

Below is a written transcription of the Walking Gottingen sound walk. Beginning at the intersection of Cornwallis and Gottingen St, individuals may take part in the exhibit by reading the audio transcription and following the instructions throughout.



Hi. I'm Gottingen Street--- I was once only a road, a way to transport people from A to B.

And then... a distinct group of people decided to just stay with me. Or rather, on me.

Who were these people? People looking to ground their displaced roots, raise their families, a place where they would belong, a place to make their own, a place for resilient people.

Welcome to that place, which so happens to be my "back" .

Now it may just look like some tarmac, cement and a bunch of buildings to you but trust me it's a community, and what makes my back so strong isn't filled in potholes, shiny new high-rises or trendy businesses, it's my people. Those who called me home when no one wanted to.

We have developed a form of harmony over the decades, a connection between two living things. Yes I am alive, To you they are my people but for us...

VOICE A: "Gottingen street is a family. Like you can, you know, all families are a little crazy and stuff but you hear good stories and bad stories about Gottingen but for the most part, it's unity. It's like... because at the end of the day - or should I say at the start of the day - we came from Africville. They broke down Africville and put us in the north end of Halifax, which is connected to Gottingen street."

VOICE B: "When I was growing up, Gottingen street was a black community. very vibrant. You see all kinds of little black kids around, there was lots of activity for kids. I mean, we were never bored. If my friend didn't have a bike, we'd get him a bike or my parents would give him a bike or parents across the Street. Somebody would get together and go get a frame and put a bike together for that kid that doesn't have a bike. That value is not the same anymore. And I kind of miss that because it was more of a community thing."

VOICE C: "Community meant that when you walk down the street everybody waved to you and everybody spoke to you. Community meant that if somebody's children threw rocks at your car, you could go to their door and tell their mothers that their kids were being bad. That's what community meant to them, because community meant - much like the word "treaties" understood by Cree - meant family and relations. That's what community meant, it was family and relations, whether by blood or by acceptance."

VOICE D: "I'm from.. I'm from square town. I'm from Uniacke Square. That's where I'm from. And I know that might be a hard, hard concept for some people to to understand that. I can't say that I'm from Greece or I can't say that I'm from Trinidad or I can't say that I'm from Jamaica. I can't say any of those things. I don't really know where my ancestors hail from."

VOICE E: "I loved the community, the people, the family that we met there, that would become generational friends Four, five generations of friends. And yeah, it's a, it's a lovely place. It was a lovely place, still, it got destroyed, now it's building back. But, with different cultures of people. Not, it's not the black area that it used to be. In 70s. Late 60s. It's a whole new culture of people from all over the world."

Their love for our community is infectious isn't ? Believe me there is a lot more to be told.

So let me tell you how this will work. Right now you should be standing at Cornwallis Street, on my right-hand side. This is where we begin.

Throughout your journey along my spine, I will give you prompts to walk to various landmarks.

They will be located on either my left or right hand's side (take a second and get your bearings... you are on my right, look across my back, or what you call a street.. that is my left hand side).

Once I provide you with directions to your next destination before you walk please pause my voice on your device. As you begin your walk I ask you to take part in an environmental scan.

I know, what is an environmental scan?

Well, simply put it is when you take in the sounds, smells and sights in the area around you. This is important because, when you hear from past and present community members their stories are connected to the environment, connected to me.

So I want you to do three things as you walk

1. Take in the physical environment; notice the skyline, the grooves in my back, the people coming and going.

2. Listen to the sounds around you; the cars whizzing by, footsteps on the pavement, the wind whistling between buildings.

3. Lastly, search for examples of the themes my residents mention in their stories. Place them on my back with you, try to see what they've seen, feel what they've felt.

GENERATIONS HOLDING ON TO THEIR COMMUNITY

Now, are you ready? Because I am... it's time to meet my community.

Stories and Sounds from Halifax's North End.

Now here is the moment where you take a walk. It's your first time so I'll remind you what to do.

