Childhood Experiences of War & Peace

1939-1960

Communities Past & Futures Society

World War II
Childhood Experiences
of War & Peace

by

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Foreword

Having worked with many community and heritage projects across Scotland, Communities Past & Futures Society members are passionate about capturing and preserving the memories of those people who have been witness to social and cultural changes, and the events that inspired, challenged, motivated, or just haphazardly led to or effected their own lived experiences, positively or negatively, everyday or extraordinary. One such event was WWII. Many of those who were children at the time experienced family dislocation, evacuation, rationing and air raids, but also love, joy and play. This book was inspired by and is dedicated to those wartime children and their memories.

During this present global Covid 19 pandemic, we are especially grateful to everyone who shared their stories with us, and to the wonderful volunteers who contributed their time, energy, and creativity to helping us to record those precious memories, and to create a range of dissemination outputs, which include this book, a unique oral history filmed archive, an amazing project website, wonderful original artwork, and a series of mobile exhibitions.

This project has had its challenges, with Covid, long-Covid, lockdowns, supplier delays, staffing shortages, and tragically, the devastating loss of friends taken from us way too soon. There were times when we wondered if we could continue with this project, if we should continue. Ultimately, there was no choice, the stories and memories of our wartime children had to be recorded and shared, and our members, our volunteers, our respondents, and our professional colleagues, were adamant that we complete that task as well as possible under the circumstances. It is with great honour and pride that I shall always remember how we all supported each other through these difficult times, how we all worked together, and that the final successes of this project belong to all the whole team, for we are indeed a team - a strong, creative, ingenious and mighty team!

We are also grateful to National Lottery Heritage Fund and National Lottery Players for their generous financial support, and to Dr Sue Morrison (Oral History Research & Training Consultancy), Rachel Kelly (Project Coordinator), Rikki Traynor (Sound Specialist), Joyce Kelly (Artist in Residence), Mark Downie (Mark Development), and Rainy Days Productions, for their tremendous professional support that went over and above their original remits. Lastly but not least, we extend our deep gratitude to everyone who participated in this wonderful project - volunteers, respondents, event organisers, and many others, during what can truly be described as yet another extraordinary period. Thank you, All.

William Morrison
Communities Past & Futures Society October 2021

This book is dedicated to all children who have experienced war or conflict

Introduction

Explored through both archival research and oral testimony, this study brings to life the personal experiences of Glasgow's wartime children and their memories of peacetime, between the years 1939, when Britain declared war on Germany, and 1960, just three years after Prime Minister Harold MacMillan famously stated that "Our people have never had it so good." Delivered during an extraordinary global pandemic, we found ways to train and work with over thirty volunteers who participated in a number of ways: conducting research, writing text, interviewing volunteers (many via online platforms), editing, transcribing, creating original artwork based on oral testimony, organising events, and the list goes on! Together with our wonderful respondents, we and our volunteers generated an impressive oral history archive of more than thirty interviews and written testimonies.

Our respondents, many now aged in their 80s and 90s, told us how they and their families were effected during the war, with some having experienced bombings, and all remembering hearing enemy aeroplanes overhead and seeking refuge in air raid shelters. Some children seem to have enjoyed their war, whilst others have remarked that they were often frightened and missed their fathers, brothers or uncles who served overseas in the forces. Some youngsters were moved far away from their friends; some lived in former prisoner of war camps, both during and after WWII; and some forever lost contact with family members, friends and former neighbours. They told us many more stories about family, rationing, education, housing, healthcare provision, and leisure activities.

This oral history archive helps us to better understand this important period in Scotland's history and to assess how childhood experiences of conflict and aftermath moulded people's attitudes and actions, which thereafter contributed to Scottish society, culture and politics. It reveals how children lived and felt during their experience of conflict and then in coming to terms with the experiential, social, and cultural similarities and differences that came with peace.

Chapter One

Life before WWII

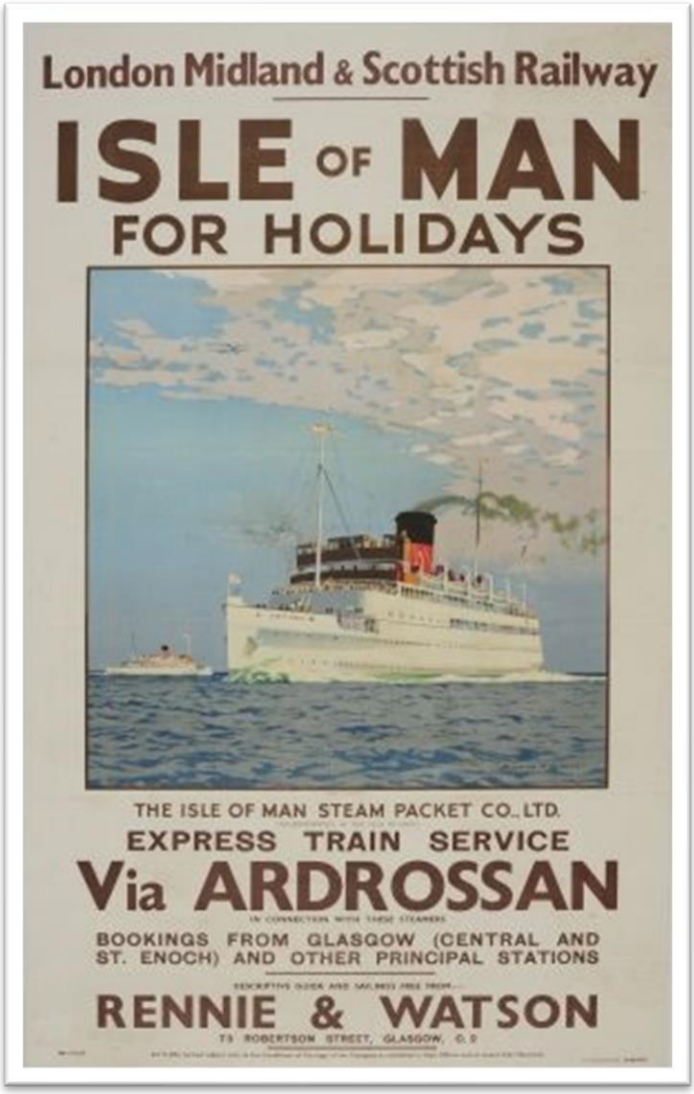
During the first eight months of 1939, life in Glasgow and the surrounding areas continued to be marred by the effects of the interwar 'Great Depression', which had lasted throughout much of the 1930s. Greater Glasgow had been one of the major British blackspots, experiencing high unemployment amongst working class men as heavy industry declined. Where industrial work was available, it was often dangerous and precarious in nature, and wages were poor, with the average male worker earning between £3.00 and £5.00 per week, whilst women earned much less. Whether in paid employment or not, most women still had labour intensive domestic and caring duties at home, and often took in 'home work', such as washing and mending, which was usually paid 'cash in hand' and not declared to the authorities. Officially, only one tenth of married women worked during this time, though the actual numbers of working women were undoubtedly far higher. Official numbers had increased during the interwar period as more middle-class women were working, at least until they married, in what were traditional male roles, such as clerical work, and in professions such as medicine and law.

Glasgow Tenement - Living Room - c. 1930

Until 1948 there was no National Health Service (NHS) and little in the way of welfare payments. Under the National Insurance Act 1911, working men who earned under a certain amount, and who paid a small amount of National Insurance a week, were entitled to see a doctor and get treatment. Hospital and consultation visits were not included in the entitlement. Wives and dependents were not covered by this scheme. In Glasgow, the Area Corporation was in control of most of the hospitals, which provided healthcare to people with no other access to medical assistance. However, there was still a lack of beds for women and children. Infant mortality was high, 17-18 per cent higher than in England; diphtheria and childhood illnesses were all too common. A 1935 report by local health and nutrition pioneer Boyd Orr stated that most people in the Greater Glasgow region experienced levels of nutrition insufficient to keep the population in good health. Meanwhile, housing for much of the region's population was often overcrowded and of such inferior quality that it had a negative impact on health and well-being.

Though they were still vulnerable to the diseases of the day, the middle and upper classes had access to more health care provision, mainly through the existence of subscription hospitals. They also had better housing at a time when buying a new semi-detached villa required proof of a steady wage, a £25.00 deposit, and a £1.00 repayment per week. And they could afford more nutritious food and could take advantage of the 1930s' healthy eating fads.

In 1939, despite the ongoing health and housing issues, Glaswegians continued to enjoy some lighter aspects of life. Children and adults of all social classes enjoyed notable sporting events in the first few months of that year. Football carried on, as did athletics events and golf tournaments. Greater Glasgow's many cinemas and dance halls remained open; attendees were mesmerised by new releases such as 'The Wizard of Oz', 'Gone with the Wind', and 'Jesse James', and they listened to the hits played by big bands and swing musicians, and danced to ballroom, jive, and jitterbug tunes. Escapism was then, as it is now, important to social and mental wellbeing.



Holidays to the Clyde Coast and beyond, for those that could afford them, experienced a boom in the summer of 1939. The Holidays with Pay Act, 1938, may have been a factor in this. The financially better off went further afield to places such as Scarborough and the Isle of Man, which were more expensive to access, and accommodation was pricier. For example, a night at a B&B in Millport cost 20p per night, whereas it was 25p per night in Douglas on the Isle of Man.

In May 1939, the shadow of impending war spread throughout Scotland. Families were required to register with schools to have their children evacuated if they had chosen that option. Older children may have been made aware of this by their parents and guardians. One can only wonder at the anguish experienced by the young people, and their families who had to make those decisions.

Trial blackouts were introduced in Glasgow in the July of 1939. At this time, ARP personnel were being recruited and trained – further tangible evidence that changes were afoot. Meanwhile, newsreels, newspapers and radio programmes reported events in Europe, such as the invasion of the then named Czechoslovakia, and then Poland.

Although a great deal of 'normalcy' remained throughout the 1930s and the first nine months of 1939, preparations for war were clearly evident. A lot was about to change for everyone across Scotland, including the lives of its children.

Childhood Memories

" Life before War"

"Yes, I do remember that. Because oddly enough…because me and my family were evacuated to relations in the country in County Glen outside Glasgow and we were there for three weeks and then the war broke out and we came back to our flat in Pollokshields. So we were never really evacuated there. I think it was a sort of panic move by my parents prior to the outbreak of the war and I remember the day the war broke out. I remember the adults crying and Chamberlain was on the radio. I remember that. I was seven."

Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

"In 1938 there was talk of war in Europe. Diplomats in many countries were involved in negotiations with Germany, in what turned out to be a hopeless quest to maintain peace. This did not mean a lot to an eleven-year-old kid like me. There were more important things to occupy the attention of my family. Namely, the fact that with the arrival of my brother Michael in 1934 we were overcrowded in our one apartment flat. My mum took a look at the houses in Riddrie which were in various stages of completion. She thought that this was a good district; a kind of better type of working-class area. However, the house allocated to us was in Garngad and mum was not too pleased. This was a tough district. The new houses built here, three apartment, with scullery and bathroom, hot water in a copper storage tank from the living room coal fire, which also heated a range in the scullery, was a vast improvement on the one apartment in Saltmarket. These house, two storey tenements, were classified as "slum clearance" and my mum was not happy about the class of the neighbours she might get. This may sound snobbish but she was no snob. She was, however, concerned that we might get what is known today as "neighbours from hell". We had not come from a slum and she therefore expected to be given a house in a district like Riddrie where, I suppose, the tenants were carefully selected. We ended up in 20 Provanmill Street, Garngad."

John Power, born 1927, brought up Saltmarket and Garngad, Glasgow. Courtesy of his daughter Dini Power

John Power, aged 20.
Courtesy of his daughter Dini Power

"The main memory was when we moved house. I remember the old-fashioned range in the living room. And I can remember my Aunt giving me tuppence to go down to the shops to get some sweets. I do remember the air raid shelters being built and having long conversations with the men building the shelters, and marvelling at their tin mugs for tea. And thinking I'd like some of that tea they had."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"My earliest memories as a child I can remember us going across the road. I don't know why I keep saying on our hands and knees. But that's the way I seem to see it as opposed to walking or me being carried. We lived opposite a very large synagogue. South Portland Street synagogue which had a very large basement. And when there was air raids- a lot of people, if they chose, could go to the basement across the road. And I have memories of that."

"I have some memories of living in the Gorbals, but I have extended memories because of the shop. At least once or twice a week from a very young age I had to go there to help out and I did all the dirty jobs, like when people wanted potatoes. In those days potatoes were delivered in sacks and in the winter half the sacks would be full of mud, so things like that. And ehm, being Jewish, in our shop, we also sold things like salt herrings and a product called schmaltz herrings. These were horrible, you had to get them out of a barrel."

Philip Cohen, born 1937, brought up in the Gorbals and then Shawlands

"Well, I felt it was just quite normal, although poor, a poor area. It was a good area for roller skating because it had lovely smooth roads in the area that I lived in. So a five bob pair of skates out of Marks and Spencer's that I got for my Christmas one year. I think that quite a few of us became very good roller skaters. In fact, I remember there used to be a hall, a dance hall in Partick, the F & F. And one night a week they used to have roller skating, just skating round the hall, so that was…and then football of course, played football in the street, yes, and hockey, we played hockey with tin cans out the midden. And a walking stick from an old guy that run a sale room and you could buy a walking stick for a penny. I've got all the bruises on my shin bone to this day. So yes, I felt it was a good area, a happy area. There was lots of pubs around the area. My Mum used to, that was one of her pastimes on a Friday night, leaning out the window with a cushion on the window ledge, leaning out there watching all the drunks getting thrown out the pub. So that was the area."

"It was a lovely area to be brought up in as a wee boy, lots to do, lots of mischief. That was the area I was brought up in."

"I think my favourite was going over on the ferry. I remember all the barrels outside the sheds waiting to be loaded on to the ships. And I used to walk over the barrels, you know, things like that. It wasn't really mischief. It was a hive of activity, there was always something to take your interest. Then you had the steamers on the other side of the river. The pleasure steamers. You know, that took you to Rothesay, Dunoon, Gourock, Greenock. As I said, that was the area and I could walk into town from where I lived it was only a couple of miles."

"Yes, oh yes. Not a lot. My Granny used to take me on the Campbeltown Steamers. She used to wake you up about five in the morning to go and join either the Dalriada or the Devar. And I think that's what gave me the notion that I wanted to be a Sailor because I was at sea. I went and joined the Merchant Navy. I was in the Merchant Navy for eight years. So I think it was my Granny taking me on the Campbeltown boats."

George Burns, born 1926, brought up in Bridgeton then Kinning Park

Chapter Two

An overview of the early days of WWII

Britain and France declared war on Germany on the 3rd of September 1939; Hitler had invaded Poland two days earlier. There was a thunderstorm in Glasgow that day. Many of our respondents, who were then children, remember hearing the Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, announcing the declaration of war on the radio. Children had different reactions to this news across Britain. Many were old enough to know some of the consequences of World War I (1914-1918), which had ended only twenty-one years earlier, and had left lasting impacts throughout the interwar period (1918-1939). Many children's parents had lost family members and/or had family members that were injured during that Great War. War was indeed a frightening prospect to those children.

Respondents have recalled that, as children, they heard family members being extremely upset at the announcement, and they themselves became distraught as a result. One girl remembers throwing herself on her bed and crying. Other children were convinced, on hearing the news, that it might be a good thing. One lady, in Glasgow, who was ten years old at the time, said that she was excited by the news, as she thought it meant she would not have to go to school. We have also heard of an eight-year-old Glasgow boy who was given a clip round the ear by his granny for cheering when he heard the announcement. He had confused the war with stories in the comics that he read.

The first eight months or so of the war were known as the 'Phoney War'; this lasted until 10th May 1940, when Germany invaded France. Yet, on the very the day that war was declared, tragedy hit Glasgow and was felt far beyond the region's borders. The SS Athenia was a steam turbine transatlantic passenger liner, built in Glasgow in 1923 for the Anchor-Donaldson Line, which later became the Donaldson Atlantic Line. On 3rd September 1939, the passenger ship that had embarked from Glasgow, calling at Liverpool and Belfast, was sunk by a German U Boat (U-30), whilst heading for Montreal and Quebec. Passengers included North Americans, Germans, and Austrians, and families and children from Scotland. A lot of those people were escaping


WAR EXTRA

Los Angeles Examiner 9 A.M. FINAL

LINER TORPEDOED!

Allied Armies and Navies in Action

British Colonies Join Forces in War

311 Americans Among Passengers; Many Saved

America Can Keep Out of World War

Crisis at a Glance

BULLETINS

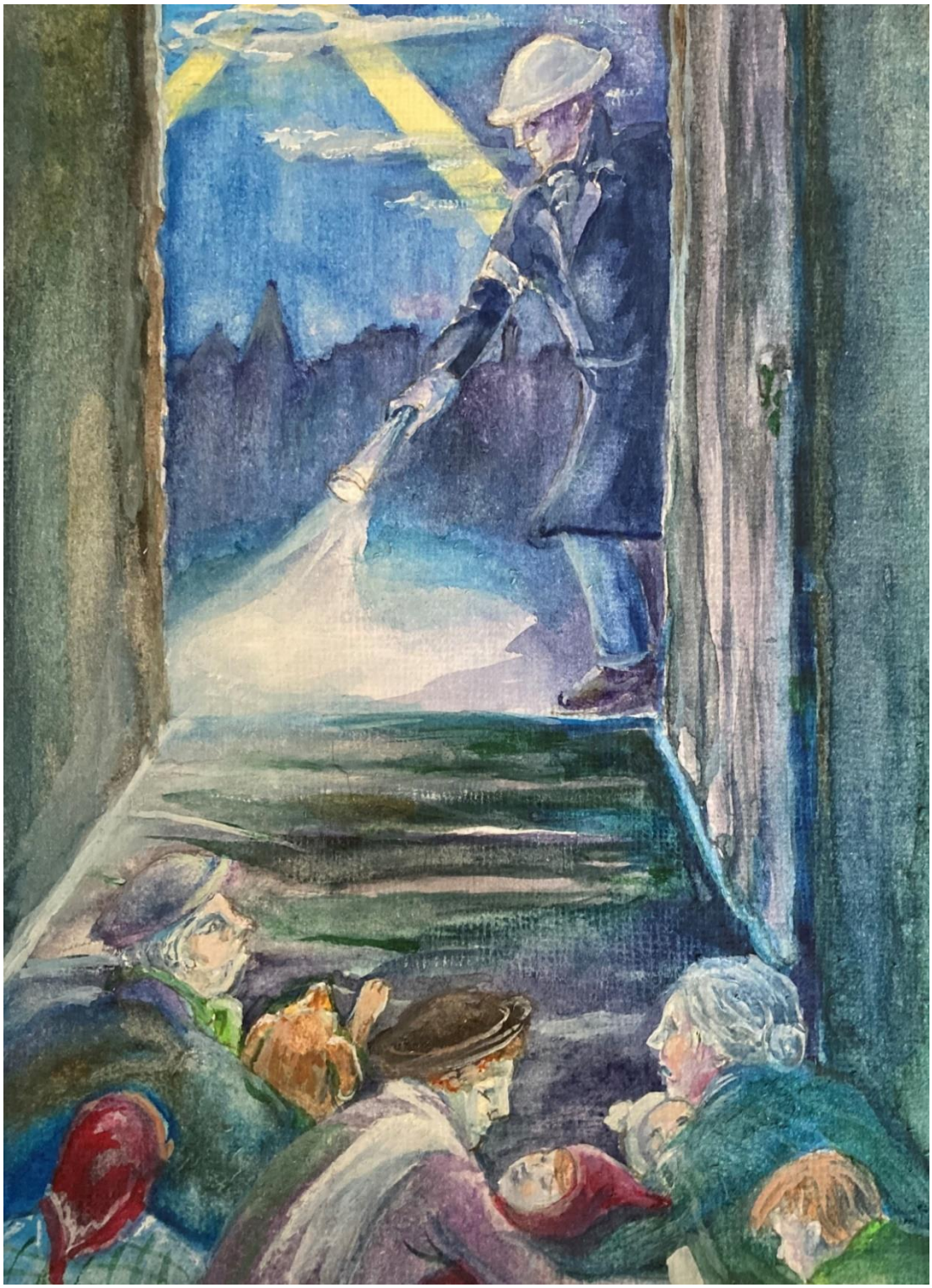
from imminent war. Of the 1,101 passengers and 315 crew onboard, an estimated 112 were killed, including 69 women and 16 children. Many others suffered horrific burns and other injuries. SS Athenia was the first UK ship to be sunk by Germany during WWII, with the sinking condemned as a war crime. Fearing that the USA might now join the war against them, German authorities did not accept responsibility for the sinking of a civilian passenger liner until 1946. The tragedy of the highly regarded Glasgow-built SS Athena was an immediate indication to the people of the Greater Glasgow, and beyond, of the brutality of the war to come.

Meanwhile, and also on very day that war was declared, the first air raid sirens sounded across Glasgow as it was mistakenly thought that a gas attack on the city was going to be an immediate consequence of going to war. Many people were particularly worried about the threat of bombing attacks from German Zeppelins. This caused the same mix of distress and excitement amongst children as the announcement of war had done. Some children were perturbed by the fear displayed by their parents, and some still equated the situation with a 'Boy's Own' adventure. In the event, bombs were not dropped on Glasgow until July 1940, though the ensuing fear was very real. The early signs of the brutality of war were not just reserved for human tragedy. Amidst a real fear of gas attacks and deeming it to be merciful, some people had their pets put down, knowing that there were no gas masks for animals. This was supported by the Government, which issued a pamphlet urging people either to rehome pets in the country or have them put to sleep. This advice was opposed by animal charities but it was followed by residents in Glasgow and across Britain. In total, 750,000 pets met this sad fate nationwide. Obviously, many pet owners and their children would have been devasted.

Parents had been asked to register, in early 1939, if they wanted their children to be evacuated in the event of war. During the first three days of September 1939, many thousands of children, mothers, and teachers, were evacuated from Glasgow. Some went out to the countryside, as far away as Oban and Ayrshire, and some went to suburbs such as Pollokshields and Cathcart. However, only around 50 per cent of those who registered in Glasgow were actually evacuated, which was a disappointment to authorities, but the figure was better than in some other areas of Scotland.

Those children who stayed home would have used various kinds of shelters during early air-raid warnings. In the first days of WWII, inter-area coordination of shelter construction was poor in Glasgow and the surrounding area, and people were often advised to congregate in the lower flats

or the basements of tenements, which were strengthened with wooden supports. These areas of buildings were often used as playgrounds by children during and after the war. Children who lived in houses helped their fathers to build air-raid shelters in their gardens. Here, Morrison and Anderson shelters were issued free to people who earned under £5.00 per annum (around £350 in modern money). In one area it was recommended that if an air-raid happened whilst children were at school, or if they were fifteen or less minutes from home, then they should go home to shelter.



'ARP Man', by Joyce Kelly, Artist in Residence, Communities Past & Futures Society

Air-raids aside, children had to cope through the night-time blackouts that were imposed at the start of the war. It could be very dangerous to be outdoors in a blackout. At least one child in the Glasgow area was killed in those early days, due to the darkness. She died crossing the road and was hit by a vehicle being driven without headlamps.

There was some excitement for children when military regiments left the area to go to war; both adults and children turned out to wave them off. Thousands of people lined the streets to see the Glasgow regiment, the Highland Light Infantry, leave the city. 602 Squadron was based in Coplaw Street, in the city's Govanhill area. It became famous in the throughout the world for its amazing record during the Battle of Britain. The Squadron was posted to Drem in East Lothian, in September 1940, from where its spitfires and brave air crews were sent to attack the German Luftwaffe, which was attacking British warships. Paisley born Archie McKellar shot down the first German plane over British soil, in October 1939 – a Heinkel HE-111 bomber over Humbie, near Edinburgh.

Initially, rationing was voluntary, and many people did their best to cut back on food and sweets, whilst some restaurants held 'meatless' days to help address shortages. Nevertheless, food and sweets became increasingly difficult to source, and formal rationing began on the 8th of January 1940. Children were issued with different coloured ration books, with different entitlements according to their age. This, perhaps more than anything, brought home to children the seriousness of war, and that life was not going to be the same for a long time.

Children across the country became aware of the threat of hostile invasion in April 1940, when Norway was invaded by the Germany. Horrifically, some youngsters overheard their parents discussing family suicide pacts. Rumours were rife, and the arrival of new families came under suspicion of being potential German spies; the reversal of this was that incomers who had fled their own area for safety were placed in the frightening position of being suspected of treason. Some people, including children, made a game out of watching people they thought might be spies. Clearly, Big Brother is not a new phenomenon.

Childhood Memories

" Air Raid and Gas Masks"

Anderson Shelter, Stirling Avenue, Bearsden, Courtesy of Nikki Anderson

"The old air raid shelters they were still on the street. I never heard anybody mention that they stayed in the air raid shelters. But everybody who'd stayed in the close they reckoned it was safer to be staying in the close rather than going into the air raid shelters. The houses that had back gardens they had air raid shelters dug into the ground for maybe about five or six people maybe more and they were covered in soil. Some of my pals had stayed in those houses."

"Every close had what they called a baffle wall, it was to stop having a bomb dropped in, or shrapnel going into the close."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"Yes they were built (communal air raid shelters) some in front of the house in the street. We had a park…a field at the back. They were there for the duration of the war I would think. Nobody used them. They were smelly places."

"I think some people had Anderson shelters. And we had friends who had one in their basement (air raid shelter). It was a trap door at the side of the fireplace and it fascinated me because they had the basement. It was fully fitted with furniture, a cooker and different things and I thought I'd love to play in here. It was a big house with a big cellar that's how they were able to do that."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

James McLaughlin, 1940s. Courtesy of his daughter, Allison O'Donnell

Air raid shelter, Wellshot Road, Shettleston. Courtesy of Charles McKenzie, 'Lost Glasgow' FB

"We were one up with this sort of winding staircase. And when the sirens went, I remember being wrapped in a blanket, so I must've been quite small, and taken down. And we just went into the well at the back door of the close and we stayed there until the all-clear sounded. So, we didn't have an air raid shelter or anything."

M. McKinnon, born 1937, brought up Govanhill and Southside

"If there was an air raid, some of the neighbours would come down to our house because it was on the ground floor. I don't really remember it, but that's what my Mother would tell me. And the people you know, if they wanted to borrow sugar or anything like that, you know, well you did it. Maybe they didn't have much. It was always tea; people were always looking for tea. Because I remember somebody coming to the house to borrow some and my Mum said, 'Oh sorry, I've not got any', and I said, 'Yes you have Mum, it's in that bottom drawer' (laugh). She probably wanted to kill me."

Cecilia Murray, born 1942, brought up in Gorbals and Castlemilk

Cecilia Murray aged 3 months, January 1943, with her parents Dolly and Charles Coyle. Her Father died in the war

"I do remember getting wakened and taken down to the air raid shelter quite often. My Father had built a bunk in it. So. my sister and I would be taken down and we would just be put into the bunk and drop off. I don't remember being scared or anything. Don't remember noise."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up in Old Kilpatrick

"Because I was born in 1940, I don't have any memories of the war. But I do remember that outside the entrance to the flat there was a wall."

Marion Penny, born 1940, brought up in Townhead and Ruchazie

Restored Old Linen Bank, Gorbals, which stood beside an air raid shelter during WWII. Courtesy of Ann McGuire, 'Lost Glasgow', FB

"I remember the air raid shelters in Anniesland. It was a tenement we lived in there near Anniesland Cross and there was a square shelter type thing in the back green. I don't ever remember going down into one because I was gone the first five years but these shelters were there for many, many years later. The shelter was for six families."

(Winifred) Margaret Baker Davidson, born 1937, brought up in Glasgow and Fintry

"I had a brown corduroy. What they called a siren suit. Churchill used to wear them."

Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

"Also in Kinning Park, they had these shelters down the middle of Cornwall Street where they lived. And my cousin Francis got knocked down and killed there. There was hardly any cars about. But it seems some guy was driving along and waving to his girlfriend or something and he must've come out from behind the shelter or something."

Cecilia Murray, born 1942, brought up in Gorbals and Castlemilk

Anderson shelter, overgrown, Prospecthill Place, Greenock image by Stephen McAllister

"This is a recall from my Mother. It always happened on a Friday night and she would put us to bed with very warm clothes on. And I remember the sirens coming and I had no idea what it meant. I was totally innocent of any fear."

"I can still picture it…we lived in a building that had two families downstairs and two families upstairs. So we shared our shelter which was all brick, with the family upstairs. And my Mother would bring whatever you could get for snacks in those days. And I remember the lady upstairs, she was a lot older than my parents and she'd put her head down and she'd be mumbling and I said, 'what is she doing Mum' and my Mother said she's praying. She kept doing this when we heard the bombs coming down."

"My grandparents had an Anderson shelter under the ground. I remember one time my Uncle came diving into the shelter. And he was standing outside having a cigarette and he could see a bomb coming and dove right into shelter."

Rene Walters (nee Catherine McMenamin), born 1938, brought up in Dumbarton

Shelter in an Edinburgh garden. Courtesy of Christine Wood, 'Shotts History', FB

"See, everybody just went into the close. And the closes were blocked up with steel girders. And everybody just sat in the close. And the baffle wall of course was in front of the close to stop anything coming in."

George Burns, born 1926, brought up in Bridgeton then Kinning Park

"I remember having a Mickey Mouse gas mask. And I don't know if I ever wore it, because it pulled all your hair with the big rubber straps on it. I don't remember getting training as to how to put it on or when to put it on or whatever. That was at Calder Street School which was just round the corner from us. So I must've been about five."

M. McKinnon, born 1937, brought up Govanhill and Southside

"When the siren would come there were two types of shelters, the Morrison shelters and the Anderson shelters. One was a corrugated inverted 'U' sat on the ground; well, the ground was dug out. One of our next-door neighbours had that one. We had the other shelter, which was a solid steel table, you couldn't move it. My memory of that there was of my Mother and her four sons underneath the table. It wasn't big enough for my Dad, so he'd be sitting in a chair, up close, with his head under the table in case there was a bomb and the house caved in, at least his head would be okay. And my Mum would come downstairs, and she had blankets or pillows, and we just sat there until we got the 'all clear'."

