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| **Project: ‘Glasgow’s Highstreets: An oral history…’**Respondent: David A AllanYear of Birth: 1958Age: Connection to project: Local knowledgeDate of Interview: 29 March 2023Interviewer: Janet PryorRecording Agreement: YesInformation & Consent: YesPhotographic Images: Yes/ No (Number of: 21 )Length of Interview: 1:32:51Location of Interview: David’s home, GlasgowRecording Equipment: Zoom H4n (internal mics) | **Glasgow Story Collective** |
| Time(from: mins/secs) | Description | Transcribed Extract(from- to:mins/secs) |
| 00:00 – 3:28 | Respondent talks about where he grew up (Ayrshire), when he moved to Glasgow and his love of the city which he has lived in for 45 years. Respondent talks about the shops in the city when he first moved to Glasgow. He spoke about Sauchiehall Street and the range of different shops that were established there where you could buy anything you wanted or needed. He also recalled small corner shops, including shops in Maryhill that have since been demolished, such as tiny shops like bakers and butchers. He recalls how the city centre was very busy with markets selling fruit and vegetables and flowers and that there weren’t big supermarkets or out of town shopping experiences, that shopping was very much a local thing.  |  |
|  | “Streets were very busy, obviously, for a number of reasons. People had to shop every day because they didn’t have the space to keep things, people shopped fresh…but you didn’t have to travel very far if you wanted something, if you wanted a bag of nails or a pair of shoes or a hat for a wedding, you could more or less get it within a few streets…shopping was very much a local thing then…” | 2:44-3:13 |
| 3:35-5:43 | Responded discusses how he used to visit Glasgow with his Aunts from the country on the train. They visited Lewis’ department store on Argyll Street. He recalls it being very traditional, with wooden counters with products in drawers. He recalls his aunty shopping for a hat and earrings and the store attendants would bring items out for her to try on from the drawers.  |  |
|  | “So if you needed to buy anything a bit fancy, you would come to Glasgow.’ | 5:37-5:43 |
| 5:43-6:05 | Responded recalls coming to Glasgow with his mum and dad to purchase a lampshade in the 1960s which they then had to transport back to their home town in the country on the train.  |  |
| 6:14-8:08 | Respondent explains that as he got older, he used to visit Glasgow a lot as he enjoyed shopping and the interactions, being on the streets of Glasgow when they were busy and the anonymity of it and able to wander about. He recalls the police horses that used to be in the centre of Glasgow every morning, as well as “strange and wonderful people” going about their business, along with street sellers, including a fruit seller at the bottom of Buchanan Street. |  |
|  | “I remember someone saying, you can’t be the strangest person in Glasgow, no matter how much you try.’ | 7:04-7:08 |
| 8:06-8:33 | Respondent recalls the uniqueness of Glasgow and how the exterior of all the buildings were black, prior to the City of Culture period when Glasgow started to improve in its look.  |  |
|  | “I just found it wonderful, this strange environment. Of course it was all black then….Glasgow was black, every building was black, everything was black…this was pre, it wasn’t until we had City of Culture that Glasgow started to clean itself up…if you look at old pictures you’ll see that literally…when I say black, I mean black, black, black…every building was black…everything was black…it was a very, very industrial city. So, and for some reason, I quite liked it.” | 8:06-8:33 |
| 8:47-12:25 | Respondent recalls different department stores that were open on the high streets. Lewis’ was the main one on Argyll Street that he visited regularly. He recalled that back in the 1960s and 70s people didn’t travel so far, so he didn’t go to the shops up on Sauchiehall Street as much due to its distance from the train station. Other stores he recalled were House of Frasers, Copeland and Lye, Watt Brothers which he noted was still a proper department store owned by the Watt family, and Trerons in Sauchiehall Street. He recalled that Trerons was the place to go for wedding china and was seen as “posh”. They had a tea room that he recalls going to with one of his Aunties as a child and it was full of elderly ladies from nice areas having scones and things in nice ‘proper’ teapots (not metal ones). He recalls that Frasers had two department stores - one on Sauchiehall Street and another on Buchannan Street. He talked about how House of Fraser bought out all the independent department stores and rebranded them. He recalled there was Arnotts as well, which was a branch of Frasers and located directly across the road from Frasers, but seen as the lower end, selling cheaper versions of the same things, although he recalled it did at one stage sell fur coats. He recalled Boots the Chemist in the city centre which was set out over 5 floors and included a private library where you could borrow books for a small fee. He recalled times borrowing books with his sister.  |  |
