

INTERVIEW NO. 18

DATE OF INTERVIEW: 21/11/91

MRS HEATHER CORR
151 DERBY STREET
PENRITH NSW

0.20 Heather Corr, 151 Derby Street, Penrith. My date of birth is the 10th April, 1923. Born in Penrith in a house, and I'm a widow, and Australian and I have three children.

0.44 **First of all I'll ask you some questions about your background. What sort of work did your father do? What kind of work did he do?**

He was a bootmaker, we called it then. Yes. Bootmaker and also an orchestra - he had his own orchestra.

He was a musician?

A musician.

And what about your mother? Did she work, or ...?

Only when she was very young and single. She worked for- I think it may have been Fletchers who were the original department store in Penrith - and she worked originally for them, more or less in the house and then in the shop to assist when he was going around, Mr. Fletcher, with his ... as a door-to-door salesman.

What sort of work would she have done at home? Accounts or something like that?

No, no, no. I think help with the children.

Oh, I see.

You know, help in the house.

Oh, in their house.

In their house, yes, with the children. Yes. And then Fletchers took both my aunts who were her two sisters as employees, but one was a renegade and she wouldn't be sort of held down, whereas the other ...

A free spirit!

A free spirit - she was, yes. And then this - Mrs. Gibbons, actually- worked for Fletchers for many, many years.

2.33 **And so you were born here. Your family lived here when you were born and you have lived here all your life?**

Yes. That's right.

In this house, or ...?

Oh, no. No. Actually on the way to the cemetery- we used to call it Upper Henry Street which is now Cox Avenue - my grandfather bought the original hospital site of Penrith. It was the first hospital site of Penrith and he bought that and built a house for themselves there. And

then when I was about seven I can remember he built a house next door on the same land, you know, for my mother and then built a house for her sister right next door. So we've always lived with the grandmother here, our family right beside and then my aunt right beside that.

So you've always had a nice extended family.

Family, that's right.

3.41 **And I guess your mother depended on the extended family when you were small for any help she may have needed?**

Yes. Any help, that's right. And large areas of land right beside it which are all built on now – houses - vacant land.

4.02 **So you didn't have close neighbours as a child? Apart from family.**

No. Well not as farm areas. But it was a residential area that we lived in. I can't think of the metric length, you know, but there were about three houses that we were very close friends with who lived in the street. More or less family too. You know, we all called them 'aunty' and grew up with their families, and it was very, very close.

4.35 **And what was the landscape like?**

Well, bush, bush, bush! And my grandfather had right down the backyard onions he grew and trees. I mean his onions were renowned! They were put in the show- the Sydney Show, the Royal Show - they were chosen. A specialty of my grandfather. But he had all the vegetables and all the trees and the whole area under development you know, of garden and trees.

And was that for your own use?

Yes. Only our own use. Or giving away! (Laughs). The majority was given away, you know, but the family sort of used it. He was a Foreman on the Council - Penrith Council. There were no engineers or qualified fellows in those days, and my Grandfather was the Foreman on the Council, so of course was home three or four o'clock in the afternoon and then sort of set to and -worked in the garden. Loved it ... yes.

5.48 **And then your parents lived next door to the grandparents, and so had it changed much from that when you a child - when you were growing up there?**

No. That was all the same. Yes, bush. Because we played in all the paddocks beside us. Actually it's Housing Commission who took it all over. I can't sort of recall how long that would be ... but I mean my growing up days were all with the bush and playing cricket, and we used to have bonfires in the spare paddocks up the street and that was a big deal - the Empire Day. We'd go over to the showground for a parade of floats, which weren't very polished! (Laughs). But that was Empire Day. It was quite a day. And then, of course I think that was a public holiday too, Empire Day. The 24th May?

Yes, it was.

And then we'd have the big bonfire at night, and everybody used to come. All our relatives and everybody used to come because we could have it out here, whereas in Sydney, you know ... there were areas and that ... but that was a big deal in our life.

7.06 **And did you go to school here?**

I went to school at Penrith Infants, which -was the one down there in Henry Street, and later to Penrith Primary which automatically went to Penrith High School, which is the Penrith Primary School now, the building. And that turned into Penrith High School. We had the headmaster, F.R.B - Mr. Baker - who was a fantastic headmaster! Anybody who went to school in those years would know of F.R.B. - that's what we always called him.

Why was he so special?

Very strong, very strong, but very fair. If F.R.B. said anything it -was, you know ... (laughs)...

Gospel!

Yes and you'd really ... and I think our parent sort of appreciated the strength of the man too. He was a very, very, strong headmaster.

8.04 **Did you walk to school?**

Yes. Walked to school.

You lived close by did you?

Well, it is quite close where ... like from the other side of the railway line to where this school is on the corner now, and we used to have the railway gates up at the top. They were called 'Henry Street Gates' I think, and they used to have a gatekeeper who we were friendly with because - like close friends - and actually my aunt still visits the Breezes who originally were the gatekeepers, you know, and there is one remaining person and she still has the alliance with Ella.

So that was a level crossing?

A level crossing, yes.

And I suppose that went when the electric trains came through did it?

Yes. It was there for ... like for all my growing up years, sort of thing, it was a gate because there were other people after the Breezes, when the parents died and everybody had moved away. But we were very, very, close friends with all those people that lived in the upper part of Penrith, sort of thing.

9.18 **You had a nice community spirit there?**

Yes. Very close. Something which isn't now. Although my block where I'm living here still has people who have been here for 30 and 40 years and that makes a difference too.

A long time. So you're still very friendly with your immediate neighbours.

Immediate neighbours, yes. Until they put the flats in around here somewhere. (Laughs) Which is coming! Yes. I don't know how we can sort of resist it, but we'll try.

9.54 **And so what was it like, how did you feel about walking to school and - did you have a lot of freedom in those days? There wasn't much traffic I suppose?**

No. No. You weren't allowed to go away from home. I mean, when you think of it now, I had a girlfriend who lived somewhere round here - probably one street - and I was never, ever allowed to go to Joyce's unless I was sort of taken. And we didn't have a car for many, many

years, until probably I was a teenager, I think. We had bikes, but until you were about 13 or 14, I mean, you had to be escorted right across the bushes because it would be bush all the way through to here. And so you weren't allowed - that was too far for me to go after school and play, so I'd always have to go home. But I could always remember, I had a serge tunic with ... a beautiful material. I can still feel it! For the three years of high school - a brown serge tunic and a white blouse -summer and winter, the same tunic! Everybody did!

It must have been very hot in summer!

Well, I mean we lived with it! And it was a hotter summer than what you get now and no air conditioning, and we lived with it. And no fans in the school and no carpet and no air-conditioning in the school, you know, you'd open the window and get a westerly! (Laughs) So ... different living.