Philip Cohen, born 1937, brought up in The Gorbals and then Shawlands

Air raid shelters and baffle walls in a Glasgow backcourt. Courtesy of James Ross, 'Dear Auld Glasgow Toon', FB

"My Mother grew up in Maryhill and she worked in McLellan's Rubber Factory during the war doing war work. And she said that when the air raid sirens went off in Maryhill most of the people in that close would go down to the lower level and they would all get together in somebody's apartment and they would try to stay there. Again, if a bomb would hit, it would have no real benefit. But at least they were all in one place. They were giving each other moral support. But she did tell me that the two nights of the Clydebank Blitz they could see the fires. And I think they did walk up to a place where they could see the flames that lit up the entire sky."

Murdo Morrison, born 1950, brought in up Scotstoun and Drumchapel

Family gathering at grandparent's flat in Anniesland. Murdo Morrison's father is holding him.

"We had the ordinary masks. The gas masks. But my brother he had one of these ones that you sat in. And he screamed every time he got put in it. And my mammy says. I'm no putting my wean in that."

Cabreg, born 1935, brought up in London Road, Glasgow, and Pollok

"I too had a gas mask which when I was a little bit bigger, I can remember wearing. It was a Mickey Mouse gas mask - sort of reddish/pink colour and had a floppy nose which people would annoyingly come over and flip with the finger. I can remember after the war playing with it. Also, we had a metal bucket in the house which was filled with a fine sand and I used to sit and play with that, running it through my fingers. There was also a stirrup pump which you were supposed to use to help put out fires. Eventually these items disappeared, so maybe someone came round and collected them."

Evelyn Humberstone, born 1939, brought up Argyll Street, Glasgow

"They were the people who came round seeing if your blackout curtains were working. My husband's Mother got ten shillings fine because there was a chink of light showing from her house."

"My Mum was very particular with the blackout. We had the tape on the windows. My Dad was artistic, so instead of just doing crosses on the windows, he had spider's webs and things. It was brown sticky paper and he made patterns on the windows."

"I was small but I do remember going out with my Dad. He had a good torch with a shield on it."

"My most vivid recollection was when the war ended and all the street lights went on, I couldn't believe how all the house windows with the lights on and their curtains open. It was quite miraculous, it was wonderful seeing them all."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"In the early part of 1939 it was evident that war with Germany was a distinct possibility. The newspapers were daily reporting on the delicate state of diplomacy between Great Britain and Germany. The names of Adolph Hitler, dictator of Germany, Benito Mussolini, dictator of Italy and General Franco of Spain were mentioned every day together with the British government representative, Neville Chamberlain. Mr Chamberlain is remembered best for his return from a meeting with Herr Hitler. He waved a piece of paper as he got off the plane saying, "Peace in our time". Within a few days of historic statement, Germany invaded Poland and Britain declared war on Germany. So much for peace in our time. We heard the news from newspaper sellers, who carried large bundles of newspapers under their arms shouting, as they hurried through the streets. "war declared" An air of excitement prevailed and the hair stood out on the back of my neck. It was exciting and scary. Everyone had to be issued with gas masks. I remember that we went to the local public hall to collect ours. I think that we had to have them fitted and adjusted in the hall to ensure a really tight fit around the face and chin. The ones for babies were a weird contraption. It consisted of a base large enough to hold a baby and it had a hinged lid with a plastic window. It was also fitted with hand bellows. Operated by an adult, which was designed to supply filtered air to the infant. It was a blessing that they never had to be used as they would probably have suffocated the child. The next thing we had to have were ration books. We were issued with these at the City Halls, Candleriggs."

John Power, born 1927, brought up Saltmarket and Garngad, Glasgow. Courtesy of his daughter Dini Power

"I don't really remember the day I got it, no. We all got the gas masks. Horrible things. I don't think I wore it, I think I tried it on a couple of times but that's about it. What a waste of money they were, really and truly, because there never was any gas, there was never any necessity for it. So to my way of thinking now that was a complete waste of money, although in the First World War, gas was used against the army. There were a lot of people gassed and it affected their health very much, so that's probably the reason why they were taking this precaution in case the Germans used the gas again."

George Burns, born 1926, brought up in Bridgeton then Kinning Park

"I don't remember any training. Gas masks, I didn't particularly like them. It did feel a bit claustrophobic if you ever had one on. You got the round bit that's got the filter and at the side its rubber, you've got to sort of pull it on and when you're talking, you're all muffled. I never had to wear a gas mask for any length of time. We always had to carry them about with us."

Philip Cohen, born 1937, brought up in The Gorbals and then Shawlands

"I don't remember the early stages of the war. I read about all that in later life but my father was an air raid warden and I sat through plenty of raids with my Mickey Mouse gas mask handy after I started primary school in 1943. I think that the Kelvin Hall was used as a factory for making barrage balloons which I think was the main reason for my evacuation along with my mother. Well, that and our proximity to the Clyde with docks and shipyards only about 1 mile away. Also, Clydebank was only about 8 miles from us and the blitz there started, I think, in March 1941."

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

"When we went back to living in Clydebank there were gas masks lying out everywhere. The ones for babies, they were rubber with a kind of Perspex and I think they had bellows for putting the air in for the kids…I don't remember wearing one myself, I possible did, but I can't remember wearing one."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"I remember the blackout. I remember we had big heavy curtains and they had to be really pulled tight or you had the man with his tin hat outside shouting 'watch that light, get that light out' or blow his whistle. I can remember these things although I was quite young at the time."

M. McKinnon, born 1937, brought up Govanhill and Southside

"My parents always quarrelled when the air raid siren sounded. My father wanted us all to go to the shelter, my mother insisted on staying in the house. She was fatalistic, and claimed that if it had her "name on it" the bomb would get her whether she was in the shelter or the house. I do not remember ever spending time in the shelter during an air raid. Mum won this argument. This, however, was in the future. As yet no bombing raids had been made on Glasgow. These were to occur the following year, 1941."

John Power, born 1927, brought up Saltmarket and Garngad, Glasgow. Courtesy of his daughter Dini Power

"Oh yes, yes, I remember them. You had Walt Disney ones, you know, in the shape of Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck. I don't ever remember wearing them in anger, we only ever wore them for fun, because they were funny. But I never had any experience of needing to use them. For instance, I don't remember ever having a practice you know. I don't remember at school ever a practice of what happens if it ever gets bombed or gassed or whatever. I don't remember that ever happening, but we had the gas masks, oh certainly, yes, but they were only fun objects."

David McNeice, born 1937, brought up in Greenock and Millport

"The bell would go, we would don the gas mask and either dive under the desk, which wasn't all that easy, or sometimes they would say to you, 'You can run home, say hello to your Mum and just come back again and come straight back to school, don't dilly dally on the way'. We lived quite near the school; it was only about two minutes from the school. If you had a friend who lived a bit further, you could take them with you. It varied, sometimes it was a dive under the desk and sometimes it was a wee trip home."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"We had a gas meter under the stairs and initially we were told if there was an air attack we were supposed to hide under the stairs. But I didn't like that idea because the gas meter, for such a little tiny lad, it was kind of frightening, this thing hissed and there was a smell of gas."

"This was where we kept the gas masks. Not that we ever had to use them, but I remember playing with them later on. I couldn't imagine having to wear one of these things, but of course, many people had to."

Ian Coombe, born 1942, brought up Gosport, then Glasgow

"Conscription of able-bodied men began and before long we were to see some of the local youths appear on leave in uniform."

"Salvage drives were organised and everyone was encouraged to collect waste paper, aluminium and other metals to help the war effort. Even the railings surrounding gardens were removed to be melted down for war purposes. I remember one advertisement in the newspapers asking for the public to donate old pots and pans to help the war effort. This advert stated that even an old envelope shouldn't be burned as it could be recycled into cardboard as a component of a rifle cartridge."

"Those men who were not conscripted for the armed services because of their age or because they were unfit were drafted into the A. R. P (Air Raid Precaution) later to be called the Civil Defence. My dad was nearly blind in one eye since childhood and was not "called up" for military service although he was otherwise physically fit. He became an ARP man. Scrap metal and paper of all kinds, including books, were handed in at ARP depots. Dad thought a few books would not be missed and it would be a shame for them to be recycled. He brought some books home. A copy of Sir Walter Scott's "Ivanhoe" was given to me, which I read. I found it a rather long drawn-out story. He also brought home a few volumes of "War Illustrated" which covered the First World War. I thought it rather odd that a section covering allies in that war referred to the Italians as "The heroic sons of Italy" Now under Mussolini, they were an enemy, and were called "Wops" and other unflattering names. The Italian shops were attacked by hooligans."

John Power, born 1927, brought up Saltmarket and Garngad, Glasgow. Courtesy of his daughter Dini Power

"My earliest memory is of being lifted out of my cot in the middle of the night, stuffed in my pram - all by torchlight - and half carried and bumped down the three flights of stairs, along the close and into Argyle Street. Turning left into Robertson Street and crossing the road towards Robertson lane - I can still feel the pram bumping over the cobblestoned road and lane. About half way down the lane we were guided into a building and down into the basement where we stayed until the 'all clear'. But I don't remember much of that as I usually fell sleep. Pop (my grandfather) was a Fire Watcher, looking out for dropping incendiaries. My Aunt Kathleen was in the Civil Defence and would stay out in the streets helping people find somewhere safe during the bombing and attend anyone who got injured. I can see her now wearing a longish grey trench coat, tin helmet and her gas mask in its box on string and slung around her shoulder."

Evelyn Humberstone, born 1939, brought up Argyll Street, Glasgow

"My earliest memory was when I would've been four so that was during the air raids and it's the air raids that would be the only thing I do remember on that occasion. Probably that's the reason, because it was an air raid. I don't remember anything previous to that. So, I don't remember the actual beginning of the war as such."

David McNeice, born 1937, brought up in Greenock and Millport

"I remember we all had to get black curtains and we had to close them all the time at night. And my Father was an Air Raid Warden and it was his job to walk around and make sure there was no little bits of light coming through."

Rene Walters (nee Catherine McMenamin), born 1938, brought up in Dumbarton

"I marched to school with one of the wee boxes, you know, that had gas masks in. The air siren going and we all got ushered into one big hall because we were all crying. I just remember my age, I don't remember anybody older, I don't know where they went. It was just the ones my age. I can remember blackouts being put up on the windows, black curtains, so there was no light coming in and they would shout if there was a light showing. That would be the ARP shouting 'Put out that light, put out that light', and the streets were black and some places had what they called baffle walls. And when I look back on it now, I think it was some kind of electric sub stations or… and something happened and it didn't blast right out when I think about it now. We didn't know what it was, we just used to play round about it. I remember going out to Birkenshaw to my Uncle's. I don't know if we were evacuated out there or stayed for a wee while and I think I went to school out there. When the air raids came at night time, I remember mostly. The air raid shelters were in Glasgow Green and I'm sure they were dug away down. I had big brothers and sisters so I remember my brothers taking me on their backs or on their shoulders and there was a big blanket thrown over you, you know, to keep you cosy you know, to go to these air raid shelters. That was near the People's Palace they had that. And I remember they had a barrage balloon there as well just beside it. If you were facing it, it was there to your left. It was a bit that was all cordoned off, it was all covered up, so it must've been something to do with the army in there. The air raid shelters, the men would stand at the mouth of the air raid shelters and smoke. I don't know how the aeroplanes didn't see us with all the men. It's a wonder we didn't get killed with all the smoke. I remember getting wakened during the night, hearing the 'bang, bang'. I remember eventually we got an air raid shelter in the back green and it was only bare bricks and my Mum just hated going in it. She said you were safer in the buildings, they were stronger."

Cabreg, born 1935, brought up in London Road, Glasgow, and Pollok

Chapter Three

Evacuation

'Evacuees', by Joyce Kelly, Artist in Residence, Communities Past & Futures Society

Britain's plans for evacuation during WWII have their roots in the loss of life, on the home front, caused by Zeppelin bombing during WWI. One thousand five hundred people died as a result of this bombardment. The bombing of Guernica, in 1937, during the Spanish Civil War, then solidified the need for an evacuation plan in the minds of the British government. Children from the Kindertransport, which started in 1938, were evacuated to Glasgow, as were a small number of the total of the children evacuated from Guernsey in 1940. Some of those children were fostered in families living in the Southside of Glasgow.

THE CORPORATION OF GLASGOW

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

EDUCATION OFFICES,
129 BATH STREET,
GLASGOW, C.2.

March, 1939.

TO THE PARENTS OR GUARDIANS
OF CHILDREN IN GLASGOW.

DEAR SIR (MADAM),

Evacuation of Children from Glasgow in the Event of a National Emergency.

It will already be known to you that the Government are making plans to enable parents who live in the crowded areas of large cities to have their children transferred to safer places if war should ever break out.

The city of Glasgow is included in the plans, and all parents in Glasgow, particularly those who live in the crowded parts of the city, will want to consider whether their children should be included in the arrangements

Under the arrangements which are being made the children would gather at the primary school nearest their home and the older and younger members of each family would as far as possible be evacuated together. They would go to the chosen places in the care of teachers who would remain with them. They would live in the country in houses where they would be welcome. Arrangements would be made to let you know their new addresses as quickly as possible. Children under school age would also be allowed to go if the mother or a woman friend went with them, and all the children of one family would be sent to the same place.

In any case, I have to ask you to show on the attached form whether or not you would wish your children to be included in the scheme. This question is being put to you now, so that the Government may be able to complete, in peace time, their plans for the evacuation of children from this city, if, unfortunately, war should break out.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

R. M. Allardyce

Evacuation Officer.

When WWII seemed inevitable after the German invasion of Czechoslovakia in March 1939, the British authorities began preparing for the evacuation of children, mothers and infants, and infirm people, from areas that were considered likely targets for bombing and gas attacks. In May 1939, people were required to register for evacuation. It was a voluntary scheme. The order came to 'evacuate forthwith' on the 31st of August 1939 before war was declared. The government planned to evacuate three and a half million people in the UK but ultimately only evacuated one and a half million. Posters appeared urging parents to evacuate children. Nevertheless, some people preferred to go into the uncertainty of the wartime situation with their children at home, especially when faced with the prospect of seeing them leave and there been no end to the separation in sight. Some people were also suspicious of the official reasons for evacuation. The government had poster campaigns to encourage evacuation, and the press published photographs of happy evacuees to encourage families to evacuate family members and children. Glasgow children were pictured with refugee children in Perthshire, taking in the harvest. Though small than anticipated, the evacuation was still the largest migration of people that the country had ever experienced and the first time in British history that mass evacuation was deemed

Kindertransport, with 'kinder' meaning 'children' in German, was the name given to the mission which took thousands of children to safety ahead of World War Two. The mission helped 10,000 children to escape from parts of Europe that were controlled by the Nazis.

necessary. The operation took place over three days from the first day of September 1939. And was an immense logistical task. The operation was code named ‘Operation Pied Piper’.

Many evacuees returned to their homes in late 1939 and early 1940, after Britain’s declaration of war against Germany failed to bring bombings and gas attacks; this period was labelled the ‘Phoney War’, but it was followed by further evacuations in 1941, this time in the wake of the Blitz bombings and the threat of V1 bombs. Evacuations to Canada and Australia continued despite the torpedoing of the SS Athenia in September 1939, which had private evacuees on board. When the SS City of Benares was torpedoed in September 1940, also carrying evacuees, the short-lived policy of these evacuations ended. By the conclusion of WWII, three and a half million people, mainly children, had experienced evacuation.

The children who did get evacuated would usually gather at their local school to begin their journey by train, bus or boat, and teachers were frequently involved in organising evacuations and sometimes accompanied the children. Tiny, labelled suitcases contained their incredibly basic luggage, which consisted of a toothbrush, a change of underwear, and a few other essentials. They also carried their gas masks, often wrapped in paper and string. Some people arranged their own private evacuations to relatives in the countryside.

The Women’s Voluntary Services for Air-Raid Precautions, precursor to the WRVS and the RVS, helped with the complicated coordination of evacuation. Local children were also often involved to work in reception centres for evacuees. Residents were obliged to take in evacuees and could be

fined if they refused. Those who took them in were given an allowance for their care. The result of these measures was that some people resented their new young charges, or took them in only to supplement their own meagre income.


GOVERNMENT EVACUATION SCHEME
CITY OF GLASGOW

NAME (IN BLOCK CAPITALS) JENNY RONALD

ADDRESS 75 ARMADALE ST GLASGOW E1

DATE OF BIRTH (If Child) 24-11-32

SCHOOL ATTENDED ALEXANDRA PDE

DESTINATION

(a) COUNTY ARGYLL AYR

(Parish or detraining Railhead) ARDRISHAIG

(b) BURGH

Evacuation in Scotland in early September 1939 consisted mainly of evacuations from Edinburgh, Rosyth, Glasgow, Clydebank, Dundee, Inverkeithing and Queensferry. The Department of Health for Scotland had been preparing for it, like the rest of the country, from early 1939. Glasgow saw only half the expected number evacuate on the first day, but this rose to 70 per cent by the third day. In total, up to 190,000 people were evacuated from Glasgow. This was one of the most successful evacuations in Scotland in terms of numbers. Many people were evacuated to suburbs such as Cathcart, Knightswood and Pollokshields. Some were even evacuated to Clydebank, and others to rural Lanarkshire, Perthshire, Ayrshire, Rothesay and Kintyre, amongst other places. Almost 120,000 left Glasgow at this point. Most were home by Christmas 1939, due to their being no mass bombing up to that point. By the time of the Clydebank Blitz on the 14th March 1941, only twenty thousand people in Scotland were still evacuated.

From Spring 1941, in the wake of the devastating Clydeside air-bombings, Greenock, Port Glasgow and Dumbarton were evacuated, along with some from the original Glasgow areas, although vast numbers of Glaswegians chose not to evacuate on this occasion. Fifty-eight-thousand of those that evacuated during this period remained evacuated for months or years.

Evacuees had a wide variety of different experiences across the UK and the world and throughout the war. Some had difficult and occasionally horrific times. Most felt homesick, and children could be separated from siblings, which they found even more hard. They could feel out of place as they did not understand the local accent or dialect, and the locals found it difficult to understand them. Children, on occasion, felt unwanted by their foster parents. These children were sometimes made to eat in different rooms from their hosts and were generally treated poorly, as if they were barely tolerated. People were known to exploit the grant money they got for the children by taking in far too many evacuees, and some were known to use the children as free labour. City children were often stereotyped by country and towns' people as thieves, and as being dirty and louse ridden.

There were occasions when it was difficult to house children due to these false perceptions. ‘City kids’ were the last to be picked at reception centres, or were only reluctantly taken in when walked round the doors by supervisers insisting that they be lodged. This attitude haunted Glasgow children, and the MP for Glasgow, Mr Buchanan, felt compelled to stand up for them in the House of Commons, as comments were made by other MPs about their ‘verminous’ state.

Children were sometimes neglected, and worse, by their hosts; some wrote begging letters to their parents pleading to be taken home, others ran away, sometimes making their own way home. Evacuated children from Glasgow were seen jumping on trams to get back home from Renfrewshire, and on trains to return home from a placement in Moffat.

Other children had positive experiences whilst evacuated and were treated like family members from the offset. These children were supported and adapted well to country life, helping around farms and with other types of work. Some were known to stay connected with their foster families for many decades after the war ended. There are also examples where they stayed with their foster parents after the war, perhaps after having lost their birth families, and others stayed with or returned to foster communities and married their young wartime sweethearts. Good homes during the war could mean that children found it difficult to adapt to life back with their original families. Long absences meant that children who were every young when evacuated, often did not recognise their parents or feel that they belonged with them when they returned home. The situation of private evacuations and those sent overseas brought its own challenges and advantages. These experiences, good and bad, would often stay with those who were evacuated throughout the rest of their lives.

Childhood Memories

"Evacuation"

"So that's the story. That's my first memory of the war. But then my Father, he must've had inside knowledge because he decided that Millport was not in any of Hitler's plans. And he decided that we would move during the war to Millport. So we left, and I think we stayed there for two or three years when I started school. So I've got fond memories of Millport. I don't remember it ever raining in Millport. It was always sunshine. And of course, as evacuees. I mean we weren't officially evacuees because my Father had decided we would go there. But we were classed as evacuees and we weren't very popular on the island. The children I mean, I don't know about the adults. Coming from Greenock there was all sorts of things like coming across gardens with grass and apple trees and pear trees. The part of Greenock that I come from these things didn't exist. So, we were known as the apple stealers. So we weren't too popular. But I enjoyed being there."

"I have to tell you a story (from Millport during the time he was evacuated there). Milk also got delivered by horse and cart and my brother, my older brother he got the job of, the dairy gave him a job when he finished school, in the afternoon, of returning the horse to the farm that it was hired from. Which would have probably been half an hour's walk with this horse. Just the horse, not the cart, just the horse. Anyway, he had an accident of some description. I think he broke an arm and so the dairy said that I could take the horse back. Now bear in mind I could only have been about five or six, and here was me leading what I thought was a huge horse. It was probably a pony or something like that. I imagined it was a huge Clydesdale horse, which it wasn't. Anyway, two hours later I hadn't turned up at the farm with this horse, because I was actually scared of the horse and if it stopped to eat, I stopped. There was no way I was going to pull this horse, so two hours later they had to send out a search party for me and the horse. That was an experience I'll never ever forget, this horse and pulling it back to the farm."

David McNeice, born 1937, brought up in Greenock and Millport

"I was evacuated to Milngavie (pronounced Millguy) but went with my mother and not any other children. We stayed in 'Invermay' which is a mansion in Milngavie which still stands today. I did not see or meet any other evacuees. My mother and I travelled to Milngavie by train and I remember arriving at the station and the long walk to the house. The house was owned by John Dunlop Anderson (Director of Education for Glasgow) who was unmarried and lived with his sister whom I only ever knew as Miss Anderson. I arrived home, by train, in the same way we had left, on the night before I started primary school at Overnewton Primary School. I believe that many people living in the suburbs and the countryside offered accommodation to Glasgow refugees, I didn't know any incoming refugees from other parts of the country."

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

Hugh Livingston as a toddler

"Well, the evacuation was because of the heavy bombing that occurred in the neighbourhood. And there was some serious loss of life and I think my parents said this is not the best place for a small baby. And my Mother's sister had a house out in Fintry and so we were moved out there. I've no memory of the actual period, but I do remember subsequently being involved in local little summer sports events and having races and things like that. So I have memories of Fintry that started then and then over the years it was my Aunt's place and we visited it many times and I was actually christened in the Church in Fintry. So that was on my birth certificate. That shows that I was christened there."

Hugh Livingston, born 1940, brought up in Hyndland and Fintry

"When I got evacuated. The war had just started and we all got evacuated. Our school shut down and I think a teacher used to come to my Mum's house and there was a few kids in the street were allowed into my Mum's flat. It was only a room and kitchen. Only once do I remember a teacher calling and all he talked about was the birds and the bees and I never saw him after that. So after twelve, I got no education, that was me finished."

"The first evacuation was to Kilbirnie and after I think we stayed there for about, I would say roughly about six weeks. Oh no, it might have been more than six weeks because I went to school in Kilbirnie. I can't just remember exactly how long, but it wasn't awfully long and then we came home. And then the war was getting quite serious so we got evacuated again to Stewarton. And we stayed in Stewarton until the war…, or my Mum stayed in Stewarton for quite a while."

"A lovely little village (Stewarton where he was evacuated for a second time). Lovely little village. Nice people. We got on so well with all the locals. We all had girlfriends. And then I joined the Sea Cadets in Glasgow. And I worked in Glasgow and travelled back and forward on the train. I was just a boy in Peter Fisher's dry salters in Mitchell Street."

George Burns, born 1926, brought up in Bridgeton then Kinning Park

"I was at Kelvinside Academy day school in Glasgow from 1938. So one year after I joined the school, the school was evacuated from Glasgow on 1st September, two days before the war broke out. And it was evacuated to Dougray Lodge in Arran which was a small hunting lodge on the west coast of Arran which was very uncomfortable. Although, I don't remember very much about it."

"We saw, or one of my classmates saw, the bombers flying down Loch Lomond, low, to get to Clydebank. They had come from Norway, I think. And one of the boys swears he could see the pilot of the German bomber."

"They dropped bombs on Inversnaid Hotel, which is a little village on the east side of Loch Lomond. People don't know of it, but I think there were decoy fires which was something we did although at the time it was said it was just something they did, burning the heather. And for whatever reason they dropped bombs on the Inversnaid Hotel which was shattered. And we went over, the school went over, in the Princes May, one of the Loch Lomond steamers a day or two later to pick up bits of shrapnel for mementos."

"The other memory was being taken to the railway station, the Arrochar/Tarbet railway station. And I can't remember which year this was. And watching the King coming off the train, probably to go to the Arrochar torpedo unit or submarines, but he was visiting somewhere. We all waved and cheered. That brought a bit of excitement to life."

"Apart from that, it was a sheltered existence. Small school, no sporting team events. We did have a local school. The Tarbet School. We didn't have much dealings with them oddly enough. You would've thought the two organisations would have co-operated but it was very separate and we had no real dealings with the locals. I think a couple of boys from Arrochar came and joined us for a year or two I don't know what's happened to them. Played tennis on the tennis courts at the hotel and played around as I say, played football, soccer and probably five a side amongst ourselves."

"At the end of the war we came back. We had come back on holidays during the war, we came back for Christmas, for summer holidays. And lived in danger as there was danger in Glasgow. I don't know why they thought we had to be evacuated for safety from January until June and September until December but back we came. And I think I remember only one lot of raids when we sheltered under the stairs. Which was the traditional way of sheltering in these old Victorian houses. But I don't remember anything more than that of the impact of war on myself, except that each of my siblings in turn went off."

"We had evacuees. It was a family from south Glasgow who were billeted and were living in our house. We gave up part of the house to them. I think it was by government decree. My Mother was quite happy to have the company instead of rattling in a big old Victorian house. Having had five children."

Ralph Risk, born 1932, brought up in Pollokshields, Tyndrum, and Tarbert

On Friday 1st September 1939, two days before the United Kingdom declared war (on Sunday 3rd September 1939), Iain, (aged 12 and 1/4) and Tom (14 and 1/2) were evacuated in school parties with children and teachers from Clydebank to Garelochhead by train.

"We were initially billeted with Mr and Mrs Allison, who lived in a cottage in the grounds of a large house named Dhalandhui, where Mr Allison was gardener. Later we moved to stay with Miss Agnes Cameron, Elderberry Cottage, and later still, with Miss Cameron's sister, Mrs Stalker and her husband John at Daisybank. The Stalkers were both perhaps aged about 60, Mr Stalker having retired from his adjoining joiners and undertaker's business. We were resident at Daisybank (attending Hermitage Academy in Helensburgh Monday to Friday via the school bus) on the night of Thursday 13th March 1941".

Roderick MacDuff recalling testimony on behalf of his late father, Iain Blair MacDuff, born 1927, and brought up Clydebank and Garelochhead

"For almost the first five years of my life I lived in Fintry. We had a little house there and we were there to get away from the bombing and stuff like that because it was going to be in Glasgow."

(Winifred) Margaret Baker Davidson, born 1937, brought up in Glasgow and Fintry

"My cousin, Jim Gallagher, he got evacuated from London, from the London Blitz. And he ended up staying in Clydebank with our family, him and his Mum and Dad. And when we got bombed out, he ended up in Rothesay with us. Jim and I were more or less like brothers because we were roughly the same age."

"Obviously, I was only eighteen months old during the blitz and we were evacuated to Rothesay so I was probably about five or six when I can recollect things. One of the things I do remember that stands out in my mind is down at front where the ships came in and I remember seeing the sailors' hats floating in the water and H.M.S. cork lifebelts. Because at that time they were made of cork. Until I got back to Somerville Street I wouldn't have known what a bombed out place was, but I did after I got there."

"We were evacuated because the house had suffered some damage. One or two closes up from us were bombed out. In Bruce Street where the baths were some of the buildings were flattened but the baths survived. I imagine that's why we were evacuated to Rothesay…Some people went to Fife and some went further North."

"There was woods behind the house we stayed in and we were always up there. Jim stood on a wasps nest and the two of us got completely covered in wasps and there was a man, he got hold of us and there was a pond and he put us in the pond to try and kill them. Then he took us home and my Mother and his Mother and they took all the dead wasps and the live wasps off us."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"My family was very large. My Mother was one of thirteen children. So she had lots of brothers and sisters, many of them in Glasgow. So they'd be coming to the same spot."

"We had the little house until I was a late teenager so we often went there. .But we stayed out there during the war years."

"We had very happy times in Fintry, despite the war. They had a town hall and every Saturday night was a get together for anyone who wanted to come, children too."

"My father had to go to work every day and see to the business and every time he came home, he was bringing more relatives to get them away from the threats of bombing."

"Eventually, jumping forward many years they had a garage that my brother turned into a little tea room because there was nowhere to eat in Fintry. It only opened at weekends because by that time we were back in Anniesland."

"So they were fun years, bad years, but fun."

(Winifred) Margaret Baker Davidson, born 1937, brought up in Glasgow and Fintry

""We were evacuated to down in Dumfries and Galloway for the first three weeks of the war and then we came back. And within the next year in Trossachs Hotel, a big hotel in the Trossachs and that was, not the whole school, but as many as parents wanted their children to go."

"I remember the day we went on the train down to Stranraer or thereabouts. And me and my friends had a picnic with our sandwiches. And me and my little friend Moira started eating them before we'd even left the station."

"I remember these children coming from the Channel Islands to I think our local church and then they were farmed out to different families. And I remember partly because I still knew a little bit about him. I remember a little boy and I remember the family he went to. We never took anybody but they took this little boy and kept him forever and he grew up. I don't know about him now but he went to school and they paid for his school."

"I can even picture these volunteer parents and the children that came all the way from the Channel Islands. These were children much less privileged and lucky than me."

Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

"Tom and I resumed school on the Monday after the raids. We kept in touch with the folks by letter - not returning to Taylor Street for a weekend until perhaps August. We stayed in Garelochhead during part of the school holidays - July/August on Mamore farm, Rahane on the Gairloch side. The farmer was Willie Goodwin, whose mother was a close friend of our landlady Mrs Stalker. He delivered our milk. We worked at hay-making and turnip-thinning for 10 shillings (50p) a week, and enjoyed it."

Roderick MacDuff recalling testimony on behalf of his late father, Iain Blair MacDuff, born 1927, and brought up Clydebank and Garelochhead

"The folks at home were fairly deprived, without tap water, gas, electricity on the Saturday. However, on the Sunday, father's uncle, Jim Mcinish and Aunt Hellen (nee Macduff), (who of course had heard about the Clydebank raid on the radio and had tried to phone Mum, Dad and Uncle Willie, at Taylor Street,) arrived by car and insisted on taking the folks back to Johnstone to stay with them. They did this and stayed for 6 weeks, while Taylor Street house was repaired. During this time, father and Uncle Willie travelled to work, Monday to Saturday in John Browns via the Renfrew ferry. When number 8 was habitable the folks returned to Clydebank."

