

NSW DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING

'Millers Point Oral History Project'

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: **Joyce Feeney**
TAPE NUMBERS: MP-FH9
INTERVIEWER: Frank HEIMANS
DATE AND PLACE: 22 July 2005 at Berkeley Vale NSW
DURATION OF INTERVIEW: 56 mins 34 secs
RESTRICTIONS ON USE: Nil

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.

00:00 START OF TAPE MP-FH9 SIDE A

00:02 Tape Identification

Can you tell me first what was your maiden name?

00:34 Doohan.

Sounds Irish is it? The family is Irish, the Doohan family?

Yes, they came from Ireland but I don't know how far back. My son does all the family history.

On your mother's side?

01:00 Her father was Scottish and her mother came from Belgium. My grandmother's name was De Soto and my grandfather's name was McDonald, that's on mum's side.

When were you born actually Joyce, what year?

1934.

Were you born at Millers Point?

01:28 No, I was born in the hospital at Paddington, the Royal Women's Hospital at Paddington.

But your family lived at Millers Point then?

No they lived at Balmain, in Duke Street. When I think I was six months old dad got the house in High Street, 32 High Street, they lived downstairs. Then when they had the electricity put on dad went upstairs to 32A, so in High Street we stayed.

Why did they move upstairs when the electricity was put on?

Because mum thought it was better for the children, she'd rather us upstairs it was much nicer.

Nothing to do with the electricity?

02:10 Oh no, but just when they put it on they gave mum the choice - if she wanted to go upstairs or stay down and she thought she'd go upstairs, so there we stayed.

So it must have been the Maritime Services Board then?

No, I think it was the Darling Harbour Trust.

The Harbour Trust.

02:32 I think it was called the Darling Harbour Trust, or something like that. That stayed really until after we were married because when we moved in down to 44 High Street it wasn't the Maritime Services Board, the Maritime took it over after that, a fair well after.

So what are your earliest memories?

02:58 Oh, I suppose going to kindergarten and just having all the friends and still got them, they are still all there. Not at Millers Point, there is a lot of them aren't there now.

Was it the Lance Kindergarten?

Yes. There are some photos out there I will show them to you, that is it up on the wall.

Do you remember anything about the Lance Kindergarten days or were you too small to remember?

03:22 Oh no, it was quite good. We used to go down to.....they sent us away somewhere and we stayed down there. The distance between the age of eighteen months and five, so I don't know how old I was when we went there, but it was down at Thirroul, they took a few of us down and we stayed I think it must have been a week, or a couple of days or something like that, that was quite good. Then we used to go on picnics and Miss Francis was the head lady there and she came back after - when my children went there she came back as head of the whole of the Lance Kindergarten. It was a very good kindergarten that taught us to read and write, so when we went to school up at Fort Street we just went into class knowing what we had to do.

Teaching you to read and write at kindergarten - that is amazing.

04:27 It was just like A-B-C and count up to ten or something like that, so when you go up to Fort Street you already know what school is going to be like. We went from nine to three, which was natural, and it was still the same children that were at the Lance Kindergarten that went up so we were more or less into class all the time until we left sixth class. During one time they were building Fort Street, what it is now Fort Street Primary, and the girls were down in Kent Street, in an office type of thing. When you wanted to go out to play you had to go through a window to go out and play. The boys were separated from us then, they all had to go over towards Trinity. Then when it opened up, I think it was 1942, we all got together again. Not that it made any difference because we all lived around, we all still talked with one another. Then when we went to high school, I don't know, it was terrible.

But you stayed with the same children all the time did you, right through even to high school years?

05:53 Well the girls yes, some of us did. If we wanted to do Home Science we went to Paddington and if you wanted to do languages and that, well you went to William Street High. You could never go to Fort Street High you had to go to William Street High to do three years and then they let you go down to Fort Street High. I suppose there was about eight of us, we wanted to do Home Science so we did that, but we were at Paddington, I think twelve months and they closed it and we had the choice of going to Dover Heights or Randwick. We thought Dover Heights was a bit far out so we went to Randwick and that was far too.

Now tell me a little bit about how far your family goes back to Millers Point, did your parents and grandparents live there as well?

My grandparents lived there until they died.

Where were they living?

