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*Ok, so that should be recording now. Um, so if you could just say your full name and date of birth please.*

Yes, Mrs Margaret Ann Carey, C A R E Y. Twenty seventh of the fourth, nineteen thirty eight (27/04/1939).

*Lovely, and could you say where you were born for the tape please?*

I was born in Hackney Hospital. And lived in Hackney for, I think only for a few months.

*And is it ok if I ask you what your parents did for work?*

Yes, my er, my mother didn’t work. Well, not when I was born, er, she became a typist later life. And my father was a surveyor.

*Lovely. And did you have any brothers or sisters?*

Yeah, I’ve got two brothers...one’s seven years older than me, and one’s seven years younger than me.

*Wow, so you’re right in the middle of the two of them!*

Yes. [pause].

*And can I ask what schools you went to, if that’s ok?*

Er, yes, I went to Ripple School, Ripple um...Ripple School, and Park Modern.

*Park Modern? Are there any particular...*

Oh, and oh...

*Oh sorry!*

Originally I started school at Blackhorse Road, Walthamstow.

*Ok. And area I know well!*

Oh right [laughs]. Yes, I went to school there.

*So that’s where you would have started off?*

Yes I started school there, but my mum wouldn’t let me go to school, and I didn’t go to school til I was six. And she got in to trouble.

*Crikey. Was there a reason xxxx...*

‘Cause she, ‘cause she didn’t want to leave me. Didn’t want me to go to school. [laughs].

*Aw! Isn’t that lovely though!*

Yeah, it is really!

*Probably missed having her little girl around the house!*

She did get really told off.

*Oh dear.*

Nothing further, but...[pause]

*Ok. [laughs].*

But it was during the war, you know. And life was, you never knew if you were going to be bombed out or not. So I ‘spect that had a bearing, to it.

*Ok. And is, are there any particular memories about um, about your school days that you would like to be remembered? Sort of certain characters you knew, or certain occasions?*

Yeah, I enjoyed, I enjoyed um, er, Park Modern, those years. Yes, um, I liked sport, I played hockey, I played hockey for the school after I left school. Er, I enjoyed school very much.

*Ok. And what did you do after school, did you work?*

Er yes, I went as a junior in to a city firm, and progressed in to a policy typist. But I originally wanted to be a florist, but in those days, the apprenticeship was very low paid, and er, mum and dad just wanted some income coming in. So I went up to the city.

*Ok. And how old were you when you moved to this house then, in nineteen forty five (1945)?*

Er, seven.

*Seven? Ok. [pause]. And is there anything in particular about your working life that you would like to be recorded, um, any particular names of firms or, type of work?*

No not really. Some firms were good, and some weren’t so good. And er, but overall I enjoyed work. Um, really, yeah. Yeah, no, like I enjoyed the city. Nice atmosphere the city was then. I don’t know what it’s like now working in it, I haven’t worked for a good few years! [laughs]. And er, I left work when I was twenty six to have my first daughter. So I worked there all that time. Mostly in insurance. And always as a policy typist.

*Ok. [pause]. And you said you got married at nineteen, is that correct?*

Yes. Yes.

*Can I ask what your husband did for work?*

Um, he was er, I don’t know how to explain it, he worked in the docks but he wasn’t a docker. He was um, clerical. Clerical in London docks. [pause] And he lived in Barking.

*So he was local to the area?*

Yes.

*Was his whole family from Barking?*

Yes, yes. [pause].

*And if, you mentioned earlier about um, the war years, um, obviously you weren’t living in Barking during the war years, but do you remember coming up to Barking during the war years?*

Er, we was evacuated to Leighton Buzzard.

*Ah ok.*

On a farm. Um...and then we came back there to Walthamstow, and er, I remember the war in Walthamstow being bombed. And um, no we didn’t visit Barking, a lot, until we came to Barking. Really/ Although the Grandma and Grand-dad lived here so we must have visited them. But it was very awkward in the war you see, because you know, you had to be in at a certain time, like with the blackouts and that. And, you know, I don’t think, I don’t think we visited much in the war.

*Ok.*

No.

*And um, talking, you mentioned there about the war in Walthamstow can you remember any particular memories that stand out in your mind, if you’re ok to talk about it?*

Yes, yes, yes. Um, I remember mum at night with a candle on writing to dad in the army. And my older brother used to be on lookout for any bum-, bombs coming over. And er, he’d stand on the toilet seat looking out the window, and he’d say, oh here comes one! Oh I dunno, he saw these, and they were doodlebugs. At that time. And they made this low noise, a “mmmmmm” like that. And then, we, mum never took us in to the air raid shelter or anything, we stayed in the bedroom. And then you heard this huge explosion, and my mum used to say, oh poor, some poor devil’s got it tonight. And er, and we want-, we were bomb blasted in this pub, every window came out, and downstairs, I remember going down stairs and the, all the beer and all the spirits had broken, and it was like um, about four foot high of all drink, that we had to wade through. In the bar. And er, I can smell that drink now!

*[laughs].*

You know, it was so, er, but it all got repaired! [laughs]. By, I can’t remember it getting repaired but we all put back together again!

*Ok.*

And er, and then we had bomb blast here. And we had air raid, um, um, what’s it called, air raid damage done here. All the ceilings came in here, this house, because a bomb dropped just over on the corner and demolished about ten houses.

*Crikey!*

So we got the blasts being on the corner.

*And your grandparents were living in this house at the time?*

Er, no we were here then!

*Oh you were here, oh crikey!*

Yes, we’d just come, because we came at the end of the war.

*Right.*

Hmmm.

*Do you remember feeling frightened at all then?*

No! No, it’s funny that, people, no, often say that. But, no, I suppose in a way it was, you just took it for granted at that age, young age, that well, I don’t know what you thought about it really! [laughs]. No, quite exciting I suppose, in a way. Er, really. We used to go and play over on the er, bomb damage, and that was like our playground. All along these houses, climbing over them. Terrible really!

*[laughs].*

No, it wasn’t, never frightened.

*Ok.*

Well I was never frightened anyway. No.

*What was it like playing on the bomb sites, was it quite a dangerous place to play?*

Oh yes, if you think about health and safety!

*[laughs].*

[laughs] These days! They’d have had a fit! Yeah, it was all jagged and bricks and, but we had a fine old time. Clambering about.

*Did you ever used to make dens and things with the debris?*

Um...no, I can’t remember making those, I suspect older ones made them. I was only seven then, so I just watched the others really. But er, no, it was just taken as granted that you were bombed, and er, nobody, mum never panicked, and dad was away at war.

*So it never really fazed you very much?*

No, no, no.

*Ok.*

And I had me older brother, and then the younger brother was born in forty five (1945), as we came here, and um, he was a war baby.

*[laughs].*

And er, and aside the older brother, he was you know, he used to look out for me and that, so er, hmmm. No, can’t remember ever being frightened.

*Yeah. It sounds like, almost like quite a happy time really, you know...*

Er, yes, in a way, ‘cause you know, when you, when it was an air raid, you was all together in the room, we used to get under a table, and er, there was aunt, uncle and all sitting under there playing games and things you know, it was quite er, [laughs]...

*Sounds like a family party! [laughs].*

Well it was really, more that it is today you know.

*Definitely.*

Yeah [laughs]. Strange times.

*Well it’s wonderful.*

I wouldn’t wish them on anybody, but I must admit, I can’t ever being frightened of it.

*Ok.*

And my husband, he was ten years older than me, and er, he used to go round all these roads picking up shrapnel.

*Oh, why would he do that?*

I don’t know really! [laughs]. I suppose it was a prized possession in a way, that he’d got a bit of shrapnel.

*Ah ok, so it wasn’t like he was collecting scrap metal for something?*

No, no, no, no! It was like, Ooo, I’ve found a piece of shrapnel! I suppose, I don’t know, I didn’t know him then. Um, no, so he saw more of the war. He was evacuated as well. And er, he wanted to stay there, he was down at er, in the country somewhere he was. And they wanted to keep him. He loved it.

*Really?*

Hmmm.

*It’s nice to hear a positive evacuee experience, because some people, obviously...*

His brother ran away twice!

*Oh did he?*

And in the end they just kept him here, his brother. He didn’t like it at all, but Dennis loved it. Hmmm, loved it.

*Luck of the draw?*

But did come home. Er, I mean that must have been terrible, not to have your mum with you. My mum was evacuated with me. Because of my age, because I was young.

*Right, so is that how it would work then, if you were quite young?*

Yes. Yes I think if you was under a certain age, you, the mother could come. With you. But he was evacuated like without his, er, mum and dad. But er, I don’t know if that was arranged or whether my dad arranged it. But I think it was, that because of, I was young.

*Ok.*

That we was er, that she was with us.

*What was it like sort of going away and then coming back to London, was it very different, or do you not really remember your evacuation?*

I don’t really remember a lot of that. I know I had my tonsils out, um, while I was evacuated. And a bomb dropped on the hospital, my mum always said, they mucked my tonsils up! ‘Cause I was left with a lump in me throat, but I don’t know about that! [laughs]. And I do remember when we came back to London, we must, it must have been near Christmas and I saw these lights in the sky, which were probably the um, lights from the um...what are they called? Search lights!

*Ok.*

And my dad, must have been on leave, and he said, oh look, that’s Father Christmas going past on his sleigh! And I really believed it. But obviously they were the search lights, that lit up the sky.

*That’s lovely though, that he...*

Yeah! I remember things like that. I remember D-Day, going up to Trafalgar Square, and er, and the parties at Walthamstow, we had a street party. And er, yeah, so really you know, all in all, I mean we didn’t realise the suffering of the, the food shortage you know, that me mother had. And you’d hear, oh there’s oranges down Hoe Street! And, they’d get packed off to go and buy, queue up for about three hours to get an orange.

*Wow!*

And possibly come back without an orange. And we used to eat eels a lot, my mum used to send me down there with a little bag to get the eels. And they used to pop out the bag, I’ve never ate an eel since.