11.33 **And what did you- how did your mother manage the household? Did she do her shopping locally?**

Yes, but the thing is that we always had Neale's who had the store up here. A fellow came once a week and took the order. The butcher were Woods's. The fellow would come and take the order and fruit and vegetables ... now fruit and vegetables, I can't remember. But you see we probably didn't have to buy that much because of the great big area we had with my grandfather sort of developing fruit and vegies there. We lived with the vegetables that came out of the garden. New potatoes! Oh, I've never tasted anything like it since! (Laughs). You know - always had new potatoes! It was ridiculous really. But. no ... and they'd deliver, you know, they'd come round and take the order. My mother very rarely went out, you know. She lived in the house and washed and ironed and cooked, and cooked, and cooked.

Made all her own preserves and things like that?

Yes. Everything!

12.44 **And did she sew too? Make all the clothes?**

Yes. And sew, and made clothes. Especially during the Depression. I can remember, you know, we used to have cut-down things. I mean Mum has always sort of made things out of men's trousers for the boys and that sort of thing.

You were one of how many children?

Four. Two boys and two girls. I was the eldest. I had to make the breaks everywhere. (Laughs)

13.16 **And did you go to high school at Penrith too?**

I went to High School, but of course it only went to third year, to the Intermediate Level in those days, and then you had to travel to Parramatta. Well, very few of us ... I can't remember very many of our third years who travelled to Parramatta to High School, and yet my father grew up in St. Marys and went to St. Marys School and he went to High School in Parramatta so maybe there wasn't a High School.

No, I think there wasn't. Not in St. Marys.

No, well he travelled to Parramatta High School.

I think there was one here, but I'm not sure. Maybe not then.

No, I should ask this fellow that I know who grew up with Dad and is still living. Because it's rather interesting when you think way, way back in those years that they may have travelled, whereas we ... you really were cut off in that degree because ... and yet at 14 years of age I left with the Intermediate and I travelled to Sydney to comptometer college. So, I mean, I was only about 14 and a half or something when I started travelling to Sydney on my own. Yes. And then I got a job at Malley's out at - 'cause they'd get you a job from the comptometer school, in Martin Place it was - and they got me a job at Malley's which was fabulous, out at McEvoy Street, Redfern, and I used to travel from Penrith to there, working Saturday mornings and I was 15. I must have been 15 and a half or something when I did that.

So that would have been sort of early '40s?

No that'd be late '30s, yes, because I worked at the bank for nine years until I was married, and that was '48 when I left.

15.36 So you were married in '48 were you?

1948.

So, did you move into your own house when you were married?

No. My grandfather divided ... well, it was just post-War and my grandfather ... in those days everybody said you had to wait. You know, you'd wait because things were going to alter after the War. Things were going to alter. You couldn't buy tiles, you couldn't buy wood, you couldn't get anything to build a house, and my grandparents had a large house. So they divided it and made it into a flat for me prior to our wedding, which was marvellous when I think about it now, 'cause it was a bedroom and a side verandah and a lounge room and a great big dining room which they put a little kitchenette in, and a bathroom. Everything self-contained, you know. And we lived there and bought a block of land and everybody was waiting - everybody, I think, in those days - for something to happen because everything had been altered so much with the War. And we finally decided to build. I can remember we paid a hundred and eighty pounds for a block of land which runs into this place in Lethbridge Street, and we started to build four years on from when we were married. And my husband had to go down to the wharves to pick up and load the tiles onto a truck. That was the only way we could get tiles for the roof, and they were Indian tiles. They're still there on the house over there. That's the only way you could get tiles. This house was built the same time - about 12 months before. The tiles in the bathroom, you had no choice of colour. What came in you took, and they were pink - and maroon as a contrast, so that wasn't too bad. Different things - the floor boards were Baltic pine is it? I know they were different floor boards and they were narrow - little tiny floor boards. You sort of had to put up with what you got. And we bought our fridge which came out from England, and in 1948 - that's right just before our wedding - my husband worked for the Council here and he bought a fridge which was a 'Rightemp' in 1947 it would have been, and then we put it into the flat and starting using it.

A Rightemp?

A Rightemp fridge. It was faulty in the first couple of months. They gave us a new motor and it's still downstairs and it's the best fridge - never paid a penny!

It still works?

It's still going downstairs! And the drinks are colder - ice-cold! Yes, and that's since 1948.

18.54 And did your mother have a fridge in her house too?

An ice-chest - I can remember the 'Ice-o' coming, you know, he used to come with ... I've seen them with claws but I mean, we didn't, we had it with a chaff bag or something that he used to come and load into the top of the ice chest.

But I think now when they show you ice being delivered it's always on a claw thing that holds it.

That's right.

Yes. Well it was always a chaff bag I can remember coming and dropping in, you know... So we only ever had an ice-chest when I was little.

19.32 And when you were little did your mother have other electrical appliances like vacuum cleaners and that sort of thing?

That's what I can't remember, but I don't think so. I can't remember seeing a vacuum cleaner. 'Cause I think it was mats more than carpet, you know, we didn't have carpet from what I can remember. And we had my grandmother ... see we must have lived there until I was about eight with my grandparents. That's why the house was so big and it was a scrubbed - I can always remember, and they do it these days, you know, for when they're showing you history - scrubbing the oak table. Oak table? Pine table, or something. Yes, well the pine table, that was in what in those days was well - the kitchen and laundry. The laundry was outside, and the kitchen was a tiny little kitchen with a fuel stove in the corner. How they ever survived in cooking I don't know! But I mean it was always on a Sunday! You had to have your baked dinner! I mean Sunday dinner and you always had all the relatives and friends that would come and this great big scrubbed table! That's how she'd serve it in there on the scrubbed table, which was dipped and worn, but had lovely...oh, a flangey sort of an edge - I can still see that - on the table. That's the kitchen or kitchenette or whatever you'd call it and it had a fire, a big fire there beside it, and my Grandfather used to sit and make toffees until the day he died. He'd sit there and we'd always have wound toffees made on this fire in this big room that was beside the little tiny kitchen. I don't know what we used ... you'd probably call it a breakfast room, I guess. But it was too big for a breakfast room - and this great big table - because the dining room was adjoining that. So ... but my Grandmother, you know, she'd be there - and I can still see her - because she was an absolute delight! With the perspiration and the fuel stove, you know! Oh, dear.... memories! (Laughs)

22.11 **Does that house still stand?**

No. That was pulled down. We sold it or my two aunts sold it and it was there until about six years ago I think, and they bought it and pulled it down and built flats and there's about 12 flats on it now - Housing Commission flats - two-storey flats. And we had an old well out the back which was the original well from the hospital- the first hospital - and nobody would take any notice of me when I tried to tell them, you know, that that well had history - to me - and we used to put - well not that I can ever remember much about drink, but probably Christmas time - the beer bottles or your ginger-beer down and tie them down and put them in the well. That was the way to keep things cold!

