

ORAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS

INTERVIEWEE: Beverley Hunter

INTERVIEWER: Sue Rosen

PLACE: Long Jetty

DATE: 25 February 1995

TRANSCRIPT

0.00 **SR:** Interview with Beverley Hunter at Long Jetty. It's the 25th of February 1995.

Hi, Beverley. I believe that you've spent really all of your life until recently in Darlington.

BH: That's right; all of my life and five generations have gone through the house where I was. My grandmother lived there, my Mum lived there, then I lived there and reared my children. My Mum reared her children, I reared my children and Sue, my daughter, now is living there with her daughter. So that's five generations that have lived there and a lovely area, loved it, yes.

SR: And where was your house?

BH: It was in Calder Road, Chippendale, number 40, and it was right next to where the university has taken over the whole of the area of Darlington where it was a beautiful suburb, full of beautiful terrace houses has all been knocked down now for the university which made everybody very upset at the time when it first came out they were going to do that, very upset.

SR: Now, what year were you born in?

BH: 1935.

SR: And were you born at home or in a hospital?

BH: No, at Crown Street Hospital and then brought home to Calder Road.

SR: Beverley, where were you in the family - did you have brothers and sisters?

BH: I had a brother - he was five years older than me - and that was all, just my brother and I, yes.

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SR: Was that an unusually small family?

BH: Yes, I think it was because there were families with six and seven, ten children; a good friend of mine came from a family of ten. Yes, I think it was unusual, yes.

SR: Was it commented on that there were only two kids in your family?

BH: No, I never heard any comment, no, never heard any comment of it, no. No, just accepted it, I guess, yes.

SR: Well, what are your earliest memories?

2.00 BH: Well, my earliest memories are of the area, growing up with plenty of friends, no toys much, can't remember ever having dolls or toys, anything like that, no, but always finding plenty to do and never going short of company. All the children went in and out of different people's houses; I've been in and out of every house in Calder Road, I know the outlay of them all and how many bedrooms they have and how they're outlaid, how big their yards are, everything. A lot of people have asked me like over the years, "What's that place like? I might be interested in buying it", I could always tell them every house; I've been in every house there and in some of them in other streets as well but in every one in Calder Road. Very friendly area, very good neighbours who were always willing to help one another, I always found that in the area. And when I first moved to Long Jetty so upset that practically had a nervous breakdown I would say, only that I realised that I couldn't keep that up and kept wanting to move back but didn't do that because my husband loved it here, yes.

SR: Well, if you were to describe your family, what sort of family did you come from?

BH: Well, it was a working class family. My Dad was a wharf labourer who had been to the war and had come back - he'd been to the war and fought the war - came back again, was on the wharves and at forty five he died with TB; it was war related. So my Dad wasn't around after I was sixteen, he'd died at home. Like he'd gone to the hospital but he was in the home with us for two years with the TB before he died and my Mum nursed him.

4.06 And we had to boil everything on the stove that he used and we all had to have separate things to use, cups and things, forks and knives and that. And then he was rushed to hospital about a week before he died and died at forty five from war related injuries, the TB.

SR: And what year was that?

BH: I was sixteen. I was born in 1935.

SR: '51?

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BH: Yes, must have been, yes. So that was sad because my Mum had a big struggle looking after him at home and with us two kids, trying to rear us up without us and we all had to have the needles and all that and for years later we had the needles and the x-rays. And I always remember I went for a chest x-ray and there was a fellow there - it must have been one of the first men that started to x-ray the chests for ladies - and my mother put on such a stink. She wanted a lady to do the chest x-ray on her daughter who was only sixteen or fifteen at the time. Anyhow, she got her way: they got a lady to do it, yes. It always sticks out in my mind; that's why I mention it, yes, but things like that. So it was a struggle, it was a big struggle for my Mum who was sort of working on and off and trying to get a few bob to keep going because there wasn't, you know. I remember she won forty pound in the lottery and that was a help, forty pound, yes.

SR: Well, if you were born in '35, you wouldn't remember much before the outbreak of the war.

BH: No, no, no. See, I was young, yes, then. I don't really remember a lot about the war but I do remember my Dad getting sick after it.

6.03 **SR: And where had he served?**

BH: Well, I'm not really sure but I know we had certificates and things. He'd been overseas, he wasn't just - I think Darwin, I think, if I remember rightly.

SR: And was he away for the whole war period? Can you remember when he went away?

BH: I think he might have been, I think he would have been, yes, I think so. The only way I could find that out would be looking at his certificate.

SR: Well, can you remember how old you were when he came back? So if you would have been five in 1940, so from ages five to ten was it just you and your Mum at home, was he off with the services?

BH: And my brother.

SR: And your brother.

BH: Yes. Well, yes, it would have been, I'd say, yes, yes, yes, for sure. Because I do remember after the war like which was still there and that was the air raid shelters in Calder Road and other streets, Shepherd Street. And I remember the trenches over in the park, they had trenches dug. I remember those because these things were there a few years after the war before they pulled them down; I suppose they thought there was going to be another war, perhaps, I'm not sure, yes. But they were still there and I do remember playing in those, yes.

SR: And what can you remember of your life during the war period, say from about five to ten, can you remember much of the impact of the war on you?

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BH: No, I wouldn't say I could, no; I think I was too young for that. But I remember going to little birthday parties with friends and things like that but I don't think there was a great emphasis.

8.04 I think it was just something that all these men just done and there was no big deal about it; it was just they all just went off and did it. And I think my Mum worked at the places on and off and I think it was a big struggle but apart from that I can't remember really too much a big deal put on about the war, no.

SR: So did your mother work when you were a child?

BH: Yes.

SR: What sort of jobs did she do?

BH: Well, when I was young, growing up, I remember her working at the IXL factory. It was all mainly factory jobs or housemaid jobs in hotels and things, cleaning and making beds and things like that; that's the type of work Mum did, yes.

SR: And did she do that during the war years?

BH: Yes, I think she did work on and off during the war years, yes, but I can't remember what - - -

SR: Even when your father was alive she was still working?

BH: Oh, yes, yes. I think when he got real sick there she couldn't work, no. She had to stay home, she had to look after him then because she had to, as I say, make sure everything was clean, yes. Big job.

SR: Did most women in the neighbourhood work outside the home?

BH: I think a lot of the women in them days, no. I think a lot of them were at home with their children at that time, I think. Mainly the ones that were a bit desperate maybe done a little job here and there but I think most of them were home with their families, yes, to my knowledge I'd say.

SR: Now, how would you describe your mother - what sort of a woman was she?

BH: She was a good living lady, very good. She wasn't much for mixing outside the home, more or less done whatever she had to do in the home. But moved down from the country when she was about fourteen from Bathurst, her and her sister, and lived down in Sydney and more or less stayed there in the old house, so she'd been there for a long time, a long time in that house.

10.18 But they were women that used to always get out the front and sweep their front verandahs and they always did this every morning, everyone swept the front verandah and she'd probably say g'day to somebody doing that but apart from that she was mainly in the home, cooking and looking after it, mainly things like that, yes.

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SR: And what about your father - what sort of a man was he?

BH: Well, he was a wharf labourer on the wharves. He was a good man, good living man, came from Bondi, a family that I think was pretty well-to-do in Bondi, and I always remember Mum, she said that they were married two years before they could tell his family that they were married. They'd kept that secret for two years, which I thought was unusual.

SR: Yes. Why?

BH: I don't know the reason. I said "Why is that?" She said "Oh, he didn't want no one to know", didn't want anyone to know that he was married. Anyway, yes, but I think they were a well-to-do family from Bondi. Maybe he thought that they'd think, you know, if she's coming from a different suburb - who knows? I'm not sure but I remember her saying that, the secret was kept for two years. But he was a good man but I found in the later years a cranky sort of a man. Like if anyone came calling out to play with you, he'd sing out "Go home to your own place", something like that, yes, maybe because he was sick. But I remember he took us to the wharfies' picnic just a few months before he died, whenever it was on, we all went to the wharfies' picnic. And I remember he was sick then, very sick, yes, but we always liked to go to the wharfies' picnic.

