

NSW DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING

‘Millers Point Oral History Project’

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEES:	April Harrison & Chantelle Shackleton
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INTERVIEWER:	Frank HEIMANS
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Chantelle Shackleton

April Harrison

Note: The opinions expressed in this oral history interview are those of the interviewees 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-FH26, SIDE A

00:03 Tape Identification

Well thanks for coming Chantelle, it was nice that you also could make it. I appreciate your input into the project. The Department of Housing wants to know all about what is happening in Millers Point for the young, so perhaps first I will start with April, April can you tell me your full name.

00:57 April Harrison.

No middle name?

April Kathleen Harrison.

When were you born, April?

28 March 1990.

01:12 Chantelle?

Chantelle Louise Shackleton and I was born 15 August 1986.

So when you were born were your parents living at Millers Point at the time?

01:25 Chantelle: No. I moved here when I was three from Dulwich Hill.

Do you know how it came to be that your parents did move here?

Chantelle: My mum just decided to move, I don't know why we came here. It was a nice area when we came and a nice house.

What house did you live in when you first came here?

01:53 Chantelle: 58 Kent Street, Millers Point. Am I allowed to say that?

You can if you like. If you are worried about it you don't have to say it.

Chantelle: No, no I'm right, I've lived there the whole time.

Okay. What about you April?

02:12 April: I moved from Waterloo when I was four. We were moving to Bondi and then we got a late call saying would we like to move to Millers Point and The Rocks. We moved to live at 38 Cumberland Street, The Rocks and I still live there now.

How do Millers Point people feel about people in The Rocks, do they consider it the same area, or do you look at it a bit different.

02:39 Chantelle: Well we have jokes about it, but it is all Millers Point to us really. Technically it is still Millers Point if you look at it.

April: It is called Millers Point and The Rocks on our letters and that.

So there no real difference.

Chantelle: We just sometimes...

April: Tease me about it.

Chantelle: If you are saying, 'Them MPBs,' or something, which is Millers Point boys, I don't know.

April: They tell me to go back to The Rocks.

Chantelle: It is just the name, but it is all Millers Point.

Are the Millers Point boys different from The Rocks boys?

03:07 April: There are no Millers Point boys.

None at all?

April: Only older ones.

Chantelle: But they class themselves as Millers Point.

April: We are all Millers Point.

Good. Now a little bit about you. Do your parents work in this area as well?

03:27 Chantelle: Yep. My mum works at Lance Kindergarten and my brother works up at Lend Lease, which is a building just up Kent Street. They help us a lot with mentoring and stuff, like they really help the community. I work in Cumberland Street, called KGV, where we grew up before the youth centre was here.

Is it the King George V

Yes King George V Recreation Centre.

You actually work there?

Chantelle: Yes.

Full-time job?

04:02 Chantelle: Well I ref and umpire basketball, but I do like a lot of things because they are all like family up there to me, because I've known them my whole life. I play a lot of sport up there, so.

April what about you?

04:17 April: My dad is in construction, so he goes around, is not in one place. My mum at the moment is working at the bistro at the Cromwell pub in Cumberland Street.

That's good. You are all Millers Point people. So you said Chantelle that you work a bit at the KGV – is that at the time when you are not at school, do you mean?

04:44 Chantelle: Well I did my HSC last year and then I did TAFE for the first six months of this year and I'm just having a break and I'm going back next year to TAFE. I just completed Certificate III in Fitness.

What do you hope to do with that?

05:04 Chantelle: Be a personal trainer.

Right. In a fitness centre you mean?

Chantelle: Yes.

This is how you keep in practice, at KGV, is it?

Chantelle: Yes. I've been playing basketball my whole life.

April did you also play at KGV when you were young, when you was a child?

05:23 April: Yes. When I first moved here that was the first place we went and we still go there now. Like we are playing netball there tonight at nine o'clock and we play a lot of sport there. Everyone knows each other and we go up the first Friday of every month for a community barbecue and play sport and that, so it is good.

So what memories do you have of how KGV used to be - I believe it has changed a lot hasn't it?

April: It was knocked down and rebuilt.

05:49 Chantelle: The old KGV was the best, but then again we were a lot younger and I guess a lot of things were more fun. This, where we are now used to be the gym, this was actually a gymnasium, and now they have moved that up to KGV and that when they've rebuilt. They had an OOSH Programme, which is sort of after school care, that's what they operate up there. It was good when we were OOSH, but it seems like it has gone downhill now, like not many people go there.

What's an OOSH Programme?

April: Out of School Hours, OOSH.

I see. When you were young what was it like?

06:27 Chantelle: Oh it was great. You'd finish school and you'd go to KGV until six o'clock, or until your mum picked you up.

April: Everyone would go, all of us.

Chantelle: Well when we were OOSH we just played sport really, that is all our group of friends did, but now I find the OOSH Programme.... I don't feel like kids enjoy it any more. That is just what I come across. Like all my friends' sisters and that don't want to go up there and stuff.

April: But they are a different bunch of kids to what we were.

Generations of kids have played there, I believe, even a hundred years earlier there was a

King George V.

07:12 Chantelle: Well our parents used to play there and stuff, well not mine, but a lot of parents around here actually grew up there and their parents. It is quite an historic area.

