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| **Project: ‘Glasgow’s Highstreets: An oral history…’**Respondent: Frank M AngellYear of Birth: 1951Age: Connection to project: RespondentDate of Interview: 16th of June 2023Interviewer: Rachel KellyRecording Agreement: YesInformation & Consent: YesPhotographic Images: No (Number of: )Length of Interview: 49 minutes and 12 secondsLocation of Interview: Frank’s home in ClarkstonRecording Equipment: Zoom H4n (internal mics) | **Glasgow Story Collective** |
| Time(from: mins/secs) | Description | Transcribed Extract(from- to:mins/secs) |
| 0.42 | Interviewer asks the respondent what his earliest memories of Glasgow’s Highstreets are. |  |
| 0.52 | 1950s. Describes early memories of Glasgow’s Highstreets. Going to Lewis’s toy department. |  |
|  | “Buchanan Street was wonderful. You had the Argyll Arcade on one side and every boy’s delight was at the corner of the Argyll Arcade. You’d the Clyde Model Dockyard. Where you could get your model trains and model ships and various other things. There was also an excellent toy department in Wylie Hill’s, just at the corner of the Argyll Arcade. And at Christmas they did the most incredible layout of model railways. Later Scalectrix, Minic Motorways. And they were probably the best display, as far as young boys were concerned, in Glasgow at Christmas time. Across the road from Wylie Hill’s in what is…what is now Fraser’s was Wylie & Lochhead’s and they sold everything practically. Clothes, they could arrange funerals and they were also the distributor for Daimler cars. So, when you went into the shop you could often see Dailmler cars on display on the ground floor of the building.” | 1.10-2.27 |
|  | “At that time the streets were quite different, in that pedestrian areas were not thought about. Trams were still running. And you had what was nicknamed the silent killers, the trolley buses. Because they ran with electricity and you couldn’t really hear them coming. And fog could be so dense in Glasgow…” | 2.31-2.56 |
| 2.57 | Talks about driving in smog to collect his aunt from the City Centre in the 1970s. |  |
| 3.50 | Mentions the possibility that there were tearooms at the top of the Argyll Arcade in the 1950s. Very formal. Waitresses in traditional clothing. |  |
|  | “When you went in around Christmas time certainly there were Christmas lights everywhere. And because there wasn’t the same restrictions, if your family were lucky enough to have a car, you would do the tour down Buchanan Street, George Square…And go all around and be able to see the Christmas lights in comfort. Something that’s absolutely impossible to do today.” | 4.33-4.57 |
| 5.00 | Talks about travel by rail from the city centre as a child. Mentions a steam engine from St Enoch’s Station to Clarkston in the 1960s. |  |
| 5.57 | “The city then was a lot dirtier and greyer and darker than it is now. And I remember being told the story that as a three year old or four year old I had been given a new camel coat and had gone with my parents to see the cartoons at the cinema just up from Central Station. It was in the basement of the cinema and it showed nothing but…but cartoons. And seemingly I’d been rubbing my fingers along walls on the way there and my camel coat ended up as a camel and black coat. I have no memory of that. It’s certainly a family story.” | 5.57-6.48 |
| 6.51 | Mentions there were some good book shops in Glasgow at that time. |  |
| 7.15 | Talks the quality of clothing in the 1950s. Mentions having a ration book but not remembering this as he was too young. |  |
|  | “By the time the ‘60s came in fashion seem to be the thing and I can remember some of the shops going in for what they called trendy clothing. Like Italian suits where you practically had to drop yourself into the trousers to fit them. There was also shops that no longer seem to exist anymore. There was Dunn’s hat shops, for example. And I remember going with my late father. And he would be buying hats at Dunn’s and I would…I probably got my first hat in about 1963,’64 but it wasn’t…It wasn’t that unusual to wear a trilby or a fedora, you know, even at a young age for some people. And certainly, you know, when people went shopping, there seemed to be more of a formality of dress. I mean, women would tend to wear hats and more formal skirts. I mean you really wouldn’t expect to see a woman in jeans wandering around Glasgow, doing shopping, in the late ‘50s, early ‘60s.” | 8.10-9.25 |
| 9.30 | Interviewer asks the repsondent about the milk bar. |  |
|  | “Opposite Central Station there was the Milk Bar. It was the Milk Marketing Board produced it and it was a very popular hangout for people. Myself at school, you know, after school if we managed to get into town we would go into Central Station. It was a great hangout for people that were between fourteen and sixteen. And, I mean, you had your coffee, you had your tea although it was called the Milk Bar. But, it was quite a popular hangout. And if you watch the film ‘A Clockwork Orange.’, it does, sort of, reference milk bars. So, there must have been the ones all over the country but certainly the Glasgow one was the one that I went to quite regularly.” | 9.31-10.33 |
| 10.34 | Talks about the lack of fast food outlets in Glasgow. Also mentions that eating on the street was not seen as acceptable behaviour. |  |
| 11.40 | Interviewer asks the respondent to describe the inside of Wyllie and Lochhead.  |  |