12.13 **SR: Your family, your parents, were they religious - were they actively involved in any church?**

BH: No, not really. My Mum was a Catholic and my Dad was Church of England but, no, I can't remember them ever going. Mum always used to say "You can be good without going to church", that was her view. But her mother always went to church, my Nanna, and I think that might have rubbed off on me a bit because I always continued to go to church, I always went to mass at St Benedict's every Sunday and took my children. But Mum wasn't a churchgoer but a good, honest woman, like never owe you anything, every honest, yes.

SR: And did your Dad practice a religion?

BH: His religion. No, he didn't either, no. So there were no religion really in our household that I know of.

SR: What about politics? What sort of talk about politicians would happen in your family?

BH: Well, Labor was always the flare of the day, I always found Labor. Like we grew up and when it was time to vote you always sort of had that idea that you vote for whoever you want but it must be Labor. So that just sort of flowed on and we were just very Labor orientated people, very Labor.

SR: Was your Dad involved in the union, the wharfies?

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BH: He would have been. Yes, I'd say he would have been, he would have been in the union. I don't know that he had a special job in it but I'd say he would have been, definitely would have paid into the union, would have been a member.

14.04 **SR: What about any of the Communist Party organisations? Was he involved in any of that?**

BH: Not that I know of, no, never that I know of, no, no.

SR: What about your Mum, what about her views politically? Did she hold political opinions?

BH: No, she wasn't. I think they just voted Labor when it came and that was it. You never heard them talk much about politics in the house, no.

SR: They weren't members of the local party or hand out how to votes or any of that kind of thing?

BH: No, no, no, no, they weren't into any of that but I was as I got older but, no, Mum never and Dad, no.

SR: Well, at home if you're being a ratbag and not doing what you're told or whatever, what sort of discipline was used, I mean how was the family sort of managed, how were the kids managed?

BH: I think if you did anything wrong you got a smack, good hard smack but I can't remember ever beltings or anything like that, nothing cruel. No, only maybe a smack, a hard smack, but you knew that that meant business, like you weren't to do it again, yes.

SR: And were the rules pretty clear as to what a kid could do? How'd you know what you could or you couldn't do sort of thing?

BH: Well, you sort of had a basic education from your Mum and Dad on right and wrong. You know, like there were right things and there were wrong things and sometimes it might be giving cheek or something like that you'd get into trouble or maybe you went down to your friend's place and didn't tell them where you were and you were missing a bit longer or you'd go to the shop and do a message and you meet somebody and start talking and you're not home for an hour, well then you'd get into trouble for doing that, you see, because they didn't know where you were and they always liked to know where you were.

16.05 **SR: Was it a safe neighbourhood?**

BH: Very safe neighbourhood, very, very safe. You could always go out and leave your key in the front door or the key under the mat, wherever. You never heard of anyone breaking into the houses at that stage. In fact, we had never been broken into in that house in all them years, never. Even now, well, all the people have all bars on their windows. Well, I hate the bars and this security business because we haven't got them because I've never been used to it and I don't like the look of them; I think they look dreadful. But, no, it was a very safe neighbourhood.

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When we were teenagers our friends would walk up from Chippendale, up through Darlington where there was plenty of people around and lovely houses, and we'd go up to the Surreyville Dancehall, which is now the - what's the name of that place up there now? - it's now not the Seymour Centre, I can't think of it.

SR: Wentworth?

BH: Wentworth Building, that's it, yes. And it's now the Wentworth Building and we used to walk up there, go to the dance, come out, have a drink at the milk bar and then walk back home. Now, that would be eleven, twelve o'clock at night and never anyone would say anything to you and never anything to worry about. We felt very safe in that area, very safe. There were no break-ins, you never heard of things like that. There were gangsters around there, I can tell you, there were a few around that were seedy characters but they never worried us; they kept to themselves.

18.02 **SR: And who were they? I keep hearing about that, in virtually all the areas there was the odd crim [criminal] but they seemed to keep their own company - - -**

BH: That's right.

SR: - - - and never bothered any of the locals.

BH: That's right. They never, ever robbed around that area. Where they did rob, who knows? But we always remember one fellow: he was shot to death up in Rose Street. His name was Face McKeown, we all remembered his name was Face McKeown, and he had a lovely family there but he was a bit of a seedy character. Anyway, he come to that end, he got shot himself.

SR: Well, what was he into?

BH: Well, who knows? Probably prostitution I'd say would be the day then or SP bookmaking [for betting on horse racing] because there were a lot of SP bookies around that area, there were a lot of the bookmaking there, like there were little places. But everyone knew where they were, everyone bar the police.

SR: Well, I've talked to a few SP bookies and most of them seemed to be ordinary family people.

BH: They were ordinary, yes, yes, they were. I won't say this Face McKeown was into that but anything that made a bob I think these type of characters get into but I think he'd be more like in sly grog and maybe prostitution, something like that. I'm not sure, I couldn't say because I'm not sure; we only heard of him. But the SP bookies were ordinary people that lived around in the street like that we knew and all they done was get the few bets and did the bit of 'bookieing' and got the bit of money here and there and they probably lost too some weeks. But they used to have their little places with the kids; there'd be a kid about fourteen,

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fifteen standing out the front on watch and if the police come they'd let them know and of course they'd get going, yes. But we used to go in and out of their places; I mean, they were ordinary guys, ordinary people, yes, families.

20.05 **SR: Did you know any other characters?**

BH: Well, I knew of another fellow that was an alcoholic - was called Bluey Woodley - everybody knew him and my Mum was kind to him. She used to take him in, sometimes bring him in and give him a meal. Yes, so she was kind in things like that and in fact sometimes at St Benedict's reunion now which we have once a year, I meet his brother and sister in law and their family and they often mention how good Mum was to Bluey. But he went back up to the country and he drowned in a pond near his Mum's place. I think it was up the country but I can't remember what area - it could have been Wagga or somewhere, yes, yes.

SR: We were asking about whether it was a safe neighbourhood and the discipline. So you were in trouble when you weren't home when they were expecting you, not because the neighbourhood wasn't safe but just because it was just a bit worrying that you took so long. That was it?

BH: That's right or you'd get into trouble because Mum would send you to the shop and maybe you'd spend a half an hour having a talk out the front and they're waiting on something for the tea table, maybe it was something like that. I'm sure plenty of times - I was one for talking and I probably got into trouble a lot for that, yes.

SR: Were you expected to contribute to the family in any way? Like could you get jobs?

BH: Yes. Well, I left school. Like one thing that I think's very sad about that area at that time was the fact that no one had a good education or no one that I know of went past - you know, maybe they done a little bit of a certificate, some sort of certificate, but myself, I left school when I was fourteen and eight months and my father was sick at that time and it was a case of get out, get a job. It didn't matter what you did, you had to find a job and then you had to bring the money home and you had to give it to Mum, yes.

22.15 **SR: Did you get any of it back?**

BH: Well, not really, no, no. Well, what would you want it for? See, we had nothing to spend it on them days.

SR: Go to the Surrey.

BH: Oh, the Surrey, yes, well the Surreyville for the dances and things like that. Oh, you got your money back that Mum, whatever she wanted to give you back to go elsewhere. But, no, I remember putting all my money in, yes, and my brother remembers it too, yes.

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SR: And you'd just get a little bit back for pocket money for relaxation or something?

BH: That's right, that's right, yes. I never felt I went without anything; never felt that I missed out on anything. Still don't, yes.

SR: When you were a kid, before you left school to go into the workforce, were there jobs available for girls? I know boys often seemed to do paper runs and scrounge bottles and things like that but did girls do anything like that?

BH: Yes, but the boys, they started doing them things but they usually were about fourteen, thirteen, fourteen. See, when I was fourteen I had to look for a full time job. Like my kids done paper jobs but they were about thirteen, fourteen when they done the paper jobs and earned their little bit of money. You didn't let them do it any earlier than that more or less but when I was fourteen I had to look for a permanent job and bring home the money, see.

SR: Well, around the house did you help your Mum? Did you do housework and washing up?

BH: Yes, I did, I did used to help a bit, yes, because I always remember a lady across the road. She said every time she seen me I was either shaking a mat out the front or doing something like this or sweeping the front. Yes, I did used to help around the house, yes, and as far as jobs there were plenty of jobs so it was no hassle to go and get a full time job because you could walk out of one job and into another.

