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*Memories from
Frenchwood:
A Collection of Reminiscences*

*collated by Dr. Steve Caunce
collected by Bernard McNaboe and Nora Myles
edited by clan-u press*

Memories from Frenchwood: A Collection of Reminiscences

Edited and published by clan-u press

ceth

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ceth

ceth, is a national Centre of Excellence in Teaching and Learning. In 2004, the University of Central Lancashire was awarded £4.5 million in recognition of the groundbreaking work being undertaken at UCLan in developing employability in the humanities. ceth encourages discipline areas within the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Science, to nurture and intertwine employability with the theoretical and academic subject based content. All students in the Faculty are provided with a range of opportunities to enhance their employability whilst developing a fuller understanding of their academic disciplines through practical and work-related applications.

clan-u press is the publishing house of ceth. The publishing house is an RWE – a realistic working environment – where students can get an insight into publishing. *Memories from Frenchwood* is a book of oral history produced by clan-u press.

The ceth editorial team is: Zakarya Anwar, Vicki Bootman, Julian Millward and Laura Price.



When asked to describe herself, Elaine Tordoff said:

"I think I'm just an ordinary, everyday person that loves life. I love travelling, I love anything that's going, I'll give it a whirl. Myself, I think I'm an ordinary person who's quite soft hearted and a bit of an easy touch sometimes. ... I came from ... an ordinary working family, we didn't have any money. What they had, they had to work hard for – nothing given to you on a plate then. ...

I've always worked hard at my job, and enjoyed working.

I've never gone into my background, actually. ... On my mother's side, my grandmother came from Irish descent; my mum's mother came from Irish stock, and my granddad (my mother's dad), ... my auntie once told me that his mother was in service somewhere and he was the result of her having a fling with the Lord of the Manor. ... My granddad on my dad's side came from Birmingham originally, he ran away from home when he was thirteen to get a job and work up here."

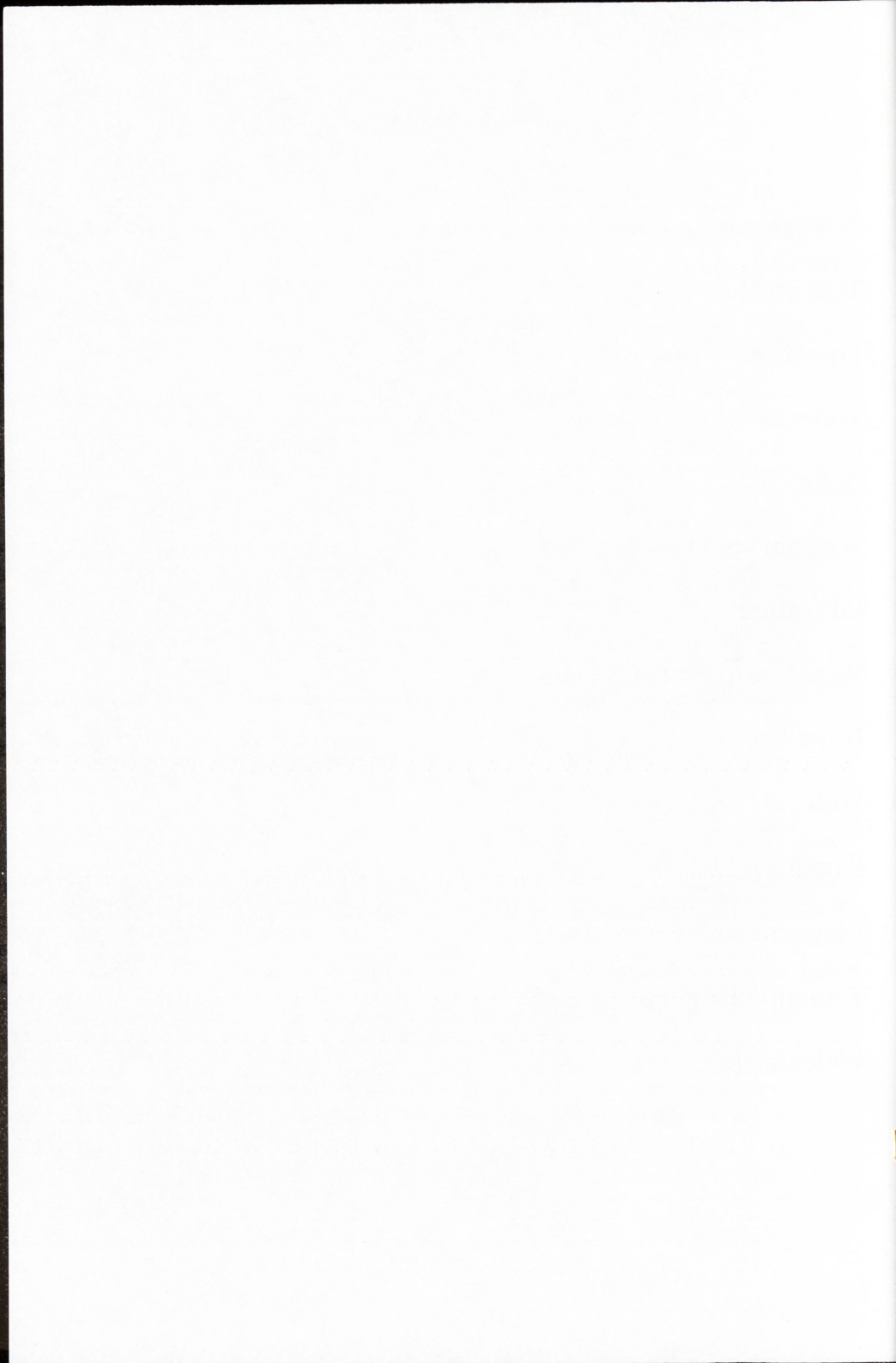
What do you think has been the best thing in your life?

"That's a poser of a question! I think, having my children really, and getting married, you know? We've had a happy marriage, and having my children and now having grandchildren. I'm not money orientated, we've got a nice house now. It would be nice to win the lottery but as long as I have enough to keep having a nice holiday, I'm happy."

Elaine Tordoff

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The book itself is a product of another student project, and is the work of clan-u press, the University of Central Lancashire's publishing house. The University's Centre of Excellence in Teaching and Learning has been an essential part of the whole Frenchwood project. We would also like to acknowledge support from the Urban Regeneration fund.

A book like this can do no more than scratch the surface of a place like Frenchwood, and one of our main hopes is that its gaps and shortcomings will inspire others to carry on this work. We are still interested in making further recordings and in publishing more material if the opportunity arises. Anyone wishing to get involved in this should contact Stephen Counce at the University. We hope that you enjoy this booklet, that it will make you think. If it does, we would love to hear from you.

All the extracts have been transcribed as accurately as possible. They have been edited to fit into a book like this, but the sense and content has not been changed. Where substantial sections have been omitted, this is shown by a series of full stops. Very

occasionally a few words have been inserted to clarify something, these words are surrounded by square brackets. Questions put as part of each recording session have been left out wherever possible, but where they do appear, they are in italics. Decades have been added to some extracts for clarification.

The results of all work done in Frenchwood by UCLan have been gathered together on a website which can most easily be reached (at the time of publication) by searching for Frenchwood Focus. The site contains oral history recordings, as well as images, resources and a brief history of the area. We hope to increase the amount of content substantially in the future.

This Project

Memories from Frenchwood is exactly what the title suggests: a collection of personal memories contributed by people who lived in the area in 2007, or who had lived there previously, regardless of where they were born. It is not in any way meant to be a history of the area, though it now forms a major resource for anybody wanting to write one. It is, at root, all about people, rather than a geographical area. Put together, these memories make a jigsaw puzzle that will ultimately form a vignette of the lives of the people living in Frenchwood.

Three hundred years ago, Preston was a small market town where gentry gathered several times a year for the Quarter Sessions and the races. There were almost no buildings between Church Street and the river Ribble. This pleasant south-facing slope still provided the town with food and milk, and there was no such place as Frenchwood. The river was more or less unpolluted and small ships could load and unload near the bridge. This peaceful environment led one or two of the wealthier families to build houses that were almost country retreats, even though the bustle of trade and manufacturing was still only a few minutes walk away. One of these was Frenchwood House, apparently so named because it was built in the eighteenth century, near a small wood, by the French family, and it gave a new name to the surrounding district. However, it never became a settlement in its own right and its boundaries were never defined, so the modern community of Frenchwood has no ancient roots of its own.

When the Horrocks brothers saw the industrial potential of Preston, and Frenchwood in particular, in the late eighteenth century, the town changed forever. Industry here meant steam engines, which created pollution and smoke, while large quantities of small, affordable houses were needed close to the new mills. People came from as nearby as Preston's closest neighbours, and

as far away as Ireland to get work. The latter were viewed with a suspicion that separated them from the local community, especially due to the fact that they were mostly Catholic. Yet people got on, built their lives and raised their families in an area that was now densely populated, but still had ready access to the river and to parks and open country. Shops opened and churches were built, different businesses started up and work was usually plentiful, if badly paid by modern standards.

In the twentieth century, the houses changed ownership - they grew old and sometimes dilapidated. The nature of work changed. However, Frenchwood survived the difficult years between the two World Wars with its sense of community intact, and even strengthened by enduring common hardships that seemed inescapable. Prosperity returned in the 1950s, and houses were modernised, but some felt that terraces had had their day. Large-scale demolition was followed by the building of flats in tower blocks, and though no-one intended it, they corroded community solidarity as hardship never had. New waves of migration, again driven by the search for work, made the population steadily more cosmopolitan in origin and character. The stress of all this, plus the loss of most of the traditional jobs the community had depended on, made the late twentieth century a very difficult time.

Frenchwood has thus recently been through a challenging period but is now recovering, with redevelopment and new houses the most obvious signs of a major regeneration project run by Preston City Council, using local and national funding. The History group of the University of Central Lancashire joined in this initiative in 2005, first by mounting a series of student projects that led to history displays. We then secured a grant from a national initiative, *Urban Regeneration: Making a Difference*, for a joint project with Salford University to work with the local residents of Frenchwood, which has led to this book. The aim of all this work has been to encourage a renewal of a sense of local involvement in the affairs of the community, and to encourage community cohesion.



Manchester Road

Frenchwood Past and Present

Edna Howarth (1930s)

Everybody were friendly, see if you were short, or if anyone were took ill, they were always there, you know, "Do you need any help?" ... And speak to one another, and you see, you just went in their houses, doors were open, in summer used to sit out at night on chairs. It were that hot. ... And when it was summer, they used to all be playing out, games, you know, till bed time.

Angela McNaboe (1960s)

Well, at the front and the back of [our] shop were all terraced houses, I think they were mill houses, because there were a lot of mills round there ... they were just two-ups and two-downs, and there was the church just across the road and around the corner, St Augustine's church. ...

The people next door ... had a son and daughter about our age and we used to play with them and we were always sort of in and out of each other's houses. I always knew Ann as Auntie Ann. She used to go in and make us jam butties, which my parents weren't very pleased about, used to spoil our dinner. Used to have proper dinners, you know. ... With living in the shop we knew everybody really, we knew the people living in the area and we got to know the generations of people, with Dad's family having the shop for so long he knew the people there that he went to school with and he knew who they'd married and quite often he'd talk about people with their maiden names rather than married names, it got quite confusing, so you knew the people that your parents knew and that you grew up with and you went to school with them.

Vanessa Chester (1970s)

I enjoyed growing up in Frenchwood. It was great because we were right near the river, we were near the parks, we were near the town.

Elaine Tordoff (1960s)

The lower end of Frenchwood, was a very quiet area ... whereas if you come up Manchester Road to Queen Street, that area, well down that part, I used to have an auntie and uncle, they used to live in a house near the top, where Queen Street is. Further down there used to be a lot of lodging houses ... and somebody once said to my Auntie Agnes, she was a real character, ... "You don't live round there, do you? It's full of prostitutes and all sorts of things like that." And she said, "Yes, it's all the fellows that come from your end to get them."

I used to come and stay when I was about ... twelve or thirteen, and my brother was working then, so just at weekends I used to come and stay with my auntie. She lived in William Street just there, off Paradise Street ... she just sort of steered me through that awkward few years. ... My grandparents lived around the corner in Park Street. ... Their house ... used to be a pub years and years before. ... In the old houses, they didn't have a bathroom, they had an outside toilet and they had a tin bath. It was lively. A very working class area, that part of it. ... I have some real happy memories of round there. ...

We have always had very good neighbours. ... We don't live in each other's houses ... we don't 'cramp' each other, as they used to say, unless an odd time you might be talking, and if somebody's not well you go and visit 'em ... of course, you send cards, take little presents to cheer them up, something like that, they'd do it for us, you know, because we've been friends all these years. ... I know that there is at least a dozen I could go to now and say, "I've had

my purse pinched and I've no money," and they'd say, "oh, here, here, I'll lend it you, no problem. Don't bother till you get yourself sorted." ... We look out for each other.