So how has it changed from what it used to be? Do you remember what it was like before it was changed, anyone? KGV.

07:35 Chantelle: Well I remember they had like this little shelter. The only shelter in the whole place was this little club house.

April: They had the outdoor courts.

Chantelle: It wasn't really that big.

April: There were two outside courts, one either side, and it just had a little play area, which doesn't seem much now, but we really, really loved it when we were little.

07:58 Chantelle: Like we used to play gladiators, because there was a little gauntlet thing. The touch games down there we used to play on this eighty metre to a hundred metre. I don't know if you ever saw the old KGV, down the bottom courts there was like two big basketball courts attached. It was like about a hundred and twenty metre, something like that, sized court and I remember the older boys who were like my brother's generation and then the generation up from there all used to come and play touch football. I was a real tomboy when I was younger, so I'd play with them. Up the top there was a little grass area where we used to play actually tackle football, which was quite entertaining, when you have little girls trying to get involved.

08:53 Yes we used to come down here and do gymnastics, to this place, which was the gym. It was just a fun thing. Like they used to have entertainment where they'd get like football players and stuff to come up there and you can win prizes and stuff. Christmas parties, everything. It used to be great up there, used to celebrate everything. Treasure hunts, Easter egg hunts, they used to have this little pool. When I was a kid it was favourite things for me. They used to have this thing that is called The Alligator, which is a long yellow tarp sort of stuff and you wet it and you slide across it, I used to find that really fun.

What about you April - have you got any memories too?

09:39 April: I was kind of the younger generation, behind Chantelle. I remember being out there watching them and like wanting to join in but never being able to, the boys were just too big for us. I was only there for three or four years but all I can remember now when Chantelle was talking when we used to play a game. You'd lean against the wall and you are sitting on a seat and whoever could sit out the longest. Like the youth people, like the carers, would just sit there and whenever anybody was out of control they'd just say, 'Play it,' and we would all sit there for hours.

10:18 Chantelle: That is the one where you lean down and you imagine you are sitting on a seat.

April: You are not allowed to move your knees or anything. They'd just stand there and laugh at us for hours because we would try so hard not to fall. We'd just give out a 'Hey'...

Chantelle: That's hide and seek.

April: They'd put a cone in the middle and you've got to make it to the cone before someone sees you.

Chantelle: Commando. The camps were fun, we used to do a lot of camps.

April: Snow trips.

10:43 Chantelle: No there wasn't snow trips at this one. Or there was in our parents' generations and that, but ours were more like Jamberoo. I remember the first ever camp that I went on was a Blue Mountains camp and we ended up coming home the next day because the weather was just terrible and we got lost and everyone just wanted to go home. There was another time we went on a Jamberoo camp - no it was a canoeing camp, sorry, and the trailer - the wheel fell off and we were on the highway and there were just all these sparks and we all thought we were going to like die. The camps were really fun.

Who organised all that at the time? Was that the Council?

Chantelle: It is all the Council, yes.

Were there other things to do apart from King George V? What sort of activities would you do apart from King George V?

11:34 Chantelle: Well when we were younger it was more like the only

activities you would be allowed to do is if you were with your parents, sort of thing. When the old centre was there I was still in primary school, April would have been pretty young. I think Year 5 is when they shut it down, when I was in Year 5. Would I have been?

April: Yes.

Chantelle: Basically it was freedom from your parents. I remember like every Friday night was barbecue night and it went to nine o'clock and all the parents came up. It was a good feel.

So what was it like to grow up in Millers Point as a kid, how would you describe it?

12:11 April: It was pretty good. As much as we might fight and argue we were all a pretty good bunch because we know what everyone is like.

Chantelle: I think it is a unique community. Like if you find other communities there's always groups of people who don't like each other. Places like Redfern and that - you find a lot of different groups wanting to fight each other, you just don't have that here, you just have one big group and you know everyone. The thing where you know our community is good is like New Year's Eve for example, it is like everyone is back in the area, whether they've moved, they come back for New Year's Eve. Everyone just knows each other and it is just the greatest atmosphere on New Year's in The Rocks.

13:05 April: It is really good because we are always behind each other, no matter what we will support each other, we are a close bunch. Like even now Helena, she's the youth co-ordinator, just joking she'll say, 'Did someone do this,' and we are like that. 'No.' She says, 'You can't just say no, if they did it you've got to tell Helena.' We never back down from each other and we are a really good bunch.

Do you know all the kids of your age now? Do you still have contact with them? Are they still living in Millers Point?

April: Yes. We are all here.

13:40 Chantelle: The other thing about like KGV is people who don't live in Millers Point still grew up in Millers Point, if that makes sense, like they spent every day practically in Millers Point. Like KGV's the place that made us all close and then the Youth Centre actually brought a lot of quiet kids from the younger and

brought them in and they are allowed now and now it is just a big group now, escalated sort of thing.

14:13 April: We have a kid, his name is Adam, his dad lives here and he has been here since he was little. He used to play cricket with us and he comes down all the time, he is just one of us. Even though he doesn't live here he is just here with us.

14:27 Chantelle: Like some of my best mates are here all the time, like boy mates that we've just grown up with through sport and whatever, because they used to come to KGV every day.