*[laughs]. Did you like them when you were a child?*

Well I think I ate them, but whether I liked them or not, I don’t know. And we bred our own, my Auntie bred her own rabbits and chickens. And even that I didn’t realise what we were, I mean I couldn’t eat a rabbit, or a chicken now. I’m a vegetarian now. But I mean we ate those. And all the vegetables. But, you had to I suppose. You know, there was no other alternative if you didn’t have a rabbit stew, oh the thoughts of it! Um, you didn’t eat. So...

*Xxxx.*

Luckily I was young because I think if I’d been older I wouldn’t have coped with it really.

*[laughs].*

Not knowing.

*Especially if you were, had been a vegetarian as an adult!*

Yeah, oh yes! Well yes, that would have been dreadful. And like, flour shortage and sugar. You know. I don’t know how we, but we all ate, and we wasn’t anything wrong with us.

*Hmmm. That’s good.*

Hmmm. Funny times.

*[laughs]. Um...*

Oh and the air, I didn’t like the masks, the er, gas masks. I had um, a Mickey Mouse one ‘cause children had Mickey mouse ones.

*Wow.*

To make ‘em feel a bit, oh, and that, oh, I can feel that pressure on my face now!

*Did, did the fact that it was a Mickey Mouse mask make you want to wear it?*

No! It didn’t, but they thought it would. It had um, I forget what it had on it, it had like red ears or something on it. And my brother, younger brother, was put in a, er, like in a big um, like a small oxygen tent. That was his gas mask.

*Ok.*

Placed in a whole plastic affair. But we never had to, we didn’t have any gas, but you used to have to keep practicing. In case you did.

*It’s quite, quite interesting hearing you say, ‘cause I heard someone the other day told me about a Donald Duck mask, and I thought that would be really, really unusual, but...*

No.

*From what you’ve said...*

Well, perhaps it was Donald Duck! It was a Disney Character.

*Yeah.*

I thought it was Mickey Mouse, mine.

*It may well have been, I’m not...*

I see these red things on it. In me mind’s eye.

*[laughs].*

In a little box, you had to hang it up, well you had to go everywhere with it.

*Yeah. I just think it’s quite nice that they actually designed them for children as well.*

Yes, but it was still the same, oh! Still the same, oh, I can feel that on me face now as well!

*Oh, crikey! Sorry I didn’t mean to [laughs]...*

Oh no, no! I mean, you know, I mean it’s amazing what spills over. I can’t remember suffering, but I can remember that! And you know, um, and not other things.

*Memory is a strange thing isn’t it!*

Yes, memories are strange things, yes. Good or bad, yeah, yeah. But er, hmmm, no not many bad memories, no. And then when we came to Barking and there was a lot of bomb damage in Barking Park, there was a done, er, garrison over there. And er, the houses opposite, they’re lovely houses along there, and you could buy one of those for two hundred pounds. Because of the risk, being a gun, guns in the park, there was more risk of those houses being bombed and not one of them was. So whoever had the foresight to buy one in those days, er...

*Doing all right now! [laughs].*

Yeah! And then we played in the, where they had all the tunnels and the, er, all brick built things over there, where the guns were, that was our playground again there. In the park, down little steps, concrete steps, and all tunnels and little rooms. And er, I was always over the playing.

*Do you...?*

There again it was dangerous. But no one worried! [laughs].

*[laughs].*

No one said you can’t go in there.

*Yeah. Do you actually remember the, the guns in Barking Park?*

Can’t remember the guns, no. Can’t remember the guns, but I know, like, where they were and all the er, well, where they got bombed I suppose, and it was just underground tunnels that we played in, like the men was under there I suppose. No, I can’t remember seeing any guns.

*And where abouts do you think they were in the park?*

They were over by um, where the Lido is, to the left of the Lido. They were all there. And then they also built some like, Nisson Huts, for people that had been bombed and hadn’t got anywhere to live. And they put them in there, and um, I forget what year it was, that they wanted to pull these big Nisson huts down, and er, the residents really loved them, they’d made them their homes. And they refused to move. And Jean next door, her sister lived in one, and she didn’t want to move at all, they had a protest. But in the end they were demolished.

*Ok.*

But they, they had made them in to their homes, you know, and...they didn’t want to move.

*What do you think it was that made them want to stay, stay in those huts, do you think it was the location or do you think it was just, they liked the construction or...?*

I think they just built it up with the bits and pieces they’d got from being bombed out, and turned it in to their home. And I suppose there was quite a little um, social network there. They were all in the same boat, and um, perhaps all similar ages, I don’t know. Made like a little community.

*And not a bad location either [laughs].*

Oh no, no, right by the, no, very nice, once the guns had stopped, yeah. [laughs]. Yes. Yeah, I’d like living in the park! [laughs].

*[laughs]. Do you know how many Nisson huts there were, where people lived?*

Um, I don’t know how many rooms they had, Jean next door would know more about that. Um...well there was quite a few, ‘cause you used to walk past them and they were like big, er, corrugated, you know like a, that shape...oh no, I really couldn’t say exactly. Without, no, not for sure. But quite a few, quite a few families lived in there. Hmmm.

*Would you say the memories of the huts were your earliest memories of Barking Park?*

Er...well the huts and these underground tunnels that we played in.

*Could you describe the tunnels to me, if that’s ok, like where they were, and what they were like?*

Well, they were to the left of the Lido, and they were um, built underground, so weeds and grass had all grown on top of them. And I remember there was lots of steps down, like, little staircases really, and I think they were like a cream colour. They were brick, they’d been like, plastered. And they just led in to like, little rooms and oh, we just played about in there. [laughs].

*Was it quite exciting to play in there?*

Oh yes, yeah. Yeah.

*What kind of games would you imagine, or would you come up with to play?*

Well I don’t know about playing games, it was just running about in there really. We didn’t turn them in to little dens or anything, we just, liked running up and down these steps! [laughs]. Er...I don’t know if we was even all-, really should have been in there now, when I think about it. But no one ever turned us out. There was quite a few of us, always running about in there. ‘Cause living so near the park, and of course the traffic was nothing like it is now. I mean we just used to walk over the park, like, walking out in to your garden. You know, the park was so accessible from here. And we was always in the park.

*Did you have a regular groups of friends that you would wander over there with or...?*

Er, yes, I can’t remember, they were probably from school. Um, I can’t, no, I can’t remember friends that, er, Ripple School...although there was a girl down the road, Rita. Hmmm, more I remember friends at the senior school really, more. Er, I think we used to just all meet up over there, you know. And, just play around with one another, whoever was over there. [laughs].

*Whoever happened to turn up?*

Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

*What was um, in terms of, obviously after that, what is the next sort of most prominent memory, or earliest memory that you have of the Park?*

Er, well the Lido was a big er, big influence in my life. Um, because we seemed to have long, hot summers, and cold winters. So every evening was a, seemed to be a hot evening in those days. For six weeks. And er, you’d have to queue up to get in the Lido, and we didn’t mind how long we stood there queueing, er, to get in there. And um, I didn’t swim, I learned to swim over there, but it was just really like a social thing, there was boys over there and [laughs]!

*[laughs].*

And you know, you just, it was just a nice place to go. There was two large fountains, and er, I can smell the changing rooms as well!

*Could you describe...?*

Kind of like a bleachy xxxx, bleachy smell, but, and all water on the floor, and oh, they were really archaic really! And the turnstile you went through, click, click, click it would go. And er, then you’d get a little locker, um, little silver disc on a piece of leather for your locker. And er, and there was a little tea bar over there. And er, no, we just used to sit on, and there was all grass and, no, it was very nice over there. But we did go in the water because it was so hot, you jumped in the water. Hmmm.

*Could you describe the pool to me,’cause I’ve heard it was quite unusual?*

It was very large and very blue. Lovely colour blue. And a big fountain each end that was always bubbling out. And um, um, a deep end, where there was a diving board, and a shallow end, you went down steps. Each end was a shallow end, and then the deep end was in the middle.

*Ok.*

And er, I was saying, oh I could swim, I couldn’t swim but I said I could swim, and these boys got hold of me and went, one, two, three, with me arms and legs and threw me in there and I, went down and up three times [laughs] I remember, seeing all these [laughs] xxxx, and I swam to the side! So I learnt to swim!

*[laughs].*

And they didn’t know I couldn’t. [laughs].

*I suppose you had to learn really! [laughs].*

But my friend was worried, ‘cause she knew I couldn’t swim. Yeah. I think it was about twelve foot six, the deep end.

*Ok, wow.*

So a long way down! [laughs].

*[laughs] Got out quite lucky, really.*

But it didn’t frighten me, well, I learnt to swim, so you know, that was alright. Yeah, and Terry Venables, the football manager, he was the um, lifeguard over there. One of the lifeguards, yeah, he used to, always be singing. So, you used to chat the lifeguards up at that age, fifteen, sixteen. Seventeen. And er, my husband never went in the, I never met him in the pool. I met him in the park, but he never went in sw-, he never swam.

*Oh ok.*

So I didn’t meet him in there, but I met him in the park. [laughs].

*Going back to Terry Venables, how old would he have been at the time do you think?*

Yes. Well you see, I’ve got a photo somewhere, and I can’t find it, I haven’t found it for a few years, um, and I can remember the dress that I was wearing with him standing with his arm around me shoulder. Um, and I’ve always said to my friends, oh, you know, I’ve got this photo of Terry Venables, and er, a friend of mine said, well you couldn’t have been over there, because he’s much younger than you. But I know that I was, and I know I had this photograph. So perhaps he was younger, although I was only about sixteen, so he wouldn’t have got a job over there I wouldn’t have thought unless, I don’t know. But I know it was Terry Venables, and I wish I could find the photo!

*[laughs].*

And it was a pink and white dress I had on! [laughs]

*Oh lovely!*

It wasn’t in the photo, it’s black and white, but I remember this dress. Funny how, you know, some things I can’t remember, but I remember that dress. And other lifeguards, but I know, I know it was over there.