Odd times somebody will have a barbi [barbeque], or it'll be somebody's birthday, or a christening, or ... New Year's Eve we've had a few fancy dress parties and things. ... It's not on a regular basis, we don't go every week to the house, or go to the pub with them every week, but we are all in touch. ... I think friends are important to everybody – special close friends. ... We still go to the Frenchwood Social Club, usually every Saturday night, we always end up there ... it's alright, we enjoy it.

Has Frenchwood changed a great deal since your childhood?

Yes, in 1962 [a lot of houses] were all demolished to make way for these flats that are now on Avenham Lane. ... There's nothing to what I remember anyway. ... There is one shop that still remains, the newsagent/sweetshop that is on Avenham Lane opposite the big flats, and that was there when I was a little girl.

Well, it does look nicer [now] in Oxford Street and round there, because they've got these nice little houses they have put up now. ... They've done all the frontage of the flats up, that are still there, [but] ... York House where my aunt went to live, that's been pulled down and they've just built a new private housing part there.

Rosa Malloy (1930s)

Most of our neighbours in St. Austin's Place were older people and we used to try not to be the first person home from school because my mother used to cook meals for them, as well as for all of us, and the first person home from school had to take the meals to the neighbours.

John Taylor (1950s)

Mrs. Gervay used to live in this house, she used to hide money in the bottom of the curtains, underneath the stair carpet, and she used to go into the Selbourne for a pint and people, when she went in, used to know the house was empty. Everytime she hid her money – they found it. She was that fed up she was going to go into a home, she said, so I said, “have you ever thought of moving on to the other side of the road? We’ve just done that house up, put a bathroom in.” And she said, “I’ll come and have a look.” ... So we did a swap, that’s why we’re in this house. ...

It’s been a happy house, has this, for us, even the one across the road was very comfortable. There was a lady in, earlier on this week, and she was comparing these with some of the modern, new ones, and she said, “you’ve got more room than they have,” and they’re all new houses. Which I believe could be right. ...

You used to be able to go through these back-streets, our back-street was the first one ... you could walk through alley-ways from one to the other, you could go right through the whole estate. We used to go out for a walk, ten o’clock at night, never worried us a bit, might have had a glass [of beer], came back. I never saw drunks or anything, at that time, ‘course may have been different nearer town, but I doubt it.

Next door, Lou used to live. He was a character on his own, he used to shout for King John [local expression for shouting loud and often], didn’t he? Or for King Bill. ... He was the one when fuel was short, he used to go underneath the houses, from one to the other, taking the props out holding up the floorboards ... and the poor old ladies at the corner shop, they’re sat there one night and the fireplace fell in.

Teresa O’Neill (1930s)

We used to go down to [my granddad’s] house. ... I lived in Para-

dise Street, so we came down Manchester Road, down little Swillbrook, and they lived half-way down Swillbrook. It's still there ... t'bungalow's still there and all that land, halfway into London Road, 'course they've changed it since. It's been widened ... 'cause it was only narrow. He had hens, and me and my brother used to go down and we'd play in the henhouse. We'd take some biscuits and creep in through them holes and sit in their pens. And they had little orchard fruit trees, you know, and gooseberries, they were all there because my gran used to do a lot of baking.

I know my grandma used to do rabbit pie, and he had pigeons, and he used to race his pigeons. He'd cups, and cups, and more cups. We always used to be there, and every now and again my grandma would have a pigeon pie. They used to be out there looking for these pigeons to come back, you know, it was a keen sport.

Dennis Crompton (1930s)

In Oxford Street, my earliest memories are of a little room above the main door, and, ... I must have been about – just over two years old and sometimes it would be summer, I think, and it would be hard to get to sleep, and I would hear these people coming home from the pictures, sometimes, or just walking along the street, their clogs would make a sound, and then tuned into what they were saying, it was, "Ee Elsie, I just been to see that film with Clark Gable. Ooh, he's lovely!" That kind of stuff. So, this fascinated me, all these different accents. Then a man's voice would come, "Come on in, get your chatting away. It's getting cold wi't' door open." ...

Selborne Street, we had two aunts there, Maude and Edith. They were austere ladies as I remember, single, one was single, one had been married and lost her husband and the children were grown up, and so they lived together in this house. We visited them on two or three occasions but always they were ... very proper. Very Victorian, nice little place in Selborne Street, but Edith

had this side of the cabinet with a key, and Maude had that side of the cabinet with a key. If they were entertaining they would decide was it Maude's turn or Edith's turn, and whoever's turn it was the key was turned and out would come tea and a biscuit or two, and that was them. Their heart was in the right place though. ... They were living their own life in their own way, and that was fine, and later on I appreciated Aunt Maude because she taught me how to iron my own long trousers and get the creases right.

John Taylor (1950s)

You had a far better variety of shopping in those days, than you have today. You can go into town; we went in last Saturday, you walk round and what is there to buy? Everything is nice and glossy but we didn't come back with much. ... Hollinger's you could go in there and buy anything. ... If it was fit to eat it was in there, if it wasn't in there, it was not fit to eat – it was good. ...

When I was working, we very rarely went into town, really. It had to be something special. Walmsley's, they still have a shop ... next to the Black Horse? But Church Street used to be the local shopping centre when we first came. Kirkham's, you could buy anything from a tin bath to a carpet, it was remarkable - the stuff he had in that place.

Dennis Crompton (1930s)

Once or twice Dad took me to barber's shops, men's barbers shops, and there was one close to the children's home in Stoneygate, I think, it was on that side of the street, not really far from the school, but I don't remember the name of the shop. It was a big shop ... you entered in a haze of tobacco and the sound of coughing; heavy coughing and spluttering and the snip of scissors. There were about three men's chairs, and all very interestingly decorated

with all kinds of glass and instruments for cutting hair. Stuff that fascinated me as a boy, lots of newspapers and magazines scattered around. ...

There used to be quite a lot of shops on Avenham Lane, there was a good butcher's, Annie Gardner's, a good baker's, a newsagent, a bookshop, sweet shops ... a men's outfitters, a draper's. ... There was a big Co-op store on your left, and on the right just before you got to the bottom, there was a double fronted grocery shop ... you could get anything there as well, it was a bit like Hollinger's shop that was on Manchester Road. Next but one to that, there was a big sweet shop. There was two chip shops on Manchester Road, there was a ladies' dress shop, another sweet shop called Alice Bagwell's, it was a real olde worlde, she sold every kind of sweet, and every time I was at my grandma's I used to get spending money, and I used to go in there and ... there was so much to choose from, it was a magnificent shop, was that, and cigarettes and stuff like that. I used to be able to get stuff for my grandma and granddad then. My granddad used to smoke a pipe, and used to have tobacco that you could cut, he used to have a knife and slice it and shove it in his pipe, called Black Twist, but I used to be able to buy that, and I was only about twelve. I used to go to Wood's Tobacconist's for that, in't town, and get him his tobacco.

John Taylor

You've described Frenchwood as a very neighbourly place to come and live in. Has it managed to retain that neighbourliness?

Well, I think we're fortunate here, in this stretch. You know, we've made friends with the Muslims and they treat us almost as one of them, they do. We have found them very, very friendly. The people across the road there time and time again, he said, "anything you want, don't be afraid to ask." And it's only last year I had an ap-

pointment with the eyes, being diabetic I've got to watch it, and I hadn't to drive. I made an appointment at the hospital for a coach to pick us up, we waited half-an-hour and we were just about five minutes from the time I should have been there, so I went across and said, "I wonder if you could help me out, I've an appointment at the hospital, and the coach that should have picked me up hasn't arrived." ... No trouble, I was in that car in five minutes and I was only slightly beyond the time I should have been there. ... It just shows, he was as good as his word. ... We get along very well ... sometimes I wonder if it's the attitude of people with each other.

Welcome to Frenchwood 1

Mohammed Hashim Desai (1950s)

I was the first generation of Indian immigration to arrive in the UK. I was at a very young age when I came to the UK.

I used to study accountancy and wanted to become an accountant, so I had two years of education in university. I sat my exam and it just happened that I saw some friends just getting ready to go to the UK. I got all the information from them and I spoke to my *dada* [grandfather], my parents, and my parents supported me: "Yes, if you think your future is a bit better, you can go, travel abroad to England." Now, there was always the question of money that comes in first, how you are going to get the air fare, this, that and the other and so much money required. My father was a poor farmer but he was very well respected as an elderly, wise person in our town. [We lived] thirty-five miles away from Surat. He was doing a lot of social work for people ... to help the community. He was a very likeable person, ... He says, "I have some friends there, and I know that in England there is a lot of cold weather, and I wonder whether you will survive with that cold weather." ... But then he changed his mind and told me what beautiful countryside [there was], he said, "In UK there are people living there – if they can survive, you can survive."

I had a friend in Preston, older than me, and my parents supported me, so on the 10th of June 1957 we landed at Heathrow Airport. I had some information, I had a friend in Preston, from India, and I had one or two correspondence with him, and he sent me some information how to get to England and then to travel to Preston. That was very helpful, it was very good of him to furnish me all this information. ... I came with two more of my friends. ... The immigration officer was so nice, and very helpful. They always say, "sir."

We were short of money, no cash with us ... but I reached Preston without any problem. We reached my friend, and he said, "Oh dear, there is three of you sharing a room in Paradise Street, off Manchester Road." We were so happy. Now, the basic thing is food, heating, it was so strange. In those days there so many corner shops. We used to go there and buy bread and all household requirements. Very helpful people.

I settled down in Preston, I have had a continuous job since then – within two weeks I found a job in the textile industry.



Manchester Road

Religion

John Taylor

We've never had any problems [with religion], like some people seemed to have. Religion, is to our way of thinking, a choice of every individual. It is their entitlement, and I've never had any problems speaking, or making friends. ... I've not been a good churchgoer, to be quite frank. When I was younger I was made to go and I think that turned me a little bit. I don't have to go now, so I won't go. I know a lot of the troubles in the past has been caused through religion, through bigotry and that ... but I still think people should have the right to please themselves.

Dorothy Taylor (1950s)

[One Protestant couple were] good neighbours, but very bigoted: very, very bigoted, they had a huge thing of William and Mary on the front window sill, you know, where everybody could see it, and ... if [the nuns, the] Little Sisters came to the door, like they used to, [collecting] for charity, she always used to put something in the box, but if he came to the door, no.

Rosa Malloy (1930s)

I must have been about six, I was going home one dinner time with my sisters and one of the things that we loved to do on the way home was pricking tar bubbles on the side of the road; stamping on them or picking them with our fingers, or stamping in the rainbows made by the rain. ... And I got some new sandals and was warned to within an inch of my life, if I did any tar bubbling with

these sandals on ... my sisters had gone on ahead and I ... came around the corner and two lads were walking along. ... And they grabbed hold of me and said, "are you Catholic or Protestant?" Well, I didn't know what a Protestant was but I knew I was Catholic so I said, "I'm Catholic." So they bent down and they got loads of this tarmac, which was bubbling, onto some cloths and rubbed it all over me, and in my hair and down my arms and on my new shoes. I was heart-broken, not because they had done anything to me, but because I had got tar on my shoes and I knew I would get into trouble, and I ran off home as fast as I could, crying. ... When I got home ... I told them and they said, "oh, it's Orange Day." And apparently, I found out later, that for two days in the year St. Patrick's Day and Orange Day, on St. Patrick's Day the Orange people came over and on Orange Day the other way round ... and if anybody was around – well hard luck for you on that day, but I was only six years old. ...

We lived across the road from the presbytery, where the priests lived, there were five priests living there then. And one day we found out that one of them had a birthday and I had a ha'penny and he had a penny and we went to a tiny little shop in the corner of Manchester Road where two ladies lived, and we said, "could we have three Woodbines, please?" And she said, "what do you want Woodbines for?" And we said, "well, it's father's birthday." ... We rang the presbytery bell and the housekeeper said, "Yes?" And we said, "Could we speak to Father Gagan please? It's his birthday and we brought him a present." We heard him come flying down the stairs, and he came in to the entrance hall and saw us there and he came down on his knees so he was on our level and ... he just put his arms round us and when he saw what we'd bought him he squeezed us so hard that it hurt and there were tears pouring down his cheeks ... he was very, very chuffed about that.

