

The Elma Street Treasure

Script and Classroom Tasks

An Accelerated Learning Resource
for Adult Programs in
English as an Additional Language

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For the convenience of the teacher, a Media CD has been included so that pages can be printed. The 3rd edition content has been edited, pages have been added, and the play itself has been inserted.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	page iv
Acknowledgements	page iv
Introduction to Accelerated Learning	page v
Class Model for Accelerated Learning	page vii
Introduction to the Play	page viii
Cast of Characters	page ix
Elma Street Neighbourhood Map	page xiii
Getting to Know Them	page xiv
Scene One: After the Fire	page 17
Scene Two: Raising Suspicions	page 47
Scene Three: The Women Get to Work	page 81
Scene Four: Looking for Answers	page 107
Scene Five: After Supper at the Masons	page 135
Scene Six: A New Idea	page 161
Scene Seven: Getting Acquainted	page 197
Scene Eight: Talking It Over	page 233
Scene Nine: The Search	page 277
Scene Ten: Confronting the Truth	page 311
Scene Eleven: Living Together	page 341
Scene Twelve: The Labour Day Block Party	page 373

PREFACE

A play is the pivotal component of *The Elma Street Treasure: an Accelerated Learning Resource for Adult EAL* Programs*. This resource also includes a binder, *EAL Tasks*, and five CDs. *EAL Tasks* are suggestions and activities for maximizing the play's potential as an Accelerated Learning Resource. The CDs contain Active Readings of Scenes 1-12, Passive Readings of Scenes 1-12, Songs to go with Scenes 1-12, and a Media CD for printing.

For more information and helpful readings on Accelerated Learning, refer to the bibliography following *An Introduction to Accelerated Learning*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project was initiated in response to interest shown in Accelerated Learning principles and approaches by Manitoba adult EAL teachers.

Gail Tiessen and Providence College undertook the leadership of the project. Gail began by assembling a very capable team. She recruited a truly talented colleague, Sara Pasiciel, who is a published playwright, and who wrote an absolutely delightful, original script for the project. Sara's wonderful script was lovingly enhanced by the beautiful illustrations done by Manitoba artist Rhian Brinjolson. Gail also recruited a group of her very capable and creative graduate students: Shantelle Almeida, Julie Bell, and Elaine Peters. They produced a massive package of tasks. Doug Sadler, another of Gail's multi-talented students, brought his professional expertise as a musician to the project, writing and recording twelve songs with original words.

Advisors to the project were Lynn Campbell and Joanne Pettis of the Adult Language Training Branch, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO ACCELERATED LEARNING

Accelerated learning is a methodology that makes learning more effective, efficient and enjoyable. It involves the whole brain and the whole person (body, mind and spirit) in the learning process.

Accelerated Learning builds on developments in a number of different but related areas: brain-based learning, neuro-linguistic programming, multiple intelligences, Suggestopedia, and learning styles. Accelerated Learning reflects that emotions are critical to learning. People learn best when in a stress-free, comfortable and stimulating environment. They learn best when their imagination and involvement are actively engaged through games, conversation, mystery and celebration. People learn best in classrooms that accommodate different learning styles and multiple intelligences in all activities, and when the power of positive suggestion is maximized. People learn best in environments in which they feel supported and empowered. They learn best when whole-brain learning is optimized and when both conscious and para-conscious learning is facilitated.

In the Accelerated Learning environment, attention is paid to comfort and visual stimulation. Comfortable seating, such as arm chairs and sofas, often replace traditional classroom furniture. Decorations, called peripherals, are used artistically and selectively to create a pleasing and inviting learning space. Positive affirmations and messages are often posted. Mobiles, plants, posters, pictures, signs, thematic decorations and displays are used abundantly; however, the decorations are changed periodically to avoid boredom and monotony.

Another key aspect of Accelerated Learning is instilling confidence within the learners that they can and will learn. Much fanfare is made of Accelerated Learning in the classroom and the potential of the script and tasks. Often learners take on new names and roles, which frees them to become a new persona with none of their old inhibitions or limiting behaviours. Positive encouragement is used liberally.

Accelerated Learning material has several key features. New content is usually presented in the form of a dramatic play. Dramatic stories and plays engage the audience in the lives and events of the characters. This type of rich emotional attachment heightens involvement in the content and has been found to facilitate memory retention. In language learning situations, Accelerated Learning scripts characteristically present the new information and language thematically to reflect the focus of the instruction.