24.19 **SR: That was in the late '40s, wasn't it?**

BH: Yes. And the first job I had was at Yardley's perfume factory and I worked in the powder room - fourteen and eight months and I was in the powder room. I don't think they let many people work in the powder room and that worried my Mum because my father was sick with the TB at that time and she was worried about that because I was in the powder room.

SR: Is that where they manufactured talcum powder?

BH: Talcum powder, that's right, and there was flour flying everywhere. It wasn't like they'd be doing it today, I'll bet, it was a lot different. And from there I went to work at Allen's Sweets in the factory, scooping boiled lollies and things into bags and I did that for years and then I got transferred into the office. And I went into the office and worked in there and was there for a few years. They wanted to teach me bookkeeping and all this sort of thing but I didn't get around to that, did I, because I got married and started to have my family. But I got a beautiful canteen and cutlery given to me from Allen's Sweets and I still have the little note on it today: "From Allen's Sweets to Beverley Smythe", yes, which was my single name, yes. So that was good times, I

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enjoyed the work, and most of the locals worked in these factories as well, yes.

SR: You know back when you were a child, in terms of helping your Mum - - -

25.52 BH: Yes.

SR: - - - I understand that in those days when people did their shopping it wasn't like these days where you would do a week's shop, that people almost shopped on a daily basis. Was it the kids who usually went to the shops?

BH: Yes, it was nearly always the kids that went to the shops, you always seen the kids in the shops. Mostly it was the kids that done the shopping and everything was ticked up from one week to the next, you had it on tick like, and when they paid the bill then immediately they started ticking up for the next week. We also had order men who came around and they collected money and if you didn't have the money that week you'd tell him you didn't have the money and you'd catch up next week and that's what you did: you lived on orders and you lived on tick. There were no surplus money around at all and you'd see some people that couldn't afford to pay. They'd be peeping through the window to see if he was coming and they couldn't afford to pay so they didn't pay him that week but they'd probably like all the others catch up. I remember the order man always saying to me that the most honest people are in the poorer areas, that it's the richer areas that you can't get the money out of them the order man always said, but the poorer people, if they don't pay this week they catch up next week. But that's how everybody lived was on tick, everything was ticked up. There were the order men, the groceries that were on tick and anywhere else you went, the butcher shop down on our corner, everybody lived ticking up their meat. So when they got their wages, all they did - and this went on to when I was rearing my children too - we always paid the bill every week and then started ticking up at the butcher shop, the grocer shop and the order man and that's how you lived.

28.05 No one had any surplus money, just everything got paid from one week to the other and there was nothing left. I remember even when my kids'd have a birthday party, I used to go over to the shop and I'd tick up a couple of bottles of soft drink, a few lollies, bag of lollies, a couple of dollars' worth of lollies or a dollar's worth and maybe a few biscuits or something to make them a little birthday party for that year, for that day.

SR: Well, these days we consider buying like at a corner shop or a little local shop is a pretty expensive way to go. Were there big supermarkets or that around that discounted?

BH: No, there were none in them days, no; there were none of those supermarkets. It was all little corner shops, so I think it's done a lot of damage to the little corner shops. Well, it has because like there used to

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be a shop on nearly every corner in Chippendale and there used to be a pub on nearly every corner in Chippendale but now of course they're all gone. The pubs are restaurants; the shops are houses, that's all changed completely, yes.

SR: And buying locally, do you remember it as being expensive or that was just the price and that was that?

BH: No, that was the price and I don't think it would have been expensive in them days because they had nothing to gain by overcharging people because they got all their business anyway. And in fact we had a couple of - well, we used to call them old maids at the time and they'd run the shop - one of them had been engaged but he got killed in the war - so they just ran this little shop and everyone knew them and they were lovely. You'd go in there for butter and they'd slap the butter together with the big like spade things.

SR: Are they wooden?

29.57 BH: The butter was in a box, come in a box, and the milk was put into milk jugs; you took your milk jug and got the milk in the jug, and that's how you bought things. The biscuits, you could sometimes go to some of the factories around and get broken biscuits - there were biscuit factories. Like at Camperdown there was one I remember and sometimes people would go and get broken biscuits from there or you could buy them perhaps in the shops, a bag of broken biscuits, cheaper than the ordinary biscuits.

SR: And were biscuits and that in those days, they were measured out by weight in the paper bags, weren't they, rather than buying in packets like they do now?

BH: Yes, that's right, yes, yes.

SR: Is that right?

BH: Yes, I think that's right or otherwise maybe just put a few in the bag and charge you so much I think they might have done.

SR: But you know how these days they come in the cellophane packets with Arnotts written on the side?

BH: Yes. No, they were just in bags them days, they would just put them into bags, yes, most of them. But, no, they were good times, no one felt as if they missed out on anything but everybody lived on tick, so yes.

SR: Did you have a refrigerator?

BH: Yes, we did. [break in recording]

SR: So are you saying you had an icebox rather than a refrigerator?

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BH: Yes, we didn't have a refrigerator, we had an icebox and the iceman used to deliver the ice to put in the box. That's what we had. Yes, I'm thinking of my time rearing the kids up but in my time as a child we had an icebox and you got the blocks of ice off the iceman. You also bought the rabbits off the rabbit man who came around right up until my children were around because they used to come out with me till I got the rabbits and he'd gut them and that in the back of the trucks, yes. And his name was Sonny, I always remember his name, it was Sonny. And he came for years and years, the rabbitoh, and a lot of people around them inner city suburbs would remember Sonny because he was a real friendly man, knew everybody and was a real good bloke.

32.01 Now, what else did we have? And we'd hear the clothes prop man, every occasionally you'd hear the clothes prop man going up the lane, always went up the laneways, selling the clothes props.

SR: What about the iceman? Where would the ice come from?

BH: Well, probably the ice works I should imagine.

SR: Where was that?

BH: Well, I don't know. I always thought there was an ice works down near where the fish markets is now but that's sort of what I thought, yes.

SR: Can you remember getting rid of the icebox and getting your first electric refrigerator?

BH: No, I couldn't say I can actually remember that. We didn't have meat safes; I think they were back in the other era but we had an icebox, yes.

SR: When you were a child, growing up, what did your family do for fun?

BH: My children?

SR: No, you, when you were a child.

BH: Us?

SR: Yes.

BH: Us, yes. Well, when I was growing up we had no toys, as I said before, or dolls or things like that - well, I didn't anyway. We used to sit out in the gutter - sometimes we'd be shelling the peas, ready for the tea; sometimes I remember doing that in the gutter talking to all our friends who were all our good friends because no one ever put anybody down or anything like that, we were all on the same level, and we all used to have great fun just telling jokes and sitting in the gutter and telling stories. I don't know what the stories even were about because we never did anything much. But we used to go to the pictures, down to the Broadway picture show and the Lawson picture show. The Broadway was in George Street, the Lawson was up in Lawson Street up in Redfern, and we done that right up until my children were coming on the scene. Till

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television came in we always went to the pictures at least once a week and if any family was going you were welcome to go along with them if your family weren't going, so you went along with their family. So it was a great family atmosphere; you never felt left out because you could just join in with the next mob and go and enjoy the picture and that.

34.22 **SR: Did your family ever go out, like Mum, Dad and the two children, yourself and your brother; did you ever go out as a group to anything?**

BH: Not very much that I can remember that we ever went in a group unless it was to visit a relative but I can't remember going out on a joyous occasion, only, as I say, the wharfies' picnic which Dad always wanted to go and take you because that was on once a year, we done that. We might've went to Bondi a couple of times because that's where he came from and he liked that beach but apart from that I could say you could count it on one hand how many times you would go on an outing, yes.

SR: Did you ever have holidays, family holidays?

BH: No, never, never. In fact, when I got married and our first holiday wasn't until we'd been married a few years my Mum thought it was a terrible waste of money. She didn't believe in holidays, didn't believe in holidays because that was a terrible waste of money because they'd never, ever had a holiday, see, they never believed in that sort of thing, you never did them sort of things. But we used to go to the Surreyville, all of us young ones all together, up to the Surreyville and apart from that the bigger kids used teach us to dance in the street. Sometimes in the afternoon they'd teach us how to dance so that we'd be right to go to the Surreyville, yes, they used to teach us.