Vanessa Chester (1990s)

My mum and dad got married [at St. Augustine's church]. I was confirmed there, I took my Holy Communion there and ... we did go to church regularly as children and until we were a bit older, and then unfortunately ... you wasn't able to go inside the church because the roof was unsafe. They tried loads of fund-raising events that we were all involved in, but just never managed to get enough money to save the roof. And just before we actually got married, the priest from St. Augustine's came to Brownedge, which is just around the corner here where we got married, and we got the priest from St. Augustine's to marry us and we had our lessons (and sort of things) inside the church, inside the presbytery and he let us go into the church with hard-hats on to have a look before they did anything with it, because they've made into ... it's called St. Augustine's New - I don't know ... SANAC it is called. ... Yes, it's a sport hall and everything now. It's a lovely building but it's not the same as it was as a church. ...

It was nice for us two, me and my husband, to go in and have a look. ... It was quite sad really because all the roof, it was just derelict. It was almost like going back in time, everything was still in its place but all cobwebs and all the roof and everything had fallen through. There were pigeons lofting in there ... it was sad, really.

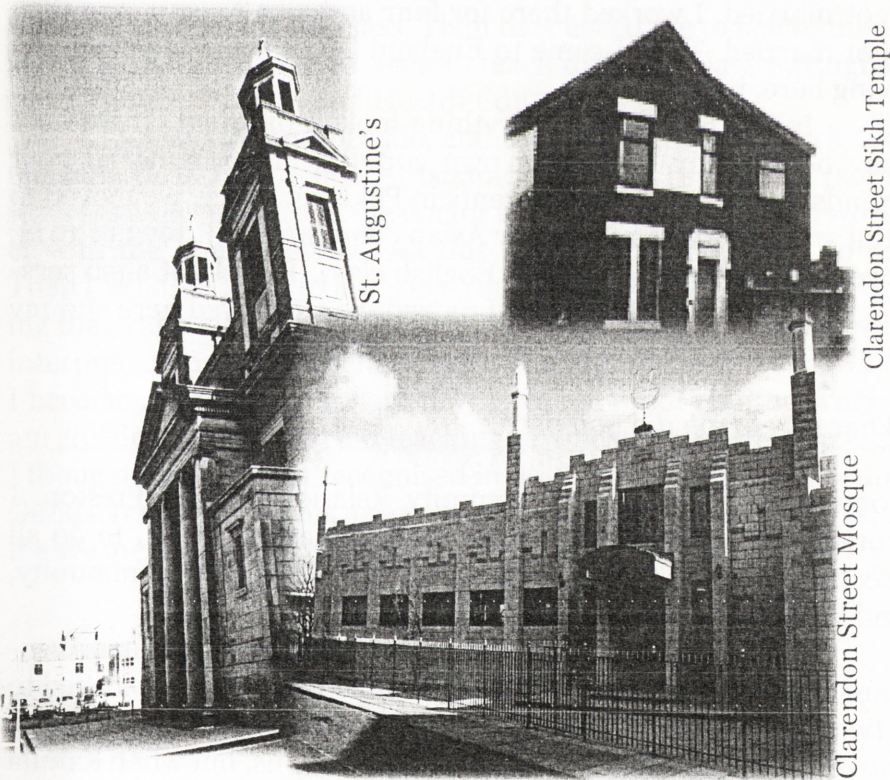
Elaine Tordoff (1960s)

St. Augustine's ... church used to always be full, and the ten o'clock mass, what they called the family mass, you used to have to go early, they used to be upstairs, it was packed out where the choir used to be.

Veronica Pownall (1940s)

You just lived in your own street ... it was a closed world, really, and ... you were a Catholic, or you were a Protestant and you didn't mix. If you lived in one street you were probably all Catholics, next street would be Protestant because there was two schools which were just for Protestants near.

[The] Frenchwood one ... and the one in Malt Street ... you went at three and left at fourteen, just like any other school at that time. Malt St. would be as old as St. Augustine's. ... They [the Protestants] had their own church, St. Saviour's at the top of Manchester Road there. Yes, everything revolved around the church, everything, it was just the way things were at that time.



St. Augustine's

Clarendon Street Sikh Temple

Clarendon Street Mosque

Welcome to Frenchwood 2

Zaibunnisa Patel

You graduated in 1967 from Karachi University, what did you do then?

I got a job in ... Pakistan as a Social Welfare Officer. I worked there for four and a half years. I worked in an urban project, it was a slum area and I brought services for the area, it was a woman's site. Then I organized services like cultural education class, sewing class, and other activities helped with the project. ... After that I got married. I worked there for four and a half years, and then I got married. Then I came to England because my husband was living here, in England.

In the beginning, everything looked different. It was not easy being away from your own country, and leaving all your friends and relatives, and parents in Pakistan. Once, we moved to Hull and there was hardly any Asian community. In 1973 or 1974, I went to college, I joined the English class. Then I got a job serving tea in Preston, that's why I moved. So we moved here and my husband got a job also in Preston as a nurse.

What sort of job did you get?

Community Worker in Community Relations Office, Preston. I worked with women organising English classes. I used to do all crèche work, and then I used to help in office in the community, and then I used to work as an interpreter.

I lived in a ... council flat around Frenchwood, near Avenham Gate. First we had only a one-roomed flat, then we moved to a two-roomed flat because my first baby was born in the flat, so we moved to a bigger flat. It was comfortable for us, but when Kamila

was eight months old we moved to another house. We bought a house in Selborne Street. It was a three-bedroom house, with one sitting room, two rooms downstairs. We extended the kitchen. ... I was happy bringing up my children. I had three children in that house, and then we moved to this house.

After my third child, I started looking for part-time work. It was not that easy, having children then going back to work, because employers don't have confidence in you, that you will work, how much will you keep time and that sort of thing. So I became a member of Well Woman Centre. Then I started to attend a meeting, once a month they used to invite me for a meeting, or for some training they used to have ... then the co-ordinator helped me to get a job with the Worker's Education, Teresa Williamson. Then I used to do Outreach work for the W.E.A. I used to do all 'Outreach' work for groups, for the class. Then they asked me to teach, then I started teaching classes. I used to teach different classes, English class, Islamic Studies, and Health Education.

I looked for another job, and then I did different work, like teaching in Islamic school – Islamic teacher. Then I did [some work] as a receptionist at the doctor's surgery and as a youth worker with the Youth Service. All this part-time work I used to do. Then I fell ill so I had to leave my Youth Service job – I enjoyed doing that, then after a while I had a job with the Social Service as an interpreter, so I asked them if they could give me some work when I became a little bit well, and they gave me proof reading work. I am still doing it. I [also] did teaching certificate at Preston College. I thought I'd better get recognised in this country, so I did City and Guilds. It was part-time, a year course. I enjoyed the course, and ... it gave me a lot of confidence.

Education

Angela McNaboe (1960s)

They [had] a junior school that was attached to St. Augustine's, my eldest brother had gone there, and he was dyslexic and they didn't recognise it in those days and he was just put to the back of the class, basically, and they said, "he's found it very difficult to read." And they just said he couldn't read. But my mum wasn't having that, she said, "he's a bright lad, he should be able to read, he's good at maths," so she took him away to a different school.

So automatically my mum wouldn't send me there, so I went to Larkhill convent school. I went right through the Junior school, then I took my eleven plus, and if you passed you could go into the senior school, but ... I wanted to go to a secondary modern school at that time ... my brothers had gone to a secondary modern school and, from what they said, they had a bit more fun than I did at school. It was very strict at Larkhill. ... The headmistress was a nun and then there was another nun that taught us, but the others were teachers. I think, although I was bright ... the standard was very high, they were quite an elite group really. There were doctors' daughters and solicitors', and they all had, seemed to have a bit more than I had, because my dad was a grocer and I was always made to feel a little bit of a second-class citizen, and not very bright. But then when I heard stories of other people that had gone on that I knew from there, they'd ... passed the eleven plus and they'd gone to secondary moderns, they were very bright there. So I thought I don't want to be at the bottom of the class all the time, I want to go to a secondary modern school and be top of the class.

Mum and dad fought against it, and said I would be better going on to the senior school, so I did that for two years. I found it exactly the same there. ... We weren't encouraged, we were never praised for the good things we did, it was always, "you can do bet-

ter.” And I think I needed someone to say, “you are doing well, well done.” ... I was there for two years and ... at the time, my eldest brother was going to a brand new school, which was St. Thomas More’s, and I said, “I want to go to the same school as my brother.” And ... I went into the third year ... I loved it. Totally different attitude altogether.

I was put in the top set, which ... gave me back a bit of the confidence that I’d lost, because I had a very poor attitude about myself. You think, “they think I’m thick – so I am.” ... So I went there and made some really nice friends who ... came from similar backgrounds, they hadn’t a lot of money and didn’t have all the luxuries that the girls at Larkhill had ... I was in the top set, and they were nice girls and nice boys basically. That was 3A I went into, then there was 3B and 3C. Now the 3C lot were a bit rough and I hadn’t come across that type of person before, but you kept with your own friends and you were alright.

If I had stopped at Larkhill I would have taken ‘O’ levels, G.C.E.s, but we weren’t given that opportunity at secondary modern. We had to take C.S.E.s, and it was considered they weren’t as good as ‘O’ levels. I got eight C.S.E.s, all grade 1 to grade 3. ...

I wanted to do childcare so I went on to St. Annes College of Further Education ... in St. Annes, [and] ... you also did ‘O’ levels as well. Mum thought that was a better option because if I had gone to do the nursery nursing that’s all I would have had and if I changed my mind later on I wouldn’t have had any ‘O’ levels.

Veronica Pownall (1940s)

I started at St. Augustine’s Infants when I was three years old. On my first day at school I was terrified, because there were all these nuns in black, and as a little child it was terrifying to see that, and I don’t remember being happy there, I was just terrified really. They were really strict and didn’t seem to have any compassion towards young children. That’s the impression I got, and then I moved to

the Junior School. The war broke out when I was at junior school and prior to that there was a boys' school and a girls' school - they were separate schools, and then with the war starting you had to go to the nearest school to your home, and they amalgamated the girls and boys.

Of course, it was absolute disruption, and I can remember one teacher Miss Cassidy, she was as deaf as a post, and she absolutely idolised the boys, but they took advantage of her. Then the siren would go and we had to run home, to see how quick you could run home, it wasn't the proper air raid but they were just practicing. My main remembrance there is religion, they just rammed it home.

The only exam I remember sitting is the 11+, and of course I didn't pass it, because I think basically, because you didn't get the right tuition during the war ... not everyone did. Like a cousin of mine she passed it and they couldn't afford to send her to Larkhill. ... She stayed in the same school as me and that was until I was fourteen. ... But that's the only exam I ever remember sitting.

Did you find that your family supported you at school, that they wanted you to do well?

No, it was just accepted that you could either do it, or you didn't. ... There were no teaching aids other than books, there were really nothing to, like, encourage you ... and you were restricted to where you could go, like you got to the library, it was horrible then when they had stuffed owls and things like that ... and it wasn't very interesting. Other than the reading library there was nothing. Of course, there was shortage in the war, all that sort of thing. You were limited to what they gave you, or what you had at home. In my case, I used to like reading books, but that was fiction.

Rosa Malloy (1930s)

I was born in 1929, and when I was three years old, like all the other children in those days, I started school. It ... was a nursery class within the primary school, and we had the most wonderful teacher, she was very, very kind and we all loved her. We had a great big doll's house and we had a lovely rocking horse, and we spent a very happy time with her for twelve months.

When we were in our second year our teacher there was very tall, and she was very practical, and we were all terrified of her, simply because she was so tall ... and she had quite a strong voice. ... We always had a fire in the corner of that classroom and one of the other classrooms. And in the winter, every day, she would get a shovel full of coal out of the fire and one of the children who was special at that time, it happened to me once, would walk round with her and carry a box with a bottle in it, and the bottle had Jeyes fluid and she would go into every classroom and would close the door and she would take the Jeyes fluid and pour some of it over the coals and all the children in the class had to breathe in, and count, and breathe in, and it was to stop germs from spreading.

...

And then, also in the infants' school, we had desks that were all iron and they were dual desks, you couldn't move them, they were far too heavy ... and we polished them like mad every Friday. We started off with slates and slate pencils which squeaked when you wrote with them, and I remember so well, even at that age I can remember saying, "c-a-t. Cat," and we wrote it down from the blackboard on our slates with our slate pencils. And one of the jobs was to ... walk around the class, shake water from a vinegar bottle onto the slates, and then the children took their slate rags and cleaned their slates off. It was great if you were the one chosen to do that. ...

The infants' school was at one side of a big yard and the junior school at the other. In the old days it had been the stables for Samuel Horrocks's home at Larkhill, and it had been convert-

ed. The tower that they had used for all the corn and stuff that they had fed the horses with; that was converted into the Headmistress's room, and the teachers' room. ... When you got older, if you were good, and if you were a monitor, the oldest girls particularly would go upstairs just before break and brew the tea for the teachers and they had a beautiful table with a beautiful cloth on it, lovely crockery ... and it was all so beautifully set out, and then afterwards someone would go up and wash up, and it was a great privilege to be allowed to do that when you were older.