06:56 I think Ma, that was my grandmother, she lived in High Street, but then they went to Princes Street which is not there any more. Then she lived on the corner of Kent and Argyle Place, there used to be a chemist shop, I don't know what it is now. You go in off Argyle Place, you go up those little stairs and that, well she lived there and then she got a place in Windmill Street and she stayed there. My aunt, she lived with her and one uncle until just recently, a few years ago, when Auntie Lil died. Auntie Kit, that was one of dad's sisters, she ended up in Kent Street but she used to live in Munn Street.

Now your grandfather, do you know what sort of a job he had?

07:57 Don't know nothing about him at all. She married twice, the first one was a Doohan, that was his name, but no one ever spoke about him. There seemed to be a mystery about him, I don't know what the mystery is but there seemed to be. It is only just recently that a few of us, another cousin, we said it was a pity we didn't ask more questions but I don't think we would have been told anyway, whatever it was I really don't know. They were a very close family, my father's sisters and brothers. I don't think we even thought of it because Ma, when we were born she had remarried and that was Pop, his name was Tom. She ruled the roost anyway, she was on of those grandmothers you took very strict notice of.

What was your father's job?

09:11 He worked for Nock and Kirby's first and then he went into the Army or something, and then he was a waterside worker. I think he was a waterside worker.

Was he in the Army during the war then, he went overseas did he?

09:52 No, no. He fell out of a window and the bones in his feet, the top part, they took them, I don't know what happened, and he had bad feet. The Army just took him and he stayed at Bathurst, oh he did go up to Queensland and that, but he didn't have to march or anything like that, he couldn't do it.

Tell me a little bit about your father's waterside worker days, what you know about that? I mean was he involved in any disputes or strikes and things like that?

10:30 Oh yes, if they went on strike they went on strike. I mean if they said you come out on strike you went out on strike, dad just went along. He didn't join anything, I suppose he joined the union and that, but they were very good to him when he got very sick and they were very good to my mother as far as paying her certain money. Whether dad paid into something or not I don't know but I can't fault them on that at all, they were very, very good. I think even when dad died they paid a certain amount too which was quite good as far as

helping her. I don't think they had it easy when we were young but we certainly had everything we wanted, I mean we didn't starve, put it that way. A lot of them I think did but we didn't. But then High Street was funny because everyone knew one another so everybody helped one another.

11:41 Like there was a lady lived up the street and they didn't believe in buying presents for their children at Christmas time, don't get me wrong, they had the money if they wanted to but they just didn't and I don't know why, they were Catholics anyway, so all the women like mum and some of the others they used to buy them presents so they always had something to give to them, like a doll for one of the girls and something else so they didn't miss out. They didn't get a lot but they got something, which was quite nice.

Now you are probably too young to remember it, your parents and the whole family went through the Depression years - do you know anything about those years?

12:21 Only what they told me. There were a few of them, the whole street probably, one of the fellows used to go to sea, so when the boat came in and the food that was left on the boat he used to bring it and he'd divide it up among the street to give to everyone. Most of the women went to work anyway, like mum was a cleaner, doing the floors and that. There were about four of them in the street that I know did that. We would have been far too young, I think it was more or less coming out of the Depression when we were born.

How would you class your family though, would you say they were middle-class, were they poor?

13:18 I think they were just middle-class. It was a funny thing about the Point because everyone seemed to be on the same type of thing. Well, High Street, I don't know any other streets but High Street, there wasn't really any wealthy people there, we all knew that. Winter time we'd all get new coats but all the kids got theirs and it was great. Everyone would come to school and say, 'We've got our coats,' 'Oh yes, we got ours.'

Who provided the coats?

14:04 Our parents bought them but it was just that everyone seemed to get them. Everyone got a new dress for Christmas and always new shoes and I think it made you feel good, whereas now, and I am the same, you give your kids everything, whatever they want you try and buy for them. I don't think we could have got any more than what we did at the time.

What sort of childhood memories do you have about growing up in Millers Point?

14:42 Quiet good really. I never thought particularly much about Millers Point that is just where I came from and that was it. I know a lot of people didn't like Millers Point, we knew

that at school. Not until we went to high school, the Home Science school, we were told it was bad enough we went to Paddington but we came from Millers Point and that was a terrible place. We all looked at one another and thought what is terrible about it and they'd say, 'Oh it is a waterfront,' but I'd rather walk around there than anywhere at all. We used to come home, we'd walk up Argyle Cut and we didn't think anyone was going to hit us or anything, it was just one of those things. We had a murder in our street, that was exciting.
Tell me about that.