SR: Did you have radios - what did you use for music or did you have gramophones?

36.00 BH: No, we had a radio. We never had a gramophone or any other music in our place, just the radio and we used to have that on and listen to the different shows that were on.

SR: What was your favourite station or show, radio show?

BH: I really can't remember that but I think we used to listen to Dad and Dave and them sort of shows.

SR: In terms of music, what sort of music did you like?

BH: I was made into rock 'n' roll, I loved rock 'n' roll, yes, and I think in our day when we were about sixteen was the music was rock 'n' roll and then the Beatles, we really loved the Beatles, Johnny O'Keefe, all that type of music.

SR: But that would have been well into your adulthood.

BH: But that was getting older, yes, yes, but rock 'n' roll.

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SR: Can you remember when you were younger as a child what sort of music in the '40s was really sort of dominant on the radio?

BH: Well, probably the old time dancing type of music, you heard a bit of that around, and the old fashioned songs that probably you hear sometimes today but I just can't remember the names of them but, yes, all the old fashioned songs. Sometimes they come on the wireless now and you think "Oh, I remember that from years ago", yes.

SR: Look, in the evening, in a typical evening, what time would you have your evening meal?

BH: I think usually around about five.

SR: Five?

BH: M'mm.

SR: Why so early?

BH: Well, I don't know. We still have our meal at five and it's only what we've been used to, around about five was the time we always had our tea. That was tea, yes, evening meal, yes.

SR: And that was the main meal of the day?

BH: Yes, yes.

SR: Would that have been because the men started work early and got home early?

BH: I think probably it would have something to do with it because as soon as the men came home they wanted their meal on the table. Yes, they seemed to want to have their dinner, had to be ready. I mean nowadays they'd be lucky, they'd have to be lucky but those days five o'clock was when you had your meal and it was ready on the table when the men walked in.

38.11 **SR: Well, that's sort of a bit funny. Well, they had the six o'clock swill at the pub so I had always assumed that the men would be coming home some time after the pub closed at six.**

BH: No, no. I'd say they would come home, have their tea and then maybe go and have their couple of beers, that's mainly what they'd do, yes.

SR: So people drank in their local area rather than near where they worked?

BH: Yes. No, near where they lived.

SR: So they'd drink near where they lived?

BH: Yes. Come home - because the pubs were still open till six - so they'd come home, maybe have their tea and then go and have a couple of beers or I'm not sure what they - yes.

SR: Did your father drink?

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BH: I think he liked, yes, he liked a drink. Yes, he used to have a drink but I think too maybe weekends they had their drink more, like Saturday; it wasn't a great event maybe every night. Like it'd be more popular now but them days I don't think they had the money to drink.

SR: Can you remember much about the six o'clock closing? A lot of other people have commented about Saturday drinking at the pub was another thing and huge brawls, fights that would happen out there.

BH: Yes, yes, yes.

SR: And then also people sort of spilling out of the pubs at six o'clock. Was that a feature of life down there - what can you remember about the pub culture? You said there were pubs on every corner. What can you remember about who went there? Like, did women go as well as men?

BH: Yes, they did actually, yes, and my Mum liked to have a drink too and she used to go to the pub and have a drink too sometimes on a Saturday. I think she drank probably beer, yes.

40.00 **SR: Well then would she be in the lounge or in the public bar?**

BH: Yes, in the lounge, the ladies drink in the lounge.

SR: And they weren't allowed in the public bar?

BH: No, they never were allowed in the public bar and I always remember when it went from six o'clock to ten o'clock closing and, oh, everybody was against it, they thought it was terrible: "We're going to have all these men and they're going to be drunk longer than six o'clock, they're going to be there till ten o'clock" and, oh, they thought it was terrible. Yes, oh yes, it was a big shemozzle because nobody really wanted them to bring it in from six till ten; they didn't want the ten o'clock closing, yes.

SR: Well, when you were growing up, what can you remember about the pubs in your area? Were they meeting places?

BH: At the pubs. They were bits of meeting places and I think the women, my Mum included, would take her peas or beans and do them in the pub sometimes.

SR: In the daytime?

BH: Yes. They used to do them - was it the parlour we said? - - -

SR: Lounge.

BH: - - - the ladies' parlour lounge, yes, ladies' parlour or lounge, it was either. Yes, they used to do them. If they were down there during the day, having a couple, they'd do them ready for the tea that night, yes.

SR: And the women would actually have a drink during the day?

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BH: Sometimes. I'm sure they did, yes, sometimes, yes, because you'd see the ladies in there sometimes, yes. Not of a night, mainly in the day, yes, never of a night.

SR: And they'd do their vegetables?

BH: Yes, do their peas or beans while they were sitting in there, yes. And I think it was a great meeting place, I think a lot of the local identities - - -

SR: What was the name of your local?

BH: Local hotel?

SR: Yes.

BH: The Native Rose was the closest one to our place. As I say, it's still there today. They're doing it all back to its original state now, they're doing all the woodwork and making it lovely there.

SR: And were you saying that it was a meeting place for locals?

42.00 BH: Yes, I'm sure that a lot of them went there of an afternoon or Saturdays and all got together, yes. Oh, yes, it was a great meeting place for people, yes. Well, there was nothing much else, you see, for people that age group, I suppose.

SR: When you were a child I guess there was the crisis of the war but can you remember any point in time where the community, the local people sort of galvanised around some particular issue where something come up where the locals responded to or were upset about or tried to do something about?

BH: Yes, I can remember one local issue but I was a bit older at the time - I think I had my son who is now nearly forty one, John. I remember there was all sorts of talk about the university taking Darlington. Now, that was one of the most traumatic things that happened in that area because the people were petrified of where were they going to go and live because they were all living there in rented places and that. Now all of a sudden the university's going to take them and move them somewhere else - oh, they weren't a bit happy - and buy the houses for pittance, I suppose, or maybe even if they gave them - no, I don't think they ever gave them the right amount they should have got for compensation and that for having to move from them houses. But that was one of the big issues that I'll never forget.

SR: And was that in the '50s?

BH: That was '55, '56, somewhere. '55, I think, because I know I had my son because I had him on me hip and we were all up talking about it, everybody was out, talking about what was going to happen with the university, everyone was most upset, people were crying. We put it in the local paper, we tried to do everything and I'm saying "Get a petition up. We'll have to get a petition up" and I was one of the youngest but all

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these old people, they didn't know what to do, they didn't know what to do.

44.07 **SR: And where would people meet? Was it in the street or at the pub?**

BH: In the street, we were all meeting in the street and talking about it, upset because no one wanted it. There was Darlington, they had Darlington Town Hall where a lot of the people used to get married and have their functions, there was a chemist shop up in Darlington, there was post office at Darlington, all these things that were going to go and eventually they went. They managed to keep an old piece of the school, that's all they managed to keep, but the rest it's just practically gone, all except a couple of streets. You've got a bit of Darlington Road - which I walked up there yesterday - and you've got Rose Street, a bit of Rose Street but I think eventually that'll go and most of Darlington Road now. As the locals die off they put offices in there, university offices into these beautiful terrace houses that should be getting lived in by families. Oh, look, it was the biggest shock that ever came in that area that I remember the whole time I was living there, it was the biggest thing that ever happened there because it upset everybody, not only a few people but everybody. No one knew - in fact, we thought they'd probably get over as far as Calder Road and I think they might have had people not started to kick up a big fuss. After about twenty years or so people see we were just taking it sort of thing but these people coming up get older wouldn't take it any more and I think that's how the school got to be kept because a few of the locals that had a bit of know-how - see, we lacked education, we lacked it and we didn't know what to do.

SR: So what did you do to stop the university from doing that?

BH: Well, we tried petitions, we got it in the paper, we tried everything but nothing was stopping that university, nothing; no matter what, they were going ahead with whatever they wanted to do and nobody or no one was going to stop them.

