

Kublacom Pictures
presents



Languages: English

50 minutes

"The art of the baker unfortunately is disappearing."
Louis Kardish

*"Would anybody recommend their children to go in it?
I doubt it very much. I suspect it's probably
one of the last businesses like this around."*
David Kardish

Produced by **Jane Gurr** and **Ed Kucerak**
Directed by **Ed Kucerak**
Written by **Jane Gurr**
Edited by **Kent Newson**
Director of Photography **Barry Lank**
Original Music by **Andrew Huggett**

This documentary was made possible with 100% funding
from the OMNI Television Independent Producers Initiative.

O N E O F T H E L A S T

Short Synopsis



A hectic Friday morning at the bakery



Rye bread fresh from the oven



Rye bread based on a century old recipe



Challah (egg bread) ready for delivery

From the Ukraine in the early 1900s to present-day Ottawa (Canada) *One of the Last* tells the story of a remarkable Jewish family who across four generations and through an enduring dedication to their bakery business, have made a lasting impact on an entire community.

With a surprising history that spans the Russian Revolution, Pogroms, the Depression and personal hardship, the bakery survives due to their intense commitment to family, to hard work and to the tradition of baking. In this intimate and heart-warming portrayal we meet the people at the heart of the Rideau Bakery and witness them grappling with what the future will bring.

Long Synopsis

One of the Last opens on a hectic Friday morning inside Ottawa's Rideau Bakery with images of steaming loaves of rye bread being lifted in to huge hot ovens and the wholesome sound of cornmeal scraping against wooden pallets. It is the busiest day at the bakery. All the orders have to be delivered to supermarkets, restaurants and synagogues before the sun sets and the Sabbath begins.

Started in 1930 by immigrant brothers Abie and Dovid Kardish, the Rideau Bakery is a much loved institution in the city and successive generations of faithful customers have depended on the bakery for rye bread, challah, pumpernickel and sweet treats. Unique in its longevity, the success of this family business lies in the commitment that four generations of the Kardish family have to tradition, to each other and to producing delicious baked goods.

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With its flour dusted machinery and row upon row of metal bread trays the bakery isn't pretty, but the bread sure is and according to customers the Kardish's make the tastiest rye bread ever. Their secret? A sourdough base that some say has been going for decades. And each loaf is crafted by hand to perfection by dedicated staff.

At the helm of the business today are the grandsons of Abie and Dovid, Louis Kardish and his brother David. Their sister Debbie Baylin also helps out and as the family historian we learn from Debbie that the true origins of the bakery and its recipes lie in the story of their great-grandmother, Rifka Kardish.

Rifka was from Kamianets-Podilskyi a medium-sized city in southern Ukraine. There in the early 1900s she raised twelve children and since her husband Moishe was a Hebrew teacher, the economic survival of the family was up to her. Rifka first started baking bread in her kitchen and over time built a thriving bakery business. On a small cobbled street in Kamianets lined with old stone buildings we see the remains of her shop, still fondly remembered by an elderly citizen.

Rifka involved her kids in the bakery and passed on her skills. Even her last surviving child, Pinhey, a gentle old man who lives in Ottawa, remembers working with his mother at age four. But life was becoming increasingly difficult for Jews in Eastern Europe. With pogroms against Jews and the iron fist of Russian rule she and some of her children made the heart-wrenching decision to leave the Ukraine for a new home in Canada.



Each loaf is crafted by hand.



From L to R: Louis, Debbie & David



Pinhey Kardash remembers working in the bakery at age four.



Members of the Kardish family decide to leave Ukraine for a new home in Canada.



Issie Kardish devoted his life to the bakery.



Moe (Uncle Moe) Kardish worked in the bakery every night after school.



Although retired, Ivan Glusic still helps out on busy Friday mornings.



Annie Brozovsky (Kardish) remembers living above the bakery in the early 1930's.

Rifka's remarkable story is a surprising backdrop to the present day bakery and gives us insights into this family and their devotion to the tradition of baking. Her strength and generosity of spirit echo through the generations.

As the story of the Rideau Bakery unfolds we meet many of the characters who devoted their lives to the bakery.

Issie, Louis and David's father, went in to the business after serving in WWII to help his ailing father Dovid.

Issie's brother, Uncle Moe, a man in his 80's who never wanted to be in the bakery business, was forced into working in the bakery every evening while still in school. Although he had a heart attack and retired more than ten years ago, he still works there in the early mornings to help out and pass the time of day.

Ivan and Max, hired as teenagers by the Kardish's, spent their entire working lives in the bakery. Even after he retired Ivan can still be found helping bake bread on busy Friday mornings.

