

INTERVIEW NO. 29

DATE OF INTERVIEW: 16th December, 1991.

**MRS. SHEILA NOTTLEY,
1 MEMPHIS STREET,
MT. DRUITT. NSW. 2770.**

0.36 My name is Sheila Nottley, address 1 Memphis Street, Mt. Druitt. Date of birth 12th June, 1908. Place of birth ... it would be George's Creek, but I'm not sure if that's registered in Kempsey, or ...

Oh, up Kempsey way?

Yes. Status - widow. Australian. Number of children two.

1.27 **Just to start off with I'll ask you a few background questions - family background, so what kind of work did your father do? What was his occupation?**

Farmer.

And did your mother work, or was she at home?

On the property all the time. Oh ... my mother died. I was only three months old when my mother died.

Oh, really. So who brought you up?

My Grandmother.

Oh right. And did you have any brothers or sisters?

No.

You were an only child?

Yes.

And your grandmother lived on the property?

Yes. Yes.

2.13 **So when did you first live in this area, in the Mt. Druitt area?**

We came to Eastern Creek first. About '45 I think.

Just at the end of the War?

Yes. And we rented a small dairy - a small dairy - and we had the milk-run.

Oh did you?

Yes. Supplied the Army Camp at Wallgrove and my son used to deliver the milk all round Mt. Druitt where we had the milk-run. My daughter went to school at Eastern Creek. She went to school for about three years there, then went on to High School at Penrith. My husband was very sick. He was a diabetic and he got very sick and we had to sell out. So we sold it and that's how we come to live at Mt. Druitt. We moved up to Mt. Druitt then.

And what year would then have been?

Oh, about .. let's see ... '45 we came to Eastern Creek so it would be about '48 probably.

About '48?

Either '48 or '49 it was - around that time.

3.47 Just about that time. So we'll talk about what it was like in the area at Mt. Druitt when you first moved here at that time.

Oh well it was a real ... what can I say... lightly populated those days. Now for instance this road straight opposite here - Palmerston Road, the road that goes right down there - there wasn't one house there when we came here. Because my husband had a property there - rented - and ran cattle on it for a few years.

In that street?

Yes. Where all the houses are now. Yes. This street - well Masons might have said that I might imagine - because there was only three houses on this side of the street when my daughter built here. Yes I think there was only two houses on this side, three houses when she built and I think only about one on the other side, when she built here.

It was all bush?

Oh, yes. Absolute! Absolute! And then of course the railway station was moved then, up here, which we were very angry about. It was moved to coincide with the new shopping centre, see, when they built that new shopping centre. And I can remember back to the Post Office then, was ... let's see ... I think where the hairdresser is now. I think the hairdresser's now in the place where the Post Office used to be, because I can remember that they were going to close down the Post Office here at Mt. Druitt. We weren't going to have a Post Office here, and a friend of mine and I, we stood all day - sat up the street there - and took signatures from everybody that came along. Put in a petition to restore the Post Office, and we ended up with a branch here. They've got a little Post Office here - a branch - but only for that we did it.

You had to fight for it?

Oh yes. We had to fight for it for sure! And then when they build the new railway station, to coincide with the shopping centre, there were no ... oh, to go up onto the station ... they put an overhead after we complained about it for a long while, so that you cross over to go across the street - because it was closed off you see, the street - then of course when the station was moved ... and we were a long while fighting for that, but they eventually built an overhead and you could cross over to the other side. But, oh yes, there wasn't many houses around then!

6.41 Did you have a lot of land around your house?

No. Only just an ordinary house block. It was a big block because we had the block next door to us where they've built ... oh, what do you call it - not a child minding centre, but ... where they take little babies for check-ups.

Oh, a baby clinic?

Yes. Baby clinic - I couldn't think - a baby clinic was built there then. But, yes there was no doctors around here then.

7.27 How old were your children when you first came to live in Mt. Druitt?

Oh, well Clare would have been ... well, she did three years at Eastern Creek Primary before we moved up here.

She would have been about nine?

Yes. I guess around that. She did three years there. She did two years at the Penrith High. I got sick and she had to leave to look after me for a while. And then she got a position - she wouldn't go back, she could have gone back to high school, but she didn't - and she got a position an office for a tyre firm in Penrith. She was there until she got married, and stayed on. She was there a few years after she was married too. They lived with me when they were first married, for two years, up in our old home until they built this place. Then they moved out here into it to live.

