

**NSW DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING**

**'Millers Point Oral History Project'**

**INTERVIEW TAPE LOG**

INTERVIEWEE:	<b>Fiona Campbell</b>
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INTERVIEWER:	Beverley SUTTON CROSS
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*Note: The opinions expressed in this oral history interview are those of the interviewee and do not necessarily represent in whole or in part the position of the Department of Housing, the Government Architect's Office, the Department of Commerce or the Oral History Consultants.*

00:02 START OF TAPE MP-BSC4 SIDE A (RECORDED 3 DECEMBER 2005)

00:06 Tape identification

*Fiona could you tell me your full name and where you were born.*

00:38 My name is Fiona Burton Campbell and I was born in Melbourne.

*So you moved from Melbourne to Sydney to Millers Point or somewhere else in between?*

00:51 I lived in Melbourne until I was sixteen and then I moved overseas and I lived overseas until 2001 and then when I came back I moved to Sydney. I originally moved to Balmain - I lived in Balmain for about a year, then I moved to Coogee because everyone that moves to Sydney thinks that you should try living at the beach and hated it, full of backpackers and drunken people. Decided I wanted to move back to the city and was looking at buying a house and fell in love with a house in Millers Point and moved here in 2003.

*Did you have any idea of what Millers Point was - what sort of a suburb it was, when you chose to come here?*

01:42 I suppose when I first started looking here I sort of associated Millers Point with The Rocks. When I was a kid growing up in Melbourne we'd come to Sydney and gone around The Rocks and the touristy side of it, and the Bridge and the convicts, you know the very stereotypical view. I don't think it was probably until I'd been living here a little while that I started to realise the separate Millers Point community as opposed to the whole historic Rocks area which was quite a nice surprise really. I think it is very nice to feel like you are living in a community, especially when you are in a city often you can worry that being in a big city you lose that sense of community and it is nice.

*So you feel that Millers Point does offer that for you, a sense of community?*

02:35 For me personally it hasn't necessarily been like that the whole time I've been here, mainly because I haven't known a lot of people, I haven't become involved with a lot of things, but recently I think I've got to know a lot more people through being involved in community meetings and this project. I'm just getting to know more people and I think the more you involve yourself the more you feel that there is a community. But I sense that with the people that have been here for a long time it is obviously very strong, very strong bonds between people.

*Do you feel that you have been accepted into that community at Millers Point? That even though you are a new face they are happy to welcome you to join in with them?*

03:23 Yes I think so. I mean I chat to people in the pub when I go over there and my neighbours came up to me the other day, and not living at home for the moment I've

been renovating for a couple of months, they said, 'Fiona when are you moving back we really miss you, the kids miss you,' and I thought that was very cute.

*That was nice.*

So I do start feel more like that.

*That's good. When you said you were looking around and you wanted to live in the inner city and you'd already tried a few other places like Balmain and what have you what attracted you to Millers Point? Was it a sense of history?*

04:04 I wanted to buy an old terrace house. Originally I was looking in Surry Hills, Redfern sort of area. A friend mentioned this particular house that was for sale and said that I should go and look at it and I said, 'Oh I don't really know about that area. Does anyone live there, they are such beautiful houses?' I didn't know anything much about it and he took me took down one lunchtime, I remember, to look at it and I saw it and thought 'Oh that's a nice place and what a lovely street' and ended up buying it. It was mainly the house and the historical sight of the physical area that I initially was attracted to yes. I mean the beautiful sandstone buildings and the beautiful wide streets and the trees, it is such a quiet area, well sometimes, usually, it's a very quiet area, compared to a lot of the inner city, somewhere like Darlinghurst, or Surry Hills where it is a lot noisier and a lot busier.

*I suppose one of the advantages of this area is that the population are fairly static, they don't move a lot, whereas perhaps with some other inner city areas they can be transitory so you don't get a chance to sort of build up perhaps a community feeling which in turn makes you feel - when you say it is quiet, if you are a local you feel you've got to be mindful of your neighbours, whereas if you are living in a nameless inner city sort of area in a flat that you know you are going to be gone in six months that doesn't always occur does it?*

05:55 Certainly I've found that there's not a lot of people living around here in my age group, I'm twenty-six, nearly twenty-seven and there's not many people of that age, perhaps any other people, living in the area, which I found a bit strange at first but it is becoming less of a problem as I start to become more friendly with other people.

*When you go into the pub, as you say if you go over to the pub, if you talk to some of the locals you are talking to older people, the older locals.*

06:36 We steer clear of the pub Sunday afternoons when the young backpacker crowd goes in it, it is very pleasant there on a week night evening when there is just a piano player and a few people in there and go over and have a chat. This is the *Hero*

of Waterloo that I'm talking about.

*In Windmill Street.*

Across the road.

*Do the locals that you talk to do they fill you in on things in the area and what it was like perhaps years ago, do you get into those sorts of conversations with them?*

07:13 Not very much but I think more so now once you start to know the right questions to ask. The sort of things that people have been talking about in these interviews that we have been doing - you start to learn a lot more about the history and about the big events that have shaped people's lives here, I suppose. I certainly think that in the future when I get chatting with people there will be a lot more to talk about.

*Well as you learn more I suppose that will prompt more questions as well perhaps from the locals. They are never short of wanting to tell you a story I think, are they?*

07:55 No. I think everybody likes a chat. I think it is more about becoming more confident and more familiar with people because I think a lot of people when they see a new face and a young face around here they assume that you are a tourist or somebody on a pub crawl, or whatever, and I think once people realise that you live here and that you plan on living here for a while then they are a lot more willing to talk to you on a different level than they would talk to somebody who they didn't know or who didn't live here.

*So they open up.*

Gain a bit of confidence or recognition.

*So when you say you are planning to live here for quite some years, you are quite happy so far with what you've seen and the area and the community, and you feel that it is somewhere that you could comfortably stay for quite a while?*

08:50 I moved here in 2003, I've nearly finished renovating my house so obviously I've put a lot of time and effort into that and hopefully we'll now stay here a while to enjoy it. I think that it is definitely somewhere that I would like to stay for a while. At some stage I'll probably, hopefully, be having kids and things like that and at that stage I would possibly think about leaving but not necessarily because of the area but more because of my house. It's four-storeys high and has a lot of very steep stairs and isn't necessarily the best place for small children to be running around. But apart from that I can't really see any reason why I would leave, it is a lovely place, it's convenient

and there's a lot of nice parks and the water right here.