So the well's gone too has it?

Well they've built over the well or done something, I mean...

23.20 How did you feel about it when the place was demolished?

Well, sad. Because it was called 'Duldorence' which is Dulcie, Dorrie and Florence, and anybody who knew my family always said 'Oh, such memories with "Duldorence"! I've got

an elderly - oh it'd be a third cousin removed or something, you know - and I often sort of get a note from her and she'll always say 'Such memories of "Duldorence"! She even composed a poem when we had a family get-together - about Duldorence because they used to always ... we lived in the country here and of course they lived in Balmain, this particular family. So it was fantastic to come up here right out into the country for the day. But Duldorence was ... it's a shame it was pulled down.

And we tried to trace to get the name - you know how they used to have the names on the places? - and couldn't ever find it.

What a shame.

You know, you think of things too late! (Laughs) This is it.

24032 **Yes. So when you were married and you built your own house eventually, you had all mod. cons.? The fridge and I suppose electric toasters and so forth?**

Yes. Electric ... everything. Yes I can't ever remember doing some scrubbing or anything.

24.49 **What about the bathroom? That was inside wasn't it in your house?**

Yes. Internal. Yes.

Was it in your parents' home? Had that been...?

No. The one that ... actually George Hudson - I don't know whether this " 'udson with an H" is an off-shoot - but George Hudson houses ... what would Mums have been? It's still standing there. And it was a standard house that you bought and see my Grandfather build it because George Hudson would deliver.

Ready-cut?

The ready-cut. And there's numerous houses, you know. I mean our standard phrase is, when you go past or drive past something, 'Oh that's a Hudson House!' and it's just incredible that people these days don't know about it and I'd love to know whether " 'udson with an H" is the George Hudson that used to be. It could be because it's timber. But anyhow, we had the toilet ... 'cause, oh, to have a toilet inside! I can remember when my aunt built her house - Mrs Gibbons - she was putting a toilet inside. Well you just didn't know how you were going to have a toilet inside!

A luxury?

No it wasn't luxury! It just wasn't, you know ... health-wise! To have a toilet inside! Because our place was built with a bathroom - an internal bathroom - and then you went down the back stairs to the toilet which was down...

This was the house you built?

This was the house my Grandfather build for my parents. And they had the laundry downstairs - down the steps, it's not downstairs, about seven steps - the laundry and the outside toilet build beside that, all under a little awning so you didn't have to go outside. And we built a toilet, when we built the house over here in 1940 - '50 it would be, '51 say - and we still put the bathroom inside and you came out through the kitchen and the toilet was outside. So it's strange how you grow up with that idea. (Laughs).

But you would have had the sewer then?

Yes. Sewered, yes. That's right. Oh we used to have the ... my grandparent's house you used to walk right down and of course it was lines either side with November Lillies in November - it was absolutely gorgeous - and it always had flowers down the pathway right down the back to the toot. And who used we call him? Sam, Sam the sanitary man! And Mr. McDougal! Mr. McDougal - I think it's the name to go with it! (Laughs). Mr. McDougal was the sanitary man, yes. Quite a few jokes about that too, but still...

28.03 **Yes I'll bet! And what about when you had your children? Oh did you work when you were first married?**

No. No, I was married in 1948 and I wasn't going back to work. My husband worked here on the Council, and in 1949 I found that I wasn't falling pregnant and I sort of had some tests and that and found that I couldn't have any children. But my husband still wouldn't you know, there was no working. But my aunt had the tuckshop at the High School when the High School first opened, which would probably be about 1950-something – the new High School, this is, The Towers - and I went and worked with her for quite a while in between time waiting to fall pregnant and then we adopted two children. And then I had a child (laughs) about ... oh, I can't think what the difference between Deb and Barb is ... 33 and nearly 31 ... so it came in beautifully. But James is the eldest one and Debbie and then Barbara.

So you adopted them as babies did you?

One was 12 days old and one was ten days old. Yes. After about nine years of waiting, I think it was.

And what was the adoption process like in those days? Was it difficult?

Well, it was hard. It took quite a while. Once the doctor said that I, you know, because you had to have the medical thing that there was something wrong with you. And after going for tests to Sydney - it was the most horrific thing to go through to prove you couldn't have children, for both the male and the female- and we sort of applied through the Child Welfare - I think that's what we used to call it - and they called us in once after about four years or something. You more or less had everything ready, you had clothes and everything. And when the girl interviewed us she said 'Oh, no, you couldn't have this child', you know 'He's fair and he's redhead and the background of the family' you know, the background of the family, you know the two that had conceived this child.... So we came back disappointed. And anyhow then we called in again another day, I think it was about nine years, probably not that long from when our application went in, but it was a long time in those days. And we were called in and interviewed and then they brought the girl who had seen the mother and the babe and they agreed that it would be all right and off we went out to Crown Street, I think it was. And anyhow it was, you know ... my family now say that he was the ugliest baby they'd ever seen and James - we picked him up and brought it home and he was under nourished, under-fed and everything. And from the day we brought him home he was sort of more or less a chosen child, and that's how they've grown up, as being chosen. And we were assured in those days that there'd be no way that anybody could ever sort of find out who they were, what they were, and of course look what's happened now! I've written to Nick Greiner and everywhere and my daughter's written. You feel threatened. I don't, but they do. They both feel threatened now, these days, 'cause they wouldn't put a...

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0.44 ... anyhow that they put a veto on. They wouldn't pay the 50 dollars because they both agreed, 'cause we discussed it, - and their wives and husbands respectively - and they agreed that they can still find out your name and address and a car could be sitting out the front, or you know, and that person can sit there for a week and sort of assess what you're doing and you've got no comeback. So, they've left it open, but they've never, ever had any approach. But not like in the old days. I mean, that's how we've brought them up to think, that this is their home, and that's how they think. My daughter's been very, very vocal. (Laughs). Written letters, rung up radio stations and everything else to try and bring forward ... but in those days you were assured that there would be no records that they could get and here it is that you can.

1.49 And what about with the third child? Did you have her at the local hospital?

The third child. Yes. Up here in Nepean Hospital. I had her there. Quite a shock to everybody! (Laughs) By this time my husband was Town Clerk here in Penrith and of course quite well known and, you know, out of the blue I think we went away on a conference once and I sort of kept everything quiet and everyone got the shock of their lives. 'Cause I think I was about four months pregnant at that stage and concealed it very well. (Laughs). But the strange thing is that when we travel or go in cars, when they were children, going along and one of them would say "Tell me about how you chose me?" you know. Of course I always said 'Deb, you just sat up at ten days old and said "Hi Mum, Hi Dad" 'cause that's how she is. And then Barbara the third one, would start and cry and say "I wish I'd been adopted" you know. And I thought it was just the way they'd been made special children really. They still feel special!

3.09 Did you plan your third child?

No. No, that was just an accident. And that was the only one.