First, when I say it's time to go, press pause on your device. Next, take in your surroundings; and most importantly remember the story you just heard, place yourself there. When you reach your next destination press play to meet another one of my family members.

So here we go, your next destination is the bus stop theatre just one block ahead... Now press pause, IT'S TIME TO GO.

_____ WALK BREAK _____

The first person we're going to meet represents three generations of memories and experiences, moments that may make you a bit hungry. See those shiny new lofts, across my back on the left... There stood Metro Garden Chinese restaurant. She and her friends would all pile in to buy a handful of egg rolls then strut down my sidewalk like it was a bag full of money.

VOICE D: "I can remember like steam coming off the egg rolls were dipping in the sauce and, you know, eating two or three egg roll. We do this every weekend or whenever someone had extra bit of cash and just not even ever worrying about. And in danger or feeling unsafe or we were so carefree and happy, we didn't even care about the elements. You know, it could be freezing cold and we'd still be outside eating or egg rolls and hanging on the corner and playing track down or whatever other games hanging out the basketball court, watching people play, playing yourselves the numerous games of soccer, baseball. So those are some of my really fond memories of the community I grew up in. There would be people walking to the corner store in the road with slippers. Yeah. Like everyone was so comfortable. And that wasn't an unusual thing. But somehow I knew even growing up, that was just part of my landscape. Somehow I knew that this doesn't happen in other neighbourhoods.

VOICE D: "It's really unfortunate that this space might not exist 20 years from now. The way that I know it well, it isn't existing right now. There's a few co-ops where you still have some black folks, folks residing as well. But other than that, when I go back to visit family, that's that very small area that I go back to, because a lot of the homesteads on Bauer Maynard houses that were a Maitland, Creighton Street, Gary Shaw, Buddy Day Lane now are no longer being occupied by black families."

Those names represent families that were forced from their homes in Africville and through perseverance created a home for themselves with me, only for that home to slowly be taken away.

Isn't it interesting how history repeats itself?...Think about that as you head to your next destination is at Cunard Street, cross over my back and walk along my left-hand side. Remember to pay attention here, watch out for cars, don't get in anyone's way. Now press pause, IT'S TIME TO GO.

WALK BREAK

Look across the street. You see all that rock and dust? There was a time where it was much more than that. It was the place where people would party noon to night without ever stopping. A place to see people and be seen. But like so many other things here, it's gone.

VOICE F: "I miss the derby, the derby was like our community thing and everybody went there and everybody hung there and you know, most of us met our husbands and boyfriends there, you know, American or not. I miss that, I miss the Misty Moon on Gottingen where we could all go and just hang out and have a good time, and there wasn't shootings, and there wasn't fights, and there wasn't any of that, we just wanted to have a good time, sometimes there might a little fight here and there. A little love triangle thing going on but nobody killed each other. I miss that. I miss, I miss, yeah. Yeah, I miss the Earl's Lounge, I miss the prizefighters club, I miss the, and it makes me look like all I ever did was party, which I did do a lot of it, I miss the Car-Unusual which they now call Buddy Daye street. I miss that, because we couldn't get in but we could hang outside and enjoy the music and dance, right, and until we could find a way to sneak outside, right? I miss that kind of stuff."

VOICE A: "Gotta get to Gottingen; had the shirts, they had everything. It was like a weekend event, maybe four days. You had dance routines, people would rap, you have singers, you have talent shows and you know, face painting and it was just beautiful. It was beautiful. And then at night time would be the adults, and of course, you had the little kids. I just remember sneaking around trying to you know get in with the adults. That's all I really remember but I want to see the new Gottingen collab with the old Gottingen, really."

Stories and Sounds from Halifax's North End.

Hey, I want that too. We all want that.

We've seen different folks from all over the world come over here. So, it's really up to you if you want to make that happen.

But let's keep walking.

We're going to head down to the corner of Prince William Street. Of course, I would never call it that. To me and my people we know it as the corner by the Y but anyways, press pause IT'S TIME TO GO.