April: Chantelle makes a joke that these boys are going to be here forever and the next place they are going to go is next door for old people, the place for the older citizens. So they are going to stay here as long as they can and then move on.
Do you feel safe in this area as teenagers?

Chantelle: No.

April: Yes.

14:57 Chantelle: My mum like gets worried because I'll go and play basketball. Like for example we are playing netball at nine o'clock tonight, well usually I'm playing on my own and not with people from the area and I've got to walk down the tunnel and down the hill and I'm fine, I'm not worried. I guess that is pretty much everywhere, you feel safe in your area.

15:18 April: And we know everyone. We can't walk through the street without saying to an older person, 'Hi,' like you know them. Mum says, 'Where you are going? What time will you be home?' 'What are you worried about, we know everyone, everyone we see we know so nothing is going to happen.'

There are a lot of problems in other parts of Sydney as you probably know with drugs and things, is that happening in Millers Point as well do you think?

15:44 Chantelle: I prefer not to comment on that.

April: Not as much as other places. It is happening with all teenagers.

Chantelle: I would be lying if there weren't people in this community who do. But when we say drugs the people I know aren't into like heroin or speed. If I am being honest I am talking about marijuana. Personally I don't do it and never will, I'm a

sporty girl, so I don't touch any drugs. But marijuana I guess is the biggest thing in Millers Point, yes I think that's the big problem.

Yes I think it is pretty well everywhere so it would be very difficult for you to be excluded totally from it, I suppose. So do the boys protect you anyway?

16:28 Chantelle: Oh very protective. Well my brother and his boys were always protective of me and the young ones and the boys as well, so now these boys feel obligated to.

Let's talk a bit now about your parents' lives when you were young at Millers Point. What would your mothers do, say after a day's work, how would they entertain themselves?

Chantelle: Laying down on the lounge with a coffee and a book. Mum works a lot, she has an outside job as well from Millers Point, so when she's home she likes to lay around a little bit and clean up. I'm a bit of a messy child, so she cleans up.

17:20 April: My mum is going to work and she loves it. When people come down she can show off where she lives, Millers Point and The Rocks, like everyone wants to be there. She takes walks with hundreds of our friends and family around, 'Look at this, look at this.' She thinks she knows all the little secrets.

Chantelle: That is the other thing. Like when you go out and you speak to people, like you meet people, 'Oh where do you live?' 'Oh, I live in The Rocks.' You won't tell them you are Housing Commission because they think you are rich and you sit there. Then they go, 'Do you live in a house?' 'Yes.' They are like, 'Wow.' We all laugh about it because it is funny.

They think you are from the rich areas?

Chantelle: Rich area.

Well there is Walsh Bay, I guess.

Chantelle: They know like The Rocks, they just assume. Walsh Bay has just come.

It used to be that living in Millers Point was a no-no. In past generations people were actually afraid to say they lived in Millers Point because it was regarded as a bit of a slum in the 1960s. Did you know that?

18:23 Chantelle: I didn't know it was in the 1960s. It is starting to be now.

It is starting to be trendy now, isn't it?

Chantelle: Not really Millers Point, that's more Walsh Bay.

April: We do have a lot of up and coming things now like we've got the Lend Lease,

the place with the big egg.

18:45 Chantelle: I feel like in a way they want to get rid of all the Housing Commission. I can't see us all being here in the next ten to twenty years, just personally. This area is just a profit place and if someone with a lot of money can get a house or something in The Rocks then, you know, I just can't see this being Housing Commission for many more years to come.

Why do you think that is?

Chantelle: Because Sydney is money-hungry, our government loves money. That's my personal opinion anyway.

19:24 April: As much as we'd like it to be here in ten or twenty years it is just not possible. It is just a profit place - everyone wants in on it.

19:30 Chantelle: I just think with Housing Commission, I don't know, they want to have them in certain areas, I feel, and The Rocks is a very unique area to have Housing Commission houses. I just see what they are doing with Walsh Bay and eventually it is going to get up here. I have noticed the Housing Commission is really strict now and I've spoken to people, not in Millers Point but in other areas, they have just been kicked out for their rent being late, just simple things. The waiting lists are just long, long, long, I just can't see it being here in about twenty years, which is sad because it actually is a quite unique area. A lot of fun.

Tell me a bit about your school, the schools you attended. Did you start in Kindergarten?

20:21 Chantelle: I didn't start at Lance Kindergarten.

April: Me neither.

Chantelle: Because when I was younger I didn't want to leave my preschool at Marrickville. But we all attended Fort Street Primary. The education wasn't too good but it was a fun school.

April: There were only sixty kids when we were there.

Chantelle: At the most, we were struggling to get sixty. There were times there they wanted to shut it down, but it was convenient.

April: It was good.

They tried to shut it down while you were at school?

April: Yes.

Chantelle: Only because of the numbers, it was like struggling.

So what happened? How did the community react to that idea that they were going to shut it down?

Chantelle: There were commercials.

April: Trying to get more kids in.

21:10 Chantelle: I remember one thing, Cheese-TV just before they started, come down to our school when we actually gave them a lot of ideas. I don't know if you remember that April, I don't know if you were at the school. Cheese-TV - Fort Street actually gave them a lot of ideas, our school. We got to sit in the assembly hall and just talk to Jay and that before they started.

Which TV is that?