You were living in the house in Palmerston Street were you?

The Avenue.

Oh, in the Avenue. Did you build that house?

No. No.

You bought it?

Yes.

8.45 And what sort of house was it? Was it weatherboard?

Oh, yes. Ordinary fibro - not fibro - it was timber. One of the oldest houses, it would be, in Mt. Druitt.

Really?

It was. But it was quite comfortable - a very comfortable place.

And is it still standing?

Yes. No. Just recently been pulled down. It was recently sold here a while back. I've been told a doctor - I think from overseas somewhere bought the land, 'cause it's a big block of land - and bought it just a while back, and the vandals got in first and did a bit of damage. The Council I think were ... it's all pulled down now and it's just the vacant block there now.

9.34 And so you've seen a lot of change here since you've been here?

Oh terrific changes, terrific changes, yes.

And how was the landscape then - it was all just bush and paddocks around your house? You didn't have neighbours very close by?

Yes. We had neighbours up on the avenue. Oh, one side there wasn't any... there was quite a space of ground, because the Presbyterian Church - it was really only a hall, but it was always called the Presbyterian Church, where they had services there every Sunday - was quite a good distance from our house to the Church. But on the other side there were houses. A few houses built. Oh the other side of the street there was a few houses too, but after a few years it got built up before I left and came down here.

10.35 And did you have any family to help you with your children when they were little? I mean you didn't have a mother, so did you have any other family you could depend on?

No. The sister-in-law ...well the Nottley family that I married into were a big family, and one of the sister-in-laws, she was absolutely marvellous. They took Clare when I got sick.

Oh that was good.

And they had her for three years.

Really!

Till I decided then that I'd have to bring her home because we used to go up there every Sunday to see her - they were living up the North Coast - but she wouldn't come to me. She'd go to her father because he could pick her up and walk around with her, whereas I couldn't. And I got very upset and I said 'Well, she has to come home!' I said 'I'll have to bring her home' and when I got home I looked around and applied to get somebody to look after her, and on the next farm to us - below us - there was a girl about 16 years of age. A lovely girl she was too, and she was at home not doing anything - only helping her parents, you know, on the farm - and we went down and asked her if she'd be interested and that, and of course she jumped at it.

So that worked out well?

So, yes, I had her with me for a few years then until time that they got big enough to look after themselves, you know. But I certainly look back and think to myself, well they've had to do a heck of a lot, you know, when they were young, what children today would never dream of that they'd have to do. But I don't think it was any load for them to carry, really, because I've really looked back on it and I think to myself 'Well it certainly made them that they can do everything for themselves' you know.

12.36 Is your son older or younger than your daughter?

Four years older than Clare. Yes. He was 60 in June. Just retired. And my son-in-law here too, they both retired in June.

12.50 And so when you were bringing up your children what was your sort of daily routine? I suppose you did a lot of housework and cooking?

Yes. Yes. And then later on as I said, we did work with a group of us, for Blacktown Hospital and then of course we formed an Auxiliary for Mt. Druitt, and raised money so that we had a nice sum of money to hand over the day Mt. Druitt Hospital was, you know, built and opened up. And in fact I got my life membership badge from the Auxiliary here.

Did you?

Yes. Only about 18 months back.

13.39 So you were instrumental in getting the Hospital going were you?

Oh, yes. Well we have a very, very good organiser, Mrs. May Cowpe. She's really wonderful and she's the President of the Auxiliary and has been all along. We raised a lot of money for Mt. Druitt Hospital. Bought a lot of equipment for the Hospital. They're doing very, very well. And they have a roster for the gift shop. They've got a lovely gift shop now at the Hospital. My daughter does one day a month. Then we started the Senior Citizens' Club Association. Oh I don't know what year it started. It's been going for about 16 years, I guess, and it used to be down here in the old hall, down here. Oh, it's all done up now, the hall, but it wasn't that hot when we used to go there and first formed the Senior Citizens' Club. We went there for some years and then we got ... Blacktown Council - when the new shopping centre was built and the Library over there, there was a lovely little room at the back of the Library - and Blacktown Council let us have that, so we transferred over there then. So we were in there for a few years and then the Council built a beautiful building for the Association and Mt. Druitt Senior Citizens', and it is a beautiful building!