The Accelerated Learning process also has methodology that has derived from Suggestopedia techniques. In particular, the concert sessions have very important structural features reflecting current research on the effects of music on learning. Studies show that the use of classical music boosts learning. During the first concert, the **Active Concert**, the learners listen to the play read to the accompaniment of emotional, classical music such as something by Mozart, Beethoven, Haydn or Tchaikovsky. The reader's voice harmonizes with the nuances of the musical phrases while at the same time being slow and rhythmical. When the music stops, the reader stops. When the music is excited, the reader's voice is excited. The learners follow along in their text underlining, highlighting, illustrating or making notes as they wish.

The Active Concert is followed by the Passive Concert. During the **Passive Concert**, the learners sit back, relax, close their eyes and listen to the play read naturally to the accompaniment of what has been described as philosophic classical music such as Bach, Vivaldi, or Handel.

Music, it should be noted, has a very important role throughout Accelerated Learning. Teachers are encouraged to begin and end their day with music in addition to using it throughout the lesson

and during breaks. Music can be both re-energizing and calming, and its selective use can enhance learning most effectively.

After the Active and Passive Concerts, the lesson moves into the Primary and Secondary Tasks. The tasks are techniques and activities to help learners interact with the new material. During the **Primary Tasks**, learners engage in multiple readings of the script in a variety of ways: chorally, singly, loudly, quietly, rhythmically, or in different voices or moods. This takes the attention off the actual content of the text and redirects it to the reading performance. Research suggests that this aids deeper level learning to occur.

In the **Secondary Tasks**, various techniques are employed to focus on specific elements of the content. However, rather than traditional exercises that focus direct attention on specific features, Accelerated Learning utilizes indirect approaches based on multiple intelligences factors. Games, songs, role plays, story-telling, and art are encouraged and have been found effective in processing and integrating the new language with that previously learned. An Accelerated Learning class schedule follows this introduction.

Given this very brief overview of Accelerated Learning, the authors hope you will find *The Elma Street Treasure* a helpful and exciting new resource in your teaching. Not only does the resource incorporate many Accelerated Learning features, but it also addresses *Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000* competencies in its tasks, making it particularly applicable in Adult EAL classrooms. Teachers are also encouraged to supplement the tasks provided here with others of their own design. Tasks that engage learners in art, music, physical activity or poetic expressions are particularly effective in accelerating learning.

Helpful Readings

- Caine, G. & R. (1991). *Making Connections: Teaching and the Human Brain*. Redlands, CA: Connections.
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CLASS MODEL FOR ACCELERATED LEARNING

- ☞ Total curriculum time approximately 75-80 hours
 - six hours per scene (approximately eight 45-minute blocks)

Day 1	Course Intro	Course Intro	Block 1	Block 2
	Introductions	Introduction to AL and the Introduction to the Play – “Getting to Know Them”	Introduction to Scene 1: Pre-reading Task	Active Concert* Passive Concert

Day 2	Block 3	Block 4	Block 5	Block 6
	Primary Tasks: Reading the Text in a Variety of Ways	Secondary Tasks: Competency Focused	Secondary Tasks: Competency Focused	Secondary Tasks: Competency Focused

Day 3	Block 7	Block 8	Block 1	Block 2
	Secondary Tasks: Competency Focused	Most Spontaneous Task: Function Focused	Introduction to Scene 2: Pre-reading Task	Active Concert Passive Concert

Day 4	Block 3	Block 4	Block 5	Block 6
	Primary Tasks: Reading the Text in a Variety of Ways	Secondary Tasks: Competency Focused	Secondary Tasks: Competency Focused	Secondary Tasks: Competency Focused

Day 5	Block 7	Block 8	Block 1	Block 2...
	Secondary Tasks: Competency Focused	Most Spontaneous Task: Function Focused	Introduction to Scene 3: Pre-reading Task	Active Concert Passive Concert

*Always plan the active and passive concerts for the end of the day.

Continue the Block Pattern through Scene Twelve.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAY

The play is set on one block in an aging neighbourhood in Winnipeg. Although the short block is bordered on one end by a busy highway, the street is tree-lined and pleasant; the houses are small but for the most part neat and well-kept, with small front yards and tidy back yards which back onto an alley or back lane.

In the case of JACK and LILLIAN, these back yards are gardens. One house is empty, and has broken windows that have been boarded up. At one end of the block is a Cultural Centre, a building which was once a church and has now been turned into a place where neighbours can gather for meetings, games, and occasional social events. The upper floor is a museum, containing items that reflect the history of the neighbourhood.

