

A TEI Project

Interview of Kamala Ananth

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1. Transcript

1.1. Session 1 (July 15, 2010)

Hampapur

It is July 15, 2010. This is Veena Hampapur, and I'm here today with Kamala Ananth. Thank you for joining me today. I really appreciate this.

Ananth

You're welcome.

Hampapur

I'd like to start off by talking about your life in India. Can you tell me where you were born?

Ananth

I was born in a district called Hassan, which is Karnataka state. Can I go further?

Hampapur

Sure.

Ananth

Even though I was born there, I didn't grow up there. I moved to Bangalore and ever since, I was in Bangalore until I came here.

Hampapur

How old were you when you moved?

Ananth

Oh, I don't know, very young, a few months or maybe one year old or like that. So I don't have any memory of that. I have not seen the place also.

Hampapur

Was it a village?

Ananth

Yes, a village. Yes, it's a village.

Hampapur

How far is it from Bangalore?

Ananth

Bangalore--about sixty miles probably. I have no idea.

Hampapur

Okay, so not too, too far.

Ananth

No, it's not far.

Hampapur

Where were your parents from, originally?

Ananth

They are from the same place that I said, Hassan. It's called Hassan. It's like a city, yes, Hassan. Both of them are from there.

Hampapur

And they grew up there?

Ananth

They grew up there and all their life they were there, and then once we came to Bangalore, they also moved to Bangalore. I moved; they brought me to Bangalore.

Hampapur

Why did they decide to move to Bangalore?

Ananth

Because of education. The education was the most important thing. In the village, I don't think there were no schools or anything, so they wanted to move to Bangalore.

Hampapur

For their own education, or for their children?

Ananth

For my--for our children education.

Hampapur

Did you have any brothers or sisters?

Ananth

Yes. I have--three more girls, three sisters; including me, four, and I have a younger brother.

Hampapur

When were you born, in that order?

Ananth

I was the last; among girls, I am the last, fourth one.

Hampapur

Okay, baby of the family.

Ananth

Baby, yes. They pampered me. [laughter]

Hampapur

So your siblings, your other sisters, they grew up for some time in Hassan?

Ananth

Yes, yes, yes. They did, yes.

Hampapur

What did your father do for a living?

Ananth

He was a farmer, taking care of the land. Actually, he didn't move to Bangalore, because he had to take care of the land. Every now and then he used to come and visit us, but most of the time, he was there taking care of the land.

Hampapur

So he was a farmer?

Ananth

Like a farmer here, yes; landlord, like landlord.

Hampapur

So do you know if he oversaw other farmers? Or do you know what his responsibilities--

Ananth

Yes, yes, yes. He supervised. He supervised others, yes.

Hampapur

Okay. So when you moved to Bangalore, did you come with your mother and then your siblings?

Ananth

Yes. Sure. Yes, we all came together, yes.

Hampapur

What part of Bangalore did you move to?

Ananth

It's called Chamarajpet. Do you know Chamarajpet?

Hampapur

No.

Ananth

No, I don't think so. Chamarajpet, we moved to Chamarajpet. When I was about eight to ten years old, we moved to another place called Gavipuram Guttahalli. Yes, we moved there. And then I finished all my education; from elementary to the university, we were there.

Hampapur

And when you first moved to Bangalore, where were you staying? Did you live with other relatives?

Ananth

No, but I think my grandma and grandpa were already there, so we stayed with them. My mother's--maternal, maternal grandparents are there, so I stayed with them. We all stayed with them.

Hampapur

Did your father come join you guys eventually?

Ananth

Yes. He did, he did, yes, eventually. But most of the time, he was there. He was in the village.

Hampapur

Busy with work.

Ananth

Yes.

Hampapur

Do you have any memories of that first place you lived until you were eight years old, what the neighborhood was like?

Ananth

Neighborhood was very friendly. That place I don't have much memory, because I was very young. Only thing, I had this typhoid. I remember, I had typhoid.

Hampapur

Oh, wow.

Ananth

Yes. And I was in the bed for so many days. Then afterwards I recovered, and then I was okay later. But that is a memory I have there. Otherwise, I don't have anything there, nothing.

Hampapur

Do you remember anything about your grandparents' house there?

Ananth

Yes. It was a two-bedroom apartment, like apartment here; they don't call them apartment there. So house, yes, two-bedroom apartment, one kitchen, and we managed with all that. At that time, you could manage, but now everybody wants their own rooms and everything, all comforts. But no, we were all--we adjusted so well in that house.

Hampapur

Were your grandparents retired?

Ananth

No, my grandfather was working in--what do I call--I think government, in the government office, yes, as a secretary or like that.

Hampapur

Okay. So were you living in government housing then?

Ananth

No, no, no, rented house.

Hampapur

Then the next place you moved to, you said when you were eight years old. Do you have memories of that neighborhood, what it was like?

Ananth

Oh, I had a wonderful time in that house, because we lived in a house and the whole surroundings had children of our age, and we had a ball, I tell you, because we used to play together, we used to go to school together, we did all kinds of things, even picnic on evenings. During summer holidays, we were out all the time, not inside. The parents had to call us, I mean. I had a ball there.

Yes, I had a wonderful time there.

Hampapur

What were some of the games you used to play?

Ananth

Like karem, it's called karem, and then badminton, and then what did you call hip-hop or something, you jump over them?

Hampapur

Hopscotch?

Ananth

Hopscotch, yes, hopscotch. Koko, it's called koko--I don't know what they call it here--moving from one place to other one. What is it called? Suppose you sit here, take the chair, your chair, and you will move to the other one. I don't know what kind of game is it, but that's the one we used to play. And snake and ladder. I think those are the things we played. Cricket also, yes, oh, yes, cricket. Yes, boys and girls, we all got together. We played and played all the time.

Hampapur

So it sounds like all the neighbors knew each other.

Ananth

Very good, yes, very good neighborhood.

Hampapur

Can you describe what it looked like then? Were there a lot of trees, or was it very city-like?

Ananth

No, no, no. Backyard was so big, all the way. The houses had a big backyard, so we could gather there. My backyard, a neighbor's backyard--there were three houses. Three houses had big backyard, and our house was alone, nobody, nothing but the backyard. But my neighbor, they had a tenant, and the people to our left side, they had tenants also, so most of the time they all used to gather in our place at the backyard. Yes, we had some vegetables and fruits growing, but not big trees or anything.

Hampapur

Were your grandparents also living with you at this house?

Ananth

Yes, yes, sure, all the time, yes.

Hampapur

Do you know why your family moved to this location?

Ananth

Because that house was small. That's why we moved here. This was a little bigger of a house.

Hampapur

Can you tell me about the setup of the second house?

Ananth

Okay. Living room and a big two bedrooms, and then you get a dining place, kitchen, bathroom, and our toilets were all the way at the back. You had to go all the way--at that time, you didn't have any toilets inside. We had to walk all the way to the end of the house, to the backyard and there.

Hampapur

Oh, so it was separate from the house.

Ananth

Separate, yes. Maybe hygienic, I don't know.

Hampapur

Yes, that's true, to keep it separate. Okay. So houses were a little bit different back then.

Ananth

Yes, yes.

Hampapur

Did you have any chores or responsibilities at home?

Ananth

I was a very irresponsible girl. I grew like a tomboy, I tell you. No, I didn't even go to kitchen. I didn't know the difference between this lentil, that cereal, or anything. No, I didn't have any--but we played. Like in the summertime, we just played all day, dolls, and then all the neighbor children, we used to go together to every house and get something from them. They used to make some kind of snacks, and we used to collect and come and eat it. That's it, yes, we had that.

Hampapur

For Dasara, did you put out any special sort of dolls?

Ananth

Oh, special dolls, yes. We had separate dolls for Dasara festival, so every year we used to take it out and put it in; display. Your mom does it, right?

Hampapur

Yes.

Ananth

So that is how we used to do it, yes.

Hampapur

Were there any other religious holidays you celebrated?

Ananth

Oh, yes, Ganesha, Gowri, Ganesha, and what else? Mainly those are the things, Gowri, Ganesha, Dasara. Oh, Deepavali, Deepavali, firecrackers and that. Mainly those are the ones, very important, yes. But my grandma and grandpa, they did so many others, but as far as I am concerned, these are the three festivals.

Hampapur

So how did you celebrate those? What would you do?

Ananth

Okay. For Dasara, the first day we used to take a shower and then pray god; install. The first day, we help install something, and then the next nine days, every day different--we used to pray in the morning and the evening, but nothing special. But in between, there's a puja called [unclear], called Saraswati puja, which means wisdom, the god of wisdom, right? Yes, we used to do that. On the ninth day, I think, we used to offer something to all appliances we had, like bicycle and so many things. On the tenth day, we used to take out all the dolls and whatever else it is.

Hampapur

What about for Diwali, what did you do?

Ananth

Diwali, early morning. Early morning we used to take shower. Everybody has to take shower. In the house, there were so many people, our neighbors also. So we used to go and have the firecrackers cracked, yes. And good food at home; all the time good food.

Hampapur

Did your family attend a temple at all?

Ananth

Oh, they did, yes. They used to go to temple. There was one temple called Ganesha Temple. Every morning, every morning before we went to school or college or anything, we used to go there, pray god, and then we used to go to school.

Hampapur

Oh, wow. You went every day to the temple.

Ananth

Yes, but it is close by, though.

Hampapur

And did you do any puja or anything at home also?

Ananth

Oh, yes. At home, yes, pray god, that's it, nothing special, no. Every day we used to do the pray god, and Namaskara, go around, and then in the morning, after taking bath or shower, we used to do that.

Hampapur

Were most of your neighbors also Kannada as well?

Ananth

Yes. All of them were Kannada-speaking, yes.

Hampapur

Okay. Did your family have a radio?

Ananth

No, we didn't have radio for so many years. But I think when I got into high school or something, at that time we got radio. Until that time, we didn't have radio, and only one neighbor had radio. We all used to go and sit and listen to the cricket commentary and some of the music, binokof or something, some good music, Kannada music or Hindi music. We knew the time, so we used to gather there and listen to that.