46.12 In the end when it did go on, people were starting to say "Well, the only thing is" - like when they knew there was no stopping them - "the only thing is maybe it'll bring a bit of work into the area". Well, it did do that, because the university opened up cafeterias, where the Surreyville was, is now the big Wentworth Building and things like this. Well, that gave work to the local people, it did give a bit, and a few of the local people - but for years I said "I wouldn't work there for what they've done" but eventually after I had my children and was desperate for somewhere to work, to just work in between school hours, I too did work there for a while but I always said I wouldn't. But we were all so irate but it did bring work and that's about it, but people lost their homes for the sake of them few jobs which I thought was disgusting. I'll never forgive the university and even when I was down not long ago I asked them to clean up because they took where the beautiful old tin shed used

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to be, Keane's [Keene's?] hay and corn store, they even knocked that down and they made a park and I wouldn't mind that but I rang them and asked them to clean that park not too long ago and I got fobbed off and they didn't want to know about it. I said "No, if they've made that place into parks and things they should clean them parks". They don't even do that; they don't even clean up the parks. They let them just overrun with weeds and get filthy dirty and the people have got to put up with that park that they can't even sit in.

48.00 That upsets me too when I go down there - which is still own my house there - and that upsets me to see that at the back. I would have rather had the old hay and corn tin shed. I loved it. We all used to go in there and sit on the bags of hay and corn and things, whatever was sitting around, and talk to these three old bachelors and they were real old identities these three and lovely old men, listened to everybody's problems but never gave you two bob off anything but they were good old men, yes, really good old men.

SR: And did you go in there as a child?

BH: Yes, growing up as a kid to do the messages, see, to get the potatoes; we got our potatoes and that there, yes.

SR: And then when you were older?

BH: Pumpkin, things like that. Yes, and as we got older we all went in there and as our kids grew up they all knew our children as well, like they got to know them.

SR: So did you buy bulk vegetables and stuff there?

BH: Yes, you bought vegetables and you bought coal for your fires years ago. See, we used to burn coal in the fireplaces. Like now they probably wouldn't allow you to do that but we used to burn coal, a bit of wood and coal and you used to be able to buy it from there as well as all the other seeds and things and they even sold feed for horses and things like this, yes, but it was a great old place.

SR: What would you say was the social focus of the neighbourhood when you were growing up there in the '40s? And would you say you lived in Chippendale or Darlington, how would you describe it?

BH: Well, I always said Chippendale because I remember, I think that we used to say Redfern and then we got a letter once from the post to say that it's been changed to Chippendale but a lot of people put Darlington. So to be honest you don't know if it's Redfern, Chippendale or Darlington but I always put Chippendale but Darlington was just across the road but I put Chippendale because I thought that was the postal address, yes.

50.10 **SR: And was there any place that was a special social focus for the area, say for kids was there a special place where kids hung out?**

BH: In my day?

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SR: Yes.

BH: Well, we used to visit each other's houses and as I say, no, I don't think even - well, the University Settlement used to be a place where you could go but I only remember going there like to dances. I don't remember going there any younger than about say fifteen and we'd go there to the University Settlement but I think the Scouts and all used to accumulate there, used to get together there, and I think maybe they had groups but mainly the boys would go there, I should imagine, when they were younger, yes.

SR: Did you ever go over to Victoria Park and there was a swimming pool and that over there.

BH: The swimming pool wasn't built there until young Johnny was about two, forty-odd years ago, so that swimming pool wasn't there when we were kids but it came there in about '56, I think, when my son was a couple of years old or a year old and we all then used to take our children over there but it wasn't there for us as kids, no.

SR: What about for the adults? What was the social focus or where would people get together and talk?

BH: On the street, mainly in the street, mainly people got in the street. Or a friend of mine, Edie, her Mum's house was in Boundary Street, a lot of people used to get on the front verandah there and meet, yes, a lot of people got there and met and sat and knitted and talked and played a bit of music, a lot of people got there on that verandah; that was in Boundary Street, number 23, yes.

52.08 But there were places like that where people would go. Like I remember some of them, I think, played cards in different people's houses - but I didn't; I was only a child - but a lot of them, they used to get these things together for the older ones but there was nothing much for the kids, really nothing. But I find the friendships that I made in that area are going on with me today because all my good friends are friends today. I keep in touch with all these people and they're my only friends. I seem to be able to communicate better with these sort of people than I ever would with anyone because everyone that I grew up with I still keep in touch with, apart from ones that, of course, have passed away which is sad but we've always gone to their funerals and things. You know, like we keep in touch with these people; they're all our friends that we've grown up with and they'll always be my friends. And I even play tennis with the groups up here, friends that come from that area, girls I grew up in the same street or around the corner, and we all play tennis up here at Long Jetty. And I think that's what kept me a bit sane was getting together with these people, these friends of mine from the other era when I first moved up here because I was on the verge of a breakdown, I reckon, for the first time in my life. Yes, but I settled down to it.

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SR: Going back again, taking you back to the 1940s again, was the Native Rose the local pub for the men or were there other places that the men liked to meet at?

BH: Well, there were lots of pubs, you know. Some liked the Native Rose, some might have liked the Glengarry that was up on the corner of Lawson Street and Abercrombie Street, some might have liked the Britannia that was on the corner of Boundary Street and Cleveland Street but I think my Mum, if she had a beer, and my Dad mainly went to the Native Rose; it was the closest. And as we got older my husband, he had a beer there at the Native Rose, their friends used to go to the Native Rose.

54.22 **SR: And those pubs, would it mainly be locals working in them? Would the barmaid be one of the locals and would you know the publican?**

BH: Oh, yes, they all knew the publican, yes, because I remember there was a hotel on the corner of Ivy Street and Rose Street and it was called the Darlington Hotel and her name was Mrs Robertson, the woman that was the publican at the time that I remember my Mum going there. That's right, that was another hotel where they used to go and have a beer was the Darlington because that was closer again. I forgot about that because it's been pulled down for years but that was on the corner of, as I say, Rose Street and Ivy Street and that was the closest hotel too but there was that one, yes, as well. And then there was another one up on the next corner, on the corner of City Road and Ivy Street. Yes, they all knew the publicans and probably knew all the barmaids. I suppose they would be locals, yes, I think most of the time they were, because sometimes if you were looking for Mum or Dad or anybody that liked to go there and just have a little beer you sort of got to know who was sort of going in and out of there, yes. Yes, so, no, it was a great area, great.

SR: Can you describe your mother's working day?

56.03 BH: Working day?

SR: Yes. What time would your Mum get up?

BH: Probably six, I should imagine, five or six or something, six, I'd say, yes, and get Dad off to work.

SR: Well, what would that mean? Did he have a cooked breakfast or would he have cereal or what, can you remember?

BH: No. I think probably toast or something, I can't really remember. I think I'd be telling a fib if I said for definite but, no, I'm not real sure probably toast or something easy. Maybe bacon and eggs, I'm really not sure.

SR: I'm trying to get an idea of what did a woman - I mean a lot of people say that "My Mum never worked. She stayed at home" but

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then when you start asking what she did, because there weren't so many labour saving devices they actually

BH: That's right, that's right.

SR: So can you go through what you think your mother might do?

BH: Well, they'd get breakfast over and get the husband off and get the kids off to school, right, and then I'd say they'd get into the washing, which meant boiling up the copper.

SR: Was that done every day or only one day a week?

BH: Well, probably a couple of times a week, I'd say, for Mum, yes, probably a couple of times a week. They'd boil up the copper, wash probably the necks of the shirts and then put them into the copper and boil them up and then they've got to get them out with the prop thing that they get them out, they pull them out with a big wooden stick and into the whansaname and rinse them. I suppose with the washing and the ironing - see like I even remember the irons that they used to heat up on the stove - see, they all took much longer than the electric things you plug in today.

57.57 And washing, ironing, cooking and preparing meals and things and then she'd have to have the tea ready for when they come home, when they're coming home, and then had the tea ready and then if they're going to have a bath or anything of a night, see, you had to light up the chip heater. Nothing was easy. You had the wood and the paper and you'd have this chip heater to light up and the thing'd be going "Woof, woof, woof" - like you've no idea - and I mean that was in a little tiny bathroom where you could have blew it up, I reckon, easy because I used to try it, when I started to do it I'd try and get it that hot. But I don't think you really bathed every day, I must be honest, I think it was every second or third because you went to that much trouble lighting this chip heater that you didn't do it every day, yes.

