longer living. But he played that and his brother played the darbakke and his sister Celia sang. So while the dancing was going on at one part of the festival, he and his family were playing to the older generation, like that original Lebanese music? And they would be playing for them and entertaining them.

EH: Okay. And what is the music for the dance like?

CD: It's peppier. I mean you move and you get tired, but it's so much fun. And there's a couple different dances of the dubke, but there's one classic one that everybody does all the time, mainly.

EH: Is it a circle dance?

CD: Yeah, you link arms and you dance in a line around. So it's really fun.

EH: And are there musicians left in the church?

CD: You know, my cousins used to, and his friends used to play, but they're too old now! My cousin's in a nursing home. The other cousin died, and the other ones are just too old—they can't do it. So no, we have no musicians now. It was a sad…

EH: And so for the festival do musicians come from Pittsburgh?

CD: Pittsburgh or Cleveland or wherever we can find 'em. You know the one we had for our centennial celebration came from New York, so it just depends on where you find 'em and what you can afford to have at that particular time.

Now the neighborhoods that we grew up in. They were fantastic. Kids don't have that today. Everybody played outside. It was a mix like I say of Greek, Lebanese. You know, all the mothers watched everything. You couldn't get away with anything. Because everybody was watching you but you felt safe and you played these games outside. It was wonderful. People visited back and forth. They sat out on their stoops in the summertime and talked. It was just a wonderful way

to grow up. You weren't tied to all these technical stuff. You did physical activities which was very nice. I enjoyed it.

EH: And did you feel, um, because there was such a strong Lebanese community and other ethnic communities, did you feel different in Wheeling?

CD: Maybe it's because I was half and half and my maiden name was sort of… wasn't Lebanese. It didn't affect me a lot. Some of them. Bye honey (to Mike).

Some of them ran into discrimination. Okay? Ah, I know one person wanted to have a job at the drugstore, the corner drugstore, and they said "We don't hire foreigners." And she wasn't a foreigner, she was born in the United States. I mean both my parents were born in the United States. So my grandparents were the immigrants that came over. But had I had, had I had more of that look or the name that went with it, I think I would have felt discrimination a little bit more, but I didn't. But I do know some that did.

EH: On my way here I was listening to a podcast about a Lebanese community in Clarksdale, Mississippi and one of the older members of the community was saying, "I was too dark for the white community and too light for the African American community and so I couldn't really move in either circle." But they were talking about this—it was a barbecue joint but they also had kibbee and other Lebanese food and they said "We were the only place that would serve black customers and we were the only place in the community that when they came to test integration that passed and didn't get fined."

CD: That's funny because most of the Lebanese I know are not dark-skinned.

EH: Yeah.

CD: They're fair.

EH: I know, right. Like Mary [Mary Monseur]

CD: They look just like everybody else and Father's family, he's from Lebanon and I saw a photo of his family… and come on in—I think his sister's picture is in there. They look almost European.

30:09

Oh, he took it down. His sister died when she was 35 years old and he always kept it here and prayed for her. So, um…

EH: Yeah, I mean I think it was probably just… I don't think that was always the case, but I think it was probably him and maybe in the summertime and he would get tan and you know.

CD: You know what killed me about that, when they said they didn't want a foreigner working at the drug store, their parents were immigrants.

EH: Right!

CD: What did they think? You know, they weren't an American Indian!

EH: Right.

CD: So everybody basically is a foreigner.

EH: Exactly.

CD: So I really don't, I don't…I can't stomach any of that stuff. I mean prejudice should be left out somewhere, not…

This is our centennial book. This is a brief history of the church and the fire. So I thought, you can have this book and you can read up on that.

EH: Yeah! So how did that fire start?

CD: Uh, I guess the heating system, but he [Fr. Abraham] checked it before he went to bed and it was fine, so we don't know what happened. So this is… this is just when all the parishioners died. I don't think you'd be interested in that. This is St. Joseph's society and my grandmother's name is in here right there.