15:38 Well I don't remember very much but the milkman found him, and he was in a car up the top end of High Street, probably about four houses up from when Margie lives, Margaret Anderson. We just weren't allowed to walk up that way to go to school we had to cross over and everyone wanted to have a look but we weren't allowed to look. It was exciting up at school, everyone was talking about this, no one knew anything but it was just one of those things.

How old would you have been when that happened?

I don't know, I suppose I'd be between seven and ten.

So in the 1930s, or early 1940s.

16:26 Yes. We left sixth class in 1945 and I was at high school in 1948, so that is how I can remember that.

Was it while you were still in sixth class?

16:45 No, it was before sixth class. I know it was at Fort Street so we were there from 1942 to 1945, so it was in between that period of time.

Who got murdered, do you know, did you ever find out?

I think it was in the paper and that but to us it was just a game, well not really a game, I don't know what you'd say it was, but it was just something different, something that really happened.

Were you fairly free as kids? Did your parents tell you not to come home after a certain hour, that sort of thing?

When we got older?

No even younger than that, when you were just children?

17:30 Well we didn't go very far, basically all our life was just centred around the Point. Being girls we weren't allowed to go up to the playground because mum didn't like us going through the subway so all of us in High Street used to all play together. Whether we played out in the street or we went to one another's place that is how we just did it. It made us

very close, all of us, I think it was much better than in the inner suburbs. In the inner suburbs you could go to a local theatre - we couldn't because we didn't have one so we had to go into town to the movies and we had to be about eleven or something before we were allowed and it was only to the matinee, we weren't allowed to go at night time or anything like that.

What were you thinking about doing when you were getting towards the end of school, what kind of work were you looking for?

18:46 I was going to work in an office, I knew what I was going to do - I wanted to work in an office, and I did.

Where was the office?

18:57 The first one I worked for Mutual Acceptance in Challis House, in Martin Place, so that was quite good. Then I went up to Morley Johnson's and worked in their office. There was another little place I worked at for a while. But I never worked after I got married, I didn't work then, and then I went back when the kids were in primary school, in about fourth or fifth class and I worked locally then, ended up in a paper shop.

Did your mother work too?

Yes. She worked in the canteen on the waterfront.

Serving meals to the men?

Yes, making the sandwiches, they'd come in and order their sandwiches, so she did that. *So she had a full-time job as well.*

20:06 Yes, it would have been. That started about seven, seven thirty. She worked at a printing place, she worked at Cowan's up in Kent Street, that is not there now. It was a printing place.

What was the first house you lived in, in High Street?

32 High Street and then we went upstairs to 32A.

What was 32 like, can you remember what it was like before you moved upstairs?

Exactly as it is now. Me, I only remember upstairs.

Can you describe upstairs, the layout, how many rooms there were?

20:54 You went up the stairs, there was the stairs, and then you got the long hallway. Then off to the right of the hallway you had one bedroom and that had the balcony. Then you come to the second one and that was another bedroom for us. The third room was another bedroom and then we had the big dining-kitchen. Went out of that onto a little lobby way and

there were stairs going up, which went up onto the roof. Then you had this laundry which was on the left hand side of this little lobby and it had a set of tubs and a copper and a gas stove and then you had your bathroom and your toilet. It was all enclosed. Down in Windmill Street and Kent Street some of them were outside but ours were all flats, so everything was in.

How many of there were you in the family?

Three children and my mum and dad.

Was it crowded?

22:20 No, no. Dorrie and I had one room, mum and dad had another and Billy had the back room. Then one of mum's brothers came over and he lived with us, he stayed with us.

So there were three children and your mother and father.

22:48 Then my uncle came and lived with us, he was working at the *Telegraph*, he was fourteen. He was there until he went into the Army, he enlisted and he was eighteen when he enlisted. He went up to Bathurst with dad, but then he went to New Guinea after. Then another brother came over and he lived with us for a while but not that long.

So it was pretty full house most of the time.

23:23 Well not as many as some of them. Like there was a Mrs Connaghan that used to live in our street, I don't know if you have met any of them at all, and she was there and she had about seven children, still in the same type of space we had. There was Mrs Donnelly, she had five. There were a lot who had big families. Mrs Connaghan, she used to live there and then she got a place up in Kent Street, a really lovely big house, it had a big front verandah and it was really nice.