*Did they wear a uniform, the lifeguards?*

Whites. Whites. White trousers, white t-shirt...don’t think they had lifeguard on the back. And course my son was one of the last lifeguards, in the summer of eighty six (1986). He was a lifeguard over there. And um, I forget what he wore now, he, er, he probably was all in white. Um, and the pool closed down, because er, sometimes they’d only have one person over there.

*Oh, that’s a shame.*

Hmmm. So, it got worse and worse, and er, sometimes there was three, and I think when it got to one, that was the end of it, and they closed the pool down then. And yet, you know, before that you had to queue up, for a couple of hours to get in.

*Could you describe it as, you know, at it’s busiest that you saw and experienced, could you kind of describe how many people were there?*

Oh...no, I don’t know what the limit was, I ‘spect there was a limit, ‘cause that’s why we had to queue up. ‘Cause you couldn’t go in until somebody had come out.

*Ok.*

But really long queues, right up to the beginning of the park here. Right to the Lido. The queue. And no one got fed up, you queued, no one pushed in, you just stood there and moved along, and hoped to get in. I never got in without queuing. But as I say when he was there, um, they had one person, but the…you see the summers were bad

*Right*

It was an opened aired pool and it wasn’t heated so, you know you…that’s why im saying the summers…years ago were hot because you wouldn’t have gone over there

*Mmh…can you remember the water being a little bit chilly?*

Oh yes

*[Laughs]*

you know, you put one toe in ‘ooohh’ scream, and you know all this, and then once you got your shoulders covered you were alright, but it was all that burst…putting one toe in and then another one, so it was always cold even if it was boiling hot

*Mmh*

I think there was a little paddling…there was a little paddling pool for the little children, just behind the fountain,

*Ok*

About two inches of water in there, so you know…toddlers could go in there, it was a big event, you went over there with your mums and dads and…

*Ok*

And we erm…I took…we took our children over there, but it had closed before the grandchildren ever went over there

*Oh what a shame*

Mmh

*Can you remember it being quite expensive to get into the lido?*

I’ve no idea, but we didn’t have a lot of money, so obviously it wasn’t too dear for my… you know my mum to give me the money to go over there

*Mmh*

I’ve got…I’m not very good with erm…how much things were

*Mmh, so the first time you have been…went over there, would be 1945, obviously when you moved here*

Yes, yes, yes

*Erm…do you, do you remember other sort of…of the original features, things…*

The train, the little train and that was over the other side of the park, along the lake, and you went through a long corrugated tunnel and you all screamed

*[Laughs]*

Cos it was dark

*Wow*

And erm…but then of course it run from the…erm down to the lake from the erm…gates, so the tunnel…the SS Phoenix, the steam ship, that was always there, and we’d go on that, so nothing could have been very dear, because I can’t remember my mum, ever saying ‘no you can’t go on it’ you know, we used to go on it, and erm…and that was lovely, going round the lake on that, and there’d be all deck chairs erm…and deck chairs, you know crammed packed, like next to one another, not spread out…so many people

*Mmh*

And tiddler fishing with the…erm net, and a jam jar, with string round and you’d fish these tiddlers out and the prize was to get…well you didn’t get a prize, but the prize possession was a…a red…red stickleback, I think it was called, it had a bit of red on it’s tummy

*Ok, sounds like quite…*

And oh course they al died before you got home, shame [Laughs]

*[Laughs]*

I know it’s awful, I mean I couldn’t do it now, but it was something to do, spend hours going up and down with this fishing net, trying to get a tiddler

*Would you make your fishing nets or would you buy them?*

No, erm we brought them erm, but made our own jam jars, you put the string round a certain way, so that you got a…a handle, turned it round, then you knotted it both sides, so the jam jar was out the cupboard and the string, no but the nets…no I should think…there was a shop at the top of here, called Alec Wheels, real old fashioned erm…top shop…my erm…husband used to get a penny a week I think, pocket money and they used to say that ‘I can get a little soldier’

*Ah*

Little soldier, and I think we got our rods from Alec wheels

*Ok, erm and where was that did you say?*

Well, you know where the round-a-about is up here

*Yes*

Well that was a high road all along here

*Ah ok*

Both sides, and Fanshaw avenue was still there, but…the shops went from Fanshaw avenue to Cambridge…all along, all along…I’ve got a photo of that somewhere from the change and they were all shops…you know the local butcher, there was erm…Princes a drapers shop, lovely in Princes, get anything in there, cottons and anything, and clothes and a man’s tailor shop and a bakers, fancies the bakers on the corner

*Fancies*

And erm and Alec Wheels, he was the only newsagent, along there and the top…he was like…toys as well, and this side…this side was houses, little houses but I know I got my wedding bouquet made in one of these houses, so she must have been a florist

*Ok*

So all along here up to the station, both sides were shops…

*Right*

Nice…you know nice little shops…and a lovely clothes shop on…on the hill that you could only look in cos they were so dear

*[Laughs]*

And then a couple of clothes shops, that you could pay off weekly…but you didn’t get the thing until you paid, he’s name was Gold, Jewish man…and erm a Jewish Delicatessen, along here, they used to queue there, for their bread on a Sunday, my mum used to say ‘just going round to get the bread’ and she’d be gone hours

*[Laughs]*

Queuing for this bread

*It’s quite…*

A sweet shop called XXXX along here and you had to queue up when…sweets came off the ration, big queue there, to queue and get your sweets, and erm lots of shops, all the way to the park…mmh…Pardy and Johnson’s the erm…hardware shop…I could smell that as well

*[Laughs]*

Moth balls

*[Laughs]*

And erm linseed oil and all things…and that was the only telephone in there and my mum used to give me…I don’t know what the coin was to go over there to ring an auntie up

*Right*

And the telephone was in the Pardy and Johnson’s

*So he provided that service or…?*

He must have provided that service, yes you had like a little erm containa door to get in and you pressed A to get through and pressed B to get your money back, if you…if the person didn’t answer

*It sounds very complicated doesn’t it?*

[Laughs] yeah my mum couldn’t do it, so she…and oh there was a co-op over there, and we got a XXXX and I can remember that number, 8-3-7-3-1-2

*Oh*

And you had to give this number and you got a little ticket and then mum got XXXX at the end of whenever

*Ok*

So she used to send me over there as well, and ‘don’t forget to give the XXXX number’

*[Laughs] and that is engrained in your memory*

Yes, I can still remember that, and I can’t remember other things, but erm, remember that

*Ah that’s lovely*

Yes, oh it has changed oh

*And all those little shops do sound quite delightful*

Oh they were lovely, lovely shops, lovely shops, yeah

*Could you describe…*

Barking was lov…they had nice shops in Barking

*Yeah*

Really nice shops

*I’ve seen some old photographs and it all looks very…you know, it’s very sort of XXXX almost*

Mmh, mmh, there were manhattans’ and if you tried a dress on you had to put all tissue paper over your head

*Oh really*

Before you put the dress on [Laughs]

*Sounds a bit extreme doesn’t it? [Laughs]*

I know, but it was, it was, it was nice, those days should come back [Laughs]

*[Laughs] I would love to see it, so yeah [Laughs]*

Yeah, yeah you can’t, can’t explain it to people really

*Yeah*

Can’t explain, how it was

*It must be…*

But you live with it, to change and there you go

*I was wondering if you could describe like a typical day, if you were going over there, to fish for tiddlers, if you could describe that whole experience to me*

Right

*If that’s’ ok*

Well you’d probably take some jam sandwiches, wrapped up in..brown paper…didn’t have freezer bags and things like that or…little boxes or anything erm wrapped up and some…a bottle of drink…bottle of Tizer or something and off you go…and you could be over there oh…just doing the tiddlers, sitting on the grass and erm mums and dads liked you to be out all day really [Laughs] I don’t know why, but they did [Laughs]

*[Laughs]*

Go over the park, you know, come back for tea, and erm, well I’ve done it with my children ‘go and play cricket in the park’ and they’d be over there all day, playing cricket

*Yeah*

And come back for their tea, my grandchildren, not so, because I’d never let them go over the park on their own, that’s how things have changed…from my own to the grandchildren…and erm…I’d go over there with them, where as the children could…my own children could always go over the park

*Ok*

And erm…yes and then you’d sit and have your sandwiches, did go on the swings, swings were big important thing

*[Laughs]*

And…they’ve knocked them all down, I’ve noticed now in the park, but they’ll be replaced, but they were really basic swings, you know, swing and a slide, and a…called an umbrella

*Umbrella?*

Yeah, it was like…umbrella shape, and you sat on these slats and held on and cos the boys being boys, whizzed it round so fast and it used to go like this and very exciting and a horse, a rocking horse, over there, that you all sat on about eight of you could sit on it, and the one in the front held onto two iron ears or things and erm that was very good, yes

*That does sound quite exciting*

Yes, yes…the big swings, what we called big swings, just a piece of…erm wood and you sat on and get ever so high, as high as you could and baby swings, you know with the…you put them in and…and they’re in cased in there so they could fall out, I suspect some did, but

*[Laughs]*

And erm, yes the umbrella and slides, in that same compound, same place where it is now, and you take a bat and a ball and erm you’d play bat and ball games and buy

*Ok*

And buy an ice cream in the erm…pavilion, and erm then come home…had a nice day out and this was everyday, but you never got bored with it, well it was the only thing to do, quite honestly

*Ok*

Erm yeah, good days

*And what about sort of the train and the, the Phoenix you mentioned earlier*

Mmh

*How often would you go on those, do you think?*

Erm…well we used to go over with my mum and dad, it was the Sunday afternoon walk, you’d walk in the park with them and erm you’d go on it then, perhaps it was only on a Sunday that you was allowed to go on those, although I seem to think I went on it lots of times, erm my own children went of it quite a lot and the grandchildren were never off the train, in fact they had a little season ticket, because they were on it so much