Nobody ever stayed for school dinners - there weren't any. There were no school dinners pre-war, except for children who came from poor families, and they all went to St. Saviour's school which was in Malt Street, and they had school dinners served there, for those children. ...

We did a lot of reading, a lot of mental arithmetic which stood me in good stead, right to this day when I go to the supermarket. We learnt times tables so that we could say them whilst standing on our head. ... We did lots of things using shells, little rods with beads on, so it was practical as well as parrot fashion, we did them as well as learning them. But once you did those, didn't you half know your tables, and all the combinations of numbers it entails, addition as well as multiplication, it still serves me in good stead, all these years later. ... We used to have spelling bees every week. ... It was a happy time.

But do you think that the education was only education to be a housewife?

While we were younger, no it wasn't, it was just an education for being educated. We did the stories of Shakespeare, not as Shakespeare plays, but as the stories of Shakespeare. ... They could leave at fourteen, but if you went to the Grammar School you had to sign a paper to say (or your parents had) that you would stay until you were sixteen [when] you took your School Certificate, and that was all just exams, no coursework. ...

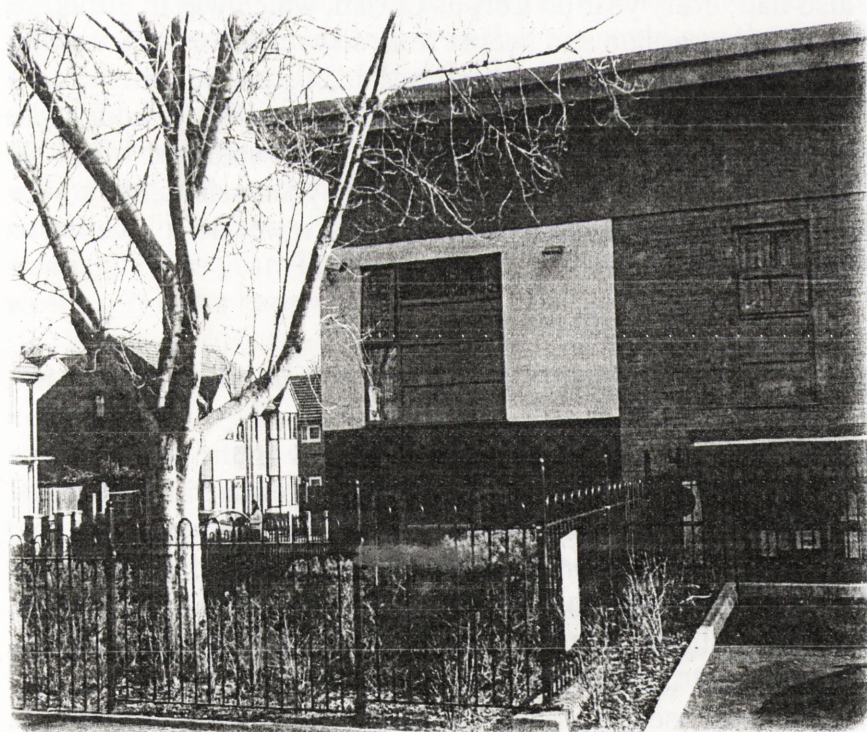
We dropped swimming when we went to Larkhill, but we had lots of netball, and rounders, and tennis and we had a lake in the grounds and we learnt how to row. We used to take the children from St. Augustine's rowing round the lake. After they made their first communion we made them a party, and we used to take them rowing round the lake afterwards, and they thought it was wonderful, or play games with them. We had lovely grounds, and we had houses, school was divided into houses called after the different saints, and every year there was a presentation of the colours, the house colours had to go up, if you won your house was the best, the house colours went on an eagle. The houses played games against each other. We were lucky because we had netball courts, tennis courts and rounders places, all within the grounds. We also had swans on the lake, they had a huge nest but you hadn't to go anywhere near them at nesting time because they were very fierce. We also had, every year on Corpus Christi, which was in June, we had a huge procession and people from all over the county used to come to it. People flocked to it, and we had big microphones put up outside the chapel and one of the masters at the boys' school had a very good voice, he used to sing, and we used to sing with him, and we walked all around the grounds in these processions, they were fantastic. It really was, people came, it was a wonderful feeling to walk in them.

Elaine Tordoff (1940s)

Oh, I went to a nursery, pre-school, yes. My mum wanted to go back to work, my mum was a weaver and of course, in them days, they didn't have a lot of money ... they needed two wages as such, really you know, they were quite poor wages weren't they? And she decided she was going to go back to work, and I think I was about three and my brother ... he would be eight then ... and he would walk me round, take me to the nursery along with my mum early morning, and I used to scream and grab hold, I didn't want to stay,

I didn't want to stay, and it went on for a few weeks until in the end my mother just gave up and thought, "oh well, we'll just have to stretch the, stretch out the budget a bit more," because it was just upsetting me so much. ... She just went back when I was about eight. Seven or eight, she waited till I was seven or eight and then went back to work part-time.

I really did, I enjoyed school, I had a lot of friends at school, and lots of friends that went to school with me that lived in our street. ... G.C.E. 'O' levels, I did my 'mocks' and passed them, then I opted to leave school. Well I was sixteen in January and didn't go back after Christmas, and my dad were going mad he kept saying "they've sent a letter from school, they want you to stay on." 'Course, I was in the academic section at school, when I got up there I shaped myself a bit more, but I said, "no, I want to go out to work, I don't want to go to college."



Oxford Street

Welcome to Frenchwood 3

Dorothy Taylor

Moved from Marshside, Southport in 1955

[Before I met my second husband], I had my house, it was across the road from my parents, and it was next door to my eldest sister ... so I was surrounded by family. Oh yes, my brother lived at the end of the street ... my other sister, she had a butcher's shop at the other corner, you know, so all the family were kind of round.

John [my husband], he used to have a milk round, you know, his father had the farm and John did the milk round, he had a three-wheeler Reliant van. ... He put his hand out to [signal to] go round a corner, you see, and he had a whole load of empty milk bottles, and ... the load shifted, his arm was out, and he smashed his arm ... [The doctor later told him], "You are the luckiest man alive, [we very nearly] amputated it, it was so badly smashed."

They were wanting postmen at Preston and so he thought he would have a bash at that. ... And the funny thing is, his arm is as good as new. ...

So when he got the job, we saw this house at the top of Manchester Road, right opposite Lark Hill Street ... so we got that. There's one thing that we've never forgotten, when we came, we opened the door, and went in and looked all round, and thought we'd better get some heat on, and there was a knock on the door, and it was - there was a little shop at the corner called Elizabeth and Mary's, we found out later, and it was Elizabeth, and she came in with a bucket of coal.

Farida Patel

I am in Preston since 1977. ... It was a very strange experience and because of winter I was a little bit depressed ... there was no one from my side of the family here, so I felt alone then. Between 1966 and 1977, I went to Africa for a few years.

My husband's parents were in Mozambique all the time, and my husband was in India, and we didn't go to Africa because my father-in-law was in Africa by himself and after many years he called his wife (my mother-in-law) and at that time my husband was poorly so he couldn't go Africa. In '60s the government of England, they were asking for labourers and he gained a passport and came here in 1962 ... I had children, it was when my husband was working in Portas it was very hard work, then my husband went for a holiday to Mozambique, he liked there very much because his parents had a good business ... a shop ... then my husband came back, and again his parents told him to come down with family and stay. ... Then we realised that it was Portuguese colony and obviously the language is Portuguese ... I didn't trust it. My children were under age for school, so I went with my husband and my children. I went to work there ... I went all round and I found out there is no English, only Portuguese language, and ... I persuaded my husband to come back to England.

I came to Accrington in 1972 until about 1974, when I came to Barnabas Place [in Preston]. Then it was a small house and we wanted bigger house. ...

My son went to Ashton and my daughters went to Woodlands. Then my oldest daughter, she went to college for three years, my second daughter sit digital at her school, secretarial course, and my third daughter she went to college for three years as well. Then my son, he went to college there, then he went on to Manchester University for three years, for his degree. Then he went to Birmingham for crash course for law, and then he went to London for his Barrister.

Did you actively encourage them?

Yes ... my fourth daughter she wanted to do a degree ... and she is now an accountant. And my children do me credit. ... She is cleverer than me. I just stayed at home, because I wanted to look after the children, and I wanted them to be educated. If I went to work I couldn't take care of three children and help them, so I stayed at home. And I had six children ... I read a lot. I read nightly, all the time ... my daughters, they're 'bookaholics'.



Manchester Road

Hard Times

Edna Howarth

My dad was out of work for seven years in the '30s, when I was born. In his early years he worked at Horrocks's ... and he had two fingers took off, you know, in a machine, so he had a disability. ...

We hadn't a very lot to eat ... we didn't see cakes or biscuits. A [neighbour] ... a little old lady, she used to come in some days, she used to say, "here you are love," – she knew the situation, and she used to bring a big tin in wi' Madeira cake, she used say, "I've taken some out, but what's left, you can have it." ... And she used to do it more or less every week. ... That were t' only sweets, really. We didn't buy any cakes because it were just the main basic food we got, you know, what we could afford.

Did your father get any unemployment relief?

Yes. National Assistance Board, it was called and he used to go to t' Miller Arcade and it weren't much a week. ... He said that, one night when he'd no money for t' gas, no penny, he vowed, ... "if I get a job, then we'll never go short again." And, when he did get work, he banked his money, he said, "those hard times, you don't forget." He didn't spend, he just saved his money. 'Cause he said, "I know what it is to be wi'out." You know, most people were in t' same boat where I lived, you know – I think they were lucky if they had a job. It was only through t' war, that's how he got his job.

Veronica Pownall (1940s)

You was in poverty, frightened of being ill because you had to pay one shilling to the doctor, or something.

Teresa O'Neill (1920s)

I'd had a lot of serious illnesses. I'd had scarlet fever, I was always off school with bad throats and such like, and I ended up with scarlet fever and after that I finished up with diphtheria. And then I had my tonsils out, and ... I never went to hospital, imagine that. I even had my tonsils out on the table at home. My dad ... had tiled the top of the table with willow pattern ... [so] the table was one that they could scrub, or put disinfectant on, it was Lysol in those days, and because they could use that my doctor and the anaesthetist came.

The bed was downstairs, they picked me up, put me on the table, I tell you, my doctor, I loved him to bits, I'd had him for years, you know, said, "can you count?" "Oh yes, I can count," I said, (I was eight, nine something like that). "Right, so we'll count." The doctor was behind me with this mask over my face. ... So I got to about eight and nine, ten, nine, nine, ten, ten, eleven, twelve, gone ... 'Course when I wakened up tonsils had been done, and I was back in bed ... having little sips of water. Now they have ice-cream and all sorts of things.

Some were very poor, some of them very poor. ... There was a girl called Mary, she was a very small child ... and they were a very poor family. I had a lot of clothes that I had grown out of, you know, there were dresses, whatever, and my mother asked this little girl, (or she gave her a note) to ask her mother if she would mind, if I gave her some of my clothes, but she didn't want to offend her. You had to be very careful. Anyway, the little girl came round to my house and my mother tried her on all these things, and they fitted her. And away she went with this bag full of clothes, but you had to be very careful, you didn't want to offend anybody just because they didn't have the money. No. It was a touchy subject.

Dennis Crompton (1930s)

It took me ages to work out why it was called 'Shepherd Street's Children's Home' in Oxford Street. But the Shepherd Street Mission ... decided to do something for the poor children of the times, and they built this home in Oxford Street, so that's how it gained its name.

About the age of five ... I was moved down to the big boys' wing, and the boys slept in that particular area, and the girls slept in their wing, and 'never the twain should meet', except in the dining-room. So, in this room there would be, (just a rough guess), five or seven boys along the wall on that side, opposite me, with another five or seven ... in the next row, and then on this side four or five beds and then mine, just where you went into the toilet/bathroom area. Over there, in the middle row was my brother Fred. Now this was a bit of a mystery to me, because I didn't work out where I fitted in this particular family for a long time. Dad would call for us - he'd been working somewhere, finding work wherever he could during the Depression, and occasionally he used to come and take us out for about an hour or so. He had to get permission to take us out, he wasn't just allowed to come and take us out, and I've seen the minutes where they've said, "Fred Crompton applied for permission to take his children out, on such and such a date, permission denied, or permission granted."