|  | “…coming from the countryside going somewhere like, say a Boots the Chemist, and the one in the city centre had like five floors, and had a book department as well, cos Boots the Chemist used to have libraries, you know years ago, they had and you could go and they had a private library and you could pay, like, so much…and I was really into books, we read a lot as kids – me and my sister – and we had like, we worked out that we had library cards and we worked out, I don’t know how we did this, but as kids we somehow ended up with two library cards, we must have fiddled the system or something so we could get more books. Then we discovered that Boots the Chemist would let you borrow books if you paid, I can’t remember how much it was, 2, 3 thruppence or something.” | 11:28-11:58 |
| 12:16-13 | Respondent recalls that there were lots of clothes shops in Glasgow that competed and how there were preferred shops that might have been more expensive but you would pay more to purchase at them, regardless of the price. He recalled there were lots of tiny little shops that sold just one thing. For example, there was a shop that just sold gloves and nothing else. He explained his love for shopping and how he enjoyed visiting shops as a child and how he went on to work in shops later in life.  |  |
|  | “There were gentleman’s shops, like every man would go to Burtons, you know, to get a suit, sort of thing.” | 12:16-12:24 |
|  | “Even going to Marks and Spencer’s was quite exciting, you know, simply because it had so many different departments. I was fascinated by shops as a child, I always…and I subsequently went on to work in shops….I don’t know why…everyone told me that working shops was dreadful, it was a bit…but I was fascinated by shops…I had this misguided ideal that it was a sort of magical thing that happened.” | 13:15-14:33 |
| 14:45 | Respondent recalls shopping for clothes in Glasgow at “trendy little boutiques”. He recalled that there used to be an independent shoe shop in Argyll Street (since demolished) that had shoes that were very different – like continental made shoes, leather stylish shoes. He said in the 1970s everyone then looked the same and conformed with what they wore, and if you didn’t, you stood out. He commented that wearing bright colours was not the norm. Respondent recalls his time working in shops, and how things were very conformed, and everything was in sections and departments.  |  |
|  | “Nowadays…people I think don’t realise… how different it was...how everyone then looked the same and conformed…so in like the 70s if you had shoes that were anything other than brown or black, people would literally point at you in the street. You know. So I would go and buy these shoes that were like bright red…or had brogues on them or had a little heel on them, and stuff like that. And then I would go to other shops and buy these clothes that were a bit different, a bit more boutique-y, they’d come up from London…so this would be different, so people would…point at you…because everyone, everything was very conforming then, you know you just didn’t, you only wore what you were supposed to wear, you know, and then when I subsequently went to work in shops, that was still the case, there was so many things that were in departments or in sections, and that’s what people bought. It’s just bizarre. Nowadays when you see people walking about the streets in sequins and stuff, they would never have worn that…never, ever, ever, ever…but even wearing anything at all coloured or anything like that was a bit different…” | 16:07-17:32 |
| 17:35-19:20 | Respondent recalled how Glasgow had hundreds of shops where you could buy literally anything. He recalled the opening days and hours and how all shops were shut on Sundays. He recalled that even when shops started opening on a Sunday, Marks and Spencer would refuse to open. He recalled a time when he went out to buy batteries on a Sunday, and managed to find some eventually at the newsagents at the train station and pay double the price, because it was the only shop in the whole of Glasgow that was open on a Sunday.  |  |
|  | “So Glasgow had hundreds and hundreds of shops…where you could literally buy anything. Apart from on a Sunday, when everything was shut. Everything shut on a Sunday. Literally everything. And a lot of the shops as well shut at lunchtime, you know between you know sort of like half 12 or half 1 … and they all shut by 6 during the week except on Thursday when they opened until I think 7…and in some areas of Glasgow there would be a whole day during the week when the shops were shut…so if you went to say the south side on a Tuesday, all the shops would be shut….” | 17:42-18:18 |
| 19:35-21:42 | He recalled how the streets in Glasgow were very busy with people moving about, but they weren’t used for leisure or sitting about. He recalled how in the late 1970, Buchannan Street was pedestrianised and made modern with metal sculptures and benches were installed. He recalled it’s only in the last (approx.) 15 years that Glasgow has had street cafes. He said people were quite thrown by this initially.  |  |
