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Interviewer: Eoin Dunne, King's College London

Interviewee: Jean Taylor

Venue: Flat 1/346 St John Street

Purpose: Part of the One History, EC1 in the making oral histories

E: If you don't mind me asking where and when were you born?

J: January 1st 1937 at 3 King Square.

E: Could you tell me about your childhood?

J: I suppose my first memories are going to Moreland Street School when I was 5 and also going to the shelter in King Square during the war. I remember being woken up early hours of the morning and running across the square to go to the shelter in the park. I didn't really have the fear of it because I didn't know any different but obviously my Mum and my family panicked to get down there. There was always an ARP warden in the park because they had a hut there and they used to say come on hurry up and we would all have to rush and get down into the shelter. I also remember in the shelter they had bays with all bunk beds, I don't remember sleeping down there too much, but we used to spend quite a bit of time down there.

E: Could you tell me about your parents? Where they came from?

J: They both come from the area my Dad in Wild Street in Covent Garden and my mum was born in Europa Place which was in Lever Street. They moved into Gee Street and they got married in Peartree Street in the church there and they lived in Leverington Street which was off King's Square and then moved into King Square. My Dad was a railway porter on Liverpool Street station.

E: Could you tell me about your house in King Square?

J: We lived in the basement and we had a parlour, a bedroom on the first floor and then we had a bedroom up the stairs, we also had an old lady who lived in one room and other people lived in the top floor, so it was shared really by three families. We were lucky we had an indoor toilet which was inside the yard door; we had a small yard with a wash house at the back and a copper. In the summer you might use the copper, you had a fire under it and my mum would do some washing out there or you might have a bath out there in the summer. We used to have the tin bath, we had running water, in later years we had an ascot fitted. It was quite a nice house; my dad used to paint the door and varnish it and keep it in good repair.

E: Was it just you and your parents?

J: No, I had two brothers, two sisters but there is nine years difference between me and my next sister and when I was born my eldest brother was 21, so there was quite an age difference.

E: Had they left home?

J: No, my brother was in the army, but my other brother and my two sisters were still at home when we lived in King Square.

E: Did you stay at King Square for your childhood or did you move?

J: We went away for about 6 weeks when the bombing was on, to my Uncle's in Slough but we came back, we didn't really stay there very long. My sister next to me was evacuated for not very long, so we really all lived there during the war.

E: How did you find it leaving London during the war?

J: It was really like a holiday, I didn't realise why, I suppose I was about 4 or something like that. It was just somewhere different to go.

E: You spoke about Moreland School, what was that like as a school to go to?

J: Very good, we started in infants and then we worked up, the teachers were very good, quite strict but very good and we had plenty of sport and things. Then when you got to the Juniors Friday morning was Coram's Fields we all used to go to Coram's Fields, we played netball and the boys played football and we used to come home on the bus and we used to walk through Lamb's Conduit Street because there was a bakers there and they used to let us all go in and buy a bun on the way out. So that was quite a treat on the Friday. We had very good teachers and they took the swimming in Ironmonger Row we used to go to. So very good school.

E: Do you remember any particular teacher's that stand out?

J: I remember Mr Hodgkinson because he was there a very long while and he did the swimming. Mr Allinson we were in with him and my particular teacher was Mrs Williams I remember her and headmistress Miss Derrick who was very strict but quite liked me so we got on very well (laughs).

E: What was it like being a school, I guess it's different from being at School now, was it hard?

J: We never really realised it was hard we had to know things we had to learn everything, but there were a lot of other things that went on, although we had to do our lessons we used to do country dancing, we had choirs we used to go out to Central Hall Westminster at Christmas for the carol concert. So we had loads of other things going on and also after school there was play centre so although you had lessons you had a lot of other things in with it as well.

E: That was for infants where did you go after that?