So if you have that many children in one place like that you'd have to put three or four kids in one room, wouldn't you?

24:16 You really would yes. I mean upstairs was better because you had the balcony and ours was eventually glassed in. I think it was after my son was born, we glassed that in. We had all the canvas blinds that came down so mostly the boys always slept out there on the verandah.

What was a mother's life like in Millers Point, your mum's life, how would you describe it?

24:55 She seemed happy. She had her friends. My mother wasn't very old, she was very young, she was forty-one when I had my son. They used to have a dart club up at the hotel and the women played that. They used to have turn-outs that they all got dressed up. I don't know what it was, it might have been the dart club that did all this, but they used to go to

those things. They didn't go to the theatre or anything like that but in their little circle they did.

25:47 We used to go to Clifton Gardens when we were kids, we used to go and stay there. We used to go down Saturday night or Friday night and come home Sunday. They used to have huts so all the children could sleep in the huts and the adults could play their cards and stay up all night if they wanted to. Every time anyone went anywhere it was just with the same crowd all the time and you didn't really go anywhere else, so that was it.

The adults slept in the huts with the kids?

Oh no. They all knew one another, they weren't too far away.

What sort of entertainment did your parents have, did they play cards?

They played cards.

Do you remember any of the games they played, was it Euchre?

I don't play cards at all, I know nothing about what they played.

But your mother had friends that she played cards with?

It was always the women and the men, they'd all played together. They would be at our place or they'd go next door, or go round to aunty somebody's place.

What was the pub life like?

27:12 Most of them drank at the Palisade, the crowd that mum and dad went with and of course they were very good friends of them. The women, if they wanted a drink they'd go to the Palisade too. Some of the others used to go to the Nelson because the fellow that ran that he was a Catholic, he was always called Dadda Pierce, I don't know why but that was his name, and he was very good to the Catholic church. Don't get me wrong, he was good to Fort Street too but he gave more to St Brigid's. The Armstrongs, who owned the Palisade, they gave equal. If we were having something up at school and asked they would give an equal donation, whereas if we went to the Nelson they wouldn't give the same. He was very good, we had a baseball team and they got that up and he supplied all the uniforms for it.

Was it a women's team?

No, it was a men's baseball team, they used to play out at Queens Park.

So there was a support system in the community?

28:38 Oh yes, it was very good. It still was, even when my kids were going to school, it was exactly the same. They were the main two hotels where mum's friends went to, either the Nelson or the Palisade.

So the women had a pretty good life too, obviously.

29:03 I would say so, yes, very friendly. I think that is why they all stayed there and didn't want to move. There was one lady, Mrs Thompson, and she had a place up near Budgewoi and when they retired Harold wanted to live up there and she ended up coming up, but she just wanted to go back. She wanted to come back and sit on the front stairs and talk. They used to go round to the hotel sometimes, mum didn't do it but a few of the others did, take all their vegetables, their peas and beans, and peel them in the little back room.

29:56 END OF TAPE MP-FH9 SIDE A

29:59 START OF TAPE MP-FH9 SIDE B

What were your best childhood memories, do you think, of Millers Point, when I say Millers Point what sort of pictures come in your mind of things that you did?

30:18 All the time I think of the Point I just think of all my friends. I don't know if they have told you, they have a back to school reunion thing down at the Captain Cook, which is the first Saturday in March and there have been quite a few that have turned up. We went to a couple but it is a hassle to go from here because you've got to get a bus from here to get the train and then you've got leave early, and if you don't leave early then you get back late. I don't bother going down now but I still keep in touch with most of them. Lillian, she moved up to Queensland but she comes down. A few of them live down Narrabeen way, so they come over, the Donnellys and a few of them down there. Pearl is up here, that Lillian's sister, then there is Ivy, she's up here too.

All on the Central Coast? Now what was the religious life like in Millers Point, did you go to church, did you go to Sunday School?

31:36 We went to Sunday School because we were Protestants. There were two groups, the Protestants and the Catholics, but we were all friendly. I didn't find this out until later on, they got a house in Merriman Street and they said, 'Oh, got to go and live in Merriman Street,' and I said, 'It's quite all right, there is nothing wrong with it.' They said, 'But the Catholics live there.' I said, 'Catholics live everywhere - what difference does it make?' They said, 'Oh no, that is the Catholic place,' and I came home and thought how stupid can you be? Apparently Lower Fort Street, down in Dawes Point, apparently that is more Protestant down there than what the other parts were but in High Street it was half and half, well I presume it was

anyway.