*[Laughs]*

Backwards and forwards

*How much was a season ticket?*

I don’t know, I have got a photo and I think…well that’s modern…more modern day…thirty p, thirty p there and back, thirty p return I think it says, I don’t know how much it was for when my children went on it, but erm…they’d go on it, and there was a little level crossing in the middle erm, which has been bordered up now, it’s not a level crossing anymore, erm and people used to have to wait, who used that side entrance, but the entrance’s been blocked up now

*Oh*

…the little train to go by, so erm and then there’s the boats, and my grandson worked on the boats

*Oh did he?*

Until he…erm two years ago, the boats closed…or was it last year…when did the boats close…last year or the year before, and he worked like as a little holiday job from school

*Ok*

And erm, he enjoyed that, the little motor boats

*Did he know Alec then?*

Yeah

*Could you talk about Alec for me if that’s ok, cos I’ve never meet him?*

Well, no erm…I won’t talk about Alec

*Oh ok*

Really, erm very nice man, and erm he said to Billy, you came here as boy and you’re leaving as a man

*[Laughs]*

And he taught him a lot and erm…erm he was quite strict erm with the boaters and…workers but erm…I’m ‘afraid I don’t know what happened, but something happened towards the end and…I don’t know the details, but erm…I don’t think he was very happy at the end

*Oh that’s a shame, oh I’m sorry to hear that, sorry about that*

Mmh

*I’ll move on [Laughs]*

So yes, I mean…I wouldn’t…I don’t know the details but I just know that erm, he would have been happy to have carried on

*Ok*

That’s put it that way, and it just coincided with Billy, going to work anyway, so he…well he might have come over the weekends cos he really enjoyed it

*Yeah*

Working on the boats

*What kind of work would he do, could you describe it?*

Erm…well he put the numbers up when you had to come in, cos you came like if number six went out at quarter past four, you got you to come back at quarter to five and you’d put the number up and call out the boat, if he was over his time and he’d pull in and moor it up and help the new people in it, and then he’d change…oil or whatever it worked with and erm put them all away at night into the middle of the erm…middle of the lake, moor them all up and cover them all up…and erm get them out, obviously, you know in the morning, and erm…they had a couple of good summers, but they had a couple of bad summers…you know people don’t use the things if the weather’s not nice…you know they’re open boats, so they’re not closed…

*And did you ever go on the row boats, or the motor boats…?*

Erm yes, I’ve been…my husband used to take me on the rowing boats and I have been on the motor boats with my children and the grandchildren…and my mum used to row, erm in Barking oh so she must…well she was born in Barking, mum

*Ok*

And she used to row, I think there was a rowing club…erm oh you know years and years ago, that is…and she used to play tennis over…cos there were beautiful tennis courts over there at one time

*Ok*

With proper umpire chairs, you know and

*Oh wow*

And all wore white, and yeah, a tennis club, yeah lovely

*And she was a member of that*

Yes

*Did she ever tell you about that?*

Erm she used…when I first started senior school and I said ‘oh we’re having tennis lessons’, and she told me like you scored it, so she…she must of quite like it, but I didn’t…those days, parents didn’t talk to their children [Noise]…what’s that

*I think it’s someone walking by*

[Laughs] oh he’s clapping, they’re a little bit disabled, he’s clapping

*Oh right*

He lives up…I thought it was the rabbit; oh he’s having a long time out, I must get him in

*[Laughs]*

Erm they…yes there was a different attitude, wasn’t there, you know, they didn’t tell you things, eve like that, it was

*Right*

Their world and you world was…different some how, not like now, it’s all…you best mates with your mum and dad, it wasn’t then, you know it was…cut off

*Ok, so she was a member of the rowing actually in Barking Park or…*

Yes

*Ok*

And the tennis club, yes, yeah

*So did she row the skiffs?*

Yes

Oh lovely

She used to tell me, I’ve never seen her, but she used to say ‘oh she’d erm leave work and go over the park and row the skiffs and then go and play tennis’ so she was quite active, but I would have…you know, but she didn’t give you that impression, but if she talk about things, that came out in the conversation

*Did you ever see a skiff, or go on one?*

Yes, I’ve seen them

*Ok*

Cos erm years ago, the rowing club was still there when I came here, and at night, they used to be practising skiffs, and erm yeah it was lovely to…went quite fast, so that was when I was…I don’t know when they ended…childhood seems to just go into erm a rhythm of it’s own and you don’t know when things ended and when things began

*Mmh*

It’s only like when you…go courting or get married and goes onto another, but childhood just drifts [Laughs]

*Yeah, it kind of all merges into one*

I mean some people’s childhood obviously are you know bad, but if you’ve had a reasonably good one, it was just, you know

*Yeah*

Childhood and you just…did your own thing, but erm yeah the park’s got a lot of…as I say you know, a lot of memories…erm…for me with the children and you know meeting my husband and then the children and then erm the grandchildren, so…

*Yeah*

I’ve really used the park

*[Laughs]*

It’s been a…

*Well it’s lovely to hear*

Yeah, big thing, I haven’t been in the park for ages, I must admit

*Oh right ok*

And I used to love the fair; I was over there every night

*Oh fantastic*

Ever night

*Could you talk about the fair, if that’s ok?*

The fair, yes erm…see my mum like the fair [Laughs] she like playing this erm bingo and erm…there a lady…cos you, you knew the fair people because they were the same ones every year

*Right ok*

And erm this lady, we called here the little lady, and she used to have these lights flicker up with names like Fred and Bert and Eller and if you have the ticket, you won something

*Oh wow*

And she was always there, we always looked the little…called her the little lady, I don’t know why, and the erm…their children always had silver cross prams, the big...silver…with all the beautiful lace covers

*Mmh*

And they’d have them by their stool, while they were doing the erm the XXXX or whatever and these prams with the babies asleep were always there, they were always beautiful prams, in fact I never knew how they got they transported cos they cam in caravans

*Mmh yeah*

And these prams were nearly as big a caravan

*[Laughs]*

But it was a bit like a social standing with them

*Oh ok*

You know who could have the…the nicest looking pram, beautiful prams, covers the babies had

*So that was something you were aware of, was the competition between the…*

Yes, yes

*Ok*

Yeah because it stood out from not poverty, but like when they first came the caravans were really, you know not so nice I mean, Holland was the man

*Mmh*

The erm fair man, and his caravan, you always…oh Mr Holland’s caravan, you’d walk past cos it was all lovely wood and oh beautiful and erm crow…milk things outside or water jugs, I don’t know what they were, outside, and then the other caravans, some were really you know horrible really

*Mmh*

But they gradually got…you saw that difference the caravans got nicer and their toilet facilities got better [Laughs]

*[Laughs]*

Cos they used have just one standing out and all use it and when the fair went, there was always a big yellow circle where all the toilets had stood

*That was a bit unpleasant, isn’t it?*

It was, and then the men played football you see on there, and there was always the risk of like injuries, a cut would get in something not nice in you, your wound

*Do you know if that ever happened?*

I don’t know, but it’s my mind that I was told that, so I…you know perhaps that did happen and

*Mmh*

It was like…erm…brought, but then they got you know better chemical toilets and that erm…so it was really lovely going to the fair, loved it, loved the lights, and there were these things called erm…the big Lizzie and the big Bertha

*Oh*

They don’t have those now, they were like big…erm oh they had netting all over them, so you didn’t fall out

*[Laughs]*

And like big show boating away and then it went right up like that and right up like that, and you had this net…thick netting so that didn’t…cos you could just…came out of your seat, I mean health and safety would never allow it now, and if you sat at the back, you literally came out of you seat, but oh we did love it [Laughs]

*That sounds terrifying*

I know it’s marvellous, marvellous it was so…always queues for the Lizzie and the Bertha, they were side by side

*So that was the big sort of thrill seeker ride*

That was the big thrill thing yes, yes

*Right ok*

That was the big thrill thing, yes…and there was the dodgem cars and erm there were lots of side shows, and course you had the side shows with the freaks, and when I look back and I used to stand there gulping at these poor people, but you see you did it, and you didn’t have that moral…guilt

*Yeah*

Now…thank goodness, it’s banned, but it was awful

*What kind of things were there*

Well I remember this lady, she had no arms and she played cards with her feet and did all things...XXXX you sat in this little round tent, grass, on a stall and she did all marvellous thing just with her feet

*Wow*

We just stood there looking, and then there was erm…I don’t know if it was a goat with two heads, and he just stood there, and you just stood there looking at him, because you’d never seen anything like, that’s what it was

*Ok*

It wasn’t anything out of nastiness, you just…it was something you’d never seen…and so…you gulped at it

*[Laughs]*

And cos unfortunately any you know, dwarves were very popular for freak shows

*Right*

Because there again they were something different and so there’d be you know dwarves there and erm…not very nice

*Sorry I didn’t mean to upset you, or anything [Laughs]*

No, no, no you know, but it’s dreadful, really when you think about…

*But like you say you know*

But thankful, XXXX it’s changed, goodness it changed

*Well like you say you know were young and these thing were unusual, so of course you would*

Well that’s right, that’s right, yeah, and people did point these things out that, that was wrong either

*Mmh*

It was just accepted, so they were always there, but then all of a sudden they weren’t, you know

*Ok*

So something went on behind the scenes to stop…that kind of thing

*Was there a particular then where, it just didn’t happen anymore?*

I think it seemed to yes

*Ok*

It just seemed…erm one year you went and there wasn’t any freaks, as we called them and erm…so yes I think it must have been banned and I didn’t know about it somehow, so erm and erm…my mum used a cutlery…a cutlery set, and saucepan set, a set of saucepans

*[Laughs]*

And she’d bring them home from this bingo and erm…we looked forward to seeing what she brought home

*[Laughs]*

And erm none of it last, it was all so cheap and nasty, you know, it all broke [Laughs] but it looked good when she brought it home

*[Laughs]*

And erm, so every year we went to the fair, sometime just to walk round, just the lights and the erm…and people, but we used to only have the fair once a year

*Ok*

Not like now when we keep having the fair

*[Laughs]*

And when I was at school, there was always…when we went back to school in September, there was always girls or boys missing that had run away with the fair