J: I went to Highbury Hill Grammar School then, so I did quite well there but the last year I was there my teacher was ill and away so I used to do the register in the morning and take dinner money and things like that. The headmistress really pushed me to go to the Grammar School because I didn't really want to go because all my friends went to Hugh Middleton and I didn't particularly want to go to Highbury, my Mum didn't want me to go it was too far on the bus, but she really pushed and I ended up going there. Which was very good I mean it was completely different from everything that I knew. Unfortunately I left at 15 because my Dad couldn't afford to keep me there anymore (laughs) it was very expensive the school uniforms and things like that so I left at 15.

E: You say you left at 15 what did you do then?

J: I started work, left one week and started work the next (laughs).

E: Lived in King Square for most of your childhood, what was that like as an area to live in?

J: Very nice, where everybody knew one another and outside the park was the Square as well and we used to all play rounders there and all the boys and girls all mixed in from different places and we used to play in the street all the time. We had Carter Paterson horse and carts at one time but then it went into lorries when that come along we used to really create because we had to get out of the road. In Leverington Street which was off of King Square we used to play skating there and balls games and things. The whole area you had different groups but you used to know one another so it was a really nice area to live.

E: When did you move away from King Square?

J: We moved in 1960 cause they pulled the houses down in slum clearance and we all moved into Radnor Street which was Grayson House.

E: You moved as a family?

J: As a family yes, there was only me and my other sister at home then because the others had all married but they all still lived local but we moved into the flat in there.

E: Do you remember a lot about the slum clearance?

J: Not very much I was sort of at the time I was taking a course because I working at nights to do a computer course at the time, I wasn't there when we actually moved I was out all day. My mum hated that flat it was really awful. I think they felt so confined after being in the house, because it was all modern and then they had to get rid of everything and so had to have this new and that new so, I don't think it was a very happy time for my Mum and Dad as such but there was nothing they could do about it. Because all our houses were owned by Bart's Estate and then council took over and we all became council tenants.

E: Was there a noticeable difference when the Council took over the housing?

J: I suppose there was in some ways because we had a rent office in Goswell Road for Bart's Estate and you had to pay rent every Monday without fail or you were in trouble. You did get repairs done and things you could go around there. I think the Council at first was quite good but then it just got worse and worse it just went downhill.

E: Did people generally not like the slum clearance in the area; did they want to stay in the houses?

J: I think the older ones probably didn't like it but a lot of the younger ones did, because everything was modern you had bathrooms, a modern flat and too be honest them first flats were quite nice and quite big and you had separate kitchen so for a lot of people it was a step up in that sense. Although we moved onto the 13th floor which wasn't very good for older people it was quite a big deal for them.

E: How did you personally find it moving from a house to a flat?

J: I found it a bit confined I suppose we didn't have that room where you go upstairs and you would be away from each other, it was more you were close together but I suppose a lot of the time I was out so (laughs). I was out all day at work and then went out in the evening so it wasn't too bad.

E: So your parents, did they have a choice to stay in the area?

J: You were allocated where you were going, that was that block to clear that lot so they did it.

E: So they didn't choose to stay in the area they essentially had to stay in the area?

J: I suppose some people did move out, but I think they were too old to do that by that time they didn't want to move out. I mean it was far enough to move from King Square to Radnor Street that was a long way for them to move.

E: You lived with them, when did you stay in Radnor Street till?

J: We moved there in 1960 and I moved 1966 when I got married.

E: Where did you first move when you got married?

J: To Arlington Avenue which is off New North Road we got two rooms in a house there and then we lived there for about 4 years and we were offered a Council flat in Gambier House which is in Lever Street so we actually moved back a little bit and then we stayed there. That was nice when we first moved in, we all knew one another in there which was quite nice and we helped run the Tenants Association very friendly and as the Council do they move a bit of rubbish in. I mean we polished our landings it was nice and then they move these problem people in, and I know they have to go somewhere but it brings the place right down again, we saw these here being built by

the Brewers Company and the agent Daniel Watney and I wrote to them to see if we could get into here and I think they had to take so many Council tenants when they built them and we got offered one of these so we moved here. So I was still in the area as such.