There is an empty lot next to the Church/Cultural Centre which has been neglected and is overgrown with weeds and strewn with paper and bottles which have been discarded there. Across the street from the Cultural Centre is a corner grocery store, and next to that is a house which has just been sold (by an older couple, who have moved to a retirement centre) to a graphic arts company, which is planning to do some extensive restoration/renovation.

The action of the play takes place during a two-week period in August-September.

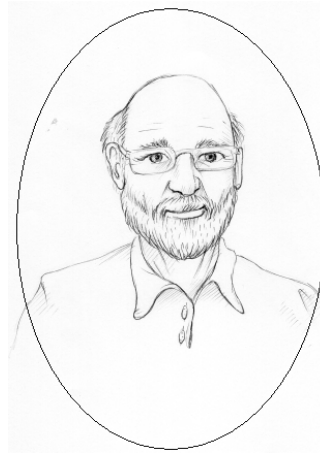


CAST OF CHARACTERS

Characters: (12 speaking parts): 6 men, 4 women, 1 young boy, 1 young girl
2 extras: police officer, fire fighter



JACK (JOHN) TANSKY: early 70s, the owner of the house in which he lives and one other on the block; divorced several years ago, crusty, in fairly good health; extremely proud of his background, his roots; grows most of his own vegetables in his garden. Has one apple tree which his mother grew from a seed brought from the old country. His relationship with his two children is cool.



SAM (SAMUEL) MILLER: early 70s, in good health although he has some pain in his knees and back. His wife died two years ago after a long illness. He and Jack have been neighbours for years, but recently the two men decided it would be cheaper and more sensible to live in one house than to try to maintain two, so Sam has sold his house to Lillian and moved in with Jack. He is milder, soft-spoken. His only son works for the government and is stationed, along with his wife and one son, in South Africa. Sam's hobby is woodworking, and he has set up his tools in the basement.

LILLIAN ANDERSON: Late 60s, recently widowed; she has moved from New Brunswick because her children and their families live in Winnipeg. She has bought Sam's house, and has chosen the neighbourhood because she can't afford a more expensive place and she sees the potential in the area. Lively, outspoken, adventuresome, she still likes to go on one Elderhostel trip a year. She has strong loyalties and friendships.



DAVID JANZEN: late 20s, works for a large company in their computer department. He is lively, outgoing, has a good sense of humour, but has not related well to older people since he left home at 18, and his parents have subsequently moved to Florida. He and his wife, Lisa, are living in their first “starter home”.



LISA JANZEN: late 20s, an accountant for a firm in Winnipeg. She is attractive, confident, busy, involved with arts groups in the city. Both she and David are University of Manitoba (U of M) grads. Her parents also live in Florida. She did a fair bit of traveling before she married David, and she and Lillian enjoy sharing experiences, begin taking day trips, then become more interested in their own neighbourhood and the heritage of their area.



SYLVIE TANSKY: 19, Jack’s granddaughter. She has just graduated from high school and has moved into Jack’s other house on the block with two male friends as housemates. She has been eager to get out of her own home; her parents divorced 9 years ago and she has a decent but cool relationship with both ensuing blended families, including a number of step-brothers and sisters; she has a warm though distant relationship with her grandfather. She is bright, interested in environmental issues, a vegetarian, is planning to attend the University of Winnipeg (U of W) to study science, possibly medicine, but is more attracted to holistic medicine at this point. She is earnest, keen, most often serious rather than silly.



MATT (MATTHEW) ANDERSON: 19, is also planning to attend the U of W, but in a general arts major as he doesn't know what he plans to do with his life. He grew up in a small town in southern Manitoba, and attended the same high school as Sylvie when his family moved to the city four years ago. He is interested in drama and music; prefers musical theatre, jazz, and semi-classical music; plays the violin. His family has moved back to their original home in the country.

TONY (ANTHONY) ARNOLD: 20, a friend who has known Sylvie since grade school. The three young people have an easy companionship, although Tony's interests appear to be quite different; in fact, he looks different, with brightly coloured, spiked hair, body piercings, and a generally dishevelled appearance. He comes from a "normal" home; his parents are both schoolteachers, he has a brother who is studying medicine and a sister who is on the honour roll at her high school, and on principle he refrains from any kind of substance abuse, although he is addicted to Coca Cola. He is looking for a job.



