



# Memory Holloway

Not long after I arrived in New Bedford, I saw an announcement in the paper for a Festa at St. Julie Billiard in Dartmouth Street. I wandered around until I came upon a big table and asked, "what are these?" I asked, pointing to a table of stuffed quahogs. "You're not from here, are you?" she said, smiling. But I knew I wanted to be from here. I loved the place from the beginning; the cobblestones of New Bedford, the dock, the fishing boats with names like Growler, Sea Angel. and Endurance. I came with my family from Melbourne, Australia, where I had taught art history for many years, and then in New York at Vassar College.

I recall driving across the Braga Bridge in Fall River for this first time and tuning in to [foreign language 00:00:54], 97.3 WJFD, radio Portuguese. I was on my way for an interview at UMass Dartmouth. Wow, radio Portuguese, I thought, this is really interesting. I think I'm going to like it here. I began to listen to Tony Cabral on Thursdays and [foreign language 00:01:15] and tuned in to [foreign language 00:01:19] and other Portuguese music. I found RTP1 on my local channel and found news from the Azores and the continent. I found Cape Verdean archives at the New Bedford Library and walked up and down Milton Street with friends. What a place. I drank coffee at Lydia's Bakery before it closed, and then moved to Tia Maria for Morning [foreign language 00:01:42]. All this, all this in Portuguese.

I found a two family house and moved in. My neighbors were Portuguese, some from Faial, some from Pico, some from Sao Miguel. With Jose across the street, we talked about his [foreign language 00:01:58], his kale, and how he managed to keep his fig tree alive during the winter when I couldn't. We sat at his picnic table and he told me about his family in Sao Miguel, about [foreign language 00:02:10], the 25th of April about Salazar, and the war in Angola.

Before long, I was on my way to the Azores with the National Park Service and some friends from the Whaling Museum, to do an exhibition that showed the things that people had brought from the islands; black shawls, ceramic pots, soup tureens, and old photographs. I was hooked. I went to Lisbon on a grant from the Luso-American Association to study the art and architecture of the country, and returned with what I had learned to offer classes at the university. I worked on exhibitions on Portuguese art, and then spent part of a semester as a resident guest at the Gulbenkian Museum in Lisbon.

But it wasn't just the academic side of Portuguese culture that I loved. It was New Bedford and the people that I met. I cooked at the Salvation Army and met families and fishermen. I worked on political campaigns and held posters on windy corners. I met adult students in the classes that I taught downtown in the PACE building, and on Sundays, I attended Grace Church, where I sat with people who sang and prayed and ate piles of Portuguese sweet bread, afterwards, at coffee hour. So, almost 30 years later, if I'm asked that question, "you're not from here, are you?" I say, "yes, I'm from here. Yes, I am."