E: When you say you got offered a Council flat at Gambier House how did that come about?

J: When we got married we put our name down on the housing list and you had points but we had no chance at that time, there was an election and the Conservatives got in, in Islington which was very unusual and they decided to give places to people whose parents lived in the area and we had always lived in the area, so with that in mind we were given a lot more points and they came around and offered us a flat.

E: Was that a new building when you moved in?

J: Gambier House? Yes

E: Was it noticeably different from the ones you lived in before?

J: Not particularly, no it was just a council flat, wasn't much difference in standard.

E: When you moved here you have been here how long?

J: 25 years now.

E: So you have been here since then. How do you find it living here then living then living in the Council Estate?

J: I find it nice because we are on the ground floor its quite a lot a smaller to what we had but its only two of us, and its nice you just go out your door and your on the street. Whereas before we lived on the 13th and then the 14th floor.

E: Did you ever consider leaving the area?

J: Not really no, we have always wanted to stay in the area and the other thing was we never had that much money to buy a place out I suppose our savings wasn't that good really.

E: Have you ever had a family?

J: No we don't have any children.

E: How have you found it just being the two of you?

J: Pretty good actually, we got on quite well as friends and that and we spend quite a lot of time together. Plus the fact that I have family still in the area, my sister lives in Grayson, my brother lives in Grayson. My great niece lives in Grayson and she has now two children and then my

other niece lives by the Tower of London and another two nieces live in top of Hoxton Street. My great niece comes around with her children so we see quite a lot of them and one of them I pick up from school every Friday so we've really got quite a lot of family still in the area.

E: Your family in the area - have they found it harder to stay in the area?

J: Yes, one of them lived with her Grandfather and when he died she was allowed to take over the flat so she's got a Council flat but the others live in private flats at the top off Pitfield Street. So they got into a private block where they all live, but it wasn't easy to stay in the area because obviously when they got rid of all the industry they turned all the buildings into flats but they were such ridiculous prices that people like us couldn't afford them anyway.

E: You said you have nieces, what do you think the area is like for families and younger people?

J: I think the primary schools are quite good. The secondary schools no - you don't know where to send them. I think the secondary schools in the area are bad, play wise they have a couple of parks there are things going on, I mean St Luke's is quite good now because its branching out for the younger ones there are groups of things for them to do. I think there could be more facilities for the younger ones.

E: What do you find the facilities like in the area?

J: For older people I think St Luke's is absolutely brilliant. I have never used it very much I have started going a little bit now we go on the walks and you can get yourself involved if you want to and I think for older people I think it's quite good.

E: If we talk a bit work now, you say you started work at 15 what did you do?

J: There was a youth employment bureau on Carmelite Street so anyone who left school you went straight there for a job. It was like what is your best subjects Maths or English, and that was it, then you were given a choice of two or three. I worked for the Home and Colonial stores I worked for the head office in City Road so that was like there was Home and Colonial, Maypole, Liptons and those amalgamated under Allied Suppliers. So when I first went there, they were still rationing on the sweets and I worked on the sweets in the sugar department, what you had to do, all the stores used to send there stock sheets in and you could allocate what they could have according to the points and then. So I worked there then they introduced a computer system which at the time took a whole floor and the first computer system were these great big boxes all around the room (laughs) and I worked on the punch card system where we used to punch holes in the cards and put them through the tabulators and they used to print all the orders out and things actually I got a very good education of Geography there, because we used to have runs for England, Wales and Scotland and you had to do these run books and I got to know where all the places were so its was quite a good education that was. Then I think I worked there for about 13 years and engineer used to come in to mend the machines said there is a little firm opposite and they want someone to set up a tabulating system and I went over there it was a handbag firm a Jewish man had it. I got the job we did