Hampapur

Okay. It sounds like all the neighbors were quite open.

Ananth

Oh, we got along so well. We used to fight also, but at the same time, we never left each other.

Hampapur

Were the adults as close to each other? Or was it the kids more?

Ananth

Yes, the adults, yes, everybody, all of us, yes.

Hampapur

Was cricket very popular back then?

Ananth

Oh, very popular, yes. I used to go and watch too, the games, yes.

Hampapur

Where did you go watch it?

Ananth

In the stadium where they played. I used to go there and watch.

Hampapur

Oh, okay. Was it a local team?

Ananth

Local team with somebody, with other teams, like from other states. Other states, yes.

Hampapur

Okay, so like Karnataka would play another state?

Ananth

They would play Madras or, yes, yes, like that, yes.

Hampapur

That sounds fun. Was it very popular for people to go watch?

Ananth

Yes. Cricket was the most popular game. Even now it is popular, yes, that is true, yes. Wherever there is radio, you should see people gathering and listening to that, because everybody didn't have radio. So wherever the other people had radio, everybody used to go there and listen. You should see the restaurants and everywhere, so many people listening to the commentary, cricket score, yes.

Hampapur

Were there any other popular activities at that time?

Ananth

No, I don't think so.

Hampapur

Did you go to the movies at all?

Ananth

Yes, very rarely, not much, because my grandma didn't want us to go, you know. My grandparents were very strict protectors, well-protected family, so they didn't want--but I used to go, but very rare, though. Not so much.

Hampapur

What kind of movies did you see?

Ananth

Kannada movies and then comedy, and some of them are not mystery--what is it called? Comedy, mostly comedy.

Hampapur

I'm guessing no one had television back then.

Ananth

No. No, no television at all.

Hampapur

Do you remember when it came to India?

Ananth

No, I wasn't there. Yes, I was here.

Hampapur

Oh, wow, okay.

Ananth

Yes. Until that time, nobody had really TV.

Hampapur

Well, switching over to your schooling, do you have any memories of your elementary school?

Ananth

Oh, elementary school was so close by, we used to run to the school after hearing the bell, because it was so close, and we used to run from the backyard. There was an alley. We used to go there. We used to play with other children also, but elementary, as far as I can think, not much, no.

Hampapur

Was it coed or girls only?

Ananth

Coed, it was coed.

Hampapur

What language did they conduct it in?

Ananth

Kannada. Mainly Kannada; yes, Kannada. Elementary was Kannada.

Hampapur

What about your junior high or high school?

Ananth

Yes, junior high, which was far from my house and all of our friends, we used to walk together, having our lunch in our hand and always carry it. We used to carry with us, and then there were games. At that time there were sports like athletic meet or something. They used to train us, and all the schools gathered in one of the stadiums, and we used to compete with each other. Oh, yes, I enjoyed my intermediate school.

Hampapur

What sports did you play?

Ananth

Like running, so many things, like running and I don't remember that. But in high school, I played baseball. Yes, we had softball and throw ball, we called it throw ball, and we used to throw and they used to throw back; a couple of things I did in high school. High school also, very good high school. I studied in private high school. Another thing I have to tell you--in intermediate school, only for girls. High school also for girls, no coed.

Hampapur

Why is that?

Ananth

I don't know. The boys had a different school and girls had a different school. The reason, I don't think that it was any reason or anything. Probably they wanted the girls to be safe, like that, probably.

Hampapur

Were all the schools like that, or just your school?

Ananth

I think most of the schools are girls and boys different, but some of the schools had boys and girls together.

Hampapur

Okay. So it sounds like you were pretty athletic back then.

Ananth

Oh, I love it. Even now I like it, yes.

Hampapur

You mentioned you went to a private school for high school?

Ananth

High school, yes.

Hampapur

Why did you choose to go to private then, or why did your parents send you to private?

Ananth

Because the student-teacher ratio was small, and it was a very good school. It had a good name, and also the results, the education--the results are so good. So [unclear] and then all of my sisters went to public school, and they wanted me to go to a private school so that I can have more knowledge and more education, yes, more production, more to eat.

Hampapur

Were your grades important to your parents?

Ananth

Oh, very much. Yes, that is true. They are all the time, "We take care of the housework. You go and study. You make it. You get a good grade." That was the most important thing.

Hampapur

Why do you think it was so important to them?

Ananth

Oh, I don't know. My grandma, she said, "You've got to stand on your feet." At that time, my grandma used to say that. "You've all got to stand on your feet. If you have education, you can exist," so that is the way. She made all of us to go to school and college. Yes, she was really the powerful lady in that house.

Hampapur

Were you the first generation to do further schooling?

Ananth

Yes, yes, first generation. The whole family, nobody went to university. My older sister, second sister, she was the first one to enter into university, whole community, whole in our relationship.

Hampapur

Your family must have been very proud.

Ananth

Oh, very proud of her, yes.

Hampapur

Did your teachers also encourage you to do well in school?

Ananth

Oh, they worked hard, yes. They used to, yes. At that time, they were very strict. They used to punish also. We used to get scared when we used to see the teacher, not like here. You can put your leg like this [demonstrates]. Never [unclear].

Hampapur

How did they punish?

Ananth

Punish? Put us in the corner. Only there was a cap called mad cap. They used to put mad cap. Luckily, I didn't have any time on those. I did get into that problem.

Hampapur

Okay. Did you grow up thinking that you would go to college?

Ananth

Yes. Yes, I did.

Hampapur

So that expectation was there.

Ananth

Yes.

Hampapur

In that time, were boys and girls equally encouraged to go on to college?

Ananth

Boys had a little bit upper, you know. Girls--now, in my family, it was important for both boys and girls. But when we think of all those people around, boys had an upper hand than girls. Girls high school? That's more than enough. That's the way it was.

Hampapur

So were many women going to college when you started?

Ananth

Yes, yes. There were so many. Not so many--I went to coed school, coed college, university, and only we were about fifteen or twenty girls and forty boys. Ratio, you see the ratio? Yes, so forty boys and only we were fifteen or twenty girls in the university.

Hampapur

While you were going to school, up through high school, did you have any activities aside from school that you did?

Ananth

What activities; I am thinking. I don't think so.

Hampapur

Did you study music or dance or anything?

Ananth

Yes, yes. We went to music, yes. We studied music, and we participated in schools for dance and drama, so coming back from school we had to practice, and we did that. And music also. All of the surrounding people, we all always used to get together, learn the same song and then sing. That's what we did.

Hampapur

What kind of songs did you learn?

Ananth

Kannada songs, what else? Kannada, and little devotional songs, so many, and [unclear] also. Yes.

Hampapur

Did you enjoy that?

Ananth

Oh, I did enjoy so much, yes.

Hampapur

Who taught you all the songs?

Ananth

No, on our own. Nobody taught us, no. We used to get together; we used to do it on our own. There was no teacher.

Hampapur

And you mentioned dance too?

Ananth

Dance too. Okay, in middle school, in junior high, intermediate school, one of the optional subjects was music, so I took that music. I had a teacher. She used to teach us music, but that's all Karnatak music it's called, the classical. That's classical; she used to teach.

Hampapur

Vocal.

Ananth

Vocal. But high school, I didn't take it, only intermediate school.

Hampapur

You mentioned dance. Did you learn dance too?

Ananth

Dance means whatever dance in the school. Every year, the last day of the school they had some kind of function. We used to participate and we used to do--all of us practiced dance and music and whatever, drama, and we all used to participate in that.

Hampapur

So was it like folk dancing?

Ananth

Yes, folk; no, Bharatanatyam, like that, yes.

Hampapur

Okay, so you did classical.

Ananth

Classical, yes.

Hampapur

What kind of dramas would you do?

Ananth

Like Kannada drama, some comedy, not any other thing;; comedy, mostly comedy, yes.

Hampapur

Did you perform in those?

Ananth

Yes. I used to be one of the participants in that, yes.

Hampapur

Okay. You enjoyed being in that?

Ananth

Oh, yes, yes, yes.

Hampapur

So who would you perform for?

Ananth

Every class had their function at the end of the--almost end, so we used to entertain other girls in classes. Because if I am in the eighth grade, we used to entertain seventh and sixth, like that.

Hampapur

I see.

Ananth

And they used to entertain us.

Hampapur

Okay. While you were growing up, did your family go on any trips or outings, things like that?

Ananth

My family--after my university, yes, I did travel. My sister, older sister was in North India, her husband also, so I went there. I went there, stayed there for three or four months, and I visited a couple of places in North India, like Calcutta and Varanasi and Delhi, yes, a couple of places. We had a group in our area, and we used to make a trip, all the boys and girls. We used to fun and we used to go trip, but not long distance, not too far; one night maybe, overnight stay, not more than that. We all used to go together and have fun and come back.

Hampapur

Was that in high school?

Ananth

After high school.

Hampapur

In college type?

Ananth

No, between high school and college, if you have a holiday, yes.

Hampapur

Okay. And who would organize those trips?

Ananth

Oh, there were some groups. They used to organize, and we used to take a bus, a charter bus, so we all used to go together.

Hampapur

What types of places did you visit?

Ananth

Belur, Halebid, have you heard of that? Yes, we used to go there. We went there and Nandi hills. Yes, Belur, Halebid, Somanathapura or something, these are the places we went.

Hampapur

And what would you do when you got there?

Ananth

Got there and just visited all the [unclear], art, and enjoyed the art and everything. And that's it, nothing else.

Hampapur

Were those popular tourist locations then?

Ananth

Yes, there, it was. It was, yes.

Hampapur

When you visited your sister up north, how did you travel there?

Ananth

By train, by train. I think it took two days to reach them, because it's from Bangalore to there, what, three thousand miles or something. Yes, I took a train, and I went by train.

Hampapur

Did anyone go with you?

Ananth

Yes. My uncle's daughter. What do you call uncle's daughter? My mother's brother's daughter.