*Are you planning to become perhaps more involved with the Millers Point community? You know there's a Resident Action Group and then there are various other groups that try and keep a lid on some of the things that are happening around here, are you planning to become involved in some of those groups perhaps as you become a little more settled after your renovations?*

10:15 I've been going to the Resident Action Group meetings on and off for the last year or so and just more to listen than to participate but just to get an idea of what the issues are. I think there are certainly a lot, as there probably always is around here, there's a lot of big issues at the moment, the changes down at the wharves, the East Darling Harbour Development as they call it. All the changes with the Housing Commission, I went to that meeting probably a month or so ago, the big meeting that they had at the Abraham Mott Hall and listened to that discussion, which I found very interesting. Obviously a lot of people who live in Housing Commission are very passionate about it but I think it affects those of us who don't as well and I think that is what they were trying to say in that meeting. Obviously that is one of the big differences between this community and a lot of others in Sydney that a lot of communities have either the very wealthy people, somewhere like Paddington or Woollahra or Double Bay, you are wealthy people, or you have your Housing Commission type communities, and having them quite so close together and in such large numbers as here I don't think there is probably anywhere else in Sydney, so I think that is a big feature of this area. Probably one that has become more of an issue now that a lot of new apartments have opened up down in the Walsh Bay part, there is obviously a lot of fairly wealthy people down there.

*Yes I would think so, having paid \$2 million and \$3 million for their apartments I would think yes, they are comfortably off. Some of them are becoming more involved in the community. Do you see the community dynamic changing over a period of time because of those sort of economic changes to the area?*

12:18 I think that the usage of the area is changing a lot, this is just my opinion but there seems to be a lot more businesses opening up, like the big advertising agencies and all the companies that have their headquarters in some of the Heritage buildings that have been restored. I think that is making the area lot busier with traffic during the day, parking becoming a lot more difficult, I've certainly noticed that since I've been living here, the parking and just the general walking past. People in the streets, people in the cafes and pubs, there's a lot more apart from the tourists that have



always been wandering around, there's a lot more, which is good. It is good for the area to be used and hopefully there will be some nice cafes and things opening up down there that won't be too expensive.

*Yes so facilities that will come with those other things in a way they could benefit the area, as you say, just as long as they are not too expensive. But still it is nice to have the option I suppose.*

13:26 One advantage I think most of us have found of having the apartments opened down there is that they've got a supermarket down there now and it doesn't have everything but it is handy when you need to do stuff. I don't think they would have put that in if they hadn't done that development.

*I think there was certainly a demand for that from the developers of those apartments and I know some people that live down there and they are quite thrilled that the supermarket is now there. Of course the cost of anything isn't a particular worry for them, but as you say even for those of us that are up on the hill here if you need some milk or some bread it is very, very nice to have that option where you can buzz down and get it, whereas before you didn't have that option, although there are a few smaller shops around, but they sometimes didn't have milk, they would run out.*

14:30 I very much enjoy my visits to the little Lebanese takeaway around the corner, the men in there are quite characters. They always say funny things and they never seem to have the same thing two days in a row, one day they will have grapes and the next day they might have tomatoes and they always run out of milk and bread and all the useful things, but they'll have pistachio nuts or egg plants. A very strange shop, I don't know how they run their business, but it is nice to have that. They've obviously been here a long time as well.

*Yes they have, that family have been there a long time. That's about at least the second generation of those families that have been in those shop, so they are quite a part of the community. You are right - they are very nice, but they are not your traditional shopkeepers as we would know it. Yes they often do run out of milk because I've found that myself. So how else do you use the area? Do you go down to the parks and sit by the water?*

15:38 I like to go I would like to say every morning but that would be a little white lie, but quite often I like to go on a little walk around to the Botanical Gardens around the foreshore and that is a lovely way to start the day. Trying to have picnics up on Observatory Hill and a couple of times a week have a little sandwich for dinner up there and read a book and that's a beautiful spot to sit. I mean I walk to work, I work on Kent Street, so it is probably a twenty minute walk, and I find that is fantastic - you don't need to worry about the stress of catching a bus or a train. That



is one of the great advantages of living here for me, it is fabulous. I do find I spend most of my time around here. Today I needed to buy a present for a baby shower tomorrow, had a big panic, and I went down to The Rocks markets and found some little baby clothes. You can normally find what you want, at great expense probably, but it is nice to be able to do everything on foot rather than having to go to some big giant shopping centre somewhere. We got to the pubs sometimes but most of the time it is just as nice to sit on the balcony with a nice glass of wine and enjoy being at home.

*You were talking earlier about your neighbours, glad that you are coming back soon, are they Department of Housing people those neighbours with children?*

17:13 Yes. I have obviously two sets of neighbours, I live in 90 Windmill Street. Number 92 is privately owned as well, so there is John and Christine in there and they are a lovely couple, they've had me over for dinner a few times and they always come over. When I was living by myself, I was single for two years probably when I was first living here, they used to worry about me and it was very sweet, they'd pop over and make sure I was okay and ask if I needed anything done in the garden and had me over for coffee and tea, which I thought was very sweet. They've got children about my age, I think. So that is on one side. Number 88 is Michelle and Steve, I hope I am getting their names right for posterity, and they seem to have hundreds of children but I think they've only got four, maybe five, but there's always swarms of children in there.

*Are they little children?*

18:14 Probably between about two and eight, I think. They are very, very beautiful children but very badly behaved - you can always hear them running around in the garden and the poor mother yelling out at them. Yes I think they are probably little troublemakers, but it is nice to have kids in the area, I think it always livens the place up.

*Are they the children that get down into the park just below?*

18:42 Yes. They are very naughty children, as I said. Well I think they just see that as an extension of their back yard and they like to dig holes and build castles and whatever children do, which is quite nice but sometimes obviously it goes a bit too far when they dig holes that are very big or damage the trees, or whatever else they

do. I think the younger kids around here, it is very nice to see that the young kids play in the street and play in the park and stuff, it is probably when they start to get a bit older that it is a bit more worrying. I don't know how old they are but there is certainly a bunch of young teenage kids around who are not scary but they seem like they are a bit out of control. I mean they graffiti things and they sit in the back lane and smoke.

*Have you had trouble?*

19:41 Our house backs onto Ferry Lane and we've had graffiti on the back fence a few times and strange objects thrown into the back yard, lots of bottles and things thrown over the back fence. There is a raised area with a seat and I think a lot of the under-age drinkers sit up there with their bottles of whatever and when they have finished they chuck them into the lane or into my garden, wherever it lands.

*It is a bit hard to do anything about it unless you catch them.*

20:12 Kids everywhere do it I suppose. I suppose I probably did the same thing when I was their age.