|  | “I remember people having conversations about, why would you want to sit on the street? Why would you want to sit here? One, it’s Glasgow! …why would you want to sit on the street, why would you want to do that? And…I would say, it’s only in the last…15 years that we’ve had street cafes in Glasgow. You know. And I can remember again someone phoning me and saying, ‘I was walking down the street in Glasgow and there’s a café that’s got two tables outside on the pavement’. I said, ‘no!’, and they said ‘yes, yes!’ cos this was just so bizarre, and this has just changed so quickly as well.”  | 20:20-21:07 |
| 21:42-24:26 | Respondent talks about when he started working in shops, where he realised quickly he was quite good at selling things. He explained how he started working temporary jobs, one in retail initially in Harrods in London selling fur coats and then in Glasgow at House of Fraser in the gents’ department in menswear as a junior. He explained there was a massive hierarchy of staff at Frasers – from juniors to assistants, to deputy manager, managers of each department and floor walkers – staff who walked about the floor. He recalled how juniors were not allowed to speak to floor walkers unless it was an emergency. He spoke about the frequent bomb threats that were made in department stores at the time, and the process for informing the police using codes.  |  |
|  | “There was like juniors, and assistants and deputy managers and managers of each department and floor walkers, people that just walked about the floor…and you weren’t allowed to speak to them…juniors were not allowed to speak to them unless it was an emergency. I remember once there was a bomb threat and I took great delight in rushing up to a floor walker…”I can speak to the floor walker!”…we got lots of bomb threats in the 70s because of the situation in Northern Ireland, you know, so department stores were targeted and there were lots of fire bombs, we didn’t have them up here but you know…so that meant that every mad person just phoned up and make a threat every other day …happened all the time...” | 23:35-24:12 |
|  | “So then, there was a massive hierarchy. Everyone had to be called Mr or Mrs…and it was very strict.” | 24:25-24:44 |
| 24:27 to 25:55 | Respondent spoke about the sock department that he worked in at House of Frasers as a junior and how it was arranged.  |  |
|  | “I started in menswear on mens’ socks…and it sounds strange but the junior always did men’s socks…and people would laugh and say ‘you’re starting at the bottom, ha ha ha,’, starting at the bottom in men’s socks. And there was this, at that time, back then, socks came in…every shoe size…so if you had size 8 feet, you got size 8 socks...and you only wore the socks that were appropriate for what you were doing. So you had socks that you wore for your work, you had socks that you wore in the evening when you’re going out, you had sort of nice socks for Sunday, if you were…playing sport you wore sports socks, and that’s the only time you wore sports socks, you didn’t wear them any other time. If you’re playing football, you’d wear football socks, if you were going hiking, you’d have hiking socks…so all these socks were in different sections…in all the different sizes…” | 24:44-25:55 |
| 25:55-27:45 | He explained that there was no real guidance on how to merchandise the stock. He recalled changes he made to the merchandising to group socks together by size to improve sales and the feedback he received from other staff – all women except the manager who was a man – who were all laughing about what he was doing. Sales of socks went up and it was a big success. He was then promoted to mens’ accessories and a new junior was allocated to mens’ socks. The new junior staff member immediately moved all the socks back and then sales went back down, but nothing was done about it. |  |
|  | “What happened then, and again this is very strange. There was no real guidance of how you merchandised things, it was sort of left up to you…even me as a junior how I merchandised the socks. And again, very strangely if the socks weren’t selling, because say I hadn’t merchandised them properly, no one sort of bothered much, you’d maybe be given something else to do, but sort of like, this whole idea of making…things nicer or better looking to try and upsell sort of thing didn’t really exist.” | 26:06-26:33 |