haggle over the money but I got a good job there and I worked there for the next 19 years I think I worked for him and he went bankrupt in the end. He moved to Goswell Road so I was always in the area that I lived I never travelled to work. Which is very good because it saved on the fares and when he went bankrupt I was out of work for 3 months I was about 48 then and I went to the agency I got a job for NEC, at the time the facsimiles came out and I went and worked in that department for about 3 months but it was full-time and a little job came up in Mark Lane which is just off the city. For an Accountancy Agency which was 10.00 am to 4.00 pm which suited me very well so I went there and then I was there for about another 20 years. Which was doing like all the wages and things like that.

E: If I could just go back to the first one, it sounded like quite a big company?

J: Yes it was.

E: What was it like working for a big company?

J: Very good, it was one big enormous room and we had long desks and we would all sit either side. Although we had different floors for the different companies the top floor was Allied which incorporated the lot we had a very good canteen and a very good sports club. I used to play netball for them at one time (laughs) and we had a nurse so everything was incorporated in one building it was very social.

E: They took care of you, it was quite good conditions?

J: Yes it was quite good it was very social and friendly and after work there was always things going on if you wanted to go to. They had a drama class yeh very good company.

E: What was it like going from a big company where to a smaller company of just one?

J: Quite difficult (laughs) it was quite difficult the first time you go in, you think oh god this is too closed in and he had such a lot of different people he had Italians working for him in the warehouse, he had a couple of West Indians and a few were Jewish so it was quite a mixture but we all got on so well in the end. They talk about PC now but there everyone called everyone everything and nobody took offence (laughs) after you have been there a little while it knitted very well and we had a very big showroom because he used to import handbags from Italy so you always had customers coming up so you got involved in that. There was always people in and out after a little while although it was quite a small office, was quite a big concern so you really got in with it.

E: So you went from the big company, was that primarily British workers?

J: Yes

E: To a smaller one with foreign workers? Did it take a long time to adjust?

J: No not really, I can remember one who was Lee he was the West Indian and such a big personality and he would come in Monday morning and his eyes would be red rimmed and you would say been on the rum Lee? But it was like it just knitted I don't know why, nobody had to watch what they said or anything it was quite normal and we really got on well.

E: What were the conditions like at that job?

J: Not so good as the other one it was a little bit, it wasn't very good and we had a warehouse downstairs. The showroom was the best bit because that was really lovely it was all windows and polished and that was lovely our working conditions wasn't as good as the other one.

E: What was your specific role at that company?

J: We had punch cards there he had just started out so I did the orders that were going out, I had to go and do the punch cards, I used to put them through. Do you know what a tabulator is? What it is we used to do punch cards so all the items was on cards with holes in and a tabulator was this big machine and it had a box inside and the pins used to come out through the holes and it used to print out all your orders so I was in charge of the orders going out. It was the forerunner of the computer really, but we used to have a batch of cards and you put them in and as they feed through the pins used to come down and go through the holes it used to read it and print out on the orders.

E: Did it always work the way it was supposed to or did it ever make mistakes?

J: Well no it would always work unless you had a bent pin in the box, because for different jobs you had a different pin box and if you jammed one in by mistake and bent a pin then you would be in trouble and you had to get the engineer in or your might just be able to do it yourself, so it was quite a good system. That was the international computers and tabulators so it was called ICT, the original computers and tabulators that started out and IBM and ICT was two big companies.

E: From there you say you went to?

J: I stayed with that company and we moved into Goswell Road which were much better offices and then I went to NEC for about 3 months they were a Japanese company who are still going. I did all the orders for the faxes because they just started coming out then but I was only there 3 months because I had to travel to Camden Town and I didn't like that very much (laughs) then I got a job in Mark Lane and they were accounting recruitment so I worked there I did back office jobs there and then I went on and did all the wages because we had alot of temporary workers and alot of Australian's and New Zealander's and we used to put them out to the banks and things like that and I did all the wages and all that work.