Hampapur

Cousin.

Ananth

Cousin, yes. She went with me. Yes, we both used to go. We both went together.

Hampapur

And she traveled with you to Calcutta and all the places?

Ananth

Yes, all together.

Hampapur

Since you were taking such a long trip on the train, did people socialize with one another?

Ananth

Yes and no. Some of them, yes, yes, yes. That's true. Yes, they're sitting in the same--they used to talk and we used to chat with each other, yes.

Hampapur

Did you buy food on the train, or did you pack it?

Ananth

We packed. No, we didn't buy, no.

Hampapur

And did you enjoy that trip up north?

Ananth

Oh, excellent, yes, yes, yes, sure.

Hampapur

Do you have any memories of what you saw, or any special anythings?

Ananth

Yes. Varanasi I enjoyed. I enjoyed so much Varanasi. The temple was in like an alley. You had to walk with the cow and so many animals would pass by, and you had to go through there. It was very good. On either side, there was like a market, selling the garb, flowers, and coconuts and other things. But the alley was so little, and we used to go there. I went there and I had a good time. There was one South Indian restaurant, only one, so that Bangalore guy had a restaurant. We had wonderful food, excellent food. We enjoyed the food there.

Hampapur

What language--how did you communicate with people, in what language?

Ananth

Oh, they heard of Hindi. I didn't know that, but my sister knew; through her we used to talk. English, no, nobody talked English at that time. So only Kannada. I knew Kannada, and my sister and brother-in-law, they knew Hindi, so we could manage with them.

Hampapur

Okay, so they went with you on your travel?

Ananth

Yes, yes, they all came. We all traveled together.

Hampapur

Were people in the north, at that time were they familiar with South Indians?

Ananth

No, I don't think so. No.

Hampapur

Did they have any conceptions of--

Ananth

Yes, they didn't--somehow--you know, there is a place called Madras. They didn't know the existence of Karnataka State, Mysore State. So they used to call Madrasi, Madrasi, as if--Madrasis are little rough and tough. So we are very, very timid. They didn't know the difference between Mysore State and Madras, so they always used to call us also Madrasi.

Hampapur

Oh, wow. How did people feel about that?

Ananth

Oh, yes, we didn't like that. Even my sister. "No, we are not from Madras. We are from Karnataka State, however much you tell the Indian [unclear]."

Hampapur

Wow. Why do you think people knew so little about the South?

Ananth

I don't know. They didn't know that.

Hampapur

Did people in the South know a lot about the North?

Ananth

Yes, much better than the North people.

Hampapur

And how did you learn about northern India while you were growing up?

Ananth

The school, geography. Oh, they used to teach geography, yes, very nicely, all the states and everything, yes, capitals, everything.

Hampapur

And so you became familiar.

Ananth

Yes, yes.

Hampapur

Were there any stereotypes North Indians or South Indians had of each other?

Ananth

Stereotype. In my experience--what can I say? In my experience, I looked them different, because their eating habits and other things, yes. We used to eat with the hand, right?

Hampapur

Yes.

Ananth

So there I don't think they used their hand, I think. I don't remember that now. But I don't know whether there is any difference other than that. Dress was a little different dress. Otherwise I don't think or have anything.

Hampapur

What did you wear then? How did you dress?

Ananth

I was wearing sari.

Hampapur

When did you start wearing sari?

Ananth

Sari, in the university. I started in the university.

Hampapur

And before that?

Ananth

Before that in a lengha and blouse.

Hampapur

Okay. So when you got older, you started to wear sari.

Ananth

Yes, yes.

Hampapur

What college did you go to?

Ananth

Two years I went to ladies' college called Maharani's, and then I went to the coed school. It's called Vijaya College. First two years in ladies' college and the second two years--the second two years I had wonderful time in the coed school, very, very good. I had wonderful time there.

Hampapur

What did you like about it?

Ananth

Because I participated in sport. And also, there were so many trips also. We used to take trips, all of us, and go together; everything. You know debates? I used to go. I didn't participate, but I used to go on this as an audience. I used to go and see them talking, and then this music competition I used to go and see, but I didn't participate. But I was so interested in going there. And also the baseball there, I was one of the better players then, among the girls. Very few girls; I was one of them. Those are the things. Ringing the--what is it called? In baseball [unclear] or something. They could put the baseball in the--

Hampapur

Like the dugout?

Ananth

No, the one standing there and then you baseball. [unclear] or something.

Hampapur

I'm not sure.

Ananth

No, you don't know. I don't know either. I used to play that also. We don't know either. And basketball, we used to put the baskets, make some baskets, yes. We had a basketball court also.

Hampapur

So people played cricket and they played baseball?

Ananth

Yes. No, no, no, no. Baseball was very uncommon, only certain schools and certain colleges, not all of them. Cricket was common, but I didn't participate in cricket when I grew up. After I grew up, no. Ladies didn't participate in cricket.

Hampapur

But you could play baseball?

Ananth

Baseball, yes.

Hampapur

Okay. I didn't even know that was in India.

Ananth

No, that was. Only I told you, in high school? That was special there. Nobody knew baseball there, only a few schools, so that was the one school I went and there they had baseball. And then in the college also, so I participated in that.

Hampapur

The debates that you used to watch, was it other college students?

Ananth

Yes, competition, yes.

Hampapur

It was a public competition?

Ananth

A public competition.

Hampapur

What would they debate about?

Ananth

Oh, they used to select a subject the night before or the day before. They had to prepare and present in such a good way, and there were judges. They used to judge and give the awards.

Hampapur

Okay. And for the music you went to?

Ananth

Music also, the same thing.

Hampapur

And what kind?

Ananth

Karnatak music, classical music, yes. No [unclear], no; classical music.

Hampapur

Okay. Were Hindi films also popular in Bangalore at that time, or mostly Kannada films?

Ananth

No, at that time, Hindi, yes, some, yes. There were some programs on radio. Yes, we used to wait for them on Wednesday a certain time or Tuesday a certain time. It was popular, but Kannada was mostly popular.

Hampapur

What did you study in college? What subject did you study?

Ananth

Physics, chemistry, mathematics.

Hampapur

Oh, wow.

Ananth

Three; we had to take three subjects, yes. So my option was physics, chemistry, mathematics. Apart from that, I have Kannada; as the second language, English, five subjects we used to do.

Hampapur

So did everybody learn English at that time?

Ananth

Oh, yes. Yes, even in elementary school--no, not elementary. In junior high, yes, we all--intermediate school you started English. Yes, that is fifth grade, like that, yes.

Hampapur

Was that all over India, or mostly in the South?

Ananth

I think it is in South India. I'm not sure. I don't know much about North India and education or anything.

Hampapur

Right.

Ananth

But in South India, yes, English. We had to learn the local language and English; three subjects. Any subjects. Three of them, you had to take it. So I was B.Sc., Bachelor of Science. Bachelor of Arts; they have another one, but I had a B.Sc.

Hampapur

Okay. How did you pick those subjects?

Ananth

Oh, I'll tell you. That's an interesting story. You know, whether we are good at it or not--my second sister was very good at it. So automatically, without asking us, another sister and myself--they didn't ask what subject you are good at it. They just pushed us in. Somehow it worked out, it worked out. I don't know what would have happened if--anyway, we were good at it; we did it. Yes. That's how--because my sister took it, and without our permission, everything, we followed her.

Hampapur

Oh, okay, this was your second sister, who had gone to college.

Ananth

Second sister, yes.

Hampapur

Okay. And if people didn't do science, what other possibilities were there?

Ananth

Well, there was Bachelor of Arts, and engineering was there, mostly for boys, engineering. At that time, girls didn't go to engineering college. And there were medical schools also; there were.

Hampapur

What was it common for girls to study then?

Ananth

It depends on how the girl student is. Mostly there were subjects called CBZ, chemistry, botany, zoology, and mostly PCM, like mine, like physics, chemistry, mathematics. I used to go there, and B.A., Bachelor of Arts.

Hampapur

Did you enjoy college?

Ananth

Oh, to the extent, I tell you. I had a very good time there.

Hampapur

Did you have any plans for after college? Or did you know what you would do?

Ananth

Yes. Right after college I started working in an insurance company for six months.

Hampapur

Did you think about getting a job in the sciences?

Ananth

No, it doesn't have any connection with science or anything. No. Mathematics did count, yes, mathematics, yes. Otherwise, physics, chemistry, I don't know. It didn't help at all, but mathematics did.

Hampapur

How did you find that job?

Ananth

A job? At that time there were so many people, they used to us as interns, three months, and then they continued another three months, so six months. After six months you had to take a big test, and I didn't take the test. So I went to the other test for a government job. So I passed the test and I worked in statistics department as a statistical assistant. I worked for one or two years, and then I got into inspector general police department, and I worked there as a secretary, like a secretary, and I worked until I got married.

Hampapur

Was it common for women to go into work after college?

Ananth

No, not at all, not at all. In the whole place where I worked, in my room, I was the only lady and another lady, two ladies in the whole. At that time, no, ladies working, no, not at all.

Hampapur

What did women do then, after they finished college?

Ananth

Get married or have some children. What else? Stay home.

Hampapur

How did you decide to go into working instead of getting married right away?

Ananth

My grandma brought us like that. You had to stand on your feet. So you go and have education, work, and live. Even though you don't get married, you have an income. You can earn and you can do it. So she was the one who put us like that.

Hampapur

Why do you think that was so important to her?

Ananth

Because her brother was a physician, another brother was attorney, and she had seen all of them, I think. But I don't know. Girls, they didn't go to college or anything. I don't know why she made us to do that. I'm glad she did it. I'm so happy she did it. It's good. We all went to work at a job also. It was good. Earning is a good one, yes.

Hampapur

Did you enjoy working?

Ananth

Yes, yes, I did.

Hampapur

Did it ever feel odd to be one of the only women who was working in that place?