SR: Beverley, thinking back about your family life, you know when your father was alive and everything, can you remember who controlled the finances?

BH: I think probably my mother but I'm not a hundred per cent. I never sort of was in a position to know sort of what was going on there with the money but I think he worked and probably put in his share and probably kept a bit to himself, I'd say that's what happened. He would have kept a bit of his own money and gave her so much to run the household but I'm sure she always had the bigger amount of the money, yes.

SR: At that time, when you were growing up in the '40s, can you remember what sort of variety there was available in terms of fruit and veg?

BH: Oh, there was mainly only peas, beans, carrots, potatoes, pumpkin. You never heard of lots of the vegetables they've got today. Yes, well,

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sweet potato, chokoes, I'd say, but apart from that I can't think of a lot of them that are out today; you never, ever seen in them days.

60.21 **SR: And things like oranges and apples and lettuce and tomatoes, were they around all year 'round?**

BH: I don't know about all year 'round but those things were around, fruit and veg; I don't know about all the time.

SR: Now you can get those things twelve months of the year.

BH: All the time, yes.

SR: So I was just sort of wondering if that's always - - -

BH: No, maybe not, maybe not them days.

SR: O.K. Were there a lot of kids in the neighbourhood?

BH: Yes, a lot of children in the neighbourhood, a lot around about our own ages that you never were lonely because there were all heaps of kids to play with, heaps of kids, much more than there is today.

SR: So who were your friends?

BH: Well, my friends were people I went to school with, people I lived around. There were more or less no outside of the area friends, they were all in the area of Chippendale and they're all still my friends today, you know, I'm still friends with all those people today.

SR: Can you name some of the people?

BH: Yes, I can name. Edie Moon, Laurie Hanlon, Gloria and Mavis Darwent, Ruth Edwards, Russell Vernon. Oh, God, you could go on and on.

SR: Keep going.

BH: Collie Crook - I don't want to leave anyone out; they might get upset with me; look, just too numerous to mention - there's Betty Moles [Moulds?] and her husband, Cec Moles [Moulds?], there are just so many people that I just didn't expect that question or I'd have had them all written down but, oh, numerous amounts of people. Joan Dargue's another girl that rang me up today. [break in recording]

62.23 **SR: Interview with Beverley Hunter, tape 2, 25th of February 1995. Beverley, we were talking about some of the friends that you grew up with, who you played with.**

BH: Yes. You want me to name them now?

SR: Yes.

BH: Yes. Well, there was the Moon family - I'll say in families because they're all our friends. There was the Hanlon family, Vernon family, all the family, the Neen family, the McKennas, the McKeowns, the Darwents, the Dargues and all these people I can get in contact with today because they're still all my friends, I still keep in contact with them. There was

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Eileen Carey and her husband and their kids, there were, oh, numerous, Mary Dunne whose mother had twelve children, I think, and then Mary had ten children - they lived in Cleveland Street; they were a great family too - there were the Gadds, there were the Johnsons. Oh, look, you could just go on and on. I hope I haven't forgotten anyone but they were just numerous and still all my friends today.

SR: Well, what did you do with your friends, what did you do together?

BH: This is when I was a kid?

SR: Yes.

BH: Yes. Well, we did all sorts of things. We went ice skating at the Glaciarium.

SR: Where was that?

BH: That was when we were kids, growing up. The Glaciarium was at Central and we went ice skating - I just thought of that now - and Luna Park, we went to Luna Park, we went to the Surreyville Dance Hall.

64.12 We had numerous things that we went to but you couldn't always afford to go. You done these things once in a while because you didn't have the money, see, but all sorts of things and other times we just sat and talked.

SR: What about when you were younger children - you'd go to the pictures a bit?

BH: Yes.

SR: Was there other things, not things that you had to pay to - - -

BH: The pictures, oh, yes.

SR: - - - not things that you had to pay for but were there other things that the kids in the neighbourhood would just sort of do?

BH: No, they just more or less hung around. Like, unless you went to those things you just sort of got together and told stories, danced in the street, told jokes. There was a girl there that used to tell plenty of jokes - she was really funny.

SR: Can you remember any of them, the jokes?

BH: Oh, I can't remember the jokes but they wouldn't be rude jokes, they were funny jokes; there were no rude jokes, they would all be funny sort of jokes. But she was a great joke teller and her name was Patsy Vernon and she used to have everyone in stitches. We loved to all get there and sit with her because she was so funny, yes; she was a real storyteller too, yes.

SR: You know how you hung around with the kids in the street? Well, how far did you roam?

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BH: Not very far; you didn't roam very far away from your own area, no, unless you were going in a group with the kids, the local kids. You'd go in a group to Luna Park or one of those places but you never went on your own and you never really went too far away; your Mum and Dad wanted to know where you were. No, you never.

SR: Before, you mentioned swimming at the North Sydney pool. Did you do that very often?

65.58 BH: Well, we'd do that when we were going to Luna Park which wouldn't be too often. It might be once a month or something, yes; perhaps, we'd go swimming at North Sydney pool and then go into Luna Park and have a look around. Well, sometimes you mightn't even have the money to go on anything but you could look; you didn't have to pay then to get in the door, you just looked at the rides if you didn't have the money; you might have had the money for one ride, so you did that after going to the pool. And I think you paid to go into the pool but it wasn't much.

SR: Can you remember any adventures that you had as a kid?

BH: Adventures, like what sort of adventures?

SR: Well, probably doing something you weren't supposed to do.

BH: Oh, yes, I do remember something. I remember we used to go to the pictures at the Broadway or the Lawson but if we were going to the Broadway picture show - we'd be about fourteen and no one was allowed to wear lipstick at fourteen then days - so we used to go into Victoria Park ladies' toilet, put the lipstick on at the ladies' toilet and then go to the pictures and we felt very grown up because we had this lipstick on. It made such a difference, yes, but that was one of the things we did that our family never knew about.

SR: And what were your favourite pictures? You'd be talking, say, in the '40s. What were the movies that stand out from that time?

BH: Gee, *Gone with the Wind*. Was that out in that day? Probably them types of pictures, I don't know.

JR [Jocelyn Rosen, also present]: Betty Grable's pictures?

BH: Yes, yes, Betty Grable and Clark Gable and, oh, them types of shows but I just can't remember - that's going back a bit.

SR: What games did you play, what were the games?

BH: The games? Oh, we played Knock Down Ginger; we used to often play Knock Down Ginger. We'd all go 'round and knock on the door and then run for our lives and I remember a few times we got caught by the ladies in the shop that had the shop, the two ladies that owned the shop and they come running 'round to catch us to see who was doing it and I was hiding in a little lane off the lane and I remember her pulling us all out.

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68.18 We were all squashed in this tiny little lane and they pulled us all out and were saying "Get out here, Edie Moon, Gad" and "Get out here, Laurie Vernon and get out here you, Beverley Smythe. I know you're in there, you little troublemaker, you". So we all got into trouble for that but we often still did it, we often did that. That was another thing that we done that our Mums and Dads didn't know about, probably never found out, but we used to go around, knocking on the doors and then running away, yes; that was a fun game.

SR: What else?

BH: We used to play hopscotch. I remember we used to play hopscotch; draw the hopscotch and play that.

SR: Were there rhymes associated with hopscotch? You know some of those games you had to say things as you hopped along, anything like that?

BH: No, we just had one, two, three, it was all just laid out and we'd just all hop along. And kick the tin. It was an old tobacco tin with a bit of something in it to hold it down and we'd kick that along and play skipplings, with skipping ropes.

SR: Can you remember any of the songs from skipping, the skipping songs?

BH: No, I don't, no, no, I couldn't, no. No, because I think we just did it, I don't remember singing anything to it. See, they put rhyme to everything these days; we didn't, yes.

JR: Do you remember jacks?

BH: Jacks, we played jacks, yes, we used to play jacks.

SR: Where'd you get the

BH: They used to get the bones out of the meat and then we'd wash the bones and scrub them and use them to catch on our knuckles and things like that.

SR: Were there any places that you were not allowed to go?