There would be Fred and there was also Hilda, my big sister, and Jean another sister. And I didn't understand about brothers and sisters, because nobody ever explained it to me. ... In fact, it wasn't until I was about seven and we were due to leave the home that I discovered that I was part of a family, and these were my brother and sisters. ...

Well yes, I owe [them] everything really ... and I look with real satisfaction on my time in Preston. And the home - I mean, people cared, before we ever needed the home it had been built, somebody had thought about it, and that was just ordinary people,

they got together and built the home. ...

There was a lady called Miss Horner, after we left the home, she'd been a sister at the home too, at one stage, and she'd been on the committee as well, but at this point she had a little grocery business. ... One day, my sister Jean said, "It's your birthday today. If you go and see Miss Horner and tell her that you were from the home she will give you a cake." So I did, and she gave me a great big hug, this lady, and it was a nice big cake - all I can remember about it was it had candied peel on the top. But it was doubly nice because here was this lady I hardly really knew at all, but she was associated with the home and still had a soft spot for the kids there.

Rosa Malloy

During the war my mother collected for Red Cross every Sunday, and ... if she was busy a couple of us would go round and we had a Red Cross tin, and we became very familiar to all the people we went to, we had districts to go to. One lady ... had a thru'penny bit at the end of her sideboard, and they'd call out, "mum, the thru'penny bit lady is here!" My mother would never have darkened a pub doorstep, but she went into two pubs to collect for the Red Cross, and she was walking out of one one day and who should come round the corner but two of the nuns from Larkhill who had been to post a letter. What they thought of seeing my mother coming out of a pub on a Sunday morning, I don't know.

We also used to have sales of work at the church, and the ... parish was divided into five groups, each district belonging to one of the five priests. My mother, she was a very quiet lady, she hadn't time to socialise a lot, but people used to come to her. They would say, "now, Mrs. Harrison, we'll have something for your stall." So, we as children had our districts and we would go and knock on the door and say, "there's going to be a sale of work on such and such a day." "Right, we'll have something for you," and for the few days

before the sale of work we would take a big washing basket, and we'd go round to these houses and they would put all their goods in and we would cover them with a sheet or something, and we would come back home. ... We used to get some lovely things from them. My mother never stopped knitting, she was always knitting things for the sale of work.

Elaine Tordoff (1940s)

My grandma and granddad never got anything, only their pension, there were no subsidies for them. There was nothing, it was the family that helped them out if they needed it, they'd buy them if they needed new clothes. Children and grandchildren would say, "Oh, I'll buy this for my grandma, I'll buy this for my granddad," ... and rig them up with things, like if they needed a new coat.

Dorothy Taylor (1950s)

We bought this [house] in Selborne Street, that was advertised in the newspaper, and we went to have a look at it, and decided we'd have it [though] it needed a lot doing to it. We found out afterwards ... the person who lived in it before, he put his head in the gas oven, so I think people were a bit wary of it.

Welcome to Frenchwood 4

Anna-Marie Riedel

I was born in [what is now] the Czech Republic in ... 1927 ... my father was born in ... the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. At first he was a chimney sweep, and then later on he became the manager of the slaughterhouse in the town.

And what about your mother?

No, she was only a housewife. When the war ended ... Czechoslovakia came into being, in 1919. And from then on, even though we were German, we lived under Czech rule. ... My grandparents were farmers, millers, and they had a flour mill and a saw mill. ... They had about twenty-two hectares of land. It was one of the smallest towns in the Czech Republic, it was more like a farming community.

We lived with my grandmother, and then when my father got the post of manager of the slaughterhouse we got quarters there ... and the house was very well-built – we had double glazing then! ... It had very old-fashioned ovens, you know [for heating and cooking]. No central heating, of course, they were made from tiles and it was heated by coal or wood. ... We had a living kitchen, a bedroom and a smaller room. ... My brother slept in the little one, and I slept with my parents in the big bedroom. [Our flat] was free, because it belonged to the town ... and we got the coal and the water – we didn't pay for that. ... Our veterinary surgeon [who lived opposite], in fact, was a Jew, and in 1938 he left, you know, when the Germans came. ... The living quarters were burned down by the Russians on the 10th of May [1945], even after the war ended.

Mrs Riedel remembered that the community got through the war intact, but was broken up by the Russians. All the Germans were packed into cattle trucks and taken by train to Germany, where they were simply turned out to fend for themselves. Accommodation was very hard to find due to the bomb damage and families had no choice but to live in very overcrowded conditions. Food was also very scarce.

I saw an advertisement, and I applied for coming to Britain: ... 'young girls from the Sudetenland [which was where they came from] looking for [work in the] cotton industry', in 1950 ... so we applied. And before we could even enter Britain, you had to have a health check – from top to bottom. You have had an x-ray, you have had your teeth checked, your water, and your blood, and then your police record has to be checked, you know, and then we came to [a place where] the British army doctors checked us through again ... and if they found something, you were sent back straight away ... There weren't many jobs about. So we came from all places, you know ... the transport, you know, there must have been about forty or fifty [young girls] every time they came over. ... We went on the train to the Hook of Holland, and from there to Harwich, and from there to Manchester. They put us on the buses and they took us to Inskip. Into nissen huts, you know, and we thought, 'Oh dear, what have we let ourselves in for?' – they were blooming cold and it was March. ... Then we were sent so many to Chorley, so many to Blackburn ... the whole transport was split up. We came to Talbot Mill in Chorley ... [and we lived in the] mill hostel. They took us in the canteen, and the warden was there, she spoke perfect German, and she took us there and [gave us] cooked meat, some potatoes, vegetables and some brown sauce. Well, we weren't used to that.

They put us in the weaving shed – oh dear, oh dear, you know, the shuttles flying on one loom, you know, and they were talking, and of course, we couldn't understand the things – even people who had learned English. ... I wasn't in there very long because I didn't like it. ... I wanted to go back home. And so I started

in the hostel, in the kitchen, as a cook. In 1958 or '59 the hostel closed down. And then I came to Preston. ... And I rented a house, and I worked for CCM – Cotton Clothing Manufacturers ... I always worked for my living, and ... [at first] I got a place in Lancaster Road, and then I rented a house in Grayson Street. ... It was two up and two down and the toilet over the yard, and then as it happened they were taking that district down, you know ... and I [bought my present one in 1972] and I thought, "Oh, I would have liked one with a garden," but I mean, if you haven't got a lot of money, then you can't do it. ...

Life was fine, you know, it was much cleaner, you know – I mean I left the door open and nothing happened. ... People were more friendlier – they would say hello. When we came over, they ask us, "are you a good German or a bad German?" And then later on, I mean, when you were talking, they said ... "you must have known about your concentration camps." I said, "yes, we knew about concentration camps, but, I mean we didn't know what was going on in there. ... And if you were not careful, you nearly landed in there." ... When we came over we got told, "Behave, abide by the law, and always think you are a guest here." So they're the things we lived by. Always friendly, polite and such things. Well, we were brought up like that. ... I have had very good neighbours.

Earning a Living

Marian Pomfret

[My father] worked at Arrowsmith's, I should think he was a labourer, and then during the war he had to go and work on munitions. He got two pounds [and] ten shillings per week. Hours? Seven in a morning and to get extra money, often he used to work up until nine at night to get extra money. Six days – they always worked Saturday morning. ...

What was your mother's occupation?

She was a weaver. She worked at Horrocks's in New Hall Lane.

Did she continue working after she married?

Yes. They had to do in those days. ... My sister and I slept in the back bedroom, and my mum and dad in the front bedroom. That's when I heard the mill folk going to work in their clogs on the ... cobbled streets. And I used to waken up when the knocker-up used to come and waken everybody up. Six o'clock.

Rosa Malloy

My father was John William Harrison ... he was born in Preston in 1891. ... When my father was ten, his father was killed in an accident and he had to go as a part-timer at the mill, in fact they moved into a little rented house with an aunt and because a woman couldn't have her name on the rent book, his name was on the rent book. He was twelve ... and he used to go part-time to the mill and part-time to the school.

But then he always went to night school and he did all sorts of things and one of the things that he did was art and that's why he finished up going into decorating. And we have certificates from his night school. He [became] a master painter and decorator. ... By the time I was growing up he had other people working for him. ... They painted churches, schools, houses, all sorts, anything painted and decorated. He was an absolute perfectionist. Later on they painted a lot of pubs for Matthew Brown's. ...

He worked hard - when they took the papering boards and the ladders and the paint and everything wherever they were working, it was on a handcart and they had to walk because people didn't have cars in those days, everybody took them like that, so he walked miles when he was doing that.

Sheena Nelson (1950s)

When you left school what sort of job did you take up?

For some reason I went into a material shop in the arcade, the Miller Arcade, and that came about because the man that owned the shop had rung the school up, and ... the headmaster thought I would be ideal for the position, so he contacted my mother, who came to terms with this gentleman [about] how much I was going to get. I didn't like it one bit, because I don't like sewing, I'm not into doing material. I can't even cut straight, and I only stayed there a month or two.

My dad was a baker at t'Scotch bakery, there was a vacancy in the shop there, and I jumped at it. I absolutely loved confectionery, and that was the sort of work I spent all my life doing. I helped in the bakery, but I wasn't a confectioner, but I have iced cakes, I've packed, we used to have to pack the bread, pack the buns up.

I used to start at eight o'clock, and we would go and set the window up. The shop would open about half past eight. Everything had to come down from the bakehouse, which was in an alleyway,

and we had to carry everything down. Then the boss had the bright idea that he had a young girl in the bake house (the same age as me) and me, to give us an extra hour a day, and we could go in at seven o'clock to peel the potatoes and onions for the meat and potato pies. So we got I think, we got an extra five shillings a week, so we jumped at the chance. So, therefore, I was going to work from seven o'clock in the morning. ... Tuesday was my half-day, I finished at one, Wednesday was the manageress's half-day and I looked after the shop, and I was only a young teenager, and I couldn't close 'til half-past-five then, 'cause I had to wait for Horrocks's coming out. You were on your feet all the time.

Marian Pomfret

My grandfather ... came from Yorkshire. [He] was a footballer for Preston North End. And my dad was born in Liverpool in 1900, so my granddad played for Liverpool in 1900, and he also played, I think it was for Sheffield United. He ended his days playing football at Preston North End. I think that he broke his leg or something, and that ended his career. [His name was] Ralph Howell. ... And they had a vegetable shop, and miscellaneous groceries and toffees and things, and he used to take the veg out on a horse and cart.

***Dennis Crompton* (1930s)**

I remember ... a man pushing a large round tin, like a dolly-tub, but with two wheels and handles to push it along. Inside the tub was a collection of long broom handles with different attachments at the end. ... He went to where a horse had passed recently leaving a supply of manure on the cobbled surface. I watched him using the stiff broom and shovel to remove most of the deposit and then with the rake to clear the rest. He took out one more item – a handle with just one slightly curved hook on the end [and] he

used that one to clear the manure still left between the cracks of the cobble stones. ... For a while after that whenever anyone asked me what I'd like to be when I left school, I said – “A coddly-muck sweeper!”

[When I worked at Ribble Motors as a young man] ... I was in the semi-skilled department. It was on this bench where I met an amazing group of men, as far as I was concerned. ... On this bench there were two Irishmen who stood out for me because one was a kind of philosopher, talked about life, ideas and people's theories and so on, fascinating really, and the other one was a great lover of Shakespeare. He made Shakespeare alive, and he'd talk about Shakespeare with me. The man in charge of the bench was a man called Tony ... just gave us our job, what we had to do. But they all had some particular aspect of life that they either discussed, or talked or shared with me. The best ... the most influential man in that particular group was down in the engine bay, and we all got a turn on different sections, in putting this particular chassis, the chassis of the bus together again. This time I was sent down to the engine bay where I took the engine to bits, put all the bits in a basket, the basket went to the degreasing plant all cleaned and came back, and the man on that side put them together. He was from Poland and we called him George, but his real name was Jerzey Fojalkowski. He used to teach me a little bit of German.

Angela McNaboe (1950s onwards)

I went down to the Youth Employment and ... everybody had to have an interview [near leaving school] to see what sort of job they wanted ... I said, “oh, I fancy something in an office.” So he flipped through his filing system, pulled out a card, “Sun Alliance Insurance want an office junior, do you fancy that?” I got an interview, got the job and started the week after. The only qualifications you needed for that job, was I think, two ‘O’ levels, which I'd got, one being English.

It was fine. It was a lot of mundane type work: typing, filing and all that sort of thing, the filing systems. And then I saw an advert for Social Services, so I thought, "well, that's sort of in line with the childcare that I did." ... I got that job, stayed there for two, three years. ... We used to deal with social workers, they would go and see the clients and I was responsible for ... all the paperwork involved in that.