15.15 So you've been pretty active with that over the years?

Oh, yes. I was President for some years. About eight or nine years. Nobody wanted to do it in those days, you know. There wasn't very many. There was only a few of us when we started up, but they've got quite good now. A beautiful building. So we did see those changes. I've always said now that even though I'm handicapped, you know, and I can't do

anything now, but I've got something to show at least for what I have done because I've got my life membership badge from the Senior Citizens' Club, life membership badge from the Hospital Auxiliary and I got two medals from Blacktown Council in the Bicentenary Year.

Did you? What were they for?

Community work, yes.

Oh that's great.

So, you know, I look back now and I think to myself well I can't do things now ...

But you've done plenty over the years!

I have done, yes, so it doesn't worry me now so much. I get a bit - some days - a bit down to think I can't do this or I can't do that, you know. Still there's plenty worse off than I am I guess.

16.30 And were you involved with any other community organisations?

No. Not to any great extent. No. They were the main two things that I was involved in.

16.44 And did you make your children's clothes or anything like that - do sewing?

No. That's one thing I was no good at!

And did you make jams and that sort of thing?

Yes. Did a lot of cooking. Oh, yes. I used to make jams and pickles and all that sort of thing. I did quite a bit of cooking, quite a few years back, for fetes and shows and that sort of thing.

17.22 And did you grow vegetables in your garden at home?

Yes. Always. Always.

And you used those for fruit and vegetables?

Yes. Always. We used to have chooks and that too! Yes. (Laughs). When my husband was alive and that we used to have our own chooks. I don't know whether you're allowed to have them now or not in your backyard, but we used to those days.

There're not so many around. They're a bit noisy aren't they?

Yes. People object to them, the noise and that. Well I object to the dogs around here now.

Lots of dogs are there?

Oh, they're a nuisance. Bark all night, some of them. Terrible!

18.03 And I suppose people have them for security too, do they, now?

Yes. Oh yes, for sure. Yes. I mean neighbours here alongside of us have dogs. I don't know what breed they are, but they're all big dogs, and bark. I know sometimes if anyone walks up our side here you'll hear them bark, you know. Raced down here and jumps up on the fence and they fight. Although I used to like dogs years back, but I can't stand them now. I don't know, because I think of the noise somehow around here.

Did you have pet animals yourself at home in the earlier days, in the '40s and '50s?

Oh, only had dogs. My husband was mad on dogs. He used to breed them. I got sick to death of them to tell you the truth! (Laughs) But he loved the dashed things! And the horses. When we first came down we had a beautiful little show pony. We sold up everything up there mostly, but he brought two horses down, when we came down here. And my son used to ride this little pony in the show - novelty events in the show. But when you think back and think of doing the milk-run, you know, with a horse and a cart, and when we moved up here too then my husband delivered the mail around.

Oh, really?

Yes. With a horse and sulky.

In a horse and sulky from here?

Yes. (Laughs) When we first ... yes! So that's how things have changed.

Yes.

It's a pity ... I'm so terribly sorry now that I haven't any photos. But we were never ones for taking photos. You know how some people go mad - taking photos all the time! The young ones, you know, the grandchildren they're everlastingly ... and I get real annoyed! I get annoyed with them taking them! They love taking all these photos!

You didn't take any photos yourself?

No. I look back now and I think to myself 'Oh, what a pity I haven't taken them', you know.

20.16 Because you could look back and see how it's changed?

Yes you could. Yes, for sure.

20.21 And how did you feel about it when the population started to get bigger here, and the houses were being built around you?

Oh, well it was good for a time. It was quite good and, you know, more shops. We got more shops and that and it is quite a good little shopping centre here now, even though it's only small, but it's quite good. But now things have changed dramatically. I don't know ... there's a lot of shenanigans going on with the young ones. Trouble everywhere around. But you know, you can't ... when you were first here you could leave your door open night or day, you know, you didn't have to lock up. But my heavens you've got to lock up everything now! That's the way it has changed completely.

21.12 And there'd be a lot more traffic I suppose too now?

Oh yes. There used to ... oh well I guess Mason's would tell you about that, when they had the racing track over the line. Yes, well they used to have bikes. It was mostly bikes. And they'd have weekends - Saturday and Sunday - go right through the night!

Really!

Yes. They had a big racing track over the line there. Where I think Whalan school might be built there where the track ... oh it covered a fair bit of ground.

That was noisy was it?