70.04 BH: Not that I can remember really main places that we weren't allowed to go because as I said before it was a pretty safe area. You could more or less go but you could only go when your mother and father said you could go because they wanted you home to do messages or do this or that, so you only went when you were allowed, yes.

SR: Did you ever go over and explore the old buildings at the university because they would have been pretty interesting.

BH: Yes, we did used to go over to the university and go through some of them old buildings; occasionally a few of us would walk through there and then walk back but we wouldn't go into any of the buildings, we'd only be in the grounds, yes, but it was a lovely old place, the uni.

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SR: Did you have much to do with the students?

BH: No, never anything to do with the students. No, didn't even know of them much them days, yes.

SR: Were there any people in the area that you had to avoid?

BH: No, not really, no, no one that I know of that we had to avoid, no, no.

SR: Where did you go to school?

BH: Well, I went to Darlington School for one year and then I don't know whether it was because I didn't like it or what happened but anyway I finished the rest of my education at the Catholic school at St Kieran's up at the top of Abercrombie Street, St Kieran's School.

SR: And who ran that?

BH: The nuns, it was run by the nuns.

SR: What order?

BH: I think they were Mercy Sisters, the Mercy.

SR: And what was that like?

BH: Oh, it was good. Yes, I enjoyed, the school was O.K. I learned piano there. They had like a college where you went to, from when you finished sixth class you went over, if you wanted to you went over to first year over at this college run by the nuns as well. And I remember learning piano there; I think I done it for about twelve months, that's all.

72.03 **SR: And what was the college you went to when you finished sixth class?**

BH: I didn't go to a college. When I finished the sixth class that was it, I left school; I was fourteen.

SR: Didn't you go to St Pat's in the city, business college or something?

BH: No, I didn't go anywhere. Well, money wasn't real right so I went and got a job, I went to work, because my Dad was sick at that time from TB.

SR: Where did most of the local kids go to school?

BH: Most of the local kids? Oh, they went to St Kieran's, St Benedict's, Darlington School, Glebe School - I think that was about it.

SR: Was there any sort of rivalry between the kids in the Catholic schools and the state schools?

BH: No, I never, ever found it. There could have been but I never, ever found that there was, no.

SR: So you all mixed together in the street and playing?

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BH: Yes, and never even mentioned the Catholics or the Protestants, as we called them, Church of England or whatever.

SR: Now, what about sex education, not necessarily at school but what did you know about sex as a kid?

BH: No, never knew a thing, no. We're never told anything at school, definitely not and we're never told anything at home by your Mum, never.

SR: So what happened when you first menstruated?

BH: Well, I just thought that I was going to bleed to death, to be quite honest, yes.

SR: What did you do?

BH: I didn't know what to do; I was in a panic. But anyhow I ended up asking me Mum in the night and she told me what to do but there was nothing out them days that you could buy at the chemist, I don't think, and it was just like - - -

SR: Towels?

BH: Yes.

SR: How long did you wait before you told your Mum what was happening?

BH: A day, one day, yes.

74.00 **SR: And you must have been worried sick.**

BH: Didn't know what to do, didn't know what had happened, yes, that's right, didn't know what had happened.

SR: You wouldn't have remembered hurting yourself or anything.

BH: I thought I might have. I didn't know what had happened, yes, yes.

SR: Pretty terrifying.

BH: Yes, it was terrifying, it was. That's one thing that sticks out in my mind is that because it was frightening.

SR: You know how you were talking about when your father was very ill and he had TB, did he get that when he was overseas during the war?

BH: Well, they seemed to accept that it was war related injuries, yes, they did. As far as I know: Mum said it was war related.

SR: And you never got it?

BH: No, never, no. And my brother never and my mother never but she took particular care to make sure that everything was boiled. That's what they had to do: boil it all, she had to boil it all up in a big pot on the stove. That was the way she kept it, was boiling this big pot; I always remember this big pot.

SR: What was in the pot, what did she boil?

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BH: Well, his knife and fork, his plate, his cup, anything he used for eating was boiled by my Mum.

SR: And in those days, I mean TB wasn't always but it was often a death sentence and it was contagious. Was there problem, was there any shunning or at least as you'd probably say discrimination because of it?

BH: Well, there might have been but I never, ever seen any of it but perhaps people were a bit frightened. Perhaps nobody knew, I don't know, I'm not sure.

76.00 **SR: But it was pretty common. Were you aware of other families that had it?**

BH: No, I wasn't. No, I only particularly knew that my Dad had it. No, never knew of anyone else that had it at that stage, yes.

SR: What were common childhood diseases at that time, what did kids get?

BH: Childhood. Oh, measles, whooping cough, things like that, measles.

SR: Did people get sicker with those sort of illnesses then than they do now?

BH: Sicker?

SR: Yes.

BH: Oh, no, I don't think so, no. I think they used to keep you in a dark room if you had measles or something and things like this, I don't know. No, I don't think they got sicker, no, no. Probably there wouldn't have been the medical things that they've got today for it but people seemed to get over these things.

SR: Did you ever end up in hospital?

BH: Appendicitis was another thing a lot of the young ones seemed to get, a few of the young ones seemed to get. No, I don't remember ever being in hospital, no, sick.

SR: Can you remember any deaths from that time?

BH: Deaths? No, not from that time I don't, no.

SR: Just your father?

BH: As I got older. Yes, yes, only my Dad, yes. I was sixteen, of course, yes, yes. And then of course after that there was a few others sort of dying around. There was an old lady across the road who'd reared up her - well, one of them's my good friend today - reared up her four grandchildren, she died. That was heartbreaking because we used to go in and out of each other's houses and that was upsetting.

SR: And what caused her death?

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BH: I think it was old age; she was in her eighties. Well, probably something but I'm not sure what it was today, yes, but she was pretty old and getting around sort of pretty sick looking, yes.

SR: Can you remember any accidents? In those days there weren't that many cars around but with kids playing in the street and things like that, were there many accidents that you can remember?

78.10 BH: No, there weren't many cars around. There were hardly any cars, in fact; you hardly saw a car and there were certainly none parked around our way much. No, I can't remember any big accidents of any kids around our way ever getting hit by a car or having an accident, no, I can't.

SR: Did kids have bikes in those days?

BH: Yes, we did. We nearly all had a bike and if you didn't have a bike you borrowed one off a friend, off one of the kids around your neighbourhood. And sometimes we used to take them over to Victoria Park and ride them around and you might have rode them around the street but you never went a long way away; only Victoria Park was the furthest I ever remember riding on a bike.

SR: If you were to describe the neighbourhood, was it residential, industrial or mixed, how would you describe the general neighbourhood?

BH: Well, it was residential and industrial, it was mixed. There were a lot of factories around, so there was always work for someone. Because they had cardboard factories that a lot of the locals worked at, there was the Allen's Sweets lolly factory, there was Scanlon's lolly factory, there was Yardley's, the perfume factory, there was heaps. There was Firth's was a big cardboard factory, there were heaps of factories. There was a bottleoh place where all the bottles were and they used to transfer them in trucks and things. There was a tobacco factory - - -

SR: Where was that?

BH: - - - which was on the corner of Darlington Road and Calder Street - see, we had a Calder Street as well as a Calder Road and it went up alongside of Calder Road, across Shepherd Street - and on the corner of Calder Street and Darlington Road, right opposite the Darlington School was a tobacco factory, a big tobacco factory.

80.16 **SR: What brand, do you know?**

BH: No, I can't remember the brand but I remember it being there, yes.

SR: And most of the people that lived in the area, were they working people or were there professional people living there as well?

BH: Oh, they were all workers, they were all working people, there were no professionals whatsoever. Now, you go down there now it's full of professionals but there wasn't a professional around there then; they were all like the same as us. That's why no one ever felt like they'd

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missed out on anything, because everybody was living the same, everyone was the same, you never had anything. And it was no good of people robbing you because you had nothing to take, there was nothing much there; we didn't have TVs or only a wireless, perhaps, and old furniture and a bit of lino [linoleum] on the floor, a bit of wallpaper on the walls. Yes, nothing much at all, yes. They couldn't take the chip heater and they couldn't take the old copper so there was nothing for them to take.

SR: What smells can you remember?