From there, oh, I've done lots of jobs, but you see, you could do that in those days. You could change jobs it was very, very easy, you could move around very easily. ... I went into Visionhire, because everybody used to rent their televisions. I got a job in the Bankers Orders Department. It was a new system they were setting up in those days and it was all computerised. So I sort of met the first computers in those days, and I stayed there for about four years. Then I met my husband, got married, and he worked at British Aerospace, so he said they were very well paid, and I fancied a change so I went to work at British Aerospace in the clerical department.

Then I had my first daughter and left work ... I chose to, but that's what everybody did in those days. I was at home for eight years, and had two daughters. Well, the time I spent at home is when computers happened. ... The job that I did had been completely taken over by computers. We used to do all the ordering for the spare parts for the airplanes ... and [now] everybody just sat with a computer at the desk. If I had stayed there I would have been trained on it, but ... I thought it was an area I couldn't go back into.

I'd started taking my children to school, and I stayed and helped with reading when they were in the nursery. I decided I would go back to college and do my nursery nursing. So I went back to Preston College and spent two years doing a full-time course in nursery nursing. Myself and four others who were mature students who'd had their children and gone back, we were in a class of seventeen year olds, who had gone straight from school ... I was so scared about going back, but it was very good that there

were four of us because we could consult on things, but we came out very well compared to the younger students. I think it was sort of life skills we had learnt along the way. ... We had been there, we had done it, we had brought up our own children, and we found that a lot of the tutors who hadn't had children, we knew more than they did ... I enjoyed it, it was wonderful.

I did quite a few temporary jobs, covering for maternity leave, I worked in a crèche, and I worked in a special school. I put my name down on a 'bank' list and I did outreach support work at Broughton High School. I supported a student who was hearing impaired in a mainstream school because they'd just started doing that. ... When I first went there, there was only two of us, and when I left nine years later there was ten support staff. There are even more now. So from there I went on to Newman College, which is a sixth form college, I stayed there two years, and then I moved on to Preston College where I am now, still supporting students within the college.

John Taylor (1950s onwards)

When I was fourteen ... my best subject that I liked was woodwork ... I went to serve my time with [a firm of] joiners and plumbers, and they had a vacancy on the joiners' side. I was there until, just about eighteen, just at the start of the war. When I started work, the first six months I got half-a-crown a week, and then it gradually doubled, but wages weren't a great deal in those days.

What hours did you work then?

Eight till five, it was just a normal day, it wasn't as excessive as it was previously. ... They didn't drink tea in those days, you just worked, I mean, if you worked eight hours, you just worked eight hours. You had a meal at dinner-time, but I used to go home for mine, I had a bike in those days, and could get round. Clean and

help, you had to keep the place clean, in a reasonable state. When the shavings were flying all over the place it was quite a job in itself. They were very, very good - I was sent into town to get a saw, hammer, mallet and then I could assist proper. ...

Did you work on Saturdays?

Till mid-day, if I remember right. Twelve o'clock Saturday. ... That would be forty-four hours?

On the joiners' side I was the only apprentice ... I didn't get the chance to do a lot. Basically for the first twelve months you was a labourer, you didn't have cars and lorries, you had a hand-cart and if they wanted timber, you went down to the timber yard with the old hand-cart, brought it up, brought it back, which as long as there were no bridges and ups and downs it wasn't too bad, but if the street started going upwards you'd a problem. When you're serving your time they take advantage of you. ...

When I joined the Post Office you were part of the Civil Service. They don't believe in secure jobs in these days. That was 1955 ... I just did as a temporary over Christmas, parcel sorting. When I did eventually get on permanent, you go through the mill, a three-week shift, one six o'clock, an afternoon, and a night shift, on sorting, and one week on delivery. When they started on the mechanisation, there were quite a few vans and that, and I went on to driving.

How long did you work at the Post Office for?

Between twenty-eight and twenty-nine years.

Was it generally a good company to work for when you were working there?

Oh yes. The firm ran on overtime. ... They use to say it was cheaper to pay overtime out, than to take people on, so therefore I used to

do a lot of overtime. Mother [his wife] used to wonder if I was ever coming home some days. It made it a good job; the flat rate wasn't good but the take-home pay wasn't bad. ...

At that time, I don't think we had a lady on staff at all. Now, I bet there's more ladies in the sorting office than there are men ... When I first went on they'd just finished a 'three delivery a day', and we went on to two deliveries. Now they do one delivery, if you're lucky.

Edna Howarth (1930s)

We wore clogs, you know, and there used to be a clogmaker down on Manchester Road ... and my grandma always wore clogs. Now my grandma worked in Higher Walton, and she used to walk it. ... She used to set off at six in a morning and she said it were about six at night when they got back, walking it. ... She were a hard worker ... she was very clean, she used to do her windowsills every day and stone her steps and all her curtains she used to scour them in dolly blue, they must have been strong to do that. Walked in all weathers.

Veronica Pownall

When you left school [during the war] there was a shortage of people to work. If you started at a place you couldn't leave, you know, so I went into a shoe factory which I hated ... I wanted to leave ... you know, [but] they wouldn't let you leave because there was a shortage ... I was fourteen.

And did you find your job before you left school?

I think my mother found it for me, I don't remember 'cause as I say there was a shortage of people wanting to work in these places be-

cause they were all took for war work, the older people. [We were paid] very little, I think it was about nine shillings a week.

Did you have to give that to mum when you got home?

Yes. I was given [spending money] if I wanted it, if I wanted to go out, you went to the cinema or something like that. But you took your dinner with you (to work), not sandwiches, you could take a hotpot and they'd warm it up, things like that. So you'd no money to pay out for anything like that.

I hated it, so after a lot of wrangling I left and went to Horrocks's weaving mill which was in Sand Street and I quite liked it there. At that time they were just bringing in what they called Northrop looms, and they wove towels, and I had eight looms. I think [the wage] was like twenty-five shillings a week, something like that. ... You got paid weekly. I stayed there until I was eighteen, I think, and then I joined the air-force. I quite enjoyed that. Then I left there after two years. When I was in the factory, at that age, you could think, "oh, there's something more to life than this," and my mother had died, you see, in between this, so I wanted to get away, if you like, so after that I came back home, and I met my husband and got married.

And raised a family?

Yes, eight of them.

Teresa O'Neill (1930s)

Well, first of all [when I left school] I went to look after a little boy. They had a fish shop up Newhall Lane, Ribbleton Lane, Melling's Fish. I was only there a week. Someone said they could get me on at Owen's Mill in Bamber Bridge, so ... I learnt weaving there for a few years. Then from there, I came to Horrocks's ... I worked for

quite a number of years at Horrocks's ... I was there during the war because, whenever the sirens went, we all had to stop our looms and come down the big yard, go inside, underneath one of these big buildings. So we had to go under there. I was there for, well, I don't know, a few, couple of years, and then my mother had a nervous breakdown, so I had to stay at home to nurse her. ...

My dad and his six brothers were builders. ... It was my granddad's firm and he was the boss. My dad was the oldest of the sons. The firm was in Paradise Street, top of Manchester Road. R. Cooper & Sons. My granddad first started with his brother, and then his brother moved away somewhere, still in Preston, but he moved further away. So when my granddad's sons were older they took over. My granddad was Ralph, and ... all the sons worked for him. There was my dad, James, Uncle Ralph, Albert, Lawrence and Robert (Uncle Bob).

It was a big concern. They had a big wagon. I knew all of the men 'cause we lived next door. We lived there, I was born there, we lived there, and my uncle Albert he lived at the other side of the big work-yard. And our work-yard went from Paradise Street right through to the little street behind there. And at one stage, I don't remember, they had horses, and the bottom of this wide courtyard was stables, on the side ... I remember my dad going out with handcarts, and all ladders on.

My house, where I lived, down below, they had a lot of slates and all kinds of stuff underneath, they had like a cellar. ... We had a big lime-pit, we had a concrete shed over it, and ... there was a big loft up there that was full of builders' stuff. And a double sand-pit, one of them had soft sand in and the other gritty sand in. ...

Now my granddad, he was fair, very fair but he was strict. One particular day he was coming down the street, these two fellows were up on a roof (they had stopped to have a brew), one of them said, "Hey, Mr Cooper's coming." So they emptied their cans out and started going back to work, so he shouted at them. He said, "next time you see me coming and you are having a cup of tea, have your cup of tea then get back to work. Never do that again

because it looks like I won't let you have a brew. I'll never stop you from having a drink." So he was fair. He could have said, "get lost," they'd sack you and there was no money in those days.

Elaine Tordoff (1960s)

My granddad - he worked for a builder's yard, a small building company, he used to be down opening manholes, down drains and digging. A really physical, hard job, and didn't retire until he was sixty-five, digging and doing all that. It really was manual labour then, true manual labour. In a way, I'm glad they haven't got all that to do now, they've got a lot of machinery now that takes the back-breaking work out of it. Health and Safety, oh you wouldn't have been able to get away with things they got away with then.

There was all sorts of different jobs going then - in fact you could, in the sixties ... you could walk out of one job and walk into another, because we had so many job vacancies. ... Well, I was sixteen in January and didn't go back [to school] after Christmas, and my dad were going mad, he kept saying, "they've sent a letter from school they want you to stay on." 'Course, I was in the academic section at school, when I got up there I shaped myself a bit more, but I said, "no, I want to go out to work, I don't want to go to colleges."

I went all over and I thought, "I'll have to get something." I really wanted to be a telephonist at G.P.O., and I'd been to t'careers office, it used to be in Lancaster Road, and he used to keep saying, "I'll put your name down, but there's nothing at all at the moment, nothing." What made me do that I don't know, it was either that or I wanted to be a nurse. ... Then I thought, "oh well, I don't know what I'm going to do".

I left [school] and I got a job at the gold thread works, embroidery it was, embroidering badges, you know for the army, the navy and the air force, the gold cap badges, stripes and the blazer badges, they were all done with a hollow gold thread ... it was very

intricate really, you'd to have good eye sight, you'd to just pick it up with a needle and just stitch it through.

You'd to iron it on - this, that and t'other, and then start doing it with your thread, you used to have it on a tapestry loom, and it was like a small twelve inch square piece of black cloth, and then you'd put the imprint of the badge you were going to do, or the stars and stripes ... all the banners that they used to have as well - all those we made there, but you'd to progress on to them I think. You used to do that, and once you'd got it set up on your tapestry frame as tight as you could, then you'd start like going from underneath, you'd to be there doing that all day long, picking thread up, going in and going down, so you'd to have good eyes. And I enjoyed it, I did like needlework at school though. I enjoyed that and embroidery.

We started at seven o'clock in the morning, seven o'clock, I think it was, until five or half-past-five and I got about three pounds twenty (three pounds, four shillings) a week and it was about fifty-two hours a week for that, we were exploited really when you think about it. Disgusting!

And I stayed on at that because there was nothing going in the nursing either, and I thought I'd hang on and wait, something would turn up eventually, and I was there about twelve months and then I got a letter from the G.P.O. to say they were taking on some to become telephonists ... I went for my interview and got it. Six weeks training and I was a fully qualified telephonist. And whilst I was there I got a letter to say that I could go for an interview for nursing, so I was like torn between two then, but I'd sort of started to get settled at the G.P.O. and got some new friends and stuff, but I think deep down in my heart, I think I'd have been better going for the nursing I think that's the one thing that would have lasted ... I could have seen myself going right through to retirement as that. ... It was the old switchboard where you plugged in, with the headphones on and there are plugs everywhere. That's why you had to have six weeks training, just initial, and then you picked it up as you went along. I really thoroughly enjoyed it.

The wages were double to what I was earning ... it was brilliant. They were funny hours, you did an eight hour day ... you couldn't do a nine-to-five because it ... wasn't like an office switchboard. Oh, there was hundred and odd telephonists up there. They had a night shift that would come on at six o'clock, and they would work from six till seven o'clock the following morning, and they would do it in shifts, some would work six till two in the morning ... and they did it that way because it had to be going twenty-four hours, because of the emergency services. ... Saturday was included in your job then, it was only Sunday that wasn't included and it would be the night shift that did Sundays, you see? Or it would be eight till four, nine/twelve till six, seven till three or any variations in between. ... Sometimes you'd have to work Christmas Day, Boxing Day.