So everyone got on well with each, the Catholics and Protestants?

32:33 I mean my girl friends were Catholics so to me it was just as easy to go to church with them as I got older. I mean dad was a Catholic and mum wasn't.

So the house you described for me was in High Street, what number in High Street was it?

Thirty-two.

Did you move after that somewhere else in Millers Point or not?

No, still lived in High Street. After I was married we moved into 44 High Street.

What was that like, describe that place to me.

33:10 It was exactly the same but it was downstairs and we had no balcony, we just had that front verandah downstairs. They weren't done up - when we got into 44, I think it probably was the same with mum when she went up there, there was a fuel stove in the big dining room, lounge room type of thing, and I didn't like that so we got rid of that. There was a gas stove but there was no bath heater, you had to buy all that yourself. There was no copper or anything.

No hot water?

No, no, no, you supplied that. The rent was cheap enough anyway so you didn't have much.

When we got down there I think it was fifteen shillings and sixpence a week we paid.

Which year was that?

1964.

That was a pretty good rent, wasn't it, people were earning about ten or twelve pounds a week, the average wage.

34:39 I don't know. I know everyone nearly had a heart attack because they put it up to five dollars, the rent up to five dollars at one stage, they were all going isn't it terrible. With the kindergarten, and my two children were going, my children. When my son started it was seven and sixpence a week and that included a hot meal, we didn't supply it, they supplied that. With my daughter, by the time she left it was a dollar fifty or something, which was very, very cheap. You had to help, everyone did a bit, you had kitchen duty and then you had to scrub the beds and that at the end of the year, their little beds, but you didn't have to buy the meal, which to me was fantastic. They got the fruit and then you got a hot lunch and then you got sweets and the kids still got the milk. That was the same when we went too. But I think the Council paid half and Lance Kindergarten did the rest.

They were subsidised. Now tell me where did you meet your husband?

36:16 It would be at a basketball game at Newtown Police Boys' Club.

How old were you then?

I was in my twenties, might have been about twenty, or nineteen, something like that.

What was the attraction?

36:44 I don't really know. There was another girl from the Point - she went to see some game and we went out there and met, there was Jack and a few of the others there, I just met him and that was it. My brother played a lot of basketball so I used to take him, so we knew most of the basketball crowd anyway and basketball was pretty big on the Point because a lot of the boys played it. My son and daughter both played, they still both play.

Did you get married at the Point?

At St Phillip's, up on Church Hill. You know where St Pat's is, St Patrick's Church?

Is that still there, St Patrick's?

37:45 It is just off Cumberland Street, or Harrington Street but it runs down Grosvenor Street there, well it is further up. St Phillip's is on the street that goes onto the Bridge, might be Clarence Street.

I believe it doesn't work any more as a church, is it still a church?

I wouldn't have any idea. I only got married there and I never went back, I don't think after.

How many children do you have?

Two.

You had them at Millers Point too?

Yes.

So what was it like for a young mother to bring up kids at Millers Point, what facilities were there and so on?

38:27 It was quite good. You know, you'd go round, you'd see the Sister and she'd tell you how the baby is going and how you are, so that was quite good. By having all the old ladies there they would tell you what to do, I mean you knew what to do and they told you. There was a lot of us around the same age so after the children went to kindergarten we started up the tennis club, so we played tennis once a week. Or we'd go and sit in some park, waiting for the kids to come out, so it was quite good. Went to a lot of balls, a few of us used to go out a lot. Sometimes they would go out, like all girls, so the men could mind the children, we had a lot of that type of thing.

It was arranged that the men would look after the kids?

39:27 Yes of a night time. I don't say we did it once a month or anything like that but whenever we wanted to. I had friends, Lawrie probably told you anyway, it was Tony Bradford, where we lived in 44 he lived in 46A upstairs.

That was the Deputy Lord Mayor of Sydney at the time.

Yes, so we went to a lot of things with him too. He got tickets and we could take the kids, they used to have parades so we used to go and sit right in front of the Town Hall and then we were invited in to eat in the Town Hall afterwards, which was really good, the kids liked that.

Now you said that Millers Point had sort of a bad reputation why do you think they got that reputation?