Chantelle: It was called Cheese-TV, it was like a cartoon show on Channel 10 in the mornings. It is still on, is it?

April: No.

They did a programme at Fort Street, did they?

21:41 Chantelle: Oh they'd come and just asked us for ideas and what did we think of the name Cheese-TV and what would we like to see? Then about three months later it was on air and it went for about five or six years.

Okay. Did the kids take part in that at all?

April: Yes.

What did you do? What ideas did you give them?

Chantelle: I was little.

April: I don't think we liked the name very much, I don't think we agreed with it very much.

22:13 Chantelle: Just about what cartoons we would like to watch. I think a lot of us were Cartoon Connection, was that the name? All of our ideas went from there. That was on Channel 7 with Agro. I think most of our ideas came from that show actually.

Do you remember any teachers' names from Fort Street school?

Chantelle: I remember all of my ones.

April: Me too.

22:41 Chantelle: I remember my favourite teacher was Miss Trevor, who was my Kindergarten teacher. Then she left. I had Miss Wellard (?) for Year 1 and 2. In Year 3 and 4 I had Mr Prince – no, I had Miss Barder. The best teacher was Miss Wells and she was Year 5 and 6. I remember she left when I was in Year 4 and I was so excited. No, Mr Prince was Year 3 and 4, sorry, Mr Prince was the Principal. I won't get started on him. I was really excited. I remember Mr Prince, he was just a teacher you didn't want to be with any more. I remember being in Year 4 getting excited because I was going to have Miss Wells, and Miss Wells left and I remember the whole school was crying and the whole school was sitting in the playground just bawling their eyes out. Then Miss Barder left and Year 5 and 6 we had to have Mr Prince and we were like, 'Oh my God, we've just had him for two years - don't make us have him for two more.' But Miss Barder came back. We had Miss Barder for Year 5.

24:09 April: But she had to leave because of the shortage - there wasn't enough kids.

Chantelle: I remember she came in with bags of clothes and little remembrance gifts and that for us and then she left. About two months later she came back.

24:25 April: I had Miss Thompson in Kindergarten - Year 1, Year 2 - Year 3, before I had Miss Ryan. In Years 5 and 6 I had Miss Shandley (?) and Mr Hewitt, who is the Principal now, Andrew Hewitt. I had him for a little bit too.

Chantelle: It is a different school than now.

In which way?

24:45 Chantelle: Well, when I attended the school I had Mr Prince my whole time. I guess a couple of times the teachers hit the children. I think all of Millers Point knows that, so it is no secret. Mr Prince had some weird ways of disciplining kids. The education - you didn't learn much at Fort Street when I was there, it was whether you wanted to learn or not.

25:24 April: Having Year 5 and 6 together before someone is going off to High School and then having Year 6 really learning more.

Chantelle: When Mr Hewitt took over the school actually got very educational.

April: More funding.

Chantelle: But apparently it got a lot more boring. When we were there like it was really fun.

Did the parents take part in much of the school activities too?

25:51 Chantelle: Yes they did, the P&C. Our school camps were good, Year 5 and 6 camps. It was only \$50 and we went for a week to The Basin – yeah, they were pretty fun.

That's good. So you are coming here to this youth centre, has that changed at all since you were younger?

April: There used to be a gym when we came here. When they set to close King George, when it closed down to be rebuilt, they brought us down here for a while.

26:21 Chantelle: To the Abraham Mott Hall, which was our centre for about a year while it was getting built. We used to be allowed to come into the gym a lot. I remember on Saturday mornings they used to have a kids' morning, where we could come in on a mini-tramp and jump onto the crash mat. But it was gymnastics in here, we did gymnastics, and we competed. I remember we did an Alice in Wonderland sort of performance once.

April: Aladdin.

26:51 Chantelle: Then when this first become the Youth Centre we were still in our KGV days for about the first two years or something - we were still like KGV. Then I came down here and until Helen came here this place was a 'drop-in' centre, if that makes any sense. I don't know if you have seen drop-in centres around Australia or anywhere else - you come in and do whatever you want, well Helen sort of organises sporting activities and in the holidays we have outings and she just keeps us like...

So tell me what you do here now? What kind of activities do you take part in?

April: Well for instance there are holidays on the beach. Laser Skirmish.

27:46 Chantelle: To be honest because I'm nineteen I don't come here much any more in the last, say, six months. I used to come here after school and that with

all my mates, I used to bring them down here from Glebe and stuff. But because things that entertain me now is just catching up with my school friends and that, that's what makes me happy. But when I come here I'll go on the Internet or play pool or table tennis. I sit here and I'll talk to Helen and Chin Tel (?) for like an hour or an hour and a half. That's basically what I do.

April: I come here every day, I am working up here all the time. I come here before work just to say 'Hi,' because everyone is always here. If you are looking for someone in between two and six I can guarantee they will be in this Centre or sitting out the front, I can guarantee it. It is just everyone is here, you catch up with everyone in Millers Point.

You said you come here before and after work, what kind of work is that?

28:54 April: I work in McDonald's at Circular Quay. Not much of work, but it is work, money is money.

So what is your favourite activity here, both of you?