Ananth

Yes, it was odd, so it was odd. But what can you do? You can't help. But afterwards, a couple of years later they hired some more ladies. It became more and more and more afterwards. But when I started and worked a couple of years, no, no. It was very unusual for ladies to work. Do you know why? Because you don't get married if you are working, a working girl, so at that time, that was unusual. No.

Hampapur

Okay. So you were like a pioneer.

Ananth

I think so. My sisters, they were pioneers afterwards.

Hampapur

Around what year was this, when you were working?

Ananth

What year? 1960, I think, from 1960 until 1971. I got married in '71. Until I came here to Canada, I was working.

Hampapur

So you worked 1960 to 1971?

Ananth

Yes.

Hampapur

Oh, so you were working for a while, then.

Ananth

Yes, yes, I did.

Hampapur

It must have been nice to be able to help your family.

Ananth

Yes, nice income. With so many people in the house, so it really helped everybody.

Hampapur

Did your other sisters and your brother also go to college and work?

Ananth

My brother didn't go to college. He finished high school and then he got a job, a good job, and he left there. But other sisters, yes. The first one didn't go to a college. She finished high school, got married, and the second one, the third one, and myself, we three went to college, university.

Hampapur

In those years, what did you do for fun when you weren't working?

Ananth

Get together in the evening on a Saturday, Sunday, because--Sunday, only Sunday, because Saturday also I used to work. Yes, so six days a week we used to work, and Sunday, one day. So in the morning, take it easy, and then wash all of the saris and iron them and keep it ready for the next day, and go in the evening with all of our friends and walk, walk and enjoy and come back, outside.

Hampapur

Did a of your friends work after college?

Ananth

Not many, no, no.

Hampapur

Did they mostly get married?

Ananth

Yes, I think so.

Hampapur

Did you have any servants at home?

Ananth

Yes, I did. We did have, yes. Servant's names--they used to come in the morning and wash the clothes and [unclear] and wash the dishes, and after evening also. In between, no, no, nobody.

Hampapur

How did you go to work?

Ananth

I took a bus. There were buses to there. Vidhana Soudha, you know Vidhana Soudha?

Hampapur

No.

Ananth

You know Parliament building in Bangalore? I worked there, so there were buses, there were buses.

Hampapur

So how did people mostly get around in those days? Was it by bus?

Ananth

By bus, yes.

Hampapur

Were there a lot of auto-rickshaws then?

Ananth

Auto-rickshaw was very rare at that time; they came later. No, not many, no, very few.

Hampapur

What about taxis?

Ananth

Oh, taxis were there. Taxis were there, but the buses were less, cheaper than going by taxi, right? So we used to take buses.

Hampapur

Did anybody own their own car?

Ananth

Very few people. As far as I know, I don't know anybody at that time. Nobody had car, no. Now you go there, everyone has three or four cars in the house. At that time, no. The traffic is so bad now.

Hampapur

Did you ever eat out, like at restaurants and things like that?

Ananth

Yes. In the office, we used to go in the afternoon to have something, or some-- if there is any birthday or some occasion or promotion, if they get promotion, we used to go together and have it. And from home, no. Very rarely we went out and we ate, but from office, yes, we did.

Hampapur

Was it mostly South Indian restaurants?

Ananth

Yes, yes, South Indian. Oh, I didn't know about nothing in food at all. No, only South Indian food.

Hampapur

So I've heard that Bangalore has changed a lot since those days. Can you tell me about some of the differences with Bangalore when you grew up and Bangalore in current times?

Ananth

Okay. It has expanded to the extent, to the point of all the farm land they are developing, and they are building skyscrapers, and using most of the farm land. And buses, that auto-rickshaw, unbelievable, unbelievable auto-rickshaws, so many, so many. I don't know, roads are so bad, some of the roads. So crossing, oh, crossing the street? You can't. When you go from here, you are not used to, and it's uncomfortable to go and cross the street, unless you have somebody with you who knows how to do it. It has changed a lot, I tell you. And also, another thing is from not being there, because Bangalore was so good, temperate weather-wise and everything, a green city, so North Indians everywhere from other states, they all want to come and stay and live in Bangalore. So now there are so many people from other states, and the local people doesn't have anything to eat, some of the local people. But they have money. I don't know how they have money. They came and they bought the lands, they built everything, and they're having good time. And the local people, I don't know. Some of the people are okay. My family is okay, because

they're upper-middle and high class, higher level. That's okay. But some of them, I don't know, because the food there is so expensive. Vegetables are unbelievably expensive.

Hampapur

Oh, really.

Ananth

Yes, yes. Now I can see that. This time when I went with my sisters and everybody, my nephew bought coconut, a tender coconut to drink water. My mind was still in the law, olden days. "Oh, how much did you pay? Did you pay five rupees?" "Where are you?" he said. "Where are you? It's twenty rupees now." What a difference from five, so it has changed a lot.

Hampapur

It sounds like Bangalore is a lot more chaotic now than when you were growing up.

Ananth

Yes, yes, yes, it is. It is chaotic. And also, there are people now, they get paid so much. Nowadays the children who go into the computer classes, IT business, they earn a lot, I tell you. They earn--they get a good salary, good salary, and they are having clubs, and they drink now. Yes, it has become very--every other store is a wine store and readily available, and they drink also, they smoke. When I was growing up, smoking, drinking, I never heard that.

Hampapur

Oh, really?

Ananth

Yes. No, I never heard that.

Hampapur

Even socially people didn't?

Ananth

No. I don't know, maybe, but in our community, in our circumstances, no, I never heard that. Now everyone--so many people go to club, they come in the middle of the night and get up late in the morning, and everything has changed. Bangalore has changed a lot. Maybe the TV influence probably, and most of the people are Americanized now. When we were growing up, we used to wear sari and go. Nowadays, if you go in a sari, they think that you have come from the zoo. [laughter] Because college students--we live very close to one college, so I see these children going up and down. All of them wear western dresses, like jeans and salwar kameez. I have not seen any student wearing sari. Sari is out.

Hampapur

That's a big change.

Ananth

Big change, yes.

Hampapur

Okay. Wow. I'm trying to imagine how it must have been back then.

Ananth

Oh, yes. Oh, but we had wonderful--nowadays, because of this computer and everything, they stay inside. Right? All the time they stay inside and in front of the computer. We were out all the time. We had fun outside. They are having fun, whether it's good or bad, they stay inside. They work hard too. They have to. Otherwise, they can't make a living.

Hampapur

I'm guessing it was a lot less polluted then, when you were growing up.

Ananth

Yes, yes. Now it is polluted, yes, yes. [unclear] Downtown, if you go--I can't go to downtown at all. It is so congested, so congested, and traffic, traffic, traffic. No, it has become a very, very bad place now. Bangalore was very good at that time.

Hampapur

I've heard that Bangalore was called the garden city?

Ananth

Garden city, yes.

Hampapur

Were there a lot of trees and plants?

Ananth

Trees, yes, yes. There were so many trees. Lalbagh was so good. Lalbagh [unclear], what is it, red garden or something, Lalbagh. That was very good. And now everybody goes for river walking in Lalbagh. I don't know, it's not that great now. But still, it's our place, right? My mother's, my parents' place. I love to go and spend some time with my sisters and brother, so it's wonderful to be there, but not to live there.

Hampapur

Okay. So you were working for about eleven years, it sounds like. And then how did you decide to get married?

Ananth

You know, girls' parents worry about what we are parents and we are worrying too. So my parents were worried, to get married and go. So somehow Ankul. He came to India on a vacation from Canada, and his sister was looking for some girls for him, and I was one of them. So somehow he said, "Okay, I'll marry her." So he was--the day he came and I got married, within ten days. I got married in ten days. After three or four days, he came back to Canada. Yes, I was in India. Until I got my visa, I didn't come.

Hampapur

How long had he been living in Canada?

Ananth

Ten years.

Hampapur

Oh, a long time.

Ananth

Yes, yes, '71 to '81. Ten years I lived in there. And he was there for a long time.

Hampapur

Okay. Why did he go to Canada?

Ananth

Because of opportunity for physicians, they were great, so it was a very good place, I tell you. Canada is the best place to live. So he went there to have his M.D., and he did all his residency, fellowship, to get--he is very knowledgeable. He wants to do [unclear], so he came there and he did all of them. That's the reason he came.

Hampapur

Was he originally from Bangalore too?

Ananth

Yes.

Hampapur

Did you meet him before you got married?

Ananth

No. Yes, yes, after the engagement. So after I saw him, we went together. Yes, we did, but not--I didn't know him at all before.

Hampapur

Right. How did you feel about getting married? Were you excited?

Ananth

Scary, because he was in Canada, I was in Bangalore, and my people are very protected, my grandma and everybody. We didn't go other--we didn't travel or anything. We didn't know much about out of India, so I was really scared. Very scary to go. But when I came there, still a couple of months I was very scared, and then I got used to it. And also culture, you know. You have your own type of things to do, and here everything is different. You have to get used to that, so it was very hard on me.

Hampapur

Yes, that's a big change.

Ananth

A big adjustment, yes.

Hampapur

Where did you get married?

Ananth

In Bangalore.

Hampapur
In a temple?

Ananth
No, no, in a hall, in a big hall.

Hampapur
How long was the wedding?

Ananth
From morning till evening, that's all. Morning, and evening reception, that's it, not much.

Hampapur
Did many of your relatives come?

Ananth
Oh, yes. So many people came, yes.

Hampapur
Did you have any other relatives in Bangalore, or had most people stayed in the village?

Ananth
No, all of them are in Bangalore. Nobody is in village. Nobody is in village.

Hampapur
So when you were growing up, you saw your cousins and other--

Ananth
Oh, yes, yes.

Hampapur
Okay. So after you got married and Ankul came back to Canada, how long did it take for your paperwork to go through?

Ananth
Two months, I think. April I applied; June I came to Montreal. Two months, that's it.

Hampapur
That's fast. Did you know anybody else who was going abroad at that time, leaving India?

Ananth
Yes, my cousin, who came to Connecticut, she came. She was there, yes. She came, and I came after she came.