JOSEPH MASON: a man in his late 30s, Joseph has been unemployed since a recent company downsizing, but he is looking for work and happy that they invested in their home while he still had work. He is dependable, sincere, and uses his time now to help others with their projects. As the dilemma proceeds, he discovers new abilities and skills in himself. He is devoted to his family; although, he does not express himself very freely about this.



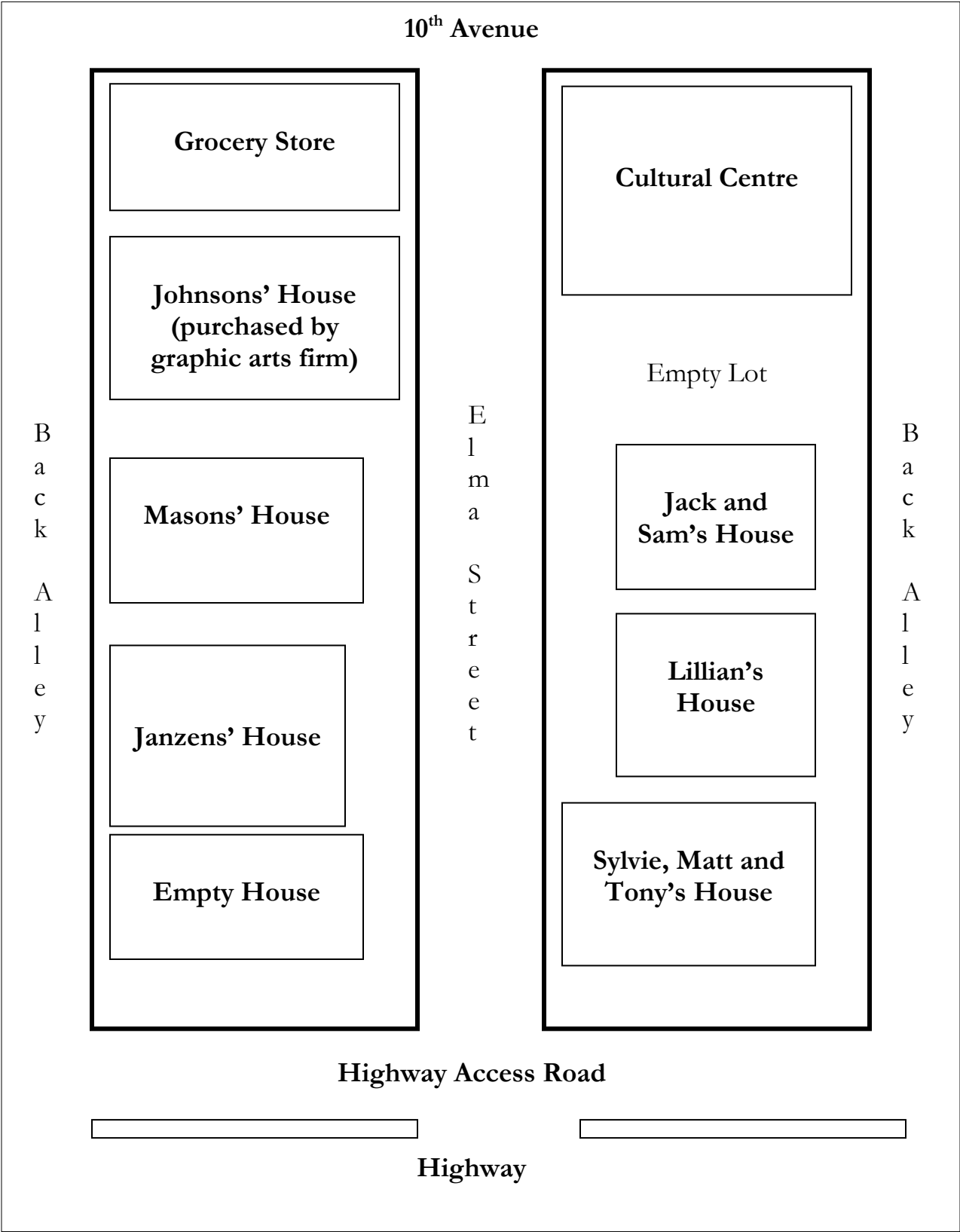
BRITTANY MASON: 7 years old, a friendly, outgoing young girl. She loves people, almost to the point of trusting them too much, and enjoys visiting her neighbours.