Roderick MacDuff recalling testimony on behalf of his late father, Iain Blair MacDuff, born 1927, and brought up Clydebank and Garelochhead

The late Dr Iain Blair MacDuff as a child, with step-mother Lizzie Bothwell and brother Tom at the Blair's house, 8 Taylor Street Whitecrook. C.1940/41 after the Clydebank Blitz

"I am not sure of the date but we were evacuated to Twechar before the Blitz, I believe. That was my Mother and my brother and me. I believe after a little while my Mother decided if one of us was going to get killed we were all going to die so she took us home."

"I think my brother went to Ghiga- not sure if that was later. Robert was 7 years older than me."

Matilda Jane Holmes, born 1937, brought up in Clydebank, Helensburgh, and other places

"We were in a Church hall in Milngavie. I just remember and a lot of the women standing in a big queue to get washed at the washing house or whatever it was… and my Father coming and taking us over to Kinghorn."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up in Old Kilpatrick

"When we arrived in Kilmarnock we were assembled in the station into a "crocodile" three or four abreast, and marched through the town to a hall where we were allocated to the folk who were to become our guardians. I still remember the local folk lining the pavements, some with handkerchiefs held to their eyes, and all looking at us with emotion and compassion."

John Power

"It was a quarrel with Willie (his brother) that led to us leaving the McGhee family. It happened that we were arguing in the front garden of the house. We were being observed by the McGhee's neighbour. At one point I smiled at her as she stood at her window. I remember picking up a pebble from the driveway and saying to my brother. "I am going to keep this as a souvenir for you, you wee midden" We called each other "midden" when we were annoyed. It was a commonly used word at the time. The neighbour had observed and heard us and I thought no more about it. We were wakened at about 7am by the sound of Mr McGhee talking loudly. He was saying something about "well they are not going to be staying here much longer" When we came downstairs for breakfast after he had left for work we found Mrs McGhee in a tearful state. I enquired what was wrong. She said that that her neighbour had reported that I had said that she kept her house like a midden. This was a complete distortion of the facts and I told Mrs McGhee what had actually been said. She was quite inconsolable and I was hurt and angry at the neighbour. I told Mrs McGhee that under no stretch of the imagination would I have said such a thing. I reminded her that I came from a three-apartment tenement flat, with five kids, and my father did not earn a big wage. In comparison, Mrs McGhee had a palace."

"Mrs McGhee may have been distraught but so was I. After what had been said I knew that relations would never be the same again. Looking back on it now, I can understand that Mrs McGhee would be inclined to be influenced by a neighbour she had known for years. She would be inclined to believe the neighbours word against the word of a kid, of recent acquaintance, from Glasgow. I have often wondered if the neighbour ever realised how she had caused such unhappiness between the McGhees and a young boy who was an evacuee."

John Power

"We were sent to Moffat but we didn't like it and Flo had some money I don't know where she got it from but she got us back on the train to Glasgow the next day and we went home. (Flo elder sister and Bruce the younger brother of David)."

Davie Walker, born 1934, brought up Bridgeton, Glasgow

"I do not remember if we were taken to our new home or were collected. I do remember that Mr and Mrs McGhee and a younger couple were in the house when we arrived. The house reminded me of my Aunt Maggie's house in Troon. Aunt Maggie or "Tish" as my father called her lived in a semi-detached and her family were grown up and in good jobs. Her house was spotless with good quality furniture. The McGhee's house was similar. Everything was spick and span. Everything was neat, there were no children to make the house untidy. I thought that this was a beautiful house and that we were lucky to be living there. Before going to bed that night and every night thereafter we had to take a bath. This was unusual for us because, at home, we had a bath once a week."

John Power

To try and ease the blow of being separated from their parents, a special song was written for children in 1939 by Gaby Rogers and Harry Philips, entitled 'Goodnight Children Everywhere' and broadcast every night by the BBC:

Goodnight Children Everywhere

Sleepy little eyes in a sleepy little head,
Sleepy time is drawing near.
In a little while you'll be tucked up in your bed,
Here's a song for baby dear.

Goodnight children everywhere,
Your mummy thinks of you tonight.
Lay your head upon your pillow,
Don't be a kid or a weeping willow.

Close your eyes and say a prayer,
And surely you can find a kiss to spare.
Though you are far away, she's with you night and day,
Goodnight children everywhere

Soon the moon will rise, and caress you with its beams,
While the shadows softly creep.
With a happy smile you will be wrapped up in your dreams,
Baby will be fast asleep. Goodnight children everywhere.

Chapter Four

Rationing

'Rationing', by Joyce Kelly, Artist in Residence, Communities Past & Futures Society

National registration of households began on the 29th of September 1939, twenty-six days after the start of Britain's entry to WWII. This required people to register the numbers and ages of the people in their residence. Voluntary rationing was replaced by compulsory rationing in January 1940. This happened when Germany U-Boats bombed British ships carrying food and other imports in attempts to undermine the British resolve. At the start of the war, Britain imported 55 million tonnes of food, but that figure was soon reduced to only 12 million tonnes. The government introduced rationing measures in the hope that everyone would get their fair share of food and other items made scarce by the war. Clothes, furniture, petrol, coal, electricity, paper, and soap were also rationed and other materials were scarce. Many items continued to be rationed, or became rationed, years after hostilities had ceased.

At the star, only a few types of food were rationed; these included bacon, butter and sugar. The number of foods rationed increased over time, and the quantities that were allowed per person fluctuated throughout the war. By March 1940, all meat was rationed. Tea and margarine were rationed by July of that year. In 1941, jam, cheese, and eggs were added to the list, as were rice, dried fruit, tinned tomatoes, tinned peas, sweets and biscuits in 1942. Fish was never rationed but was expensive, as boats were requisitioned for war work, and sea fishing became even more dangerous than usual. Potatoes and bread were not rationed during the war as they were regarded as important 'bulking out' foods. This also meant that fish and chips were never rationed, and the staple became a form of comfort food that was important for public morale. A wee fish supper was an important and much-loved treat for children.

Along with an identity card, each person was issued with a ration book, which contained tokens for allotted items that had to be purchased with money. Most ration books for adults were buff in colour, though certain people and all children were entitled to different coloured ration books. Pregnant women, nursing mothers and children under five years of age received a green ration book, with entitlements to a choice of fruit, often dried or tinned (fresh domestic fruit such as apples were available in shops from time to time), a pint of milk per day, and double the supply of eggs that were issued to those people with the buff-coloured ration book. Children between the ages of five and sixteen were supplied with a blue ration book, and this meant that they could get fruit, the full meat ration, and half a pint of milk per day. The details of varying entitlements were stamped in the ration books.

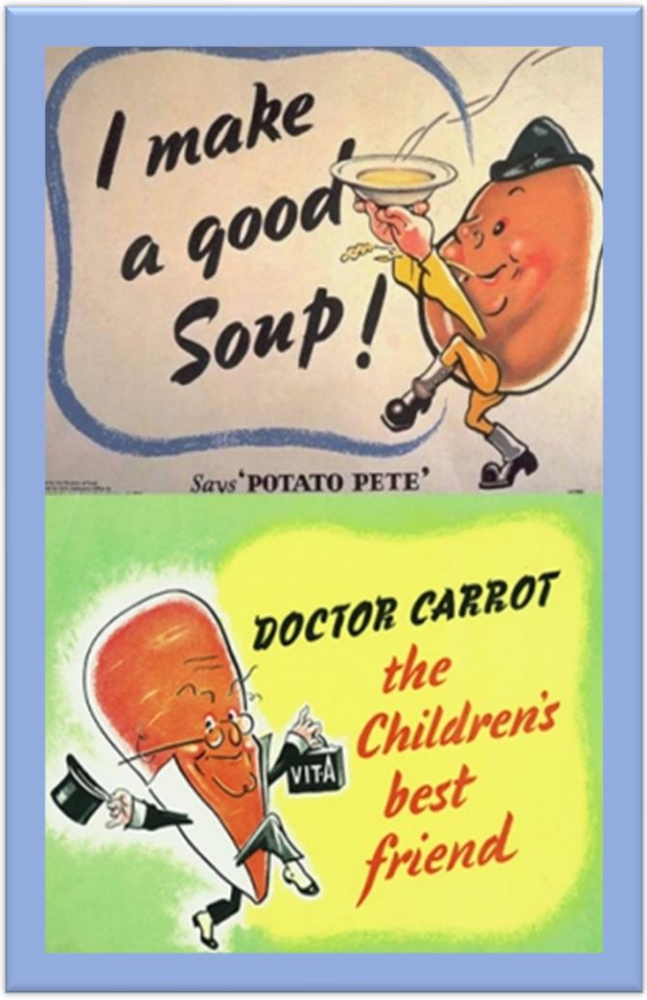
Average adult ration WWII

Butter 2 oz a week	Milk 3 pints a week, on occasion dropping to 2 pints.
Bacon and Ham 4 oz a week	Meat to the value of 1 shilling/ 6 pence per week
Margarine 4 oz a week	Sugar 8 oz a week
Cheese 2 oz a week	1 fresh egg per week
2 oz of tea per week	Jam 1IB every 2 months
I pack of dried egg per 4 weeks	

Source: http://www.primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk

Each household would have to register with a food supplier for meat, vegetables, etc., and then stick with those suppliers. The ration book was put in a box on the counter and the shopkeeper would take the tokens or mark them as goods were purchased. There were invariably queues of people waiting to get into shops, and people rushed to them when they heard there had been a fresh delivery of food. One of our respondents, a child at that time, remembers that shopping was "really demanding work". Mothers had to shop daily as there were no refrigerators at the time.
Conversely, it has been said that some of the population received a more nutritional diet during the war than they had done beforehand, as rations contained a healthy balance of food stuffs. It is thought that most of the children brought up at this time benefited from eating a good diet of food.

Many people felt that food rationing was not as fair a system as the government had intended. As is human nature, some people had hoarded food when it became apparent that war might be inevitable. There was a lot of suspicion around hoarding and people were made to feel uneasy about this activity, particularly in towns and cities, yet people in the countryside often had access to extra supplies of eggs, dairy products and meat. Many children who were evacuated to the country benefited from this when staying in their temporary homes. Many families supplemented their rations in other ways. For instance, it was not unknown for some people to take advantage of the black-market, with goods, and, amongst many other things, oranges and bananas, finding their way to larders. A lot of families had someone who worked in a factory or other workplace and could eat in the work canteen; this saved on the household rations. Some schools also had canteens where children were fed. A number of people from Scottish cities caught trains and buses to rural areas, and there used emergency ration vouchers that were issued for people who were away from home to buy food in small towns and villages. In 1942, it was reported in the Fife Free Press that residents at a Fife holiday resort had become disgruntled with visitors coming in and buying up their supplies of food.



People overcame privations in other ways. Many inventive war-time recipes aped missing ingredients. Parsnips were used as mock bananas in dessert recipes, and carrots were used to sweeten things in place of sugar. Children often found that sweets were in short supply and replaced with cinnamon

sticks, and sticks of liquorice root. American GIs often gave sweets and gum to children who lived near their bases, and “Any gum, Chum?” was a popular cry to those soldiers when in Scotland. Adults were also known to give up their sweet rations for children, with some kind souls handing them into shops or giving them to neighbours.

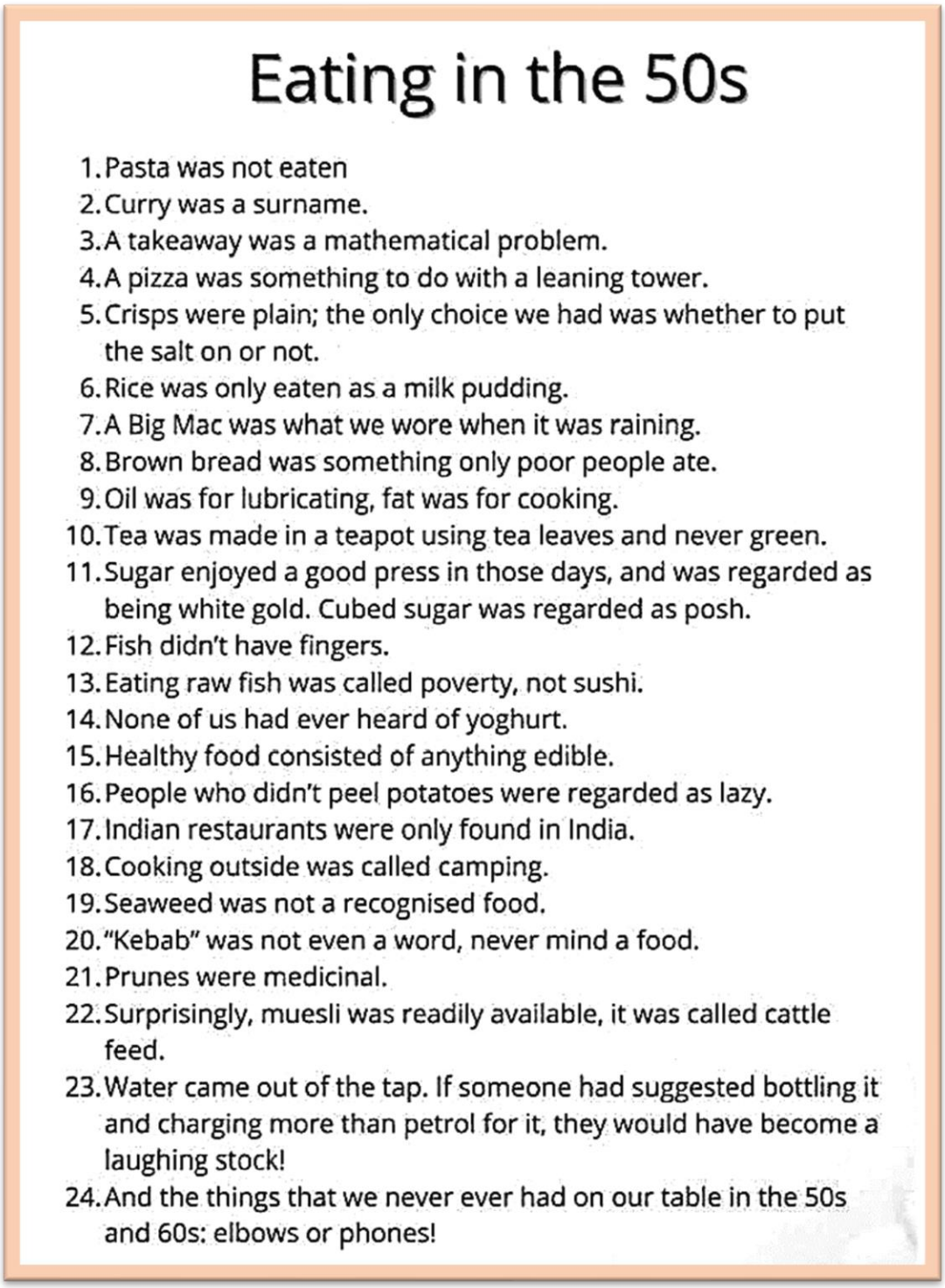
The Government started the ‘Dig for Victory’ campaign in 1939, and every man and woman, who was able, was asked to grow food and, in some cases, look after animals. Every spare bit of land was put over to the cultivation of vegetables and the rearing of farm animals, and children were expected to help. They were also encouraged to eat their vegetables by poster campaigns featuring friendly characters such as ‘Doctor Carrot, The Children’s Friend’, and ‘Potato Pete’.

A quarter of the British population were entitled to wear some form of uniform. The manufacture of these and other military fabrics put pressure on the production of civilian clothing. Shoes were also in short supply in both civilian and army life, as rubber supplies were diverted for army use. Clothes rationing began on the 1st of June 1941, in an attempt to make the distribution of clothing fair. The number of coupons issued to most adults fluctuated throughout the war, going from 66 coupons a year at the start of clothes rationing, to its lowest level of twenty-four coupons per adult per year, in 1945. Eleven coupons bought a dress, two were required for a pair of stockings, and eight coupons got you a man's shirt or a pair of trousers. Women's shoes were five coupons, and men could be shod for seven coupons. It was a complex system and people were reminded by poster campaigns to plan out what they wanted to buy before going shopping. People of certain professions, such as diplomats and actors, were issued with extra coupons.

Children were given ten more coupons as of 1942, as they would quickly grow out of clothes and school uniforms also required coupons for their purchase. The Women’s Royal Voluntary Service set up clothes swaps to try and help this situation. This had been a usual habit for families on poor incomes, anyway, but it now became unfashionable, and even unpatriotic, to be seen in clothes that might be regarded as too new, or too showy. The ‘Make Do and Mend’ campaign encouraged people to reuse and upcycle materials. Classes in how to make clothes sprung up nationwide. Not everyone was too keen on the thought of making dresses out of old curtains, but nonetheless this did happen.

Women’s clothes tended to be designed to be made with the minimum amount of material, hence the popularity of the pencil skirt during this era. Although clothes should not be seen to be ‘flashy’, women were encouraged to wear make-up and do their hair to boost their morale. Make-up was not rationed for this reason, but it was expensive. Women would improvise by using beetroot juice for lipstick, and boot polish for mascara, amongst other things. Friendships were formed with American GIs who often brought their female acquaintances the gift of nylon stockings.

Rationing was only gradually phased out after the war, and newly rationed items were introduced – items that had not been rationed during the war. This included rations on potatoes and bread, ostensibly introduced due to poor harvests, which proved to be controversial. Sweets were not derationed until 1953, which then caused a huge rush on the shops by children and adults alike. Rationing finally ended on 4th July 1954, when restrictions on buying bacon and other meat products were lifted. A great deal of WWII-era children carried their experiences of rationing with them throughout life, and were, and are, uncomfortable about wasting food and being unthrifty with their finances.



Eating in the 50s

1. Pasta was not eaten
2. Curry was a surname.
3. A takeaway was a mathematical problem.
4. A pizza was something to do with a leaning tower.
5. Crisps were plain; the only choice we had was whether to put the salt on or not.
6. Rice was only eaten as a milk pudding.
7. A Big Mac was what we wore when it was raining.
8. Brown bread was something only poor people ate.
9. Oil was for lubricating, fat was for cooking.
10. Tea was made in a teapot using tea leaves and never green.
11. Sugar enjoyed a good press in those days, and was regarded as being white gold. Cubed sugar was regarded as posh.
12. Fish didn't have fingers.
13. Eating raw fish was called poverty, not sushi.
14. None of us had ever heard of yoghurt.
15. Healthy food consisted of anything edible.
16. People who didn't peel potatoes were regarded as lazy.
17. Indian restaurants were only found in India.
18. Cooking outside was called camping.
19. Seaweed was not a recognised food.
20. "Kebab" was not even a word, never mind a food.
21. Prunes were medicinal.
22. Surprisingly, muesli was readily available, it was called cattle feed.
23. Water came out of the tap. If someone had suggested bottling it and charging more than petrol for it, they would have become a laughing stock!
24. And the things that we never ever had on our table in the 50s and 60s: elbows or phones!

Childhood Memories

"Rationing & Making Do"

"Sweets were rationed and I think. I remember I could get four lollipops a week. So my decisions were what days a week when there were seven days a week. What four days did you have your lollipop. So I think I worked out that usually it was Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. I had my lollipop and on a Wednesday. I spent my money on a comic. I do remember getting pocket-money when I was young that I was responsible for. You would get money for going to the cinema and that sort of thing. But I had an allowance every week, a small allowance something like sixpence or something. But that was for things like sweets and comics and presents, so you had to kind of budget how you were going to spend that, whether you were going to spend the sixpence in one week. Or whether you were going to save a few sixpences and have a couple of shillings to spend. So that money was mine and once it was gone, it was gone."

Marlene Barrie, born 1946, brought up in Scotstounhill and Blairdardie

"Yes, A green one (ration book), I think. The fruit…It's just… I was remembering a wee while ago about vegetables and fruit and how you couldn't get fruit. And the wee grocer, quite near us, would say to my mum if she was in during the day. "If you come tonight when it's dark I'll have some onions." No fruit or anything but the onions were a great thing. To get some onions that was really good. And my friend whose brother was killed. He brought bananas back from somewhere. I remember getting a banana and I had never seen one before. I didna (laughs) really like it when I took the peel off it. But, no there was very little fruit and veg and we just had to…My mum was a good cook and she managed to make stuff that was healthy."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"We weren't too badly off. We had a good grocer. And my Dad being in an office in a coal mine… sometimes the miners got parcels from the Government. I think they were either Canadian or American. There would be tinned meat, jam, tea, different things. And he occasionally came home with a box with goodies in which we opened, and barley sugar sweets that were quite a luxury at the time. My Mum gave me her sweet ration. She stopped taking sugar in her tea. She just took tea without milk or sugar. I was an only child so I suppose I was a bit spoiled. She made omelettes with dried egg. And occasionally we had a Canadian soldier, who was a friend of a relation of ours in Canada, and he would come and stay with us for a couple of nights. And he would bring something. He would bring sweets or chewing gum or something like that… It was a happy childhood really."

"We got our supply of coal because my Dad worked in the industry. Clothes rationing-I remember the coupons. And when my Aunt was being married, my Dad, I suppose on the black market bought clothing coupons from some of the miners, so that she could get extra coupons to buy her trousseau and her wedding stuff. I can remember doing that. I think my Mum was quite worried actually that he'd done that."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"I remember seeing my Mother's ration book that would be about 1953. And I'm not sure if it was sweeties and butcher-meat that was rationed. But I remember… I'm not sure if it was during the war or just after. My Auntie worked in Birrells in Glasgow and one of my Uncles took in some chocolates for the school teacher. Of course, sweeties was rationed, so she's going 'Where did you get them?' and he said, 'My Auntie works in Birrells' and everybody in the class said-" Oh you're not supposed to have them."

Sandy Boyle, born 1948, brought up Maryhill

"Well, you couldn't get sweets but there was a sweet shop who used to sell like the broken bits of boiled sweets. I don't know whether they broke them themselves or not but they used to sell them in screwed up balls of paper. And of course, word would get around that he's selling his sweeties so you went and stood in the queue."

"I can remember going to Rothesay on holiday. And there was a shop that made rock, but he only had certain times that he sold it. He must've made a batch and I can remember going to queue there. That was quite a novelty."

Marion Penny, born 1940, brought up in Townhead and Ruchazie

"Well, the main thing was, as I said, you couldn't just walk into a shop and say I'll have this that and the other. Whatever you had, you had to go in with your ration books. There were two ration books, one was for adults and one was for children. And in the ration books there were all these various coupons, for butter, for meat, for eggs, for sugar, margarine, all sorts. Clothes- if you wanted to buy a dress you might have to use five- or six-months' worth of coupons. The coupons you got lasted a month. You got a whole book of them. And with sweets we'd go round the corner and ask Miss Grey about a week before the end of the month 'Will you take next month's sweetie coupons please?' Invariably she said yes. Our sweetie rations would be used up very, very quickly. But there again the sweets that were on offer were very few. During rationing it was just so basic. There was no, erm, it's very difficult to describe. You had your bread and some sort of butter or margarine to put on it. You might have jam if you were lucky. But for all that, I don't really recall, it's very difficult for me. In today's world when we keep hearing the word poverty. Because from experience it was always poverty I was surrounded by. But we never ever used that word. We just accepted this is the way things are, there's a war on. We've all got to do whatever we can."

Philip Cohen, born 1937, brought up in The Gorbals and then Shawlands

"I remember parts of the early '40s with regard to ration books. And the things that were very hard to get. And it was at that time. I do recall my Mother went down to the social office there to get free orange juice for myself and my brother. We had milk powder, we had powdered eggs. We had all sorts of things which today we very much take for granted. But I didn't realise how scarce all this sort of stuff was. I really wasn't terribly aware of what was going on."

Ian Coombe, born 1942, brought up Gosport, then Glasgow

"Well, you were only allowed one egg a week for example and so many ounces of sugar. It was ounces, not pounds that you got. I just remember going to the Co-operative with my Mother's ration book and she had the messages all written out. And I'd just hand it over and the grocer would make up all the messages. Tear the coupons out. Give you your ration book back and that was it. But my Father worked as a lorry driver for the railway, but he was stationed at Drumchapel Station. And I'm talking about Drumchapel before it was Drumchapel. It was only a village, and there was a station, Drumchapel Station. And there was Beattie's Biscuit Factory two miles down the railway line. And my Father's job was to take the raw material from the station yard to Beattie's Biscuit Factory. And that was his job. And I remember he always had access to a bit extra sugar. There was always biscuits available. There was always a bit of coal from the railway yard available. And the Station Master was always supplied through my Dad. And the local policeman was always supplied through my Dad. So we always had wee bits of extras in that line you know. All these things were all rationed. Coal was not very available. That's about all I can remember about rationing. I don't remember being hungry. I don't think we were very well fed because I was small. I was only five feet one and a half inches when I joined the Merchant Navy. And within six months I had grown four inches because I was getting fed. I got good feeding aboard the ship, good bread, plenty of it, plenty of butter and plenty of good food. And within four months I had grown four inches right up to the height I am now."

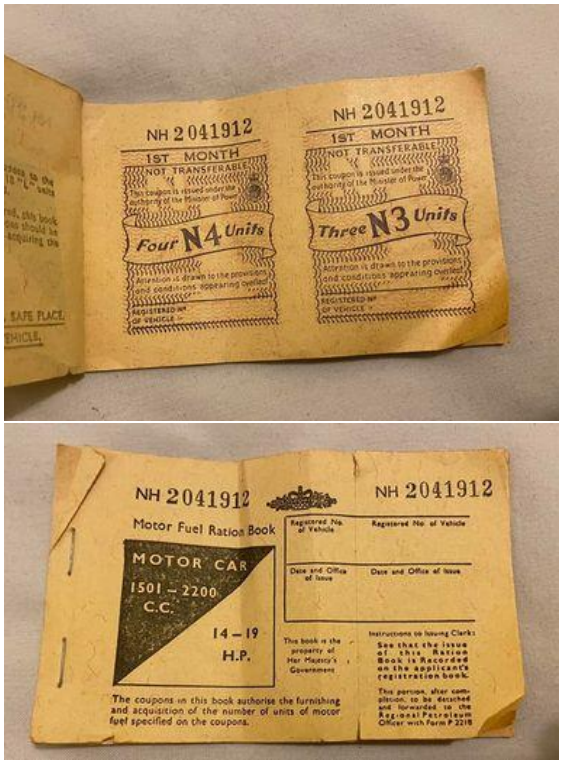
George Burns, born 1926, brought up in Bridgeton then Kinning Park

"I remember the wee book and the coupons. And when you used to go for Granny's messages or that. You needed so many coupons. If you needed meat you'd go to the butcher and he'd take that wee bit out of the book. My Faither for some reason, he used to get extra. I don't know where he got them from. I think it was maybe if he did a wee job for somebody. Nothing illegal. So we'd maybe have an extra couple of coupons."

"Food-wise, we were lucky. Because my Granny and Granda up north they used to send us down rabbit, hare and chickens, things like that. So we were lucky in that way."

"We had quite simple fare. We were never starving. I never knew what rationing was to be honest. Because you experienced it. it's not as if it was going from having stuff to a lack of stuff. I didn't have it in the first place. So growing up it was just part of your life."

James Love, born 1943, brought up in Craigellachie and Glasgow



Petrol ration book belonging to James' 84-year-old father. Courtesy of James McGlone, 'Lost Glasgow', FB

"I've got my ration book here which for some reason my Mother kept. And it's got my name on it, and also an identification card. She was good at keeping these kind of things. When I opened up the ration book, I found this - that's your Co-op slip. When you went to the shops and you bought something, they wrote it in a book and they gave you a carbon copy of it. I used to be fascinated by this carbon paper, it was fantastic, before you had photocopiers."

"I remember sweeties being rationed. There was a thing as well if you saved up your sugar and took it to a shop like Birrells or R.S. McColl's, they would give you sweets. You would give them your sugar and they would use it in their factories, I suppose. One memory of that; I must've been about nine or ten by this time, my Mother would take some sugar to her Mother, and I came in from school at lunchtime and I saw the sugar in a brown bag, and I got my finger and just stuck it right in the sugar bag to take a lick of the sugar. And I didn't realise she'd put an egg in there to transport it to give her Mother, this egg, and my finger went right through it. It ruined the whole lot of the stuff."

"So that's what it was like, you gave people presents of wee bits of sugar and stuff like that."

Cecilia Murray, born 1942, brought up in Gorbals and Castlemilk

"I have all my ration books right here. My favourite page was the sweetie one and there's still some in here so I didn't get using them all. D was for two ounces and E was for four ounces. Now fast forwarding a bit when everything went off rationing. There was so many people clamouring to get the sweets. They had to put it back on rationing again for a short time. So, it was a disappointment for everyone for a short time. In Fintry we only had one store. A little store that sold everything. And she was very careful that you only came once that day, or whatever, to get them and not get too many. Because so many people wanted the sweets."

"We went up to the farm with a bucket to get milk and other kids went with us too. I used to swing the bucket. So there wasn't very much milk in the bucket when I got home."

"My brother would actually be able to send some food home to us sometimes. The one thing being was a big can of lard because then we got our chips."

(Winifred) Margaret Baker Davidson, born 1937, brought up in Glasgow and Fintry

"I remember the ration books and how for example… well we obviously had one for everybody in the family. And my parents well, my mother, she would do the shopping and have to go to the grocers, for example. And they would cut out the coupons for whatever rations were being bought. And then there was the sweetie coupons as well. And around the corner from us there was a wee, I'll call it a newsagents, but they sold everything. And that's where we would go to get sweets. I know the ration books lasted until about 1953 I think. They went on quite a bit. And when we'd moved up to Pollok you'd get ice cream vans coming round because there was next to nothing in the way of shops. And the ice cream van had to take the coupons as well."

Alf Duffy, born 1940, brought up in the Gorbals and Pollok

"I remember the ration books. And when you went to get anything at all, they tore a wee bit out of it for what you were due. And they had sweet rationing then, but you could go down with your coupon or pennies, or whatever it was at the time, and get some sweets, which was great. And also, I remember the coal was rationed. The coalman used to put his big heavy bag of coal on his back and bring it up. We were one stair up. And he used to bring his coal up and put it in the bunker in the house. And the clothes of course. I didn't have a lot of clothes bought because I fell heir to my sister's clothes, although she was five years older than me. So, they tended to be too big and had to be tucked up, or hems taken up. But I don't remember getting new clothes as such."