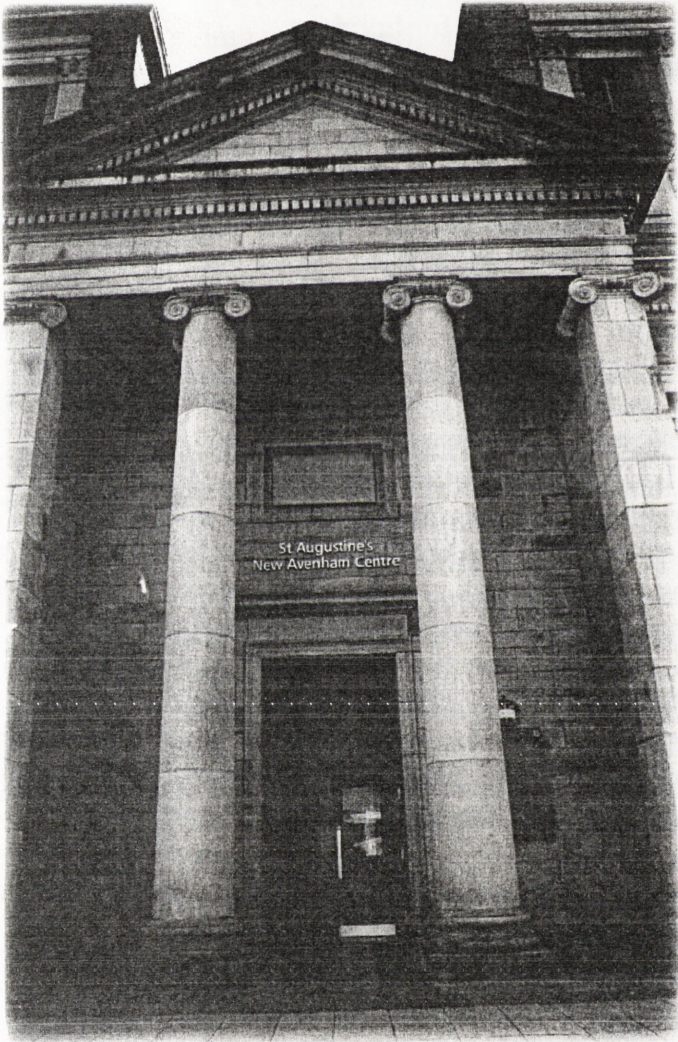
You'd to sign the Official Secrets Act, it was a very, very exclusive job ... but then they started changing things around at the G.P.O. The technology started coming in, and they were going to move to Moor Lane. Anyway I had a friend that worked for this small company and she said she was leaving this job, she was getting married and moving and it was a good job, and I thought I might do [it] because a lot of my friends had gone off and got married. Anyway, I did, and then I got an offer to work as a telephonist for British Rail, but I stuck at this job until I come to start a family really, 'cause it was a better paid job than the post office. ... When I had the children I didn't go to work then after, 'cause in them days you didn't. Most people did, I mean you'd no money, only one wage coming in, you'd no money but you sort of managed somehow. I used to do a lot of my own baking and sewing, and knitting and stuff - you just had to do it, so that you weren't struggling.

I did get a little part-time job whilst Alan was working, I used to work at night with my sister-in-law, she used to do cleaning at County Court in't Judge's Chambers. Then I thought, "That's not for me, I have enough cleaning during t'day." I got a little job at Shaw's Arms pub, which is just down the road there, and my friend that lives across road she was in the same situation as me, she'd

two little 'uns ... and not a lot of money, so she said, "shall we go?" Mondays and Thursdays we used to work. We used to enjoy it, we used to have a laugh, 'cause it was a very, very busy pub. ... They'd have darts Tuesdays and the car auctions would be on the Thursday when we used to work. ... There used to be a whippet track behind there ... they used to train the whippets and the greyhounds. We used to put bits away for holidays.

I used to work for Securicor till I got made redundant, I worked there twenty odd years but we used to have computers there, but ... you used to only use the computers when it was in relation to the job you were doing, it wasn't like going onto internet and getting up with your friends ... it was just completely to do with the job, nothing else. They used it for dealing with all different companies, 'cause then when I first went there twenty odd years ago, to Securicor, they used to do the wages for all these big companies, there was all British Aerospace, they'd about eight thousand workers there then, Strand Road was there and Samsbury, Warton, and they used to do all of Leyland Motors wages and they had about eight thousand or more people. We used to do Rolls Royce, every big company you could think of. ...

We dealt with banks as well. The banks would want to know what's coming in, what's going out from them, quite complicated really. I remember saying the first time I used it at Securicor, and this bloke came in to teach and I went, "I'll never get hang of this." He said, "you will." ... What I think it is with that when you're not computer literate like at my age, our age, whoever, these people in their sixties, I thought, "what it is, I'm trying too hard to understand." And he said, "You're looking for complications."



St. Augustine's New Avenham Centre

Welcome to Frenchwood 5

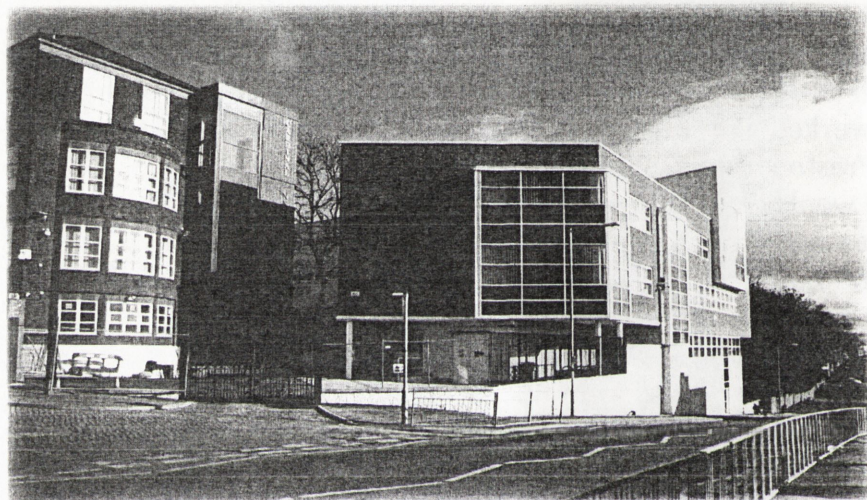
Sheena Nelson

It was the end of 1946, as far as I can remember, all that year my dad was looking for a job out of Glasgow, he was looking to better himself and we went to one or two places in Scotland ... and they didn't seem to suit. Apparently, when he was in the merchant navy he worked with Mr Tommy Bailey, and he opened a shop in 1932 in Preston and wanted my dad to go into partnership, which my dad wouldn't because he wasn't married then ... but he always said if he wanted a job to let him know. So my dad wrote to him and he found him a job. So he came to Preston, and they then found him this house in Brixton Road, but it went with the work, so that's how we came. ... It was December 28th 1946.

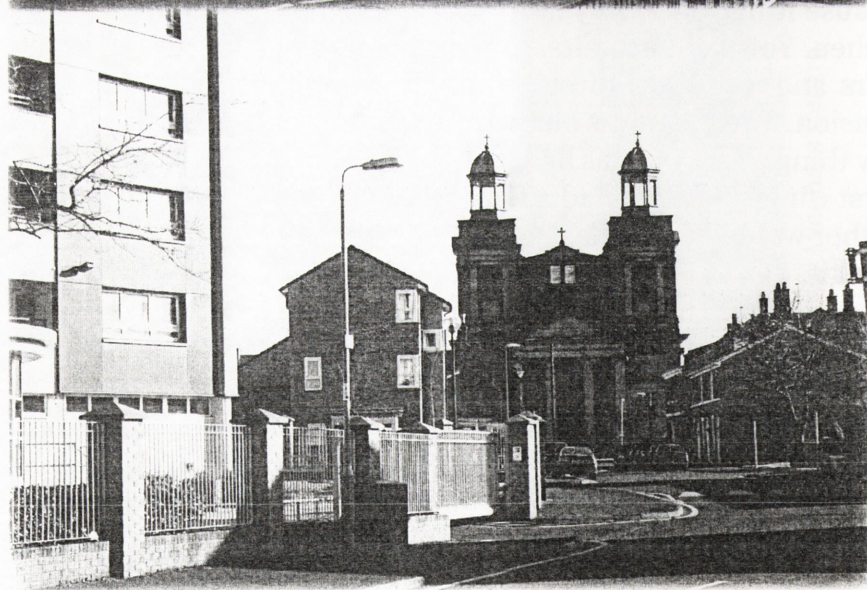
When we first drew up, we actually came down with the furniture van, my mother and two brothers we all came together. ... It was dark and we went in the house and it looked like a mansion because it had a hallway ... it had a big room there, then it had a kitchen. You went upstairs, there was a bathroom at the top of the stairs and there was three bedrooms, so I thought I'd gone to a mansion. The toilet was out in the yard, but that was nothing. The only thing was it was gas light, it wasn't electric. ... It was one of the worst winters we ever had ... and if they hadn't got snowed in ... my mother would have gone back to Scotland in January, because she hated it. ...

She just had left all her friends and the comradeship and everything that they had. But there was a lady, Mrs Worswick and she lived about two doors down and she knocked on my mother's door a couple of days after we came. She said, "I know you're a stranger in a strange country (because it was a long way in those days), I live at number thirteen and I've got three children, so whatever you want to know about anything, about doctors, or if

you want a cup of tea, come down.” Until the day my mother died those two were the best of friends from that day on. Of course she gradually introduced her to other people so that was nice. ... And they wanted a Sunday school, so my mother started taking it in the Presbyterian church.



Cardinal Newman College



St. Augustine's New Avenham Centre

Recreation and Fun

Teresa O'Neill (1920s)

We played ball against old Pat Kilroy's wall, we played hide and seek, and hopscotch, we'd made hopscotch on these flags, top and whip, shuttlecock, we played all the games. There wasn't as many cars ... it wasn't as busy, and in the evenings, of course, traffic was just minimal in those days. ... So we just played games outside, and some of us had a bike, we used to give our friends bike rides. That was one thing that I do remember, it was Christmas, and I don't know how old I would be, nine, and anyway, I went to town with my mother to buy me a new bike, for Father Christmas to bring, for Christmas, and we got it from Mears in town, it's not there now, Mears's shop. Anyway, we went upstairs to have a look at these bikes and she said who was it for, and I said "it's for me." "Have a look at them now and which one would you like?" And I said, "I want that one." "No," she said, "That's a boy's bike. Is it for you?" I said "Yes." She said, "Well, these are girl's bikes." I said, "I don't want a girl's bike. I want a boy's bike. And I want this one." So I sat on it for size, you know. ... So my mother said, "If that's what she wants, that's what she wants." And she couldn't understand, and she said, "Well, why do you want a boy's bike?" I said, "So that I can give rides to my friends." It was simple – that's what you did, if you'd got a boy's bike, two of you could have a ride. Now that, to me, was normal – you got something you could share. Now if I'd had a girl's bike, there was only me could ride it. Yes, it was great fun.

Marian Pomfret (1930s)

[We played] in the street, on the lamp posts, with rope from the

orange boxes that my grandma used to have [in her shop], and we used to make swings. [We played with] the neighbours – all the children in street. ... We played Queenio and ... skipping ropes and marbles, tops and whips, shuttlecocks and bats ... I think that there was more for us to do than there is today. ... Anybody could play. In the street or anywhere.

I often used to go on Avenham Park after school, and play, it was safe to do that, take my sister with me and play. And down here, well I always came down here when it was rhubarb field at bottom, where the Rec is now, and the houses are, and you used to come and there was bowling greens and tennis courts, and I used to play a lot of tennis down here when I was young, and they also used to have a putting green where the children's playground is now. And we used to play putting there, when the rhubarb fields had gone, and they built all these houses, I can remember these houses being built ... in the 1930s. My childhood period. ...

I had to go to Sunday school ... I was once in the Young Christian Workers, I was in that for quite a long time, belonging to St Augustine's. ... We had meetings every week. ... We tried to help people and we sang hymns and it was supposed to help people, you know, with different things and learn how to be good.

Elaine Tordoff (1960s)

Yes, there were quite a lot of pubs around there. There was St. Augustine's Club, a lot of people used to go in there, St. Augustine's Club was a very busy place, but there were also lots of pubs two or three doors from each other. They were always busy and there was never any problems. I mean, I wasn't old enough to go in, but there didn't seem to be ever any problems, in that sense. ... What we used to do was sometimes we'd go to my grandma's and granddad's and he'd say, "will you nip down to t'pub and get this jug filled up?" He used to give me a big jug, two pint jug or something

like that, and you could go to the pub at the bottom, it was called the Morning Star.

I'd only be ten/twelve, whatever, from being a little girl, he'd say, "just go down there, lass, and knock on the selling out," because they used to have a little glass in the side, the selling-out side ... they'd open it up and I just used to say, "Can you fill that up for my granddad, please?" and they'd fill it up and I'd walk back up the street with it, a big jug of ale with all froth, I used to drink all froth, it were all round my mouth, I used to hate the beer, didn't touch that, and I used to go in and say, "there you are." And he'd say, "Have you had a drink?" "No, granddad, I haven't," and there'd be all the froth round my mouth, I used to like that, but you wouldn't be able to do that these days.