What about the next one? Didn't you say you had four children?

No three. I was one of four myself.

Oh, I'm sorry, yes that's right.

Yes. There was never another one. It was rather late in life too, and it was rather good that I'd had the other two. And I think I was 38, nearly 39 - I was 39 when I had her. So it was rather good. It would have been terrible to have gone on and then at 39 had your first child.

And so were the health services good then when you were bringing up children?

Oh I reckon health was never better than in those days. I mean you knew where you were with your money, what you were doing, and you know - not like today! You just don't know where you are with it really. And I really feel in those days that's how ... if you could afford to you paid for it and if you sort of had your health fund. HCF I think we might have been in from the day we were married and you paid that every week and you knew what that was and I don't think ... it very rarely went up as far as I can remember. It just automatically came out of your salary. And it covered you for what you wanted. If you couldn't afford to, I think the facilities were there for you anyway.

4.41 **And you had - for an emergency or anything like that - you had local doctors and good services?**

Yes. Good services. You had to go to Sydney for specialists or something like that in those days. I know Barbara the last baby ... I was in a car accident when she was about seven

months I think. I was seven months' pregnant and I caught my leg with the lurch of the car - I was in the back seat - underneath, and it's strange that she has, or had, a scar on her leg exactly where I was caught. Peculiar! And of course being a girl they recommended, you know, that I could have something done to it - the local doctor. So I was sent to a specialist in Sydney. Well I had to take that child every week in to Sydney. There was a health care there, like a babies' facility in the Mark Foys - Hyde Park there it was, just opposite Mark Foys - and I'd have to get a taxi from the railway and get there and either go to the specialist accordingly to the time and then go in and feed her and, you know, do all those sort of things. So that's what you had to do for specialists or hospital or anything in Sydney in those days.

6.06 Of course now you'd have plenty of specialists locally would you?

There coming out of our ears! (Laughs). You know, I think there's ... you didn't have a gynaecologist. You just had your ordinary GP for delivery or anything like that. I think I had a little bit of problems when I was having Barbara and we had the other doctor in the town and the fellow assisting my doctor, but he wasn't a specialist. (Laughs). But that's all you had because there was no specialist around to come. So ... and I think everybody seemed to survive, you know.

6.48 And did your children go to the same school that you went to, or...?

They did initially, and then James ... in High School, 'cause in those days, just before James was about to start to start High School they went on strike up here in Penrith High and there was all this dissention, so my husband – he put him into King's because in those days you could just go and go into a private school overnight.

Would this have been the '50s or ... ?

James was born in 1955, yes so it would be the '60s. And Communism ... I can remember. The talk was that the fellow who was organising the strikes was a Communist. It's strange, you know, but I know there was a lot of dissention about the High School and the strikes and teachers and that in those days. So he went to King's School and then Debbie went to Tara, which is the equivalent Church of England Girls' School at Parramatta. Barbara went there too.

8.08 And they travelled by train?

Train yes . And then you used to have train strikes by the dozen and you'd have to drive, but there were a few others around in the area that were going there, so you'd sort of pack up and one would take it in turns. One would go down and one would pick them up. But that was a bit of a grind, really. And schooling was supposed to - unless you were very good, if you were in the top percentage sort of thing - the schooling was supposed to be excellent. But if you were down a little with your brain power it wasn't the best, so that's why we sort of chose that. But anyway, whether it was for the good or the bad - my son reckons it wasn't - it was for the worst! (Laughs).

Really!

Yes. He didn't like it!

9.05 He didn't board either?

No, no boarders. It's too expensive I think, in those days, let alone in these days! Yes, so ...

9.17 And what did they do in their school holidays for recreation?

Well, we used to go away for about a month. 'cause, yes I think a month's holiday was in then wasn't it? Yes about a month's holiday. We'd go away for about a month. Well, what did Debbie do? Well they did ballet, the girls. They used to go to ballet. James wasn't - well he used to play soccer and that - but never very keen on sport. He liked reading and nature. And that's how he is today. He won't cut any tree down here unless ... I have to cut the trees down. You know, he came over yesterday and nothing to effect nature in any way. That's why they came back from Canada. It was because of the pollution and that and he said this is about the same now, here. They're living up in Kurrajong, and they reckon that's about the clearest place or cleanest place they can get. I feel the pollution. I said 'You don't see the sky like it used to be.' You know, as clear. Very rarely do you see a very clear sky out here.

10.38 Really. And the river is probably pretty polluted too now?

Well I don't know. We used to swim in the river when we were kids. And that's what we used to do in the summer. You'd walk down to the river if your parents would go, you know, or walk there during the weekend we'd walk down until Dad got a car. And then we used to go out to Castlereagh to the Green Cat and Jackson's Lane swimming.

What's the Green Cat?

Well it was a little ... actually it's under ... they're digging gravel and that out of it now. I haven't been out there for, you know, about 30 years. 'Cause we used to take our children there. That's where we used to go too, is out to Bent's Basin, take them out there.

Oh, near Wallacia?

And Norton's Basin you used to be able to get into and then they ... I have never ... I walked down once. But you walk right down to the bottom and you've got this crystal clear pool down the bottom. And my children have taken their friends there until it was closed and bought privately. But it was absolutely glorious.

Yes. I've been to Bent's Basin. That's still fairly untouched.

Yes. That's not bad - I mean you can just drive in there. But this - you'd park and the top and Mum would sort of take the banana chair and I had to take all the picnic and everything, and all their friends from Kings and Tara, that's where we used to take them. And I've had phone calls and that from people asking me where was it and that, because the kids must have gone back. And you'd walk down and there was a rope there to swing out over the river and they'd take the dog down and ... like my husband would go with them and they'd spend the day or half a day down there and then come back up. Untouched! But now it's private so you can't get in there.

12.40 And how did you feel about the Castlereagh area being dug up?

Well, it looks awful at the moment. But my husband, when he was alive, he sort of did quite a bit of investigation about the Lakes area. Only it's a bit slow for me - I don't think I'm going to see it! But it could be, you know, a beautiful tourist resort later, but at the moment ... oh, Castlereagh was beautiful. Trees and cattle and everything. But now it's all sort of dug up. I don't know that there are any farms out there now really.

And that started happening after the War did it?

Oh, yes. Yes. None of that happened, you know ... oh, we went out there with the children, so it wouldn't have happened until the last ten or twenty ... Oh, dear time! My husband's been

dead 16 years! It would be about 20 odd to 30 years since that sort of started developing with the gravel.