"She was very good. She was on her own. She was a butcher, my Mother. So we didn't have any problems as far as I'm aware of having meat, a chicken or a fowl as she called it. She used to bring them home and she had to pluck the feathers and then seal it with the red-hot poker."

"So the fact that she was a butcheress and worked just down the road. It meant too that she was out all day from six in the morning until teatime at night. And my Aunt cared for us."

M. McKinnon, born 1937, brought up in Govanhill and Southside

M. McKinnon in her ballet dancing days

"Oh yes, I can't remember the amount, but it was 'the big week' and 'the wee week'. I think this was for butter and if you had children at a certain age maybe you got an egg or something like that you know. But most of it was powdered egg. You had your ration books for the shop. That was till well after the war because when we went to Pollok in 1948. I'm sure we still had ration books then."

"I always remember them making soup, there was always beautiful soup and full of vegetables. You always hoped you'd get an outsider with it, you know. The bread was still wrapped whole and had to be sliced up. With your Mummy trying to spin it out, and still hoping you got an outsider with your soup. It was brilliant."

Cabreg, born 1935, brought up in London Road, Glasgow, and Pollok

"I can remember we didn't get a lot of sweets. We didn't get a lot of things that are commonplace nowadays. I know that I never liked eggs when I was younger because my Mother told me I had been fed dried egg when I was very young, and I didnae like it so after that eggs were a no-no. I love them now right enough but I went through a phase and blamed it on the rationing."

"I think it was more obvious at Christmas time. In those days you got an orange in a stocking and even a bar of chocolate was a luxury."

Graeme St Clair, born 1947, brought up in Knightswood and Springburn

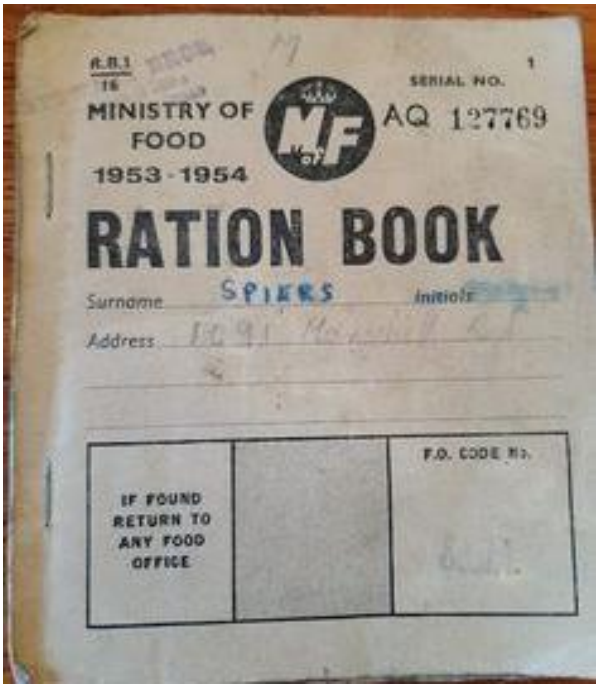
"I was lucky. I had a great Uncle who was a confectioner in Aberdeen. And we used to get off-cut dolly mixtures and so on. Occasionally, and there was also, I think I remember, the meat rationing. We lived in Aberdeen and fish was relatively easy to come by so we weren't starved. I do recall my grandmother when I was about four or five allowed me to play with a shop and gave me stock of raisins and various other things. And after an hour or so she came back and I said the shop was shut because the stock had all gone. But obviously I had used up a bit of the rationing that was due to last for a month or so."

Kenneth MacAldowie, born 1944, brought up in Aberdeen and Glasgow

"I certainly remember that. And the day that word got round that they had bananas in the shops. Bananas-and people were rushing out their homes to the greengrocers to get bananas. An even stronger memory of rationing was in Greenock Central Railway Station there was the vending machines for chocolate. And of course, they were empty and we would stand looking at these machines you know like as if we were watching the telly. Just watching where this chocolate should be. But nothing in it and the imagination of just being able to put a coin in there and get a chocolate bar was just too much. I certainly remember the rationing, although I don't ever remember being hungry. So it must've worked out quite good; that there was sufficient for people to eat. Providing they had the money of course. But people did exchange the coupons of course."

"When we lived in Greenock. We lived opposite the Westburn Sugar Refinery. And there was always sugar, you know, available. Off the ration because the factory was across the street. So, my parents use to make sweets They'd make candy and tablet and all these kind of things."

David McNeice, born 1937, brought up in Greenock and Millport



Grandmother's ration book 1953-1954.
Courtesy of Valery Willis, 'Lost Glasgow', FB

"In my family, we all had our own separate little bits of butter. And when we finished it, there were no more bits of butter. I remember all those domestic kind of things. I don't remember probably until the end of the war really thinking too much about the war. I was a happy little girl."

Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

"Again, we also had coupons for clothes and lots of clever people searched their wardrobes for clothes to be recycled. My Aunt Kath got married in 1944 (just before mum went into hospital) - her husband was in the R.A.F. (not a pilot but something to do with security) and as, the war was drawing to an end, he unexpectedly got 2 weeks leave from his post in Cairo, so a wedding was hastily arranged. Mum managed to get me a dress from a second-hand shop, hurriedly knitted me a bolero with wool from a ripped down jumper but shoes absolutely stumped her. Nothing fancy in the shops only what they called 'utility' so there I am in the wedding photos in my wedding ensemble wearing brown lace-up shoes! I also have a paper doily with artificial flowers sewn on as my headdress. Luckily, Kathleen secured the loan of a wedding dress that was circulating amongst prospective brides. That was the norm then. (I understand that our Queen, then Princess Elizabeth, had to save her clothing coupons for her wedding dress)."

Evelyn Humberstone, born 1939, brought up Argyll Street, Glasgow

"Obviously rationing went on for quite some time after the war into the early '50s I think. But what I mostly remember having been a small child was 'the big week and the wee week' for butter. So, you'd have miserable bits of butter and then it would end up being margarine or dripping on your toast for the end of the week. Because there wasn't enough. Whereas the big week was more exciting. And I remember also we used to go to Arran for eight weeks holiday in the summer because my parents were in education. And we had to save up our sweets to go there because you couldn't get sweets on the ration in Brodick. Because that's not where we were registered. So, we used to save them up and put them in a great big tin. All these boiled sweets to take away, that we could take out walks and satisfy our needs for sweeties. So that's really what I remember about rationing."

Christine McIntosh, born 1945, brought up in Hyndland, Broomhill, and Arran

"I remember the rationing. My Dad one day buttered his bread on all sides before we realised he had used all the butter. He laughed and said that was how we used to eat butter. I remember too he used to boil an egg and cut the top off for me and then he had the rest that was at one time when I lived with my Dad for a short time. The only sweets I remember were when some American soldiers stopped by they always brought lots of sweets. One awful memory I have was when I lived with some strangers to me but obviously friends of my Mum, the adults all sat around the table after dinner and cut up old cigarette ends and made that tobacco into new cigarettes. I decided I would never smoke and I never have."

"There was a rhyme at the time. Where was Moses when the light went out? Under the bed looking for a doubt. A doubt was a cigarette end."

"Another memory was the way we found paper and pencils so scarce. My Dad was a very good drawer, and our amusement was to draw-often. I would say we drew daily. To this day, I treasure paper and pencils. At school we had to hand in the ned of an old pencil before you got a new one. By ned, it meant it was a stub a little larger than the one you handed in, A brand new pencil is a treasured thing still. We are so lucky."

Matilda Jane Holmes, born 1937, brought up in Clydebank, Helensburgh, and other places

"My Mother, she had a ration book, ration cards and within the ration book there was a section if I recollect it was in the back of the book, for sweeties. So, we were given these sweetie rations and we would go down to Nancy's. Nancy was the last shop in Gibson Street before the bridge on the left-hand side. There was a sweetie shop. It was absolutely phenomenal, and you would go for different types of sweeties and of course the equivalent of rations there were stamps. It must've been an awful carry-on, adding up all the different stamps of different value. But I do know that I went off boilings as a result of all that. They were too hot for me. I loved Smarties."

"Nancy worked there with her sister, and they were Stafford Hamilton's aunties. And Stafford lived at 99 Otago Street. He was one of my closest friends and his father had been a spitfire pilot during the war. But his real job was as a Grocer. And eventually they moved to down Wishaw way, and it broke my heart because I'd lost my best pal."

Peter McNaughton, born 1944, brought up in Clapham, Glasgow, and Comrie

"Well we didn't have a garden because we lived in a flat. But one of the things I do remember is what we called the pig bin across the road on the pavement where we always put the leftover food. And it wasn't very nice because there was a lot of rats. I remember that and my Mother saying, 'you take the stuff to the pig bin'. And not wanting to do it because even though it was just across the road. I was worried about the rats."

Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

Peter McNaughton, the younger boy, with his dad David Baird McNaughton and brother David, in Comrie, in 1950

"Yes indeed. We had an allotment in Broomhill and we shared that with my Aunts. And I know that we got vegetables and things like that from the allotment. And I presume we also helped in cultivating it. But then again that wasn't something I did. One of my Aunts was green-thumbed and she was the one who did most of the cultivation. But I remember the allotment."

"Until you mentioned it, I'd forgotten about it being a feature of the actual war. My Aunts told me all kinds of stories. They were in the A.R.P. in the Air Raid; they were Wardens and they had what they used to call 'high jinks' when they'd be out waiting looking for incoming bombing planes. Again, these were stories I heard from my Aunts rather than my memories of the actual planes themselves."

Hugh Livingston, born 1940, brought up in Hyndland and Fintry

"I remember sweets being rationed and the rationing, I think being briefly lifted and quickly re-imposed. When it was finally ended, I was sent to queue for a box of Cadbury's roses. My mother made sweets occasionally during the war. I was also sent often from 1944 on to queue for available butcher meat which was rationed. I know we got coal and soap during the War but I don't know if rationing affected our family. I did not know clothes were rationed. I never saw a GI."

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

"No, there was no allotments near us but we did have a back and front garden. And I don't know if this is relevant or not. But the golf course gave over two of their holes to farmers. And they had corn. They grew corn and I remember helping with the harvest thinking this was great fun. You know building the haystacks and running around on the horse and cart. No there wasn't anything. But we had a neighbour who grew all his own vegetables and supplied most of us on the street, you know, with vegetables that he had."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"Once a week we would take our coupons and get our sweeties for the week so that was always a big treat. Just about everything was rationed. I remember one time, I was about fourteen and because there was five of us we got a little more rationing than my Aunt who lived alone. I remember going up to Glasgow. I went by myself to give her some of our rations to help her."

"My Mother, she was a seamstress and she made a lot of our clothes. And when I think back. We were dressed beautifully because she was always sewing and we were like her little dolls. I remember she had like a cousin-in-law and she used to get things from the black market. So she told my Mother about it. And my Mother invested in some of this material. And one time there was a rumour that a lady was to find out who was getting this material and I remember my Mother having to throw it all in the fire, she was so afraid she would be caught. I'm sure she got more after that. I don't remember the lady coming. My Mother had two Aunts. And when they were finished with a dress, she would take it, cut it all up and make dresses for us. I had a white dress and it was from a pair of white linen pants from my Father. And she cut them up and made me this white dress and she ran short of a little bit and she put a blue bib on it, sewed in. I remember that dress well."

Rene Walters (nee Catherine McMenamin), born 1938, brought up in Dumbarton

"I remember I was sent across the road. And I was sent a message over to the fruit shop because they had heard that the bananas were in and there was a queue. So I was sent over to stand in the queue and wait for our quota in bananas. I don't even know how many we got and that was the end of rationing. Then you were free to buy anything you liked if you had the money. But not a lot of folk had money by that time."

M. McKinnon, born 1937, brought up Govanhill and Southside

"I think the main thing was sweets taken off the rationing, that was later on that was much later on, and there was a queue outside the shop and down the road. I remember my Mum and Dad in Port Rush and we travelled over the border to Eire. And I remember going into a sweet shop and being absolutely gob-smacked at the jars of sweets and chocolate and I said 'Can I have this and can I have that' and my Mum saying 'You can have anything you want'. I couldn't imagine, I couldn't believe that we didn't need coupons for these. I think that would be about 1946."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"I remember rationing stopping. I can remember the first time I had yoghurt, I can remember thinking I don't really like the flavouring in it, for a long time, because it was exotic. And we didn't even have a fridge until I was at secondary school. We got one when we moved into the new house and it was still there when my Mother died. And she was 93 when she died. It was in the house when we emptied the house. It was the same fridge all our lives."

Christine McIntosh, born 1945, brought up Hyndland, Broomhill and Arran

"In Fintry we had rose hip trees and I'm guessing they were wanting rose hips. So I would get them and take them in. I think you got some money for them, like a penny or something. That was to make rose hip syrup for vitamin C. They had plenty of that, plenty of rose hips."

(Winifred) Margaret Baker Davidson, born 1937, brought up in Glasgow and Fintry

"It was really post-war VE Day and then playing in the streets and all the issues that were associated with the war and shortages and all of the rationing and all the various events that we all experienced coming out of the war. Having the first banana. Being taken up to the shop having only seen a banana in a book before. And my Mother took me up to the shop and then showed me a real banana. And I tasted my first banana probably age six or something like that. I just have a memory of the actual novelty of having something that, that it was exotic, it felt quite exotic. And then the day the rationing of sweets ended and you were able to go into the sweetie shop without restrictions, I can remember that."

Hugh Livingston, born 1940, brought up in Hyndland and Fintry

Elma Robertson beside her parents and younger sister during WWII.

"I do remember food was rationed. I do remember the sweets being rationed. My Grandfather gave us his coupons but the shops…very rarely did they have sweets in. We lived opposite a newsagents and we'd see from our window the sweets being delivered but we didn't get our newspaper and things in that shop. So we'd go over with our coupons and our money. But we would be told they had none and if you saw sweets anywhere you were lucky. Right up until about 1950 the sweets were still on ration."

"I remember we went to Paris in 1951 with the school. And we were quite delighted when we got on the boat at Southampton because you could buy chocolates without coupons."

"We had no bath. We had a toilet that we shared with the people across the landing from us. So at the weekends, I used to go up to my Gran's for a bath. And I would have to take my breakfast with me because nobody had any spare food. And I was getting my ration of bacon and egg to take up to have. Because it was one egg per book and things were scarce. I think it was about 1945 before I saw a banana. My Gran managed to get some bananas."

"We were lucky my Mother's two sisters went to America and her oldest brother was in Bermuda. So we used to get parcels from America during the war. It was great excitement getting a parcel that came from America because there would always be some sweets for us and different cake mixes and things that you couldn't get here. So we were lucky in that respect. One of my Aunts worked in a butcher so you couldn't get extra butcher-meat but you got a couple of slices of corned beef or things like that. My Uncle the gamekeeper, he used to get us the odd rabbit. And his brother was a gamekeeper in the Isle of Mull. So sometimes we got venison. We weren't so fond of it, but my Father liked venison."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up in Old Kilpatrick

Chapter Five

The Blitz

by Jennifer McKeeman

Guest Author

During the Second World War, Glasgow was identified by the Nazis as a strategic target mostly due to the fact it was a hub of industry and was supplying the allies with ships and ammunition during the war. Clydeside was an area of particular interest to the Germans, Clydebank specifically, as it was the home of John Brown Shipyards, which manufactured anti-aircraft fire and medium calibre guns, and other factories such as the Singer Corporation Factory, which built weapons for the government. On March 13th 1941, Clydebank came under attack and was devastated by a two-night aerial blitzkrieg campaign, which left 528 people dead and a further 617 people injured. During the two nights of constant bombing, more than 1,000 bombs were dropped on houses and tenements, leaving only seven out of 12,000 undamaged, and led to more than 35,000 people being left homeless. Isa McKenzie was 12 years old at the time of the Blitz; she described how her father got her and her brother dressed in their best coats, and took them to a room and kitchen flat on the bottom floor of her tenement. She remembers a lady standing by the front door who would shout "Duck" whenever she heard a bomb, and having to leave the building after five hours of sheltering as it was on fire. Isa and her family made it to safety and spent the night in a local billiard room, only

to emerge the next morning to find that they were homeless, as their building had been completely destroyed.

It has been argued that Clydebank was more underprepared for the blitzkrieg attack than it should have been, considering it was a densely populated town with over 55,000 inhabitants and high-value munitions factories. Historian Les Taylor stated that the reason so many people were killed in the raid was down to a 'creep back', which meant that the Germans were forced to release their bombs early over Glasgow to avoid the gun fire. Despite the Clydebank Blitz being the worst case of destruction and civilian death in Scotland during the war, it was considered a failure by the Germans as only one person was killed for every two tonnes of explosives dropped, a mere 1% of the military's pre-war planning. However, Glasgow was not the only place in Scotland to suffer at the hands of the Germans. The Luftwaffe also bombed Greenock on the West Coast of Scotland in 1941, in a two-night blitz that started on the 6th May, and left 271 people dead and 10,200 injured. There were reports of an air ministry decoy being used on the second night of the bombing, which consisted of mounds of combustible materials being lit over a wide part of woodland to appear as a burning urban area from the sky. This decoy was successful and resulted in the shipyards, which would have been the intended target, emerging relatively unscathed; however, other factories, distilleries and the sugar refinery were badly damaged. In Greenock, like Clydebank, it was civilians who took the brunt of the attack; however, the decision to flee to tunnels in the east end of the town on the second night undoubtedly saved many lives.

Both the Clydebank and Greenock Blitz were widely documented; however, it can be argued that their infamy, along with wartime censorship, meant that smaller attacks were not reported and when they were, they were vague. Despite the devastation caused in both Glasgow and Greenock, it was Peterhead that was the most bombed location after London. It was bombed 28 times and although it was of no strategic value, it was the first place the planes saw when attacking en route from Norway. There were also a number of other smaller attacks in places such as Campbeltown, Fraserburgh, and Montrose, which were bombed more than a dozen times and, although they were not widely reported, they were an important part of the story.

Govan also came under attack from the Germans, and one man who experienced it made it his vocation to talk and write about the untold stories of the people of Govan. George Rountree describes how he believed he had spotted a German reconnaissance plane taking aerial photographs whilst playing with his friend in the street. He wanted to tell his story as he felt that the least-famous air strikes were being left out of historical accounts. On 13th March 1941, George found himself sheltering in his aunt's house alongside his mum and sister after the siren alerted them to an imminent attack. He recalls how the house was filled with twenty to thirty people, and the way the building shook from the explosions and gunfire. A parachute mine landed 400 yards from where he was sheltering, filling the room with a thick haze. George spoke of the devastation he witnessed when he emerged the next morning, the piles of rubble that were still burning, and the civil defence working frantically to determine if anyone was buried underneath it. Two buildings in the street had been completely destroyed overnight, leaving sixty-nine residents dead. However, that was not the only attack that took place that night and, by morning, news had started to filter through that other areas of Glasgow had been hit. In Scotstoun, a mine blew up between two shelters on Earl Street and Dumbarton Road, killing 66 people; meanwhile over in Partick, bombs fell on Peel Street, Hayburn Street, and Crow Road, killing fifty. Hyndland also took a direct hit that night, as a parachute mine hit Dudley Drive, destroying three tenements and killing 36 people.

These and many other tragic incidents that took place during WWII have largely been forgotten, but not by the children who bore witness.

Childhood Memories

"The Blitz"

"We didn't go anywhere, we stayed in the house. But I do remember the planes going over to Clydebank. Sitting on the back steps with my Mum and Dad. Seeing the planes going over, seeing the flashes. And my Mum saying 'If we're going to die, we'll all die together'. I didn't fully understand that. I thought it was just a big adventure. I don't remember being scared."

"The Blitz started, it was my 6th birthday on the 14th of March. It was on the 13th and 14th of March. We were eagerly awaiting my Aunt arriving the next day. She was bringing a birthday cake for me and she had been involved, of course, in the Blitz. And my Mum saying, 'Oh you're as white as a sheet'. That's what I remember about the Clydebank Blitz."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"When my husband lived in Kelvinside, they had a bomb land there and it demolished some houses."

(Winifred) Margaret Baker Davidson, born 1937, brought up in Glasgow and Fintry

"I don't remember anything until I got bombed out. I can't remember the actual date it took place. But I was staying with my Granny at that time in West Street. And as I said she was only two and a half blocks from the River Clyde. And I can remember the siren going at 9 o'clock at night and my Granny saying, 'Come on, time for your bed'. And I remember going to bed and the next thing I knew was the ceiling had caved in on top of me. And a policeman had come up to get me. And my Granny had a lodger. And first of all, I got up before the policeman actually came. And Wardie's Stables were at the side. I can remember it vividly to this day, Wardie's Stables were on fire and the men were in to get the horses out. And they were running up the street with two horses. Where they were going I don't know and my Granny's floor was littered with glass, broken glass. And her lodger, old John Lucas shouting down 'Where are ye?'(he was blind), and 'Where are ye Mrs Burns?' I says, 'John, go to bed and I'll go and get my Granny. And just then the policeman came in the door but half the stairway was blown away. So he got me down into the close to where my Granny was and then my Granny saying to me 'Go and get your Daddy". So I had to run through the streets to get my Mum, well to get my Father to come and help out."

"Then at that time, the two churches that were at the back of us at Patterton Street and Nelson Street, they were on fire. One of them was flattened and the other was set on fire with an incendiary bomb and right down Nelson Street/Ballater Street to Morrison Street. That was all bombed all the way down. The steamie was flattened, I can remember that."

"So that was the worst night I can remember that we had. That was the worst night that I experienced during the war."

George Burns, born 1926, brought up in Bridgeton then Kinning Park

"I can remember the day when I was four and we moved to Tantallon Road and that in itself was a little tale. What had happened was I think sooner or later my parents wanted to get us out of the Gorbals, there were six of us all together - myself, the youngest, my brother Gerald, my brother Hymie and the eldest was Ellis, and I think we got out sooner than expected. My Dad had an Aunt in Tantallon Road, Shawlands and in 1941, following a raid at Clydebank they reckon a plane, a German plane on its way home, to lighten the load, to get rid of its bomb load, and a bomb fell a direct hit on a tenement in James Gray Street which is just up the road from Tantallon Road. My Dad's Aunt, Mrs Freedman, she panicked, and wanted out of Glasgow quickly and sold the house to my Mum and Dad."

Philip Cohen, born 1937, brought up in the Gorbals and then Shawlands

"When we were walking home from the cinema, I remember seeing the pill-boxes along the edge of the River Clyde. And the search lights looking for enemy aircraft in the sky."

"There were fuel tanks up at the back of Old Kilpatrick and two or three of them were on fire but they managed to put it out."

"We used to collect things. It was like long bits of silver paper that planes would drop. This was something to do with the radar. It deflected the radar."

"I remember in near the school football pitch there was a big barrage balloon for quite a bit of the war. That again was something to do with the radar or something like that. But this huge great balloon was in the field next to the school."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up in Old

"We had an air raid shelter at the bottom of the garden. I do recall seeing barrage balloons in the air which I had likened to elephants, big grey elephants in the air. And of course, being adjacent to Portsmouth they were to protect the shipping that were docked in Portsmouth dockyard at the time. Because the Luftwaffe went across on its way to London. And also, Portsmouth suffered quite badly from bombing, as did Gosport. In fact, a few houses down the road were hit by an incendiary bomb and as far as I know a family were killed."

Ian Coombe, born 1942, brought up Gosport, then Glasgow

"I remember the first night of the Blitz we were at a Shirley Temple film. My Mother and a neighbour and I. And just halfway through the film the lights went on in the cinema and the manager went up on to the stage and announced that enemy aircraft had been sighted and if we wanted, we could spend the night in the cinema. Or if we wanted to go home, we better start making our way home. So we went home and we couldn't go into our air raid shelter that night because my Father had a car engine in it, it seemed. And what I remember of the Blitz was being in a neighbour's house which was the bottom floor of a small tenement. I just remember all the big legs round about me because all the neighbours were in. But the next night of the Blitz my Father had emptied the shelter and we were in the shelter from then on. Anytime there was an air-raid my Grandmother came down luckily for her…and my young Aunts came and my Uncle because their house was bombed that night, it was flattened. As were quite a few people in Old Kilpatrick. They'd lost their houses and their possessions."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up in Old Kilpatrick

"Although I don't remember, I vividly remember my Mother's stories. Because she sat through them in the top flat in Hyndland that I was brought up in. And she told how they used to sit in a lobby press a lot of the time. This was in a top flat but they sat there because there were no windows in the hall. And she used to sit eating Rennie's because she used to get terrible indigestion every time there was an air raid, and did old crosswords from the old papers that were stacked up in the cupboard for lighting fires and other things. So she used to sit doing the crosswords. This was before my Father went to the desert because he was slightly old for the first call up. So the war was several years in before he joined the RAF. Also, my Father would tell me, people who lived in the ground floor flat…all the rest of the tenement used to go and gather in the ground floor lobby press. And he used to say, 'there's no point in sitting there, our piano will land on top of you'. So that was quite an amusing sort of story."

"There was also the story of the woman that took her windows out in buckets to the tip the day after an air raid she said she had a diamond studded piano because all the glass had impacted the front of her piano. And it looked as if it was all covered in diamonds. So, that made a big impression on me as a child. That was from a land mine that fell on Polwarth Gardens as it was called in those days, in the middle of the tenements there. And because of which the flat across the landing from hers had sloping floors. Because the blast had sucked the walls out and they'd popped back in again. So I always knew that Mrs McMillan had slopey floors."

"My parents used to tell a story of how in the early days of the war, my parents they were caught out by falling shrapnel because an air raid hadn't ended. It was a beautiful evening and they'd gone out for a walk up to Hyndland Road. And they ran down Novar Drive holding hands and laughing like lunatics. Which always struck me as very youthful and bold of them. And I know my Mother was evacuated from Glasgow. She was teaching at that time. Because married women had to stop teaching when they got married. They couldn't teach anymore. But once the war started they were all asked to go back again and she was evacuated with her pupils to a farm in Dumfriesshire. And she remembered the farmer reading the paper at night and saying, 'Someone's died in Glasgow, do you know them?' which was quite funny. Then my Father joined the RAF. He was too old at the start of the war but he signed up rather than being told to go into the H.L.I. Because he didn't like the idea of that."

"So that's as far as I know about the war, the things I remember my parents telling me."

Christine McIntosh, born 1945, brought up Hyndland, Broomhill and Arran

"There was a German plane came down a few miles from Shotts. And I think it was rescued and sorted up a bit and they brought it to Shotts. Probably in other places as well. But it stood outside the local fire station for a week and they had a step ladder you could go up into the cockpit. I didn't go because I thought the German pilot would still be in there. And I was scared. But I remember going to see it."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"I remember, as I say- I would've been about four years old and I was standing in the entrance of the close. We lived in a tenement building and ehm, of course it was the baffle wall outside we've already spoke about and also there was a tarpaulin sheet that came down the front to keep the light in. Anyway, the adults must've been pulling this sheet aside and watching the planes that were flying over the top and I heard one of them remark that the planes were dropping flares which would account for the brightness. But of course, to me a 'flair' was what you walked on in the kitchen. And my imagination was trying to imagine why planes would be dropping these wooden objects covered in lino on top of us. It was years later before the penny dropped and I realised it was flares not flairs."

David McNeice, born 1937, brought up in Greenock and Millport

"My memories of air raids proper was the terrible sounds of the sirens. When the siren would come on because you did not know what to expect, being in Shawlands we were quite some distance from Clydebank where most of the bombing would take place, the Clyde obviously. But knowing that Shawlands had been bombed and that's just because the bloke wanted to lighten his load. It was always lovely to hear the All Clear. It was a siren, but it was different."

Philip Cohen, born 1937, brought up in the Gorbals and then Shawlands

"I remember there was a big café but it was bombed. A big Italian-type café. It was bombed in 1941. Most of my memories are round about 1940."

"My Grandmother had a chip shop in the village and I remember being around the chip shop. And it was closed at the beginning of the war because of rationing. And then later on in '41 it was bombed. Luckily, my Granny didn't have it by that time."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up in Old Kilpatrick

"There was one family, the Rocks, that was the name of the family. I think they lost something like seventeen of their family. It was the biggest loss of life in Britain for one family from the Blitz. They had all went to their Granny's. I think there was only two survivors. One was on night shift and the young girl who survived she'd be roughly the same age as me. I don't know how she survived. She must've been away staying with neighbours or something."

"There was an awful lot of deaths. And the ones that were in my class at school, I know that some of them lost family members."

"What I do remember, one man, a man called David something and when I started working in John Browns. I would've been about 16 at the time. He was a journeyman electrician and he was a lovely guy but he couldn't speak properly. He was deaf, but you could make out what he was saying. And his hair was virtually pure white. Somebody told me, I didn't know, that David had been buried under the rubble for three days. That's how he lost his hearing. They dug him out after about three days."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"Up in the hills in Dumbarton they built a fake town. We lived right on the Clyde also. And the Germans flying over thought it was a town. And they really bombed it hard and when we got the clearance to come out of the shelter, my neighbour, not the older woman, she took me up in her arms. And pointed to all the fires at the back. And she said it was fairyland. I remember that vividly. And I thought it was lovely not knowing what it was."

"We had an incendiary bomb stuck on our roof. I don't remember about it but my sister said we all had to evacuate when they came to make sure it wasn't going to blow up. And they took it away. That was a close call I guess. My Father being the Air Raid Warden. Sometimes we got hit pretty bad near the Clyde. And my Father would go down there and I remember one time him just sitting telling my Mother about it. I don't think I was supposed to be listening. But he was talking about limbs all over the place and dead bodies because it had really been badly bombed down there near the shipbuilding in Dumbarton."

Rene Walters (nee Catherine McMenamin), born 1938, brought up in Dumbarton

"It was incredible, the place (Clydebank) was absolutely devastated. Even although I was young, I can remember all the bombed houses and rubble everywhere. It was a massive playground for us. You can imagine, we got up to all sorts in the old, bombed buildings and my Mother and my Dad would've murdered us if they knew half the things we got up to. It was dangerous and we weren't supposed to get into them, but we used to get in by hook or by crook somehow, they were maybe cordoned off by wood, but we still managed."

