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| **Project: ‘Glasgow’s Highstreets: An oral history…’**  Respondent: Pat McCash  Year of Birth: 1945  Age:  Connection to project: Respondent  Date of Interview: 27th of March 2023 Interviewer: Sophie Fensom  Recording Agreement: Yes  Information & Consent: Yes  Photographic Images: No  Length of Interview: 57 minutes and 39 seconds  Location of Interview: Pat’s home  Recording Equipment: Zoom H4n (internal mics) | | **Glasgow Story Collective** | |
| Time  (from: mins/secs) | Description | | Transcribed Extract  (from- to:  mins/secs) |
| 0.30 | Pat was born in Glasgow. | |  |
| 0.37 | Interviewer asks the respondent during which era she first remembers Glasgow’s Highstreets. | |  |
|  | Was around about 5 years. Shop called D&F on the high street in Glasgow. Clothes shop. Had an account. Would pay every Saturday. Mentions Ice cream shop at the bottom of the high street. Got a McCallum. Ice cream in a glass with raspberry sauce. Remembers pokey hats-a cone with ice cream and raspberry. Hot green peas in the winter. | |  |
| 2.56 | Interviewer asks the respondent if she remembers what kind of properties were open on the highstreets. | |  |
| 3.01 | Tenements on the High Street. The hospital. The Barras on a Sunday. Frank’s the photographers. Football shop with Celtic goods. | |  |
| 4.57 | Interviewer asks the respondent if she remembers any high street processions, parades or carnivals. | |  |
|  | “I remember when I was about five. And I don’t know it the high street was involved. But, there was a circus came to town. And they walked through the Argyle Street bit. We were in Argyle Street. And they came through there with the elephants and everything. We were all just standing at the side.” | | 5.04-5.24 |
|  | “And then Roy Rodgers, who was the big actor at the time. He came to Glasgow. And he came down the street with Trigger. That was his horse. And the horse would go up and…We all loved that. Seeing Roy Rodgers.” | | 5.30-5.46 |
| 5.49 | Mentions theatre off the High street that she used to go to. Did tap and ballet. Did shows. Maybe Lyceum theatre. | |  |
| 6.45 | Talks about being horrified by Argyle Street at present. Mentions the previous good state of that street and Sauchiehall Street. | |  |
| 7.27 | Mentions the shops in Argyll Street in the past. Lewis’s, Grant’s furniture shop. Main shopping area. | |  |
|  | “And, when I nursed, in the ‘60s, we used to get an afternoon off. And Lewis’s used to sell slices of cakes. For one and six, or something like that. And my friend…If we’d the afternoon off I’d say ‘Come into town.’ And she’d always…she was a skinny thing. And she’d say. ‘Let’s go and have a slice of cake out of…Or, if you bought a slice. I think you had to buy two or something. I’d say. ‘I don’t want to spend my money on cake.’ Because I was always dieting. And you could go in there and you could get anything. From the bottom floor was food and all the shopping and things.” | | 7.55-8.34 |
| 8.36 | Mentions cold meat shop near Central Station. Possible photo of Mum in paper in that shop. | |  |
|  | “Just round the corner from that [Central Station] was a little circus. Well, zoo. It was supposed to be a zoo. But they just had things like rabbits and snakes and smelly animals. I never really liked that very much.” | | 9.05-9.20 |
| 9.22 | Got clothes from Grafton’s she thinks. Boots on the corner. That Boots was the only one late opening. Place to meet boyfriend. | |  |
| 10.12 | Interviewer asks the respondent what Woolworths sold. | |  |
| 10.40 | Sold everything. Mentions Bronco toilet roll and pick and mix. | |  |
|  | "Pettigrew & Stephens, which I'd never ever been into to get anything...But, I heard they were looking for girls and they gave you a pound on a Saturday. So, I got myself in there."  "If you'd watched the Selfridges show on televison...it was about the Selfridges store in London opening up. And how people actually stayed in the bit up the stair. They used to keep like old maids or sewing ladies and things like that...had a flat up in this place. So they still had that when I was in Pettigrews...I don't think anybody lived in them but it was all still there." | | 11.28-14.15 |
| 14.16 | Mentions other shops etc on Sauchiehall Street-Woolworths, Watt Brothers, The Empire Theatre, going to see Cliff Richard at fourteen. | |  |