| 27:50-33:24 | Respondent talks about his time working in the men’s accessories section of House of Fraser which sold handkerchiefs, ties, bow ties, cuff links and tie pins, gloves, scarfs and hats (bonnets) which were displayed in glass cabinets in the store. He recalled people only wore woolly hats if you were a farmer or a fisher, and they were not stocked in the store. The accessories were all kept in glass cabinets. He recalled in the 70s there was a trend for velvet bow ties. He spoke about how he made some changes to the merchandising, by taking some products out of the cabinets and putting them on the counter, or putting the accessories (ties) near the shirts. He recalled that there was great debate about this, particularly over who would be responsible for dusting the bow ties given they were not the responsibility of the person in charge of men’s shirts. He commented that all staff had their own feather dusters to keep their areas clean. He recalled how the men’s department was split up into different sections with staff allocated and responsible for each section with no cross over. He recalled how he would keep a box under the counter with loose single gloves and socks to provide for people who only had one hand or foot (war veterans) and how previously these items would get thrown away. |  |
|  | “There was even a big discussion about who should dust these because as a shop assistant at that time everyone had a duster in their pocket and you just dusted as you went along during the day.” | 30:19-30:31 |
|  | “So even within the gents’ department, it was all spit up into different sections and you didn’t encroach on someone else’s section and …if someone came in and wanted something, you were supposed to get the person from that section to serve them, if they were at lunch you were allowed to serve them, but then you had to tell them when they came back, you know, I sold two shirts, I did that, did that. And things like underwear, men’s underwear was a specialist, you had to have training to sell men’s underwear. And it was run the department was run, by this tiny little woman who was very funny…and everything came in hundreds of sizes, we even had extra small men’s sizes which you don’t get now…it was very very traditional still, very traditional, and everything had to be put into a paper bag and cello taped. We didn’t have carry bags originally.” | 31:34 – 33:20 |
| 33:25 to 35:31 | The respondent recalled how he would sometimes get reallocated to work at different departments/sections of the stores, such as the toy department which he enjoyed. He recalled how everything needed to be put in a paper bag or wrapped in brown paper. At Christmas there was gift wrapping and people would come in from other shops to ask for their goods to be wrapped up, which the staff at Frasers weren’t supposed to do, but he did. He recalled the women’s department were “all snobs” and thought they were above everyone else. He recalled the women wearing cashmere cardigans and going to lunch together with their handbags. He recalled a scandal when women working in womenswear were discovered to be holding stock back (cashmere cardigans) waiting for a sale so they could purchase the stock themselves. He recalled that one woman resigned because of the shame.  |  |
|  | “…there was a big scandal because it was discovered that the women’s department were holding back… the cashmere cardigans until they were on sale and buying them when they were on sale, which of course was a big scandal..and of course we were all delighted about this. And one of the women resigned because of the shame..the shame!” | 35:04-35:24 |
| 35:40-36:15 | He recalled how customers were not allowed to enter Frasers wearing shorts. He recalled how in Glasgow people didn’t generally walk around in gym clothes, they would only wear sports clothes if they were going to play sport.  |  |
| 36:20-38:22 | He explained how he applied to work as a ‘senior’ in the perfume department, and he did not have the opportunity to be interviewed because he was a man. He also recalled that there was a black man working in the sunglasses department and people would come in to take photographs of him, because Glasgow was ‘so white’ at the time. Respondent recalled that customers were not easily able to return products. He explained that staff generally interrogated people before allowing a return, and they had to be sent to the customer service office where the staff were “horrible to them” (the customers).  |  |
|  | “You weren’t allowed to bring things back to shops back then…back then if someone brought something back we would have to interrogate you…even if the item was obviously faulty, you would do your upmost to try not to get them to take it back.” | 37:51-38:12 |
| 38:30-39:02 | He recalled if a customer had an item of clothing to return or be refunded due to an insurance claim which was quite common, they would get the money to buy a new item. He explained that quite often the damage was only small/minimal so if the customer asked to keep it, the staff would reply, certainly and then chop the entire arm of the garment off rendering it unwearable. |  |