Very noisy! Quite noisy! We never used to mind, because there wasn't the population in those days, you know. Yes well then when we first come here too they had a greyhound track. They used to have greyhound races at Plumpton, over the line from Rooty Hill, but it only lasted a few years and then that was cut out. The same for the racing track. That's when they started to build the new schools and new houses and everything all around their property.

22.36 And so what other sort of recreation was there in the area? What did your children do?

Well there'd be nothing really. Oh there was nothing. That was one thing - one thing you missed!

So how did your children entertain themselves on school holidays and that sort of thing?

Oh well, they never had very much time to entertain to tell you the truth! They used to go into Blacktown to the pictures - the flicks - or Penrith. But there was nothing around here really at all for young people those days. Not like it is now!

And so they were fairly busy just helping you at home and that sort of thing?

Yes.

23.28 And what about the shops? Did you go to the local shops yourself or did you have things delivered?

No. We did our own shopping.

Did you. Was it far to go to the shops?

No. We used to go into Blacktown quite a bit, but we did quite a bit of our shopping locally, really.

23.50 You had a car did you?

Yes. Yes.

You'd need it wouldn't you?

Definitely.

The transport services weren't very good I believe, apart from the train?

I'm trying to we didn't mind the trains those days. It was very handy. That's why I was so annoyed I suppose when the station was transferred up to where it is now, 'cause it was so close I didn't have ... it was just a short distance to walk, you know. I used to often go into Blacktown and that. I'd be able to do shopping if I wanted to and that, but of course after it was taken down to coincide with the new shopping centre, well that ended that! But I rather liked going out on the train those days, but that's how things have changed.

That was the steam train I suppose?

Yes. For a long while it was.

And I don't suppose you travel by train at all now, would you? You'd go by car anywhere that you went?

Yes.

24.59 What about finances in those days? Did you manage your household money or did your husband?

No. I did it.

Did he give you a housekeeping allowance, or ...?

Yes.

And you managed it all?

Oh yes. It was quite easy to do those days.

You didn't buy anything on credit in those days?

I never have. Look I wouldn't have those credit cards if they offered them to me. I think they're the ruination of the country. Young people, I mean, they get them you know on everlasting and they buy things and they don't realise what a debt they're building up, you know, and when it gets that high they'll wonder how, you know, they're going to get out of it!

Yes. So in those days you more or less saved for what you wanted?

Oh, yes. I never bought ... I wouldn't buy anything if I couldn't pay for it. Never, ever did.

25.59 And did you have all the modern electrical conveniences, like an electric stove and fridge and that sort of thing?

Yes. Yes.

Vacuum cleaner?

I didn't have a vacuum cleaner, no.

And did you have the sewer on when you first moved here?

Oh, no. Not for years.

So you had to go down the backyard?

Yes. That came later, much later. We were here for a long while before we got the sewer and it was put through.

26.45 So did you find washing and things like that harder? Did you - more than these days?

No. Not really. I had an electric copper. No I didn't find it difficult at all. Of course they have it much easier now with washing machines and that. But I'm funny. Lots of things I won't use. Now ... like the microwave! You know I won't use it! I won't! We've got it here and it's quite handy, and I know and I see Clare cooks things in it and that, but I wouldn't use it. You couldn't kid me to use it!

No?

And the same with the washing machine. I did have a washing machine in the end, you know, I had a washing machine. But I dreaded using it. I don't know why. Just was never used to it I suppose. It's just what you're brought up with I suppose. (Laughs)

27.44 Yes. What you get used to. And what about the churches in the area? Were there churches around here?

Yes. Well the Presbyterian Church ...

It was next door to you wasn't it?

It was next door to me, yes. I worked a lot with the Presbyterian Church. That was one thing I missed sadly when they closed it down. Certainly it was only a very small congregation, you know, that you used to come there. I suppose about 20 people.

And they closed it down because there weren't enough people did they?

Yes.

28.16 And is the building still there?

Yes, the building's still there. I don't know whether some other church ... I couldn't tell you to give the honest truth now, what they use it for now. But the house was quite good. Quite a nice building. And the church is quite in good order and ... well it's more like a hall. It wasn't like a real, proper church, you know. It was more a hall, but it was quite nice and quite a big building. And I was very sad when it closed up, because the kiddies used to go there to Sunday School, you know, and it was so handy - right alongside me - that I didn't have to depend on anybody to take me or anything, and I was very sorry when it closed down.