"Next door to us was badly bomb damaged, the building was still standing but the inside was virtually away."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"In the close there lived a lady who was Irish, she was from Eire, and when the bombs were falling on the 13th or 14th of March 1940, one of the bombs fell on the bridge over the Kelvin beside the Art Galleries, destroying it completely. It was a land mine, and two of my Uncles were in my parents' apartment and the walls came in until they were about 19 or 20 inches. These were stone tenements built in the 1880s and if they'd come in another two or three inches, the whole building would've come down. And then they went out again. My Uncles experienced that because they were watching the flak (aircraft defence cannon) that was going up on these German bombers. However, the Irish lady she was saying out loud how much she was praying for these poor boys up there in the sky and my Aunt Catherine who was quick off the mark- she said to her 'Well, if you're that keen on them, why don't you go out and bloody well join them!' So that happened in the dunnie in 97 Otago Street. They were a real labyrinth, so we spent time playing Cowboys and Indians down there, Cops and Robbers."

Peter McNaughton, born 1944, brought up in Clapham, Glasgow and Comrie

"During the war there was a lot of bombing, different types of bombing but particularly what was effective was called the Stukas which were low level bombers. They came across fairly low, and did do a dive, and dropped a bomb with pinpoint accuracy."

"One of the means of defending strategic targets was to set up balloons outside the thing. They were all around various strategic places. There was a trailer lorry and they filled the thing with hydrogen and it was hoisted. If you were flying a dive bomber and you knew there were balloons above you, you knew bloody well there was a great big cable somewhere which you couldn't see. And as you went into your dive and came out, if you actually touched the cable, you were dead. So it discouraged the average sensible bomber pilot and kept them higher. So that was I think the motive behind these and they were set up particularly at Scapa Flow in Orkney to defend the fleet."

Ralph Risk, born 1932, brought up in Pollokshields, Tyndrum, and Tarbert

"Kent Street, you know where the Barras is, part of Kent Street was bombed. It was the left hand side of it and I think there was two or three people killed. We were told when we were going to school don't go Kent Street way because it was bombed."

"I was scared all the time, it was scary"

Cabreg, born 1935, brought up in London Road, Glasgow, and Pollok

"But during the bombing. We went up into the hills. Pitch dark. Course with my blind grandfather trailing him along. Up into the hills above Greenock. Getting away from the bombing."

David McNeice, born 1937, brought up in Greenock and Millport

"One thing we did do when you had bombing. Anti-aircraft things, shrapnel would come out of the guns and land on the pavements. And there was all this stuff and we used to pick that up and collect it."

Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

"My Father wasn't [enrolled in the armed forces] because he had a medical problem pre-war which precluded him from serving in the war. My Mother, I know, took part in the fire watching. She worked for the railway at the time, I think it was L.N.E.R. pre-British Rail. My Dad was involved in the Clydebank Blitz because he worked for an undertakers. It was a car hire and undertakers' business that he was the garage foreman for. So I know from talking to him that he had been involved in removing bodies from the Blitz in Clydebank. I think it had a fairly lasting effect on him to be honest. My Father's two brothers also served in the war, both in the R.A.F. I think. My Mother had no brothers or sisters. However, her Grandfather was killed in Gallipoli just after she was born."

Graeme St Clair, born 1947, brought up in Knightswood and Springburn

A group of Clydebank children at Carbeth
where the huts were requisitioned to house the children

"I remember that the bridge over the river Kelvin, on Kelvin Wat through Kelvingrove Park, was hit by, what people said was a landmine but might have been a bomb, and all the windows on Sauchiehall Street, facing the Park, were blown in. This resulted in some mesh type material being stuck to the glass on the windows at the landings on all the stairs of Blantyre Street. My recollection is that this was not removed until a few years post-war. There was a ruined Church at the corner of Old Dumbarton Road and Argyll Street, right by the EWS Tank, but I believe the story is it was destroyed by fire and not bombs."

"Bombed out buildings were the joy of my life. As a terrible tomboy I, along with a crowd of boys played in the bombed buildings whenever we could. I have been chased off a few by warders trying to stop us from harming ourselves but we loved it. I used to collect silver paper-wrappers from chocolates before the war. I incorporated these in my paper works of art.. Then we were told not to pick up shiny pieces of paper because they might be dangerous. I didn't think much of that."

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

“I was born in Clydebank in 1937. Where I was brought up is a long story. After the Blitz in 1941 we were evacuated to Helensburgh as we lost everything in the Blitz. I went to 9 schools between the age of 4 and 11. My parents split up and remember accommodation was scarce. My mother at one time asked to sleep in the police station, so I was shunted from pillar to post sometimes with a relative but other times with strangers.”

“Interesting now that you have mentioned a siren suit, I do remember that name, not sure if I wore one. I had a Mickey Mouse gas mask though, with lovely turquoise at the mouthpiece I recall. On the 13th March 1941 Mum, Robert and I were at the La Scala watching a Shirley Temple movie. My cousins have since told me that I won a Shirley Temple contest prior to the Blitz..That was where I first heard the bombs and my first really vivid memory. Mum picked me up and threw me under the seat. My understanding was that we had a young boy who lived in our close at 24 Second Avenue with us that night. I believe he was the only one of his family to stay alive. The dance hall across the way, had had two direct hits and people were coming in and walking like zombies down the aisle. I found that very frightening. My Dad was working at Singers and on his way to the La Scala he had to drop onto the ground three or four times as bombs fell around him. Miraculously no one in our greater family were killed.”

“I do have vague memories of the shelters, but I think I probably heard people talking about it. One story was of a friend who was asked to bring down some tins of fruit so she had loaded her apron with as many as she could carry and as she got to the entrance of the shelter, she heard the incendiary bomb and the contents of her apron up in the air. Those in the shelter thought they had been hit.”

Matilda Jane Holmes, born 1937, brought up in Clydebank, Helensburgh, and other places

Friday 14th March 1941

“In the morning we had breakfast and heard the radio report a heavy raid on Clydeside. We went off with our cases for the school bus. At school, we learned that the raid on Clydebank had been severe and transport had been interrupted (no trains between Helensburgh and Clydebank). After school at 4.00pm we met together and went to the station and tried to phone home, but all the lines were "dead. We discussed what we should do - return to Garelochead or try to get a bus to Clydebank. Eventually we decided on the latter and eventually boarded a packed double-decker bound for Glasgow.

We encountered the first bomb damage at Bowling - part of the tenement in ruins and smoking, also black smoke from a burning oil tank at Old Kilpatrick. The bus terminated at Dalmiur where there were many badly damaged houses, dust and smoke, fire engines etc. We became very concerned about the folks at home, as we walked through Dalmuir and Clydebank Main Street, to Taylor Street We were very glad to see the house still standing, so hopefully the folks were OK, however, the windows were boarded up. We were delighted to see our Mum and Dad and Uncle Willie, but they were aghast to see us! The house was without water supply, gas and electricity, but a water-cart had made a delivery and the folks had a portable stove.”

Roderick MacDuff recalling testimony on behalf of his late father, Iain Blair MacDuff, born 1927, and brought up Clydebank and Garelochhead

"I have no recollection of the Clydebank Blitz which started in March 1941 but it may have been a reason for our evacuation. I don't remember which month of 1941 we went to Milngavie. I do remember my Father holding me at our front room window after a raid when, I think, a munition ship was hit in Yorkhill docks and the flames could be seen rising above the Sick Children's Hospital at Yorkhill. I remember well the air raid sirens warning and also the all-clear when danger had passed. We were 1 floor, up in a 3-storey tenement and, for some strange reason all the neighbours congregated in our lobby instead of the air raid shelter or even our close which was shored up with scaffolding. When I was older and after the War, I thought this was rather silly. I had a siren suit but did not know enough to be scared, however, my parents, and the neighbours, did not transmit any fear that I remember."

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

"I remember one night when brother, Willie drew my attention to the searchlights that were criss-crossing the sky. In one the beams we actually saw an enemy aircraft. It took avoiding action to escape from the light. At the same time, the 'Ack Ack' (anti-aircraft) guns were firing and the noise was deafening. We thought that the enemy were aiming for the I.C.I works in Castle Street, opposite Garngad Road, which was only a quarter of a mile from where we lived. The I.C.I chemical works would have been a satisfactory target for the Germans if they had dropped their bombs on that night. The flight crews would have probably got Iron Crosses if they had succeeded. On going along Garngad Road the next day, I was able to pick up pieces of shrapnel which had fallen from the sky, the by-product of exploding anti-aircraft shells."

John Power, born 1927, brought up Saltmarket and Garngad, Glasgow. Courtesy of his daughter Dini Power

"We had the ground floor flat and the neighbours came into our close, I don't know why. There was something to stop the bombs coming into the close. We never went to the shelter. We didn't like air raid shelters they were crowded. It was sociable people coming into the close. There was a heavy curtain and as boys we looked out and watched the lights and the bullets trying to hit the planes. It was exciting. The nearest bomb was round the corner in Allen Street."

"We lived opposite the gas works with one of the big storage tanks. Once a bomb dropped on the gas works but didn't go off because it landed in a pile of sand just over the wall opposite our house. So we'd all have gone. It had gone off the end of us, they never got the gasworks or the yards that they were after."

"There were occasional dog fights. The planes were all propeller jobs and they were slow. You watched them float across the sky. We watched them it was exciting. The trace bullets trying to get them."

"My mate's family were bombed out there. They weren't hurt but they were fed up and immigrated to Canada straight after that. He was called Jim Sherriff."

Davie Walker, born 1934, brought up Bridgeton, Glasgow

"There was a strong feeling that there would be a second raid that night, so after some food, father said that we should try right away to get back to Garelochhead and he accompanied us to Glasgow Road to try for a bus. People were streaming west carrying goods and cases, leaving the town. There was very little transport - perhaps one or two double-decker buses - packed, and not stopping. We waited until about 7.30pm as it started to get dark and then father said we should all return to the house."

"Back at the house we all had a snack and the sirens sounded about 8.30pm. Tom and I took our places under a large strong dining room table while the folks sat on chairs in the hall almost under the stairs. (My parents had been offered an air raid shelter before the war, but had foolishly decided not to get one.) Uncle Willie, then about aged 50 and not very fit, was an auxiliary warden (he had a helmet and gas mask) and went to the front door to watch the street and surrounding area. Soon the heavy sound of aircraft was heard, accompanied by fairly loud explosions of bombs and anti-aircraft fire (this was probably from the Polish destroyer, ORP Piorun, then in John Brown's dock, nearby). The noise became quite intense and probably around midnight, father said we should leave the house and seek an air-raid shelter. There was an Anderson Shelter in a back garden, just two doors up (Mr and Mrs Connell). We ran out the back door covering our heads with our hands and found the shelter almost full, but Tom, Mum and I were admitted while father remained outside with some other men, under a sand-bagged entrance. The shelter was very cramped (I sat on someone's knees). The noise lasted all night but eventually it became quieter and the "All Clear" sounded about 6.00am."

Roderick MacDuff recalling testimony on behalf of his late father, Iain Blair MacDuff, born 1927, and brought up Clydebank and Garelochhead

"We returned to the house, which had sustained further window damage, and we had a breakfast. Then Uncle Willie and I had a walk around the immediate Whitecrook area. There was no substantial damage in Taylor Street but an incendiary bomb had fallen in the middle of the street and had been extinguished by a warden using a sand bag. There was lots of debris in the area, but the worst damage was in Whitecrook Street where a four-storey tenement had the middle completely blown down by a parachute mine (around 16 people killed in this street). I picked up two bright metal bomb or anti-aircraft splinters (one of which I still have - now rusty!)"

Roderick MacDuff recalling testimony on behalf of his late father, Iain Blair MacDuff, born 1927, and brought up Clydebank and Garelochhead

"I remember during the war my Mother and a neighbour hanging out their washing. And they were both in tears because the neighbour's brother had just been killed. I started school in 1941 in the January and I kind of remember round about then because just after I had started the school was bombed at the Clydebank Blitz. So our school was bombed, and our school was closed for quite a while."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up in Old Kilpatrick

Chapter Six

Housing

The housing situation at the start of WWII in Glasgow and the surrounding area mirrored that of many other industrial areas of Britain. Home was, for many, a legacy of cheaply constructed 19th century buildings, built for workers coming to cities during the Industrial Revolution. Squalor was one of the five giants identified in the Beveridge Report as holding back progress in housing in Britain in the 1940s. This was compounded by a halt in house building during WWI, followed by a 'Homes For Heroes' programme that was weakened in the 1920s and 1930s by a number of factors. This was marked by underspending in local authorities, the interwar Depression, and by what some regarded as stringent rules for securing a council house. This meant that people who did not have a steady job, a common situation at the time, could not get leases. There was also an ideological move away from public spending in the early 1930s, which meant that most of the houses being built were privately owned. This was the time when many three-bedroomed semi-detached houses were built in the suburbs for those that could afford them. Only 18 per cent of manual workers owned their own home. Slum clearance far exceeded house building during the inter-war period. Many people

let out rooms to people in need of homes as a means to subsidise their own incomes. This contributed to overcrowded and unhealthy living conditions for many people.

During WWII, house building came almost to a standstill again, as two thirds of the skilled building workforce went into the armed forces, and building materials were in short supply. Those builders that were working were employed on government contracts. In Glasgow, there was an influx of war-workers from villages and towns across Scotland. The population grew from one million one hundred thousand, in 1939, to one million three hundred thousand at the start of 1940. There was a deliberate policy of getting people to work in armaments and engineering works in Glasgow; this saw almost a quarter of a million people moving into the city during WWII. Unlike in other areas of Britain, there was no large-scale scheme to build houses for these people. Some workers were rented houses in Clydebank, after the Blitz there in early 1941, only to have to leave as people returned home when the threat of bombing lessened. The Rolls-Royce factory at Hillington had a purpose-built estate, but many workers found the rents too expensive and chose to live further afield. This brought about a situation where people had either to be housed in extortionately high rented accommodation through their workplace, or to rent single or multiple rooms in people's homes, often inferior in quality, and also for a disproportionally expensive fee. Little wonder that these workers sometimes struggled with rent as work tailed off towards the end of the war, and evictions happened as a result of this.

The aerial bombardment of Britain destroyed two hundred thousand homes. In Glasgow, between 1941 and 1943, six thousand eight hundred and thirty-five homes were destroyed and twenty thousand suffered minor damage. The Clydebank Blitz on the 13th and 14th of March 1941, resulted in the destruction of a huge percentage of its housing. There were four thousand houses destroyed, four thousand five hundred homes were severely damaged, and three thousand five hundred suffered serious to mild damage. In total only seven houses out of a twelve thousand strong housing stock remained completely undamaged. The Greenock Blitz on the nights of the 6th and the 7th of May 1941 brought about the destruction of five thousand homes, with twenty-five thousand suffering damage. Homes in other parts of Glasgow and the surrounding area were also damaged or destroyed during this time. The people of Clydebank who survived the bombing were evacuated en masse, with forty-eight thousand leaving the town and many were never to return there again. These people were bused to temporary reception centres and then went on to either stay with friends or family, or move out to places as

far apart as Stirlingshire, Helensburgh, and Hamilton. Others, along with people from other bombed out areas nearby, found themselves in sub-standard and expensive accommodation closer to home.

From 1943, the Government tried to mitigate the housing problems by requisitioning houses and flats, but the effectiveness of this scheme did seem to depend on the local authority. Some were regarded as favouring the owners of these properties. Even when rules came in that meant that owners only had a fortnight to rent or sell empty houses, they often found ways to do just that. In Glasgow five hundred and seventy-five houses were requisitioned during the war, in comparison to only fifty-five requisitioned by the Corporation of Edinburgh. People were selected from the direst of circumstances to be housed in requisitioned houses and their rents were sometimes subsidised by the corporation, and in turn, the Department of Health. There was a case, at the end of the war, in which some private landlords looked to their own financial interest as opposed to the common good. Returning servicemen, a group whose rooms or homes were often filled by their families renting it out during the war, were put out of their accommodations in Largs to make way for holidaymakers. The corporation of the town complained to the Department of Health regarding this incident.

Squatting in properties happened in the West of Scotland, during the war, as a reaction to the housing difficulties of the time, but could end in prosecutions as the laws on squatting were stricter in Scotland than in England. For example, there was a squat in Greenock, in 1943, where the occupants had made great improvements to the property and were refusing to leave until they got alternative accommodation. They were eventually evicted from the property. At the end of the war, some POW and army camps were taken over by people in need of homes. The earliest example of that in Scotland was in 1945. This certainly happened at former POW camps at Patterton, East Renfrewshire, and at Pennylands, on the Dumfries House Estate near Cumnock and Auchinleck, Ayrshire. The wartime situation, in terms of housing in Glasgow and the surrounding area, was fraught with difficulties, some of which were to continue well into the post-war period.

Childhood Memories

"Housing"

"The apartment had a recess bed, two chairs, sink. You had to wash at the sink. We had like a little zinc bath that my Mother used to bath me in. When we first moved to that house, my Mother was delighted getting a room and kitchen. It was two nice big rooms and the hall had a bunker in so that was good and my Uncle helped us with the flitting. He had a coal lorry, not that there was much to take, a mattress, a couple of chairs, a sideboard, a table. How we had all that in one room…however, that was the stuff she got taken up. So we decided I was to sleep in this recess bed in what was to be the kitchen. We had a big range. The next day I was itching. There was bugs, there was bed bugs. They live in the wall and infested our things, so it all had to get thrown out. So we didn't have a bed. So, the sanitary men came and put paint on the walls, like green paint, inside this bed recess. I think it had something DDT in it or something like that and that cured that problem. But she had to get a bed. Somebody said you can have this, it was like an iron bedstead, like an old brass bed. It would cost a fortune now. So that was in the front room this great big bed and then she had to get a mattress. She went down to the Co-op in Bridge Street and saw she couldn't afford one. A man took pity on her and said, 'Look we've got one here but it's got a bit of oil on it so she got it for a cheap price."

"You know, I can remember washing my feet with my socks on to get them clean at the same time. That was in the room and kitchen."

"We had to use a potty, a chamber pot, and it got emptied in the morning. There were three families in the stairs and the people in the middle. My Mother reckoned the father had T.B. and she didn't want us using the toilet. She cleaned it and all that sort of thing. But she didn't want us using it."

Cecilia Murray, born 1942, brought up in Gorbals and Castlemilk

"It was a two room and kitchen as they called them in those days. My Aunt was there with her husband and her two sons. They were a few years older than my sister. So, they were about six or seven years older than me. My Mother's brother was there. He was an opera singer. He used to sing in the Carl Rosa Opera. Then my Mum came with my sister and I. So there was quite a crowd of us. But we managed fine and everybody seemed to be well fed and cared for. There was an inside toilet which was really something."

"There was a range of course, black. It had to be black leaded once a week, I think. And along the edge had to be done with I think a Brillo pad, I suppose, or steel wool anyway. And rubbed and made to shine. And then the big kettle went on the fire. There was a fire in it and the big kettle went on to boil the water for the tea. And I remember a big pot. Whether that was for soup or not I don't know. A big kind of cauldron thing."

M. McKinnon, born 1937, brought up Govanhill and Southside

"It was a house and they called them a garret, on the roof. It was a house like that. I don't remember how big it was. My older brother he stayed in it with my Mum and I and my brother Joseph. He was born in Rothesay in 1944, so it was obviously not a bad size… Right across from the house was a school that my brother went to. I was too young to go to school… I remember there was a wall in front of our house and I fell off this and broke my arm… I remember the Castle it wasn't far from us."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"Well it had two bedrooms one living room and one bath. It was quite a good size bathroom back then. And we kept the coal in a cupboard. The coal man would come with a coal bag on his back. We also had a coal bunker outside. We had no fridge until I was almost twelve. We got a very small refrigerator. I shared the room with two sisters. And we had a sitting room and my parents would sleep on a pull-out couch. Settee. It was a nice house. I was very happy there. And you know it had a nice yard. The people upstairs had the side yard."

Rene Walters (nee Catherine McMenamin), born 1938, brought up in Dumbarton

"My grandparents lived in a two-apartment house in Back Templehill. The lavatory was in the backyard. The cooking was done on a gas ring and an old coal fired grate. My mother had reluctantly to go to Troon with us kids. She hated it. The accommodation was hardly adequate. My dad had insisted that we all had to go to Troon in order to avoid the danger from air raids. When I think of it now my Dad had a nerve expecting us to live with my grandparents under the conditions that prevailed. My gran was in her late seventies, my granddad must have been about eighty, deaf as a post and smoke Gallagher's Thick Black tobacco in his pipe. He would not allow the window to be opened. I can still remember the combined smell of stale tobacco, wood and coal smoke from the occasional "blow-down" from the chimney."

"There were five (?) of us kids, with our parents, staying with Grannie and Granda Power. The two-apartment flat was on the ground floor, first left, in the close. Three other flats comprised the small tenement, one across the close and the other two, above, were accessed by way of stairs in the backcourt. Adjacent to the kitchen, in the back court, were a coal cellar and next to this, a lavatory."

"Both rooms in the flat had double inset beds. These beds were in recesses in each room and would be curtained off during the day, giving the impression of a room with no bed. My grandparents occupied the front room and the rest of us slept in the back room. Makeshift beds had to be made on the floor because we could not all fit into the inset bed in our room. Our room had a cast iron range and there was always a kettle of water on the grate, this being the only source of hot water. Conditions were primitive by today's standards but acceptable then."

John Power, born 1927, brought up Saltmarket and Garngad, Glasgow. Courtesy of his daughter Dini Power

"My Granny was one of them (homeless during the war) and she had about four of a family still staying with her. They were quickly rehoused in Old Kilpatrick. I do remember somebody taking me up to Clydebank. And I remember a tenement had been sliced down by the bomb and I thought it was very funny because there was a toilet, a lavatory pan, just at the edge where the bomb had split the building."

"Our house had blast damage but we were able to go back to it after a couple of months. I remember there was a big hole in one of the internal walls and this is what it was. It was blast damage."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up Old Kilpatrick

"We lived in a Nissen hut in Helensburgh until we found some other housing. It was very cold. We then went to the corner of Argyle and Sinclair Streets for a while then we lived in Mill Glen right next to the Hermitage. I loved it there."

Matilda Jane Holmes, born 1937, brought up in Clydebank, Helensburgh, and other places

Chapter Seven

Impact on families

WWII conscription began in May 1939, as it became apparent to Neville Chamberlin and his government that war was inevitable; men between the ages of twenty years and twenty-two years were required to submit to military training. On the day that war was declared, *The National Service (Armed Forces) Act, 1939,* brought in conscription for all males between the ages of sixteen and forty-one. Those in reserved occupations and those who were medically unfit received exemptions. People who were conscientious objectors appeared before tribunals; if they were successful, they were given non-combatant jobs. Conscription helped greatly to increase the number of men in active service during the first year of the war.

A 'reserved occupation' was considered important enough to the country for those working in it to be exempt from military service and to be forbidden from leaving it. Examples included: railway workers, dockworkers, farmers, agricultural workers, lighthouse keepers, schoolteachers; engineers, and doctors. Coal miners were added to the list in 1943 amidst a shortage of coal needed to fuel essential industries and homes.

In December 1941, Parliament passed a second National Service Act. It broadened the remit of conscription further by making all unmarried women and all childless widows between the ages of twenty and thirty liable to call-up. Men were now required to do some form of National Service up to the age of sixty, which included military service for those under the age of fifty-one.

The effects on families of men away at war during WWII were many. Marriages had often been entered into young during the marriage boom in the UK at the start of WWII, and before the spouses had really got to know one another. This resulted in marriages lacking in essential elements of resilience. Men and women often did not comprehend the realities of each other's wars. Men were sometimes under the impression that their wives had the easy side of the bargain and did not appreciate the arduous

work and fear that they were experiencing. Likewise, women would, in some cases, have found it hard to imagine what their husbands had witnessed and been through as members of the armed forces.

Members of the armed forces were given little leave during WWII, and the leave system was not set up with families in mind. Often, leave was fleetingly short and not designed to coincide with any time off work that wives may have been given. Sometimes children would not see their father for years, or did not meet them until they came back from the war. This resulted in some children only meeting their fathers at the end of the war and not really knowing them, or even in children regarding their fathers as complete strangers. In some cases, family bonds took years to form or repair; sometimes they were never formed or mended.

'1940s Lady', by Joyce Kelly, Artist in Residence, Communities Past & Futures Society

Extra-marital affairs happened both on the home front and during service abroad. Separation, loneliness, and the threat of imminent death contributed to their prevalence during this period. Affairs were known to result in children. Some marriages survived these difficulties as people were forgiving and realised that the circumstances, during that time, were exceptional. One respondent recalls that on arriving home to Glasgow, one husband accepted the two younger children as his own, knowing that they had been the result of his wife's wartime affair. The mores of the day meant that the children did not find this out until many decades later.

Men were sometimes traumatised by their experiences during the war, and some never recovered. Others suffered terrible physical injuries which affected them for the rest of their lives. These mental and physical issues could bring about family problems, such as mental and physical abuse. It also might result in wives looking after broken men for the rest of their lives. There was little understanding or support with those who had mental health problems during this era. These

circumstances could have adverse effects on young children, both during and after the war. Children may also have had older siblings that were away to war. There were occasions when young men joined up below the official age, whilst effectively still children themselves, and this caused distress to their families. The death of a father or child, and/or other family members, was an all-too familiar occurrence and brought trauma to many wartime families.

The National Service Act, 9141, required that all women between the ages of 18 and 60 years old had to be registered and record their family occupations. Initially this was just single women. By 1943, ninety per cent of single women and eighty percent of married women were employed in war work of some nature. Women were never supposed to come under enemy fire, but some did die on active service, with auxiliary armed force services, leaving families bereft of mothers, sisters and aunts. Married women also conducted dangerous work in munitions factories and other home front work placements, and women soon made up one third of workers in metals and chemicals factories. Some men, however, who were in what was known as 'reserved occupations', were prevented from going to war. Some men found this emasculating, and feared that they would be viewed as 'shirkers' by the public, and indeed, some were accused of avoiding 'doing their duty' in the beginning. This may have had its implications for the family life of these men. It is thought that the perceived bravery, and consequently the self-esteem of these men, improved after the Blitz and when people realised the importance of the work that they were doing for the war-effort.

Married women and men in Glasgow and the surrounding area often worked long hours during WWII. Factories producing war materials in and around the Glasgow area included the Rolls Royce factory at Hillington, which built Merlin engines for Spitfires and Lancaster Bombers, the Dalbeattie explosives factories, the torpedo factory in Greenock, the Singer Sewing Machine factory in Clydebank which was converted to produce munitions, Cardonald in Paisley which produced war ships, and many more. One female respondent remembers regularly working twelve-hour shifts at the Rolls Royce factory in Glasgow. People would also work in occupations such as the ARP, the air warden service, and the Women's Royal Voluntary Service, in addition to their full-time jobs.

WWII was the first time the term 'latch key kid' was used. The term describes young children having to let themselves into their homes whilst parents were away at work or war. Children who stayed at home often had to be independent during these years and some took on household chores and duties. Children could leave school at fourteen to start jobs in some work environments and would work long hours, sometimes on different shifts to their parents or siblings. Others were evacuated and experienced a different kind of war. Mothers and fathers would have missed their children, and vice versa, for these reasons. Perhaps unsurprisingly, divorce rates peaked at the end of WWII. Some marriages did survive and some families, did, on the face of it at least, recover from their war experiences, which varied vastly in intensity, and go on to live relatively normal lives. Others did not.

Childhood Memories

"Impact on families"

"I had three uncles; one was a ship's surgeon on a troop ship. He was torpedoed. And another Uncle who was a gunner in the Army. He was in Burma. And another Uncle who was in the Royal Navy. My Dad didn't pass the medical examination. He would've gone but he was too low a grade to be accepted in any of the forces. My Mum was happy, but he wasn't, he was disappointed."

"My best friend's brother was killed. He was in the Air Force. He was only about 19 or 20; he had been last seen entering a hall and wasn't seen again. I remember that. We were only about 7 or 8 years old and he was about 19."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"He was pulled up for the American Army when he was 19 (his Uncle Jimmy). He was working in Weir's in Cathcart as an apprentice. And he got called up to go to the American Embassy in Edinburgh. And then three weeks later he was shipped out to the United States for military training. He didn't see any action lucky enough because he was on a troop ship going to the Philippines when the Americans dropped the atom bomb. So the war was basically over by the time he got to the Philippines."

"My Father, he was demobbed in Munster, Germany. And I used to have my Father's old army great coat. That was used as an extra blanket for us in the winter time. That was on the bed for me and my sister. A great big heavy khaki horrible itchy thing. But it kept you warm. That was before continental quilts were ever invented."

Sandy Boyle, born 1948, brought up Maryhill

"My Dad, unfortunately, had been a prisoner of war. He was captured in St Valery in France and marched into Poland where he was kept in a prisoner of war camp. He didn't speak much about it at all. But I did get the impression that some very unpleasant things had happened to him. And subsequently discovered that instead of being de-mobbed in 1945, he had actually been sent back in 1943 as part of a Red Cross exchange where prisoners on both sides who had health issues were swapped through the Red Cross, so German prisoners in the UK would be sent back and British prisoners in Germany would be sent back. I believe that's how my Father came home early."

"Because he was part of the Royal Army Medical Core. When he arrived at the camp in Poland, there was a big hospital in the camp which treated German soldiers. And because of his background in being a Medic, he was put to work in the German hospital. And he actually had pictures of him with German soldiers who he was looking after and nursing. And I recall one of the things he said was that a lot of these German soldiers loathed the Nazi regime just as much as the people who were suffering under them. And while they were patriotic Germans, they weren't Nazis. He spoke a little German having treated some of the German soldiers. He was able to speak to them in basic terms. Apart from that he spoke very little about his experiences."

Heather Bovell, born 1948, brought up in Gilsochill, Maryhill

"My Father, he was called up just before I was born and he had to report up to Perth. And I believe at first, he was in the Black Watch in the Infantry Regiment. But what I remember he was in the Royal Scots."

Alf Duffy, born 1940, brought up in the Gorbals and Pollok

"My older brother was in the Royal Navy. He was at war. My other brother, he's four years older than I am. He did his National Service later on and he was in Ireland."

(Winifred) Margaret Baker Davidson, born 1937, brought up in Glasgow and Fintry

"My brother, one brother was in the Navy, one was in the Merchant Navy and one in the RAF. And my older sister's husband, and he was killed at Anzio. Twenty-three he was."

"You did hear about people getting killed. I think they called it the buff letter. You know it was a buff colour. And you knew this was the telegram to tell them that their husband, or their son or whatever was killed."