*They move around, that pack of young teenagers. They go down to the park there, the paddock as we call it, or they go up onto Observatory Hill. They sometimes play touch footy over on the Village Green here. I suppose it is difficult, they are just being kids, but when it happens constantly sometimes you can lose a bit of patience with it. But still, as you say, a few years they will be grown up and they'll be doing something different.*

20:58 That is the thing about living in a city with children, I suppose, that there is no way that you can have your children inside, or in your very small back yard all the time, they have to play on the streets. I think it is good they all play together, there is probably four or five families in my street and the next street that always play together and they seem to get on.

*I think in this area that is something that has always happened, certainly we always played in the street because, as you say, the backyards are tiny and there's no grass in most of them so they are just hard surfaces. So the parks were the obvious place to go and children, I suppose, in these sort of houses get used to going out of the house to find entertainment. They can't invite their little friends home much because there isn't enough room for them, let alone for some others so that is why they are always out on the street. I guess that is the fate of many inner city tenement sort of housing really.*

22:13 I think in Millers Point as opposed to somewhere like Redfern or Darlinghurst or somewhere that is a lot busier there is space for the kids to play, the streets are wide enough and quiet enough. I think there are some areas where you

wouldn't want your kids to be on the street but it is nice that here the parents can pretty much let the kids run around and then call them back in when it is time to have their tea, or whatever.

*There are organised places for them to go as well so there is a Community Centre across here in Argyle Place and the kids can go up there and do all sorts of things. Then there's the King George Playground which has been around a long, long time and King George has always acted as a sort of surrogate child-minding centre for as long as I can remember. So there are places for kids to go where they can be looked after, rather than running around on the street. But still it is safe enough, it seems to be safe enough, it certainly has been in my recollection anyway.*

23:25 When I moved here by myself a lot of people were worried about me living in the city by myself and living opposite a pub, everybody had something to say about how dangerous it might be, I have never felt unsafe here at all.

*I was going to ask you that, do you feel safe living in the area?*

23:44 I have never felt unsafe. If I'm walking home later in the evening, if I've had dinner in the city and I'm walking home, occasionally someone drunk will say something uncomfortable, as drunk people do, but that has been the only thing. *That can happen anywhere.*

24:01 Exactly. Probably shouldn't say it but I've never been broken into and I've never had anything happen to my car or anything like that. I know a lot of people get windows smashed and stuff but I've been lucky, I suppose.

*So you don't have any fears on that score.*

24:20 I've never been very fearful like that I suppose, but I certainly don't feel that this area is. In fact I think a lot of other areas that are less close to the city are probably more scary sometimes.

*Just out of interest many, many years ago, and I don't know if it is relevant now, in this area for insurance purposes we actually had lower premiums because of the low incidents of crime and break-ins. That was quite some years ago and I don't know whether it still prevails because the dynamic of the area has changed dramatically in the last twenty years. Some years ago because the level of crime was so low we actually had low premiums because there wasn't much crime happening around the area. Perhaps you can still feel comfortable about not being broken into.*

25:27 When I have been to the residents' meetings here the things people are complaining about are fairly minor things in terms of crime, it is noise, graffiti, windows getting smashed. I haven't heard anybody say they are getting broken into or muggings or assaults of anything like that - it seems to be more your lower level

crimes.

*You get break-ins in cars, I think there is a fair bit of that, but then often people will come and park in Argyle Street, down in Argyle Cut, and they will leave stuff in the car that is easily seen and I think that is when those sort of things happen. Once again that happens everywhere, but I think if you take normal precautions and you don't leave your laptop on the back seat I think the chances of that happening are pretty low too. But still we won't tempt fate.*

26:54 END OF TAPE MP-BSC4: SIDE A

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26:56 START OF TAPE MP-BSC4: SIDE B

*Fiona how do you see the future for Millers Point?*

27:12 I think there is too big upcoming events I suppose that are going to influence the future here, one of them being what happens down at East Darling Harbour, the closure of the wharves which nobody really seems to know what is happening, but it seems to be fairly definite that something is going to happen down there. That is going to involve big changes in the usage of the area, there are going to be a lot more people around, a lot more offices and a lot more residential stuff.

*Does it concern you that once Patricks do move out of the area that perhaps we are not going to really have the living harbour that we have now, that we are not going to have the working harbour, which I think is very much part of the enjoyment I think of probably living down here and seeing all of that activity?*

28:16 I've had both opinions on the subject. When I first moved here I thought that it is all so ugly, what's that big tower - it is so ugly. Then very soon after living here I sort of realised that is what it is all about and that is what makes it the history. I have since been to all the working harbour meetings and all that and very much think that it is not a good idea but I think that doesn't make much difference to the fact that it is probably going to happen. I think some of the plans seem to preserve some of that atmosphere better than others, but obviously without the actual ships it doesn't really matter whether you have it. I think there could be some advantages to having parkland down there, for our quality of life point of view most of them seem to have a swimming pool, which would be great, and a park, which would be great.

*You think these things will come to pass rather than just a lot of apartment blocks?*



29:18 I think they have made it a requirement that it has to be fifty per cent open land, forty per cent or something, so I think there will be something, but you can never trust people to do anything that will be good. I think despite a lot of people thinking it is not a good idea, especially almost everybody that lives here, I think that is going to happen and that is going to create a lot of change.

29:43 The other thing that will influence the future here is what happens with the Department of Housing and I think that is another mystery. Since living here it has astounded me that nobody seems to know anything about what is happening and for me it doesn't really matter so much because I own my house and nothing is really going to change that, but I feel for the majority of people that live here and hear all these rumours and most of them turn out not to be true - it must be terrible to have lived somewhere for twenty years and hear a rumour that you are going to be thrown out and have to go out and find out whether it is true or not. They seem to happen quite regularly, these sort of rumours that go around but the Department of Housing needs to do something around here, I think. Just walking around the streets and seeing the beautiful old houses that are not falling down, but certainly not looking their best, the peeling paint and the graffiti on the walls, rusted balconies and pipes that are broken - it doesn't look good. The tourist industry around here there's a lot of people getting probably a not very good impression of Sydney from walking around and seeing some of that, so I think they need to spend a lot of money. Probably to make a lot of money they are probably going to end up selling some of the real estate around here I would imagine, hopefully not all of it or not much of it. *Which is what they have done with some of the older, bigger houses, they've leased them off, haven't they, for ninety-nine year leases on the basis that the people taking those leases on will have to spend their own money restoring to heritage...*

31:36 While that is very sad I think the amount of money that is involved the government can't afford to do it. I think rather than have the government put in aluminium windows and things, as they have done in some houses, I think it is better to have somebody who can afford it, even though it is sad it has to pass out of the government's hands, I suppose.