Did they open another more modern one somewhere or ... ?

No they haven't. You've got to go to St. Marys or to Rooty Hill.

29.18 Really. And so the Church played a much bigger role you think in the community back in the '40s and '50s than it does now?

Oh, I doubt it.

You don't think it did?

I doubt it. Yes. They've got a new building ... of course then when all the new suburbs have gone ahead over there, they have a new Presbyterian Church over there. Of course the majority of people - there are a lot more people over that way - and they go. So anyone on this side of the line ... we are supposed to go to St. Marys. We are supposed to be St. Marys Parish. But now, since I've got handicapped much more than I was, I just don't go.

30.07 And what about industry in the area? Was there very much industry around here?

Oh, none at all.

None.

None at all. You had to go away to find work, you know. Everybody ... oh, you've only got to look up at the station of a morning, if you used to go up there, say seven o'clock! Cars were lined on both sides of the street for a mile from the station, they are, cars!

There's a lot of industry here now?

I said there was a great fuss kicked up when the Steel Mill at Rooty Hill ... people were dead against it! But I didn't ...

What was that?

The Steel Mill - B.H. P. I think had built it. I don't know whether it was partly that they transferred some up here from Port Kembla. I just really forget the real thing. But a terrible lot of people were dead against it. But as far as I was concerned, I suppose it didn't concern me I suppose that much, like as with other people, but I thought it was all right. Put it this way, well surely it's going to bring work - they'd be able to get work there. A lot of people should be able to get work there, which I think they had, and I think they're doing a jolly good job since they came here. Everybody was complaining about the noise and the pollution it would cause. But I can't see that it has caused any so far, and I think the next couple of years will see a big improvement there with a lot more people working there.

31.54 If it provides jobs, that's good.

Oh, I think so. I think it improved the district a lot. But that's sadly what it needs out here, for some industries to start up, you know. But they're closing them down now. There's really nothing here at all. Nothing at all.

32.14 When you first moved here it was mostly poultry farms and that sort of thing wasn't it?

Yes. Over the line ... across the line where the big poultry farms were. There were, oh, a few this side, but not many. Not many. But, yes, young people I know ... because as I say, my daughter Heather, when she left High School, she got this position in an office at ... oh, I forget what firm it was now ... it was a tyre company.

END SIDE A

SIDE B

0.08 And when you said you worked for the Hospital Auxiliary, getting the money together for the Hospital, what happened in the years before there was a Hospital built here? If you had to go in an emergency what would happen - any sort of medical emergency?

Well, you'd have to go to Blacktown or Penrith.

That was the closest?

That was the closest yes.

0.31 And the local doctor was he close by, or weren't there any doctors?

There were no doctors here at Mt. Druitt when we first came here. A few years later a couple started and came in. But they've got a very good little medical centre up here now, and it's very busy too. Very busy.

And when your children were born, did you have them in the Blacktown area? You were living in the Blacktown area when your children were born were you?

No. Up the north coast. They were born up the north coast.

1.23 Right. And did you have much leisure time yourself? Did you have time to go on picnics or beach-side holidays?

Yes. We did, but we didn't go out a terrible lot. We'd go for a drive, say up the Blue Mountains and that sort of thing, you know, run here and there. Coming from the country, my husband was very interested and that - he used to go into Parramatta for instance to do some shopping and that - and every fortnight there were big cattle sales - North Parramatta they were held - big cattle sales, and he'd always end up at the sales yards to look at the horses and cattle and things. But I must say that was one thing, my husband would never leave me at home. He always insisted that I go with him. He didn't want to leave me at home on my own. I always used to say 'Oh, I don't want to go. What do I want to go for?' you know. And he'd say, 'Oh, you can take a book and sit in the car and read it! which I used to! (Laughs) But coming from the country he was used to that sort of thing and he loved to see the cattle and the horses. He had a miserable life after he got sick. But he got very ill. He was a diabetic.

2.58 When he wasn't well, how did he get on for health services in the area?

Well, he had to go to Blacktown.

Did he?

Yes. He had to go to Blacktown to the doctor.

That's a long way to go if you're not well!

Yes, and Parramatta Hospital when he got sick.