BH: Smells. I probably remember a bit of a smell from the tobacco factory as you went past it.

SR: Was it a nice smell or a stink?

BH: Oh, I don't think it was too bad; I didn't seem to think it was too bad although I never smoked in my life, luckily. I think it was more luck than anything because that was another thing they all had a go at and some of them took it up and some didn't, yes. We all used to have a little go at the cigarette when we were about fifteen, sixteen, yes, had a go but never interested me but that's just another one of the things we did.

SR: What sounds can you remember that you would associate with that area from the 1940s?

82.05 BH: Sounds. Gee. Oh, would have probably been the sound of Mum in the kitchen with the pots rattling or something like this. Yes, perhaps that'd be something like that or shaking mats over the balconies, all housework things, they'd be about the only sounds. You never heard aeroplanes or cars or you never heard anything much like that, yes.

SR: If you were to close your eyes and just think back of that time, what image comes to your mind of Chippendale in the 1940s?

BH: What image?

SR: Yes.

BH: Oh, well, what comes to my mind is a very safe area with a lovely lot of people that were really friendly, just a really safe area, that's the image and really lovely growing up in that area. I'm sure I enjoyed every minute of it because you never went short of friends. Even though I never had a sister I always had plenty of girlfriends to hang about with or play with or whatever. Just the friendliness, I think, of the area more than anything, where you could go in and out of different one's houses and if anyone was sick everyone rallied around to give you a hand. Not that I was sick or my Mum - my Dad was a bit but he had us there to look after - but you never let anyone that didn't have anyone to look after them, you never left them without. Like there'd be people going in to make them a cup of tea and give them a bit of lunch or do all these sort of things; everyone was willing to help each other.

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SR: It sounds like there was a very strong sense of community but what was the ethnic mix? Was it Anglo-Aussies or after the war were you getting the European immigrants or were there Aboriginal families there?

84.16 **BH:** Well, no. I can only remember Australians there; I can only ever remember Australian families. I can't really remember any ethnic groups and, no, I can't say that I can even remember - oh, yes, a couple of Aboriginal families scattered around, there were, yes.

SR: Can you remember who they were?

BH: Yes, yes. One was Keithie Saunders who was a friend of my husband's and we all used to go out together. Wait a minute - well, that was Keithie Saunders - well, I can't remember a real lot of but then in my son's time, growing up, there was a friend of his, a couple of friends of his that lived in Calder Road and we were good friends with their Mum and Dad too.

SR: And who was that?

BH: And they were - one boy, I think he's teaching now - Lester, Johnny Lester was the boy who grew up with my son and Robert Griffin was the other boy and they were from Aboriginal family and lovelier people you couldn't meet, they were lovely families. I still keep in contact with the Griffins but the Lester family moved away a lot of years ago but I still hear from the Griffins because they moved up here near us, they're up here.

SR: What were the most popular newspapers?

BH: I think they were *The Truth* and *The [Daily] Telegraph*; as far as I remember it was *The Truth* and *The Telegraph*.

SR: And did your family get those papers?

86.02 **BH:** Oh, I'd say they would have, yes, I think we always got the papers, yes, yes.

SR: Can you remember any magazines that you used to get at that time?

BH: Oh, I don't know if *The [Australian] Women's Weekly* or whatever but, no, I can't remember any magazines that we ever got in our house, no, only the papers.

SR: What about comics?

BH: Well, comics in the papers, that was it.

SR: Well, what were the big issues of the time? In the late '40s, which is where most of your memories are coming from, can you remember if there were any big issues at that time?

BH: Big issues?

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SR: Even on an Australia-wide basis, not necessarily locally. Well, obviously WWII was one but that was a bit earlier. Can you remember anything - - -

BH: Yes, that was a bit early for me, yes.

SR: - - - big debates that might have been on in the media or something?

JR:

BH: What did you say?

SR: Queen, that was '54 when they came out.

BH: '54, yes, that was when the Queen came out but apart from that the only other big issue I remember 'round that area was the Darlington, was them taking Darlington, yes.

SR: And that was the '50s too?

BH: Yes, but that was a bit later too. And the Queen, who arrived in '54 which was a big issue, everyone was thrilled, that was a great big thing, yes.

SR: We weren't republicans then.

BH: No, no, no. Everyone, I think everyone in that area was down at Cleveland Street to see her, yes.

SR: What did you know of the world outside your local area?

BH: Nothing very much, I don't think, no, nothing very much at all. No, you just more or less lived in the area and knew everything that was going on in the area but nothing outside much, yes.

SR: Can you remember any of the politicians of the day?

BH: No, I can't remember any of the politicians. We weren't into all that at that stage.

88.05 SR: O.K. Well, what impact did the car have on your lifestyle and on the area? You know when people started to get cars, well, did they start to get cars in the late '40s in your area?

BH: I think it would have been, yes, well I think, no, maybe in the '50s I can remember cars coming to be popular. And then before you knew it when the university took Darlington, now with the university there you get all the cars in the world there in Chippendale. They just take up all the car spots and even though they've only got two hours to park there, they come out, they rub off the chalk mark and they stay there all day. I mean, my husband, when we were finished there, when we were still living there and he was on shift-work couldn't get anywhere to park, couldn't park out the front. He used to have to double park and he couldn't go to bed until we got somewhere to park for him and you'd have to wait for hours sometimes before he could go and have a sleep after shift-work because he couldn't get his car into the street.

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SR: That's lousy, isn't it?

BH: Yes, so it got really bad once the university took over there, it took Darlington; the car problem is traumatic around that area.

SR: Well, how did you get around? If there weren't cars, how did you get around as a kid in the '40s?

BH: Well, we went on buses and trams; we went on the tram and the bus, that's how we got around. We used to go down and get the tram and it was lovely riding on the tram; we all loved it. But that's how we went, bus or tram - mainly tram, I think, mainly the tram, yes, or you walked, mostly you walked, or train.

90.05 **SR: Can I ask was there any sort of social status differentiation, say, between Darlington and Chippendale or Surry Hills or Redfern? You know it was an inner city area and it was sort of classed as underprivileged, where you've mentioned that before - - -**

BH: Yes.

SR: - - - were any of the areas ever considered by the locals to be better than any other area? Was there any of that?

BH: No, not that I can remember. No, I think everyone just felt on a par.

SR: So you didn't think you were better than the Redfern mob?

BH: Oh, no, no, no one, no, no, never, no. But there were mobs called the Redfern Mob, the Glebe Mob.

SR: And what were they?

BH: Oh, they were only a group of boys or girls, girls and boys that sort of came over to our way and we might go over there to Glebe. Yes, they were only a group of young teenagers that weren't doing any harm. They were called the Glebe Mob, the Redfern Mob, the Chippendale Mob.

SR: And what would you do if you were going to somebody else's area?

BH: Oh, yes, well you'd go and have a milkshake with them or something like that.

SR: Right.

BH: Yes, yes, it was no fighting or that unless maybe the boys thought that you were trying to pinch each other's girlfriends or something like that. Then you might get a little scuffle with a little fistfight on it but apart from that, no, they were all friends, yes.

SR: Was there ever a time when you felt, perhaps when you were older, that people looked down upon you because you came from Chippendale?

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BH: No, I've always been very proud of Chippendale and living in Chippendale and growing up there, I'm more than proud of being there but I have heard of people that say they live in other addresses but that's something I would never, ever do because I loved it.

92.03 I was very happy there, I had a happy childhood there and growing up there and I couldn't knock the place; I loved it.

SR: Thank you very much. Is there anything you'd like to say that you haven't said?

BH: Oh, only that I became a Justice of the Peace because the people had nowhere to go to have their papers signed and things. They used to have to go up to the courthouse or somewhere like that so I became a Justice of the Peace so that I could sign them for them and they'd come to my place and have them sign. And then in '77 I ran for council as an independent and became an independent on the council and had a great run there for seven years and they amalgamated from South Sydney into the city. And I really enjoyed doing it and when my husband had the accident I sort of phased it out because I didn't have time to do the whole thing and so I didn't run the next time. And I loved being on it and helping the people and I had plenty knocking on my door, I can tell you, yes. But apart from that, that's all, Sue.

Interview ends