*So perhaps a mix of private and government-owned would certainly be better than just allowing the houses to deteriorate as you've indicated, you have thought a number of them need doing up and have been like that for some years. Obviously they can't always find all the money all the time to do that. Do you think though that perhaps that in its own way*



*might be a bit of a salvation for Millers Point? If you have an element of private people coming in and living here because they want to live in an historic area, in an old home, do you think that perhaps could in its own way save the area, rather than it be left to just strictly Department of Housing tenancies?*

32:57 I think that this sort of area, the people that choose to live here and to buy houses here are always going to be the sort of people that want to live in this sort of community, that appreciate the history, that appreciate the older houses and the environment that they have, so I don't think that is going to be a situation where the houses get sold off and suddenly the whole place changes. I think that people will be choosing to live here because they like it and they will be wanting to stay that way. I also think that some private ownership and people moving in here who perhaps have influence in other circles, influential people, who can help make things happen or not happen - that could be what could help the area stay the way people want it to.

*So a mix really could be advantageous to the Department, where they could get some well-needed money in the short term to do other things around the area and also allow private people to come in who will work towards maintaining the properties and also give an ongoing community feel.*

34:30 I think a lot of people have a wrong impression about Housing Commission. I know when I moved here a lot of people said, 'You don't want to live in a Housing Commission area, what are your neighbours going to be like?' I mean, I must admit I had that thought briefly, I thought what if there is a bunch of strange people living there, and I certainly haven't found that, there is the odd strange person. But people very much have that impression that Housing Commission people are different and undesirable and I think that probably does stop a lot of people moving in here. There is firstly not many properties available, which obviously stops people moving in here but when they do become available, in Windmill Street at the moment there is two that have been for sale for a very long time, the amount of money that you need to do them up puts people off. Then they think 'do I want to spend all this money doing up a beautiful house and then be living in a street of Housing Commission people?' that is what people think, and I think that is quite hard to change in a lot of people. But I think the people that choose to move here anyway would be the sort of people that would be willing to form an integrated community and I think that is a positive thing.

*So over a period of time that would all come to pass. I think you are probably right there. I think that some of the people that have moved into the expensive houses that they have*



*bought down in Walsh Bay or up in Kent Street in those apartment blocks, the people from those places that want to become part of the community have become part of the community and that won't ever change them, they involve themselves in all aspects of the community. I think that given time I feel that is what will be Millers Point's salvation in many ways and I think eventually perhaps as the mix becomes more even I can only see that being good for the area. But then I'm coming at it from a different point of view I guess, but you as a new person, a newcomer, you would have a different view.*

36:53 I think obviously when you choose to buy a house somewhere you are investing in that area and you are interested in what is going to happen in the future, so you do worry about it, but I don't worry about in a negative way. I don't think that the area is going to end up in a disastrous state and I'm going to lose all my money, I certainly think that any change has got to be positive in the long term. I think there will probably be a few little hiccoughs along the way when it first starts to change, I think that will be difficult for a lot of people to deal with and probably has been recently. But it is a beautiful area and people that live here love it, so I don't see why private owners and Housing Commission people who all love the same place cannot live happily together, the Utopian vision.

*If they are coming from the same sort of sympathetic viewpoint, that's right, exactly, I would agree. With the East Darling Harbour project, which technically is still in the Millers Point precinct, even though they insist on calling it the East Darling Harbour project, there would be quite a lot of new apartments there apart from open spaces you say and perhaps a swimming pool, which would be very nice, I should live so long to enjoy a swimming pool, do you think that that sort of development will change Millers Point dramatically? Can you see them moving up into this area or do you think they might remain isolated down in Hickson Road?*

38:41 It depends how they do it obviously. A lot of the plans seem to have most of the apartment buildings concentrated right up the far end, up where King Street Wharf is, having just a couple of big buildings there and not so much up this end. Maybe that is naive of me to think they will actually do that and perhaps it will end up being more of a dense sprawl which obviously none of us would enjoy. I know a lot of the plans involved putting a lot of bridges over roads and things which all looked a bit invasive, but it is all speculation at the moment. I think the one thing that I have noticed about that project is that nobody here was asked about anything, nobody was told about anything.

*That is why they called it East Darling Harbour, you see. Had they called it Millers Point at that end well, I think they have done that deliberately, but then I'm a cynic, you see.*

39:48 I do think whatever they do will have a big impact on people here, so they



should try and deal with that.

*Given my understanding of the competition or whatever that has just finished, my sources tell me that it really has now just gone on to the back burner because with the advent of Morris lemma coming in as Premier I don't think that anything will be rushed into. A couple of people that I know of who were on the selection committee said that really they weren't happy with most of it anyway, so to choose the best of a bad lot is still not good enough. You are probably a bit young but the reason the action group years and years ago held up the Walsh Bay development for eighteen-odd years and people kept coming in and wanting to develop down there and we kept holding the plans up because they weren't sympathetic to the area and they weren't giving enough back to the area. Now if you think about it, had the plans for the first Walsh Bay redevelopment gone ahead eighteen years ago they wouldn't be anywhere near what they are today, what we have ended up would have been totally different. So I think maybe East Darling Harbour needs to be held up for a while so that over a period of time people have just got to give a bit more in order to make the whole project more sympathetic to the area in general. I have no problem with that being held up, although I agree with you that progress must go on I'd be quite happy to see that held up for a while. You place the bar just a little bit higher and maybe they will do better things.*

42:16 I think that is probably I would enjoy getting involved with in my time here, I can see that would be interesting.

*You can pick up the banner where the rest of us... the arthritis has sort of set in. It is good that you feel that way, that you would be prepared to become involved in order to make sure that whatever is done is best for the area, that's good. Any other comments that perhaps you might like to make about the area that you've observed, noticed, would like to see happen?*

43:04 No, I don't think so. As someone who has moved here relatively recently I think it is very interesting to uncover the area and to realise the differences between what people think about it from the outside and what is the reality from the inside and hopefully that is going to be ongoing interesting experience for me.

*So you have found it different to what you imagined? Now that you have been here a little while you've found differences to what you thought?*

43:44 Just a learning process I suppose, going from not knowing about any community to worrying about a Housing Commission community to discovering an interesting community, to feeling that I might be able to participate in something, it is just an interesting process and I suppose possibly happens when you move to any new area, but I think this area is particularly fascinating because of its history and because it is very unique.

44:17 END OF TAPE MP-BSC4 SIDE B

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00:05 START OF TAPE MP-BSC5 SIDE A (RECORDED 18th FEBRUARY 2006)

*Fiona could you tell me your full name and where and when you were born?*

00:34 My name is Fiona Burton Campbell and I was born in Melbourne on 15 January 1979.