Cabreg, born 1935, brought up in London Road, Glasgow, and Pollok

"I remember my Uncle Wullie coming back from the Navy. That was a big thing. He arrived still with his uniform on you know. He came into our house in Somerville Street. I remember. I'll never forget. He'd a big…I think it was a Navy issue. It was a big case. It was a kinda lime green case. You know. Heavy duty case. And he opened it up in the living room. Like that. You know. And me and two of my brothers and Jack, aye Jack would be there. His son. And he opened it up and it was aw the sweets you know boilings and aw that (laughs)."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"Not nearly as much as my parents must've had. I don't think my imagination would conceive of my heroic big brothers having trouble. In a way the fact that Tom was a flying boat pilot he was involved, I believe, in the battle of the Atlantic a little bit."

"My brother John. I was only really aware after the event that he had landed, not on D-Day, but later."

"My older sister got married and joined the WVS and worked in Stirling. My eldest brother went into the Air Force and became a pilot and travelled the world in flying boats. He was a flying boat pilot. His travels left me always anxious to see other parts of the world. He was based in Ceylon and flew to Perth in Western Australia. Which at the time was almost Amy Johnson type flying. It was a Catalina, a long-range plane which was almost unheard of. He joined the Air Force and my second brother joined the Marines in 1944 or thereby. He was in Holland and Belgium fighting... And I was still too young to do anything."

"So, it was an interesting life, second-hand, and so many things happened… "The end of the war came so everybody returned home and set about their life."

Risk Ralph, born 1932, brought up Pollokshields, Tyndrum and Tarbert

"They were both in the ATS and both stationed in England. Although my Aunt went to OTC (Officer Training College), and she was transferred to Germany where she was an officer of the British Army on the Rhine. And she was there for three or four years and then she came back to Glasgow to look after her Mother, my Grandmother. And she became a police officer and she was in the first group of ladies who became detectives in the Glasgow police force and she worked at Glasgow Central and Maryhill and no doubt one or two other places, eventually ending up as an investigating officer on fraud activities."

"My other Aunt, she was in England, and she was the whole British Army rolled into one. A very dominant fun-loving character. Loved us all to death. She lived in Park Road just round the corner from Gibson Street, so we always stayed very close to each other when we were all in Glasgow. And today, none of my relatives live in Glasgow, not one."

Peter McNaughton, born 1944, brought up in Clapham, Glasgow and Comrie

"Listening to the radio regularly and my parents listened to the radio and you asked questions and they explained things to you. And I suppose the first time it really hit me was, we lived in a tenement and upstairs was a family and their son joined the R.A.F. And he went missing. And you know how friendly people are living in a tenement. So we knew this family really, really well. And so that's the first time probably maybe a couple of years into the war when he was killed. And I think that's when I suppose I got the implications of a war in a way that I think before that my life had been kind of normal. No different from before the war."

Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

"My Father was a very unassuming man. He never talked much about his experience but he served in the Atlantic and Arctic Convoys and particularly on that infamous convoy PQ 17 when so many ships were lost. He was on one of the rescue ships, The Zamoli."

"I don't think the service of the Merchant Navy was ever properly recognised, and certainly he went through hell with that."

"I'll tell you one experience my Dad had. He was on a ship that was going from Glasgow to Boston, U.S.A., and he did the round trip. He was an engineer and there was something about the ship he didn't like and he decided to leave and transfer to another ship. He was a civilian, although he was on war duty, so he had the choice as long as he was on a ship, he could serve on any ship he liked. So he got off the ship and on its next round trip, it sank in a storm. And you know if he hadn't had that intuition, he was an Engineer, and there was something about the ship he didn't like. He didn't think it was seaworthy and he was right and on its next trip on the way back to Glasgow, it sank south of Iceland. No survivors, none whatsoever. They didn't even get the boats off because I actually tracked down the surviving radio messages from the ship in the records and they said they were going down by the head and they were trying to launch boats and it just sank, no survivors ever found. That was it, no more radio transmissions. He sent a letter home and I have a copy of the letter and it says he wrote to his Mother. It said I'll be home in time for my 21st birthday. And said I don't like this ship, I won't be going back on it, or something to that effect. And if he had taken that second round trip, I wouldn't be talking to you right now. That's how problematic sometimes these things can be."

"My Grandfather was at Dunkirk again as a merchant marine. He was delivering supplies to Dunkirk. His ship was bombed. He was stranded and got off with the soldiers evacuated from Dunkirk."

"Amazing stories. Lots of people have got stories like this."

Murdo Morrison, born 1950, brought in up Scotstoun and Drumchapel

"So, when I was three months old my father went to the war. Never saw again. Never came back. He got drowned in Naples. I was eighteen months old."

"My own Uncle Peter had been a P.O.W. in Germany. He died. I'm sure there was a few tales to tell, but when you're young you don't really listen. I just remember he had to march through the snow in Germany, very cold and I think there was a lot of bad things happened on the march to women. And others getting left behind and things like that. But I wish I'd listened more."

Cecilia Murray, born 1942, brought up

"I don't remember too much. I do remember one time being woken up in the middle of the night and we went off to my Uncle's house. He had gotten notice that he had to go to war and that's the earliest memory I have."

"My Uncle, my Mother's brother joined the Marines. My Father was turned down due to problems with his knee."

Rene Walters (nee Catherine McMenamin), born 1938, brought up in Dumbarton

"My Father, he was in South Africa and Sicily in Italy. And I can remember when he did come home my sister said 'I'm not staying in this house with that man. Because we had never been used to having a man in the house. But of course, we soon got used to him being in the house."

"My brother-in-law did. My husband just missed it. My brother-in-law, he was in Germany for his National Service. I can remember my uncle doing his National Service and my Granny had died so he was brought home. He was in Germany too."

Marion Penny, born 1940, brought up in Townhead and Ruchazie

"My Father's brother went off, he joined the Scots Guards and he came back. In fact I still have a letter that he wrote to my Father from Italy in 1944. When they landed and were marching up to Italy, he wrote to my Father but he didn't mention where he was. My Father had obviously said to him that he knew where they were. He had guessed it was Italy and in the letter my Uncle said, 'You guessed right'. That's when they were going up through Italy to Monte Cassino. I remember my Mother and Father getting a couple of Christmas cards from foreign places from friends of theirs that were at war. My Uncle came back alright. But there were quite a few from the village that didn't come back. That were killed in the war."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up Old Kilpatrick

"My brother, one brother was in the Navy, one was in the Merchant Navy and one in the RAF. And my older sister's husband, and he was killed at Anzio. Twenty-three he was."

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Cabreg, born 1935, brought up in London Road, Glasgow, and Pollok

"My Father's two youngest brothers served in RAF I believe as ground crew. I met a friend at University in 1957 who told me that his Father had survived his ship being torpedoed on the Russian convoys but other than that no one close was involved other than as Air Raid Wardens like my Father. My Father at the start of the War was a bus driver, he had previously driven lorries, and during the War often drove ambulances as did his 2nd oldest brother. His 5th brother was a shopkeeper in Greenock."

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

"My Father, he was called up just before I was born and he had to report up to Perth. And I believe at first he was in the Black Watch in the Infantry Regiment. But what I remember he was in the Royal Scots."

Alf Duffy, born 1940, brought up in the Gorbals and Pollok

"I remember my Uncle Wullie coming back from the Navy. That was a big thing. He arrived still with his uniform on you know. He came into our house in Somerville Street. I remember. I'll never forget. He'd a big…I think it was a Navy issue. It was a big case. It was a kinda lime green case. You know. Heavy duty case. And he opened it up in the living room. Like that. You know. And me and two of my brothers and Jack, aye Jack would be there. His son. And he opened it up and it was aw the sweets you know boilings and aw that (laughs)."

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Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

"The Civil Defence rescue work in Clydebank came to an end when the Blitz ended. My dad's nerves were very bad and although things were quiet in the Corps, he felt that he had had enough, he wanted out. All adults had to conform to Government regulations regarding what they could do. The Civil Defence was a reserved occupation and one was not allowed to leave unless there was work of national importance as an alternative. My dad had to argue his case before a tribunal which existed to examine requests for transfers to other work. He was good at debating, and although his education was lacking when it came to reading and writing, he could speak intelligently. He told the tribunal that he could do very important work as a welder and burner, in Troon, as a ship breaker. As the need for the Civil Defence rescue had virtually ceased in the West of Scotland area, he would be much better employed as an essential worker in Troon. He told the tribunal that there was a great need for burners in the shipyard there. This was true. My dad had checked with his contacts in Troon and verified that there were vacancies waiting to be filled. He knew that if he didn't get away from the Civil Defence Corps he would go off his head. His appeal succeeded and he started work in Troon shipyard."

John Power, born 1927, brought up Saltmarket and Garngad, Glasgow. Courtesy of his daughter Dini Power

"I know that Ernie Valente and his oldest son from a big family, those two got taken away because they were Italian. I remember when we got back to Somerville Street, they were still away. The family were still there, they hated the Nazis as well the same as everybody else. Ernie used to work with cement in the Rothesay dock I thought he was a baker because every night he used to come in and he was pure white with cement."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"My father was a doctor who had qualified from Glasgow in 1942. Having been in the Glasgow University O.T.C. He was whisked away as a volunteer and ended up landing in North Africa with "Operation Torch. He was in Command of a Field Ambulance and was blown up during the Attack on Longstop Hill in Tunisia April 23 1943. As a result of this he always used a deaf aid (Which when I was young was a massive thing which was suspended from his under vest and lately was just a wee thing in his ear) and had been a bit shoogly for while. He was lucky as most of the men with him were killed. My mother and he had got married in 1942, as if he had been killed and married my mother would have received a pension, otherwise not."

Colin Stevenson, born 1944, brought up Hillhead and Jordanhill, Glasgow

Colin Stevenson (standing) and Peter McNaughton, class 2C, Hillhead High School.

"For all it was 1950 sometimes I think that our society was still living in a sort of Victorian, pre-First World War era. At Christmas in my Aunt Agnes's house my father, my Uncle Colin (who I was called after) and my Uncle Duncan, plus a few drams, would be talking about the war. Even then I was aware that war for my uncles was the only real one and that the second war had been just a bit of a side show despite the fact that my Father had been wounded in the second one."

"During this time there had been the invasion of Egypt with the French which the Americans made the UK back out off. At the same time I can remember listening to Imre Nagy the free Hungarian PM pleading for help from the West on the radio. I could not understand when my father said to me "No one will be going son". Imre Nagy was taken by the Russians to Moscow put on some sort of trial and then hung."

Colin Stevenson, born 1944, brought up Hillhead and Jordanhill, Glasgow

"So, when I was three months old my father went to the war. Never saw again. Never came back. He got drowned in Naples. I was eighteen months old."

"My own Uncle Peter had been a P.O.W. in Germany. He died. I'm sure there was a few tales to tell, but when you're young you don't really listen. I just remember he had to march through the snow in Germany, very cold and I think there was a lot of bad things happened on the march to women. And others getting left behind and things like that. But I wish I'd listened more."

Cecilia Murray, born 1942, brought up in Gorbals and Castlemilk

"I do remember the day they came round and took away our railings from the front of our house. The whole country, they wanted the iron for making ammunition and things like that."

Philip Cohen, born 1937, brought up in the Gorbals and then Shawlands

"He was pulled up for the American Army when he was 19 (his Uncle Jimmy). He was working in Weir's in Cathcart as an apprentice. And he got called up to go to the American Embassy in Edinburgh. And then three weeks later he was shipped out to the United States for military training. He didn't see any action lucky enough because he was on a troop ship going to the Philippines when the Americans dropped the atom bomb. So, the war was basically over by the time he got to the Philippines."

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Sandy Boyle, born 1948, brought up Maryhill

"My older brother was in the Royal Navy. He was at war. My other brother, he's four years older than I am. He did his National Service later on and he was in Ireland."

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"My Father was a very unassuming man. He never talked much about his experience but he served in the Atlantic and Arctic Convoys and particularly on that infamous convoy PQ 17 when so many ships were lost. He was on one of the rescue ships, The Zamoli."

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"I'll tell you one experience my Dad had. He was on a ship that was going from Glasgow to Boston, U.S.A., and he did the round trip. He was an engineer and there was something about the ship he didn't like and he decided to leave and transfer to another ship. He was a civilian, although he was on war duty, so he had the choice as long as he was on a ship, he could serve on any ship he liked. So, he got off the ship and on its next round trip, it sank in a storm. And you know if he hadn't had that intuition, he was an Engineer, and there was something about the ship he didn't like. He didn't think it was seaworthy and he was right and on its next trip on the way back to Glasgow, it sank south of Iceland. No survivors, none whatsoever. They didn't even get the boats off because I actually tracked down the surviving radio messages from the ship in the records and they said they were going down by the head and they were trying to launch boats and it just sank, no survivors ever found. That was it, no more radio transmissions. He sent a letter home and I have a copy of the letter and it says he wrote to his Mother. It said I'll be home in time for my 21st birthday. And said I don't like this ship, I won't be going back on it, or something to that effect. And if he had taken that second round trip, I wouldn't be talking to you right now. That's how problematic sometimes these things can be."

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Heather Bovell, aged 1, c.1949

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Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up Old Kilpatrick

"My Dad, unfortunately, had been a prisoner of war. He was captured in St Valery in France and marched into Poland where he was kept in a prisoner of war camp. He didn't speak much about it at all. But I did get the impression that some very unpleasant things had happened to him. And subsequently discovered that instead of being de-mobbed in 1945, he had actually been sent back in 1943 as part of a Red Cross exchange where prisoners on both sides who had health issues were swapped through the Red Cross, so German prisoners in the UK would be sent back and British prisoners in Germany would be sent back. I believe that's how my Father came home early."

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Heather Bovell, born 1948, brought up in Gilsochill, Maryhill

"I remember that in the bungalow which was across the street there were Polish soldiers billeted there and we used to talk to them. Lovely, handsome Polish soldiers. I remember them very well. There were also Italian prisoners of war. I remember them giving me a present of a bracelet. They were billeted outside of Glasgow so I have no idea of how I got in touch with that one."

Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

"I would've been about four or five. My Granny stayed at number 16 Commerce Street, three stairs up. And with being up that height her bedroom windows looked up on to the railway. And as a youngster I'd stand at the window and you saw the trains going out and in. And I've got a faint recollection you could see there were soldiers in them. You know they were quite far away, they were about two or three hundred yards and that is a memory I've got seeing that. The only other thing is I remember when my Dad was going from leave after being home and he was stationed up at Methil. And it was later I found out they left from Queen Street and I don't know if I had any brothers and sisters there, but my Mother took us all out to the train. It was a corridor train with a corridor down the one side. And what I remember is the compartments were all full of servicemen and the air was blue with smoke. I think everybody smoked. So I've got that memory of that."

"I remember the Prisoners of War coming home. There was a man up our close. I don't know if he was caught by the Germans or the Japanese. But I remember another time the place was packed with people and this was another Prisoner of War coming home. Because they'd bunting across the street. I think he'd been a prisoner of the Japanese. And that would be late '45 early '46… I'd been on a bus at Glasgow Cross and saw these guys with a mark on their backs. And my Mother said that they were the German Prisoners of War. By that time, the war was over."

Alf Duffy, born 1940, brought up in the Gorbals and Pollok

"Oh yes, you knew when there was a ship in the Clyde, the girls were all out. No disrespect to the girls. We had the Americans in Prestwick so we had them all the year round but if a ship, an American ship docked in the Clyde it got round like wildfire. And remember, these fellows, unlike the Brits when they came into town they had nylons, remember the girls didn't have stockings during the war, they painted their legs. So they had nylons, chocolate, chewing gum, money, cigarettes. Cigarettes? I remember one time going into Liam's Cafe in Skirving Street, Shawlands, and there was a sign 'Cigarettes', and running down to my cousin, Lily Lipton, saying, 'Lily, get up to Liam's Cafe quick, they've got cigarettes in'. This was probably the '50s, after the war."

"Shortly after the war ended. Can't remember the circumstances. But my mother took me down to Mrs Henry who was at the end. And I was introduced to these two ladies and a young girl my age. And it was the first time I ever, ever saw someone with numbers tattooed on their arm. And this little girl still had bite marks from the dogs. They'd come out of Belsen. And anyway, they settled in Glasgow. The young girl was very good. I mean she couldn't speak a word of English. She ended up going to university. Became a pharmacist and sadly died just a few years ago."

Philip Cohen, born 1937, brought up in the Gorbals and then Shawlands

"If you went into say Argyle Street way, you would see one or two(GIs) but it was only after the war when we went to Pollok and they had the Cowglen American Military thingamy. That was a couple of bus stops before we arrived at Pollok. But we didn't really see them much unless you were older and went to the dancing I suppose."

Cabreg, born 1935, brought up in London Road, Glasgow, and Pollok

"We had two friends who were in P.O.W camps. There was a camp quite near us I think it was Germans who were in there. I remember going on holiday to Filey to a Butlins Camp, going out horse-riding. And the pony that I was on just stuck his heels in and wouldn't go any further. And a man came running over and walloped the rear end of the pony to make it go. And I think they were prisoners who were actually helping to build the Butlins camp at Filey. They weren't wearing uniforms. Somebody said they were Germans building chalets and doing gardens. That would be 1947."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"There used to be a big fuel depot during the war and boats used to come in to refuel. And we used to stand at the bridge and if it was Americans coming up, we would say 'Any gum chum?' And if we went in with chewing gum my Mother would be mad because we'd been mooching. If it was a British soldier or a British sailor you asked if they'd any souvenirs. So, you'd get a button. There used to be barges going up and down the canal full of peanuts during or towards the end of the war. And if you were nice to them, you'd get a handful of peanuts."

"And I remember I used to walk from Old Kilpatrick across to my aunt's house in Inchinnan. Which was quite a walk when I think. I couldn't do it now. But I used to do it during the war. So, the war ended '45. I would be nine years of age. And I was walking over tae Inchinnan. During the war…I remember it was during the war 'cause there was a German Prisoner of War worked in one of the farms. You could tell by his hat that he was a prisoner. And I used to always be a bit wary if he was in the front garden when I was passing."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up Old Kilpatrick

"I can't remember if they were prisoners of war or what. I'm just not too sure but I remember lots of girls going up and talking to them through the railings. So I think they were prisoners of war, because it was a kind of brownish uniform they had on, like a battle dress. I can't be more positive about that one. I have a funny feeling they were Italian and I think this is maybe why the girls were interested in them. But I remember going up one day, well Bellahouston was quite a bit away from where I lived, and you were walking but that's about all I can tell you about the camp at Bellahouston Park."

George Burns, born 1926, brought up in Bridgeton then Kinning Park

"I remember there would be lots of trucks. And there would be British troops and American troops. There was a lot of Americans. And my mother pointed out one to me. I wasn't exactly sure what was going on but she said that one of the trucks had a big sign that said, "Don't clap for us we're just the Britishers not the Americans" (laughs). It's like everybody loved the Americans you know. Especially the young ladies. And we also had a lot of romances with the Dumbarton girls and the Americans."

Rene Walters (nee Catherine McMenamin), born 1938, brought up in Dumbarton

“The part of the building on the right of us was used as a N.A.A.F.I. during the war. When war was over and I was allowed out to play, I used to sit at the front of the close and watch the people passing. The N.A.A.F.I. took up the three floors, the first being a restaurant/cafe with tables and chairs. The kitchen was on the ground floor and sometimes they left the back door open which was in the back court and us kids could look in. We used to watch all the different branches of the forces going in and out and the most popular for the children were the Americans. As soon as any appeared either out of the door or coming along Argyle Street, they were rushed at by the kids shouting 'Any gum chum' which seemed to amuse the Yanks, as we called them, and they would happily hand out any sweets they had in their pockets. One American soldier was chewing on a bar of Highland Toffee having just taken a bite and saw me sitting at the close and he walked over and held out the chewed toffee to me, saying 'Here you are kid'. However, my mum had drummed it into me to never eat anything that someone else had bitten into, so I shook my head and said, 'No thanks'. He continued holding out and eventually one of the other boys noticed and came running over, saying 'If she doesn't want it, I'll have it'.”

Evelyn Humberstone, born 1939, brought up Argyll Street, Glasgow

“I was going to mention. They had prisoner of war camps situated in the hills above Greenock and you could go up there and actually talk to prisoners. And the prisoners used to make toys to pass their time so it was quite a thing. I remember I got made a boat, a wooden boat, by one of the prisoners. And I don’t know if we paid for them in any way whatsoever but I know that they were delighted to do them and hand them over. And it never occurred to us that these were the enemy, you know. It certainly didn’t occur to me. I didn’t look upon them as enemy. I wasn’t quite sure why they were locked up. But I think some of them were allowed to wander around you know. I don’t think they were chained in any way. I think they had quite a bit of freedom.”

“The ones I remember were Italian. But I understand there were German ones, but certainly Italian ones are the ones that I can remember. And of course, we had the whole of the West of Scotland Italian Cafés and ice cream shops. But it was funny, most of them got rounded up and so you had Italians that were actually prisoners that were given a certain amount of freedom and the ones that had their shops were in some cases taken away.”

“I think most people were very grateful to the Italian Cafés and Ice Cream Shops because there was very few places where you would buy them anywhere else. Coffee, I mean that was the first place you were introduced to coffee. Although it was horrible. When I think of it now, the coffee they sold was dreadful stuff especially when you were growing up as teenagers. It was quite a thing to be going into the Italian Cafés for coffees and sitting for hours, you know, with the one coffee. Maybe if you were really flush you could afford to get another one.”

David McNeice, born 1937, brought up in Greenock and Millport

"In Comrie, there was a P.O.W. camp called Cultybraggan Camp 21, and there they housed 4,000 German Nazis, hard core stuff. So, as an adult about twenty years or so ago I came in contact with one of them who lived in Phoenix, Arizona. And I went to Phoenix, Arizona to meet with him. His name was Helmut Stenger and he was a boy of 17 back then. But he looked at Adolph Hitler the way I looked at Baden-Powell. Because I was in the Cubs at Hillhead School as well as the 84th Glasgow Scout Troop at the Church at the corner of Gibson Street."

"Helmut would tell me all sorts of tales. He was in a U-Boat and the U-Boat was bombed."

"I've got his story written down in my website which is www.highlandstrathearn.com and in there is a chapter called A German Friend, and it's also followed by the death of Wolfgang Rosterg, he was murdered by his own people at Cultybraggan."

"As it became much more obvious that Germany was going to lose the war the German P.O.Ws were allowed out of the camp to help the local farmers for example with planting and reaping the crops. And he was befriended by his first girlfriend, his first love."

Peter McNaughton, born 1944, brought up in Clapham, Glasgow and Comrie

"During our time in Gosport she [his Mother] would take me with her as she sold war bonds and she would go knocking on doors around Gosport dragging me with her. I was such a cute little boy, long curly blonde hair. Anyway, she would take me around town and introduce me as 'this is Eenie, my youngest son. But anyway, she did so well, she sold so many war bonds that she actually received an invitation to go to Buckingham Palace. I think it was in '48. So she went up to London, I think it was the Queen, the Queen's Mother's garden party at Buckingham Palace. I still actually have the invitation she received. So of course, she imagined she would be on her own meeting the Queen Mother, but she was just one of thousands who had done a lot of war work and this was their reward."

Ian Coombe, born 1942, brought up Gosport, then Glasgow

"She wasn't a seamstress [Grace's mum] but she knitted socks for the troops. Now I don't know how she got them away to them. And I don't know whether she used new wool or whether it was ripped out garments. But she did knit socks and she could talk to you…with her four needles. She could turn the heel in the sock without thinking about it. She seemed to be knitting… Most evenings she would be knitting. And it was socks for the troops."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"I remember seeing G.I.s. They used to go about the street chewing gum and the game that we had was you had to run up to a G.I. and tap his collar and say 'Any gum chum?' I don't know what age I was. And invariably they would give you a wee bit of gum or whatever it was they were chewing. That was my one chance at talking to a G.I."

M. McKinnon, born 1937, brought up Govanhill

Chapter Eight

WWII Education

by Ciara Graham-Mcloughlan

Guest Author

The lack of consideration towards contextual factors during the Second World War is limited in terms of research, particularly the impact the war had on education. This section will explore the educational gains and losses that occurred as a result of the Second World War.

The transportation of urban children to rural areas caused great difficulty for teachers and children alike. Those who were from cities, such as Glasgow and Edinburgh, had lower academic ability than those who were from the countryside. In 1939, Roderick Barron, H.M.I., stated that in relation to primary education, children in rural areas were far advanced in terms of reading and writing than those from cities. The contrast between both groups provided difficulties for teachers and the mental-wellbeing of children. The Scottish Educational Journal (1944) stated that the war had a greater impact on children from the cities. Those who were from the countryside still had the ability to obtain pre-war grades, whilst those in cities were falling further behind due to a lack of confidence in their learning. This was further emphasised through children's behaviour as they began to compare themselves to a group who were academically progressing whilst they were not. The urban group was described as inferior and having a lack of ability, in part due to a study conducted by A.D Dunlop in 1941; he concluded that children from cities were a year ' retarded' in their reading abilities. Whilst the attention for teachers was primarily focused on improving the ' inferior' children, the ' clever' children had to teach themselves; however, this did not impact them negatively, as D.M Mcintosh, assistant director, stated that clever children were doing even better than before the war.

C. POPULATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND EXAMINATIONS, 1938 - 1939 to 1944 - 1945

Table 4.4: Average Number of Pupils on Registers of Secondary Departments at 31 July for the years, 1939 -1945; and the Size of Corresponding Age Cohorts

Year	Population aged 14+	Third year pupils	Per-cent-age	Population aged 15+	Fourth year pupils	Per-cent-age	Population aged 16+	Fifth year pupils	Per-cent-age	Population aged 17+	Sixth year pupils	Per-cent-age
1939	87,172	21,726	24.9	91,054	8,463	9.3	90,555	5,787	6.4	97,363	2,536	2.6
1940	89,169	18,509	20.8	87,172	8,093	9.2	91,054	5,602	6.2	90,955	1,782	2.0
1941	85,603	17,915	20.9	89,169	7,415	8.3	87,172	5,325	6.1	91,054	1,661	1.8
1942	83,672	18,363	21.9	85,603	7,797	9.1	89,169	5,325	6.0	87,172	1,692	1.9
1943	84,220	18,501	22.0	83,672	8,073	9.7	85,603	5,830	6.8	89,169	1,653	1.9
1944	83,717	19,651	23.5	84,220	8,742	10.3	83,672	6,122	7.3	85,603	1,783	2.1
1945	86,134	21,064	24.5	83,717	9,467	11.3	84,220	6,711	8.0	83,672	1,877	2.2

Sources: S.E.D., Education in Scotland in 1947. Cmd. 7509 (1948); and Census of Scotland,1931. Report on the Fourteenth Decennial Census of Scotland, Volume II (1933).

Secondary educational standards did not decline but the want to attend secondary education did. Education did not seem important to many children (mostly young boys) when there was a war going on. The lean of labour to the war efforts resulted in the classes of junior secondary children rapidly declining in size. The chance to gain economic prosperity at such an early age appealed to many boys, and the war efforts was believed to be their chance to set up for the future. However, economic motives were not the only reason for early withdraw from education; women, too, left to support their family through the dark times of war. Husbands and sons would have been enlisted to fight for their country, and it was up to the mother and older children within the family to keep the family united and afloat. This impacted women's academic progress significantly. Prior to the Second World War, most women who were academically gifted would have progressed until sixth year, and then later continued their studies at university level. The overall wartime situation was believed to be a considerable loss for education, as prior to the war there were around 5,700 thousand fifth year pupils, this dropped significantly to 6,122 in 1944. (Report of the Fourteenth Decennial Census of Scotland, 1948). Further evidence to support the loss of education due to the Second World War was that only 2% of the population in 1945 attended sixth year studies; therefore, wartime efforts largely effected children's chances to prosper in education. (Summary Reports, Census 1948).

Those who left not due to economic motives or family support, often did not care for their academic progress. Attendance during the Second World War declined and in some cases was non-existent. In Ayrshire, six years prior to the outbreak of the war, the average attendance for secondary schools was 91.6%; however, from September 1941 to June 1942, a thousand children each school day would not attend school for reasons that were not considered as excusable prior to the war. Attendance in Glasgow schools began to deteriorate at the start of the war and declined each year until 1944 (Glasgow Education Committee, The War, 1939-1948).

Evidence strongly supports the theory that Second World War resulted in education being negatively impacted. Firstly, the war resulted in children from cities being identified as inferior in terms of learning; this was concluded through comparison to rural children they had to learn alongside due to evacuation to the countryside. However, this can actually be seen as a positive too, as without the evacuation to the countryside as a result of the war, the lack of progress city children were making academically may have never been identified; this knowledge allowed this anomaly to be targeted during and after the war.

Furthermore, the evidence shows that the Second World War limited educational prosperity for many children, as young boys' attention was diverted to labour or military work instead of education, this led to an increase of dropout rates at the junior school level. However, this was not gender specific as women also felt the pressure from the war, and often decided to drop out of school to support their family whilst their father and brothers were away fighting on the war front. This is viewed as largely detrimental to educational prosperity, as most of the women who dropped out due to the war would be the type of individuals to go onto university education and perhaps than make a notable difference within society.

Undoubtedly, the war overall resulted in a lack of attention and worry about academic progress or academic importance. It resulted in a shift of priorities for most Scottish individuals; young boys wanted to fight alongside their fathers for their country, and young women wanted to support their family as best as they could whilst their menfolk were on the war front. Children's priorities were not to prosper educationally during this time but to support and help the war efforts. Children may not have been able to academically prosper during the war, but most did grow up sooner rather than later. Whether this was beneficial to them in the long term is up for debate.

Childhood Memories

"WWII Education"

"Just before we left primary the girls were taken into a class and told about periods and that was it. That was our sex education at school. And we came out and the boys all wanted to know what you'd been told and of course nobody would tell them. So that was the sum total of our sex education. Most things were learned from pals, older brothers and sisters. Probably even my parents weren't that confident about speaking to you about those kind of things."

Marlene Barrie born 1946, brought up in Scotstounhill and Blairdardie.

"Our school wasn't too far from the house. My Mother would walk me there initially. I remember my very first day actually being five and that would be 1947. And it's still clear in my memory. I remember going into this cloakroom just outside the class and there were all these other kids with their mothers and an awful lot of them were crying, yelling and clinging to their mothers' coats. Because they didn't want their mothers to leave basically. But I, it's not that I didn't love my dear Mother. This was quite a whole new experience for me and I was quite interested in what was going to happen next. So eventually we got into the classroom and started to knock the pegs into these things with a wooden mallet. And also do some drawing and open up picture books and things like that. There was another time I remember seeing a picture of a horse. The first horse I'd ever seen was in this book. And also an elephant, and the elephant reminded me of this barrage balloon."