29:07 Chantelle: The holidays. I think the holidays are good, because you get to do things like Jamberoo, for example. You get a Council bus to come and pick you up and you pay \$10 when it is usually like \$35 to get into Jamberoo. Things like the movies you pay \$5 for when you pay \$13. I know the money doesn't mean a lot, but when you go and do it anyway it is just fun. I like the activities in the holidays.

29:44 April: I just like when we're all together, that's an activity for me. Like coming here, all my friends from school, we went to Jamberoo on the bus, it took us like two and a half hours to get there and we had so much fun on the bus. We didn't get off, we just went the whole way. We were fighting over the music and no one is different, it was good, I liked it.

So these are the programmes that they put on here, are they - for the holidays?

Chantelle: For the holidays, yes.

30:19 END OF TAPE MP-FH26 SIDE A

30:20 START OF TAPE MP-FH26 SIDE B

Well what has been one of the best programmes you think they have had here?

30:32 April: I think we haven't been there yet.

Chantelle: Their budget has gone down now, so the excursions, a lot of them are in-centre activities now. When the holiday programme first started it was like going out every day. I personally loved the summers because I'm always at the beach in the summer and because they go to the beach a lot it is easier to just come here and get on a Council bus and then have a barbecue, because I love my barbecues and everyone is there. You get a free ride there, instead on the bus for fifty minutes picking up everyone at each bus stop - it is just easier that way.

Okay. What about you April, what do you do in the summer here?

31:20 April: We went to camp two years ago, our school, and we went to Cataract Park. It is like a boot camp, you go in the mud, you do like army cadets and that, and we are doing that next Thursday, so I am really excited. I think it is really good with our activities, what we do, because we have a boy out there with no arms as you've probably seen and he is exactly like us, no one treats him differently he's the same, no one thinks of him differently. He plays touch, he plays soccer, he plays basketball, kicks soccer balls, he's one of the cheekiest ones out of the lot. Just the things that Helen can set up for us to make him come with us, like we see other centres and they don't even do that, they fight each other and that. With ours he is so good and we look after him and make sure everything is okay, he's all right, we feed him. Like we are going to Cataract Park on Thursday and there are some things we thought, me and Ashley my friend, maybe he can't do it. So we came to speak to Helen and she'd already e-mailed them and asked is there anything that he can't do? Can we change it to make sure he can do it? It is really good that we can do that, because some people make out it is a disability.

Chantelle: No one in this area does.

April: He's not different, he is the worst out of the lot, he's the cheekiest one.

32:51 Chantelle: Probably he swims quicker than any of us.

April: Races us.

Chantelle: Plays soccer better than any of us.

April: Shows us up.

That's great, that's good. What about the make-up of the kids here, are they mostly Australian kids or are there a lot of multicultural people as well?

33:15 Chantelle: I think everyone has a background, like my background is Maltese.

April: Mine's Aussie.
Which side of your family is Maltese?

Chantelle: My father.
Are you related to Caruanas - they are a Maltese family here?

Chantelle: No, but I know who they are. See, they have been great to this family, the Caruanas, I mean the family in this community. My last name is Shackleton, I've actually got a Pommy last name for some reason. I get asked all the time am I related to the great Shackleton who walked through Antarctica and I'm always, 'Yes of course I am.'

Is there enough to do after school here, apart from the Centre? I mean what can the kids of Millers Point do, they haven't got much space to play in have they really.

34:15 Chantelle: There's really not much to do in Millers Point to be honest but we've got the city, so the city is sort of our playground.

April: Chantelle is a bit old just to play with us, but last holidays the Centre closed at six and we really had nothing to do and we were sitting around Lower Fort Street near the Garrison Church and there's kind of a dead end street with a park and we were really bored one night, so one of the boys suggested we play Commandos. We are thinking no this is never going to work, we are not going to be able to do the restrictions, but we broke into teams and we just played, you weren't allowed to pass a certain point.

Chantelle: We used to do it when we were younger.

34:51 April: We played every night. When the Centre would close we'd go home, change our clothes, come back out and play all hours of the night. We got a few complaints that we were being a bit noisy.

Chantelle: Another thing is if we want to have a game of touch football of a night every one in Millers Point seems to find out and all of a sudden every one is down

there playing touch football.

Where do you play that, touch football?

35:18 Chantelle: Under the bridge. The village green used to be the main spot but it is really tiny.

Where's the village green?

Chantelle: Just across the road, that little island in the middle of the road.

Argyle Place?

Chantelle: Yes.

35:32 April: Like on Christmas Day we all got together, I don't know how we all found out, we were in the middle playing cricket.

Chantelle: Then we all ended up at my house. The whole community was at my house at one stage. That is another good thing, Christmas Day and that.

35:50 April: We didn't know how we all got there but we were just all were there, 'Let's play cricket.' Everyone was outside their house just watching, catching on balconies.

So there is a sort of a grapevine is there at Millers Point that news spreads very quickly.

36:03 Chantelle: Well Christmas especially - for generations Millers Point has been the place to be. Like all my family used to love coming down here and we used to block off Kent Street and have big cricket games and that. But it has mellowed down now, it's not as popular as it used to be. You know the water pipes that you have for fires - I remember one year one of the locals actually undone it. It was like one of the hottest Christmases and he just undone it and we all got wet and the Police came and they ignored it. Then eventually they said, 'Look we have to do it back up.' I remember that, I was about like nine, but it was so much fun. Like Kent Street, the street I live, was just awesome. Aunty Jo and Uncle Jim, they are not really related but you're are told to call them that, they moved into April's street and ever since then Christmas has sort of gone down a bit.