WALK BREAK

I've seen my people time and time again go out their way to help one another.

People who don't have much making the most out of what they do have.

Community is about leaning on one another, even at your lowest point. Knowing you have people there to hold you up.

VOICE F: "I'm cooking supper and I realize that I don't have enough potatoes. And I don't have to be embarrassed to run next door to grab an egg or two potatoes, because I know my neighbour will come over and switch and she'll say, yeah, I got a couple potatoes, got any sugar over there, and it's not unusual, and it's not begging, it's not panhandling, it's just what we do for each other, you know? And not feel bad about it, and not worry about it, oh shit, someone is going to say, I went over and got potatoes, you know, or whatever. It's just not, it's almost like when you, when you, there's an old book from years and years ago called Stone Soup and buddy had a rock and some water and then he started getting people to get a carrot, and then something, that's what this community is to me, you know? you've got a carrot, you've got a potato, you've got an onion, and at the end of the day, we all had soup, that's the easiest way I can explain it."

Stone soup.... I can see the connection, each person puts in what little they have and with that everyone is full. With books in mind, do you have your library card handy because it's time to head to the "North is Freedom" monument, where you can see those helping hands at work. There, you'll meet someone whose life's purpose is to lift up his community. Press pause, IT'S TIME TO GO.

WALK BREAK

This is the North Memorial Public Library. The hub of the community.

It has served the people around me for generations, offered access to basic needs and provided innovative and crucial opportunities for community growth and development.

The next person you are going to hear from built his career within these walls. Now he works tirelessly everyday to ensure this place is here to stay so that my people can always feel welcome.

Like many impactful leaders his roots stayed strong.

VOICE G: "I remember, I was in high school and I was walking down Gottingen from the George Dixon. So just on the top of the cut, or on the block as people would say, so I'm walking down and a committee member who's no longer with us anymore stopped me and said "Why are you looking so good?" Because at that time I was working at a law firm. So I had like a suit and tie on and he said "well what was going on?" I said, well you know I'm walking downtown, I'm working at a law firm for the summer. He says "OK well why are you here?" Well it's lunchtime. He says "why?" I said I can't spend money downtown. So he said "OK well let's just walk." So we're walking down Gottingen street. So we're heading towards the library area. We're just talking. He says to me "you know, you don't need to come back up here. You should focus on you." I said what does that mean. He says, "focus on you. Listen I'm going to give you some money. Don't come back up here. This is your community but at the same time you need to think about what's going to help you. And you coming back here every day could take away from you doing something that could be positive aspects of your life." And when I thought about that, you know, this person is somebody who folks would look at in you know two lights, whether a negative or positive light, and that's when I really took ownership of my community because even though I thought this person didn't see me and this person was always out on the block, they'd seen what I was doing and wanted to make sure that I was safe and that the community was being considerate of that. So he said, "here's some money, stay downtown for the rest of the week and figure out a way that you don't have to come back up the street because I want you to focus on you. You don't owe us anything until you do something, until you do something big, then you owe us."

Stories and Sounds from Halifax's North End.

That was something huh? Now look across the street, ask yourself what are the odds of someone living there giving you.. a stranger... a free lunch, let alone encouragement to keep going? ...Just think about that.

This community now is a far cry from what it used to be. Businesses come and go, buildings disappear, people move away and others move in. Of course me and my people want change, but what we really want is change should be led by us.

VOICE D: "I'm in fear that the neighbourhood that I currently identify with will no longer be available to my grandchildren."

VOICE: I: "I think gentrification is a real thing and it's becoming ...There are aspects of which are really are a problem today. I would say that in the 1980s however there was

nobody building luxury condos on Gottingen or Agricola street and yeah the gentrification discussion is a complex one but the essentially Gottingen Street was a neighbourhood where people who did not have a lot of money found a place to live and that included queer community and the art community as well as the African Nova Scotian community who have roots there going back a long ways.”