*Really*

Mmh

*Was that quite common then?*

Mmh, every year you’d look round, you’d go ‘oh Gloria’ ‘oh yeah, well she’s gone off with the fair’, I don’t know if they ever came back, I can’t remember

*Crikey*

Yeah used to go off to the fair, well you see the young fellas doing the…the rides, were always quite you know outgoing and chat the girls up and

*Yeah*

And then there was always the girls, who wanted to chatted up, you know and one thing lead to another I suppose

*Wow*

They went off with them [Laughs] but I can’t remember if ever we saw them again

*[Laughs]*

But no that was…always when we went back to school, there was people missing, and fellas would go off, cos they liked that kind of life, you know

*Mmh*

And I…they used to pay them to help them…get the stuff, put away at the end of the fair

*Ok*

And pay them to get things out, and I suppose it lead from there, it was a job and…you know that kind of life, free and easy, and wondering about

*Quite exciting I suppose*

Yes, so I think it…it appealed to certain…young people

*Ok*

Which it perhaps would now even

*Yeah*

But erm...I don’t, I mean it’s gone ridiculous now, you know you have to pay to go in, and then we had a lot of trouble with the…

*Yeah*

You know the later years, erm in fact erm…I was alright when my children went over there, they always went over there on their own, but when the grandchildren, they’ve never gone over there on their own because there was always…the element of…going to be trouble

*Ok*

So I used to take them over and they used to go on their different rides

*Do you know when it stopped being free, and when you had to start paying to actually go in?*

Oh that’s very recent…

*Oh that’s recent*

Very recent, last couple of years that is…no very recent, and I think that probably to keep away, the erm…the bad element that could just

*Mmh*

Might be a XXXX perhaps they won’t pay the pound to go in…but when they didn’t have to pay you know, they went in to cause trouble…rival young fellas, but you don’t need that XXXX

*Yeah*

You know there was never anything like that

*Especially not when you’re taking children for a nice evening out*

Oh that’s right, that’s right, you don’t want to see that, no, so…it all seemed, lots of things ended, when the grandchildren’s turn was to come

*Ok*

So they’ve missed out in a way, on some things I feel…erm…so I used to take them over early evening and erm…course then there was the carnival…erm which was marvellous, so that was big event, in fact I was talking the other night, and a friend of mine lived in Plaistow

*Mmh*

And she said ‘oh’ she said ‘we used to say ‘oh mum taking us to Barking’’ you know

*[Laughs]*

[Laughs] now, you wouldn’t pay to go come to Barking, but you know, Barking was really a you know, a town to be admired, they used to come over to see the carnival

*Wow*

It was a big event…come to Barking

*Could you describe erm a carnival to me?*

Erm yes, lovely floats, erm different erm firms…promote a float, we had erm, erm a school of dancing, not XXXX June England’s school of dancing here, on the corner, she always had a lovely float, perhaps did like a pantomime theme or, or you had a float that anybody could dressed and go in it, and walk along…and we’d have the Dagenham Girl Pipers and different bands leading it, and a big celebrity, always a big celebrity, Diana Doors…erm I seem to remember Gregory Peck coming once, but I’m not sure if that was, but we used have some big names coming and the last name that I can remember was erm…Nicholas Parsons

*Oh ok*

And they used to ride in an open top car, you know sit on the back and wave, and you’d wave and call out, and it was packed, erm I could see it from my window upstairs if I wanted to, but we used to always go their and you’d have to stand there for quite a while to get a good seat, not seat stand, you sit in erm on the curb waiting as well, then flags were sold and it was really nice and you’d had a carnival queen, and you’d had carnival queens from other places, erm Southend erm Billericay, every town had a carnival queen…and they’d come on their floats, and my friend was a carnival queen attendee,

*Ah*

she came second and erm the dresses were always on display in her shop in the town and you’d go there to see them, dresses…erm whether anyone would do that that now a days I do not know, but we used to go down there and erm…look at the dresses

*Do you remember which it was?*

Now I can’t think what the name of the shop

*No ok*

I know the shop, but, but erm I can’t…it wasn’t manhattans’ it was a dress shop, and they’d have them displayed in the window, and it was down…I can’t remember what the name of the shop was…XXXX was on the hill…no

*No, never mind [Laughs]*

But we used to all go do there and look at the dresses and they were different each year, whether they were modified I don’t know, but they…bit different, and then they were crowned, in the park

*Ok*

By this person and you’d have fireworks, erm…Saturday night, erm Gala night was Wednesday, you’d have fireworks, and then you’d fireworks the following…the last Saturday and that was a big event the fireworks, and that was over by the swings

*Ok*

And you’d stand for hours it seemed waiting for the councillors

*[Laughs]*

The mayor and the carnival queen to arrive [Laughs]

*[Laughs]*

And they always seemed to be late, so you’d be over for hours and it was all dark cos there’s no lights on

*Yeah*

And…but the kids loved the fireworks

*I was going to say, because there’s so much, there would have been so much less sort of light population then, were the fireworks more prominent do you think or…?*

I think because you’re young and they were different that they might have seemed brighter, but I’ve seen them in recent year from window, back window and they look just as bright

*Ok*

It probably made the gunpowder, I mean they’ve improved on all that haven’t they, you know

*Yeah*

I mean even the fireworks now are different, but they’ve always…but very primitive when I think of what they have now

*Ok*

But they used to have like erm…nailed on boards and the end one was erm…goodnight

*Oh*

It…light up as goodnight and so they a lot of like display erm…fireworks, now you see a lot of up in the air display, really pretty ones…no I don’t think they were any brighter

*Ok*

But it was very dark over there, ever so dark

*I was going to ask you, after all this activity, cos obviously the fair and the carnival happened quite close together, didn’t they?*

Yes, it was the two…was together

*Yeah, I was wondering, like you was saying earlier about how there would be a yellow circle on the grass from*

Oh yes

*You know*

XXXX [Laughs]

*[Laughs] I’m thinking in terms of maintenances of the park, how long would it be for the park keepers and park wardens and you know, the other people that worked there to get it back to the way it was*

Yes, I don’t know, they used to be taking the fireworks down, almost as soon as they’d finished…

*Right ok*

All these erm…wooden post that they had the…displays on that seemed to happen that night erm…the carnival erm…I don’t know, but erm we had a lot of park keepers at the time

*Mmh*

So the work went on behind the scenes and I say…the fair employed people there was always a notice up, men wanted to…erm help take the fair things down and then they were gone the next morning

*Ok, so the fair would clear up after itself really*

Yes the fair did itself, I don’t know erm…and then you see, my husband used to moan cos he liked playing football and cricket over there and he used to moan, what they’d done to the grass, well I must admit when we’ve had some bad summer and they’ve it up, it’s been a disgrace when they’ve left

*Ok*

And erm and it’s taken, but it does come back to life, but erm I suppose perhaps its cos I’m older and the fair doesn’t appeal to me, that I do sometimes…wonder why we have

*[Laughs]*

Really because of the price that they charge erm because the rides are so huge, so little children, possible still got little children’s

*Yeah*

Roundabouts…[phone rings] excuse me

*That’s ok*

It was more for um the family before

*Right*

And for the damage that is done I do wonder…5-9-4-1-1-7-2 oh cold call I hate them

*[Laughs]*

There’s always one this time of day, Hi

*Was it a recording or was it…?*

Yes, I usually swear, but as you’re here I didn’t

*Feel free [Laughs]*

I know she can’t hear me, but it makes me feel better [Laughs] cos sometimes I’m doing something, you know and I always answer the phone…you know, I get so cross [Laughs]

*[Laughs] I’m with you on that one, so if you want to swear, you go ahead*

XXXX

*They can’t even be bothered to ring in person, can they, it’s just a recording?*

No, that’s right, that’s right, it’s awful, yeah it’s awful…erm yes so yes sometimes that green over there is in a pretty bad state

*Ok and you mentioned then there were lots of park keepers in those days*

Mmh

*How many do you think there were?*

Oh I don’t know it just seemed to be…there were always…like now you can’t find anybody if anything goes…my grandson was mugged coming from the boats one night

*Oh crikey*

I mean there was no one over there for him to run to, like lucky he run here

*Yeah*

And erm, oh nearly died and erm, but you know years ago there was always a park keeper that you could go and finds if there was any…there wasn’t any trouble like that, but anything you need a park keeper for, they always seemed to be…we had one on a bike, he was really, really strict, I mean when his whistle went you cleared that park, XXXX the gates were shut, which they should be shut now, all against all this with the gates left open all night, I mean it’s a haven for drunks and whatever

*Is it, it’s a shame*

It’s not right…and erm they were very strict and you, you know can’t misbehave cos they’d see you so I don’t know how many there was over there, but you couldn’t do anything out of hand

*And you said they used to be on their bikes, so they would cycle round the park?*

Well there was one on his bike yes

*Ok*

Yeah, he was the strictest one, he used to have his bike, I suppose they had to have a bike a night to make sure you were all out, it shuts at dusk and his whistle would go and erm oh you know [Laughs]

*[Laughs]*

Out of those gates you went, but cos some I suppose didn’t, and he’d round them all up and they were out

*Ok*

You know, single handed he’d…[Laughs]

*Wow he sounds like quite an impressive fella [Laughs]*

Yes he was, he had a nickname but I won’t tell you his nickname cos…not nice [Laughs]

*If it’s the person somebody else has told me about I think I might already know XXXX*

Oh right, he had a broken nose

*Mmh, Mr bent nose I think he was called [Laughs]*

Yeah oh bent nose is coming oh you flew yes

*[Laughs] that amazing that you knew him as well*

Yes, yeah [Laughs]

*That’s, that’s incredible*

Well you see they also stayed, cos people in jobs in those days, stayed in the job, like now you probably have people come and go, so you knew these people, they were, they were there, I suppose until they retired or died