37:10 April: But we all pretty much met up on Windmill Street on Christmas Day.

Chantelle: You still meet up and stuff, you know where everyone is, but there is no arranged sporting things any more it is just on the spot. You just go, 'We are

playing cricket at two o'clock,' and eventually everyone comes.

So you basically make your own fun then. Now you both got involved with RocksFest didn't you, tell me how that began and what it is all about.

37:39 Chantelle: Originally it was about joining up with Lend Lease. It is a corporation that just wants to get involved with Millers Point and help us out and they started a mentoring programme, which was like for April and that, just if they needed help with homework or just life in general. It helped the Lend Lease staff just get to know teenagers and that. Yes, it started through just get all the businesses in Millers Point and that just altogether and the kids as well.

38:21 April: Then the kids all got involved with Fort Street Primary to have a brainstorm, the first ever. Everyone of them boys and girls wrote down their names and agreed they were going to join in with us, they are going to do it, blah, blah, blah. The next meeting, a two-day workshop, it was down to about six of us.

Chantelle: There were the original girls and then there were five boys. The next day we went on a pirate ship and there were three boys then and then the boys just left. Then eventually it was five of us. We did it ourselves.

What did you actually do? Explain to me what you did.

39:08 Chantelle: There were a lot of meetings.

April: We started off that we were going to have a big festival down at Circular Quay. Then after a couple of months no one was getting much done.

Chantelle: We didn't really get along with the co-ordinator. It was more of a thing where she has never worked with kids before and we could feel that she was struggling. They all made me express how we felt to her and that was the sort of the thing, 'Chantelle do everything, Chantelle speak'. As you can probably tell I talk a lot. Eventually Adrien stepped in and said, 'Would you like me to take over.'

April: Adrien Meredith. She took over so we organised food, movies, decorations.

Chantelle: We tightened up with our mentors.
You both have mentors?

April: Yes.

40:08 Chantelle: Well Samantha and I, my best friend, we are over eighteen, so we have buddies. We got them to help us with the RocksFest because us two have had a heavy work load, it was really heavy. Then the two ladies really liked being our buddies, so we sort of enjoyed talking to them and we just meet up with them once a week, or whatever, and have a coffee or something.

40:33 April: We had to door-knocks, dropping off the invitations. Two weeks before the RocksFest the invitations hadn't been out, or the RSVPs hadn't come back yet, so Chantelle and I - no one else was there - walked all the way round Millers Point, The Rocks, dropping them into doors and we had about seventy back and we only had like eighty seats.

So what was the idea of the RocksFest, what did you devise? What kind of ideas did you come up with?

41:03 Chantelle: Originally it was meant to be a big festival with rides, animals, show bags, footballers, entertainment. There was one stage we were going to get Sony to set up a stage and hopefully get someone like Delta Goodrem, or someone. Then it was just getting too much for us and we weren't making any progress, so a couple of us came up with an idea to have a movie festival.

April: Show what the young people around Millers Point could do, we had performances on the night with dancing, singing.

41:36 Chantelle: I ended up in pretty much every video that was made in Millers Point, and April - April and I both hosted the night.

April: As you can tell we are the ones that do show up.

Did you make your movies? Who were the camera people, yourselves?

Chantelle: Basically us.

42:00 April: *Where's the Bridge*, we made a movie called *Where's the Bridge* before, when we were just making movies for fun before even the RocksFest got involved. This is one day shooting Chantelle and I ran down the street with people following us with cameras asking people the obvious question, 'Where's the Bridge?' We were standing under the Bridge, 'Where's the Bridge?' We were standing there saying, 'Do you know where the Bridge is?' We were asking tourists and they'd point in other directions. Like the Bridge would be there and people would point the other

way, like not on purpose, and we found that really funny. Then we had other people, husband and wife, both pointing in completely opposite directions. Then we went down to Circular Quay and we were dancing and just making jokes and asking these Asian tourists would they go out with our friends. It was just a joke, like a funny day.

42:58 Chantelle: That day was how to use a camera. Like there was a TAFE course, sort of thing and we got in front of the camera and we just did silly things. We just walked in the police station and just silly things.

April: And asked if they had seen us before, do they know who we are? In the end they made into a movie and they said, 'We are going to enter this,' and we were like, 'What?' Then it came up on the screen and we got really embarrassed.

Chantelle: We also won a lot of awards for this Rock Fest.
Who gave the words?

43:33 April: The Prime Minister's Award for Excellence for the partnership, Lend Lease, the school and Abraham Mott Hall. We've won the National one, we've won the State one. Now we are going into the national one in Melbourne, all our teachers are going, but the kids aren't invited.

Chantelle: And we did the hardest work.

April: We are pretty disappointed about that.

43:58 Chantelle: We just didn't understand that, like we worked our butts off for that RocksFest and we don't get to get the glory.

April: When we got up on that stage for the Rock Fest it was so hot, we were so red. Like we weren't advised, just before they told us we had to go on stage, we were like it's not going to work. We were doing decorations ten minutes before it started, we were pinning up the final decorations, we weren't even dressed.