E: Was that very different form the work you had done before?

J: Yes and it was a much smaller group there was only about 6 of us there I found that a bit claustrophobic when I first went you just sat down and thought oh gosh should I get up now or not but gradually you do a bit of everybody's work in that case so the wages were different but that was quite interesting to do so I went on to something else which was nice.

E: So apart from the job when you had to travel to Camden all your jobs have been in this area?

J: Yes and Mark Lane I used to get the 43 down to Eastcheap so it wasn't too bad it was about a half hours journey but I didn't mind. That was quite nice working in the city though it made a change.

E: Did you mean to go into that line of work?

J: Not really it was the 10 – 4 that attracted me (laughs) I just went down there and thought oh this is good hours I will try this. At that time I was 48 it was a change as well and you thought well will I get a job that was the thing then and this came up and I went for the interview and got the job so it was a nice change to have.

E: Having lived and worked in this area all your life essentially how do you see the area now?

J: Completely changed (laughs) very much so buildings we knew gradually sort of go and I think it's sad really because it's just completely altered.

E: So the street plan has completely changed?

J: Yes I mean King Square had about 6 streets going off of it, and there was all different kind of communities really and now its just one mass. I mean lucky enough we still have friends who live in King Square so we meet up with them so there is a few of us all left that we still know in the area so we are not completely, its not completely gone we still meet up with people who have always lived here.

E: So when you were growing up and you younger you said there was quite a good sense of community in the area?

J: Very much yes

E: Did people get together and do things?

J: Oh yes, I mean you met Colleen didn't you, she still lives in King Square they lived in King Square and my brother married her sister and I used to go with her sister as friends and her brother actually and her mum and dad had a caravan in the 50's so they used to be away on the weekend so it was always a party in their house on the Saturday night and then there was us and her brother who I went to school with there was that group of friends and they meet up with someone else. There was another group of friends then and Cecil my husband he is younger then me his brother used to come and him and his friends used to come and so it was a

really big community that we all knew and most of us all went to Moreland Street School originally.

E: What kind of things did you used to get up too?

J: Well when we were quite young I mean I am talking about 15, I used to go speedway to Harringay Arena and also in the winter we used to go Ice Hockey so we had that sort of thing and as we got a bit older we started going dancing which was local dancing Finsbury Town Hall and Holborn Hall which we used to go to different dances. We didn't really use pubs then because pubs was where our mums and dads went they were a bit too old for us we didn't want that so we used to go dancing. As we got a bit older we used to go to the modern Jazz clubs in Wardour Street and Leicester Square so we all liked modern jazz and did that and the Lyceum on the Sunday was a Sunday club and we used to go dancing there. So we went out quite a bit then, after that when we started going to the Jazz clubs you met different people that's when we started doing the pubs but the pubs were really East End pubs that we went to because you always got music more like our age in there as apposed to your mums and dads, so we used to go over Whitechapel there used to be Hayfield and the Artichoke all them pubs and there was The Ship just off Commercial Road and you would always meet different people. When we first started going in the pubs I suppose it was in the Merry Monarch and Murray Grove. But those pubs that side of the Angel used to close at 10.30 so you used to come out before then and get a cab up to The Angel which used to open until 11.00am and hope you got a party somewhere and I suppose that was what we used to do mainly.

E: It sounds like you went too quite a few things outside of the area?

J: Yes then we did.

E: Was it that there wasn't anything in the area?

J: There wasn't no, I mean when you were younger you had the Finsbury Town Hall but that was a little bit you know. Then we started to go out of the area quite a bit.

E: How did you find it going to other areas of London?

J: There was always about 4 of us girls who were always together we could walk home 2 o'clock in the morning and not even think about it, you never had the fear of walking the street, you were always aware of what you were doing, we didn't really have that much trouble, and that was coming home from a long distance.