13.56 What about your daily routine in the house when your children were growing up - when they were at school?

Well I used to sew a lot and of course always with school fetes I always seemed to be sewing until midnight or one o'clock in the morning for school fetes, especially when they were up here at the primary school. I can remember that. And then I used to go and spend one day a month and King's tuckshop and one day a month at Tara's tuckshop. And then you had meetings, you know, and I belonged to ... my husband was a returned man and with the RSL down here. They were in a little weather drill hall where the Q-Theatre ... drill hall beside the TAFE College. I don't know what it is now. We called it the drill hall. We used to have Bingo - not Bingo - Housie to raise money for the Returned Soldiers. That was the Returned Soldiers meeting there. They did everything in the drill hall which would have been owned by the Army, I guess. That's why it was called the drill hall. Until they got some money and then they bought a house where the RSL is now, and so he was a President of that for a little while, but actively, and his father before him and his mother had all been active with the Returned Soldiers group as it was. And I finished up as the Secretary, I think, of the Women's Auxiliary of the RSL because I went to a presentation to my mother-in-law and ... (Laughs)

You got caught!

I'd never been to a meeting and I was just nominated as Secretary - they couldn't get one - so I finished up ... And ever since I've belonged to them until I had the family, and then they started a Legacy group and I belonged to Legacy, and my husband went into Rotary and I went into Inner Wheel, so you know, meetings ...

You were very involved!

Involved, and of course with Harold in the Council, there was quite a bit of meetings and stuff or openings or stuff like that.'

What was his position in the Council?

He was Town Clerk.

Oh, right. So you had a lot of functions to attend?

Functions and that you sort of went to. But mainly I sewed at home or knitted and ... oh, you know ... and three children! I'd forgotten how much washing and ironing and cooking ... I mean, 'cause cooking doesn't sort of come into my life now, but in those days you used to ... well you cooked! You didn't have freezers. I don't think we ever had a freezer until late, probably until the children were grown up a bit and I always had - not until I moved into this house- did I have an ordinary washing machine! I had a boiler over there. I was quite happy with it.

17.18 Did you. Really. A copper you mean do you?

Well it was an electric copper, yes. And my mother and grandmother they had the old coppers where you fuelled underneath and you got up at four o'clock in the morning and stoked them up and kept them stoked. But I had the electric copper until we moved here in 19 ... well, about 22 years ago, so I lived with the electric copper.

17.57 Right up until you moved here.

Yes, that's right. So I was happy - and we came here and there was a washing machine, an old one, and I survived with that until you know, about 15 years ago I suppose.

18.16 And what about finances - household finances? Who managed them? You or your husband?

I managed them because my husband never, ever carries money. And it was rather good too because he maintained that even when we bought, you know, we bought property - later, very later - that he didn't have time to sort of devote to it, so he sort of organised me that if we bought something I had to sort of run it or control it and it's proven that you know, it was necessary because ...

Renting property?

Renting, yes. Because if he'd died and I didn't have any ... I wouldn't have had an idea of what to do money-wise because I sort of worked in a bank in the housing department, but to ask me anything about finances, you know, I knew about interest rates - they were four and a quarter percent when I worked in the bank! As I said, far different ... although it's coming down now isn't it!

19.32 So did he give you his pay packet more or less and you managed it?

Yes. That's right. And I controlled it. When we were away overseas in 1973 he was thrilled - he went into a supermarket you know, overseas! He'd never had time here! He never went in to get butter or bread or anything like that. Because I think the men these days do. In those days he wouldn't have known what a pound of butter was or anything like that. So, it was a different life style.

20.06 So you were actually doing lots of jobs weren't you? You were managing the household finances and providing clothing and doing lots of other things?

Yes. That's right. I used to sew. They had all home-made clothes, no matter what, except school uniforms or something like that. James even came home from King's and wanted to know if I could make some of these board shorts, 'cause they used to have floral board shorts that I used to make him. You, know, and of course making them you'd get mar more and the boys at Kings wanted to know, you know, would his mother sell them, because they were bright florals. 'Cause he's always been, you know, - loved clothes - loved clothes!

21.00 What about the churches in the area? Did the churches play a big role in the social life of your family?

Yes. When I was growing up they did, because we had a Fellowship, and I mean I still have friends who ... we were in the Church of England Fellowship together, and Sunday School, and I've still got quite a few friends who grew up with me in Sunday School and Fellowship. And we had a terrific time in Fellowship growing up. I do belong to the Church now - the Church of England - but I don't belong to any of their organisations, you know, now. I felt that the Church did in those days make a much bigger contribution socially. See the Catholics, I think, have the idea because my sister-in-law is a Catholic and my nephews and nieces. They've got four children, and they have such a bond with their church friends. It seems to be the basis of the family life, the Catholic Church.

Still today?

Still today. Over what we were like, you know.

22.31 **And when your children were growing up did they go to church functions as well?**

No, only school functions, but ... see, my mother never, ever went to church. Well I can't even remember my mother going to church, but I'd say my mother was one of the most religious people. She had 2CH on singing the hymns all day and all night - I think it was 2CH that used to have the hymns! And we were all brought up and confirmed and went to Sunday School. And Sunday School was the be all and end all. Nine o'clock or nine-thirty – and then you could do what you wanted to. We could go to the beach or you could go ... we didn't go to the beach in those days but we could go anywhere, you know, we wanted to afterwards - unless we had a particular aunt who was a very staunch Methodist coming for lunch - and we weren't allowed to knit or sew or do anything like that. That was the difference!

23.34 **On the Sunday?**

On the Sunday. Yes. If Auntie Ida was coming - who wasn't an aunt but a friend that had worked with my mother - and she was a very staunch Methodist. I've told her - I met her this week in Penrith. She didn't live in Penrith in those days, but she moved up here when she retired. And I said to her 'We were terrified!' We weren't allowed to touch a needle or anything on the Sunday that Auntie Ida came to visit! Just the different beliefs.

And you respected other people's beliefs too.

Well you did. And you had respect of your parents which you haven't got ... I mean my children, I think, respect me. But if I was to say to my son, you know, that black was white, he'd defy me and, you know, argue accordingly. But if my mother or my father said black was white that was their word., you know. Whatever Mum and Dad said, I'd believe it. It wasn't that I was forced to believe it! But I just had all that thought ... you know, and my grandparents, no matter what they said, you know ...

You never questioned them?

Never questioned, never queried as to what they did or why they did it.

Yes that's one of the things that's changed hasn't it with the modern generation?

Vastly! Yes, that's right.

Maybe that's a good thing? They do think for themselves a bit more?

Well it all depends on the type of child. That's the whole thing. I really feel that it all depends ... and it depends on the background and how they've been brought up too as to how they question that parent really. I know I am questioned!