3.17 And after the War, when a lot of migrants came out from Europe, did you notice them settling around this area?

Oh, yes. We have a lot of migrants around this area. Yes, a lot. Some very nice people, too, amongst them, you know. I got very friendly with some of them because at the Hospital Auxiliary we used to run a bus trip once a month and I organised that for a long while, I did, and there were some of them that used to come - always come - very, very good - lovely people!

All different nationalities?

Oh, yes. All different nationalities. But to tell you the honest truth, now this street is practically full of migrants and I wouldn't know the name of one of them!

Really!

I wouldn't know the name of one of them! No. Although across the road to us, if I'm out the front - which I don't often go out the front these days, but I used to - and they'd look over or they'd wave or call over for morning tea, you know, but apart from that ...

Friendly, but you don't visit or anything.

Oh, yes.

4.31 And that's another thing that's possibly a bit different from the old days, too, because you used to visit more did you, in the old days?

Oh, yes. You knew everybody. Look, you'd walk up the street and you knew every person that came. Now I could go up the street and I wouldn't strike a person I knew! Oh, gosh yes, it's changed dramatically that way.

4.55 And so, looking back on what it was like in those days, in say the '40s and '50s, when you first came to live here - and looking at what it's like now - how do you feel about it? Do you think it's a good thing? How do you feel about the changes?

I don't know how I'd really... I guess it's a good thing. It's certainly brought a lot more people into the district, and brought a lot more money into the district, and you know, more shops and that have gone up and a lot of things have come that we wouldn't have had in those days. But I ... you know, I can't say that I'm over-pleased with it, but that's just my ... you know, I often think now that I've lived too long! (Laughs) That's how I feel!

6.11 Do you think it's very much different for young mothers bringing up children now to when you were bringing up your family?

Oh, I think it's changed dramatically! Young people today wouldn't have any idea what it was like when we were, you know, bringing our kiddies up! They've got it - heavens above - they've got it on a platter now these days. If only they realised it, but a terrible lot of people don't realise it. Heavens above, they don't believe you if you tell them what you did in the olden days! (Laughs) No doubt that it's improved marvellously, I mean, as far as health facilities and that now - which was badly needed, you know. And they could still do a lot more than they are doing now too. I think that things are in a bit of a bad way just at the moment with the hospitals and everything and the way things are. You've got waiting lists, you know, to get a bed in a hospital and so long for operations and all that sort of thing now. I just don't know where it's going to end really. Of course we're going through a very bad time, too.

And the population's still growing out this way isn't it?

I think that's where the Government's made a big mistake. I think they've brought out too many migrants. We've certainly got to have migrants to build the country up, but I think they should have cut down on the numbers that they were bringing out long ago. And I think they'll have to put a stop to it now to get this country back on its feet somehow. I can't see anything else for it! It's ... you know ... the number of people now that are on the dole is incredible! You wonder ... it's no wonder the Government's gone broke you know. They can't do this and can't do this, now, with all the number of people that they've ... Oh, I don't know. I think there'll have to be big changes before long, somehow.

8.19 And what about the feeling of space around you when you first came here and it was more like country, really?

Yes. More open. More open spaces and that. Yes, it was. I didn't like it at first when we got all crowded up sort of thing, but I don't mind it now. You get used to it. It's like everything else. You get used to it and I suppose you just think well, they're here to stay and that's all about it!

And there's nothing much you can do about it?

No. Really, no. No, you've got to go along with things. Progress! Well that's all right. I agree with it providing that the Government work things out a bit better than they're doing at the present time. I think it wants a big overhaul in the Government as to how they run the country, you know, I think the way that they've let it go down hill is not right. Not right. But so many people are struggling now, you know, especially young people too that have bought homes and now find, you know, that they just can't pay more off and that and they've had to cash in on them. I don't consider that right at all. It's pretty hard. Although, the way the wages ... we managed in the olden days. But things weren't of course ... nothing like they are today. But still and all, I really do think that if two young people are working and they work ahead and save their money, that they should be able to manage. But a terrible lot don't. They don't - they seem to want to spend their money as soon as they get it, you know. There's no thought of saving it. There should be some initiative for them to begin to have an issue to save towards. Because two people ... we didn't have the opportunity to when we was young to do that! But I really think my granddaughters and that and my son have all done very well. You know, they've got their own homes and done exceptionally well, but there are an awful lot that get into strife.

Yes, it's easy to buy beyond your means when you have the availability of credit.