| 39:07-44:15 | Respondent recalled his next job was in the curtain department in a senior role, which he loved, saying it was really fun. He recalled how there were hundreds of managers and how funny it is to think that staffing was so top heavy. He spoke about how there was a manager just for sewing machines and the specialist staff were extremely knowledgeable about their specialist area. He recalled how there were different colours (for curtains) – and they each had their own names and how staff would get very snooty about the names of the colours, because they were “specialists”. For example orange was called tangerine sunset, bonfire, sultan…hareen was a deep black red colour; madagascar was a purple colour, etc.Net curtains were also a separate department, which he recalled he was lent out to one day. He recalled that he accidentally sold someone too much of a fabric and he almost lost his job, but it was determined that he was ‘not a specialist’ in the area, so he wasn’t sacked!He recalled how he also got lent out to the suit department, which was very specialist area, because measurements were essential and he couldn’t work out the measurements at all! He recalled that as well as being fun, it was also very hierarchical. The office people were ‘top of the pops’ and these workers were able to go outside for lunch with cushions, but no other staff were allowed to take cushions out.  |  |
|  | “It seems so strange that there were all these departments just for one thing….there were hundreds of managers, it was so managerial top heavy, everything had to have its own wee speciality. But that was it, it was a speciality, you literally knew every single thing about every product.”  | 39:22-39:45 |
| 44:20-48:42 | Respondent speaks about how he then moved onto work in supermarkets, and in an office. He recalls how he used to go around to the small / tiny little supermarkets and organise their offices. He explained how Morrisons used to be a small fruit and vegetable retailer – so supermarkets were a lot more ‘rough and ready’ than department stores. He recalled that at Frasers staff would need to work out prices of products themselves, based on the cost price. He recalled the minimum mark up was 100% and it could be up to 300% for women’s jewellery. He recalls a fire at Treron’s in the 1980s and how the store never reopened. But he recalled at this time, the expensive department stores were really dying and having to change and the tradition of going to one place to buy everything you needed wasn’t as common anymore and other shops started to open longer and sell things for cheaper and allow customers to take products back with no reason. He recalls that there was a product that he wanted to return – a shirt – and he was so worried about taking it back for no reason that he unstitched it a little bit!  |  |
| 48:50-51:00 | He spoke about how from this time the streets were changing with places to sit down and fast food retailers such as McDonalds opening up, with people starting to eat in the street, which was very ‘bizarre’ at the time. He recalled that buskers started to perform on the streets – unlike the ‘street entertainers’ like before. He recalled that previously street performers would entertain people at places like cinema queues, and they would have drums and dance. Respondent recalled how Glasgow then had the garden festival and became the ‘City of Culture’. Prior to this, he recalled that Glasgow’s reputation was ‘dreadful’ and was known as the “worst place in Europe”. He referred to a documentary about Glasgow that was produced about the city and how it had changed in around 1990.  |  |
|  | Responded recalled that prior to the City of Culture period, there were only two places open in Glasgow where you could have a coffee or a glass of wine, and how hotels / pubs would not have wine glasses – nor serve chilled wine.  |  |
|  | “Before the City of Culture…there were two places, and I mean two in the whole of Glasgow where you could have a coffee and a glass of wine. What you would call a café brasserie…there were literally 2. And we thought this was fabulous…and even to get wine in a pub was very, very difficult. Most pubs wouldn’t sell wine…at all. And if they did sell wine…they wouldn’t have wine glasses…they’d only have pint glasses…so you could get a pint of wine…so when they started selling wine they’d only have pint glasses…and it was warm…” | 51:30-52:49 |
| 53:30 | The respondent recalled how it was very uncommon for people to go out in the Glasgow city centre just for coffee and cake with a friend, unless it was part of a shopping experience. He recalled again that the city centre wasn’t commonly used as a place of relaxation and entertainment prior to about 30 years ago. He explained how they city had no tourists. |  |
|  | “So this whole idea of actually using the city centre and using the streets as a place of relaxation and entertainment is only something that has happened sort of in the last 30 years in Glasgow. You know, because we didn’t get tourists, there was no tourists, literally there were no tourists…we never had to cater to tourists.” | 54:26-55:00 |
| 55:00-57:00 | He spoke about how hearing foreigners in Glasgow was unusual and would have been a topic of discussion with friends because it was so unusual to hear different accents or languages. Respondent further describes how using the city was different to now and described what it was like at night time in the city. |  |