EH: They were Habdo?

CD: Yeah, they were Habdos. Initially she was a Joseph. Her maiden name was Joseph, but she married my grandfather who was Habdo. Oh, there's a picture again. These pictures. There's Father Abraham. Look at the costume. Or the outfit. That's really early and these are really early. Communion class. Just to give you an example of how things have changed, this is a communion class, this is my cousin Roberta when she took her first communion, and she was 2 years older than I was. Our communion class last year was 2. Our communion class this year was about 4.

EH: Wow.

CD: So you can see how it's changed, but these are the classrooms.

EH: So how many young children are part of the community?

CD: Now? Very few. Maybe 8.

EH: Mmhm.

CD: Yeah.

EH: Is that because families are not you know, going to church, or because people have moved?

CD: No. No, because they go to Catholic schools and they have to go to the church that pays for their you know, way to go. So sometimes they come here, but mostly they have to go to the churches of the schools that they go to. We don't have a school so we lose out there.

This is pictures of the festival. See how they used to dress up at the festival? I can't believe it. I used to…

EH: And that was August, right?

CD: Yeah! I used to wear a dress and high heels. I don't know why we did that. This was Mr. Simon, at that time, this is Nick's mom. A lamb used to be hanging out in the open, and he used to slice meat off of it and they'd make shishkabob, but that was the best shishkabob you ever tasted—over a wood fire!

EH: I bet!

CD: It was fantastic! These are… yeah these are recent. This was the housekeeper for Father Abraham. This is Father Bakhos and his father and mother over in Lebanon. They're bot deceased now. Here's Nick.

EH: Oh yeah.

CD: So you'll be speaking with him. He'll go into a lot of detail. Now these photos, like I say, I have that…what I was talking about… I printed that out for you so you have that too.

EH: Oh, thanks so much.

CD: This was Father Abraham's 50th anniversary, his golden jubilee [Carol told me later that she'd mixed it up and it was actually his 25th silver jubilee]. And this was only partial. There was another section of the hall over here. So you can see how many parishioners we had at that time.

EH: Wow. Everyone is dressed up.

CD: Yep.

EH: And are those other priests?

CD: That's clergy. Not our priests, but priests that were invited to the event. Now, that's my grandmother. I can tell by the bun in the back of her head and I can tell by her friends that were sitting with her. But this is Father Abraham right there, with the little white beard.

Now this is one of the festivals, the Mahrajan. This is the man I was telling you about who used to dance with the finger cymbals? And see he picked that lady up and he was doing a comic routine with her. Now this is my grandmother there. And you see the darbakke there—there's the

outline of it there. And that's the bottom of it, she played there. And see what these two men are doing? They're playing the mizwiz. This is my great uncle Jim—I don't know why he wasn't playing that 'cause he was really good. But he was standing there watching while these men were doing that. But this was the way the festivals used to be—it was nothing really fancy. We just used to form a circle and watch the dancing or the circle or whatever.

EH: Mmhm. And now what's the festival like?

CD: Oh there's a wood floor and there's tents and you know… it's different.

EH: Is it at Oglebay?

CD: Site 1—it's been there. Oh my goodness, we're the oldest event held in Oglebay Park. The oldest continuous event in Oglebay park. 80 some years I think?

EH: Wow.

CD: Yeah. And we still draw a crowd!

EH: I'm hoping that Mary will come and I can meet here there.

CD: Oh, you'd love it, honey!

EH: I really want to make it up.

CD: You would really love it. Now what they used to do too, in the early days, they used to put on plays. And you can see some of the costumes. This must have been a patriarch. This was my Aunt. My Aunt Mamie? She was the supreme dancer. At the festivals, people used to scream for her to get up and dance. But look at the funny clothes. Look at that. So this is what they used to do for fun, I guess. They were busy. They were always busy!

EH: Wow, yeah. And very creative.