VOICE H: “I have great pride in this community. I actually do still sense, although, it’s not the same as when I was a little girl and or a young girl and young lady or whatever growing up. Denise Daye I had a very strong sense of everybody feeling like we were all family. To this day, I still feel that there is that sense. It’s not as prominent as it was because there is a lot of families that have lost a lot of their mothers, fathers, sisters, older sisters and brothers, and things. So the families are dwindling down but I know that the family names of some of those descendants are still very strong and that I feel a part that we are still all one family.”

VOICE A: “My people. I would like for them to have my people stay where we’re at. You moved us from Africville, put us in the park, put us in the pubs, put us in Uniacke Square. Leave us here now. Leave us here. Because... I don’t know, it’s just weird. I don’t want to see that change. I really don’t want to see that change.”

VOICE A: “I would like them to take away understanding. Take away the understanding that everybody is different, everyone has their own battles, every community celebrates, grieves, or does whatever in their own way. So understand that, and if there’s a Gottingen street near you, don’t be scared of it.”

Stories and Sounds from Halifax’s North End.

There is change and there is destruction, all depending on how you look at it.

Watch those around you as you cross the street and walk towards Buddy Daye st.

Are people greeting each other, is there that buzz of community taking place... or are they all in their individual silos just trying to get from A to B... press pause, what do you see?

_____ **WALK BREAK** _____

Now this street isn’t like the rest of them.

Most seem to be named after some old British guys with glamorized legacies, But here? This is Buddy Daye street, named in honour of a man who loved and fought

for this community both in and outside the ring, someone who raised his family right here, and they are still here today...

Well, I can go on about him but it is better you hear from his daughter.... To her, he was just a great father and this place was just home.

VOICE H: "So as a kid, my most favourite memory of Creighton Street was the older people who would be in their doorways on grading day. Grading day was like your birthday, it was Christmas, it was Easter. It was every holiday you could think of that was so joyous. You would leave the school, school was closed for the summer. You're skipping home with your grading card and you're coming down each and every person's older is standing in the doorway, stopping you and saying, "did you grade?" And you're so proud to say "did I grade? Yes, here's my report card," and they would hand you a nickel, a penny, a quarter. And by the time you got to the end of the whole section, you would have maybe 50 cents and you would be the richest person in the world from having all the older people stop you and give you something as a reward. So that when you got home, when you got your big reward from your parents, your mother and your father on grading day, it meant nothing to what you felt as a kid skipping down the street from school to your home and getting money from all the elders. I'll never forget that memory. It's always stuck out in my mind. What that meant to me was the pride that they felt because they may not have had that opportunity to go to school, grading, maybe they didn't even go. So, therefore, when you're doing it and then you say, well, these people really cared that I graded and that gave me encouragement to go back the next year and feel even more going to have this happen again. It was a positive experience that was passed on and hopefully passed on to mine."

This street wasn't always named after the boxer Delmore "Buddy" Daye. Funny thing with this place, people always remember how things used to be, so for many they remember it as Gerrish Street, which connects me with my sister Creighton Street... if you walk up the hill a little bit you can see her, running parallel to me.... We're going to meet someone else there with quite a story. He hitch-hiked from Halifax to Harlem with other young men to bring a global movement right here.