|  | “You went in for shopping, you went home. You went into the cinema, you went home. You went into the pub, you went home. You went into the dancing, you went home. None of these things were connected. And you didn’t hang about the city centre. So if you were at your work, and you were going to the cinema, you would go home and then you went back out. Even if it was miles away, you know, you would never stay in the city centre. Because everything was shut, and it was dark as well…it was literally pitch dark…there were no lights in the city centre.”  | 56:00-56:59 |
| 57:00-5 | The respondent discusses his personal experiences of Glasgow at night time and how he always walked up and down the back lanes because it was safer for him to do this than be on the street. He described the city centre at night and how it felt and who was about, including homeless people on the streets and the night buses that were at George Square taking people to dances.He recalled that the shops didn’t have their lights on, but would have security and police were on the streets, and council would clean the streets at night, in the 1970s to 80s.  |  |
|  | “The city centre actually felt very safe to me…there was never a lot of crime…there was homelessness in a different way…there was lots of…men who had alcohol issues…but the never gave you any trouble…there would be fights occasionally…but nothing great. There would be problems when people came out of the dancing…due to alcohol…The city closed down very…quickly and also sort of like shrunk towards George Square, because all the night buses to get home from the dancing went from George Square…and people would sort of hang about George Square…but the rest of the city would be in sort of darkness…” | 59:09-1:00:46 |
| 1:02 | Respondent spoke about how until the 1990s Glasgow was still a very industrial city. He mentioned that very near the centre of town there was enormous factory that made railway engineers and railway cars and there was lots of extreme poverty and derelict buildings, with brothels in different parts of the city.He commented on the changes he has seen in Glasgow over recent times.  |  |
|  | “Glasgow has changed so much…even in the way that it looks and the way it presents to the world… and its ability to be proud of itself, I think, you know. And that for a long time was reflected in our streets…Glasgow became one of the best shopping destinations in Britain…and then these last few years just with the downturn in the economy…and the downturn in everything basically, we have started to really started to slip away…places like Sauchiehall Street now…are just a disaster.” | 1:03:00-1:03:39 |
| 1:03:00-1:08:00 | Respondent comments on his wishes for the future for the city of Glasgow and how he thinks bringing families back living in the city centre will help to revitalise the streets. He spoke about how people now just stay in their homes a lot more. He referenced time he spent in London and how people don’t tend to use streets as much anymore and how society has changed a lot in the way we live and get things delivered and how things can be done from home.  |  |
| 1:08:08 | The interview then moved on to speak more about the look of the interior of the buildings in the previous decades. He described the look of the interior of department stores, having lots of wood, dark wood. He described Lewis’ had a bridal suite which was very exclusive. He recalled that customers weren’t allowed to pull things out of the drawers in the stores. He recalled that there was no background music in the early days, but then when music did come on in the stores in later years, it was very repetitive and the staff would get sick of it. Respondent recalled that announcements were introduced in stores over the loud speaker, but prior to this, announcements were passed on to staff by hand written notes which were hand delivered by staff, with no speaking.He spoke about some stores having pneumatic payment systems where money would go into a tube canister and it would be shot up across the ceiling to a cash office, where the cashier would then put the change in and send it back. He recalled that this didn’t happen at Lewis’s as they had cash machines there. He recalled that in about 1980 there was an upgrade and the pneumatic systems got removed and replaced with orange plastic - he noted that ‘Glasgow went orange’. He described that there was a new system introduced called ‘pay and pack’ and that nothing purchased was packed before it was paid for. He spoke about how mirrors were then introduced and the interior of the stores were modernised – the glass fronted cabinets were thrown out. He recalled how shopping was quiet / sedate generally but the sales and Christmas period were busy. Respondent commented that people didn’t go shopping to browse, they went into shops with a purpose to buy something. He recalled that there was security on the door and turning people away if they were wearing shorts, etc.  |  |