CD: Uh-huh. Very much so. I remember one time when I was in the first grade, Sister asked me if I could, if I knew all the words to Silent Night. I says "yeah," she says, "okay." She says, "I want you to sing it in that Christmas play." I said, "okay." I didn't know any better to have nerves at that time. You know. Well my mother and everybody came, they were sitting downstairs. I think we had it downstairs right in the schoolroom. And we had Mary and Joseph and Jesus up in the front, and she made me kneel down in front of them and sing "Silent Night" and my mother asked her friend, "Where's that little voice coming from?" Because I didn't sing… Her friend said, "Cel, that's Carol!" And she said, "Oh my goodness!" (laughs) But like I said it was one big happy family. It was so nice. And some of these people, they're still family today.

EH: Yeah. Could you tell me a little bit about the recipes we started talking about that you make?

CD: Oh yeah, the food? Like I said, kibbee is the national dish. Okay? And you can make that in so many different ways. Basically what it consists of is cracked wheat which is the bulgur and we call is bulghur. And that comes in fine, it comes in number 2, which is semi-coarse and then the 3, which is coarse. Some people like the number 2, they do it a little bit more of a bite to the tooth with it, some people do the fine. I can use either one, it doesn't make any difference to me. Consists of that and either ground lamb, pureed onion, some people put in a pureed green pepper, salt and pepper, and then your spice is your preference. Some people put a dash of cinnamon. My grandmother used allspice. That's what I use sometimes or I use the seven spice mix. Okay? That's the basic recipe for kibbee. And you can make it any way. You can make it in patties and either fry it or bake it, you can make it in sineyeh which is in the pan—you put a layer in the bottom and then you saute some ground meat, onions, pine nuts, put it on top of that, then another layer of kibbee on top of that and score it, bake it in the oven. So it's made in a variety of ways. Now another thing that the Lebanese love is the yogurt, which we call laban [labneh is the strained version of laban]. And we've all been taught how to make it ourselves from scratch, so I do that and I love that. Tabbouli is another national dish. That's with the cracked wheat—like a salad, like a cold salad with tomatoes, green onions, a lot of parsley, there's a lot of vegetables in that. There's a lot of different…

Lebanese food is labor intensive. I'll tell you that right now. Everything is fresh, everything takes a lot of time to make. Uh, the Lebanese chicken soup. I used to prepare little… it's called um, acini de pepe they're those tiny little, tiny little dumplings that they use sometimes in wedding soup. I buy a box of that, but what my grandmother used to do—she used to take the cracked wheat, sprinkle it with water, sprinkle it with flour, and then roll like this to get those tiny little beads. My mother tried one time. Some of 'em were big, some of 'em were little, some of 'em were oval. She says… that's… forget it! So but that's what the Lebanese women used to do. And they all baked the bread, they all baked their own bread. My grandmother was 5 foot if she was 5 foot, and she used to bake 25 pounds of flour at a time. It was never anything less. Never anything less. And that would be like the week or week and a half supply of bread. When it came out of the oven it was hard, so they had to dampen it, and then they would store it. It was nice and soft. Now what they made was not the little pita bread. It was the big round. Like sort of, they called it like the mountain bread khibaz mahrooh? It was big. And it separated. It had like two layers on it. And you know how they did the pizza?

EH: Yep.

CD: That's the way they used to do the bread. And in the old country, I guess, they used to lay it over a hot stone to bake it.

EH: I've seen that.

CD: Yeah but now, I mean then, she just put it in the oven down on the floor of the oven. When it would raise, she would poke it with a knife, and then take it out and put it in the broiler to brown it.

EH: Wow.

CD: It was a lot of work!

EH: Yeah.

CD: Every loaf had to be done like that. And that's 25 pounds.

EH: So that would be—would that be hundreds of loaves?

CD: Yes. Yeah.

EH: Wow.