Yes. That's what I say. These credit cards - I think they're the ruination of the country. I mean with young people they don't study it enough and think, you know, that they can just walk in and produce this card and they can get what they want. But they forget that the interest that they've got to pay - that's the killer. But they don't realise that.

11.29 So do you think that you had a hard life, you know, growing up before the population explosion here? Was it a harder life?

Well, yes. When you look back on it, I mean most people think, 'Oh, what a hard life!'. But we didn't consider it hard those days - in those times. Because everyone was in the same boat. And as I say, through that '30s Depression, which was a big depression - we were on the farm then and we used to send the cream to the factory to be made into butter, and fortunately we had an account with the co-operative store run by the factory, and so we got all our groceries through the co-operative store. I can remember once getting a cheque back - you'd get a cheque monthly on the farm - for three dollars - it wasn't three dollars then, say it was six pounds - but I can remember that vividly! But it's unheard of now! These days! But that's what I say... But on the farm of course it was a different thing because you had your own vegetables. You had your milk and your cream and your vegetables.

Yes. You could exist.

But that's why I say that I never considered it hard at any stage at all.

13.06 Did you every go out to work at all after you were married?

No. Not after I was married I didn't.

You were busy enough doing your home chores?

Yes.

Of course a lot of women go out to work these days to make ends meet.

Oh, yes, well they've got to! They've really got to! It's such a shame too because they've got to go and leave the little children, you know. My granddaughter - the oldest one - is married, she'd in the Police Force, and she's got a dear little boy two years of age - he just turned two on the 1st October, and she had 12 months' leave and then applied for another 12 months. She's had another 12 months off and she's been able to look after him herself. But she had to go back and finish - it was in her contract - she had to go back and do ten weeks, I think, afterwards. When she went back and did the ten weeks, they were living in Perth then. Her husband's in the Airforce and they were transferred to Perth, and of course while she was over there she didn't apply so she was able to look after the little fellow. But now when she came back to Sydney she was contracted up and did ten weeks. She was stationed at Balmain Police Station. And she got that way that she just wanted to go back, right or wrong! And now they've been transferred to Canberra, so as soon as she got down there she went and applied for a position. So she's stationed at Yass! So she's got an hour's travelling from Canberra to Yass. So she'll have to travel and she's going to put the little fellow in a child-minding centre, so she's been taking him round and inspecting them, you know. She rings us up nearly every second day. So she went to Yass to introduce herself as she'd be starting there. And the child-minding centre that she looked at she was quite keen about, and one especially because it was the one that had the less number of children. So then she took him to see how he'd take it, and he got on with the other little ones and that. He was quite taken ... he's a very intelligent little thing. He can't talk - only with his own little lingo, you know - and a few words like 'Poppy' and that sort of thing. So when she took him in to have a look round he took to all the kiddies and he was having great fun with all the toys, so they said to her 'Well why not leave him here while you go to Yass and do whatever you want to do, and pick him up this afternoon and see how he goes!' So she did that and they were thrilled with him. They said he was real good and, you know, joined in with the little ones and that. So she's very happy she's got that decided now. She'd be quite happy to do that when she goes back to work.

16.26 Yes, well there's more child-care like that now isn't there, to help the young mothers?

Oh, yes.

And when you were bringing up your children you had no choice did you?

No. We did not. You did not. No, I think they're a marvellous idea. And he's a very intelligent little fellow. He's very big for his age too. Tall. Very tall baby. And he doesn't walk - he runs! All the time! Oh, he's very, very active. Over active! You know one of those types that ...

He'll enjoy being at pre-school

Yes. He's terribly good. He gets up of a morning - he had a week with us before they moved down to Canberra. He'd get up before his mother and father and he'd come out, and Clare would be up and that and she would see to get his breakfast, and he'd have his breakfast and he's got used to going in and watching the TV for an hour. The baby .. you know ... kiddies' programs, and we got a video for him. And he'll sit there as quiet as a mouse, on his own. He'll sit there for a solid hour and not move and watch it! He's just delightful! But then he's on the go of course after they're finished. That's it. He's not interested then! By Joves he's an active kiddie! But it's a really good idea, I think, putting him in the child-minding because

he'll shoot ahead, you know, and then he'll be real good then when it is time for him to start school. It will be really good.

18.05 When your children had their babies, were you able to help them in times of need? Did they live around you?

Yes.

And so you were able to give them that help?

Yes.

18.25 Well, I think we've just about covered everything now. Thank you very much for your time.