*Yeah, that’s wonderful*

Yeah, oh yes, it is…you know it’s a different, different, different way of life

*Did they have a uniform the park keepers?*

Yes navy blue, I think like trousers and a jacket, and…a peat flap hat with a peak [Laughs], god XXXX had a badge a on it, and a big whistle on a chain

*[Laughs]*

And you could hear this whistle all over the park

*What over kind of things would he tell you off for?*

Erm…erm…in the swimming pool you got told off for jumping in, like dive bombing

*Right*

And screaming, you could scream in there, erm in the park erm well I…anybody just being silly I suppose

*Ok*

But you didn’t get many…well when you think back you didn’t get many, I mean their whistle be blowing all the time now

*[Laughs]*

Over there, dogs were on leads…I mean dogs should run about, I’m not saying they shouldn’t but dogs were on leads, you couldn’t take…and you couldn’t walk on the grass

*Ah*

You couldn’t walk on the grass, please keep off the grass, a little metal sign and nobody ever went on the grass, not the big grass, the flower bed grass

*Ok*

But now they walk wherever

*Do you remember any of the gardeners in the park, sort of…*

No there was this nursery…erm and we used to go in there and you could in there and look at what they were growing, no, I didn’t know anybody’s names there, and oh course the bowling was very popular, my father in law erm, he didn’t bowl but he used to sit on the seat everyday in the bowls…you always knew where to find erm Pat Carey, as he’d be sitting in the bowling green

*[Laughs]*

Every day with his…cronies

*Lovely*

And erm, and then there was a big chess set, that you had to move…by hand, but children weren’t allowed in there, it was like the quiet place, and that was behind the bowling green…on a big erm concrete chess board…and you’d creep past there cos you’d…mustn’t be seen going near there

*Were you…really not allowed near the place or…*

No, you wasn’t, no you see

*Oh*

And you knew that you wasn’t allowed near there

*Ok*

So you used to creep past, now they’d be in there throwing them all over the place [Laughs]

*Why do you think children weren’t allowed?*

I don’t know, perhaps it’s because…it interfered with the concentration of older people

*Ok*

I don’t think they were allowed in the bowling green, no they weren’t…couldn’t go in the bowling green...children

*Ok*

For the same thing I think, it was an adult section and adults didn’t want the children in there, which I’m all in favour of

*[Laughs] it’s nice to have your own space, isn’t it?*

That’s right…it’s like children in pubs, I’m dead against children in pubs

*Mmh*

I know it’s nice to…but there’s over things to do then take children in pubs

*Yeah, I think that’s fair enough*

For the sake of the other people as well, they just let them run…run round and round

*Yeah*

We took our children to pubs, but we sat in the gardens, that’s alright, but now they go in the…go in

*Do they actually allow them in the bars now?*

Oh yeah, they’re in there, having they’re meals

*Crikey*

In weatherspoons up there

*Yeah weatherspoons is quite child friendly, I think isn’t it?*

It’s only recently, it wasn’t at first

*Oh*

And I just think, they thought oh we’ll move them, we’ll do that, but personally I think it’s a bad move

*[Laughs]*

But that’s only my personal opinion

*Well someone who doesn’t have children, it’s not really a factor I have to think about [Laughs] XXXX going out, so*

No it’s…there place that grown-ups enjoy and there’s obviously place that children enjoy, and they’re not necessary the same place

*Of course*

I don’t think

*Yeah, I would agree that, that’s fair enough [Laughs]*

[Laughs] so erm yeah

*Were there any other sections of the park that were sort of more for one of the other, ether for adults or for children*

Mmh…erm we never used to go the other side of the lake

*Ok*

I don’t know why, but we never used to go the other side of the lake…and erm…no, no I don’t think there was anywhere that children couldn’t go…no it was only round by the bowling and…and that chess place, and there were two big shelters in the park and that was a hive of meeting up with boys and girls

*What do you mean shelter?*

Well one was erm…well it all had roofs and like one had a bench right across the middle and sides and you used to sit and just chat, it was a place to sit and chat, and the other one by the pavilion was the bigger one, quite a big shed and they were wooden sits like benches, but all built in and that had a roof, and it was just a place where you all meet up..

*Ok*

Cos there wasn’t many other places to meet, there was seats, you know, in, in the gardens erm but these were, you could get more of you in there and…so it was like a meeting up place

*Ok*

I think they used to crave their names there, very naughty

*[Laughs] ah initials or something, ah it’s lovely*

But yeah, used to do that, in these two shed, one was by the pavilion and the other one was over by the lido

*Ok*

And then there was paddling pool…outside of the lido erm…and that was a nice paddling pool and erm mine have lots of days, it wasn’t there when I was small, but it was there when my children were there and I’d their pack lunch and they’d go this paddling pool and then I started taking my grandchildren but unfortunately we had silly men with trainer on, who thought it was highly enjoyable to be in the paddling pool

*Oh*

Splashing everybody

*Crikey*

And then that, that just, that just stopped

*So what happened to that paddling pool was it just filled in or…?*

No it’s…erm as far as I know, and I haven’t been over there for a long time, it was just…just a concrete, empty

*Ok*

And people used to play football in it, you know kick a ball, well it’s there, might as well been used for something, but erm, it was a nice paddling pool

*I was told that there was a section of the lake that was sort of cornered, just for children’s boats…*

Yes, oh yes up the other end

*Ok*

They were those erm, you have to paddle erm…they were called paddle boats and you had to wined these to make the paddles go round

*Right ok*

So erm, I think two…four, you could get four in and two and two paddled and then if you wanted to go left, you just paddled with the left and right like that

*[Laughs]*

Erm yes paddle boats, and also on a Sunday, they had these erm…remote controlled boats

*Ah*

And...that was…men, it men really doing and erm that was very Sunday and erm sailing boats, and that was up at the other end and that cornered off and that all of a sudden went, and that have been a little club for people

*What kind of year was that? Do you remember how old you were…or the decade?*

Erm…erm oh well into my marriage, oh no the children are twenty and twenty one it was in their time, just before them

*Right ok so we’re talking maybe the eighties or something*

Twenty…yeah, yeah, mmh and that was Sunday morning and you could hear from hear, if the wind was travelling, right, you could hear like the, the humming noise of them and you’d go ‘oh that the men over there with their boats’

*[Laughs] it quite funny to think that you were sat quite a distance away and yet you could still hear…*

Yes and you could this noise yeah, you could hear the fair as well from here, well you still can, if the wind’s in the right direction, it’s so…erm clear that you can hear conversation

*Wow*

It unbi- it don’t XXXX it must be in like a little bay or something and you can hear conversations, people talking at the fair, that’s right over there

*That’s incredible*

Yeah it is, and that’s always been like that, yeah

*You could use it for a bit of spying*

XXXX and listen, but you could…you can hear it; you can definitely hear the music

*Yeah*

But as I…that’s altered, they, they shut that half past ten, I think now or ten o’clock

*Right*

It didn’t, it used to go on ‘til about midnight

*Oh really, did it, ok*

Mmh, always later, much later then what it shuts now…but probably cos the noise has got…noisier if you know what I mean, you know its erm

*Mmh*

Perhaps those little XXXX what they didn’t have…the little roundabouts, they used a little bell on, I don’t think they had music the children’s little roundabouts

*Mmh*

They had like a little XXXX always like going the bus, there was a bus, only made of wood, and it was upstairs for the bus, we went up the stairs, when they were brave

*[Laughs]*

And sat at the top of this bus, and then there’d be a little aeroplane that you sat in

*Ah*

And a horse, always a horse, and like the horses that go up and down, I don’t know if you’ve ever seen like the real carousel, we used to have those, but they’ve not been for years

*Oh that’s a shame*

Mmh, I suppose they weren’t exciting enough

*But…kind of like iconic of a certain period of time, aren’t they?*

Yes, yes and the music was that all punched out in card

*Oh really*

And XXXX he’d put it on a round XXXX and then the music would come out on that now, I don’t know what they use for music now, as I say I haven’t been over there for ages

*[Laughs]*

No one will walk over there and I don’t like walking over there…I won’t mind walking over by myself, but they might think I’m a bit weird

*[Laughs] I’m sure they wouldn’t*

And I’m not paying a pound [Laughs]

*[Laughs] That’s fair enough isn’t it?*

Yeah, so I haven’t been over the fair, solely cos no one will come over there with me [Laughs] for years

*Oh what a shame*

Yeah it is, well perhaps it’s not, perhaps I wouldn’t like it

*Mmh yeah, I mean…*

Perhaps I wouldn’t like

*Something’s are probably different, but…*

Yeah I probably wouldn’t like it

*Still [Laughs] you should probably go next time maybe*

Well we’ll see, we’ll see [Laughs]

*I was just going to ask you, you mentioned earlier about the nurseries and you actually…*

Yes

*Went into the nurseries…*

Yes you could go in there erm, don’t remember if you could buy anything in there, but I’ve definitely been there and then they used to have erm…rabbits in there, like show rabbits and one year the dogs from the fair, killed them all

*No*

Got in there, killed them all

*How did they get in?*

Don’t know, broke in I suppose…killed all the rabbits

*That’s really sad*

It was really sad

*How many do you think there were in there?*

Oh there were quite a lot, you could…you know look at them, they were all in cages, all along, I’d say ten or...might of been ten, but that, that…I don’t know why they had the rabbits in there…perhaps they let people you know…association show them

*Mmh*

Or something in there, but they was always in there, in this nursery.

*So, I’ve spoken to over people, and said that the nurseries weren’t really open to the public*

Well perhaps there weren’t, perhaps for some reason I went in there…but I remember going in there…like a glasshouse it was erm…I remember going in there and I definitely went in there when the rabbits were there

*Yeah*

Cos went in…to look at the rabbits and as I say, one…they all went, horrible

*What a shame*

Mmh and cos we’ve always had the ducks, and there were the swan called Henry, got a photo of him

*Have you?*

He broke a man’s arm, cos the boat got near him, he was viscous, Henry, ruled that park, he did Henry [Laughs]

*That’s a name I’ve heard before, as well*

Have you heard Henry before?