CD: So that's the way they used to work and like I said, when she would come home, she would be crocheting. She wouldn't be sitting. She would be doing something. Another thing she loved—I don't know about the other women. She loved cowboy movies. Every Saturday she would take me to the Liberty Theater. We would watch a double header. Cowb—I hated 'em! A double header cowboy movie. I went for the popcorn and the cartoon and to keep her company. Every Saturday, that was on the agenda. I had to do it and she had to do it and she loved it. (laughs)

EH: (laughs) Why do you think that was?

CD: It was easy for her to understand. There was a good guy and a bad guy, you know? Wasn't a lot of dialogue. A lot of action.

EH: Right!

CD: I mean that's my guess!

EH: Yeah! That's probably it.

CD: And then we used to walk through town, you know, window shop. And do different things like that. But the Lebanese people, the first thing in their hearts and their minds is their faith. That was number one with them and nothing could take that away. Second thing was family. Family was totally important to them. And then after that, they loved their food, they loved their music, they loved their dancing, they loved to laugh, they loved people. They were some of the most hospitable people you would ever want to meet. You go to their house and they would feed you—you couldn't get out the door without that. And a lot of them are still like that today. So that's what I loved about them.

EH: That's really nice.

CD: Mmhm.

EH: So when you get together or for the bake sales, what are the things that you make now?

CD: Okay, sometimes we make the sweets, which is the maamoul, and the orange cookies, lamoun.

EH: Are those crescent cookies or no?

CD: Cresent cookies is aras-aid and that's for Easter.

EH: Okay.

CD: Okay. The maamoul is the round dome cookies stuffed with walnuts… and covered with powdered sugar. We usually have those at the festival. And then of course the bahlawa,but we don't make that by hand anymore because that's a lot of work.

EH: And what's that?

CD: That's the baklava, is what the Greeks call them. Yeah.

EH: Okay.

CD: And then of course the twists, the sesame twists, and the nemorah, which is sort of, sort of like the maamoul, only you bake it in a tray, and I stuff mine in the middle with nuts. And then when you take it out of the oven you pour the simple syrup mixture over it. It's really good—there's a lot of different Lebanese cookies. But the ones we usually make are the maamoul, the lemoun, and the sesame cookies. And then for the bake sale I'll usually make the nemorah. Now for the regular bake sale, we make meat pies, spinach pies, and then we do the za'atar which is the savory bread, and then we do the sweet bread, which is a round… it's not a pita bread it's just a round piece of bread which they call manoushe, and then they put butter and sugar and sesame seeds on top of it. And a lot of people like that—they call that the sweet bread.

EH: Oh okay, and then the savory, did you say zatar?

CD: Zatar. It's very pungent thyme. Very pungent. And you mix that with sesame seeds and oil. And you smear that on top of that.

EH: Oh zatar. So good.

CD: Yeah. The first time my husband tasted it, he thought it was a cinnamon roll he was going to eat, and he actually shook when he took a bite of it, but now he likes it.

EH: Uh-huh.

CD: Yeah. So you have to develop a taste for it. My daughter, when she was little, used to (makes licking motion) just lick the topping off of it.

EH: Oh yeah, that is really good.

CD: Have you ever tasted that?

EH: Yeah, I think I've had some in New York. Um, but that's…

CD: Actually, I was watching one of the cooking shows… Andrew Zimmern—have you heard of him?

EH: Mmhm.

CD: He mentioned that as a spice he would love to use on regular food today. He did it on chicken, rubbed chicken with it and he said it was delicious.

EH: Oh yeah. Yeah!

CD: So that's really up and coming.

EH: Yeah, I think some of the… that middle eastern food is… you know you can find hummus everywhere now.

CD: I know.

EH: Pitas…

CD: Hummus is the easiest thing to make too. Very easy and it's good.

EH: Yeah.

CD: My daughter works with the school children out in Oklahoma City, and she worked with kindergarten this year and she said, "Mom, it's so funny. A lot of them bring hummus for lunch."

EH: Yeah!

CD: With vegetables and pita bread? And I said, "well, it's good for 'em!"

EH: It's better than Ranch!

CD: I know. I know!