|  | “Wylie & Lochhead’s was very grand. I mean if you go into Fraser’s now the architecture’s still there. The fancy staircase going up to the first floor. And as I say, it was behind the staircase that the cars were displayed. They were the Daimler dealers. But they offered…I think they could sell you just about anything and even arrange funerals.”  | 11.45-12.08 |
|  | “If you were a Southsider, myself, you tend…you know, my family tended to go to Argyle Street and Buchanan Street. We didn’t really go to Sauchiehall Street much. Whereas people from the West End tended to go to Sauchiehall Street. Although my parents had met the owners of Trerons. But I don’t remember us ever shopping there. There seemed to be this divide. North of the city, it was Sauchiehall Street. South of the city it was Argyle Street and Buchanan Street.” | 12.13-12.43 |
| 12.55 | Interviewer asks about the customer service in Wylie and Lochhead. |  |
|  | Self-service not a thing. Describes the automated system for taking the money. |  |
| 13.32 | Talks about the supermarket at Muirend opening in the early 1960s. Café. Fresh meat counter. His late mother and her friends thought it would not last. May have been first or one of first supermarkets in Scotland. |  |
| 14.33 | Describes local shopping in a suburban area in the 1950s and 1960s. |  |
| 15.01 | Talks about the idea of an out of town shopping centre being not thought of in the 1950s. Then mentions East Kilbride and Cumbernauld and being taken to Cumbernauld and the shopping centre there. |  |
| 15.44 | Talks about going to the modern homes exhibition at the Kelvinhall in Glasgow in the mid-1950s. Hatch for milk. TV. |  |
|  17.09 | Talks about shop on St Enoch’s square where you could get BB Guns etc. |  |
| 18.41 | Interviewer asks about the shop with the model kits.  |  |
| 18.48 | Respondent mentions a few shops. Talks about various model making kits. Mentions limited children’s TV in the 1950s and 1960s. Talks about his family getting a TV. |  |
| 22.13 | Interviewer asks the respondent for any more memories of the Argyll Arcade.  |  |
| 22.16 | Describes what he can remember and that it was not only jewellery shops in there at the time. Tearooms. Clyde Model Dockyard. |  |
| 22.46 | Interviewer asks the respondent if he remembers any processions, parades or carnivals to do with the Highstreets of Glasgow.  |  |
| 22.53 | Respondent replies that he can’t remember any other than hearing about orange walks. Mentions the carnival in the Kelvinhall and attending that. Circus and menagerie. |  |
| 23.31 | Interviewer asks about the toy department in Lewis’s.  |  |
| 23.38 | Respondent describes some of the toys he got from there. Toy soldiers. |  |
| 24.06 | Interviewer asks the respondent what local shops his family went to around Netherlee. |  |
| 24.35 | Respondent describes the local food shopping that they did. He talks about going further afield to get Kosher goods. Goes on to describe the Jewish shops on Sinclair Drive. |  |
|  | “There was a Jewish hairdresser (on Sinclair Drive). Now, I mention Jewish hairdresser because under legislation, in those days, shops had to be shut on a Sunday. However, there was an exemption made that Jewish businesses that were closed on the Sabbath, the Saturday, could open on the Sunday. And this included the hairdresser. And, as I say, there was about five shops. There was Morrison’s the Jewish Deli, there was a caterer’s business, there was Stein Schreiber[?] the butcher and there was the hairdressers. All within this little block of five or six shops. And then across the road from them J Levingstone. Jack [?} Levingstone’s bookshop. And they also sold items of Jewish interest. Prayer shawls, candlesticks etc…” | 25.57-27.02 |
| 27.06 | Interviewer asks the respondent if he can find Jewish goods in Glasgow now.  |  |
| 27.11 | Respondent describes where you would get these-mainly online. Difficult to get things locally now. |  |
| 27.55 | Interviewer asks the respondent if he ever went into the city centre at night. |  |
|  | “When I was younger, no. Unless my parents were taking me to pantomime or theatre. They also used to take me, in those days, what was later the Apollo, Green’s Playhouse. And on a Sunday afternoon they used to have classical concerts there. So, my parents took myself and one of my cousins who I was very close to age to. And I can’t say it was the most enjoyable experience I ever had in my life. I much preferred when we went to places like Kelvingrove if it was winter. Summertime to Stirling or Aberfoyle or various places…” | 28.05-28.49 |
| 28.55 | Mentions going to pantomimes at The King’s Theatre and the Citizen’s Theatre. |  |
| 29.10 | Says when he was older that he would go into town at night. Mentions The White Elephant and Joanne’s. |  |
| 29.47 | Interviewer asks the respondent if he remembers the shops on Byres Rd during his time at Glasgow University. |  |
| 29.54 | Respondent replies that he was at the dental hospital which is on Sauchiehall St. Mentions a couple of shops there and a couple of bars on Byres Rd. |  |
| 30.48 | Interviewer asks the respondent if he went to any local cinemas when he was a child. |  |
| 30.51 | Respondent mentions the Toledo in Muirend and the Vogue in Cathcart. Talks about walking in in the middle of the film. |  |
| 31.51 | Talks about the boating in Rouken Glen Park and Queens Park. Mentions the band stand at Linn Park. Tearooms in park and putting greens. |  |