WALK BREAK

VOICE E: "Well, in the, in the late 60s, 67, 68, 69. Those were the years, and that's when that activist here in Nova Scotia in the black community of Gottingen Street. We took, we were called, I guess you could say, we were gatekeepers, we had speakeasies where we'd meet because the law, the police, they were just randomly drive by if you was walking down the street. Hold you up, asking you your name, put you in the back of the police car, take you to the police station, tie up two or three hours of your time for absolutely nothing. And through our speakeasy, we became associated with the black panthers. There was leaders, and, and subordinate people of the movement would come and have our meetings at our speakeasy and yes, we did. Because like, at no space, there was a winos, they were good people, but they were just caught up in like opioids is now, right? But, they were intelligent people and yeah, they, they used to keep eye out for police when we was having our meetings. And we would reward them and I would never myself personally would never buy them liquor or anything but I would give them money, so what they did with that, if they was keeping watch, what they did with that money that was totally up to them, but I know, what they would do with it, but at the same time, I couldn't take myself to buy it for them even though I knew the money I was giving them was going towards that addiction. And then, in 68, there was, a real big activist movement against the, against us, but at the same time, our people, I call them, the street people, fought back against the police brutality in the, in the old laws of the police. And, it was, it was quite bad. But it did change things because it got more people, politicians, involved in what was really going on up there with the police in the black community. And yeah, it changed. There was no more just grabbing off the streets anymore. Like. Through learning the laws, of the country, we passed that on to the people of the community so they would know their, their rights and that the police just couldn't do that, and with a couple of real, real decent police officers that helped us, like Sergeant Brown, Sergeant Lambert, they helped us get access to like, the police, and to the politicians because a black man couldn't even get access to their MLA, through, ombudsman, or whatever. And, yeah, and through that activity with the panthers in that movement, we did change. We did change our community to a high degree so black people could be more comfortable walking down the street."

You heard that right, Yes the Black Panthers were here in Canada, and yes they had a meeting right here. And you heard it from a Panther himself... Think about that long journey as you cross on over to Uniacke, press pause and ask yourself, what would you do for freedom?

WALK BREAK

Did you think of an answer? Yeah that's a big question, but it is something my people have to ask themselves on a constant basis.....

But to be free means to live without fear, and to live without fear means to feel protected. Even by people you'd least expect.

VOICE C: "One time I was walking home, just in this area here, you see the house right there in the square? So, I had to pick my kids up and I had phoned ahead to say "look, I'm rushing for time, I'm just gonna grab the kids and keep going." And so then my friend was waiting for me. I came up here right by this divide here. And she was standing behind the divide and you couldn't see her, if you were coming towards me, you wouldn't be able to see her. But my kids were right there, so I grab my kids and I head down towards the corner, in the corner right here. And you know this used to be called "crack corner." And this used to have all the young bloods on it, right? And there was quite a few of them that day, there was, oh God, about maybe 15? So I get to the corner, now, I'm not paying any attention and then I realize, we're circled by- these young men have all circled me and my two children. And nobody's saying a word. And I'm looking at them like, "what's going on here?" and I'm starting to freak out a little bit going like... Cause, you know, I was fairly new to the area and had only been in there like maybe five, six years. And I'm like, "why are you doing this? what's up?" And then one guy stepped forward and he looked at me, then he looked down at my son and he said my son's name and my first thought is, who are you and how come you know my child's name? And then he said, "who is this?" pointing to me and my son said, "That's my mother" and he went, "Oh, okay then." And then they just opened up the circle so we could go through. And every man in that circle said, you know, "How are you? blah blah blah" and spoke to me like they'd always known me. And right then and there, it hit me, it struck me so hard. Like when I was talking about the feeling of community and who belongs and how community's family. Right then, I thought I was going to cry because my thought is, you know those police that don't show up? You call them and two hours later, they show up and everything is dead and done and over with? And when all those services that nobody can get anymore and I didn't have to depend on anybody. All of a sudden I thought, "my children are safe because this is community." These guys, and yes, I don't agree with their lifestyle, but these guys were watching out for my children. They watched out for the kids in the neighbourhood. No matter what they did wrong, my kids were part of their community. Therefore, part of their family and they were watching out. Like, I won't always say that was a good thing for some of the kids, but for my kids I thought, "this is beautiful." And I'd never had that feeling like that before other than for my own direct family when I was younger. And that was old Gottingen. You know, good or bad but that was old Gottingen. The fact that you could

have that kind of understanding that I didn't have to worry about the police, I didn't have to worry about anybody coming to save my children. I had these guys here. And there's a lot of stories about, you know, yes they're bad, yes they did stuff that was bad, but there's also stories about, you know, a young girl got attacked one year and those boys ran up to the commons and chased down the guys that got her. And they did it, not the police. Where were the police? Police showed up hours later. So, again the word "community" and what does it mean. No matter what they had wrong going on in their lives, those young men realized they were part of a community and that community to them meant family. And you know and so that was beautiful."