44:25 Chantelle: Also my best mate and I we won a TAFE award because we both were attending TAFE, so we won a TAFE award for what we did. Also our group won an award from the Lord Mayor and we went and received that at Redfern Town Hall. We got another award, but I can't remember what that was for.

44:53 April: And a Cancer Council one.

Chantelle: The Cancer Council because we raised money.

Tell me a little bit about what happened on that day. What was the sequence of the programme, how did it start and how did it end?

Chantelle: Basically it was a film.

Which film? The videos you made?

Chantelle: Yes community videos. After that we had awards and I found these Oscar trophies and we bought them and we gave people Oscars.

April: Engraved them, there's one up there.

Chantelle: Just for best actor and best film.

You made them yourself?

45:31 Chantelle: No, we bought them from a trophy shop, got them engraved. As a gift to all the partners and that for all their help we bought them that picture there. We got \$500, us five guys, for what we did we got a \$500 cheque and we bought two of them for them.

45:53 April: They started off at school with a cross-country and then we got here around four, we started cleaning and decorating. We couldn't decorate the night before because there was people using the hall. We went to Reverse Garbage. The night before we went shopping again for stuff. Then we just set it all up and then we went home, started at seven, we went home about ten-to-seven, got changed, come back and we were ready. We did awards dances, awards songs, awards...

So you sang as well?

April: The boys sang. They've got a computer out there and they are currently making their own CD, they sang for us. One of the youth workers sung.

46:48 Chantelle: The main thing for music festival was the boys especially. Like a lot of the older residents think that they were just thugs and trouble-makers and whatever. Basically we just wanted to get the message out that we don't have much trouble with the adults, but sometimes boys will be boys and then, I don't know.

April: So the main point of the whole idea was to get them known, that they are not just thugs. One of the main boys that everyone doesn't really agree with what he does and that got up and sung that night and played the guitar and everyone really enjoyed it. Then we had the boys in the movies, giving awards to the camera man,

showing them how they filmed and that and it was really good.

That is a cultural effort, it is a creative effort isn't it. Do you feel good about doing that?

April: Yes.

Are you going to repeat this again next year.

47:50 Chantelle: Everyone wants another one.

April: Everyone is saying we have to have another one.

What were some of the troubles you had in making this all happen?

April: The co-ordinator didn't get along with children. Chantelle didn't get along with the co-ordinator.

Chantelle: Don't say 'Chantelle,' it was the whole lot. There was a lot of arguments, we were a group of young girls, never been in meetings. Every week we were at one or two meetings, working with Lend Lease people who are at meetings every day who know how it is done. We wanted it our way and they wanted it theirs. The hardest thing was doing the whole thing, that was the hard thing.

48:27 April: Considering like at the beginning it was going to be this huge thing, so we started in November for May, that is when it was going to be, then we just stopped for the Christmas holidays and it was then February and it was just a movie night. So all that hard work we'd put in, like we had twenty-seven meetings...

48:49 Chantelle: The movie night was nothing compared to the first thing that we had in mind. We were out in the rain, measuring Circular Quay. Samantha and I had to do this sponsorship package, which took us ages.

April: With DVDs.

Chantelle: DVDs, everything we did we didn't use any of it. That was really what was draining on us. We sat down and Adrien goes, 'Do you want to do this?' and we were like well we've put all this effort in and it's just like gone, we want to succeed. Then we succeeded.

49:22 April: We were like this was going to be a night for us and then we were like do we want to do it and then we just decided we did.

Chantelle: I think the last week or two were stressful, That's the only stressful thing I can say about the movie, when we knew what we wanted, that was about the

most stressful time because it was just hands-on.

April: Getting the awards, getting the people there, making sure the people that won the awards would be there. Getting the movies, who are we going to put in the movies, watching the movies to see if they were up to the standard we wanted.

That's great. How many people turned up for this RocksFest?

49:58 April: I think there was seventy. But a lot of people couldn't make it because of other commitments, like they had said yes and at the last minute couldn't make it. Like my mentor: she was in it from the beginning, she was so excited about it, she loved the idea and she hurt her back like two weeks before and she couldn't make it. *I would like to get a little more information about this mentorship, seeing that you both of mentors, can you each talk about your mentors.*

50:29 Chantelle: While my mentor is the assistant to the boss of Lend Lease, so she's a very busy girl and I'm a very busy girl, so we struggle to meet each other, but we talk on the phone frequently and she communicates through my brother who works there, sends her love and whatever. She has just come back from London on a trip for three weeks. I just think she's great. I was a bit worried at first because I thought I'm a very outgoing, bubbly person and I was like - what if I get this lady who's so not like me, but she's great. Her name is Pamela Reynolds and she is a very lovely lady.

What activities do you do with her?

Chantelle: Well I personally haven't done much because a lot of our things get cancelled. Like when we say we are going to go for lunch something comes up with one of us. But we go for coffee a lot, we have gone a lot for coffee. I haven't seen her for about four weeks before she went to London. We speak on the phone, but it is just flat out, like she has had deadlines and stuff she has had to do and I've just been working every day. When I was at TAFE it was even harder because I only got Fridays off and I worked Fridays and it was tough.

How has she been able to help you, do you think?