EH: Is there something that you miss for food that you don't make or can't really get anymore?

CD: Yeah. Uh, I can make it but it's so much trouble to make, it's called shish barak.

45:35

And what it is, it's similar to a ravioli. It's the little round dough, and you stuff it with ground meat, onions, and parsley, and then you wrap it and seal it. And then you cook it in a yogurt base.

EH: Yum.

CD: I mean it's delicious. It's delicious, but it's so time consuming to make. And then another thing that the Lebanese women love and the Lebanese men love too is kousa. Which is squash, but a certain type of squash. It's short and a little bit fat. And you take the inside out of it and you put meat and onions and rice and seasonings in there, then you plug it back up and cook it in a tomato sauce.

EH: Yum.

CD: Yeah, and it's very good.

EH: Sounds great.

CD: Yeah. Lebanese food's healthy. It really is.

EH: Lots of vegetables.

CD: Mmhm.

EH: Well I might take some photos.

CD: Go ahead.

EH: Is there anything you want to add?

CD: I don't think so unless you come up with something that you want to ask me.

EH: Okay. I… so the festival's the first weekend of… August?

CD: No. It's always the Sunday before the 15th.

EH: Okay.

CD: The 15th is the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin and they started the festival to renew the church after the fire. Okay? So they always had it in the honor of the Blessed Virgin, and it's always the Sunday before the 15th. Now this year it will be the Sunday before the 15th whatever Sunday that falls on.

EH: Mmhm. Okay. I'll have to put that in my calendar.

CD: Mmhm.

EH: I hope Mary can meet me.

CD: I hope so too! Her dad used to come once in a while.

EH: I know she just moved in with her parents because they are not in great health, so I think she's taking care of them. So I'm not sure how much he they could travel.

CD: Was she originally, was she… did she ever live in Wheeling?

EH: I'm not sure. Maybe in her early childhood. But I'm not sure if she ever did. I can't remember. I think she spent most of her time in Virginia.

CD: Okay. I didn't know her. Like I said, I knew the dad, and I knew his sister and I knew the older brother.

EH: She's really wonderful.

CD: I'm sure.

EH: She was sort of a work mom for me.

CD: Really?

EH: Yeah (laughs) she was very sweet, very smart.

CD: How long have you been doing this?

EH: I got my Master's in 2011.

CD: Where'd you go?

EH: UNC. Chapel Hill.

CD: Okay. Mmhm.

EH: But yeah. And uh, so… this is with the Humanities Council, but we're also trying to build a Folklife Program that would help support you know, cultural heritage communities.

CD: We're trying to keep it going, I'll tell you that. We're working hard to keep it going. But as people move away and… Like I said, the industry in the valley has gone downhill. You know, we used to have a lot of manufacturing here, but that's all gone. So when that went, the younger people started to move out to get employment so naturally that lessened our population in the parish. But we're working feverishly to keep it going, so hopefully we can. I'd hate to lose this.

48:50

EH: I know.

CD: I would hate to lose this, I was baptized here. I was married at that altar, I made my first communion here. I made my confirmation here, I buried my family out of this church. It's…

EH: It's important.

CD: Mmhm. My grandparents were among first members of this church.

EH: Well also we're hoping to build programming and there may be grants available. One of the things we're applying for now is funding that would support a master/apprentice program, so a pair would apply and then the master artist would get a stipend for an apprenticeship for a year. And that could be, you know, it could be food related. It could be, you know, maybe there's a younger person who is interested in learning all the recipes, you know something like that.

CD: Right.

EH: So, I'll let you know if that happens.

CD: Okay.

EH: And could help with application or anything.

CD: Okay.

EH: And some of it is… I'm realizing now, a lot of the communities are bringing in musicians. I was speaking with a Polish woman yesterday, and they bring their dancers in from Pittsburgh, so maybe it would even be an out-of-state—you know, someone here learning from someone out of state to bring the tradition back or something like that.

CD: Right. Father has tried.

EH: Really?