25.26 **The roads and the transport here when you were growing up have they changed markedly from when your children were growing up?**

Yes. Well I don't know. I mean, when I was travelling to Sydney to work and that'd be in the late '30s wouldn't it yes 23, 33, yes it would be late '30s early '40s - and I used to catch a six past seven train to get into town because I hated being late. It was something in my nature - I hated being late. And we used to have a 'Chips' which we called the 'Chips' train - there was the 'Fish and 'Chips', I think they still call them, but none of them come from Penrith. And you never could depend that you would get into the bank by nine o'clock. So, I used to get up and walk to Kingswood, because we were halfway between Penrith and Kingswood, and I'd walk. My brother did the same - he worked for an insurance company in town, and we'd catch the six past seven train to Sydney so that we got there on time, and then we would come home

at night and we'd catch the Chips home, and I knocked off early. I used to knock off ... my hours were 4.30 in the afternoon. So I'd go up and keep the compartment for all my girlfriends to catch the Chips home at night and admittedly that was half an hour I was probably sitting in the train that I probably could have been getting a slow. But it wouldn't get in before the Chips. And then you'd walk - at twenty past six it used to get into Penrith - and you'd walk from there home and you'd have your dinner. Well now I think it's the same principle today. I mean, if you catch the Chips I reckon that you still wouldn't get into town where I had to go, to the top of Martin Place, except that you've got the internal railway now. Because I used to get to Central and catch a bus ... or did we ... no. Then I'd catch Wynyard in the afternoon or St. James. But to me, you know, the train travelling, until they bring in these better trains which they ...

It's not much different!

It's not much different really.

27 .54 What about buses and bus services?

Well I never ever used buses and I don't use them here now, because I'm so handy to the town. But people who catch ... I know the lady opposite catches the bus and she said it's a much better service now. But I don't think we had buses in Penrith in those days, I don't think there were buses.

28.16 And were the roads sealed roads?

Yes. What I can remember. They were sealed that I used to go to. Around here - the inner centre. But I mean there were ... well I know down to Castlereagh - it was a rough road to go out to Castlereagh and Dad had this Willies car. It was the first car we ever had. No glassed in or anything like that. Mica - you know, mica windows that you used to plug in to the doors and remove them in the hot weather. Oh, dear! (Laughs) But I know going out to Castlereagh she was a bumpy road out there. My grandparents - Dad's parents - lived in Katoomba and we used to go up the mountains to them like regularly of a Sunday, and it'd be a foggy day or a foggy night coming back and the two elder ones - one either side - that's how we guided Dad down the mountain at night. If we'd left you know, and it was foggy and we'd have our heads out either side to tell Dad!

It would be a hair - raising trip in those days!

Yes, while the other two slept! Yes, it was a hair-raising - until they started and they brought in a yellow line. And why nobody thought of it - isn't it strange? You know, a yellow line down the centre and we used to watch the yellow line.

At least you'd know which side to keep to!

To keep to. Yes. That's right.

29.57 And what did you yourself do for recreation when your children were growing up or when they were a bit older?

I never played sport. I used to play basketball and school and vigoro which is like hockey, a little, but after that I didn't because I used to play ... I was taught the piano from the convent, and elocution - all the arts! - and dancing, and I mean that took up a fair amount of time. And I used to travel to Auburn to an elocution teacher, Norman Kennerdale, later in my school life. But, I mean, I must have been a school child and travelling on the train to Auburn on a Friday night for lessons.

30.59 **And no worries about security or anything like that?**

No. No. I had somebody meet me at Kingswood off the train, because my cousin keeps telling me you know, when he used to visit up here: "I was always sent with the bike to Kingswood station when we used to stay at Nan's you know to pick you up from your elocution lesson!" But they used to have eisteddfods here and that's how I got into going to this teacher. He was an examiner and he came up and wanted me to go to him, so my parent, you know, sent me there.

31.38 **And when you were married did you and your husband go out to the pictures or go dancing or anything like that?**

Yes. Well we used to go to balls.

Oh, with the Council?

Yes. But prior to being married I used to - War time - Dad played at the Castlereagh Hall out here at Castlereagh. And so - I don't know what night it was, Friday or Saturday night it would have been - and he used to play out there so I used to go out there to dances. And having Dad in the orchestra was always very good. I never, ever knew that you could get drink outside. You know, the boys must have had the drink in the car. But I was a real goodie-two-shoes. I didn't know that. Anyhow, so I'd come back with Dad at night and on Sunday we'd always have a piano ... you know, with people invited like soldiers from the Army camp here.

Right.

END TAPE 1

TAPE 2

0.06 The soldiers - you used to go to dances in the Dungowan. That must have been a Friday or a Saturday night and Castlereagh must have been, you know, the alternate night, and my father played for all of them and you'd meet these soldiers who would - 'cause there were very few of our boys here - and the soldiers from the Army camp which is beside the railway now which is being disbanded, they've been there ever since - and they used to come to the dances at the Dungowan which was later a theatre here in Penrith - a picture show - in Station Street opposite where the Council Chambers are now, or just along from that. All the girls used to go there and then we'd invite them back to my place on Sunday, quite a few of them, because my mother just cooked, and cooked, and cooked - sweets, cakes! Cakes she used to have in those days. And they'd come up there on a Sunday and we'd have a sing-song around the piano or something because of these lads that had been from all over Australia. And that's how we sort of spent a lot of our time.

Also, one thing I used to do was - this would have been later when I was working at the bank - I used to come home on the Chips at twenty past six - by that time I'd say Dad would have had the car and picked me up and take me home - and I'd go back and I worked as an usherette at night at the Nepean Theatre, which I enjoyed. And I'd always ... sometimes walk down, and I mean it must have been dark in winter and that's quite a way to walk down to the middle of Penrith from where we lived, but somebody always had to pick me up or take me home. What I made out of it I wouldn't have a clue. But I'm friends with the fellow now, Bruce, who was the proprietor in those days. It's rather amazing that I used to catch the six past seven - which is what I tell my children now or anybody else that says about how hard pressed you are with work - the six past seven train in the morning, that would be a twenty minute walk to the railway, come home at twenty past six at night, two weeks holiday a year, work Saturday morning on the six past seven train and home at twenty past one the train got in on a Saturday afternoon, and I'd walk home, and you know, there wasn't much time left for

doing anything really. And I used to work two or three nights a week as an usherette, and then the dances, so . . .

You were very busy!

Ridiculously so really! (Laughs)

And that was in the days before television, so you used your time perhaps more wisely!

Yes you probably did. I mean, today ... I had an appointment yesterday and I mean the ticker-tape parade for the Union boys yesterday. Well I wanted to work around that. Whereas in those days you didn't have that sort of thing and that's how I sort of live now. I sort of think, oh if I want to see something, you know, something live and interesting on TV you work around that whereas you didn't have that worry. (Laughs) You used to listen to the serials on the radio, but that was later when I was married, but no. ...full time, I feel and I think that's better. And two weeks holiday a year.

It's not much is it?

No.