Look, my back carries a lot over the years, a load my people make lighter but there have been times where it's almost too heavy. Heavy with fear, with rumours, with misconceptions. They want me to crumble but my people keep me together.

VOICE E: "Since they put in Uniacke Square, the community became known as hell. H-E-L-L-F-A-X. Because through media and people that came in and didn't really understand the community, it was known to be a very violent Community and caucasians was not to enter into the community. Which was totally wrong, there's bad apples everywhere, as for being safe, Gottingen Street the community, where the community there, was just as safe as any other place as you could ever be."

VOICE B: "This is probably the friendliest community in the city because for me growing up, I used to look at all the other cultures of people that would come in the community. Like the guys in the Navy, people from away, they would come here because this was a party community and it was a welcoming community. When I was growing up, I'd seen every other culture in this community that we're just starting to see now come back to the community. So they were comfortable here. They didn't have to worry about being abused or robbed. I mean, there was the odd little rip off here and there, but it wasn't noted for that, it was noted for going to this community, having good food, drink, party, and the community had some pretty sisters walking around. So I have to be honest. And that's what made them come."

VOICE G: "There are people who still, to this day, when they look up Gottingen street to move down here online, they get the worst articles and there are still some places - I won't say who - that tell students don't walk down Gottingen street because it's a dangerous place. So it's still something that, you know, the stigma still is there."

My people. They're tough, right?

They had to put up with a lot over the years.

First, they were torn from their homes. And look how resilient that made them.

Now, they're judged by the outside. But to be honest, I don't really care what the outside thinks. I feel good knowing that my people know the truth and the truth is? This is the a great place to raise kids, and have fun. Speaking of fun, let's head to the Dixon Field, walk down the path overlooking the park. But just be careful, because right now it's going down.

WALK BREAK

VOICE A: "The George Dixon centre has these big chestnut trees and we used to be like seven or eight and there was about ten of us. We would spend half the day throwing up sticks to knock the chestnuts down. They're down, then you just spend that rest of the half of the day picking them up and then picking teams and throwing them at each other. And chestnuts, if nobody knows the chestnuts are, they're like the size of golf balls and they got these little prickly thorns on them and it hurts when you get hit with them. It's crazy, it'll teach you reflex, it'll teach you reflex. And when we get so many down on the ground, it's just free for all, just grab all you can grab and wherever you're at, you just know there's a line drawn, there's an imaginary line drawn. And you don't even know where it's drawn, like you could be on the other side throwing something at your teammate and somebody behind you sting you in your back. And then you're throwing like four or five and you ducking and weaving and you're hiding behind like the playground equipment and then you look up and then there's like twelve of us. It's like where did everyone come from. I don't know, it was good. Chestnut fights were the best and water fights too. Because then the whole neighbourhood's in the water fight. Chestnuts, only for the strong dummies, the strong ones. But water fights yeah the whole hood would get in them

Well, water fight... like a chestnut fight, you have throw chestnuts at certain people. You know who's already playing the game from who collects chestnuts and who grabs them. You know who's playing, but a water fight, you could just run up to a random person in the hood with your bucket of water, with your spray gun and just go crazy on them. But watch your back because then they're coming with their hose later, they'll wait all day to catch you slippin' and then (hose sounds)... It's amazing. I actually watched a kid chuck a bucket of water, of cold water on an older gentleman. He was about 45. The kid must have been about eleven. The water was so cold I swear the guy was about to take a seizure like he went like (deep gasp). And then another kid came and threw another

bucket on him and I think that snapped him out of it. I think that brought him back. I witnessed somebody die in a water fight and come back in like three seconds. It was amazing to me. It was amazing.”