*Were you an only child or do you have siblings?*

I have a full brother, who is two years younger than me, and I have two half-sisters and a half-brother, my father was previously married.

*What is your earliest memory of growing up in Melbourne?*

01:04 I'm very bad with childhood memories but I do remember that my dad built a house with some of his mates and he started building it when he was about twenty and he just finished it at sixty-seven he is now, or something. It was a beach house and at various stages during our childhood we'd go down there and different things would be done. I remember bathing outside and climbing up a ladder to get into the bedroom and all that sort of stuff, five kids running around, playing in the bush and that sort of stuff.

*So that was a long-drawn out process the building of the house.*

Yes. He claims that marrying my mother delayed proceedings.

*Was your father a builder by trade?*

01:44 No, he was a mechanical engineer, he worked for Holden the car company, I think he worked there for about fifty years before he retired.

*What about your mother?*

She was a secretary before she met my father and then she was a housewife, home maker, mother after we were born.

*Do you have memories of your grandparents?*

02:08 They all died when I was fairly small, so I don't remember them very well. I remember my mother's father was a very eccentric character, a very clever man, he was an inventor and he was always inventing crazy things. I remember he invented an aeroplane seat that folded all the way back into a bed, this was in the mid-1970s or late-1970s I guess, when I was very small, and we all thought this was the craziest idea and now you get those on the aeroplanes.

*So he didn't do anything about that at the time?*

02:38 No. He should have made his fortune, but he didn't.

*What were your parents like?*

My mother is a very eccentric lady, she's about four foot ten and she has curly red hair and wears mini skirts and goes out night clubbing until three in the morning and likes to think that she is eighteen. But she is a very lovely lady and we are very close.  
*So she does that even today?*

03:08 Yes, especially today, yes. When I was growing up, maybe fifteen, sixteen, and just starting to go out on the town at night I'd go out to the latest pub or somewhere and find my mother there, it was very embarrassing when I went out with friends as a child, but now it is kind of fun.

*How did your parents meet?*

03:34 My parents met in a bar. It is quite a strange story actually, my father's first wife had died and there was an inquest into her death, obviously quite a while after she had died. After the inquest my father went to a bar to drown his sorrows and met my mother. He had three children then, so it was quite difficult I think, but they've been married for nearly thirty years now so not doing too badly.

*Something must have worked for them in their relationship. What about your brothers and sisters, what were their names and did you get along with them?*

04:17 My half-brother and sisters ended up living in foster families when they were growing up. They were teenagers when my parents got married and didn't deal with it very well, so they ended up all leaving home when I was very small and then we didn't talk for about ten or fifteen years, then recently got back into contact. My half-brother, Robert, is living in Sydney now he is thirty-three and he's getting married in a few weeks. Then I have a half-sister, Debbie, who is thirty-five and she lives down in Melbourne and is having her second baby next week. My other half-sister, Jacqui is forty now I think and lives in Cairns in a hippy commune or some such thing.

*So after you re-established contact the relationship is really quite comfortable with them?*

05:16 It is now. It wasn't for a long time, it was a bit strange when we were growing up and didn't know how we all fitted together, but we all get on well now which is nice. I know my father especially is very happy about that.

*Do you think those set of circumstances had a great influence on you when you were*

*growing up?*

05:39 Not consciously, but I think it probably did. Our family life was always very strained I think with our extended circle of family because all these things that happened that we as children didn't know about, I think that meant there was a lot of tension that we could feel without really knowing what it was about. So probably, but at the time we didn't think there was anything strange.

*Were some of those tensions perhaps caused by economic restraints? Was it a problem?*

06:15 No, not so much for us, probably more for them. They ended up living in fairly poor families and we were always reasonably well-off and I think that was quite uncomfortable and is still now that when they were growing up they didn't have some of the advantages that we had. We went to private schools, they didn't, we always lived in nice houses with swimming pools and they didn't and that feels a bit uncomfortable still.

*Let's talk about your schooling, what school did you go to?*

06:50 I went to lots of schools. My mother was determined to find the perfect school, so I think in my first two years of school I went to four or five different private schools. I would go to one for a term and then my mother would decide that it wasn't good enough and change to another one. This is in Prep when all you do is play with dolls anyway, I don't know how she could tell that they weren't good enough. I ended up going to Presbyterian Ladies' College for about ten years and then the final two years I went to Morrison Girls' School which is another private school in Melbourne.

*You enjoyed those schools?*

07:26 Yes I did. I think the whole private girls' school experience is interesting, there is a lot of bitchiness and probably in all girls' high schools you have the same things, certainly there is a lot of very rich, very stuck-up, very nasty girls who made everyone's lives miserable. But it was good.

*So do you think those experiences helped you formulate some sort of value system about your life?*

08:01 I think probably sort of values I didn't want to have more than the sorts that I did. Seeing some of those girls from families where it was all about money and not much else that certainly made me think that I didn't want to be like that and that

there must be more important things to worry about. But I'm still friends with a few girls from school, but not many.

*What sort of interests did you have while you were at school?*

08:36 I was a bit of a bookworm, pretty studious and read a lot of novels and did a lot of school work. I enjoyed a lot of outdoor things, used to go camping a lot with school and do hiking and mountain climbing and kayaking and all those sorts of things. Played hockey on all the school teams when I was at school, that was my main sport.

*You went on to your Leaving Certificate and then university?*

09:14 Yes. I finished Year 12 in 1995 and then went overseas for a year on a student exchange, so I lived in Paraguay for a year in 1996 which was terrifying. I was sixteen and didn't speak any Spanish and sent to the other side of the world to live in a very small town with nobody else who spoke English and it was a very life-changing experience. I think that is where I really had to grow up and find my independence. I was there for a year and then I came back and started Medicine at Melbourne University and hated it, so I dropped out after a term or so, couldn't cope with blood and sick people and all that sort of stuff. Then I ended up going to England to study Science in 1997.

*How many years were you in England doing that?*

10:22 My degree was three years, so I was living in Cambridge for three years. Then when I graduated I stayed for another six or nine months. I got a job in Hungry Jack's, so I had a degree from Cambridge University, a fairly well-educated person and the only job I could get was at Hungry Jack's, or Burger King, sorry, it is over there. So I worked in Burger King for about nine months and then came home.

*Did you find other people in the same position as yourself?*

10:54 Yes a lot of people similar, finished university, don't know what they want to do, just want to hang around and stay with their friends from university, so a lot of us had jobs in pubs, in restaurants. It was quite fun actually, I enjoyed it.