4.13 And did you go away on those holidays?

I used to go away with a friend, like a girl friend or so many of from the bank to various places, and then we used to go away for weekends too when we would have been 20, 19 or 18, something like that. We had a bank reunion this year and we'd all taken our photos of when we went away. We'd go to Katoomba which now, of course, isn't such a fantastic holiday place. But in those days it was a ball, you know. And we'd go away and rent a house, about ten of us, and then go to Holmesdale - I think it was called - dance on the Saturday night, and go up by train and back by train, and we had a ball.

And a lot of them came from Sydney, I suppose?

Well they lived - Balgowlah, one was, and one's Hurstville and we were talking this, you know - two from Hurstville and that. So they'd all come and go up by train after work on Friday or Saturday morning, I can't remember how we went. And then we went to Avalon - was another place - and down to Jervis Bay, but I think that was a fortnight's holiday with a crowd of us. And that how you used to...

So you had lots of nice group activities...

That's right. More than just going away on your own or something or flying away somewhere. (Laughs). I always said that the only holiday overseas I'd do was from Sydney to Manly, little knowing what you'd do later in your life, you know! But that's how you sort of felt! You were confined to Australia or Sydney and you didn't go interstate or anything until later in your life.

6.00 **Until - really travel didn't take off until the '60s or the '50s perhaps?**

Yes, well '50s may have been, but not for me. I mean, it was '70. Although we did go up to Coolangatta - to Greenmount I think - a couple of times, a few of us, for holidays. And I went with one of my aunts for a holiday. I often went away with her. If somebody, you know, some of the girls from the bank or my friends in Penrith couldn't go. I didn't have a lot of friends in Penrith, like later when I was travelling to Sydney; it was more centred in the City because

we used to work back at the bank. There's another thing. We used to work back two to three nights balancing every two months.

Really!

And you'd work til nine o'clock. You'd get dinner money and we'd go to Cahill's or something like that, but you only had a half an hour or three quarters of an hour for dinner, and then I'd go and stay with my aunt at Croydon for those few nights and ...

7.14 **So really you worked quite long hours and probably for not a lot of money?**

Well I know when I left I was getting four pounds eight shillings is the term isn't it? Four pounds eight, when I left after nine and a half years!

When would that have been?

1948. Yes, well Christmas 1947 I left. You know, I was married in February 1948. And, I mean, we used to lay-by. You'd lay-by everything. And I mean my parents didn't have a lot of money or anything to give me, not like I sort of ... I think a lot of parents now give their children a lot, like married children and that. When I think back, I did it all on my own. And my husband did the same, although his parents were a little better off and that. But you lived within your means. You knew what you had. And I think it's a better way to go! (Laughs)

Better than all this plastic money?

Well, I said, I'm comfortable now and my husband and I were comfortable when he died, but I still maintain that our struggling of when we built over there ... then we got a bit of money and we thought will we carpet the house or buy a car - which way, you know. And that was far better. More bonding relationship I think, you know.

You struggle together and appreciate what you get.

Yes. What will we spend it on? You know, will we buy the carpet? I think the carpet won! (Laughs) And then we thought well we'd better have the garage before the car, so we got the garage before the car. But you had to pay for it. You didn't sort of get it on the never-never and be left high and dry with your interest the way you are today, really.

9.07 **And did you ever want to work when your children were grown up and off your hands a bit?**

No. Never, ever wanted to. I think because it'd be too much of a letdown. Actually, really the lifestyle that I've lived, it's equivalent to working 'cause I've worked for stalls and, you know, I've worked in a second hand Legacy shop for years and ...

All voluntary work?

All voluntary, yes.

It is work, but it's unpaid work.

Unpaid work, but you're not regimented to the degree that you had to clock on at there nine o'clock. If I didn't want to be there at nine I didn't go. You, know, you weren't regimented to that degree. I'd love to work now! (Laughs). It's strange isn't it?

10.00 **Probably because you have more time!**

Yes, yes. This is right. Although I haven't!

You're still busy?

Well it's cards, bridge and bowls, and I never seem to get any time to anything really. And at night time - I mean I very rarely go out at night now, so ...

Why not, because of the ...?

Well I just have no interest, you know.

10.27 How do you feel about the security of the area?

Oh, well everybody's worried about me, but I'm not worried. Nobody can believe I'll live in this big house, you know, for all this time I've been here. But it just doesn't worry me. It's only recently ... see I haven't even got a deadlock on the fly door - and my son came over yesterday, so I'm ringing up to satisfy them. It'll probably come next year! (Laughs) You know, it's not an urgency. But I have got an alarm system and the windows are all deadlocked and all that sort of thing, 'cause I have been broken into twice I think.

Have you?

Yes. But ... I don't know, it's ... I am suspicious! Until I got sick I was walking every morning, you know, about six or half-past six. Well I had to wait in the winter until it got light enough, you know, and then you're very conscious of walking around, and if I walk down the town here I do notice if somebody's walking behind me. You're conscious I feel. I think that's how you're made to...

It's a bit different to the old days isn't it?

Oh, yes. I mean, boy ... I wish it was back!

11.43 Well looking at what you've been thinking about and talking about today, what do you feel about the change and the rapid growth that's taken place out here in Western Sydney?

I don't like it.

Don't you?

No. But I think it's mainly, you used to be able to ... if you had a day or an afternoon and you'd walk down the street - you'd feel lonely and lost or something like that early in the piece after you'd lost a husband or something like that - you could go down and you'd think "Oh well, I'll meet somebody" and, you know, rather than ring up a friend and sort of, you know, get into their ear. And there's not a soul! Everybody who used to live in Penrith sort of says "Gee, we used to be able to go on Friday night ..." you'd go down the street, it late night shopping and you'd know you'd meet somebody. I take a friend who is on a pronged stick and occasionally I take her down to the Plaza. Now you'd think if you sat in the Plaza for an hour - waiting for her for a hair-cut or something - you'd see somebody. It is unusual if you find somebody that you know. And I think that's what affects the people who have lived here all their lives. On Friday night it was gorgeous to go down the street and walk along the street and everybody was there and ...

It's become big and less personal.

Yes, too big, yes. Citified really. And yet so many bank managers and teachers have gone away and have come back here and retired, because I think they've got the best of two worlds. There are groups that you can belong to where you feel that you're wanted and needed and together. Whereas in the city I don't know that you've got it. My daughter lives at Oatley and she claims that it is a village atmosphere she's got in Oatley.

That's interesting!

It is interesting, yes, because I've thought "oh well maybe that's why these different ones have come back here". And friends in Inner Wheel ... there's two or three who have moved back into the city, and they just – one particularly - really wants to, you know, she'd love to come back except for her husband who went in there for business. And she just loves to hear about things from Penrith and what's happening, but I suppose that's with all towns really.

14.33 And what about when the houses around you started being built? Did you mind that at the time?

Well, in Lethbridge Street we did have no houses around us here. We moved in about ... I can't think ... so this was all settled when I moved in here. But I've always lived where I haven't neighbours, you know. And I go to my sister's place and you can see the people at the back and you can see the people at this side and that side, and I don't think I could ever do it.