From what this young man is saying I can tell it wasn't about the chestnuts or the buckets of water, it was about the entire community coming together to let loose, laugh, run and even be brought back to life.

Now dry up, forfeit the game, turn around, look across the field over my back that street there it's Charles. Let's head on over.

WALK BREAK

It's clear that kids here treat me like their own backyard.

But that's not a guarantee unless your family's lucky enough to OWN a piece of me...

Let's be honest, that is easier said than done, especially for the next man you're going to meet who had a hard time convincing his wife that a condemned home was their future, and then he has to go to the bank....

VOICE B: “The senior bank manager got to junior bank manager to come with him and they walk from Scotiabank on Agricola down here to see the house. Well, buddy just totally embarrassed me. He said, “Are you serious?” I said, “yeah, I'm serious.” He said, “No, are you serious? That place is a mess. You can never renovate that place. We're not going to give you a penny.” And they told me that straight to my face. And he says, “well, I don't even want to see anymore of this place. Good luck.” And he walked back to the bank, he retired from that bank, and I think he got one glimpse of it before he left to move back to his house. He lived in a town somewhere. But I think he snuck by one day to take a glimpse of it. And he was kind of embarrassed that he didn't give me any money, right. But I'm glad it worked out that way because we didn't owe them any money. So me and my wife, we did this. We hustled and did it ourselves. And as we worked on it over the years, she started to see the value come out of this place, too, because all my friends, they moved to Sackville, they moved to Dartmouth, they moved to Clayton Park, wherever. I think what happened was black people thought then, rather than live in the community, I'd rather sell my house in the community and move to the nicer communities. That was the worst thing they could have ever done, because the

community just dwindled then and everybody had the same attitude. And they used to say to me, "What is wrong with him? I thought he had more sense than that." Seriously and that used to bug me for a while until we finished the renovations and then different friends of mine started to come through and they said, "Hmm" and then they said, "well, why would you spend that kind of money here?" I said, if you had any sense, "I'm central. This property is gonna be worth a lot of money." That's what I said to them 28 years ago. Now, look at it. It's worth the money that I thought it would end up being. And I don't think it was a bad investment. If I told you the price I paid for and the value of it now, you would say "whoa, that's a great investment."

And back in those days, Gottingen street was very busy. Lot of stuff going on. But it wasn't crime like it is today. It was it was different. It was just a fun place to live. But at the time, a lot of people didn't live in such great conditions. And I think that really helped a lot of people say, I got to get out of here. But they didn't realize, if you could fix up what you got, why would you go? And a lot of them moved to different areas where neighbours on either side wouldn't even speak to them. So they had to live on with that kind of crap for 10, 15, 20 years, probably till their kids grew up to get old enough so they could move someplace else, right. And I don't think I made a bad choice. I think I made a great choice."

Now I told you some people were lucky enough to get a piece of me, it's almost as if they had a horseshoe around their neck.

It's so comforting to know that for him and his family, they can't be pushed out, maybe not all is lost.

GENERATIONS HOLDING ON TO THEIR
 WALKING GOTTINGEN
 Stories and Sounds from Halifax's North End.

If you're looking for a horseshoe of your own... Look across the street at that small brick building, that's the Dixon Centre, it doesn't look like much but believe me it is a gem. Press pause and be cautious when you cross, someone is waiting for you there. Don't worry, you know him. We met him before.

_____WALK BREAK_____

So It seems he has more to tell you. Now the Dixon Centre is truly a place of community, from night hoops to community dances and after school programs... This place holds many memories both inside and outside its walls, walk around back and see for yourself.