"There was one Sunday I remember I was a lead choir boy, lead chorister. And we walked down one afternoon with the Provost leading the pack. And the fellow with the cross up front. And we all had our white surpluses and red cassocks. And we actually processed down Great Western Road between churches. And, of course, us choir boys we would hold up our hymn book to try and hide our faces from the trams and the buses that were going by. Because we just didn't want anybody at Hillhead High School to know what we did on the weekend. So nobody found out."

"My claim to fame was one day I was chosen for the second fifteen at the high school. Not the best team, the second fifteen. And we played Dalry Academy. It was a bitterly cold day so we took the bus out to Dalry. And during the course of the game there was a point at which I was the only guy between one of these bruisers in the other team and the touch down. And I can remember my pals down the other end of the pitch shouting 'Coomie, Coomie, get him Coomie, get him Coomie'. And I had to get this guy and he was quite a bit bigger than me. Anyway, I had to stop this guy and I didn't want to do the regular standard rugby tackle which was to grab him by the ankles and bring him down. Because I was frightened, he would kick me in the face. So, I jumped up and I grabbed him around the neck and he carried me down the field a few yards. And eventually he fell and I dragged him down. And I held him on the ground until my team-mates came up behind me saying 'Well done Coomie.' So I was a star for a very short time. I mean on Monday, that was it, I was a star. I stopped this guy from getting a touchdown. But that was my only claim to fame when it came to sports. The rest of the time I was singing in Church."

Ian Coombe, born 1942, brought up Gosport, then Glasgow

"No sex education whatsoever…The way I educated myself in this was purely by accident. I came across a book at home. I was a young teenager, and it was called 'Wanted A Child' and it was a sort of self-help manual. Probably from the '40s. Which I think was given to couples probably to help them figure it out. It basically explained all of the information that you need basically. So I'm thinking that my parents' generation didn't really get any help from their parents either."

Murdo Morrison, born 1950, brought in up Scotstoun and Drumchapel

"I went to school at the age of five and a half and I started school in January because of the way the birthdays fell. So I spent two and a half years in the infants at Hillhead Primary School. So we had the afternoons for the first six months and then mornings until we finished the infants. I remember getting a halfpenny special on the lunchtime tram, that's what it cost at lunchtime for children. And a penny in the morning and afternoon. Hillhead Primary School in those days was a grant aided selective school. You had to have a psychological examination and I can remember it quite clearly. And I can remember my Mother told me quite clearly. If you smile up at the psychologist, who had a great big nicotine-stained walrus moustache. And all the other children wailed and ran away. But I didn't want to go with him. And he said, 'och she'll get in', so that was quite fun."

"In secondary school when we couldn't go to hockey at Hewenden when it was raining. And we were closeted in a class. We would get the health book to copy bits out of. And it told you a little bit about sex there. And also about the kind of shoes that were better for your posture. But no we didn't get sex education."

Christine McIntosh, born 1945, brought up Hyndland, Broomhill and Arran

"A story that sticks in my mind is that one day she was turning round to write something on the blackboard and her underskirt fell down (Mrs Rose) on to the floor. And of course, the kids laughed uproariously at this. And she was very calm about it and just picked it up and put it to the side as if nothing had happened. But for kids that was great fun. So that was one of my school memories."

"At school there was rugby and cricket that you played, and badminton and I had the honour of getting the Glasgow Schools Championship. We won the final of the Glasgow Schools Championship and we got the Wilkinson Cup for the school. And I remember playing in the final against a couple of lads from St Aloysius that were in the final so that was badminton. I played that at school. There were other sports too. But I played badminton and cricket and played rugby up until I was maybe fourteen. I was too small and it was a sport for larger and brawny people. So I started playing something more safe like tennis."

Hugh Livingston, born 1940, brought up in Hyndland and Fintry

"Yes, I saw that on T.V (The Coronation). I remember the Queen came to Glasgow one time and all the school children turned out on the streets. We were all taken out the school and all had to line the streets and wave to her as she went by. That was in the elementary school, I remember that."

(Winifred) Margaret Baker Davidson, born 1937, brought up in Glasgow and Fintry

(Winifred) Margaret Baker Davidson at primary school, second row up, second in from the left.

"I loved school. Well, I loved primary school. I would have stayed there forever. The teachers wiz great and it wiz… Some people had a hard time. When I look back on it. What they done. You know. I always think of all these boys. They were pushed up the back. Mostly it was boys. Pushed up the back o the class. And every now and then they would fire a question at them. And if they didnae answer it right or something then they got whacked again. Course we were a giggling. See when you look back on it…They boys could have been deaf. Maybe they couldn't see properly. Maybe they couldn't hear properly. And they made out as if they were daft. You know. God help them."

Cabreg, born 1935, brought up in London Road, Glasgow, and Pollok

"It was alright, it was quite strict really. There was no nonsense and what the teacher said, that was It that was law. We used to get out to play at playtime and had good fun with your friends. When playtime was coming up they brought in milk and we were allowed a wee tiny bottle of milk with a cardboard top. And you pushed the wee thing on the top and put the straw in. So we got that every day and that was free. It enabled you to have some energy for running about at playtime."

M. McKinnon, born 1937, brought up Govanhill and Southside

"Well, I went to school in October 1945. The big high gate was closed at nine o'clock when the bell rang. I think we had a better schooling but then it was more organised and people accepted what they were told to do. Because I do have five grandchildren and I can see the difference in schooling."

"I've been lucky because most of my family did go on to university. I didn't because I didn't want to in the first place because all your pals were leaving school so you left school. I think things were different then because you only went to university if you had money and could afford to go."

Marion Penny, born 1940, brought up in Townhead and Ruchazie

"When we were evacuated, I went to Kinghorn School for about a month. But then one of my young Aunts was killed in a motorbike accident. So the police came to fetch us and we had to come back to Old Kilpatrick. Then after the summer they built huts in the playground. So we finished our schooling. The infant department was still standing but the primaries four, five, six and seven were in huts in the playground. But the school opened after the summer and we were able to resume our education…When we were at school quite often there would be an air-raid. The sirens would go, but the teachers would just take us down to the shed, it was under the infant department. And we'd play games until the all-clear went and then go back up to the classroom. Again, I don't remember anybody being scared or panicking or anything."

"You would get threepence in the pound for gathering rosehips. So, the whole family would go gathering rosehips. My Granny was the best at picking rosehips. You took them to the school and they got weighed and you got threepence for every pound that you had collected. Some families would come in with about ten pounds or more. We usually had a modest amount, but it was great fun going picking them."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up Old Kilpatrick

Sandy Boyle. Garrioch Primary, Hotspur Street, Maryhill 1957.

"I went to Garrioch Primary School in Maryhill, Hotspur Street. It was just round the corner. Some kids had play-pieces. A play-piece was just like a wee sandwich and sometimes it was toast and it was in a wee paper poke, and you got eating that at playtime in the mornings. Maybe about half ten when you had that wee fifteen-minute break. I think that was to give the teachers a chance to have a cup of tea and a smoke. We were just out in the playground whether it was raining or not. I used to come hame for my dinner because I only lived round the corner and I wouldn't have got free dinners anyway, because my Father was working. Some kids got the dinner hostel as we called it. And some paid for their dinners. I used to envy them, because they used to tell you what they got for their dinner."

"The teachers were all old. They were all about seventy, or looked about seventy. They were all older than your Mother and Father anyway. The teachers in those days were teachers. You did what you were told. They were good. I never disliked any teachers. I think there was a lot more respect. The kids were frightened, but not terrified. If they didn't behave themselves, they got the belt and I got the belt a few times. It was reasonable. It was fair, it was fair."

"I went to what was called in those days North Kelvinside Senior Secondary. That was for the stupid but saveables (sic). East Park was for the ones that weren't as clever. If you were exceptionally clever the teachers would put you forward to sit a test for a bursary award. And then if you passed that you went to Allen Glen's, which I think was one of the top schools in Scotland. That was for the really clever ones. My cousin went to there."

"I left at fourteen because I wasn't fifteen till the August. So, I left during the school holidays in 1963. That's when I left the secondary school."

Sandy Boyle, born 1948, brought up Maryhill

"In 1943, when I started school, we carried gas masks to and from school but this did not last long I presume because the danger from bombs and invasion had considerably lessened. My Father grew vegetables, potatoes, carrots, cabbage, lettuce, peas and tomatoes in two greenhouses in the garden in Milngavie, both while we were evacuated and for many years after we returned to Glasgow, since Mr Anderson gave him expenses to travel out and maintain the garden and gardening was his hobby, He also, in the years after the War, attended to his Mother's large garden at her house in Lesmahagow. I also did some tree planting with one of my teachers, in a garden by Woodside Secondary School around about 1952. One of them still stands and has gotten big. We never got moved to other buildings, in fact schooling for me, did not change after the War."

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

"I went to Kent Road school and used to take a tram to get there. It was only about a fifteen-minute ride. For some reason my mother didn't want me to go to Washington Street school which would have been about a fifteen-minute walk along to Anderston Cross. Kent Road school had two buildings, with the infant school being the building at the back. The headmaster was Mr McConachie and he walked round the school in his long black gown carrying his tawse. He was fanatical about singing and you would be in your class half way through a lesson and he would barge in and tell the teacher to bring us out into the hall where the rest of the infant classes were. We would sit down and the piano in the corner would be rolled forward and the music teacher would be instructed to play with us singing. I can't remember what we sang. Every year there would be a school concert at St. Andrew's hall and Mr McConnachie was always on the lookout for pupils who had any musical aptitude or could dance."

Evelyn Humberstone, born 1939, brought up Argyll Street, Glasgow

"I started at Knightswood Primary when I was five. I do remember I didnae want to come home on the first day. You know you had to go home at lunchtime. You only went in for the morning and my Granny came to get me. And I was in a bit of a strop because I'd made so many friends and I didnae want to go home. But I think I got over it. The older I got, the less I liked school…It was a big old wooden school and I remember my first teacher, although I can't remember her name. But I remember she wore a long sort of pinny dress. She was quite young and she was very nice."

"I remember there was an old railway line with some sort of engineering works at the back of it near the school. And a steam train used to pass the school every lunchtime taking trucks from the engineering works further over back into the main lines at Anniesland. I can remember that because all the boys we used to hang about the railings and wave to the trains that passed. And the men would wave back and blow the hooter."

Graeme St Clair, born 1947, brought up in Knightswood and Springburn

"Miss McGhee had some work to do one day. She had to have peace and quiet. She told the class that there would be a prize of two pence for the pupil that was the quietest during the following hour. We had been told to study our reading exercise books and not make any sound. It would be a very difficult thing for thirty children to remain quiet for ten minutes let alone sixty. I resolved to be as quiet as possible. I read my book and when I got bored with it I thought what I could do with the money. You could buy 10 caramels for a penny. It cost a penny to get into the Carlton Cinema, Castle Street. If you went there at 4pm for the afternoon matinee. Comic papers were a penny or tuppence. These thoughts were occupying my mind when Miss McGhee called us to attention. The hour was up. We waited with bated breath to hear who had won the prize. She said that the class had been very good and that there had been little noise, but the quietest class member was John Power. I might have blushed. I went to the teacher's desk and she handed over two pennies. I thanked her and returned to my seat trying to ignore the looks of envy from my classmates. What to do with my wealth? That was the question. One of my pals was Hugh Huston. It was a Wednesday and the matinee was on in the Carlton. There was a serial adventure with Bela Lugosi, who always played the villain and the hero was Bruce Bennet. The heroine was of no importance as us chaps thought that the romantic stuff was cissy. Hugh accepted my invitation and we both ran all the way, about half a mile, to the cinema. A grand time was had by both of us."

John Power, born 1927, brought up Saltmarket and Garngad, Glasgow. Courtesy of his daughter Dini Power

"Occasionally we would have to line up in the hall and were each handed an apple and an orange. Britain used to receive fruit from abroad - Canada I think- which was solely for the school children. When I moved up into the senior part of Kent Road, we lined up one day and each got a banana. We had never seen one before and weren't quite sure what it was. I took mine home and ate it there."

Evelyn Humberstone, born 1939, brought up Argyll Street, Glasgow

"I remember the writing materials (laughs) It was a slate. I don't know if you've seen them or heard about them. And there probably about nine or ten inches by about five or six inches. And it was slate and you had a bit o chalk. And that's what you wrote down yer…I was never good at writing or spelling or (laughs), cause we'd no paper, you know. Even though that was after the war. You still…that's how bad things were, you know."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"I went to Willowbank School and was there for six years. And then passed my examinations and went to Hillhead High School. And I was at Hillhead High School for four years but it wasn't a particularly happy experience, other than the pupils that were in my class that I befriended. And I still know quite a few of them. And I see them when I go to Scotland."

Peter McNaughton, born 1944, brought up in Clapham, Glasgow and Comrie

"It was at this time that the government order was issued which made school attendance voluntary because of the threat of air raids. The R.A.F had taken over part of the school playground for use as a base for a barrage balloon unit. This consisted of a large, camouflaged truck equipped with gas cylinders, a deflated barrage balloon and a winch with a reel of cable. Once on site the servicemen would fill the balloon with gas while it was attached to the winch cable. When fully inflated it looked like a big fat whale with three fins at the rear. It was released on its cable to float at a suitable height to prevent enemy aircraft from flying below a certain altitude. The idea, I suppose, was to reduce the accuracy of aircraft weaponry. A number of balloons were shot at by enemy aircraft and they would ignite, being filled with nitrogen gas. The balloons were also left up at night as a hazard for enemy bombers because they would be invisible."

"I have to confess that I took full advantage of the rule regarding voluntary attendance. I played truant. I would leave home at the customary time and meet some of my classmates. We would discuss our plans for the day, and either hang around the back courts where the bricklayers were building bomb shelters, or go to the fruit market in the hope of finding some fruit, except bananas were not imported during the war. I spent about ten weeks doing this until the order was rescinded and school was again compulsory."

John Power, born 1927, brought up Saltmarket and Garngad, Glasgow. Courtesy of his daughter Dini Power

"School. I thought it was quite nice. Baby class, you had…the tables were painted pink and all that. And you had to be well behaved. Everybody was well behaved. I don't know why but they just were. But I could read before I went to school. Cos my Mother used to read Black Bob out the Weekly News. It was a sheep dog, Black Bob. And she would read books to me. Anything. And I would quickly spot-you missed out that bit you missed out. So eventually I just learnt to read. So, when I went to school, I was quite bored. They would maybe give you a book ahead or something. But it was still kinda boring."

"I hated milk. They used to give us a wee bottle of milk every day. Quite good if you liked milk. That was another good thing you were getting. Probably helped the kids that weren't getting fed properly."

Cecilia Murray, born 1942, brought up in Gorbals and Castlemilk

"I went to nine schools between the ages of 4 and 11 so you can see that I wasn't at any school for very long. Always the new girl. I loved the fact that you did some exams and moved up a class if you did well. I think Scotland had the best education system in the world at that time. I loved school dinners I think they cost about ten pence a week-maybe 1/10. I can't remember."

"I loved school it was my escape from whatever drama I was living. At one time I attended Bearsden Academy and thought it very posh. I started my schooling at The Hermitage in Helensburgh at 4. I upset my mother because I wanted to go to school on Saturday. Teachers were quite firm to say the least but looking back very fair-to me anyway. I left before the Qualifying so have no idea about what happened next."

Matilda Jane Holmes, born 1937, brought up in Clydebank, Helensburgh, and other places

"I noticed no change in schooling after 1945 as compared to before. I know leaving age was raised because my Father left school at 14 and, the earliest, I could leave would be 15. Compared to today the Janitor was a big man in the School appearing in all our photos and being responsible for all maintenance work in the school, including defrosting frozen out door toilets in the winter."

"Schooling was different from now in that great emphasis was placed on memory and learning the multiplication table 'off by heart' without any understanding of the maths involved. We were often given word which we had to learn how to spell and were frequently tested. In fact, one teacher gave us a spelling test each day and where you sat that day depended on how you did in the test. The best sat at the back/right desk and the worst at the front/left with the rest graded along the rows right to left and front to back."

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

Chapter Nine

Children's Work and Play

Children of all ages helped the war effort during WWII, in a multitude of ways, both in a paid work capacity and on a voluntary basis. Small children throughout the UK knitted squares of blankets for soldiers. This happened in schools in Glasgow, where teachers taught children to knit and explained why the blankets were important for the war effort. The squares were then sewn together into blankets by members of the Women's Royal Voluntary Service. Children also helped with 'dig for victory' schemes at home and at school, where plots of land were often dug up for the purposes of growing vegetables. An estimated ten thousand square miles of land had been dug up and planted in the UK by 1942. Children often helped to maintain 'pig bins', which were food scrap bins created to feed the pigs that people were keeping in gardens or on areas of waste ground, all done as part of the dig for victory movement. Six thousand pigs were kept in gardens and communal areas in the UK by 1945. Not all children enjoyed this work and we have found one account of children tying trip wires to pig bins in Glasgow that, once tripped, would result in adults being covered in rotting food from the bins!

Families and children from the cities had been casually

employed to pick labour intensive crops, such as berries and potatoes, since the 19th century, when the Great Hunger in Ireland and the Industrial Revolution, amongst other factors, caused the numbers of farm workers to fall. Of course, children had always helped to help out on the farms and to bring in harvests, but as compulsory education was introduced, school holidays were centred around peak agricultural periods when children's efforts were essential to securing good food supplies. In Scotland, fifty-four thousand children helped to plant and harvest the potato crops during WWII, alongside the Women's Land Army (which recruited members from the age of seventeen), and with the assistance of prisoners of war (POWs) and travelling people, etc. Children often got time off school for this work; others would have been over the age of fourteen and employed to do this work. Certainly, older children would have had to help out if their family owned a farm, which was true of some of our project participants who, when teenagers, spent many weeks planting and harvesting crops on their parents' farm. This was no doubt replicated across the country, along with children working in all types of family businesses, especially in the wake of staff shortages.

Boy scouts collected wastepaper and scrap metal to help with shortages. They also functioned as stretcher bearers, messengers, and general helpers during the Blitz. Girl guides travelled to the Scottish countryside to gather berries to make rosehip syrup, an essential source of vitamin C, and to collect wool from fences, and they also collected old saucepans (for the metal content) and jam jars to be recycled. This helped plug the gap in resources caused by German blockades at sea. Guides also helped during air raids and with supporting evacuees. Those that were too young for enrolment to war service turned up to help in hospitals, often tending to badly injured people in the course of their work. Both the scouting and guiding organisations helped raise money for the war effort.

During the war, children could leave school at the age of fourteen to go to work. Many of those children worked alongside men and women in armaments and munitions factories; this was extremely risky and tiring work. Many children had more than one job or took on additional roles on a voluntary basis; some worked through the night with the Air Raid Precautions (ARP) service, or with the Local Defence Volunteers. As of 1941, all those aged between sixteen and eighteen in the UK had to register for some form of national service, even if they had full-time work. One teenage boy who worked with the Local Défense Volunteers in Renfrewshire remembered how he came face to face with Rudolf Hess having a cup of tea at a farmer's house, next to the field where he landed his plane. This boy reported that cycling round the countryside, armed, was an exciting part of his war, even if he did often fall asleep at his desk at school the next day! There is anecdotal evidence of boys in London and Birmingham helping the ARP at ages as young as fourteen, by, amongst other things, operating sirens and acting as messengers, across bombed out and burning streets, when telephone lines went down. Many wartime children reported that they felt safer and more in control than if they had had nothing to do whilst the bombs were falling. Some found this work exciting. Boys and girls also joined the Air Training Corp (ATC) and other forces' youth groups. Sadly, there were fatalities amongst this age group whilst working in these dangerous occupations. A boy who

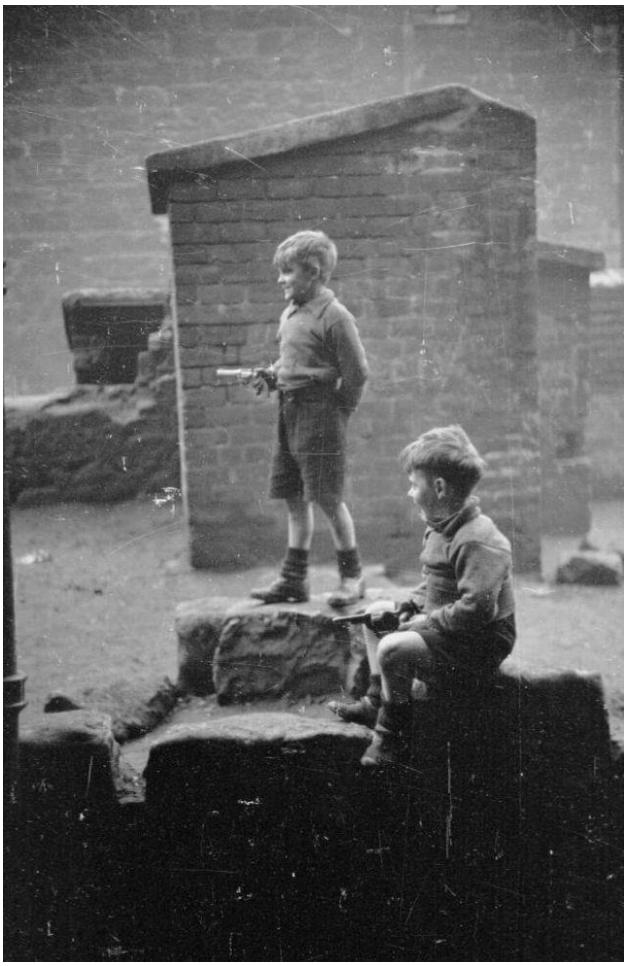
was working as a messenger for the Auxiliary Fire Service (AFS) in Glasgow, was blown off his bike and killed by the detonation of a bomb. He was one of many children hurt or killed in the course of their duties nationwide. Another important war-time job was carried out by boys as young as fourteen years old - delivering telegrams by push bike or motor bike to give people both good and sad news of relatives. We know of another boy who did this in the West End of Glasgow and Maryhill at fourteen. Many reported that the job made them grow up fast and that it was often very harrowing.

WWII did not stop children's capacity to enjoy themselves and they played many different games, both in groups and individually. The most popular games were often cheap and traditional. Outdoor games included hopscotch, skipping ropes, and all types of ball games – football, rounders, cricket, netball, skittles, and bowling, etc. Street games were also popular, with many children enjoying red light/green light, bulldog, hide and seek, statues, and tig. Building dens, either outside in gardens and woodland, or indoors, under tables and beds, was great fun, and resulted in many blankets, cushions and pillows being temporarily repurposed!

In the days before television and video games, youngsters' indoor pastimes consisted of playing house, school, soldiers, or Cowboys and Indians, or with dolls, cars, or marbles. A simple cardboard box would become a baby's cot, a castle, a fort, a palace, an army trench, or a hidey-hole. Children also loved to play board games, either with friends, siblings, or adults. Here, ludo, snakes and ladders, chess, draughts, Monopoly, Scrabble, and dominoes whiled away many hours, especially

during the winter or cold damp days when it was too wet to play outdoors. Playing cards were another favourite, and games were often played with siblings and parents. Happy Families, snap, go fish, hearts, pontoon, and queenie, gin rummy – the list goes on!

A group of boys from the deprived Gorbals district of Glasgow play among the gravestones of the Corporation Burial Ground in 1948 Other children play with toy guns



Childhood Memories

"Children's Work and Play"

James Love, middle row, behind the boy sticking his tongue out. Mix of Protestant and Catholic friends.
1951, near Ibrox Park

"We made our own entertainment. We used to get cardboard and you all had your own wee space on the railings. And you put cardboard and string and that was your horse. You couldn't win because you're all in a straight line but we're shouting come on, come on. Then we'd shout 'Throw me down a piece' and all the mothers would throw pieces down and we didn't have to go up for anything and off we'd go again (on their horses)."

James Love, born 1943, brought up in Craigellachie and Glasgow

"You never heard us saying bored. We never were bored. Because we lived at the end of the glen. There's a lovely glen in Old Kilpatrick. We used to play in it and go picnics in it and there was rope swings in the trees. And swings and roundabouts. So, if it was dry at all we were always up the glen having picnics. Or down the shore when we were a wee bit older. Ten and eleven maybe we'd go down the shore and light a fire and roast potatoes. We were always out. Even in the rain. But more so in the dry weather."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up in Old Kilpatrick

Kenneth MacAldowie, aged 3, at home in Aberdeen

On Coronation day I got bored with the television and the kids, we were all about eight or nine. Were out playing cricket in the street using a gatepost as a wicket. I got interested in cricket because of my blind grandfather. Coronation year as well the Australians were over and he used to listen to the ball-by-ball commentaries. And I used to sit with him and listen too. I played cricket right up until my thirties and started playing tennis."

The other things that we did, we used to build bogies, wood with old pram wheels and there was a hill where we were, it was a cul de sac, so we were able to go down the hill in the bogey" (added by respondent) - Description of bogies, a plank of wood 5/6 feet with cross struts nailed or screwed at front and rear and four pram wheels attached at each corner the front cross strut being able to be turned left and right."

Kenneth MacAldowie, born 1944, brought up in Aberdeen and Glasgow

"Where I lived, you never saw children out playing with toys. When I went out to play I usually took a ball to bounce against the wall. I was only allowed out to play during the summer school holidays. Sometimes if it was a nice day, we would walk to Kelvingrove Park which took us nearly an hour and have a picnic. Our picnic consisted of whoever was luckily enough to scrounge an empty bottle from the house and fill it with water from the tap. Then we each had to sort of scrounge a jam piece to eat. On the way back from the park we'd stop off at a shop and hand in the bottle and get a penny for it which was redeemed for probably a strip of liquorice or something to share with the others."

Evelyn Humberstone, born 1939, brought up Argyll Street, Glasgow

"And Glasgow Green that was a big, big part of ma childhood. That was more or less my playground. And they've still got the drying area there and they use to go to the wash house. The drying area. Praying for a good day (laughs)."

"Grass. You used to run away down the grass in your bare feet. You just tumbled and tumbled and tumbled and chased each other and tumbled. What else could you do, steal the flowers? Just in front of the People's Palace there was a bit that you weren't allowed in. We would creep in there and there was Rhododendron bushes. We would hack them away and then you'd hear the parkie coming and run like hell. You would take them to the teacher for the altar. She must've known where we got them, we were all torn to hell (laugh)."

"It was just great I mean, there were swings there and a kind of gymnasium thing. We always tried to reach it but we couldn't reach it and there was what we called the sawny pond. A wee bit of water and sand. It must've been filthy I don't know how we survived (laugh)."

"You played in the streets. You played Rounders and you played Doublers, and you played Kick the Can. I didn't like Kick the Doors Run Fast. I think that wasn't awful nice. I didn't like that. Oh, there was so many different things and sometimes the Mothers would join in. They would come and hold the skipping ropes. They were probably only young women and we thought them old. And it was a wee bit of their childhood coming back again. We had a great life in the London Road, you could see everything coming up and down."

"There was a whip and peerie. And there was a shop that hired out bikes. They were old wrecks but it was great. You could play in the street because there wasn't a lot of traffic then. You would hear about a side street that was good for the skates you know. You didn't fall off and get all grazed."

"Anyway, I'm still here, I've survived, playing in all the muck, playing in the middens, a lucky midden. I've survived it all and now they can't stand germs now. I think I've got a built-in immunity or something like that."

Cabreg, born 1935, brought up in London Road, Glasgow, and Pollok

"You played at either a wee house or a wee shop. If it was a wee shop, you always had to have things to sell. So rather than risk the wrath of your Mother for taking anything out of the house we used to get things out of the middens, out of the bins. And of course, people didn't just throw their rubbish out then, and there was no bin sack. It was you took your bucket down and emptied out the whole lot and also your ashes out of the grate. So if you wanted to get tins or bottles or anything out of the bins you ended up covered in grey ash dust as well. I remember how inventive we must've been. Because if you were playing at a shop and you wanted to weigh something. you would find a brick or a reasonably square stone and a bit of wood and on one end. You would put another stone so that it tipped up and you would weigh things on it. I can't remember what we used as so-called money. I'm sure it was just little stones. Backcourt concerts that was the thing where people used to sing and dance in the backcourt. I think it's very sad now that society's not safe enough for children to enjoy the freedom that I did as a child."

Heather Bovell, born 1948, brought up in Gilsochill, Maryhill

"Yeah, we played a form of cricket where you marked a wicket on the side of the bomb shelter and we played Rounders. That was a very popular game. And there was a version of Blind Man's Bluff, which was a street version of that. I do recall that. And we also played some tricks on neighbours whereby you would tie a rope from one neighbour's house to the next one where there was a bell. Then you would pull the bell and run like hell and wait for the neighbours to come out and say, 'Who's at our door?' I don't know how often that happened. And then Halloween was a big event, turnip lanterns and so forth, so that was another form of a game. But that was an annual event, probably still is. Commercialised now I imagine."

"Party Piece? Oh yes, when you went around guising you had to do something before you were given some sweeties or something. You had to say a poem or sing a song or if you were musical play your violin or something like that. So you went around, that was part of guising and I guess that's changed somewhat too. It's terrible the way that it happens over here (USA). Kids just going around with bags of stuff and expect people to throw things into it. So it certainly was nothing like that. We probably didn't get very much either."

Hugh Livingston, born 1940, brought up in Hyndland and Fintry

Gordon Gorman as a cowboy who had hung his gun up on the table, circa 1958,
at 125 Parson Street, Glasgow.

"We played with friends either in the street or in gardens. We lived in a relatively quiet part of Aberdeen and we went to the park. Also, grandparents were close by within a mile and you would walk. And when I started school at Robert Gordon's College and it would be about a mile."

Kenneth MacAldowie, born 1944, brought up in Aberdeen and Glasgow

"Leisure activities at home in these days were mostly card games, Pelmanism, Whist and Patience. We also played board games such as Ludo, Snakes and Ladders and, later on, Monopoly."

"Back in Glasgow outside games, in Glasgow, were predominantly football played with any strange things when we could not get hold of a ball. Empty tin cans tied up rags and newspapers but somebody nearly always managed to scrounge a ball (mostly tennis balls). We also played cricket in the summer with wickets painted on the wall of the Kelvin Hall and usually with an old tennis racquet, a shovel or just a piece of wood and a tennis ball. Ball games were not allowed in the Street and we needed to be alert for the local Bobby. 'Kick the can', 'Hide and Seek', 'Dodge the Ball', 'Peever'', 'Marbles' and 'Tig' were also favourites. We also spent a lot of our time climbing on the washhouse roofs and the walls separating our backcourts from the next street's. There was ice skating in the Kelvin Hall on a Saturday morning that I went to for a few years around 1946-48 and we roller skated with skates which were clipped and strapped onto our shoes. Although nearly all Glasgow streets were cobbled there were areas in front of the Kelvin Hall and the Art Galleries and a single street not far away that were smooth."