|  | “And then there was a theatre in Sauchiehall Street. The Empire. It was a big theatre. Where all the stars came to from all over. And I went to see Cliff Richard in it when I was fourteen. And then, with the school being up the road. They let us… You know, we’d be out at dinner time. So, we went away down. And we’re all standing in this foyer shouting for Cliff Richard to come out. In the morning, you know. And eventually this woman came out. And the man says.’That’s…she cleans Cliff Richard’s room. And, she’s got a button off his dressing gown.’ And am like..So. I’m weeeh! So. I’m at the front. And they’re all shouting-‘Ooooh.’ And she went-‘Right, stand back and I’ll throw it. I’ll throw it.’ And I caught this button for som…I had it for years and years. It was only a couple of years ago, well, I thought-this is probably garbage. A button. It was blue and white dots, you know. Kind of thing a star probably would wear, you know. And we all went from school to see him. I got to see him but I never got to see The Beatles. Cos I was working then.” | | 14.51-15.58 |
| 16.25 | Mentions pub on Sauchiehall Street that is still there and Chinese restaurant up the stairs from there. | |  |
| 16.27 | Talks about going to an Indian restaurant near the Locarno on Sauchiehall Street. | |  |
| 18.21 | Mentions book shop, big hotel at Charing Cross. The Yellow Bird Café-a student place-no alcohol. Not unusual outside of pubs then. Mentions Beresford Building. Bookshops, C &A. Easter Bonnet, Woolworths. Marks & Spencer’s. Football shop. Pub on corner. Café. Italian restaurant. Camera shop. | |  |
| 21.12 | Argyle Street. The Argyll Arcade, Sloane’s Restaurant. Disgusted at Argyll Street. Grant’s furniture shop. Menswear shop. Might have been Burton or Morrison’s. Talks about husband getting a suit. | |  |
| 23.39 | Mentions doing a lot of shopping in Clydebank Co-Op as they lived there. | |  |
| 24.05 | Talks about provident check. Bayne & Duckett. Greenlees. | |  |
| 25.18 | Mentions Timpson’s on Argyle Street. | |  |
| 26.48 | Interviewer asks the respondent to describe what some of the buildings were like inside. | |  |
| 26.55 | Woolworths wooden floors, no self service | |  |
|  | “Pettigrew & Stephens was fine for the customer. But, when you went up these old escalators. You know, when we were children. I don’t know whether we were in Argyle Street or where we were but we were in the town and we actually got caught in one of these escalators one time. And it was nearly going on fire. And I can remember my mother was hysteric and that. But, anyway they got us out and there was no…But, I think these lifts used to cause quite a bit of a problem. And some places like Pettigrew’s would have a lift boy. You’d always have a lift boy that would take the customers up and down. But, when you got into the back of it. You know, if you went for your lunch, it was really… you were going up dark stairways and very horrible canteens and things like that. There wasn’t anything nice, about… for the staff. I don’t know what the rooms were like [accommodation for shop workers of the 19th century and beyond] but I know they were there. People lived in them. I remember you had to clock in. I don’t think you had any locker or anything like that. It must have had a locker you could leave your bag in. but, I don’t really remember much about that.” | | 27.45-29.05 |
|  | “Just off the..At the Central Station. They had a Milk Bar. I was only ever in it once. But, we thought that was marvellous, you know, getting a…And you sat on a big stool. American milk bar. And you sat on a big stool. And you got a milk shake. So, that was quite a thing when I was little.” | | 29.07-29.33 |
| 29.37 | Mentions jewellery shops and pawn shops off Sauchiehall Street. | |  |
| 30.09 | Interviewer asks the respondent if she remembers any music in stores. | |  |
| 30.19 | Mentions music shop on Sauchiehall Street. ABC Cinema. Cinema at Pettigrew and Stephens. Lyceum Cinema. Could buy music in Woolworths. No music in clothes shops such as Pettigrew & Stephens. Woolworths-musical corner. Didn’t get paid enough in nursing to buy records. | |  |
| 33.11 | Interviewer asks the respondent if she remembers people modelling clothes in stores. | |  |
|  | Doesn’t remember models but remembers mannequins. Wedding shows. Mannequins in windows of Daly’s, Pettigrew & Stephens and C&A. Travel shop corner of C&A. Banks. | |  |
| 34.22 | Interviewer asks the respondent what the changing rooms were like. | |  |