*Yes*

Yes, I’ve got a photo of Henry

*Have you really? Oh I’d loved to it, if that’s ok?*

Yes, yeah I’ve got them there, I put them there, and there you see I have got a Cine Film that I leant Alec erm…it was put on a video, it was Cine Film and my brother put it on a video for me, and it’s the phoenix’s going round the lake, and it got the train…

*Wow*

And it’s got my with the skipping rope and all the deck chairs and it’s got erm…well it’s got bits and pieces of…it’s a bit fragmented, cos in those days Cine…I suppose Cine camera were expensive so you didn’t use a lot of film, so my dad has take you know bits of things, but also on there, is when I was young and my brothers were young and erm anyway I leant it to Alec and I’ve been in touch since I came to this meeting

*Right*

Because at this thing, and he says ‘that he gave it back to me’ well I’m sure he didn’t give it back to me erm and it’s a shame erm but the brother that did it, the younger brother, he actually seriously ill in hospital

*Oh*

At the moment, well I always answer the phone anyway, but very, very ill down in Bristol and erm I was going to ring him up, last week to ask him, if he’s got a copy of it and that’s when he was taken ill, so I don’t think I’m going to get that…off of him, if anybody ever wanted to see it, cos it was quite interesting

*Yeah, it sounds amazing, it sound like exactly the kind of thing*

Mmh yeah it was, yeah

*If you ever do get a copy, please do get in touch*

I know, I mean hopefully he will recover, but I don’t know, erm and he will, I’m sure he would have a copy himself

*Right ok*

And he would give it to me, but I’m sure Alec never gave it back to me

*Right*

Erm, but it’s his word against mine and perhaps he did and I’ve mislaid it, but I’m not saying that I’m erm above mislaying things, but I feel certain that I would have known if he’d given it back

*Well it sounds like quite a…you know…quite a wonderful artefact, it’s kind of something that*

Yes, it’s lovely, yeah it’s really

*Wow*

It is…yeah…it is a good little film, but erm hopeful, fingers crossed my brother recovers and erm…I will then get him to

*Ah ok*

Get his one out, or make me another one, but as I say it was a Cine Film and he put on a video

*That’s very clever isn’t it [Laughs]*

Oh I…how to do that, but he did that…yeah so erm

*Have you still got the Cine Film, or is that what you gave to Alec?*

No, that’s…no he had the Cine Film

*Right ok, ah*

My brother and he put it on the video and sent me the video

*Right ok*

Cos he lives in Bristol, erm and erm and then I gave it to Alec, not until about last year, funny enough, I kept telling…I told him about ‘oh, I’d to see that’ and then I gave to him and now I’ve rung him up or…no my son called on his house and he said he’s given it back to me, but I don’t know where it is

*Oh, it’s a shame*

But, one of those things

*I hope you manage to find it*

Yes, I…well that’s what prompted me, the meeting, although I did want it back, cos as I say, there’s my other brother on there, that unfortunately was killed, erm so it’s you know, memories, but

*Yeah*

One of those things, but erm…so that’s the bandstand with the Dagenham Girl Pipers, playing

*Oh wow*

On there

*That’s incredible*

There’s a magnifying glass, there if you wanted to see it

*Thank you*

I think this is…this is the carnival queen being crowned in this one

*Aren’t they incredible?*

I think that’s the carnival queen being crowned in that one

*Do you remember what year this was?*

No, and it’s not on the back

*It kind of looks like the sixties from these ladies hairstyles, doesn’t it?*

Yes, yes, yeah

*Wow*

And that’s me in the middle with my mum sitting in the erm…gardens there and my older brother

*Men really knew how to dress in those days, didn’t they? I loved that everyone looked so smart?*

Has he got his uniform on?

*I’m not sure*

He was in the RAF

*I think he’s wearing just sort of a suit and jacket*

No, no he’s got ordinary…yeah

*Yeah*

And that’s the phoenix, but it’s not a good picture, because you can’t see that it’s the phoenix really

*Oh it’s a wonderful picture*

But in the Cine Film, it is you know, you can see the phoenix

*You can just about see the phoenix on the erm life ring there*

Yes, yes but like to see it all, it was, it was lovely

*These are fantastic*

And that’s in the pool, I’m in the middle

*Wow…I was going to ask actually, if you had one of the sort of knitted swimming costumes, but obviously not [Laughs]*

Not there, I did have a knitted one, but not there, that’s Henry

*Ah there the culprit [Laughs]*

There’s the culprit…and that’s the grandson with my son pushing him, on the little swings

*Ah look at him…those look like Clark shoes*

Probably are

*[Laughs]*

And that was by the lake…and that’s the little train, but the…the thirty p that is, that’s so it’s…

*Ah*

Well I mean she was about three there and she’s twenty this year…so it’s a good seventeen years ago

*They’re wonderful*

But erm

*I was going to ask is it ok if I borrowed these and scanned and returned them?*

Oh of course, yes I’ll put them in an envelope for you

*Cos I can scan them in the office as well*

Actually I had a big…I wanted to downsize cos I’ve always been one to have loads of clutter or like things around me, and I thought oh when I die, you know, they’ve got all this to clear out, like it’s a big house to clear and there’s the cellar full of things

*[Laughs]*

And I thought, they’ll just chuck them all on a skip, so I just took it into me mind one day to go through all the photos and I tore loads of photos up

*Ah what a shame*

But I just had to do it, because I want to condense them into one box

*Of course, of course*

And now…I felt nobody wants to know, you know

*[Laughs]*

The park, what was that you know…now this comes out the blue

*Well it’s typically isn’t? It’s always going to be the way, XXXX?*

Yeah

*I should have started the project a couple of years ago [Laughs]*

Yeah, so I probably have got some more somewhere, but they…they were the only that I could put my hand to; let me give you and envelope

*Fabulous, if you’d like a digital copy of these to pass onto your children or whatever, please do let me know and I can…can do a couple…no…[Laughs] I find it so odd, that people aren’t interested in things like that [Laughs]*

You don’t know my children [Laughs] you don’t know my children [Laughs], they don’t treasure any of my treasure, I tell you

*Ah*

I’ll know where all my treasures will go, on a skip

*What a shame*

Yeah, but that’s how it goes, I don’t erm, I don’t…put them in one of these

*Oh sorry*

There we are…

*XXXX all your other pictures*

No XXXX I thought I had an ordinary envelope in there but erm

*Thank you very much*

As I as I say, if I…or I could ask my friends if you wanted erm

*Oh please do*

Erm, because one of my friends has seen a Cine Film of the pageant

*Wow*

Mmh I don’t know anything about the pageant

*That was 1931*

’31 yes

*Yes*

Erm we were talking about it the other night and I said about you were coming and erm, she said ‘oh Mr…’ you know, I don’t know Mr Bell is, I suppose I could ask her, she should think he’s dead, I should think he was an elderly person

*Right*

She’s my age, erm she said ‘oh Mr Bell, had a Cine Film’ she said ‘I’ve seen it, oh the pageant’

*Wow, that incredible*

Mmh

*I did manage to interview a lady the other week, who actually was in the pageant*

Oh right, ah

*She was in the country life scene and her husband was in the Saxon warrior scene*

Oh lovely, yeah I knew nothing of the pageant

*Yeah, I suppose it’s after your time really*

Yes I was born ’38 and that ’31 so no, no, no one ever told me about the pageant either

*Oh what a shame*

So it wasn’t a thing that the family seemed to know, no didn’t anything about the pageant

*Well if you’re interested they’ve got some lovely photos of it…*

Oh right

*Down at the erm local studies and archives*

Oh right

*Down at Valance House*

Oh yes, I haven’t been to Valance House since it’s been done

*Oh you really should go, it’s lovely down there*

Yes, I should, I know

*[Laughs]*

My friends have and they keep saying ‘you must go, you must go’ and I just haven’t got round to it

*Yeah*

Erm…yes I could ask her, but she definitely said she’d seen it

*Ah wow*

And she quoted Mr Bell, but I don’t know who Mr Bell is

*Well I’ll see if I can track it down*

Perhaps it was a neighbour, I should imagine it was neighbour of hers’ but I wouldn’t know, and I didn’t take it up…we were talking about things

*Mmh*

And erm…that and I didn’t erm go into it anymore

*Erm my colleague Angela told me something, erm a story that came up in your group at the session*

Mmh

*Erm she said something about a chap dressing up as cowboy and riding*

Oh yes

*Could you tell me about that?*

Les the window cleaner, he lived in Wilmington Gardens, and erm he used to dress up in cowboy outfit, spurs and hat, and he had a horse, lovely horse, and he used to ride it in Barking Park

*[Laughs]*

I think eventually he got banned, I don’t know where he kept the horse, cos he just lived in a ordinary house in Wilmington Gardens, and he was quite a little fella, Les, he liked betting, always betting, probably that why he had a horse

*[Laughs]*

Yes, and he’d be in this, and there was photo of him somewhere, I can’t remember where, not that I had, but I seem to remember, it might of been in the local paper

*Right ok*

I reckon it was in the local paper, the advertiser, that was…and I think there was a picture of him in there

*Right*

And I think once that appeared…they were alerted that he was over there on a horse

*[Laughs]*

And I don’t think he did it anymore

*Do you know he did it?*

No, no, no, he was my window cleaner, very chatty little man, lived with his brother, both very small and erm, no it was a complete surprise when we found out

*[Laughs]*

I don’t know where he stayed with the horse

*So how old would you have been when he started doing that?*

When he started doing oh Les…oh I suppose I was about twenty-five

*Right ok*

Perhaps…my husband used to chat him up about betting, not that my husband betted, but…he knew of betting and he’d

*Yeah*

He’d say ‘look what I won today’ and he get this great big wad of notes out, but then you know, he didn’t win and never told when he didn’t win, but he was corr he said ‘I’ve just seen Les, he’s got a great big roll of notes what he’s just won’ I said ‘I reckon he just says all that’