Live close together?

Close yes.

You've got a fairly big block here haven't you?

It is, yes. And in Lethbridge Street, see, we didn't have immediate neighbours and where I grew up we didn't have ... and I've never, ever lived where I've got a person who could sort of see that I, you know, I walk out on the terrace or I walk out the back door.

So you've still got privacy.

Yes. And yet I'm so handy to the town, and this is what I like. But I've got to do something sometime haven't I, the way we live. But I don't know. It's a strange thing. You sort of do resent ... see all the flats from here down.

15.58 Yes. Have they demolished old houses there to build those?

Yes. They've been old houses. Yes.

And did that make you feel sad when they were demolished?

Yes, well there's a few people I knew who lived in the houses there, and it's sad to see it. And I can see the houses deteriorating in Lethbridge Street going down where the doctors have bought them and they haven't built yet or something. There's one elderly lady who used to live in one place and it was a lovely place, and it's getting worse and worse with tenants and that. And it's sad every time you walk past to see that but that's progress! It's just a shame somebody can't prop it up and do something to leave it there, 'cause I think it's a shame when you see it demolished down and up goes a modern building, really.

And many of the familiar land marks disappear then don't they too?

Yes. That's true. I was with the mechanic doing my car yesterday and we could see all where the Army camp's been, and it's so much area and he said "Oh there's a road going through here and over the railway line" and that and I thought "Oh, dear!" (Laughs). The same with the new Plaza, the demolishing and ... and it's still going to be an ordinary shopping centre. And so these shopping centres are just taking over and so much area going into them, and no lifestyle. I don't know...

17.53 So you don't particularly like the progress?

No.

Not in that way.

No. I went over to Castle Hill shopping centre this week on Monday to have a look at it – you know the new one - I don't know what they call it ... oh, I've just put it in the car. Castle something or other- DJ's and all the rest of it. And it's attractive.

Castletown I think it is.

Castletown, is that it? And it's attractive but it's still ... every shop that's there we have here. Every store except Country Road and David Jones. And I thought "It's still only just a shopping centre", you know, really . And it's attractive. It's got a few things different, probably the decorations and that type of thing. But ... what have you got? Somewhere to go and buy your food and vegetables!

And a lot of cars!

Yes . And cars, and cars, and cars. So progress isn't my main forte I don't think.

19.01 And how do you feel about the landscape? You know, did that worry you that the landscape was changing?

Well it hasn't, you know, to me, 'cause living here with trees and that around...

Where you are it's OK?

Yes. Where I am, yes. But when you go out- where did I see on the highway, oh where was I? - and I couldn't believe that they had put these hundreds and hundreds of houses and we couldn't see a tree! This was Monday. Oh I can't think what the little suburb was - going from here over to Castle Hill.

Through the Blacktown area?

Yes, Blacktown area. I don't know whether it was Plumpton or whether we said Plumpton seems to have had more trees put in or something. But it was the most horrendous, horrific place to live. They were little tine boxed houses, and there seemed to be hundreds of them. I can't think ... and there's no trees. They've knocked the trees down around it even and how quickly they'll put the trees in I don't know. But it just looks like a ... urk!

It seems to be the first thing they do isn't it, raze all the trees!

That's right, yes. England seems to have a lot of people living in ... I think they would have been better to have built houses like England, you know, two storey houses and trees and a little bit of area or something. But this is red brick, red brick, red roofed houses just there by

the hundreds. I feel if I went in ... you couldn't see internally in it because it's the backs on to the road that we went. But, boy ... I don't know.

Not a very nice atmosphere?

No it would be a terrible atmosphere, I think, to live in it, really, and it's not the way I'd like to live.

21.12 **Well thank you very much ... I think we've covered everything.**

Oh, the only thing I haven't asked you about is the introduction of migrant people after the War. A lot of migrants moved out this way. I don't know whether you had many people around here or whether you came into contact with them very much, or what effect they had on you?

Well we had Greeks - my name won't go into this - we have Greeks opposite and we had Greeks in a two-storey - an old, old, home - opposite here, and my daughter was in bed one night - Barbara, you know, she was about 26 or something - and she got out of bed and went out the front and yelled out 'Can you turn your wireless down or keep ! (Laughs) And my neighbour two doors up, she said she used to be able to hear the six o'clock 2KA news every morning in her bedroom over here from them. There so ... if something happens they just scream and rant and rave, you know, if somebody dies. I don't think they consider other people in their area. I'm am a racist you know, regardless - I am a racist. And I claim that when I've gone to other people's countries I've sort of conceded that that's what I would do, you know. I've never argued over money. I've got a friend who went with me once to Yugoslavia and she finished up losing her temper with him. You know, to me that's his country and I respect what he does, and I can't understand and I let him have the benefit and that. But oh dear, they come here ... yuk! (Laughs) And yet I've got some terrific friends that are, you know, foreigners. But it is a different thing, one to one I think. He's very nice, the fellow over here. He's got a boat and I'll swear he revs it and revs it! The different ones in the street said, you know, they wondered ... you can sort of object to it but who wants to object to your neighbour? You know, where does it leave you? He doesn't have water, see, so he just revs it up to test the motors before he takes it out. No thought for the neighbours, really. I think they're used to living in a clan situation. Maybe we're the same. I mean I hate Australians overseas, travelling! I hate Australians! (Laughs)

They stand out don't they?

Yes. I've had a few horrible experiences with Australians overseas. And yet I've got this friend now and she said "Oh, I hate .." - what did she call them - ... "whinging Poms!" And she is a true blue English person and she said "Boy! There are whinging Poms !".

There are good and bad in all races really.

That's right. The only thing is, I'm not mad on migrants! (Laughs). Really if you caught a train from here - not a fast train, but if you catch a slow train and you pick up from St. Marys or Mt. Druitt - it is absolutely awful to sit there because you're probably one of about six Australians or Europeans in the carriage. If only they'd speak the language! That's what I feel. If a migrant comes they should speak English. I mean if we go to live in their country, we shouldn't go unless we can speak their language. And I reckon that's where half the trouble is, because they can sort of yabba, yabba, yabba - you don't know what they're talking about, or about you or somebody else, and I think that's where the upset comes.

25.36 **Yes, 'cause there are a lot of migrant families in the Blacktown area aren't there - and St Marys?**

Mt. Druitt and St. Marys, yes. And I got in the train going from Central down to Town Hall or somewhere. I only went from Central to Town Hall say, and there were nine Asians in the carriage and I was the only European, you know, which is...

We are becoming very cosmopolitan!

Well we'll have to I suppose if they're going to import more? But we don't seem to be getting any further ahead with the extra people, do we ?

No.

Not yet, anyway.

26.12 **All right. Well, that has covered everything now. Thank you very much indeed for your time.**