|  | “…nobody made noise, you know…people didn’t talk loudly, you didn’t shout…it was a sedate, going into a shop was a sedate thing. It wasn’t to an extent an enjoyable thing. Lots of people didn’t go to browse, you went for a purpose. You know, I need a shirt, I need a pair of socks, I need a saucepans, I need that, that’s what I’m in for, you know? …But there was somebody on the door…you weren’t allowed in with shorts, you weren’t allowed in if you looked a bit ‘iffy’… “ | 1:13:45-1:14:40 |
| 1:15:21-1:16:37 | Respondent recalled that the small shops were very small and tiny and packed with stuff. There used to be lots of ‘junk shops’ and proper charity shops – not like the ones today where things were piled up and amazingly cheap. He recalled memories of going to a junk shop every month with 6 pounds to buy something.  |  |
| 1:16:42-1:21:10 | Respondent recalled the Christmas displays in Glasgow’s shops. He referred to a film documentary called ‘Comfort and Joy’ from circa 1984 featuring Frasers. He spoke about the Christmas windows at Lewis’s and how Santa would come on a lorry or horse and cart and would climb on a ladder up the side of the 7 floor building. He recalled how before Christmas there was great discussion in Lewis’ about the colour theme for the year, and there was an enormous Christmas tree in the middle of Frasers and people would come to see the lights. He spoke about memories chatting with a lady in Italy who used to live in Scotland and about the pollution and essence of the city. He recalled how Glasgow was ‘steam cleaned’ in the 1990s where buildings were literally steam cleaned to get rid of the black. He commented that doing this removed some of the essence of the city.  |  |
| 1:21:41-1:25:27 | Respondent recalled times when professional mannequins would come in to model clothes, or sometimes it would be the shops girls modelling clothes in the store. He recalled times when staff would wear clothes that were trending at times – for example he recalled a couple of ladies working in the cosmetic area would wear Afghan coats to show they were trendy. Respondent discussed ‘dems’ - demonstrations that would be held in department stores for items like washing machines, furniture polish, etc. and if the women who worked on the demonstrations were asked what they did would say they were a ‘model’. He recalled how pets were sold at the stores for a time- rabbits and budgies along with pet food.He recalled how all individual items in the stores had a price ticket on them, and during a sale every item would need to have a hand written price ticket on them, which was then removed and replaced once the sale was finished.  |  |
| 1:25:28--1.28 | Respondent recalled how there were hairdressers in stores for women – although he never went - and brides would go in and get their hair done with their mothers. He recalled that back then, there weren’t make up counters in the stores like there are now. He recalled other things you could purchase in the department stores and the method of shopping that was common. Respondent recalled that there was a personal shopper at one time, but it wasn’t a success at that time. It wasn’t well understood that someone else would choose people’s clothes for them.  |  |
|  | “…you had to go from department to department to buy, you couldn’t collect the things up and pay once. So if you wanted something...from the homewares, you’d have to buy it in homewares, and then you wanted a pair of socks you’d have to buy it in socks…you couldn’t collect all the things up like you can now and pay in one place.” | 1:26:44-1:27:09  |
| 1:28:17-1:31:00 | He recalled that people who had a disability would be allocated to work in roles such as lift operators. He recalled that on some floors you would have to change lifts to get to another floor. He recalled the department store he used to work in was across two buildings which were side by side and that you would need to go out of one to get into the other side before they eventually connected the two, and that people were just used to doing this.  |  |
| 1:31:10- | Respondent comments on his hopes for the future for Glasgow’s highstreets and reflects on his time working in shops.  |  |
|  | “It was interesting the way that retail has changed, the way that shops have changed, the way that Glasgow’s streets have changed, the way that they are used and they are seen, I’m hoping, my hope for the future Is that they will be cleaner and they will be more used…we are obviously going through this transition period, but it’s interesting and I always find this interesting that things that were just seen of having no value are now seen as a great value…” | 1:31:00-1:31:45 |
|  | “It was a good time, I was young, and I was growing up, and I was experiencing a big city…it was good fun…but shop work is hard, working in a shop is hard, and recently we’ve seen a change in that but that’s because of the change that we have in culture about how people see work and things…but also…the way that streets are used is different….and that is again a culture thing…because people just tend to stay at home…” | 1:32:04-1:32:38 |
|  | Interview ends and thanks.  |  |
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