*Has religion been important to you?*

11:21 No, I was raised in a very unreligious family. I remember being very embarrassed in Year 10 at school, we had to do a project on religion and we had to write a thing about going to church and I had to admit that I had never been to

church, so my Religion teacher had to take me to church on a Sunday morning to show me what it was like because my parents didn't want to take me, they felt uncomfortable. Although all my schools were all religious schools and we had hymns and all that sort of stuff it never meant much to me.

*How did you feel about being exposed to that? You didn't take it on board?*

12:00 It was all very boring. We had a subject Religion at school and it was great because you got to sit on beanbags and fall asleep for an hour during the day while the teacher talked about whatever topic, it was not taken very seriously.

*What about your interests, dreams and ambitions in your teenage years?*

12:24 I desperately wanted to be a jockey until I was about fourteen and became too big. Since then I haven't really known what I want to do. I was never very ambitious, I always wanted to do well at school and do well at university and once I achieved all of that I didn't really know what to do next.

*So you came back to Australia and presumably got a job.*

12:51 Yes, I got a job with a management consulting company. I had a degree in Geophysics so it was a bit strange but that is what everyone did in those days because jobs in science paid not very much and jobs in management consulting or investment banking paid lots. People out of uni earning \$70,000, \$80,000, \$90,000 a year to do mysterious business things that none of us knew what they really were, but they paid us lots of money so it must be good. So I did that for about a year down in Melbourne and then I moved to Sydney and worked there for another six months probably, and then quit. I started working for the government, where I am now.

*How long have you been working there?*

Nearly four years it must be.

*So when you moved from Melbourne where did you go to live in Sydney?*

14:03 I moved to Sydney because I had a boyfriend in Sydney, so we got a house together in Balmain and it was a beautiful little house, a little one-bedroom terrace house, really old, by the water in Balmain. It was the most beautiful spot, getting the ferry to work every morning, and I thought Sydney was the best place ever, so it was a very nice time. Then broke up with that boyfriend and moved out of Balmain and moved to Coogee with a girlfriend there and we had a gorgeous flat, right on the

beach in Coogee with thick white 1970s shag-pile carpet and white drapes, it was very interesting. Then bought here in Millers Point in 2003.

*How did you come to buy in Millers Point?*

14:59 I had been looking to buy for a long time, I wasn't very happy living where I was and had had a lot of trouble finding a nice place to rent both times and didn't want to go through it again, so I wanted to buy before having to move. I had been looking for about a year, mainly in Surry Hills, Redfern sort of area, I wanted a nice old terrace house. My boss at work came in one day and said, 'Come with me, we are going down the road to have a look at a house, you have to buy it.' So he took me in his car from work at lunch time down to Windmill Street and showed me the house and said, 'You have to buy this one.' I said, 'Come on I can't afford that.' He said, 'You have to,' and I did, he was very persuasive.

*Once you'd moved into the house in Windmill Street what have been your experiences moving into Millers Point and the community here?*

15:57 When I first moved here I didn't really know, I had a Melbourne girls' impression of The Rocks, I thought of this as all The Rocks then, and it was all the Bridge and the water and the history and the pubs and all that sort of touristy stuff and I didn't really have any idea what it would be like living here. I think mostly I was pleasantly surprised, I didn't realise quite how noisy the pub would get and quite how difficult it might be to get a parking spot sometimes, but generally I found it is a very lovely place to live, being so close to the city but having generally a fair amount of peace and quiet.

*What about the community here have you met a number of people in the community?*

16:47 I've met both of my sets of neighbours, I get on very well with them and we've had dinner together a few times. My neighbours at number 92, John and Christine, they are very lovely and I think when I was living there by myself, when I first bought the house, I think they worried about me because they are about my parents' age and they have children my age. They were very sweet, they'd invite me over for cups of tea and make sure everything was okay and John would come in and cut things back for me in my garden that I didn't know what to do with. So that was quite nice, that made me feel nice and welcomed, I suppose. I've been going to the community meetings once a month most months and you get to know people's faces

and work out who is who. I haven't really got to close to anybody else in terms of actually sitting down and having a chat but I certainly know a lot of the faces to say hello to when you walk down the street and say good morning to people, which is nice.

*Your neighbours on the other side of you are they Department of Housing tenants?*

17:59 Yes in 88 Windmill Street. They moved in I think a few weeks before I did in September 2003 and Michelle and Steve, I think, have four children, but I'm never quite sure there seems to be extra children appearing all the time. They are very noisy children but they are quite cute. I don't know how they cope with having four small children in a house like that with all the stairs and all the running up and down they must do to try and chase the children around. But they are nice and friendly and we always say good morning and have a chat.

*When you were proposing to buy the house in Windmill Street were you aware that it was predominantly a Department of Housing area?*

18:49 I wasn't when I first saw the house but I was by the time I bought it. A lot of people told me that it was a bad idea to buy in a Housing area because it would be dangerous and a girl by herself shouldn't be living around those sorts of people. People's true colours were certainly revealed when they were sharing their opinions about Housing Department residents, that they were all crazed drug addicts and would probably kill me while I was sleeping in my bed and all that stuff. But I spend a lot of evenings wandering around the streets around here and I never felt unsafe and since living here I've never felt unsafe, never had any difficulties more serious than a bit of graffiti on the back fence. I think it is interesting to see how wrong people's opinions can be.

*Talking about the pub, which is opposite you and noisy, do you go to the pub at all?*

19:41 I used to when I first moved here, I thought it was quite exciting having an ancient pub across the road, but I don't go there much any more. I used to know all the bar staff and you'd go in on a Monday night and have a chat and it was quite nice but it is very expensive and if you are going to go across the road to have a drink you might as well just stay home and have a drink and you can still hear the music if you open the windows, so I haven't been there for a long time. Sometimes go over there for a Hero Burger for dinner, quite nice.



*How long do you think you might stay in Millers Point? Are you here for a while do you think?*

20:24 We've just finished renovating the house, put a lot of time and effort into that and want to stay and enjoy that for a while, so at least a few more years. I think I will probably live here until I have children, in which case I think I'd need to move somewhere with less stairs. So probably five to ten years, it depends what happens in life really but I'm very happy here at the moment.

*Where do you see Millers Point going at the moment, given that there is a lot of proposals out there to change the face of it and to develop some of the area that is down near the harbour?*

21:17 I was very interested to go and see all those models that they had for the East Darling Harbour Precinct, or whatever they are calling it, some of them were pretty whacky and out there and I can't really imagine them ever existing. But I think something will probably happen down there and it will change things, but I think the Walsh Bay development was a big change physically, but I don't think that has changed the area that much in terms of the atmosphere. I think a lot more people down here will be the main difference, I think, and it will be a lot harder to park and all that stuff, but I don't think it will really change.