[Laughs]

*And erm and then, he was over there on this horse, lovely horse, a brown and white, like a* XXXX horse

*What did you think when you saw him?*

Well…[Laughs] I don’t cos Les…one off when you met him, so…no but it was a complete surprise that [Laughs] in fact we had a good laugh about it really, you know, that he, he did that

*I can imagine the park keepers weren’t best amused*

No, no I bet they weren’t no, no, and I think it was once, there was a picture of him in the paper, I think that’s when he got told…I think soon after that he died, nothing to do with that

*Oh*

He was, you know, he just died mmh

*What a lovely story though*

Yes, Les, I don’t know what his other name was, I can see him now

*[Laughs]*

Dark hair, yes sitting on this, with his hat, everything [Laughs]

*I can imagine the children, must have been all over him*

Yes, it was out of, out of character really, but then you see nothing surprises, this day and age

*No [Laughs]*

[Laughs] two things

*Yeah*

Yeah so that was Les, yes, yes I did bring that one up

*It’s such a wonderful story, when Angela told me afterwards; I was like I have to get on tape [Laughs]*

I know and Bobby Moore, about Bobby Moore playing

*Oh no, please tell*

Ah right, yes my erm husband and all his mates, they were just football, cricket mad, they spent, he could tell you more about the park, unfortunately he’s not with us anymore, but erm, he was over the park, day and night, oh until it was…like got thrown out and erm playing football and cricket in the summer and Bobby Moore was younger then this group, and erm but hung about with them, cos his dad was erm, ticket collector at the station, Mr Buckle

*Oh right*

And erm, so he used to come to visit his cousin Peter and they’d go over the park, and he was a bit tubby, and so they didn’t know really what to do with him, so they used to make him go in goal

*[Laughs]*

Little did they know, he was going to be captain of England at the time

*So he cut his teeth, with playing with them then?*

Yes, he was over there in goal, cos he was a bit tubby, and erm they’d play over there and XXXX they call him and he’d go home…went back with his cousin I suppose, they lived in Park Avenue, and erm yeah so, yeah he was over there

*Isn’t that lovely*

Yeah, I don’t think that was ever put in his autobiography, funnily enough

*Was it not?*

No and I think

*Oh that’s a shame*

My husband and his mates were a bit disappointed because…he was over there a lot with them, you know, but I don’t think was ever...I remember him saying ‘oh he’s never mentioned Barking Park’

*Oh that’s a shame isn’t it?*

Yeah it is, cos it was yeah

*Especially if like you say, if that was kind of XXXX playing with the older boys*

That’s right, that’s right yeah

*So how old would your husband been at that time?*

Erm…erm…ten years older then me and it was before…I actually went out with him, but just near the…end that…so I went out with him…sixteen, so he’d be about twenty-four, twenty-five

*Right, ok*

Mmh, his brother went on to be a professional footballer as well

*Oh did he?*

Mmh, so erm…football in the family

*That’s where all the professional practiced, then over there [Laughs]*

Yes, all the, all the practice over Barking Park paid off [Laughs] and then I say cricket in the summer, and erm…my erm sons’ always played football over there every minute he could and cricket, whenever he could

*Yeah*

But erm there again, it all change, it seemed to change from then, from then the children didn’t…although they play, he does play football, the grandson somewhere

*Yeah*

But not over there

*Oh that’s a shame*

Mmh [Laughs]

*It seems like this nice little family tradition going [Laughs]*

Yes, yes, yeah well the tradition was that erm, he came back and did the boats so he is…

*Yeah*

You know, it’s funny how…the world goes round

*Yeah*

And erm…yes so Barking Park has been a big, big thing for all our family really

*It’s amazing*

Mmh

*I was going to say, because we looked at those photos of the bandstand a second ago*

Mmh

*Did you ever used to go to see band playing over at the bandstand*

Erm yes, that used to be on a…like when this Sunday afternoon, we used to go over there in our best…clothes with mum and dad and erm we’d stand there and there’d be bands playing, yeah the erm…bandstand and I can remember them dancing round there as well, men and women, you know dancing

*Mmh*

Whatever…waltzes or whatever erm, so I don’t know what that was about, being much younger I wasn’t interested in what…people…older people were doing

*[Laughs]*

Erm but I seem to remember that

*I’ve heard they actually laid erm a dance floor almost*

Oh well that, yes

*Around the outside*

I can see them going round it yes

*Yeah*

Yes, yeah

*A little bit of a clarification for you, just there [Laughs]*

Yeah, yeah, yes

*So you know you’re not just imagining it [Laughs]*

I wasn’t imagining it no, no I wish I had a better memory, my husband’s memory was fantastic, what he couldn’t tell you about the park, would be worth knowing, but I…my memory alright

*I think its amazing [Laughs] you’ve done well*

But erm, I wish sometimes I…could remember things more…yes it comes back to you, different things yeah

*Yeah and how have you found the experience of talking about it, have you found that’s brought things forward or…in your memory?*

Erm…makes you remember things perhaps that…you forgotten a bit, erm…well it’s memories of your youth and that and as I say I was talking to my friends…last Monday and they were putting their bit in you know and saying ‘oh so and so and so, you know

*Yeah*

But all very similar…all very similar memories, nothing…particular different

*Ok*

But I possible used the park more than they did, erm as a girl and as a grandma as well

*Right*

But erm, their children went over the park a lot…but you just let them go and you different really…know what they would do, didn’t…

*[Laughs]*

Well you knew…they were playing cricket or football or something

*Yeah*

But it was never a worry that erm they were over there…but as I say when my grandson got mugged, I was very cross

*Ah I can imagine*

But here he is working on the boats and some…lout nicks his phone off of him

*[Tuts] that’s terrible*

Horrible…but erm…and Alec was very upset at the time, he only walked from the boats to the…you know, cos…to go back to Upminster…but well that’s this day and age unfortunately…nut you feel guilty that it’s happened in Barking, you know

*Yeah*

I feel ever so guilty when things happen…things can happen in Upminster, but I always feel guilty when it’s happened in Barking

*Is it because you feel attached to the area cos you’re local?*

Yeas, and, and it’s altered so much that…now I feel erm disappointed

*Yeah*

That these things happen

*Disappointed in the change in the area, you mean?*

Yes, yeah very disappointed

*Oh that’s a shame*

But it wouldn’t make me move

*[Laughs] I wouldn’t leave this house, its beautiful [Laughs]*

[Laughs] no I just…no there’s nowhere…I mean Upminster’s very pleasant but I wouldn’t want to live there

*Yeah*

There’s nowhere that I’ve been to that I’d say I’d like to live there, but I would like to live Barking as it was

*Of course [Laughs]*

[Laughs]

*If we had a time machine*

In a ideal world, but it’s not a ideal world, so…what they do out there…is their business, if I shut that front room…front door, and I’m in here…[Laughs]

*Yeah*

Do what they like [Laughs]

*[Laughs]*

As long it doesn’t interfere with me, but I don’t like hearing about things

*Yeah of course*

But erm, no not much you can do about it

*No unfortunately not*

I do complain about things

*[Laughs] you’re allowed to though, aren’t you?*

Do complain…yeah, I mean it’s my neighbourhood, I’m going to keep it…try and keep it as…nice as I can

*Of course…that’s lovely*

But erm…yeah, yeah things change. The park will change as well

*Of course, of course*

The park will change…but

*That’s why it’s important to record the memories now isn’t it?*

Yes I know, I know, and…but that was my park and, I’m not really…very interested in what it is now

*Ah that’s a shame*

I suppose…I would walk over there erm…but there’s no need to…

*You’ll have to come to the fair with us next year [Laughs]*

XXXX run away with the fair [Laughs]

*[Laughs] It’s never too late*

No never too late, no, no I wouldn’t go and pay, not the pound, worry me

*Yeah*

It’s just not the same, like just to walk in there, walk through it and walk out

*Yes of course*

I was going to do it, but erm…no, no I won’t be going to the fair [Laughs]

*Ah, it’s a shame [Laughs]*

That’s erm detached for me now the fair, and the park…but, I’d like to see the changes through there

*Yeah*

There’d be good changes

*Well when they have the launch down there, you’ll have to come down*

Oh yes, that’d be very nice

*Cos I think their planning on inviting all the participants in the oral history project*

Oh right yes, oh lovely

*So you’ll get a invite to that*

Yeah, yeah

*Have a place of honour*

I mean when I go by on the bus, I always look in the park, you know…and only think of nice things

*Yeah*

Erm…in there, but I know…you know, not so nice things go on

*Of course*

So I don’t want to be part of that

*[Laughs] I think that’s fair…*

My son used…he runs in the park every morning…still and erm you know…he doesn’t like the changes [Laughs]

*[Laughs]*

He’s getting old, I tell him, he’s getting old

*[Laughs]*

That’s when you know, when you’re getting old, when you don’t like changes

*Oh is it, ok? I’ve got that to look forward to, haven’t I?*

Well that’s right, well I never thought I’d say ‘oh in my day…’

*[Laughs]*

I used to hate it when my mum and dad, and his mum and dad used to get together

*Yeah*

‘Oh well so and so’, and I said we’ll never get like that

*No*

But I am beginning to say [Laughs]

*[Laughs]*

Well it was better in my day [Laughs] but never mind, better in so things…and

*Yeah*

Not in others

*Course*

But erm…life goes on [Laughs]

*That wonderful, thank you very much for sharing your memories with me…*

Oh alright

*I really appreciate it, is there anything you’d like to add or*

Erm

*Shall I stop the tape?*

No, no I think that’s about it

*Ok*

I’m done [Laughs]

*[Laughs]*

And my rabbit’s still out

*Oh no [Laughs]*

[Laughs]

*He’s probably starved to death up there isn’t he? [Laughs]*

[Laughs] Oh no he’s got bits up there

*Oh ok*

But he’ll erm; he’ll want to come back

*Ok, I’ll just if I can figure out how to stop this*

Oh

**Interview Details**

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