That was common ... no problem at all. I don't know whether they were allowed to [do it] legally, but they knew my grandma and granddad well because they lived at the top of the street, and my grandma and granddad didn't go out, but they use to like a little bit of beer. ... It was a little sociable area really, there were chip shops ... they'd say, "go on, take a basin and get a basin full of chips."

Were there any picture houses, cinemas?

Oh yes there were cinemas, in town obviously. The Palladium, the Empire, the Ritz, the ABC theatre which was right at the bottom, Fishergate near the railway station then. What else was there? Gaumont, which was called the Gaumont then they changed its name. It was great; I used to be a member of the Saturday Club at the ABC when I were about twelve. We used to go every Saturday morning ... kids piling in.

Edna Howarth (1940s)

I used to go dancing at Queen's Hall off Lune Street, it used to be

a dance hall. And we went to St Ignatius's dances. Oh, and on a Sunday evening ... there were St Augustine's Club at the bottom of Park Street, off St Austin's Road. And we used to go dancing there, I think it was sixpence ... and it were only local people that went, belonging to St. Augustine's ... I enjoyed that. Like a community [event], like a school dance.

Did you ever go drinking in pubs?

No, not really. I did when I got older occasionally, but ... I weren't one for drinking. It were only when I went to these dances, eighteen or nineteen, we'd happen call round in the interval, have a bottle or two, then come out, but ... I didn't really drink a lot ... Saint Augustine's, it were more like they'd sell pop and cups of tea.

Marian Pomfret (1930s)

My friend and I had two seats at the Ritz [cinema] every Sunday night, H32 and 33. They were booked. When I was a child, I always went to the matinees at the Empire, Flash Gordon. It was good. Yeah, I loved it. And I always got pennies from my aunties and uncles. And I used to take me and my sister in all the little cafés in Preston having meat pie and chips, and gravy – I did. So food must have been in my mind then.

At the New Vic there was the organ, oh, it was great. ... It was lovely, a lovely tea room at the bottom. [There was] The Palladium, the Ritz, the New Vic, the Theatre Royal, and the old Hippodrome and the Palace, and the Princess Theatre ... my grandma always took me to the pantomimes ... she used to take us to both of them. Oh, there was plenty [to do]. It's sad for them today, I think. And dance halls. We used to go to Worsley's and the Public Hall, and Wiends Hall. See all the famous bands. ...

I think I would be about twenty four before I had a drink [in a pub. ... Although] a lot of young people went in pubs in those

days. You'd see them going out from dances, they'd get pass outs and go for a drink and then come back. ...

Were there many pubs?

Well there was the Selborne ... the King Street Tavern, the Weavers, the Parkers' Arms, the Old House at Home, the Morning Star, and there was two off London Road, I've forgotten the names of them – the Sebastopol, and then there was another. And the King Bill, and the Greyhound, There was quite a lot of pubs, they were all full. ... It was mostly men that went in pubs. Women, I think it was probably during the war when ladies started to go in. ... Bowling came on, so we went over to bowling when we had the family.

...

When did you start courting?

When I was eighteen, and I got married when I was twenty-six, I was a slow learner ... I met him at St Augustine's dance hall.

Rosa Malloy (1940s)

And the church ... also provided you with social activities. We used to have dances, we used to have the men's club, and women did not go into the men's club. By the time they started, probably by the end of the war, I don't know, it was sort of, 'fancy', my mother would have been horrified at the thought of any of us going into the men's club, but later on when we did the Operatic Society and they built a new centre with the club down below and the hall and stage up above, we used to go to the operatic and then we, everyone, would nip into the club and have a drink before they went home. Only the one drink, just a bit of socialising after the practice, but by then it had become an accepted thing. But if a woman had gone into the men's club, it would have been horrifying.

John Taylor (1950s)

A lot of [social life] was linked to the church. You had church walks ... my two lads used to go with Church of England, and they used to walk round the whole area, London Road, down Queen Street and back, it was quite a 'high-light' in those days, was the church walks during the summer months. ... It was the same with the [Preston] Guild, you know, those walks they used to be something. I've been once or twice representing the Post Office, you thought you were somebody then. ...

There's always been the bowling green at the top here, which has been there since 1930. ... When we first came [to Frenchwood] we used to bike round Hutton Park, it's amazing the distance you can ... go on a push bike with a kid on as well, one on each. Mother had a basket on the front of hers and I had a seat they used to sit on. Very often if we'd been a fair way, they'd come back and they'd be fast asleep. Nothing wrong with them.

Christmas time we used to have a right good do across the road, a proper knees up – didn't we? Get the carpets out of the way, the house was full and we had a good time. We used to go in, occasionally; we'd go into the Frenchwood Club then.

Were there many pubs?

Well by present day standards. ... It was marvellous how they could keep going, there was that many. I think a lot of them, the wives had to look after it mid-day ... while the male went out to work. I think that's they only way they could keep it together. ... You got the other side of Albert Street and in all that stretch of about five streets, there'd be a pub at both ends and one in the middle. ...

I have been an allotment holder for fifty years thereabouts, fifty-two. I am the longest member, and I am, I think, the oldest member. I've spent a lot of time on the allotment ... Just behind what used to be the Ribble Motors head office, it's only just at the top of Manchester Road. They've been there, I think, since 1927.

Dennis Crompton (1930s)

I came out of Stoneygate Primary School one afternoon to see a group ... listening to some music, and watching the antics of a small monkey dressed in a red jacket and wearing a small black cap on its head. I'd never seen a monkey before, (not a live one anyway). There was a man turning the handle of a box the monkey was standing on; it was from that box that the music came. Gentle sounds, and really nice to listen to, and I found myself quivering with delight, with the grim drabness of our surroundings driven back out of mind by the scene. As music stopped the monkey held out a small tin cup for coins that might be offered ... I was five.

Marian Pomfret (1930s)

We didn't have [birthday] parties in those days. No, you just got a present and perhaps a tea, but that was it. Bonfire Night – we always had a bonfire in our street, in the middle of the street – wouldn't allow it today, would they? [At] Christmas – you went round all the shops looking at all the dollies in the windows, and the prams, it was lovely, it really was.

What sort of presents did you get?

What anybody could afford. But I think, they once bought me a pram, and I was more interested in some paper than I was in the pram. ...

What about holidays?

We went camping to Morecambe with Elaine's mum and dad. ... And I remember my uncle Joe used to take me swimming in one

of big hotels, and it was lovely. And then, another year, just before the war, we went to ... a little house, and you bought the food, and landlady used to cook it for you. Morecambe was lovely in those days – crowded, absolutely. ... I think, if I can remember rightly, when we went camping Uncle Arthur worked for Coopers, and he took us on their wagon. And then another time we went on the bus.

Arthur Monk (1950s)

Did you ever go on holiday with your parents?

Only days. We used to go on day holidays. And mainly, it were my mum that used to take me and our Pauline. We used to go to Southport, exciting places like St Annes, Knott End, Fleetwood. Never go to Blackpool 'cause it was too busy when we were kids – we never used to do what we were told. ... But yeah, never had weeks away – they couldn't afford it. The old feller used to come sometimes, have an odd day off. ... He used to sit there in a deck chair reading the paper. "Hey, here's a shilling, go get some ice creams, and leave me alone!" Worked outside all his life, sat there with his sleeves and pants rolled up and boots on. But they were good times, used to enjoy them.

Elaine Tordoff (1950s)

My grandma used to take us, the younger grandchildren, she used to take us on t'sail boat down the canal on a Sunday afternoon ... near Marsh Lane ... and go right through to past the Sitting Goose, and t'Saddle and all that, oh, it was lovely. I've got some really happy memories of being round there. ... My dad, and uncles use to take all the kids on the park, because we weren't far from Avenham Park, you know, and mums used to be at home cleaning up

and dads take kids out on a Sunday afternoon.

My grandad used to take us to the Isle of Man for a day, sometimes, and we used to get the early morning boat seven o'clock and get back about midnight. ... Yes, he loved the Isle of Man, my grandad.

Rosa Malloy (1930s)

I can remember my mother's father, her mother died before I was born but her father was a great man, he was ninety-six when he died and we used to go, her brother and his wife lived in Wrexham, and my grandfather lived with them and so did his sister who was pernickety. They were wonderful people.

Every year four of us at a time would go with my father on the train as far as Crewe and my uncle would meet us and take us for a fortnight's holiday. Then he would bring that lot back and my father would take four more and swap over, three or four more and swap over and take them back for a holiday and he'd bring us home. And it was absolute heaven, they were wonderful people. ... It was a regular occurrence until the war put a stop to that. ...

They used to get ready for the Whitsun processions and come outside our house, in fact all the houses along St. Austin's Place where everybody gathered had pillars, and ... all the way along, my father and all the men who worked for him used to scrub all the pillars until they were all clean, all the windowsills were scrubbed and donkey-stoned and all the front door paths were scrubbed. ... I never walked in a Whitsuntide procession, my older sisters did, but by the time it came down to the younger ones, it would just cost too much for all of us to walk.



Smith's Recreation Ground

Was there a lot a lot of pride in representing the parish?

Oh yes, yes, and we used to enjoy watching our friends dressed up ... and then later on when I was teaching and we had the Guild processions and I used to go along to help get them ready and get the baskets for the flowers and all the rest of it ready.

Welcome to Frenchwood 6

Kushnud Ahmed (1970s onwards)

Once you were married, you came to England, where did you move to?

Nelson, we came to Nelson. My husband was studying, he was at university in Manchester. He was studying A levels, at that time ... he must have been in college, and then afterwards he went to university. He was studying engineering. After four years, he graduated and he started working for British Aerospace, where he is still working. He was twenty-one [when they got married].

What sort of house did you live in?

A tiny terraced house, really tiny, which I hated. It was dark, because I was so young, I can't remember exactly now. When I first came, it was dark and it was very crowded because there were six people living in the house already when I came. I didn't like it, I wanted to go back because we had a garden, and we had a nice open view, I hated it. That's where I lived for the first ... seven years, with my in-laws, my mother-in-law, father-in-law and so on. ... You don't just marry one person you marry a whole house full. ...

I had two children, a boy and a girl, then I had another one when I moved here. Two daughters and one son. ... They are all grown up now, one is married and she has also become a barrister, and two of them, they are accountants, they are unmarried. My husband was working in Preston all along. All those seven years. But he was travelling back to Nelson every evening.

So you moved to Frenchwood?

I moved into a street off London Road, a corner house, quite a nice-sized house, a terraced house and I started my life there, with my three children and my husband.

Did you own the house?

Yes, on a mortgage. ... We had to decorate everything. Because when we bought the house it needed modernisation, we had to start all over. ...

Well, moving from Pakistan to a little house, it was dark, it was dull, it was damp, it was disgusting and it was very depressing. So, from that house, moving to Preston into a bigger house with three bedrooms, only two young children and me and my husband ... plenty of space, we had a big massive bathroom and I designed everything myself, we had a really deep red coloured carpet, in those days that was a new thing. I really enjoyed living here. I was very happy.

Did you get to know your neighbours at all?

Yes, I was always a very outgoing person, I like to join in with the neighbours, and I had loads and loads of friends, it didn't matter who they were, whether they were English or Asian, or Jamaican, I just get on with everybody. And I knew an English young lady across the road, and she had similar age children, and they played together, and we would help each other, if we were going shopping, we would just take the kids to the park. And the next door family was Asian, so we got on very well.

And your children, whereabouts did they go to school?

They went to Frenchwood Nursery and to Frenchwood School, then obviously to High School. ... At that time we were moving on.

When I came to that house, my children were very small, as I said, I was ambitious about business, I had a business mind, I wanted to open up a business, so this was the first business I had, [after three years] I opened a clothes shop for Asian ladies. ...

[Asian men] were very against women becoming independent getting involved in business, they don't like it for some reason. ... And I was very disappointed ... None of our women are allowed to go in business ... I said to my husband, whether you like it or not, I am going to go for it. He knew that I had made my mind up ... I only had a hundred and fifty pounds in my pocket when I opened my business. I was always interested in textiles and I bought some fabrics from wholesalers and I started selling those, then I designed those fabrics into garments, and I designed clothes and I started from there. ... In 1988, I started manufacturing household textiles, I was making all these cushions and pillow cases.

"I think I'm just an ordinary, everyday person that loves life... I love anything that's going, I'll give it a whirl."

Chronicling the real-life experiences of the working-class inhabitants of a borough in Lancashire, *Memories from Frenchwood* is a compelling and vibrant look at multicultural life in British society, and the evolution of a community. Vividly brought to life by the memories of Frenchwood's inhabitants, issues such as education, religion, and employment are examined in the community, by the community.



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