Hampapur
Did you ever think that you would leave India when you were growing up?

Ananth
Never, ever. I never thought, not even in my dreams, not even in my dream. I never thought I would get out of India. I don't know how [unclear].

Hampapur

Had you heard anything about Canada or the U.S. before coming? Did you know anything about here?

Ananth

I had high expectations. In Canada, not much, but America I had a whole--if they live in America, I had a high respect for them. But Canada, I didn't know much about it, no.

Hampapur

And for people going abroad at that time, did many people go to Canada?

Ananth

No. No, not many, no.

Hampapur

Where did they usually go?

Ananth

I don't know. Maybe they traveled the same in India, not out of town, probably. Very few went out of India. Nowadays it has become a big thing. At that time, very few people left India.

Hampapur

Wow. Okay.

Ananth

Done?

1.2. Session 2 (July 22, 2010)

Hampapur

This is Veena Hampapur here again with Kamala Ananth. It is July 22, 2010. So thanks again for joining me.

Ananth

You're welcome.

Hampapur

I'm looking forward to the second half of our interview.

Ananth

Thank you.

Hampapur

So last time we left off talking about your upcoming migration to Canada. I was wondering if you could tell me about the process of getting ready to move to Canada.

Ananth

Okay. After I got married in April, by the end of April, I waited for my passport, visa, and everything, and I was still working, and then it took two months to come to Montreal, to get my visa, so I came after I got my visa. I could have come with my husband, because it was a Commonwealth country,

but my husband wanted to go through proper channel. He didn't want me to come with him. He wanted me to get the visa and come. So I waited for the visa, and after the visa, right away I came and joined him in June.

Hampapur

How did you feel about the thought of moving to Canada?

Ananth

Oh, it was horrible for me, because my husband was there since '64. He was so used to the environment and everything, and he had only Canadian friends. He didn't have any Indian friends, and the language also, he had forgotten our language. And for me and him talking to each, communication was very hard for me, and I had a tough time when I came there. But his friends are very nice. They cooperated. They helped me out in taking me on the bus and Metro and introduced me to all the transportation and everything. It was wonderful later.

Hampapur

How did your family and your friends feel about you going so far?

Ananth

Oh, they felt so bad until--at that time, we didn't have the cell phone or phone, so we had to send a telegram. So until they got the telegram, they were so scared whether I'd be safe or not and whether I'm doing well with him, because he was a stranger to me too, so they were very anxious.

Hampapur

So after you arrived, you sent a telegram.

Ananth

Yes, I sent and they got comfort, yes.

Hampapur

Was that your first time going on a plane?

Ananth

Yes, yes. That was the first time, yes.

Hampapur

And how did you feel about that?

Ananth

Oh, I had airsickness. I want to tell you something which is funny. When I got into the plane from Bangalore to Bombay, I thought I had to dress so well and with all those--and then I got into the plane so dizzy, because airsickness, I couldn't take it. Airsickness, I felt like throwing up, and at the same time, I had left everybody. That is another thing, because our family was so big and well-protected, and I was all by myself and not knowing how to travel, and it was a scary moment. Then I had some relative in Bombay; I stayed with them. But she gave me some medication like avomine, so I took avomine to come from there. I had some gap from afternoon till night. I stayed in Bombay, and from Bombay I came to London, London to Montreal. And my experience in London

I want to tell you too. When I arrived in London, I was so scared which airline to take, where to go, how to go to the gate and everything. I was so confused. And going that escalator, putting my foot in, I was so scared. I was so scared to get on the escalator too. We didn't have an escalator or anything in Bangalore. I was so scared. Somehow I made it. I made it, and I sat right in front of the gate, looking at--it was funny. Then as soon as I got into the plane, I was comfortable. Until that, maybe I'll miss it, may miss the plane, maybe I am in the wrong gate or you know. That was confusing for me, and it was so scary for me. And everything worked out very well. Even though I studied and I was a graduate, I worked with people, still I had that fear, because I'd never traveled outside India.

Hampapur

Right. That was a big step.

Ananth

Yes, that was a big experience for me.

Hampapur

Do you remember what airline you took?

Ananth

Yes. I took Air India; on the British Airways from London. From Bombay to London, Air India, and from London to Montreal, British Airways.

Hampapur

Who picked you up from the airport when you arrived?

Ananth

Oh, my husband. Yes, that was another funny thing. I got out from one gate and I came to the door, and he was waiting in the other door, and I couldn't find him. Also, he was with me after marriage for only two or three days. Oh, maybe I forgot his face or something like that, so scary. And then he came all the way from the other door and received me.

Hampapur

Yes, I guess like you said, no cell phones were there, so you couldn't call him.

Ananth

No, no, no contact or nothing.

Hampapur

Where did he live then?

Ananth

He lived in Montreal.

Hampapur

In an apartment?

Ananth

Yes, apartment. He was in an apartment, yes.

Hampapur

So do you remember what your first impressions were of Canada?

Ananth

Canada--I got lost. Because everything was new to me, I got lost, but beautiful, Montreal was beautiful. Because I got scared, I felt like going back to India, not staying, not living there. I cried and cried and cried. Most of the time I cried. And then my husband put me to a gym, he took me to a gym; and also the snow. I came in June. That was okay. And another thing, it was so--I didn't know that it was hot in Montreal, so I was prepared for cold weather, like putting on a nice sari to please him in the plane, and with a jacket and everything. Here I get now, so hot, so hot, perspiring. Then I went home and then everything was okay. It was scary in the beginning. But later, my communication, my accent and the friends he had, their accent was so different, so communication also was hard for me, because they didn't understand what I talked, and I didn't understand what--but slowly, slowly, I got into that.

Hampapur

In Montreal, do they speak English or French or?

Ananth

English and French, but it was French. His friends were all English, so that was not a problem.

Hampapur

Okay. When you left India, what did you pack to bring with you to Canada?

Ananth

All my dresses, saris, only saris, blouses, and some spices. But my husband didn't want me to bring more spices at all, because he was so used to their food, so he didn't want me to pack and bring it. He said, "Don't bring all those things." So that was another thing; I had to adjust to the food also. And whatever anybody cooked, it smelled so bad to me, because even the oil, frying oil, it was so awful to take that smell. And shopping, another thing. Go to grocery store, and we were not supposed to touch anything in India to get whatever we want. We had to ask the people, right? And here you can go, pick up or pick whatever you want, like tomatoes you pick and bread, everything. I was not used to it, so what I did, I got the bread which is for a dog, thinking-- [laughter]. And here I bring home--my husband said, "This is for dog." Because I wanted to finish it off. I didn't want to show my ignorance or innocence or anything to the people, because I was new there. So to get into the good level, it took a long time for me, normal level, yes. I think everybody in the neighbor family, they must have gone through that too.

Hampapur

Yes. That's a huge adjustment. I can't even imagine. Were there any other new things that you had to learn new?

Ananth

Yes. Mail in India, Bangalore, there were two times they used to deliver the mail; here only one time. So I was hoping one more time, one more. Every time, maybe it is there, it is there. I went to the mailbox, checked, checked, all the time. And slot also, different kind of slot here to put the mail, and I didn't know how to put it. I was looking all around, and I asked somebody where to drop this mail, so they showed me how to drop the mail. It was a little confusing and a very different experience for me.

Hampapur

Did you write letters to home?

Ananth

Oh, yes, I did. I did so many letters. That was the only communication we had at that time.

Hampapur

Wow. So I guess that's why you were checking the mail frequently.

Ananth

Oh, yes, yes. I used to stand and go so many times, to check whether there is another mail, another mail for me.

Hampapur

So in those early days when Ankul would go to work, how did you spend your time during the day?

Ananth

During the day, he put me to some courses in McGill University, not McGill, it's called Sir George William University. It's called Concordia now. They call it Concordia University. So he wanted me to take some courses. I didn't know how to select the courses either. I went and checked with a supervisor, and somehow I picked chemistry. I went on my own. He wanted me to learn how to travel, how to go alone and everything. I went on my own and I registered for chemistry course. But in that course, I was the oldest one, because all of them from high school, and I am the oldest, and I felt so shy. That lab also, it was so huge lab with so many operators. I didn't know how to handle the operators either. Somehow or other, I did. But I left it after a couple of months, because I had to go back to India with him, so I left that course. But he made me to go there, and he put me on gym, and he introduced me to so many of his friends, their wives also. We got together and we used to go by bus to so many places.

Hampapur

What was the purpose of taking the class?

Ananth

He wanted me to continue my studies, do my master's.

Hampapur

I see.

Ananth

Yes. But it didn't work out.

Hampapur

Okay. You said you traveled by yourself, so did you go by bus?

Ananth

Yes, I did go by bus. And there was a Metro subway. I got the ticket, and we had to put it in the slot to get in. I didn't know how to, so what I did, there were people who were buying the ticket on one side, and they could go without putting it, so I went with them, having my ticket also in my hand. My ignorance. I went down. I thought there were conductors, like Bangalore, in all the buses I ever saw, there was somebody to collect the tickets. So I was under the impression there will be somebody to collect the ticket, so I went with the ticket and I asked somebody, "Where do I put up or give this ticket?" That lady told, "How did you come?" [laughs] Without--oh, I got so blushed. [laughs] So so many things. Once I came to--by a couple of months, I got used to traveling and everything, it went very well.

Hampapur

Okay. So it sounds like there were a lot of day-to-day, small things that were different.

Ananth

Oh, yes, and food also. Even pizza. The day I arrived, my husband brought the pizza. He didn't know how to cook rice or anything, so he had brought a pizza. In Bangalore at that time, we didn't have pizza, so that, oh, it looked so awful to me, and the cheese coming out I couldn't stand. I starved to death one or two days without eating, somehow drinking coffee or something, I managed with that. Afterwards--now I like pizza so much.

Hampapur

So how did you manage with--you said you had brought some spices from India?