| 34.25 | There was only room for one and no mirror in the cubicle. | |  |
| 34.44 | Interviewer asks the respondent if she recalls hairdressers working in the stores. | |  |
| 34.48 | Describes her attempt at being a hairdresser. Vaguely remembers taking her son to Lewis’s to get his hair cut. | |  |
| 35.42 | Interviewer asks the respondent to describe her memories of the staff and the customer service in the stores. | |  |
|  | “Well, as I say, the staff that were in Pettigrew’s…Didn’t find that in Woolworth’s. They were just happy to have, you kind of a thing. Well, the girl I worked with was very good. And didn’t have any airs and graces and that. Pettigrew & Stephens was totally different because it was supposed to be upper class. I was…They had all their... You know. You had to wear your certain tights. And their attitude to your part-timer was, you know, they didn’t bother with you. You know. They just let you get on with it kind of thing. They had that thing that you put your money up The customers money went in a tube and you went away up and had to get change and then came back down. I had a till as well I remember, But, I don’t know why. Didn’t have cards. It was all cash. Don’t remember cheques even. It was just cash. Maybe some people had accounts. I don’t remember that. I don’t remember, you know, anyone handing me over a card or anything. Just cash. And, as I say, that incident where, you know, you felt kind of snubbed (pushed past for commission sale) and some of the older ones wouldn’t even talk to you, you know. And as I say, they thought they were getting a better paid customer they just shoved you out the way.” | | 35.50-37.12 |
| 37.13 | Interviewer asks the respondent if the store provided facilities such as home delivery, gift wrapping or crèches. | |  |
| 38.03 | Respondent says they didn’t supply anything like that. | |  |
| 38.09 | Interviewer asks the respondent what she remembers about the stores during the festive period. | |  |
| 38.15 | Mentions Frasers Santa. More expensive shops fancier the decorations. | |  |
|  | “In my era. I would say they weren’t as early, obviously. They didn’t put the decorations up six or seven weeks before. And then Christmas finished and then they’ve got Easter eggs out. We didn’t have anything like that. In fact, we hardly… when I was young… There’s a story about Easter eggs. You couldn’t get Easter eggs. It was coupons for sweeties for children. From 1945. Didn’t finish till the fifties. So, I was about six or something. And my mother, as I say, never had a lot of money. So, she always left everything to the last minute. And this Saturday of Easter we went out for our Easter Eggs. And we started in Partick. And we couldn’t get. It was sold out, sold out, sold out. And we came down to quite near where we lived and there was a café and the woman in the café said-‘Oh, I’ve got one Easter egg left. And we’ll get that and I’ve got two cardboard ends. And, we’ll put a few sweeties in it and she can have that.’ And, oh, I was raging. My mum did that. I just wanted the one Easter egg halved between my brother and I. So, I never, ever let her forget it. And years later when she was in hospital one Easter. And I said…She said-‘Do you want some money for an Easter egg?’ And I said-‘No, I wanted it when I was five not fifty (laughs).” | | 39.28-41.14 |
| 41.15 | States there weren’t food shops or many cafes in Argyll Street or Sauchiehall Street. | |  |
| 41.47 | Describes the Xmas lights of the time. Not as good as today. Not sure if they put them up. After she got married she remembers lights. Lights just in George Square. | |  |
|  | “We always went to Lewis’s for Santa. And he would be round…the queue would be right round the corner outside, you know. Must have been healthy. And I remember asking my mum-why were there Santas in stores. ‘Why is Santa in this store?’ She says-‘Oh, he’s got these brothers that help him at Christmas.’ It’s amazing what you believe isn’t it?’ | | 42.28-42.55 |
| 43.18 | Interviewer asks the respondent if there was any training at the Glasgow Stores that she worked at. | |  |