*So you don't feel that the Walsh Bay development has impacted too much on the village atmosphere of Millers Point that you've found?*

22:09 Oh it has always been here since I've been here, so I don't know what it was like before, but it seems to be very separate. They say something about on top of the hill, or down the hill, or something, it is all down there and it is not really part of what is happening up here. All the people that live down there seem to keep to themselves. There are a few new restaurants opening up down there, I've noticed and it might start to get a bit busier, but I don't really go down there that much and it doesn't really seem to change anything in the main part. Apart from being a lot busier and I suppose a lot more people with money coming into the area to live.

*Are you concerned by what may happen to the area down near the harbour?*

23:01 I think as long as they make sure that nothing out of character is built and that there is access to the foreshore and that there is park and all that sort of stuff that they keep promising they will do then it won't be too bad. It is a shame that that part of history seems that it is going to be lost in terms of the maritime and the

wharf and all that, which is obviously what this whole area has been built on.

*The working harbour.*

23:33 Yes. It is nice to see the big ships go past and they blow their horns and you can see them. Big ugly things that they are, but it is nice to feel that there is things going on around the place. I mean in the end I don't think that we have much say in such matters. We can have a lot of input, we being the people, into the smaller things like what might be built, putting an extra level on here and taking a level off there, those sort of compromises, but I don't think we can change the fact that it will probably happen.

*So given that you think that you may not probably stay in the area long-term perhaps what happens down there is not for you a real issue?*

24:29 I think it is an issue not in terms of me living here and not wanting it to be there, I think it is an issue more in terms of how it affects the whole area. I mean it is a big part of the city, it is an enormous area, it is almost as big as the entire CBD, so as a resident of Sydney I think it sort of affects everybody. But on a personal level even being where I am, if I lived in High Street or one of the streets overlooking it I think I'd be a lot more concerned.

25:20 END OF TAPE MP-BSC5 SIDE A

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25:21 START OF TAPE MP-BSC5 SIDE B

*Now Fiona what is the number of your house in Windmill Street?*

25:35 I live at number 90 Windmill Street.

*You mentioned that you had had some renovations done just recently, what did you have done?*

25:47 Originally I just wanted to replace the bathroom, that was a very small project and it turned into a very big project. I ended up replacing the kitchen, replacing the bathroom, replacing all the wooden floors and recarpeting and repainting the whole house.

*Did you have to get any Heritage permission to do those renovations?*



26:18 I was very careful to not do anything that would require that. I didn't move any walls, or make any holes in the outside of the house, or change the colour of anything because I'd heard stories about how long all of that stuff took. I know my neighbours in number 92 installed air-conditioning recently and they said it took about nine months to get Heritage permission to have the little drain from the air-conditioning that goes down the outside of the house, even though you can hardly see it, so I didn't want to have to wait around for all of that. At the moment I want to change my front door and I'm thinking I have to lodge a Heritage permit to do that and to repaint the outside of the house. I'd quite like to do it but I'm not sure if I have the energy to go through all of that. No, I didn't need to for what I did.

*You were saying there are lots of stairs in the house, so give us an idea of what the house is, how it is set out.*

27:15 It's a four-storey terrace so off Windmill Street you go in on the main level. There's a small living area, dining area and kitchen, it is all open. The kitchen, I think used to be a balcony which they've closed in and turned into a kitchen. Then from there you go downstairs to a bigger living area, which is like a basement, and that opens onto a courtyard garden and the courtyard opens at the back onto Ferry Lane. Then from the main level if you go up there is a floor with the main bedroom and bathroom and that opens out onto a balcony. Upstairs from that there is an attic room which we are using as a study, or a second bedroom. The stairs up to the top level are almost vertical, very steep.

*Have you any idea how old the house is?*

28:13 It has been on my list of things to do for a very long time, to go to the Council and go through the records and find out exactly when it was built and who built it and all of that. Originally I was told it was 1840s but then I've seen a picture of the street in I think 1852 and it wasn't there, so I'm not sure, I think it might be 1860s. I was definitely told it was 1840s when I bought it but that is something I should know, it is very remiss of me.

*You mentioned earlier that you thought that perhaps if you had children the stairs would be a problem and you may at that stage move out of the house and find something else.*

28:56 Well my experience with kids is that they run around a lot and running up and down those stairs all day is a killer - even normally I find that I've always got very sore legs from going up and down all the stairs. Worrying about children falling down

them and things. I think it is just modern-day laziness that it would be possible to have a child in the house, but it would be quite hard work.

*So your decision to move would be based solely on perhaps the house not being suitable, not because you felt the area was not safe for children? Or that you wouldn't want to be in an inner city area with children?*

29:39 I wouldn't be worried about it not being safe for them. Probably when they got a bit older I'd be worrying that they would get in with the wrong crowd or whatever. There are certainly groups of kids, I don't know how old they are but they are probably only eleven, twelve, thirteen, they always seem to be roaming around and getting into mischief and you would always be worrying about what they were up to. I suppose that is just what kids do and it is probably perfectly healthy for them to be doing those things but I would be worrying. Also I think these days people's expectations are very different to what they were a hundred years ago when these houses were built in terms of when you have kids. Everybody now thinks that to have kids you should have a big backyard and you should have a swimming pool and the kids need their own bedroom each and all of those things which they don't really need, but that is just what we think they need.

*When you first moved here and since you've been here for a little while now, how were you accepted by the community?*

30:47 I think it is very hard to tell because I haven't had a lot of interaction with the community apart from my immediate neighbours. I found it initially very difficult because as far as I know there isn't really anybody else of my age living in the area, maybe a few people that are a bit younger than me living with their parents. I don't think that there are any other young couples in their twenties living in houses in Millers Point, maybe down on the wharf there might be some.

*What about the community in general?*

31:24 Well that's what I mean, because the community is very different to me. There's a lot of older people, there's a lot of retired people, there's families with younger children and it is quite hard to make connections with people that you don't have anything in common with. That is what I initially sort of found, but then as I got to know a few people you realise that they might be a different age group or a different type of person but you still do have things in common with them. But it is quite difficult to meet people, I think, because everybody knows each other and

when they see me or people that they don't know around they assume that they are tourists or not living here. I am fairly shy with going up to people and saying, 'Hi, I live here, let's be friends,' introducing myself to people. So I don't think it is an unfriendly community but I think that you have to make the effort to go and say, 'I live here and I've seen you around, where do you live, how do you fit in? Let's have a chat.'