And auntie Annie, Moe's sister, had a knack for talking to customers at the same time as she punched the cash. She fondly remembers living above the first bakery located on Rideau Street in the early 1930's.

The community's affection for the bakery is evident in the many customers who sing its praises and have frequented its lunch counter for many years. The bakery plays an important role in serving Ottawa's kosher observant community and at the same time it has become the pre-eminent bakery in the city.

But uncertainty hangs over all of this history and success. What will happen to the Rideau Bakery in the future? Will it continue to stay in the family? Is it possible that a fifth generation will run the bakery? As their parents before them, David and Louis are torn between wanting the bakery tradition to continue and hoping their kids will follow their own dreams and careers. Debbie's son Joel and his cousin Tyler who help out in the bakery admit that the bakery business is hard and aren't sure that they see themselves taking over.



The bakery and its famous rye bread face an uncertain future.

As the day ends the Kardish's gather for their weekly Friday night Shabbat supper. Debbie reads a letter from their father Issie written while he served in WWII. He imagines himself being there at the table with the rest of the family. As family members listen attentively to Issie's words of longing to be part of the Friday night supper we can't help but think that somehow having come this far, that the tradition of the bakery just may continue.



Kardish family at the weekly Friday night Shabbat supper.



ONE OF THE LAST

A film by Jane Gurr and Ed Kucerak

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The Subjects

Louis Kardish



Louis Kardish is the president of the Rideau Bakery. He began working part-time at the bakery in 1969 when he was 15 years old. Intent on pursuing a career in business Louis studied at the University of Ottawa and earned a Bachelor's degree in commerce. During his studies he helped out at the bakery on a part-time basis. But in 1977 when it became clear that his father, Issie, and uncles needed help running the bakery Louis heeded the call and began working there on a full-time basis. In 1993 Louis was named president of the company when his uncles transferred ownership to him, his brother David, and cousin David "The Bear".

Louis manages the Bank Street location of the bakery where the bread is made and which also includes a retail store. Louis lives in Ottawa with his wife Muriel and their daughter Rachel. When not working at the bakery Louis spends time with his family and pursues his hobby, the Japanese art of bonsai.

David Kardish



David's earliest memories of the bakery go back to when he was 10 years old when he would go to the bakery with his father Issie and watch him make the bread dough. David began working part-time in the business in his early teens on weekends, helping out and eventually driving the delivery truck.

David completed a degree in commerce and an MBA at the University of Ottawa and became a Certified General Accountant. He spent fifteen years working in industry. But his heart was always at the bakery. In 1993 when ownership of the business was passed on from his father's generation David decided to devote all of his time to the family business. He has worked at the bakery on a full-time basis ever since.

David manages the Rideau Street location of the bakery where the kosher lunch counter is located and where all of the cakes and pastries are made. David lives in Ottawa with his wife and their daughter is attending law school at Queen's University.

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Debbie Baylin (nee Kardish)

Like her brothers Louis and David, Debbie began helping out with the bakery business in support of their father Issie. She used to help him with the accounts in the 1980s. She studied at Waterloo University and obtained a degree in mathematics and computer science. After her children were grown Debbie worked in the business sector for many years but was eventually drawn in to the bakery business after her husband passed away. Debbie still looks after the accounting for the bakery and has been responsible for managing the bakery's compliance with new federal government regulations for nutritional labeling.

Debbie is the historian of the Kardish family and her research was used in the making of *One of the Last*. She conducted oral histories with many of her family members and compiled a substantial research document that outlines the family history. Debbie has two sons and her son Joel works in the bakery on weekends.

The Origins of the Rideau Bakery

From the beginning, the Rideau Bakery has been a family affair. Named for its location on Rideau Street in Ottawa the bakery has a strong 75-year history as the only local bakery supplying kosher breads, cakes and pastries. Specializing in European style rye breads, their rye and pumpernickel contain no yeast, sugar, eggs, dairy or preservatives.

The original store opened in 1930 at the corner of Rideau and Nelson Streets headed up by Dovid Kardish and his brother Abie. However, the Rideau Bakery story actually begins in the early 1900s in Kamianets Podilskyi, Ukraine (formerly part of Russia) where Rifka Kardish began selling baked goods from her home as she and her husband raised 12 children.

When her husband was killed at the age of 54 after being beaten by some men who were stealing bread, Rifka continued with the baking business in order to survive, teaching her children about the business and eventually expanding to four stores. Her son Pinhey claims that the reason they survived as Jews in those wartime days in Russia was that they were providing an essential service to the government.