|  | “No (there wasn’t any training at Pettigrew & Stephens). You just got to the counter. You got an interview. You went in that day. You got a card. And then you were taken down to whatever counter you were working at. And the first counter I got taken to on the Saturday was Menswear. And I was standing there between about three boys and every time somebody came in I wasnae doing anything. They probably looked at my thing…So, a couple of weeks later I just came in and was told to go to stockings. And I didn’t know anything about stockings. People would come in and say Ar…Aristoc. And I’d go…I had to always ask somebody. Cause the people didn’t even help you. As I said, the girls there behind the counter. They wouldn’t say when you were quiet-‘Oh this is Aristoc, or this is…’ or tell you anything. And even about your money, and that, going up the tube and this carry on. You had to learn all that on the job.” | | 43.23-44.18 |
| 44.19 | Interviewer asks the respondent if they had a trade union. | |  |
| 44.24 | Respondent replies that there were no trade unions at the store. | |  |
| 44.35 | Interviewer asks the respondent if there are any products that she particularly remembers. | |  |
| 44.40 | Mentions stockings. | |  |
| 45.06 | Talks about the prospect of getting promoted. Mentions the stock buyer. Found the job dull. Couldn’t have done it as a career. Liked it when busy. Favourite thing about working there was getting the money. Least favourite thing-not being busy. | |  |
| 47.15 | Interviewer asks the respondent if she thinks the Highstreets have changed over time and when she thinks this change started. | |  |
| 47.30 | Thinks late 1980s. Describes shopping for her second wedding in 1999. Marks & Spencer, Watt Brothers. More her Mum’s generation shopped in Watt Brothers. Horrified at Argyle Street last year. | |  |
| 50.08 | Interviewer asks the respondent what she thinks caused all these changes. | |  |
|  | “Probably the companies being too greedy and wanting to make the money. And not making it as much as they were. So, profit. And they just…they can’t pay their rates. Well. That was another thing, the Glasgow rates. They’re very high for these shops. And the other thing is lack of parking in the town. Now, that’s the reason I don’t go in. I’m disabled. I need the car. So, I go in there and there’s a few disabled place. Now, for example, I was going on holiday last year. And my son was running me into Queen Street. And our train was a 2 O Clock. And we couldn’t get in there because of all the blockages.” | | 50.11-50.50 |
| 50.51 | Describes the difficulties and how she got on when she came back from holiday. | |  |
| 53.27 | Interviewer asks the respondent what changes she would like to see happen in the Highstreets if there are any. | |  |
| 53.43 | Better parking. Less expensive parking. Could take grandkids to see the lights and take visitors in. | |  |
| 54.15 | Interviewer asks what advice would the respondent give to Glasgow’s planners and businesses if she had the chance. | |  |
|  | “It’s difficult because I know finance is always in the picture, you know. And they are making so much housing in the city, as well, for the students. I don’t know if it’s just better keeping it the way it is, you know, having the shopping plazas. For me, especially, it would be. Keeping the shopping plazas. But, then again, you’ve got all these hotels. So, you’ve got all these visitors coming in. If they could try and maybe get some of the good shops back into the city centre. Even if it was just one area. Argyle Street, off up Sauchiehall Street. I know they’ve done quite a lot in Buchanan Street. But even then Buchanan Street…It’s quite hard to get parked round about there. Very difficult, you know, so…I know if I had young children and I was pulling them along and all the carry on. I had to get my pram on the train by myself and all this carry on. I wouldn’t want to do that. I’d resist that and go somewhere else.” | | 54.24-55.32 |
| 55.45 | Interviewer asks the respondent what she imagines the future of Glasgow’s Highstreets to be. | |  |
|  | “At the moment, charity shops. That’s all I can imagine. Because that’s what they’re using them for. I don’t know if the charity shops don’t have to pay the rates. I think that’s one of the things. You know. The charity shops. But, I’ve not got a great imagination for it at all.” | | 55.50-56.14 |
| 56.15 | Interviewer asks the respondent how the changes to Glasgow’s Highstreets make her feel. | |  |
|  | Feels sad. Used to be third in UK or thereabout for shopping. Internet shopping. Daughters still quite like to go into town. Braehead in the city. Buchanan Galleries. | |  |
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