Ananth

Yes, I did, but I didn't use that much at all. These potato chips, I didn't know that we would get potato chips in stores. I brought potato and made [unclear]. Oh, it's so funny. And then one time my husband invited all his friends to my house. I didn't know how to cook the rice in quantity also, so somehow I made it. I cooked and cooked so many dishes of rice, rice, rice, rice, thinking that it wouldn't be enough, it wouldn't be. So much rice, so many things. Everything, quantity-wise, it could last for so many days, so many people.

Hampapur

Wow. So did you cook Indian food, or you learned to cook American?

Ananth

Oh, no. My husband wanted me to cook the other, Canadian and other food. I was eating meat too.

Hampapur

So what kind of things did people eat then? What was common? Like what did you learn to cook?

Ananth

I learned to cook the meat also. I started cooking meat also.

Hampapur

Was that difficult for you?

Ananth

Oh, don't tell me. I used to cry and cry and cry, because my husband said, "When we go for a--." At that time, if you say vegetarian, they used to look at you like an animal coming out of the zoo.

Hampapur

Right.

Ananth

And also not available at all if you travel. So he made me to eat the pasta and those other things, but it was difficult for me.

Hampapur

That was a big change in diet.

Ananth

Big, big change. I don't know if everybody had gone through this, your mother or everybody. But in my case, Ankul made me to get used to, get adjusted to the environment, to his friends.

Hampapur

Right. So it sounds like there was not much option.

Ananth

No, no option.

Hampapur

Were there any Indians in Montreal?

Ananth

Oh, there were Indians. He took me to some Indian house. When they served Indian food, you should have seen my face. Oh, my god, I ate some good Indian, South Indian food. Oh, I was so happy to eat that.

Hampapur

Was that in a restaurant?

Ananth

No, in their house, my friend's house, yes.

Hampapur

Oh, okay, so you had some--

Ananth

I had Indian friends too. Afterwards, my husband got into friendship with so many Indian people, so he changed. He changed and he took me to so many

Indian houses and made me to cooking their food also. But in the beginning, he wanted me to get used to, because he used to attend big conferences, and he used to chair the session, and if you chair the session, I had to be with him to eat for the dinner and everything. So he thought I should get used to, adapt.

Hampapur

So his earlier friends, his Canadian friends, were they all white then?

Ananth

Yes, white.

Hampapur

Okay. Did anybody ever ask you questions about India?

Ananth

Yes, some people asked me, but very little answer. I didn't know how to give back. I gave them a little bit, but not too much. Maybe my husband had given all the information before, so they didn't bother to ask me so much.

Hampapur

How did you start making Indian friends?

Ananth

He introduced me to Indian friends, and then we used to go together, have some festival activities together, picnic and then some festivities together, so gradually we moved and we got more and more Indian friends and our association had so many friends. They involved me, and I got involved too, so that's how I got into it.

Hampapur

What was the association called?

Ananth

It's called Kannada Association, here like Kannada Association, like that. They had their own association, Montreal Kannada Association.

Hampapur

Oh, so there were a lot of Kannada people in Montreal.

Ananth

Oh, yes, there were, yes, there were.

Hampapur

Okay. What type of activities did they plan?

Ananth

They had festivities like picnic, they used to have picnic and [unclear] competition for children, when they have festivities like Ganesha puja or something, and I used to--Karthik [son], I made him to participate in [unclear] competition, so then it was okay.

Hampapur

And what was your role? You said you got involved too.

Ananth

I got involved, I mean, I used to volunteer and arrange for a couple of things, like asking people to bring food, making arrangements like bringing food and little participation. Start slowly; little by little I started active.

Hampapur

In Montreal, were there Indian stores and restaurants and things like that?

Ananth

Yes. When I went there, there was only one Indian grocery store, which was very far. Maybe we had to go about thirty miles or something to get the Indian food, Indian groceries. Indian restaurants here and there, but very few of them, and there were some sari store, very few of them, not close to there. Now it has become so many, I heard.

Hampapur

Did you have to make any other changes, like to your dress or anything like that?

Ananth

Oh, yes, yes. But it was hard for me. Even on snow I used to wear sari and go, but it was hard. Then I started wearing pants. Even skirt also I used to wear, but very rarely. And also I took French course. I used to go to the school, French school, French courses, adult courses, French course. And there also I used to-- they used to ask me about India. They didn't want me to talk in English at all. They made me to talk in French. Somehow or other, with a lot of difficulty, I got a little bit French and became friends with everybody. I took courses, yes.

Hampapur

And after coming to Montreal, you said you went back to India after a few months?

Ananth

Yes. Every year we went. Every December--Ankul had friends in Indian Psychiatric Association conference; he used to go there. He used to take me. Yes, every year I went there to India.

Hampapur

How did you enjoy that?

Ananth

Oh, I didn't want to go back to Montreal at all, come back to Montreal, no.

Hampapur

In the time you were in Canada, did any other friends or relatives come move there or visit?

Ananth

Oh, yes. My mom came. My mom was there. My niece was there, and my husband's side, we sponsored his nephew, and he was with me for two years, and now he's in Alberta, Canada, Calgary. He stayed with me for two years.

And his brother, my husband's brother, he visited us. Oh, yes, my cousin; so many people visited me in Montreal.

Hampapur

Did you have to learn to drive when you were in Canada?

Ananth

Yes, yes. That was difficult too, because my husband wanted me to go with him for driving, and when I was in the driver's seat, he--you know. No, no, you shouldn't take lessons from anybody out from your own people. He used to scare me to death. "You will kill people. You will kill people. You go on--." So I said, "No, no more driving." Then I went to driving school, and then I got my license, and then I started driving.

Hampapur

Okay. So would you drive yourself around the city?

Ananth

Yes, I did.

Hampapur

And aside from the Kannada Association, what did you like to do for fun?

Ananth

Oh, yes, we used to travel, go with Canadian friends, all of us, three or four couples. We used to go together to New York. Yes, yes, October, what is that called? Columbus Day parade? We used to go for Columbus Day parade, yes. And we used to go to restaurant, one very good restaurant, all the three--all of us used to go. And to the Broadway shows, yes. We used to go in Montreal also, concerts and Broadway shows, yes, we used to go there.

Hampapur

Sounds nice.

Ananth

Oh, yes. Afterwards I had a good time, very good time.

Hampapur

So how often did you go to New York?

Ananth

Maybe a couple of times. I stayed from '71 to '81. Maybe four or five times I went to New York. Yes, one time I left Karthik with my husband, and my friend left her son with her husband, so these husbands looked after the children, and we went on our own to New York, a couple of ladies. We went together and we went to Broadway shows and we went to nice restaurants and, yes, we had a good time.

Hampapur

So New York City was your introduction to the U.S. then?

Ananth

Yes, yes, yes.

Hampapur

What did you think of New York?

Ananth

Oh, New York, as soon as I saw, oh, a wonderful place, wandering around and looking at the big buildings and shops. It was so different for me.

Hampapur

Different from Montreal?

Ananth

Montreal. But similar to that, but little bit, in a huge scale in New York, huge buildings and everything. It was huge.

Hampapur

Okay. So I don't know too much about Canada, so was Montreal like a city or a suburb?

Ananth

City, city, city. It's a city, and Quebec is a state.

Hampapur

Okay. So it's a city, but not as city like as New York City.

Ananth

No, city, smaller than New York, smaller, very compact, beautiful city. People are very friendly, very friendly, not like here. Nobody knows my neighbor. Even when Ankul was in the hospital, nobody knew. Even his death, nobody knew here. There, very good friends, very good friends. Suppose in stores, anything, if I wanted some grocery, if they are going, they used to bring the grocery to me. They were also Jewish people and Canadian people, but still, they were very friendly there. I used to do the same thing to them. If I am going, I used to ask them, "What do you want?" So I used to bring them also.

Hampapur

So very neighborly.

Ananth

Yes, neighborhood was very good. Even now I have contact with them. I go there. I go there. They want me to go there, so I go every now and then. Maybe once in two years or once a year I go there.

Hampapur

Wow. That sounds very different from here.

Ananth

Oh, yes, yes.

Hampapur

What did your relatives think of Canada? Like when your mom visited, what did she think?

Ananth

She wanted to be--she liked it, but at the same time, I took her to so many places, to show, to see. Once it is done, she wants to go back to India. Yes, she wanted to go back to Bangalore. Otherwise she enjoyed. I took her to New York also, yes, to show her, and Washington, D.C., Niagara Falls. I took her all over. Once these were all over, she wanted to go back.

Hampapur

Was there a point where you stopped being homesick and started to like Montreal?

Ananth

Homesick was there for so long, though, so long, so long. Oh, I wanted to go back, and I made my husband to accept some job in India, I mean Bangalore, and he got interviewed, but somehow or other the politics and the bureaucracy, he didn't like it, so he said, "No, I am not going to accept." He was offered a good position there, but still he didn't want to go.

Hampapur

What did you miss? What were you homesick for?

Ananth

Homesick in missing all the people, missing because I was on my own and going everywhere there, and here I had to depend on him, I had to. I wasn't driving in a couple of years, so I had to depend on him. But the Metro was very convenient, buses were very convenient, but the snow and driving in the ice and snow was very hard for me. Yes.

Hampapur

Were there any temples, or were you able to practice any religious things?

Ananth

Montreal, as far as I know at that time, we didn't have any temple, no.

Hampapur

Okay. So did you do anything at home or with the Kannada Association?

Ananth

Yes, yes. With the association, we used to get together and do all these ceremonies, like Ganesha puja, Diwali. We used to celebrate the whole people, where we used to get together and celebrate, yes.

Hampapur

That must have been nice for you.

Ananth

Yes, yes.

Hampapur

Were there any Canadian holidays or events or anything that you celebrated?

Ananth

Yes. Like here, they had Canadian independence also, and Thanksgiving. My friends used to invite us for the dinner. I used to go, Thanksgiving dinner and

Christmas also, Christmas. A couple of friends, we were together. We used to take turns. This year my house, next year your house, like that. We used to take turns, and we used to go and have good dinner outside, come back and celebrate at home, like dancing, so those are the things we did.