MANDY MASON: early 30s, Joseph's wife. She works as a nurse at the hospital in the area, and is the mother of two elementary school children, Brittany and Chris. Their extended families live far from them. They are concerned about safety and security, and wonder if they should move to another neighbourhood. Mandy is a bit nervous and protective, and frazzled with all of her responsibilities.

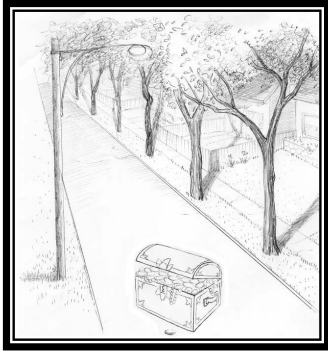


CHRIS (CHRISTOPHER) MASON: 10 years old, he is somewhat cynical and not easily impressed. He is beginning to be influenced by the boys at school in his swagger and his attitude of disdain toward girls, school, and parental authority. He learns that he enjoys spending time in Sam's workshop and begins to turn out some creative wood pieces.

ELMA STREET NEIGHBOURHOOD MAP



INTRODUCTION



Objectives:

- to help students become familiar with the characters and where they live on Elma Street

Competency Focus:

- strategic: pre-reading

Learning Style:

- kinesthetic

Grouping:

- small groups

Time: 45 minutes

Materials:

- small coloured candies (optional) e.g., Smarties®
- one die per 3-4 students, Activity Board and Answer Key per group of students

Getting to Know Them

Instructions:

1. Review the characters and their relationships. Give out a copy of the map. Read through the cast of characters.
2. Divide class into groups. Give each group one **Activity Board** and one **Answer Key**. Betting option: Give each student a box of small coloured candies. The teacher (the bank) should have one or two boxes as well.
3. The first person rolls the die. This determines the category down the left side of the **Activity Board**. (If you are playing with candies, the student then decides how many candies they want to bet.)
4. The student rolls the die again to determine which number in that row needs to be answered.
5. Betting:
 - ☞ If they answer correctly without checking the map or the cast of characters, they win double the amount of candies they bet. (These candies are given to the student out of the teacher's bank.)
 - ☞ If they answer correctly by checking the map or the cast of characters, they win the amount of candies they bet.
 - ☞ If they answer incorrectly, the amount of candies they bet is taken away from them.
6. Students may choose to roll again if they land on a question already read, or you can choose to just take away the "double reward" option for questions already read. (This would encourage review.)

Activity Board	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 The Map	Who lives between Sylvie and her grandfather?	What is next door to the cultural centre?	Who are the Janzen's neighbours?	What is across the street from the cultural centre?	Who lives right across from the Masons?	How many empty lots are there?
2 Relationships	Who are Brittany and Chris's parents?	Who is married to Joseph?	Why did Lillian move to Winnipeg?	Who enjoys visiting her neighbours?	Who is married to Lisa?	What is Sylvie's relationship to Matt and Tony?
3 The Buildings	Who is living in a 'starter' home?	Sam lived in a different house before. Which one?	Who owns the house that Sylvie and the boys live in?	Which family sold their house to a business?	Who lives beside an empty lot?	What is the name of the street?
4 The People	What is the name of your teacher?	Where did Lillian just move from?	Do Lisa and David have any children?	Two people are planning to attend university. Who are they?	Who is looking for a job?	Which family is thinking of moving to a safer neighbourhood?
5 Hobbies and Jobs	What is Sam's hobby?	What is Lisa Janzen's job?	Who is a nurse?	Who grows most of his own vegetables?	What is David's job?	Who learns to enjoy spending time in Sam's workshop?
6 Ages	Jack is in his a. 40s b. 50s c. 70s	How old is Brittany?	How old is Sylvie?	How old is Chris?	How old is Lillian?	Who is 20 years old?

Answer Key	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 The Map	Lillian	An empty lot	The Masons	The grocery store	Jack and Sam	One
2 Relationships	Mandy and Joseph	Mandy	Her family is in Winnipeg.	Brittany	David	Friends
3 The Buildings	Lisa and David Janzen	The house that Lillian lives in.	Jack	The Johnsons	Jack and Sam	Elma
4 The People		New Brunswick (Eastern Canada)	No	Sylvie and Matt	Tony and Joseph	The Masons
5 Hobbies and Jobs	Woodworking	Accountant	Mandy	Jack	Working with computers	Chris
6 Ages	c. 70s	Seven	Nineteen	Ten	Late 60's	Tony