Anna, 82, Bakery-Confectionery, Galata

**1. Can you tell me a few things about yourself? For example, when and where you were born? Did you study for anything? Have you travelled or lived overseas?**

*I’m 82 years old. I was born in Galata. I didn’t study anything as my family was poor. I met my husband when I was 17 and we married a year later. This here, is the only business I’ve ever been involved in since we started it with my husband many years ago; now I manage it with my children and we have a couple of employees who come in for a few hours a day [she shows us a photo on the wall of the shop when it was newly built].*

**2. Is this the only bakery you own or do you have another one?**

*We’ve got this one here in Galata and another one just as you come into the village from the direction of Kakopetria. My son opened that one up a few years ago and he manages it. He has an employee to split the shifts hours with him. It’s the same bakery, with the same name but I am only involved in the one that we built here with my husband. Basically we produce everything here because we have all the machinery and then we send finished products to the other shop. There is no production area or kitchen at the second bakery.*

**3. Can you tell me about the history behind your business?**

*My husband and I started this business from scratch. In the olden days there weren’t many who were able to make their own bread for their families because they were working out in the fields all day. I started to make two or three loaves of bread a week for my family and other people wanted to buy bread from me. They liked my bread a lot and so I gradually began to bake bread to sell. A few years later, we opened the first bakery here in 1958 and I was making about 70 loaves of bread a week to sell in the surrounding villages. Later on, when I had children and they had grown up, they started to show an interest in the business and learnt how to make bread and pies. They still work here many hours of the day because it’s a family business. Then, about 10 years later my son opened up the other bakery to pick up customers from Kakopetria and the surrounding villages.*

**4. Would you say that your business is successful? Why? What are the factors that make it successful?**

*When Turkey invaded Cyprus and the war began in 1974, some of our soldiers would pass by here to get to the battle areas. I remember getting up with my husband at 3am to make bread to feed all the soldiers as they were passing through, so they could go off to fight strong [she describes the events obviously touched by the memories]. That’s part of our success, because after that these men recognised our contribution and the government awarded us for it [showing the award from the Cypriot Government hanging on the wall]. After 1974, we managed to attract customers from all of the surrounding villages.*

**5. Are you facing any obstacles or problems in keeping your business going?**

*During the economic crisis of 2013 many people faced problems and went through difficult times. We tried to help our customers because we had been doing well. The only difficulty we faced was that many people didn’t have money to pay and so we would give away quite a lot of bread to families who we knew for sure were in need.*

*But we had costs and these costs weren’t being covered by anyone; that was the main problem we had. There were others who tried to take advantage of the situation; they’d come to buy things and we would credit their account for them to pay later, but they never came to pay us back and especially during that period it was difficult for us too. Nonetheless, there are no other serious problems now, apart for some health problems I am suffering with now. My legs hurt and I’ve lost strength in them, so they don’t support me like they used to, and my hands are numb from years of kneading dough. I lost one of my fingers when I was cutting bread on the machine years ago [showing her damaged left hand].*

**6. So can you tell me why you’re still working and why you haven’t retired?**

*And what am I supposed to do all day? It’s my business, why should I leave and just stay at home? I come in at 4am to make the dough and bake our bread, then I have coffee with my neighbour just further down and water my flowers. I keep busy here with things to do all the time, and the place here is beautiful. I sit under that tree and watch the people go by [showing us an enormous tree that shades the entrance to the grounds of the business]. I have an income anyway, but it’s mainly to keep myself occupied.*

**7. Considering the experience that you have built up over the years but also the experience that you are going through now, would you say that you are still able to maintain the business and deal with the problems that affect it?**

*For us to be here for over 50 years and to still be growing, I would say that it means I am capable of keeping my business going. I love what I do and just think, I’m 82 years old and I still come in to make the bread dough every morning. I wouldn’t dream of stopping what I do. I’ll stop when my time comes [meaning when she dies].*