Hampapur

Would you have a Christmas tree?

Ananth

Oh, yes. Even here also I used to have a Christmas tree, yes.

Hampapur

So it's celebrated pretty similarly in Canada as it is here?

Ananth

Canada, here too, yes.

Hampapur

And same thing with Thanksgiving?

Ananth

Yes. But their Thanksgiving comes earlier than ours, not the same but a number. Theirs is in October, I think.

Hampapur

Is it celebrated in a similar way?

Ananth

Yes. Everything's similar there.

Hampapur

So how long were you living in Canada before your son was born, before Karthik was born?

Ananth

Karthik was born--he was born there, so he was born in '73, December. I came in '71, June, two and a half years. After two and a half years, I got him.

Hampapur

Were there any things that you had to learn, like about Canadian schooling or anything after he was born that was new to you?

Ananth

Yes, yes. At that time, French was dominant, so we couldn't send him to an English school. They wanted immigrants to go to a French school also. But there was a provision that if one of the parents had taken courses in English back home, you had to bring the certificate from that school, that he attended English school. So my husband brought the certificate from India that he attended English school. That is how Karthik could get into English school. Otherwise he couldn't have gotten into English school.

Hampapur

Wow, so strict.

Ananth

Yes, very strict. It was becoming more and more. That was the reason we moved here. It was becoming more and more French then, and also the other thing that made us to come here was snow, terrible, terrible. So that made us--no, no, we can't live here. And also, Ankul got a very good--in UCLA, he got a good position, so that's how we came here.

Hampapur

And what year was that?

Ananth

It was '81.

Hampapur

Where did you move at that point?

Ananth

At that point we had a friend in Encino, and we stayed with--they were in Montreal too. They were good friends of us, so we were together there, closer to us. So they moved earlier than us, so then we stayed with them. They had an apartment there in Encino, and I stayed with them for two, three weeks. Then we bought this house.

Hampapur

Oh, so you came to Palos Verdes Estates then.

Ananth

Yes, that's right. Then we are here for twenty-nine years.

Hampapur

Wow.

Ananth

Yes, '81, in July, I think, we came here.

Hampapur

Was it difficult to do your papers to move from Canada to the U.S.?

Ananth

No, it wasn't difficult at all. No, because he got his H-1 or something, and I got H-4. He could work, I couldn't, but I wasn't ready to work either. So H-1B or H-1 visa or something; I got H-4, Karthik and myself. It wasn't difficult. Everything, UCLA made arrangements. They took all the paperwork. They did all the paperwork. It wasn't difficult at all.

Hampapur

Okay. So at that point, were you and Ankul still Indian citizens?

Ananth

No, Canadian citizens. We had taken Canadian citizenship, and Canadian citizenship allows dual citizenship, like America, but I had to give up Indian citizenship. We both gave up Indian citizenship. But when we came here and we took American citizenship here, we can have both then, Canadian and American, dual citizenship. Now I have dual.

Hampapur

Oh, you have dual citizenship.

Ananth

Yes, dual citizenship.

Hampapur

And when you were in Canada, what made you decide to get the Canadian citizenship?

Ananth

Because traveling was difficult, because Ankul used to go in one lane and I-- they used to give a lot of problem for the Indian passport, and he used to get out, get it very fast, so that made me to take Canadian citizenship.

Hampapur

I see. So after you moved to Palos Verdes Estates, so Karthik was like eight?

Ananth

Seven and a half.

Hampapur

And what did you think of southern California?

Ananth

Oh, I liked it very much, opportunity-wise, and it's so open here. The schools were very good, but other things were very good there. I was very comfortable there. But here, the school was so close here, Lunada Bay School, and I used to volunteer there too, library, in the library, so that I can go and see what is happening, and parents [unclear] were so good here. It was so good, and Palos Verdes School District is excellent. So I used to volunteer until high school in the library. And he was in the orchestra, so orchestra, some kind of position for me also, so to keep--I did help them out.

Hampapur

And had you done that in Canada? Did you volunteer?

Ananth

In Canada, no, I didn't do it.

Hampapur

And in Canada you weren't working, right?

Ananth

No, I did [unclear]. Ankul used to private practice, yes, so billing, all the billing, I used to do it, medical billing.

Hampapur

I see. Okay. So what did you do when you volunteered in the library and the orchestra?

Ananth

Oh, check in books and check out. That's all I did.

Hampapur

Were there any benefits you saw for having Karthik grow up in the United States and get an education here, versus in Canada or India?

Ananth

No, no, I don't think so, because East is always standard high, and here standard is low. He could get in very fast. He was ahead of everybody, because the standard of education is very good over there.

Hampapur

In Canada.

Ananth

Not only Canada. You see in the East Coast. East Coast is also, yes. And here, West Coast is always low. So he skipped one year here. I don't think he studied second year here. He got into third year, because he was ahead of his studies.

Hampapur

So was that something you were worried about, that the standards were lower on the West Coast?

Ananth

No, it wasn't worried at all. But the thing is, he was younger than anybody else, right? That worried us, but you couldn't help, so when he's ready to go to the third grade, why not? So we made him to take the course, go.

Hampapur

Were there any things that were new to you in the U.S. that was different from Canada or from India?

Ananth

No, I don't think so. It's almost similar. Yes, everything was similar. No, I didn't have any problem.

Hampapur

Was Palos Verdes, were there any differences with how it was when you first came and how it is now?

Ananth

Oh, yes. The development, oh, so many things I know here. Stop it and I'll think about it. No, I don't think much of it.

Hampapur

Okay. So what did you like to do for fun after moving to Los Angeles?

Ananth

The first month I came here, I called Ushanti and a couple of friends, Ushanti, because her parents knew my parents also. So somehow or other I got her phone number from somebody and I called her, and we made arrangements to meet all the Kannada people to be in, not Hesse Park, but Point Vicente, what's the park called? Now it is a different--

Hampapur

[unclear]?

Ananth

No, here in Rancho Palos Verdes Park, Robertson Park. It was called before Point Vicente Park. So we had a picnic, and all the Kannada people, we got together, myself and Usha, we organized everything. And they didn't know many Indian friends either, and everybody was so happy that they could get to know, and we all became very friends afterwards. That's how I organized, I and with Usha, we both organized.

Hampapur

So how did you find all the Kannada people?

Ananth

Mouth to mouth, somehow. Usha knew, because Usha was here before, so Usha knew many people. But so she gave me the list, and I made a list, and I called a couple of people, and she called some people, and even for the picnic food arrangement also, and I called all of them, "You make this," "You make that," like that. And we all got together in the park, and we had some fun. We had sports for the children, so it was good. We all got together. Somehow we came to know, we got to know each other very well. They were also very happy. All the others were also very happy, because they didn't know anybody either, even though they were here for so long. I don't know why. They didn't make any effort at all. So afterwards everybody--now, see how well we are.

Hampapur

So you launched some very long friendships.

Ananth

Yes, yes.

Hampapur

So after moving to California, then you made Indian friends very quickly.

Ananth

Quickly, very fast, yes.

Hampapur

So what other types of things would you do for fun, either with Ankul or with your friends?

Ananth

Yes. Usha and [unclear], we were three couples. Like we always used to go to the nice restaurants and the shows, a couple of like going to theaters and traveling also, picking a picnic, or go and stay in that Grand Canyon park, and what is it, Sierra Park, no, another park. We used to go overnight or two days; we used to stay together, and children used to have fun also, their children and Karthik. So we used to go together.

Hampapur

So did you like California?

Ananth

Yes. I like it, yes.

Hampapur

And did you miss Canada at all after moving?

Ananth

Oh, in the beginning, yes, but afterwards, gradually I got used to here. But that was a very good--here, rush, rush, rush for everything. Everybody wants to make money, money, money, money here. There, no. Money, no money-making mind at all. Everybody was comfortable with what they have. Here they always think how to get the money, how to make the money, how to make the money. More you make, more you--you know. They think that they are happy.

Hampapur

I see.

Ananth

Yes, a lot of difference between Montreal and here. Stores also. Here, seven days a week. They're never open on Sunday there. And even everyday at six o'clock, all the department stores used to shut down, only Thursdays and Fridays until nine o'clock. Saturday until six o'clock or like that. Sunday, no, it wasn't open. They didn't open at all. Here, seven days a week, even twelve o'clock or one o'clock they're open here.

Hampapur

Oh, wow, okay. So it sounds like a different pace of life here.

Ananth

Yes, yes.

Hampapur

Did you visit any tourist attractions or anything when you first came?

Ananth

Yes. I went to Disneyland. I went to Knott's Berry Farm. I went to that Six Flags Mountain. Yes, I did, yes. I visited a couple of them, yes.

Hampapur

So those things were popular then too.

Ananth

Yes.

Hampapur

When you first came to California, were there Indian stores and restaurants and all those things available then?

Ananth

Available in Cerritos only. So here there were no Indian stores. After a couple of years, they started everywhere, and there were only a few by the sea, on Redondo Beach Pier, and here and there there were some restaurants. Now it

has become so many; they have so many Indian, yes. Groceries also we used to go to Cerritos to buy.

Hampapur

And was Cerritos as big as it is?

Ananth

Yes, Indian, yes.

Hampapur

So was it big then also?

Ananth

No. It has become more now. No, it wasn't big at all at that time.

Hampapur

Was that a gradual change, or did it become big all of a sudden?

Ananth

No, gradual.

Hampapur

Gradual change, okay. Did you try to teach Karthik anything about Indian culture or India at all?

Ananth

I tried my best, but somehow or other once he went to school with the children, it changed. No, I couldn't force him, no.

Hampapur

Did you take him with you when you visited India?

Ananth

Yes, all the time, yes, until high school. Every year we used to go. I used to take him in the summer, yes.

Hampapur

In Palos Verdes at that time, was it ethnically diverse, or were people mostly white at that time?

Ananth

I think, no, it is becoming more and more now. No, not much at that time.

Hampapur

Okay. And when did you start to see a difference?