*You were prepared to be involved in the community because you were one of the first people when the oral history project was advertised to be in contact and say you wanted to be involved in that, so you have a desire to be involved in the community?*

33:08 Yes I think it is very important to be involved in the community that you live in, I think it is a big problem these days that so many people aren't and they just live somewhere and don't make any attempt to meet people. I think when this project came along and we got the letter about it I thought that would be a perfect opportunity to meet people, as well as to find out more about the history of the area and things which are very interesting to me. That is one of the reasons I originally moved here because it has such a fascinating history and hearing people talk about their own history is a very interesting way of learning about it.

*So you have made some contacts within the community because of your involvement in the oral history project?*

I think so. I recognise a few more people now. I always see Ray Newey, who I interviewed, I see him a couple of mornings a week playing tennis and we always say good morning and have a little chat and he is quite a well-known character around here.

*What about the local shops, do you use the local shops?*

34:16 Yes. We now have a supermarket but until recently it was the little Lebanese man on the corner who apparently has been here forever and all of his extended family seem to work there, they are very strange in there. He only talks to me in French normally, which is very strange, and I'm sure he charges me twice as much as he charges everybody else because he seems to look at the price and then sort of charge me something else. He has been known to call me 'rich girl' and to call my boyfriend 'rich boy', I think he is just joking, but it is a bit strange. He is just a bit of an eccentric man, but he is very nice and he is very friendly. He is normally reading the newspaper when you go in and he'll start chatting about the war in the Iraq or something and to get into a political discussion while you are buying your milk is

quite interesting.

*Does it annoy you to be referred to in that way as 'rich girl'?*

35:17 Yes. I don't know whether people know, people probably do have a little mental list in their head of exactly who owns their houses and who doesn't, probably everybody knows how much I paid for my house and it all goes around the grapevine or whatever, but it is not very comfortable to have people thinking that, marking you down. I don't think of myself as a rich person and I certainly don't think that I'm one of those stuck-up women that I never wanted to be when I was at school, so it is a bit uncomfortable. Especially if you have neighbours who are Housing Commission, I know they were at the auction when I bought my house and they probably think it is absolutely ridiculous that somebody paid that much money to live in a house like theirs when I am sure they would rather have a nice house out in the suburbs with a garden and lots of space. So it is always an uncomfortable issue, but I don't think he really means anything by it when he says it.

*You think he is really just being perhaps...*

Silly, maybe.

*You should call him on it one day perhaps.*

36:34 'You really shouldn't call me that - it makes me very uncomfortable,' and then he'd laugh at me again. No, he's a nice man.

*Fiona you bought your house in Millers Point several years ago, when you were looking around was there much on offer at the time?*

37:01 No, it was the only one for sale, I think it was the only one that had been for sale for quite some time. The agent said, I don't know if the figures are exactly true, there was about ten freehold houses in the area, which obviously is not very many. Since I've lived there no other freehold places have come on the market. Most of the properties are on the ninety-nine year leases. In Windmill Street for about a year there were two properties on the market in my block, both of them needed a lot of work done on them and both of them have just come off the market. Nobody bought them obviously, which is interesting, but I think a lot of people don't want to spend a lot of money renovating a place that is on a leasehold arrangement.

*Do you think the Department of Housing in time will sell off more of the old houses around here? Do you think there is interest in people buying?*

38:10 I think they will probably have to as it gets more expensive to maintain these places and for the same amount of money they could be buying a lot more properties somewhere else. Especially as there is a lot of places now that seem to be empty in this area, either because too much money needs to be spent to fix them up or because people don't want to live here. It is ridiculous for them to be holding onto empty properties when there is a huge waiting list of people waiting for places. I don't think they will get rid of the whole lot but I think they will probably look at selling off parts of it.

38:58 That raises the question of whether people would be interested in buying it, which is an interesting question. Since I've bought my place I've heard all sorts of varying opinions about whether people would like to buy in this area. A lot of people say, 'No way,' and a lot of people say they'd love to and it is very hard to know what places are worth because there is nothing to compare to. I went to an open house for one of the new terraces on Pottinger Street last weekend and the real estate agent there was saying there was huge amounts of interest lately in buying older houses in this area but that nothing ever comes on the market and I thought that was quite interesting because when I bought my place I was the only person that bid at the auction, so there was no interest then.

*So the real estate people are saying that there is interest in the old houses, but by the same token people that may be interested in living here are concerned because the only ones available are on ninety-nine year leases and you are saying that puts them off a bit.*

40:16 I think that is a concern for some people and I also think that the Housing Department thing is a big concern for a lot of people. The real estate agent was basically saying quite openly that she thought prices would double around here when the Housing Commission left and that that was going to happen soon. She was quite openly saying that to everybody that came in, 'This area is going to be fabulous when the Department of Housing moves out.' No evidence for that, but obviously that is their marketing ploy, especially for people moving into those newer places, there are families living in those places and they want to be in a safe area. I think a lot of them have moved in under the pretext that it is going to be changing a lot soon and now is a good time to get a bargain before the prices sky-rocket. It will be very interesting, both as a resident and as an owner in the area to see what happens in terms of the prices, which is very closely linked to what happens to the Housing Department stuff



I think just because of people's perceptions, I think. But I don't think that they will ever entirely leave the area, I think there are too many links and too much history, but maybe that doesn't mean anything to them any more, I don't know.

*Do you think the heritage is important to them, maintaining the heritage of the area and the houses?*

41:46 I don't know if it actually is but I think it should be. I think they are part of the government and the government should as a whole be interested in keeping the properties in government hands so that they are able to keep them the way they want them and make sure that the area maintains its atmosphere.

*Its village atmosphere.*

42:09 I think if it was just the Department of Housing trying to operate as a business it would be absolutely ridiculous for it to keep any of these places, but it is not a business, it is the government and hopefully they have some kind of higher thoughts.

*But you think somewhere down the track perhaps there will be many more houses that are leased-off by the Department of Housing therefore bringing in independent people?*

42:41 I think it is something that has to happen gradually but I think a lot of people wouldn't want to live here until the proportions have changed significantly. So the first few people that start to move in as private people - some people love it and a lot of people wouldn't go near it and I think you just have to find the right people.

*So you feel it is an individual choice as to whether people think they can cope with living in the area?*

43:11 Personally I love it, it is so much more interesting than living in Paddington with thousand of other twenty-something yuppies who all have small dogs and small children and look exactly the same. There is so much more interesting atmosphere and things, you just have to find the right people, I think.

*Maybe the real estate people should employ you to spread the word. Fiona is there anything else that you'd like to add?*

43:46 No I think we've covered everything.

*Okay, well thank you very, very much for being part of this oral history program.*

It was a pleasure.

44:07 END OF INTERVIEW WITH FIONA CAMPBELL AND END OF TAPE MP-  
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