E: you used to walk back did you?

J: Used to walk yeh, unless we had a few bob and we might get a cab if we could but mainly we used to walk (laughs).

E: The area is very different now, is there any areas that you have noticed that

particularly that have changed alot? Or areas that are similar now?

J: There is not much similar to when we were young, possibly St John's Street is still the same. Mainly they are just flats everywhere, nothing to what we knew as children. Then I suppose as well we had all the bombed buildings as well when we were children so that was another thing that the Barbican is completely different to what we know but I knew the Barbican as bricks and mortar as debris really so I don't remember what it was like before hand.

E: What was the area primarily like before it changed? Was it streets?

J: Yeh, where as Northampton Square is and Myddleton Square that is what King's Square area was like and at the back where St Luke's is there is all little turnings and things there then. I remember all them little streets Bartholomew Square that sort of area of King's Square downwards sort of Lever Street is the bit that has really changed.

E: Do you think the area was better?

J: Yeh but then I suppose it's always better when you look back, I mean for me it probably was better but I don't know about now.

E: Where there any areas when you were younger that you avoided?

J: No I wasn't actually, there was always villains about but they didn't interfere with you so you didn't know much about it, you knew they were there but I mean I suppose there were gangs and things there was like the Diamond gang and people like that but they were older then me anyway and people talk about there Krays and that but they sort of operated in the clubs in the West End it wasn't really local that affected us anyway.

E: So there weren't like rougher streets?

J: There were rougher streets because they were poor and you always got a bit poorer in somewhere else and you think they are poor or that families poor but I don't suppose it had that affect on us that much. Probably might have done the boys more then me.

E: Are there any events that stick out for you in the area?

J: I suppose the coronation well we had VE and VDay parties. One party was in King's Square and then the Coronation was the big thing because I remember my brother and my sister got involved and they used to go and collect money every Sunday morning and then they had a big party and we all got mugs and had a tea party and things like that so that was one big thing. Big things was like we had a big horse show on every holiday Monday and the horses used to all come around King's Square on the way Regents park and they would all be dressed up and things like that, no not really big occasions but there was loads of things we seemed to do quite a bit you know it we was always out you never seemed to be in very much but I suppose it was really just street things that we did.

E: You talked about VE and VJ day do you remember a lot about the end of the war. How it changed?

J: No not really I suppose in 1944-45 I was about 8-9. Although the war was on I didn't know any different so it didn't make any difference as such. End of the war didn't really mean much difference either it was just another party I suppose in the area (laughs). There is more things coming through to eat fruit and all that sort of thing. But then sweet rations went on right into the 50s.

E: This area was quite heavily bombed.

J: Yes

E: When did you personally start to notice things picking back up and being redeveloped or regenerated.

J: I suppose probably late 50s when they started really building. I remember going with my Mum and queuing up for food it wasn't different for me because I didn't know anything different I thought that was what you always did because my mum used to go to Smithfield Meat Market and Wednesday used to be rabbit day so you could queue up at the rabbit shop and you would get really fed up as a kid. But it wasn't anything different to me and then Gamages was a big thing in my life because Gamages was in Holborn and I used to like to go the Market if I could get to Gamages because they had a big toy department not that you bought anything but you could look around anyway and things like I suppose things like that stick out in my mind.

E: We have talked a little bit about community the area has a reasonably stable population there is quite a few new people coming into the area, what do you think of new people coming into the area?

J: I think a lot of the new people probably don't mix into the area, because we are older probably that what it is we go to these meetings but you don't get new people who live in the area going to them so I don't know if they are all that interested in it or what or its because they are younger and they don't have time. Even in St Luke's although they are trying to do younger groups and all that at the moment it is still older people who make the community up there. So where it is when you get older you do the community things I don't know but I think it's hard for people they don't seem to get involved. I mean we run the tenancy association when we were younger and we had a little hall built on the side of Gambier and we used to open it in the week for the young boys to come in and we left things going on in there. We didn't arrange things we had a telly and table tennis things like that if they wanted to do it, but it was somewhere for them to go and sit and do what they wanted to do within reason. I don't think there is a lot of that there that people do. I think people probably don't put themselves out too much to do that.