Ananth

Oh, when Karthik went to the elementary school, I went and asked the headmistress, "Is there any Indian families around here?" But no, there was nobody. After two years, probably one couple moved to Lunada, Upper Lunada Bay, and that girl sent her son here. There were not many. Nowadays, I see everywhere Indian, Indian, Indian, yes. Not many.

Hampapur

Was it difficult for Karthik being the only Indian?

Ananth

No. He was so--he didn't care. He didn't care. He got used to anybody. He got used to local people.

Hampapur

Would people ask you any questions about India when you were here?

Ananth

Not many people, no.

Hampapur

Okay. So after moving here, were you involved in any religious activities at all? Like going to temple, or--

Ananth

Yes, yes, Mollywood Temple, and I used to go. At that time there was no temple in Norwalk, only Mollywood Temple. Yes, we used to go quite often there, yes. Yes, I got involved in that also. Involved means I used to go and go there and visit that temple and come back.

Hampapur

Okay. So I understand you are a big Lakers fan, so when did you--I know you said in your last interview that you were interested in sports starting from a young age. So when did you get interested in basketball?

Ananth

In basketball--

Hampapur

Or with the Lakers?

Ananth

No, no. Before I came here, I was so interested in Montreal about ice hockey, yes, ice hockey. We used to go also. And after I came here, I know Lakers were the game. Took a couple of years, maybe five or six years to get into the Lakers, becoming a Lakers fan.

Hampapur

Have you gone to any games?

Ananth

Yes, I did go to Lakers game and the Harlem Globetrotters. They used to come to Hollywood Park or something in Inglewood. They used to come; we used to go there. Yes, even basketball also--before Staples Center, it used to be in somewhere else.

Hampapur

Oh, really.

Ananth

Yes, not in here. Where I don't remember. Oh, here, in Hollywood Park, I think. They used to have it here, I think.

Hampapur

Okay. I didn't know there was another location before.

Ananth

Yes. Staples Center came later.

Hampapur

Were there any other sports that you liked?

Ananth

Oh, I watched tennis also, but not like basketball. I watched kind of. Baseball also I watch. I went to baseball games a couple of times, and other than that, oh, yes, Olympics, all the track and field, gym, oh, gymnastics. Oh, I like gymnastics, so I used to watch all those things, Olympics also. Even in Montreal, they had it in 1976. I went there, and when I moved here, there was one more Olympics here, so I could go here also. 1984 they had it here, so I went to so many.

Hampapur

Oh, you saw it live.

Ananth

Yes.

Hampapur

Okay.

Ananth

Even there, also live, '76 Olympics in Montreal, '84 here.

Hampapur

It sounds like it was exciting to be--

Ananth

Oh, yes. Always I liked sports, yes, so I did go here also, gymnastics and track and field.

Hampapur

You're a lifelong sports fan.

Ananth

Oh, I love it, yes.

Hampapur

Okay. So after you stopped volunteering at Karthik's school, did you do any other volunteer work or start working or anything?

Ananth

Yes. I started working as a teacher's aide in the school district. No, before that I went to Town and Country School, there, as a teacher's aide. Then I moved to Palos Verdes School District and became a teacher's aide there. I worked for ten years there.

Hampapur

At Vista Grande.

Ananth

Yes, Vista Grande.

Hampapur

What made you decide to become a teacher's aide?

Ananth

I love to teach. I used to help Karthik also, even until high school, algebra and mathematics. I like math, so I used to teach him too, even until high school like little bit help, I helped him, so I always wanted to help children in the studies. So that is how I made me to be teacher's aide.

Hampapur

Did you enjoy working at Vista Grande?

Ananth

Yes, I did, yes. I did.

Hampapur

What kinds of things did you do throughout the day?

Ananth

Where?

Hampapur

At the school.

Ananth

At the school? Yes, correcting all of the papers, test papers and the homework, and if they have any problem, I used to get them to my table and then help them out, teach them. Those are the things I did.

Hampapur

So switching more to present day, what are some of the things you do these days? How do you spend your days? What do you like to do?

Ananth

Now, oh, yes, okay. I go every now and then--now I have enrolled in yoga classes. Yoga, I go on Monday and Wednesday to yoga in the morning for two to two and a half hours, and then the rest of the days, like Tuesday, Thursday, whenever I'm okay I go to gym, 24 Hour Fitness Center. If I don't go, I go for a walk here. Even today I went to gym and came back in the morning. And I used to help my husband in his practice also; here also. I did all the billing here.

Hampapur

Okay. Sounds like you had a couple of jobs then.

Ananth

Oh, yes. It kept me busy. Yes, I used to do all the billing.

Hampapur

What do you like to do with your friends?

Ananth

With the friends? We go together to lunch or breakfast; not breakfast, lunch or dinner. We did a couple of things before. Now we have stopped. Then a night out, so a night out, they used to convene in somebody's house. All night they

used to stay. We all used to stay, talk, talk, talk, and eat food and enjoy talking and making jokes. I don't know why it stopped now. It is not anymore, but we did have that get together, night out.

Hampapur

What other activities did you used to do? You said you went to some other ones.

Ananth

What other activities? I don't remember all those things, no.

Hampapur

Did you take any classes or anything after coming here to California?

Ananth

Yes. I took bookkeeping and accounting, travel agency course. I think those are the two I took.

Hampapur

What made you decide to take those?

Ananth

But billing also, it helped me in billing also, accounts and bookkeeping. Yes, it helped me, so I could do so many things at home with my husband, and all the accounts, I took care of it. My husband didn't even bother to care. He used to get the check, deposit it in the account, and all the accounts, I did it, handling accounts.

Hampapur

Wow. And you taught yourself how to do all of that.

Ananth

Yes, I did. So that helped me after his death. Otherwise, I didn't know where the money was and where did he put the money. Because I knew all those things, it was easy for me to get a handle of his debt.

Hampapur

After moving to California, did you get involved with Kannada Koota here at all?

Ananth

Yes, I did, I did, yes. Right after we moved, I attended some of the functions in Kannada Koota, and yes, I got in on there also.

Hampapur

What kind of functions do they have? Can you describe them?

Ananth

They have New Year's Day, like Yugadi. We call it Yugadi, our New Year's Day. They used to have Ganesha festival. Even now they have. What else? In between, drama function, drama, and anybody who comes from India, some artist or somebody, they used to have concerts or a lecture. They do; even now they have.

Hampapur

Did you go to that big conference that they had?

Ananth

Yes, NAVIKA, I did, yes. And even there was--in East Coast there, they had a conference called AKKA. It means American Kannada Koota Association or something. Yes, every two years, once in two years. Well, first it was in Houston and then in Detroit and then Florida and then [unclear] everywhere. I went to three or four places with my husband, yes, and it was a big success, big success, three thousand people from all over, from London, everywhere. Kannada people came from all over, and I attended all of those.

Hampapur

It was like a convention.

Ananth

Convention, yes. Even now, the July Fourth weekend there was a convention, yes. NAVIKA, it's called NAVIKA.

Hampapur

Okay. What kinds of things happen at the convention?

Ananth

Convention, they had brought some artists from Bangalore, Kannada artists, and they gave performances, and then comedians were there and they entertained us, and there was competition for the children about Kannada music, and exhibits were there, so many exhibits. What else. And food, food, oh, good food, so those are the things.

Hampapur

Why do you think people enjoy participating in such events?

Ananth

They want to keep their culture. They want to keep their culture, and it's nice to be with the people who are also of our culture. To keep up the culture; I recommend it. I really enjoy it, and my husband used to like it too.

Hampapur

Is that why you joined, back in Canada, is that why you started?

Ananth

Yes, yes.

Hampapur

Okay. So just some more overall, general questions. When you moved from India to Canada, did you have any idea that you would be staying there for such a long time? Or did you think you'd be returning to India?

Ananth

No, not at all, because my husband didn't want to go back to India at all. Even though I wanted to go, he didn't want to go to India at all, no way.

Hampapur

So you knew you'd be there.

Ananth

Yes, I knew I would be there forever.

Hampapur

And then did that translate to when you came to the United States?

Ananth

Here too, yes.

Hampapur

You knew you would be here.

Ananth

Yes, yes.

Hampapur

Do you still visit India?

Ananth

Yes. I did visit last December. Last December I was there. I came back in February. At least once in two years I go there.

Hampapur

And what do you like to do when you go visit India?

Ananth

I like to stay with my people and enjoy their children, grandchildren, and go with them to temples, visit some places with them, and have a good time with my sisters and brother and then my husband's side, relatives. In India, every day there will be some festival or there is some function, so you can go there. Killing time is not a problem at all, always busy, busy something.

Hampapur

So when you visit, you usually go to Bangalore?

Ananth

Yes, because all my relatives are there. His relatives, my relatives, everybody is there.

Hampapur

At this point, do you foresee yourself staying in Los Angeles in the future?

Ananth

Yes. Yes, for sure, yes. You know, after Ankul's death, I really wanted to go back to India and stay and live there, but Karthik said, "Mom, no. You are not going. I'll come back from New York, and I'll be here. And who else do I have? You. So I want you to be here." He made me to stay here, and in a way it's good. He came back, and I'm happy.

Hampapur

So he's in Los Angeles now too.

Ananth

Yes.

Hampapur

Okay. That must be nice to be close to him and your daughter-in-law.

Ananth

Yes. He didn't want me to go back at all. No, he requested me so much, so I listened to him and I stayed back.

Hampapur

Decided to stay. Okay. So you've lived in three different countries. Looking back, was there any place that was your favorite?

Ananth

Canada. Canada was my best, yes, sure.

Hampapur

Why do you say that?

Ananth

Why do I think? Because the way I came there and what I experienced there and how I learned to be with the people, to mingle with people, and I learned so much in Canada. It wasn't difficult for me to move to America, because I had learned everything in Canada, so that is how--one friendly city. Montreal is the friendliest city in the world, I tell you, very friendly city. So I liked Canada. I enjoyed Canada.

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