40:18 I think it was the waterfront and they just thought it had that element about it, that the waterfront just isn't a nice place. That was the only time we heard it, I mean all of us got a shock, we were standing at this assembly and this headmistress says this. She said Paddington was bad enough and we thought wonder what is coming now because a lot of the Paddington girls came over to Randwick with us. Dover Heights had just more or less opened, it hadn't been open very long.

Paddington was a bit slummy too in those days wasn't it?

40:57 Well I didn't think so, I thought it was great. We used to get this tram out to Paddington and see all these shops.

Were the trams still running at Millers Point when you were young?

Yes.

Where were the trams stops?

41:14 Right where the bus stop is now - isn't there a shed? There used to be a shed and you could sit down, that is where the trams used to come up there.

Outside the Abraham Mott Hall, you mean?

Yes. The trams were still running when we went to work and this other girl, she used to live in Argyle Place just over here and she was never on time to catch anything and the tram used to stop right outside and she'd come out like this, she had just painted her nails so she couldn't get up, 'Thanks for waiting.'

What number tram was it, the line number?

41:57 I wouldn't have a clue. You had to wait about an hour for a Millers Point tram, they never ran very often, I tell you. All these trams would be going down to Circular Quay, or

Fort Macquarie, but not ours. It was easier to walk home than to wait for a tram. Even when they put the buses on that was just the same, so it didn't make much difference.

Now some people have described Millers Point as a village atmosphere, was it a village when you were living there?

I would say so, yes.

In which respects was it a village?

42:45 The fact that you didn't really go out of it. You know when you read stories of England and all that, and you've got this little village, well when I tell anyone about it that's how I can describe it. We had about three grocers' shops, four grocers' shops, and you had the bootmakers, the barbers' shops were all there, so everything was just there. As things went on they just ended up closing them, I think it was a shame.

Do you remember any names of the grocer shop people, the occupiers, the owners of those, or the barber shop?

43:37 Well there used to be Ted the Barber's and Rube. Ted the Barber's used to be on the corner of Kent Street and Argyle Place and there was Rube Lewis's, his name was, and he had the other one in Argyle Place, down near the butcher's shop which was Duggan's butcher's shop, only Don Parrish took it over. Mrs McCremer owned the corner shop on the corner of High Street, then I think Mrs Smith and Miss Stark, they had it after that, then Roma Anderson had it, Marie's mum, she bought it and then after her Marie and Jackie Moran bought it, that shop. Then there was John Holly's. There was a Beatles owned a greengrocer's shop near John Holly's. Beachels owned a greengrocer's shop, over near John Holly's and then there was the barber's. When you came over to Kent Street you had a milkbar there and the only ones I can remember there..... we used to call it Gregg's. Marie and Tony had it, they were new Australians which we didn't have around there.

What nationality were they?

That is what I don't know.

There were supposed to have been a few Lebanese in the area in those days even.

I don't remember any Lebanese at all.

There is still a Lebanese corner shop there, opposite Trinity Avenue there, do you know it?

45:46 That is down towards Lower Fort Street. The greengrocer's shop was Leonard's Greengrocers, then there was another and I don't know who had that one, then there was Webb's shop in Windmill Street but that was owned by Australians when we were there.

Were there many people from other nationalities at the Point?

46:17 I don't remember very many at all, really. When I went to Randwick that was when I knew that there were other nationalities. We did have Aboriginals at the Point, not that I knew that then, but one was in our class and didn't look any different to me, probably was a bit darker. Dorothy, my sister had them in her class and I think there must have been some in my brother's class too. Chinese, that was the only other, the Chinese children.

There were Chinese were there?

46:57 Oh yes. We had twins in our class, Audrey and June Ma. Their mother was the most beautiful person you have ever seen, oh she was gorgeous. Then there was the Cummings and a few others, but they were the main two. Probably because Audrey and June were in my class, they had a younger brother too, we just used to call them the Chinese twins. They were lovely people, they really were. This is not in the Point really because it is down in George Street but there was a laundry man, he was Chinese, Mr James I think his name was.

Now when you went into those little shops to buy things was it a friendly atmosphere, they talked to you?

47:50 Yes, it could take you an hour to get your messages done. By the time you left home and you walked up the street, this was in High Street, you almost said hello to everyone going up and how are you and all of this and then you'd get to the shop and you'd sit down, there was always seats there, and you waited to be served because they were serving both sides and they'd be talking to you and then by the time you got back down it was the morning. You wouldn't want to do two or three shops.