E: As well as the people changing the area used to be quite industrial plenty of work has there been a really recognisable change?

J: Yes there is little or no industry now where you had printers you had engineer work and loads of work in the area there is very little now.

E: When did the change from industry to allow smaller business when did that change take place?

J: I suppose probably 10-15 years over that period it has changed quite a lot you gradually see the small firms going I mean it wasn't big industry it was always quite small firms but it has completely changed around I suppose from printers, engineers and things like that it has gone to more solicitors and architects it has changed in that sort of way.

E: Can I just ask you about St John's Street you have lived on this street 25 years, can you talk about it from your childhood do you remember it when you were a child?

J: No I didn't come around here much then it was mainly the others like King's Square and Lever street so I never really knew it much as a child.

E: Do you remember any of the businesses or industries that used to be here?

J: I remember Scholls because my cousin worked there that was a very big one in St John's Street and Ingersoll's which were the watch people I remember that one. What else was here? No not really.

E: You talked a little bit about Smithfield, the Meat Market is still there, do you remember it changing?

J: Yes I suppose it was after 60 it changed end of the 50s going to the 60s it started to change because people then had more. My mum used to go to the butchers at Smithfield because you could always get your meat there although it was on coupons. Then when that sorted started to change was when all the shops started to come back and had food in, I suppose after the rationing. Then people didn't go down there so much. That's probably when all that started to change.

E: the area at the moment has been regenerated quite a lot and there is quite a lot going on in the area. Do you recognise or do you notice any of that.

J: I don't know if I would call it regeneration (laughs) I notice where it has altered but I don't think it's for the better. I mean all these big factories that they have made into apartments and flats and things but I don't know if people live there all the time or if they are just use them occasionally and have to other places to live and that doesn't help the area because if you are not living there all the time you don't contribute much to the area so I think it has been a bit faceless what they have done.

E: Have you noticed regeneration is there more green space now?

J: No I don't think there is for a small instance we have got Hugh Middleton Primary School just down the road, now in front of that there is a little plot that has trees there now someone has brought that to built a block of flats right in front of the school, now we had a petition about that but nobody seems to bother about that so that is going to go but even small bits they seem to oh that doesn't matter they take that away. I will say they have done the parks I mean Spa Field they have really done that very nice I think that's quite a nice space the small bits that they don't seem to do much too. I think they just hive off little bits and you notice what they hive off is not really a good thing to do.

E: How do you think the area should be developed or changed?

J: I think it would be nice to have a bit more green around and I think not to build, I mean On City Road basin they are going to build this skyscraper well I don't the area is good for skyscrapers. I think it should be a bit more community-minded that we do have places for people to live but not pay lots of these really expensive ones they are putting up that ordinary people can't afford I know its nice to have a mixture but every block of flats that goes up ordinary people from this area can't afford them and I think there should be more place built for them.

E: Do you think that recently it's more so that people are moving out of the area because they can't afford it?

J: Yes

E: So people are just leaving the area?

J: Yeh, I mean they build these blocks but everyone I know could never afford to live in them, I have got young nieces and nephews and they have to live in Council places because they wouldn't be able to afford anything else. It's alright moving out but that's where you break up your communities. Because when my Mum and Dad was old and ill we were all around to look after them, but now its not the case and then you get the problem that you have rely on the Council and Care Workers to look after the elderly which is not a very good idea where we were all families who looked after the older people in our families. My sister mum and dad lived in the area when they were ill we were all around but it's not like that now you can't have that backup which you need. I think it should be more affordable flats for ordinary people than what they are doing. I mean our rent here because we are on the 1983 act they cant put our rent up extortionate prices if we move out they rent these flats for 4 times as at the moment we have neighbour next Doris she has trouble getting around and we get her paper for her. We all help one another in this little block because we all know one another but it doesn't work that now other places in other places. It is sad really because people just can't afford to live here anymore.