|  | “Other things I remember is in the early ’50s the Monte Carlo Rally started at Blythswood Square. And I had an aunt who lived in Fenwick Road in Giffnock and we used to sit in her front garden and watch the Monte Carlo cars go past. And at that time the road we…was in a different direction. There wasn’t the roundabout. It went…continued on to what is now Fenwick Place and then went in front of where the MacDonald Hotel was. And then, I believe, it would have headed to Ayr as part of the Mon…But, for many years Blythswood Square was one of the starting points for the rally. And if you were lucky enough to have a house or a relative who had a house along the route. And it was a nice dry, sunny day, which it sometimes seemed to be. Then there was nothing to be beating sitting in the garden watching the cars go past.” | 33.06-34.12 |
| 34.15 | Interviewer asks the respondent what the atmosphere was like on the streets at night. |  |
| 34.22 | Can’t remember feeling threatened on the streets. Talks about late night cinema with horror films and films that were slightly out of circulation. Audience participation. |  |
|  | “There was also some very good folk clubs. Just around the back of the Cent…The City Chambers, I think. It might have been Cochrane Street. It was the sort of place, that you know, that only after the cleaners had been could you describe it as manky. And before that, I think you practically needed a tetanus jab to get a coffee there. But, you heard some incredible acts there. I remember hearing Stephan Grossman who was guitar accompanist to Joan Baez appearing just before Hamish Imlach. And years later I was chatting to Hamish about it. And he said he’s invited Stephan back to his house and offered him his speciality of pork vindaloo, which is maybe not the best thing to offer a Jewish vegetarian. But, you know, it was a really good evening’s entertainment for not a lot of money. Later things became more formal. Hamish I remember once complaining to me when I was at one of his concerts at the city hall. That he was shocked that you weren’t allowed to bring beer into the auditorium. Because it seemed to spoil the whole reference.” | 35.47-37.15 |
| 37.16 | Talks about becoming a passive smoker on buses and in cinemas. |  |
| 38.10 | Interviewer asks the respondent if he remembers anyone singing to the queues in the cinema. |  |
| 38.15 | Respondent does remember. Talks about the lack of beggars. |  |
| 38.36 | Interviewer asks the respondent if there were buskers. |  |
| 38.40 | There were but only at cinema and theatre queues. Lack of pedestrianized areas. |  |
| 39.07 | Interviewer asks if the respondent remembers there being any stalls on the street.  |  |
|  | “Yes, especially around the old fruit market. Around the Candleriggs. You’d lots of fruit and veg stalls there. But not really in the rest of the city areas. I mean if you went to Barrowland. Especially, I used to go with friends when I was thirteen, fourteen, fifteen. We were always looking for electrical parts because we were trying to build radio sets and various other things. And, yeah, you’d all the stalls there and it was great listening to all the patter of the people. But, apart from really around the fruit market, I don’t think you really saw many stalls…” | 39.12-39.55 |
| 40.18 | Interviewer asks the respondent if there were any shops that he went into as a young adult in the city centre.  |  |
| 40.30 | Respondent mentions Burton’s and going to wholesalers with his dad due to his dad’s business. Lists the names of wholesalers. Mentions Dee’s of Trongate. |  |
| 42.04 | Interviewer asks the respondent what his father’s job was. |  |
| 42.06 | Respondent replies that he was a credit draper and engineer to training. |  |
| 42.47 | Interviewer asks if the respondent thinks the highstreets have changed over time and when he thinks that this started to happen. |  |
|  | “…I don’t know how much of a pleasure it is now to go into town shopping. By the time you work out £5.00/£6.00 an hour to park your car. And it’s all very well say-use public transport. Yeah, use public transport, but if you’ve got to lug a lot of things that you’ve bought home. You know, it’s not an answer. So, I think unless there is a change in attitude of the council… Which I don’t, unfortunately, see coming. I think there is going to be a downwards spiral as far as retail. Unless, you know, maybe people are going in for very specialised things. Like, you know some of the fancy shops that specialise in chocolates or coffee pods. But, you know, many things people can buy just as conveniently at their local shopping centres. Or, out of town shopping centres where they can get free parking and it’s so much more convenient.” | 44.34-45.45 |
| 45.47 | Interviewer asks the respondent if he had the chance what advice would he give to Glasgow’s current planners and businesses. |  |
|  | “I would say don’t be so anti-motorist. And, clean up the place. A lot of it is very scruffy and dirty and looking very unoccupied…” | 45.58 |
|  | “…I don’t know how I could provide that vision and I think maybe with the growth in internet shopping…Maybe it’s too late. The horse has bolted. I don’t know what you could do to revive it. But, possibly creating specialised centres might do. For example, the old fish market, which I think is a bit under-utilised. Why not make that a centre for toys, models, children’s activities. Where people would maybe be able to go for an activity but also be able to shop for suitable things for their children. Puzzles, jigsaws and so forth. But I’m really not sure what the city can do. But, I mean things like Byres Road, so many places are just food outlets.”  | 47.49-49.00 |
|  | Interviewer thanks the respondent very much for his contribution to the project. |  |
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