Everybody would know you as well?

48:24 Oh yes, you just knew everybody, until I went to work in the paper shop, that is the first time anyone had called me Feeney, I was always Joycie Doohan. I still say the same about the girls that I went to school with, I never call them by their married name, like I'll say Joy Chubb instead of Joy Donnelly and Lillian Harvey has always been instead of Shearer and I was her bridesmaid. I hadn't seen her for years and years so I came up here, it was about forty years from the time she was married until I came up here, and I was her bridesmaid and we hadn't seen one another.

So you are still in touch with all these people that is good isn't it. How did the Point change during all those years you were there?

49:34 Pulling the bridge down opposite our place, that wasn't very nice. Where High Street is there used to be a bridge going across in the middle and then the wharves were on the other side, so we could go over there and play where we wouldn't be on the road and there used to be a big tower with a clock on it in the middle, and they pulled that down when they

were doing part of the waterfront, which was very sad. They closed Munn Street and that wasn't nice. I think when they started all that it wasn't the same any more, I don't know if it was the Housing Commission took it over or what. The reason we left was because of the people they were bringing into..... that is probably being a snob but I just didn't want people that had just come out of gaol living on top of me that were drug addicts or something. That really finished Jack and that was another thing, so we just decided that we liked it up here and he could get a job up here so we just came.

Which year was that that you came here?

50:57 1988. I mean he is a radiographer and he worked up here at Toukley and the radiography is over there. But then he had a heart attack so he had to give work up and that is why doesn't work now. I have never worked up here, I said, 'I am retiring,' when I left.

Do you miss the Point though?

541:28 No, not now. I miss the people, some of them, not all of them but I don't miss the Point at all, I think it just changed too much. Even when I went back for the reunion it still wasn't the same, there is something gone that was there before. Or maybe I have just got older and the ones that really made it for me weren't there, do you know what I mean. I think a lot of the older people were nice to us in the street, no matter what you wanted they were there to help you. No, I don't miss it at all.

But it was sixty years of your life before you left the Point, from 1932 to 1988, wasn't it?

Fifty-four years.

That is a hell of a slice of your life.

52:29 But I am saying the older ones older than me, like my mum and a lot of her friends, well a lot of her friends were still there but the ones older than that again they weren't there and it was just the people that made it had just gone. Everyone seemed to be living their own little life instead of coming back into the thing. Maybe it will come back, but I just don't believe in going back. I think there is a lot of us who think that way. There was another couple, the de Montfort girls, they are up at St Pat's, both of them work up there now, they are nuns. When they came back, one was overseas somewhere, helping people or something, they would have given anything to have got a flat back on the Point and it just wasn't the same, it really wasn't. And another girlfriend, when she got married she moved out to Regent's Park and she said she'd love to come back too, but after she came back for a few reunions she decided no, all her friends were up at Regent's Park, there wasn't anyone left at the Point at all.

So when did the big change happen do you think, that things changed for the worse for you?

54:11 I would say when they started those what they call pub crawl things, whatever year that was. They decided to make it a tourist type of place, come round and look. You wouldn't have met Shirley Ball, well she did a lot of good things and she had that house, but from then on to me it wasn't a tourist attraction, it was a nice place and we just didn't need the outsiders. I mean that is a selfish way of looking at something isn't it. I mean if they wanted it down on The Rocks they could have it but I don't see why they had to bring it up to Millers Point.

So what do you think the future is of Millers Point now, how do you think the future is going to be for the people living there?

55:11 I don't know. I was told years ago, by one of the really old ladies there - she had apparently had her fortune told or something, and they said, 'This is going to go through a change,' and that would have been her time. Then she said to her, 'It will go back to what it was, it will be the wealthy people here,' and it is coming true, isn't it? When you think of it all those nice big units going up, but I don't know if I want to live like that.

It is probably going to be too expensive to live there.

55:52 When you think the houses basically haven't changed at all and what we were paying and what now some of them are paying it is really not right. What they are paying for units down in Hickson Road, not that I have seen any of them anyway, we haven't been down there.

It is becoming exclusive isn't it. Is there anything else you want to talk about before we end the interview?

That's about it.

Well it was wonderful thanks very much, Joyce.

56:34 END OF INTERVIEW WITH JOYCE FEENEY AND END OF TAPE MP-FH9 SIDE B