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The bakery exclusively served the government for some time. But Rifka would purposely cut the ends of the bread off and secretly collect the pieces to give to the poor in the neighbourhood.

As the persecution of Jews in Russia increased, the Kardish family began to seek a more secure life in North America. Rifka's sons Dovid and Abie came to Canada in 1926 and made their way to Ottawa. After working for a couple of years in small Jewish bakeries, they decided to strike out on their own. With \$300 apiece borrowed from relatives in the states, Abie and Dovid rented "a little hole in the wall" on the corner of Rideau and Nelson Streets and the Rideau Bakery was born. Using their mother's recipes and techniques Dovid and Abie began to supply the growing city of Ottawa with rye bread and other baked goods. Rifka and her youngest children, Chaika, Goldie and Pinhey left Kamianets Podilskyi for Canada soon after, arriving in 1927.

As their bakery grew, so did their family. Dovid and his wife made sure all their children learned how to make sponges and sours for the rye and pumpernickel bread, along with the secrets of producing perfect challahs and onion pletzel.

After passing hands through two generations, the Rideau Bakery is now owned by brothers Louis and David Kardish. They are the grandchildren of Dovid Kardish and became owners in 1993. Their sister Debbie Baylin is also a key player in the operation of the bakery. After moving the bakery a couple of times over the decades, its current two locations are 384 Rideau Street and 1666 Bank Street.



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Creative Team Bios



Ed Kucerak – Director/Producer

Ed Kucerak is an Ottawa based director/producer who has been actively involved in the video and television industry for the past 21 years.

He started his career in the industry as Executive Producer with the Government of Canada. Over a 10-year period, he was the Executive Producer of numerous award-winning television programs. Highlights include the Gemini winners: *Diary of A Teenage Smoker* (documentary about teenage girls and smoking), *Ici Ados Canada* (documentary on issues of concern to youth) and *Coming of Age* (MOW about issues concerning seniors).

In 1995 he founded Kublacom Pictures to continue to pursue his goal of producing quality documentaries, television programs and corporate videos in both English and French.

His recent production credits include: producer/director of *Four Get Me Not* and *It only Hurts When I Laugh* - two comedy shorts for the Digi60 Video Festival; executive producer/producer of *The Secret Lives of Butterflies/La vie secrète des papillons* - a one-hour documentary for The Discovery Channel, TVOntario, Knowledge Network, Canadian Learning Television, SCN, TV5 and TFO; and producer/director of four seasons of *Get a Life/Grouille Toi* - a television documentary series for TVOntario, Canadian Learning Television, SCN and TFO.

Ed is passionate about using the documentary medium to tell and explore fascinating stories about his community. He is the producer/director of *One of the Last*, a one-hour documentary about a well known family owned bakery business in Ottawa for OMNI Television (Rogers Broadcasting).

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The Rideau Bakery has for a long time been part of Ed's experience of living in Ottawa. He fondly remembers his university days when he first came to Ottawa and of buying rye bread and chocolate donuts at the bakery. Much like one of the customers in the film, he can relate to the disappointment of not being able to bite into one of those donuts because they were sold out.

Along with his colleague writer/producer Jane Gurr, Ed has long thought that the story of the Rideau Bakery would make a captivating and compelling film, a story that covers over 100 years and four generations of the Kardish Family. A bakery that started in a kitchen in Eastern Russia in the early 1900s and today is the pre-eminent bakery in Ottawa and yet still holds on to the traditional way of making bread.



Jane Gurr – Pro-ducer/Writer

Jane is an independent documentary producer/writer based in Ottawa. In 2001, following a 15-year career in international development as a specialist in gender equality issues and Southern Africa, Jane decided to follow her passion for documentary film. For the past five years she has gained skills as a producer and a deeper understanding of the creative process of documentary filmmaking. Her first commissioned film *One of the Last*, co-produced with Kublacom Pictures, will be broadcast by OMNI Television during 2007.

As is often the case with new filmmakers who find access to funding to be a challenge, Jane has taken on a number of independently financed projects. This is a valuable strategy for skill development, networking and establishing a track record. A short film, *And the Journey Begins*, was broadcast on the local Ottawa Rogers station in 2002. *Bridge to Uluru* is a one-hour documentary about a group of airplane enthusiasts who flew across the Australian Outback in vintage WWII open cockpit planes to raise funds for the Royal Flying Doctors Service. Written, co-directed and shot by Jane, *Bridge to Uluru* is in post-production with completion expected in mid-2007.

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Jane is also contributing to the local filmmaking community. She is a founding member of Documentary Works, a group of independent filmmakers in Ottawa area and is on the Executive of Ottawa-Gatineau DOC, a chapter of the Documentary Organisation of Canada.