E: Is it the same in the council estates as well now that people don't really know each other.

J: Well it's becoming like that because of what happened with sale of the council houses, it was nice because people could afford to buy there place but alot of them didn't buy them to live in, they brought them to sell or rent out and then when they moved out people like a property speculator was buying the things to re-let so that they are on short term lets and that doesn't help community does it because people move and don't really care I am here for 6 months that's it. So I don't really think that was a good idea to do.

E: You have lived in various housing do you think the councils style of estates like the blocks do you think they don't help the community feeling as well. The way they are built?

J: No I don't think they do I think it was alright when we first moved in because we all moved from one area and knew everybody but now because once people move out and you get other people move in unless you have a good tenants association but then alot of people don't want to join that there is not any community as such you don't know who your neighbours I don't think its a very good thing like that. I mean where my family live alot of them are still old neighbours where they do know one another, it won't sort of carry on like that I don't think.

E: Is there anything you want to talk about?

J: Not that I can think of what can I talk about. When we are all sitting together there is loads to talk about. I can remember still bits about the shelter we had in King's Square, my sister and her friends ran the canteen down there so you could always get a hot drink or something to eat while you were down there. We did Aid to Russia concert which sounds a bit stupid now. They must have been desperate straights for us to do that -we all sang and did things like that and collected money so there was quite a good community atmosphere at that time, although that was my childhood so you don't really know the fear and everything that was going on with our mums and everything it was a nice place to live and have a childhood in King's Square which I suppose we still have that affection for really where we all still gather now and again. Friends of ours that have moved out every now and again they will come and you all meet so I suppose that was the testing bit of it. We all went to Moreland Street School so my brother who is 83 they started a Moreland Old boy's football team which then brought in every generation. My husband, Cecil, his brother so everybody knew one another, although they are all generations apart they will all go in the pub there and have a drink together because they all have they background from the school.

E: It seems like it used to be that the schools were central to the community?

J: Yes, you all knew one another although there was different groups of children you all knew one another and the schools were central because now we don't have very good secondary and they are not actually in this area I think that might split the people up as well because they all go to different ones and to keep your friends is not easy. I mean it gives them a wider outlook but also it's not the same thing. Because my nieces when to Lady Owens which is in Potters Barn so their friends wasn't in this area when they left schools so they had friends all over the place

which was nice in that sense but it doesn't give them any sort community feeling I don't think which we all had.

E: Unless there is anything else you want to say?

J: Not really I think that's it.

E: Thank you very much.

| Second part of interview.

E: Could you tell me a bit more about your family.

J: My eldest brother was in the army he was stationed up in York, I suppose in a way he was quite lucky he never went abroad because he had a bad accident he fell off the back of one of the Lorries and he couldn't go. So he was stationed in York for most of the time. My eldest sister Anne she worked in the post office in King Edward Street and I think she had to go fire watching on the roof which was quite near St Paul's and my Mum was absolutely horrified but it was just something they had to do. John my other brother he worked for an engineering company Spalding's which was just off of St John Street and he went in the Navy at the end of the war. My other sister she was 14 during the war and she had to go and work on ammunitions at one time, that was quite early in the year then she went to work as a machinist in Klein's in Goswell Road where they used to make all the uniforms for the Army and then demob suits for when they all came out. My Dad was a Railway Porter. I suppose that was all the war years that I remember and my Brother and Sister both got married in St Luke's Church because St Barnabas King's Square had bomb damage, because the nurses home next door to that was bombed during the war so they got married in St Luke's church. So we are all still in the area.

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