VOICE G: "So for me. Growing up on Gottingen and in the co-op, most folks who know the co-op, Wood Avenue. So a lot of really influential community folks were in there. So we have some plaques on Gottingen street, if you're walking by the George Dixon Centre, Alveda Cane and we have also Graham Downey, who was a former councillor before me. And then... Oh Aretha Downey. I never got a chance to meet Aretha Downey but I've heard lots of great things. But you know when you think of this community, Gottingen street you just, you feel the community. One of the things that was nostalgic for me was walking down Gottingen street and the sounds of horse shoes hitting the poles. So the horseshoe pit is here that hasn't been used for many years. The gentleman who was taking care passed away a couple of years ago. But as a kid every morning I'd hear the horse shoes hitting the poles because that was like a nostalgic sound. I still can hear it today when I think of, you know, the soundscape of Gottingen is, you know, there's the cars and the people yelling across the street to each other and whatnot. But for me it's the sound of the horse shoes by George Dixon Centre that really leaves a feeling."

Come back over to my sidewalk. After that, your next stop is at North Street, head straight, take it all in, now press pause, IT'S TIME TO GO.

WALK BREAK

I feel it is important to remind you that the voices you've heard throughout this experience is a small glimpse into the vast community that has made my back their home. And I want to keep it that way. But for them, what will it look like in the future?

VOICE D: "It looks like not having a physical space for my kids, my grandkids to frequent. It looks like not having a that anchor, that space where you can go back and visit family and, you know, claim as your own. It looks like not. Having that component of history were that you can attach to something physical."

VOICE C: "I think the social attitudes, I think the understanding of a blended community needs to change. I think that there should be something in place by the city and I'm not just saying for Gottingen street. I think for any area that's deemed a special kind of community, because they do it in the south end, you cannot move into any one of those very affluent streets and not have to abide by sort of whatever the rhythm is of going on there, because they won't stand for that."

VOICE E: "I would say it would have to be the culture of black Nova Scotians in that area, the ones that will stay of course. But, that sense of honesty and caring, empathy, without, without the people, the originals there, I see that fading and what's little is left should be preserved. As far as buildings go, no. There's nothing that couldn't go. Except for the type of people that lived in that area. And if we keep anything for the kids who is gonna remain in that community, that is what should be preserved in that community."

VOICE G: "So there's the hopeful part of me and then there's what I think the reality is. You know, I hope that with the growth that's happening on Gottingen street that everyone will be able to be included. When I say everyone that means the historic community will be able to be part of the new businesses, they get jobs, they'll be included. Hopefully, there'll be a spot where community members can create their own opportunities for business, where any housing will include folks who need it most. So that's either folks who are moving from transition how housing or social housing that they can get that step-up of being in a place where they can you know call home where they're not part of the system. But at the same time, we know that gentrification, even though I hate using that word, is relevant and if you walk past Cornwall Street on Gottingen, you can look at and see the dramatic change that has happened. We used to have the boxing gym and if we go back in history, we used to have the theatre that was there which is now Global news. Going north on Gottingen street. We had the clinic which is still existing in the McDonald building but the clinic is gone and that will be turned into probably a new business and It's scary to think this is what the reality could be. To think that what Gottingen street will be is a totally new community that's not going to include the folks who've been there historically and you know that's one of the things I'm working on to try to make sure that that doesn't happen."

This is where our journey ends, remember we all have a story to tell so I'll leave you with mine...

**I was once red clay, cobblestones parted and moulded as an ancient highway.
 Carry'in men, work'in men, from the country to the piers... through rail, street cars anything to
 keep them moving. Moving through me, never staying.
 Leaving scars along my spine as their Wheels moved past me.
 Then came the tarmac, I became black and soft in the sun.
 My community grew, they were castaways like me, deemed unfit, hidden in plain sight.**

**We grew... they grew, I watched them. Their rich culture and traditions turned my worn transient
blacktop into a bed of loam for rooting.**

They sprouted generations.

**No longer using my back as a route to someplace better, they stayed...they made me visible.
Then one day wheels began to roll back inand one by one turf them out. Plucking them from
the land.**

Pulling out my roots, to make room for the better route... movin' on up.

Stacking seed vertically where roots can't grow, drying in the sky.

**My back is heavy now, but under that weight of "growth", I remember the bounty that truly made
me.**