Jane was awarded a CTV Fellowship to attend the 2003 Banff Television Festival and, again with Ed Kucerak, was the recipient of a prize for the best pitch to OMNI Television at Hot Docs' Rendezvous in 2004.

Barry Lank – Director of Photography



Barry has produced, directed and shot well over fifty hours of documentary, commercial and informational programming for television. Most recent credits include directing and shooting *Innocence Under Siege*, *Women on Patrol*, *Volunteers in the Global Village* and *Mission to Kosovo: The Canadian Police Experience* for Global and Prime Television National. These documentaries were shot on location in Russia, East Timor, Vietnam, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Kosovo.

Barry directed and shot a one-hour documentary for CBC's *Passionate Eye* entitled *She's Having Our Baby* on the subject of surrogate motherhood. He is also working in partnership with Merit Motion Pictures on a documentary television series entitled *Recreating Eden* an international documentary series for Vision Television.

Barry completed his Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Winnipeg and received his education degree from the University of Manitoba. He later studied at the London School of Film in the U.K. before returning to Canada and forming Lank/Beach Productions, a Winnipeg-based production company. Barry is a member of the Canadian Society of Cinematographers.

Barry has received numerous creative awards in the past including two Gold Medals at the Houston International Film Festival, a World Medal at the New York Festival, two Silver Medals at the U.S. International Film and Video Festival in Chicago, a Cleo Award of Excellence, a Gold Quill Award at IABC in New Orleans as well as many other awards in Europe, Australia, Canada and the U.S.A.

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Kent Newson – Editor

Kent's career in the entertainment industry spans a 20-year period and includes programming for radio, producing/directing/editing documentaries, music videos and corporate advertising for television, and producing large-scale musical events.

In the past several years Kent has edited several documentaries, corporate videos and short dramatic films. In early 2007 Kent will edit a documentary entitled *Bridge to Uluru*, the story of an epic journey across the Outback in vintage WWII biplanes. He also wrote, directed and edited *A Fistful of Pasta*, a Spaghetti Western parody and *Unearthed*, a short mystery drama. Kent's editing experience also includes corporate videos for Citizen Advocacy and The Children's Aid Society. Kent's creative skills also include music composition. Kent believes choosing a variety of projects fuels his creative spark.

Andrew Huggett – Music Composer

Andrew Huggett is currently Creative Director and Music Composer for GAPC, the largest post production facility of its kind in Eastern Ontario. Andrew's professional music career began over three decades ago. He received formal training at Trinity College of Music and the Guild Hall School of Music in London England where he majored in early music performance and music composition. At the age of 17 he signed a 3-year recording contract with Beatles producer George Martin who produced three record albums that featured songs written and performed by Andrew. At this time he also started scoring short films in renaissance style for the National Film Board of Canada. For 13 years, as a performer in the early music group The Huggett Family, Andrew toured throughout Canada, Europe and the Northeastern United States. In 1984 he formed his own music production company and joined the ranks of GAPC in 1994.

One of Andrew's great strengths as a composer is his remarkable versatility. From his renaissance beginnings he has gone on to compose critically acclaimed music in almost every imaginable genre. From commissioned orchestral works to rock and roll and rap, Andrew has written it all!

His credits include well over 100 animated cartoons and children's shows including the Teddy Ruxpin series, Lynn Johnson's *For Better or For Worse*, *The Toy Castle* and Disney distributed *Toad Patrol*.

He has scored numerous television documentaries including the *Life and*

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Times of Christopher Plummer (CBC), *Keeping The Groove Alive* with Oscar Peterson (CBC), *The RCMP Great March West* (History TV) and *20th Century Gals* with Cathy Jones (CBC). His other TV credits further demonstrate his versatility and include ethnic music for an Asian cooking series, themes for the CBC Ottawa evening news and a host of shows for the specialty networks. His jingle clients include Bell Canada, Bell Mobility, Johnson and Johnson US and Molson's Breweries. He has written more jingles for more local businesses in his hometown of Ottawa than any other composer. Andrew has provided music for CD-ROMs and wrote the award winning underscore for the critically acclaimed feature film *River Rats*.

Andrew has won numerous awards at international film festivals including the Gold Award at the New York Film Festival for his music for *In Concert*. Here in Canada he is a three time Gemini nominee and 2003 winner. He composed all the music for the *Three Amigos*, an AIDS awareness campaign that just won the prestigious Golden Reel Award.



From L to R: Barry Lank (DOP), Jane Gurr (writer/producer), Ed Kucerak (director/producer) & Jerry Turchyn (sound recordist)

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