CD: He has tried to get a folk dance group going with the dubke… he would even supply outfits he said, but there was very little interest of course. We… it's not inherent in our population today. Now, I grew up with it. If my grandmother didn't have a drum she would pound a plot or a table to get me to dance, you know? They don't have that today.

EH: Yeah. Right. I know. And sometimes I think it takes going away and then realizing… "Oh, I had this thing that was special."

CD: That's what happened to me! I mean, I always did love it. Always did love the culture. But due to the lack of employment in the area, my husband was in the transportation business. And that really went south at times, so we had to move to Columbus for his job. And we were there for 18 years. But all the time I was there, I missed this. And didn't really appreciate it as much as I should have when I was here.

EH: And when did you move back?

CD: 2003.

EH: Okay.

CD: Mmhm.

EH: And how far away is Columbus?

CD: It's probably 2 hours.

EH: Okay. So you would come back.

CD: I always came back for the festival and I helped for the festival too all the time. Yeah. And then of course, I went to church up there so I didn't come back like every… my family was gone by then so I didn't come back all the time.

EH: Mmhm.

CD: But I always came back for the affairs.

EH: Okay, and did you find a Lebanese church there?

CD: No. Maronite. No, there was a priest who used to say a Maronite mass once in a while, at different churches in the area, and we used to go to those every time one came available but that was far in between. You know, it wasn't anything steady. But now they do have a mission up there.

EH: Okay.

CD: So the priest from Dayton comes down and says mass on Sunday for those people.

EH: Could you explain what Maronite is?

52:03

CD: Yes. Maronite—this is our founder right over here—that's Saint Maron. Actually he's like Saint Patrick for the Irish—this is Saint Maron for the Lebanese. He was a monk and he founded the Maronite church and our rite is called—it's an Eastern rite, and it's under the Pope, the same way the Roman Catholic Church is. Father was explaining it to me. I think there's like 22 or 23 different branches of the Catholic Church—I didn't realize there were that many. But the way he explained it to me—you take a flower pot. Okay? That's the Pope and that's Rome. That's the Vatican. And then the flowers grow out. That's all the different branches of the church. Now the way we differ from the Roman Catholic Church in our liturgy? We always take communion from the priests' hand [into our mouths]. We never do it like this, we never take it from anybody but

the priest and we don't take it in our hand. He puts it in our mouth. He dips it in wine first and then puts it in our mouth. We never touch the host.

Also another difference and this is my favorite and I get chills every time it happens—the Consecration, and that's in the middle of the mass—that's when the priest says—he mimics the words of Christ "This is my body, take this and eat." That's the Consecration. He chants that in Aramaic, and that's the language that Christ spoke. So when you're hearing the language that Christ spoke, it does something to you.

EH: Wow. Yeah.

CD: So that's the big difference.

EH: Wow. I grew up going to Catholic Church with my grandmother who is Belgian. I'm not sure what branch. And I remember going to different, going to different cathedrals and sometimes they would put it in the hand, sometimes the priest would put it in the mouth. Maybe it just depends on the priests or…

CD: Well the Roman Catholics have lay ministers that stand up there with the priest and give out communion. And then they also have the wine that people—I never drink the wine. (laughs)

EH: No, I didn't either.

CD: You don't know where that rim has been!

EH: Right! I would just get the…

CD: No. But anyway, that's the basic difference. Because otherwise he says the mass in English. You know, the homily, the gospel in English, everything like that. So it's basically the same, it's all under the umbrella of the Vatican.

EH: Mmhm. Okay. Um, well thank you so much!

CD: I hope I've helped!

EH: It was really nice—thank you.

CD: I'm glad you enjoyed it. I did.

EH: Yeah me too.

CD: Okay.

EH: Yeah, hopefully I can come back for the festival.

CD: I hope so—I'd like to see you out there! I'll get you out there dancing the dubke! (laughs)

EH: (laughs) That would be great!

CD: Yes I will too!

54:41

END OF TAPE