51:55 Chantelle: She just helps me with life in general because when she was younger she was similar to me in a lot of ways. Like, she can help me with everything, she is just a very smart lady. She has just got a great job and she loves it and I can learn from what she likes.

So it is advice she gives you too?

Chantelle: I actually help her too. We just help each other, I guess.

How do you help her?

52:32 Chantelle: Just by seeing how we are today and just teaching her about our culture. Just getting an insight to teenagers, I think that is part of the mentoring programme. A lot of teenagers have already got names on their shoulders, a lot of older people just look at you when you walk down the street like you are a teenager sort of thing. They don't know you, they just think it is like the Macquarie Field incidents or the Redfern incidents, it is just like teenagers are all like that. Well that's how I feel.

And you April, tell me about your mentor?

53:16 April: My mentor. When I started I had a different mentor named Adrien Meredith, the one that organised the partnership. I really like Adrien and that, but we just weren't clicking. Yeah, we did this, we did this. We were friends. She took me out. We had fun. It just wasn't the best. Then we went out for a day of bowling where we met other mentors and she already had another mentee, she had two mentees. The other girl needed more support and help staying on the track for school and that and I said, 'If you want to change me, that's fine.' She changed me to another lady, Loretta and we love her, we all love her. She is the most fun, she's just like us.

54:06 Chantelle: She is just like a mentor to everyone, especially me. I will call her all the time for help.

April: She is just one of us. She is funny like us. She enjoys being around us. When she is there it is just like talking to a friend. She helps with homework, she helps with everything, life in general, she takes us out to coffee.

Chantelle: She doesn't hold back on what she says, she is just honest.

April: If we don't like someone we can tell her. Like Helen, we can't really say, 'We don't like her.'

Sounds good. Sounds like you are having a lot of fun, living in Millers Point. So what do you think you are going to do? You said already that you might leave Millers Point one day, things will change - everything changes, of course.

54:59 Chantelle: Well my goal is to get out of Millers Point. I think Millers Point is very, how can you put it, so hard to get out of. You talk to people now and they are

like, 'I've lived here my whole life.' People go overseas and they come back to Millers Point. People succeed in the work industry and they lose their job, or they quit and they are going to get another job and they come back to Millers Point, it just draws them in. My goal is to leave Millers Point and when I come back it is as a successful businesswoman, like what I want to do.

55:39 April: Everyone stays here, like your mum and your dad stay here, and you leave and then you are like, 'Oh I'll just go back and stay with mum and dad for a while.'

Chantelle: I find a lot of people in Millers Point do that, they move out and they are all happy. They will move out with their girlfriends. I know if you break up with your girlfriend, naturally you are going to come home to your parents, but it is like they don't leave, if that makes sense. A lot of them don't work, a lot of them just have the dole, that is our age group.

56:11 April: I'd really enjoy staying in Millers Point as much as Chantelle would want to get out. I wouldn't mind because we are so close. But everything is going to change, we are all going to grow up and we are all not going to be the same, we are all going to hate each other.

Chantelle: Don't get me wrong - I love Millers Point and I'd live here, but I am a goer. I want to go overseas, I want to live somewhere else. I am a very patriotic girl and I love my Sydney and I love my city, but I'd just love to travel.

Could you live anywhere else apart from Millers Point do you think?

April: Not while I'm growing up.

Chantelle: No I wouldn't rather grow up anywhere else because I feel this has made me who I am today. Definitely now I'd like to live somewhere like Hawaii or Miami.

What do you think about the big development that Patrick's wharves are going to be leaving next year and there will be a lot of building work starting in 2006, have you heard of this yet?

April: No.

Chantelle: No.

You don't know anything about it? It is all going to change down at the wharves there when

the ships won't come any more, so that is going to change Millers Point.

57:25 Chantelle: The ships don't come no more?

Well they won't after next year.

Chantelle: Like the P&O cruisers and that.

They will still pull up at Circular Quay. The cargo ships and things, the containers and things, that's all changing over to Port Botany.

Chantelle: I don't mind that because it is so noisy of a night, that doesn't bother me.

Does it worry you that this part of Sydney won't be a working harbour any more?

57:52 April: Not really. Nobody classes it as they classed it in the old days, working Sydney, working harbour, it is the same still, there is not going to be that much difference. The same stuff is going to be coming in just at a different location.

Chantelle: The only thing that worries me is they are doing all this outside of Millers Point, but eventually they are going to come into Millers Point. They can't make everywhere outside of Millers Point rich and laid back and then have Housing Commission in the middle of it. That is why I truly don't believe within ten to twenty years they are going to be here.

Did you have any contact with the kids of say, Walsh Bay Wharf people, those apartments there?

58:33 Chantelle: We know a few just like by hello and whatever, just through seeing them all the time and that, but not really, no.

They don't really mix with your mob?

Chantelle: Mainly adults are in the Walsh Bay area and they all work.

Anything else you want to add before we end the interview? We are near the end of our tape so is there anything else you wanted to say?

April: We love Millers Point, we wouldn't move. It's good. We love it.

Chantelle: Don't change it.

Okay that's great. Thank you very much both of you for the interview.

59:30 END OF TAPE MP-FH26 AND END OF INTERVIEW WITH APRIL HARRISON AND CHANTELE SHACKLETON.