"We sometimes went fishing, with nets, to Whiteinch boating pond where there were small fish known as baggie minnows. We collected caterpillars from the leaves on the holly trees, which at that time were planted around the Kelvin Hall, and we caught wasps and bees in jam jars until finally the cruelty of all this dawned."

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

"A memory that stays with me to this day is of the first Christmas tree I remember, which had real candles on it and wee prancing horses. We had them in the family for years. I can also remember a Christmas present of a wooden block with nails and my own wee hammer which my father said was the present that I played most with. I have been hammering things ever since."

Colin Stevenson, born 1944, brought up Hillhead and Jordanhill, Glasgow

"There was a company called "Hornby" who made toy clockwork train sets and we all had them. We marked the underside of the rails with different paint to know whose was whose. One summer's day we built a tunnel between two of the boys' gardens. Disaster! The tunnel and the wall began to collapse. Our regular window cleaner, who was a friend indeed, got some cement and brick and repaired the damage before parents came home from work. One year we had a circus where we all had to do an act. My wee brother was stationed on the gate and took the entrance money. I do remember that it was a very warm sunny day with all the mothers in frocks. We had so many things to do. There was Victoria Park just down the hill from us. We could go on the paddle boats for tuppence or go on the play park swings for nothing. As we became a bit older, we would have a go on the tennis courts. Every activity was always packed full. There was also a very good public swimming baths called Whiteinch."

Colin Stevenson, born 1944, brought up Hillhead and Jordanhill, Glasgow

"Most of the children kept within the law. The lawbreakers were in the main adults. We got on with playing cowboys and Indians, pirates fighting for hidden treasures, playing chases, kick the can, swapping comic papers, collecting cigarette cards and other activities. Cigarette cards were very educational and interesting. They covered a variety of subjects such as steam locomotives, racing cars, aircraft, ships, birds, flowers and the colour printing was of high quality. There was one card in a packet of cigarettes. A complete set comprised fifty cards for each subject covered. In order to try to attain a full set you would have to swap (exchange) the duplicate cards you had with another boy who was collecting the same series. On a weekly basis we swapped comics. We were devoted readers in those days. The comics were not only picture stories but printed stories. The standard of reading was high. It has to be remembered that there was no TV and many households did not have a radio. After evening teatime, you could expect a knock on the door and one of your chums would be there when you opened the door. He would have a selection of three or four comics to exchange if you had not already read them and he had not seen yours. It might seem unhygienic when it is known that paper carries germs, but apart from the usual childhood illnesses we survived."

John Power, born 1927, brought up Saltmarket and Garngad, Glasgow. Courtesy of his daughter Dini Power

"Back in Provanhill Street there was chores to do. Some jobs I detested. The worst job, for me, was when I had to take the latest infant out in a go chair or pram. This was the pits. My pals would be free to play while I was virtually anchored to the pram. How I disliked it. But that was the penalty for being the eldest of a growing brood of children. When I look back, I realise that my mum needed a break and I was the only one available to look after the younger kids. Any pocket money I received I earned. One of my jobs was to polish the copper hot water storage tank in the scullery. When we moved into the house the tank was a dull, reddish-brown colour. Within a month it was polished, with the aid of Brasso, to a high brilliant shine, like a mirror. I got a penny for that. I also learned to scrub linoleum floors. My mum showed me how to darn holes in my socks, as she did not have time to this herself as there were now five kids, so she had her hands full. She needed someone to take some of the work load. There were times when I felt an absolute drudge. A few years later, however, this housework experience came in handy when I was called up for the army. A major part of the duties in the first six months on training consisted of "housework". I was able to avoid the wrath of the duty sergeant because I got the cleaning chores right first time. It was surprising just how helpless some of the lads were when it came to cleaning the barrack room. They were even worse when it came to darning socks and keeping their kit neat and tidy."

John Power, born 1927, brought up Saltmarket and Garngad, Glasgow. Courtesy of his daughter Dini Power

“We had a lovely childhood in a Glasgow which has had lots of people knocking it but it was a place of wonder for me and my pals .We played the same games in the street as our mothers and fathers had, albeit we had bikes which most of them did not have. I don’t think I mentioned that the film "Ben Hur" had a great effect on us as we built bogies of various shapes and sizes and raced them round the block pulling them with two or three bikes. What glorious smashes we had on these. There were not nearly so many cars then and we did not have anything more than scrapes. Myself and another chap were into building home-made cannons/muskets. When I finally succeeded in my cannon, the old man put a stop to all further experiments. This let me safely approach 1960, leaving school and getting a job. My youthful days were more or less past.”

Colin Stevenson, born 1944, brought up Hillhead and Jordanhill, Glasgow

Chapter Ten

Cinema – film and newsreels

By Lauren Staples

Guest Author

WWII cartoon about Hitler's peace pudding (1939)

Cinemas provided a means of escapism for those living in Glasgow during the war, helping to distract them from the horrors of the events currently happening. Films and the news programmes and publications were also designed to increase wartime morale and encourage citizens to support the war effort. This was not only in Glasgow, the film industry and cinemas were particularly important to the whole of the United Kingdom. Two days after Britain declared war on Germany, the Government decided to close all public entertainment places, including 4300 cinemas. However, just two weeks later, the Government revoked this, and British cinemas saw a steady growth in popularity. Cinemas in Britain thrived during the hostilities and in the immediate post-war period, with estimated attendances of 30 million a week in 1944 compared to just under 20 million a week in 1939. Cinemas were one of the few public places to remain open during the war and so was a top choice for families wanting to get out of their homes for a distraction. The films shown at cinemas during the war were usually propaganda films sponsored by the government, and featured messages designed to motivate the public to aid the war effort and keep their spirits high.

Cinema was an important part of childhood entertainment during the war, and was very popular amongst teenagers and younger

children. The Wartime Social Survey, 1943, found that 79% of teenagers said they went to the cinema at least once a week, proving its popularity even during times of adversity. The survey also found that the most popular audience of the cinemas were young, working-class individuals. This group of people were also the least likely to watch the news or read newspapers, so the cinema was a way to reach them and influence them. Part of the reason the cinema was so popular during the war was down to the fact it was most families main source of entertainment, as most did not have televisions in their homes. This caused a peak in cinema attendance in 1946, with 1,635 million admissions in that year. However, in the following years televisions grew in popularity and as a result, cinema admissions decreased. Newsreels stopped as they could no longer keep up with the easily accessed stream of news people could get from the televisions in their homes, programmes that were created by the BBC and ITV. Many big cinemas were replaced by smaller and more modern cinemas, with others being turned into different types of leisure buildings, such as bingo halls, bowling alleys and some offices.

As well as showing films to the public as a way of increasing the spirits of people, cinemas in Glasgow also played their part in the war in other ways. The New Cinema in Motherwell hosted multiple concerts to raise funds for the armed forces. The upstairs office of the ABC Regal, in Coatbridge, was used by the Ministry of Food to count coupons from ration books. Additionally, a lot of cinemas regularly showed information newsreels for people to view during the war. This kept people informed of the current situation the country was facing, and was a chance for them to socialise with others outside of their household. Everyone relied on newsreels to visually keep up with what was happening. People enjoyed the newsreels because they were moving pictures compared to the static images in newspapers, so often people would go to the cinema just to see the newsreel, then leave without watching the current film offering.

One of the most well-known cinemas in Glasgow was the Glasgow Film Theatre (GFT). Built in 1939 as the 'Cosmo', it was the last Glasgow cinema to be built before WWII began. The GFT saw a gap in the market for Glasgow cinemas and showed a lot of European films, as well as British and American

films. It was uncommon for Glasgow cinemas to play foreign film, and it instantly gained the GFT popular recognition. Unfortunately, it became more difficult to retrieve foreign films during the outbreak of WWII, but the GFT continued to show British films and newsreels during the hostilities. In February 1946, after the war ended, the GFT became the first British cinema to screen a French film, and they also showed German war-time films in the years following.

The aftermath of world war two was an extremely important and influential era for films in Britain and, indeed, across the world. This period saw some of the most influential cinematic moments in film history, and many directors produced some unforgettable work. One of these films was 'Germany ,Year Zero', released in 1948. This film was shot in Germany only two years after the war ended and has been described as potentially the greatest post-war film ever. It is a chilling reminder of the horrific Nazi rule and the effects it had on families across Berlin, as well as further afield. It provides an insight for the rest of the world into the lives of the German people who lived during and through the aftermath of Nazism and the war.

World War II had an enormous impact on the childhoods of many, and was an important part of growing up. The cinema was used as a means of escapism for lots of people, but especially for children, as it was a way for their life to remain as normal as possible – a way for them to be children. Without the cinema, many children and teenagers would have felt a stronger disconnect from, not only their friends, but from the world, as cinema was a way to reach them through media. The sense of community that cinemas helped to create in Glasgow during the war, through their film viewings and the other ways they helped with the war effort, left a lasting impact on those affected.

Chapter Eleven

Domestic Health, WWII

By Jennifer McKeeman

By the time World War Two broke out in 1939, much had been achieved in terms of improving health. There were more beds available in hospitals and there was wider access to health care as the health system began to function more efficiently. However, there was still much more to be done, especially in the case of infant mortality and child health. Prior to the break out of war the infant mortality rate was high, despite falling by a third in the period 1901-1921, due to the depression of the 1920s and 1930s. From the 1930s onwards, the infant mortality rate was 17%-18% higher in Scotland than it was in England and Wales. Diseases such as diphtheria were rife, with 15,069 cases being reported amongst children as late as 1940, and the continued existence of squalid housing in urban areas of Scotland, and the overcrowding it promoted still had to be addressed. Of children who were evacuated during the war, 31% were found to have been infested with fleas and lice, and scabies were common. However, during World War Two many of these problems were addressed and, as a consequence, the health and diet of the population improved and many of the anomalies in terms of access to health care disappeared.

In wartime industrial areas of Scotland, overcrowding and bad housing conditions, as well as uncontrolled development, and city smog, were the worst enemies of public health. The work and responsibility of local doctors and health centres were increased tenfold as children's playgrounds became insanitary backyards and dirty pavements. Despite this, health was improving due to an increase in health and welfare provisions for both children and adults. Firstly, there was increased attendance at antenatal clinics offering early diagnosis of illness as well as parent craft classes, which made women more confident in terms of child rearing. Maternity and obstetric services also improved with the introduction of the mobile maternity unit, which was available for women in their own homes in the case of an emergency or complications; this helped to improve infant mortality rates. At no other time in history did children receive more medical attention for their wellbeing. Mothers were able to take their infants and toddlers to child welfare clinics, where they could have their development monitored by experts to ensure they did not suffer in later life. Nursery schools were introduced and not only did they free up mothers' time for war work, but they also instructed children about personal cleanliness, which was essential for health, and staff ensured that kids were being well fed. Schools introduced medical services and rolled out immunisation programmes to protect again the scourge that was diphtheria. As well as this, school meals catered to the dietary needs of growing children, and milk was provided in classrooms. There was also an

increase in health provision for adults at this time. Factories introduced regular medical check-ups to ensure workers were not overly-strained, as many were being left near to physical and mental exhaustion due to working long shifts. Some workers also had access to specialist hospitals where they could go to get rest and improve their health, though many more of them burnt out and their families suffered the loss of a loved one.

WWII children eating healthy carrots on sticks

Various organisations and schemes helped to improve health during World War Two. The Emergency Hospital Scheme began, in 1939, as a scheme for expected civilian casualties in air raids, with seven new hospitals being built in Scotland, and annexes being built onto existing hospitals. Contrasted with their Whitehall counterparts, Scottish civil servants had experience of running health services in the Highlands and Islands. When the air raid casualties did not materialise, the hospitals were put to effective use and a whole new range of specialities were established instead, such as orthopaedics, neurosurgery, and psychoneurosis. In January 1942, another health improvement scheme was set up, ‘ The Clyde Basin Scheme’, which was a unique experiment in preventative medicine. Round the clock shifts had left Scottish industrial workers on the brink of mental and physical collapse, and prevention was deemed to be better than cure to maintain the

war effort. The EHS provided an additional 20,500 hospital beds, which was a 60% increase on existing provision. From pre-war bed shortages, Scotland by 1948 had a relative abundance: 15% more beds per head of population than England and Wales, and Scotland also had 30% more nurses, and was already better resourced with GPs.

'Smog', by Joyce Kelly, Artist in Residence, Communities Past & Futures Society

Other UK wide schemes were set up to improve the health of the children and these would have had an impact on Scottish children. Unfortunately, children were especially vulnerable at this time to health problems such as head lice, skin disease, and poor nutrition caused by the rationing of food, clothing, soap, and footwear. It was a major challenge to prevent poor health as with war came shortages of certain staple and nutritional foods. However, there was a surplus of certain foods, such as carrots, which led to a campaign by the Ministry of Food in 1942 called 'Mr Carrot, the children's best friend', which encouraged children to eat a better diet to help maintain their health. During rationing, children received more eggs and milk than adults and were encouraged to eat more fish, vegetables, and fruit. Due to higher wartime nutritional standards and easier access to medical treatment, the infant mortality rate fell during the Second World War to a fifth of the 1901 level. Efforts continued towards the end of the war, and into the post-war era, when the welfare state improved the social fabric of urban areas beyond recognition, particularly in housing. As a result, health indicators showed a vast improvement with the most sensitive of all, infant mortality, falling by 89%, or from 70.4 deaths per 1,000 births to 27 over this period, which was a remarkable achievement. However, there was no room for complacency as the west central region of Scotland, in the early 1950s, still had the highest child death rate in any region of the UK. Although there remained discrepancies in terms of life expectancy between social classes, the battle against the disease of poverty had been virtually won by 1950; the battles against the diseases of affluence were about to begin.

Childhood Memories

"Home Remedies"

"If you had a cough she rubbed you with Vick, back and front, or she would give you a good spoonful of Angier's Emulsion it was called. You don't see it nowadays obviously it's away. On a Friday night after getting my hair all washed with the nit comb. It was murder it just about took your scalp off. And then she gave you a dose of syrup of figs. And you had that before you went to your bed on a Friday night. She always gave you something if you had a cough or whatever. She looked after us well even though she was on her own."

M. McKinnon, born 1937, brought up Govanhill and Southside

"My Mother used to pour some cod liver oil down my throat, big spoonful's. I remember when we moved up to the top of Ellisland Avenue and going out to school. I don't know what you'd call it. It was like a kind of heat thing you'd put on your back and chest and it was that hot you'd have melted."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"There was Vicks on the chest and my Mother used to think that M & B, which was the first antibiotic, was absolutely magic. M & B was the answer to everything. I suffered from boils at one stage. And I'd been to an outward-bound course and my Father had suffered from boils when he was in the Air Force. And he used to have a poultice with Epsom Salts and Glycerine (Added in by respondent) that would draw it out. I don't think you'd be allowed to do these things any more, you get Penicillin. I remember getting some Penicillin injections. And the other thing I remember, while still in Aberdeen, was I got some teeth out, because my mouth was overflowing. And it was gas you got for that and I felt absolutely dreadful. While I was in my second year at school, we were playing football and someone tripped me and I fell against the wall and I broke a front tooth. Fortunately, the master I had first period was a chap Donald Mack who taught history and he had suffered similarly. And it was a Friday afternoon and he said, 'You get to the dentist now, if you don't do that your weekend is going to be sheer purgatory' and I got to the dentist and it was filled. I had gold inlays and then crowns."

Kenneth MacAldowie, born 1944, brought up in Aberdeen and Glasgow

"A poultice. It was like torture. My chest used to bother me a wee bit with the smog and that. It was torture. Thank God I didn't have any hair on my chest, it would've took it off. I think the poultice had mustard, vinegar, a secret recipe."

James Love, born 1943, brought up in Craigellachie and Glasgow

"I can remember my mum and aunt taking turns to stand on a kitchen chair and have a black line pencilled on to the back of their legs with an eyebrow pencil. We didn't have shampoo. We washed our hair with a brownish coloured soap called Derbac. It had a strong disinfectant smell. In a tenement we only had a range which was kept burning all day and all the cooking and heating of water took place on it. It also had an oven on the left side for baking and roasting. So, to wash your hair you usually put a saucepan of cold water on to warm up and poured it into the basin in the sink, refilling it so you would have warm water for the rinse, with vinegar being added to the water in the basin. I had dark brown hair and the vinegar was supposed to give it a shine. Late in the 1940's, mum one day brought in some sachets of shampoo she had bought in the chemist across the road and it was powdered shampoo which you put in a cup, added enough water to dissolve it then washed your hair."

Evelyn Humberstone, born 1939, brought up Argyll Street, Glasgow

"I can remember getting poultices on skint knees which were probably poisoned. I remember having a carbuncle in my arm and I remember my Mother putting poultice after poultice on to it. We were always pretty healthy because we were taking omega 3 before it became popular. My Grandfather used to get Scott's Emulsion for us which was made from cod liver oil. I loved it. You always knew when winter was coming because my Father would get Halibut oil capsules and we'd to take one a day and also rosehip syrup. We also used to get syrup of figs on a Friday night. Oh, and I hated it, and I can still taste that to this day."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up Old Kilpatrick

"We were an extremely healthy family as far as I can remember. But one of the things I do remember is a particular ointment for an itch or a rash that we would use in the family. And it was called Dr Lawson's Ointment and it was invented by my Grandfather. And so, when you went to the local chemist, all you needed to do was ask for Dr Lawson's Ointment and we'd get this ointment."

Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

"It was almost like witch-doctoring in those days. I can remember my Mother would give us sulphur and treacle supposedly to purify the blood. Yes, it was every bit as bad as you can imagine. I was given hot milk with a raw egg in it, which to this day I don't drink milk, almost never. We had things like Askit Powders for headaches. I mean in those days they would actually, if you were sick, would give you whisky with warm water or honey or sugar in it. It didn't matter what age you were they would just do it. They'd give you alcohol."

Murdo Morrison, born 1950, brought in up Scotstoun and Drumchapel

"My Mother was tea-total, but she always kept a bottle of Advocaat indoors. She truly believed Advocaat had a medicinal purpose. You'd use a poultice for a boil. If you had diarrhoea, you got a bottle from the chemist or the doctor, kaolin and morphine, Codeine for a headache."

Philip Cohen, born 1937, brought up in the Gorbals and then Shawlands

"My Grandfather was always in the herbalist shop. And I can remember little small white pills, they were the cure for everything. I can remember the herbalist shop in Glasgow. It was in Dundas Place and we used to go there. We used to have pease brose. It was like a powder and you could have it for breakfast and you mixed it with hot water and then you had milk with it. And we did get that a lot. We used to make Senna tea, you could buy Senna leaves and make tea. And at the coal fire it was in a big enamel jug to keep it warm. So they could have this once a week to keep you regular."

Marion Penny, born 1940, brought up in Townhead and Ruchazie

"Oh yes, Rosehip syrup was one of them. A little whisky on your gums when you had toothache. There was also some kind of cough syrup that they gave you."

"A hot toddy was a cure for some colds and I remember my Mother…there wasn't enough whisky at the time, and my Mother sent me to a neighbour to get a little bit of whisky. I don't think it was me that was getting the hot toddy but it may have been, and I went to a neighbour and I came home with it. It was probably for my Mother because she would've gone there herself. I was going to make it for her, I said I could make the hot toddy and there was very little whisky. But I boiled it and so we had no whisky. I never lived that one down."

(Winifred) Margaret Baker Davidson, born 1937, brought up in Glasgow and Fintry

"Poultices. I think it was bread that they made a poultice with. They strapped it on to maybe draw poisons out or something like that. Liquorice, Tree Root and Epsom Salts."

Cecilia Murray, born 1942, brought up in Gorbals and Castlemilk

"In 1944 my mother contracted tuberculosis and went into Robroyston Hospital where she remained until just after war ended. Nana (what I called my grandmother) visited her every afternoon, taking me with her. We went on a bus. T.B. patients were housed in sort of Nissen-type huts with verandas around them. Children were not allowed in so we had to sit in the gatehouse with the Gatehouse Keeper who made sure we all behaved ourselves. I remember an older boy showing me how to fold a hanky to make a rabbit and a Christmas cracker, which I can still do. Sometimes we played games like snakes and ladders, ludo and card games like snap. Visiting was only for an hour. My grandmother would take cakes and other food for my mum as food in the hospital was very basic. On my 5th birthday, I was taken up to where the huts were and was about 20 feet away from the door of the hut my mum was in when she came and stood by the open door and waved to me, shouting happy birthday. In 1945 mum came home clear of T.B. She had been in there about a year. It did leave a mark though. From then on, she had her own towel and facecloth. Also, her own cup. She seemed terrified of me contracting the dreaded disease as well, even though she was cured, and from then on I was fed daily doses of cod liver oil in the winter and later she discovered a malt extract which came in a big jar. God knows how many of those I consumed over my childhood years. I only had to cough or sneeze in the winter and I would have my feet in a bowl of hot water with mustard powder in it. I would also have extra clothes on to make sure I kept warm when I was at school. If I did get a cold - well is was a Kaolin poultice on my chest which I hated. The Kaolin was in a tin which was put into a pot of water to heat up, then was spread on a piece of old flannel and sort of slapped on to my chest. It was thick and gooey and in the morning it was horrible, as it had gone cold, and I would hurriedly peel it off."

Evelyn Humberstone, born 1939, brought up Argyll Street, Glasgow

"We all had home remedies. I remember vinegar and brown paper could be applied to your chest if you had a cold. Friar's Balsam, you would mix it with water and you would have a towel over your head and breathe it in. Vapour rubs of all sort of descriptions. A big penny on your forehead if you fell and bumped your head. Keys down your back if you had a nosebleed. I remember my Mum talking about one of her sisters when she was young having rickets and her father, in order to stop her ending up with her legs bandy, used to make splints and bandage her legs every night so as her legs would be straight. So that was a kind of a home-made orthopaedic remedy I suppose. And she ended up with straight legs. But that was only because of him taking matters into his own hands and doing that."

Marlene Barrie, born 1946, brought up in Scotstounhill and Blairdardie

"There was always poultices, a bread poultice, a sugar poultice, a mustard poultice and somebody telling you how to cure something or whatever."

Cabreg, born 1935, brought up in London Road, Glasgow, and Pollok

"When I was about 9, mum bought me a toothbrush. Toothpaste came in the form of a powder in a round tin. Occasionally if we had run out, Nana would take my brush, open the little trap door in the range and scoop out some soot with my brush so I could clean my teeth."

Evelyn Humberstone, born 1939, brought up Argyll Street, Glasgow

"One of them was for a sore throat. Coarse salt would be heated up. My Mother had an old-fashioned bed warming pan on a long handle and they used to put the last coals in that at night and run it over the sheets in the bed to keep it cosy. Well, they used to put salt in the pan and put it under the grate in the fire and then using a scoop they would put roasting hot salt inside one of my Father's socks. And that would be fastened round your throat and it actually helped. I mean it was amazing. The Kaolin poultice was another one. The tin was heated, spread on fine material and put on to your chest. If you had toothache a tiny piece of bandage wrapped around a clove was put on the tooth that certainly helped as well."

Heather Bovell, born 1948, brought up in Gilsochill, Maryhill

"I remember having scarlet fever and my Mother running down to get me some ice cream because it was thought to be helpful for someone feeling a bit of fever. Well, I enjoyed the ice cream anyway."

Hugh Livingston, born 1940, brought up in Hyndland and Fintry

"I used to have a problem where my fingers would get poisoned. I don't know how it would start but the finger would end up full of poison so it would end up being poulticed. Poultices I do remember because they were very hot and quite painful but it did work."

Graeme St Clair, born 1947, brought up in Knightswood and Springburn

"In 1944 my mother contracted tuberculosis and went into Robroyston Hospital where she remained until just after war ended. Nana (what I called my grandmother) visited her every afternoon, taking me with her. We went on a bus. T.B. patients were housed in sort of Nissen-type huts with verandas around them. Children were not allowed in so we had to sit in the gatehouse with the Gatehouse Keeper who made sure we all behaved ourselves. I remember an older boy showing me how to fold a hanky to make a rabbit and a Christmas cracker, which I can still do. Sometimes we played games like snakes and ladders, ludo and card games like snap. Visiting was only for an hour. My grandmother would take cakes and other food for my mum as food in the hospital was very basic. On my 5th birthday, I was taken up to where the huts were and was about 20 feet away from the door of the hut my mum was in when she came and stood by the open door and waved to me, shouting happy birthday. In 1945 mum came home clear of T.B. She had been in there about a year. It did leave a mark though. From then on, she had her own towel and facecloth. Also, her own cup. She seemed terrified of me contracting the dreaded disease as well, even though she was cured, and from then on, I was fed daily doses of cod liver oil in the winter and later she discovered a malt extract which came in a big jar. God knows how many of those I consumed over my childhood years. I only had to cough or sneeze in the winter and I would have my feet in a bowl of hot water with mustard powder in it. I would also have extra clothes on to make sure I kept warm when I was at school. If I did get a cold - well is was a Kaolin poultice on my chest which I hated. The Kaolin was in a tin which was put into a pot of water to heat up, then was spread on a piece of old flannel and sort of slapped on to my chest. It was thick and gooey and, in the morning, it was horrible as it had gone cold and I would hurriedly peel it off."

Evelyn Humberstone, born 1939, brought up Argyll Street, Glasgow

Childhood Memories

"Smog"

"They were awful, and you used to put a hanky in front of your mouth and put a scarf around it. And when you took the hanky off it was absolutely black. The air we were breathing in must've been horrendous. I remember one night my Mum had sent me to elocution, something else that didn't last a long time, and I'd gone down for this elocution lesson and the smog came down. Now we would all have been about 8 or 9 years old, and it was down so thick, you literally could not see your hand in front of your face. So the teacher just opened the door and let us all out into the night to find our way home. Really it was just awful, and I was walking, and I knew I was going in the right direction but it was quite scary on my own walking along. It was just horrible you couldn't see anything. And then after I'd been walking about ten minutes, I bumped into somebody coming the other way, and it was my Mum. She was coming out to try and find me because she knew what it would be like trying to get home in the fog. I was so relieved to see her and then the two of us tried to make it home together."

Marlene Barrie, born 1946, brought up in Scotstounhill and Blairdardie

"The pea-soupers were particularly bad because there was a lot of industry. There was a lot of chimneys, I remember that. And because we were at the top of Sandbank Street you could actually look down and see how low the smog became. And I remember being taken out at bonfire night to hold the sparklers and watch the bonfire. They used to have a bonfire near us in Gilshochill and everybody just went to this ground and watched it. And that night it was particularly bad, and my Mum had put a scarf round my face. And I remember getting back to the house and blowing my nose and all this black like soot."

"I remember the smog made everything look quite eerie. The street lights looked green. There was an eeriness about it. I think most people had a wariness about going out because they couldn't actually see where they were going. And I remember the tram cars they would crawl along when there was a smog. Because obviously they would be worried about hitting another car or hitting someone. But they were particularly bad in the early '50s."

Heather Bovell, born 1948, brought up in Gilsochill, Maryhill

"Yes, up into the middle '60s. The Clean Air Act certainly made a big difference. And the buildings that were coated with the smog were cleaned up. When the smog came down, fortunately we lived in Dumbreck, and I was able to get the underground. But I had a scarf round my face, and it was black by the time I got home. But that was really the last bad one."

"I did suffer from bronchitis as a boy. Whether that was the smog or age. I grew out of it. And I haven't been bothered with it since. But I know of others who suffered badly."

Kenneth MacAldowie, born 1944, brought up in Aberdeen and Glasgow

"We got the train from Portsmouth Harbour Station which was a big excitement for me. On the train to Waterloo and then we went across on the underground to- I think it was St Pancras or Kings Cross for the Glasgow train. The Royal Scot. It was all very exciting for me. I had all my puzzle books with me to go on the train. I had my puzzles, which were those interlocking puzzles that you played with. So, I had plenty to do on the journey. Anyway, we got to the outskirts of Glasgow and the train slowed down and we gradually shuffled into the city. And my Mother looked around and there were tears in her eyes. And I remember this. And the reason was that she loved the south. She loved Gosport. She was actually from Yorkshire originally. So she realised what she'd given up in coming up to Glasgow. But of course, in those days wives followed their husbands, where the job was. The train moved in and Glasgow was a dreary looking city, soot blackened and not that long after the war. Anyway, it looked pretty miserable. All the while my Mother did not like Glasgow. Eventually when my Dad died, she moved back to Yorkshire and finished her days there. So that was our introduction to Glasgow. My Dad loved it. He was very friendly my Dad and he got on well with everybody."

Ian Coombe, born 1942, brought up Gosport, then Glasgow

"I remember one in particular, and we came out of Rutland House in Govan Road. And it was one of those where you couldn't even see the bus. London had them as well. When I say pea-soupers- you wouldn't go out in a car on your own. So the passenger would just be looking out trying to see the pavement. And lucky in those days there weren't many cars so there was nothing parked. And sometimes you had to stop because there was nothing to tell you where you are. You'd lost the pavement. They were diabolical in Glasgow and London, really, really bad."

Philip Cohen, born 1937, brought up in the Gorbals and then Shawlands

"I remember many times if I'd been out dancing, or I'd stayed late to work, and I would take either the train home or the bus. Sometimes, especially with the bus the fog would come in really thick, and it would only go so far into Dumbarton. And you had to walk about a mile in the fog. Usually there would be a kind gentleman that would walk with me. They all knew my Father. He'd worked in Dumbarton for so many years. And they would accompany me which was very kind of them. I remember them very well. It was so thick. It was almost scary on the train."

Rene Walters (nee Catherine McMenamin), born 1938, brought up in Dumbarton

"Sometimes you couldn't really see in front of your face it was so bad. If you blew your nose, everything was black. I remember you washed your face and maybe the water had run down, so then you had little clear bits and your neck was absolutely grey. What do you call them - tide marks?"

Cecilia Murray, born 1942, brought up in Gorbals and Castlemilk

"When I was working. I used to work down town in Gordon Street in Campbell's Whisky, opposite the Central Station. You'd have on your nylons and if you had a ladder in one. When you got home you had a black line all the way down your legs because of the smog. And your face would be all dirty."

(Winifred) Margaret Baker Davidson, born 1937, brought up in Glasgow and Fintry

"I think I would mention the terrible smog and industrial fogs that we had in Glasgow, that were pretty fierce. And I remember one time on the bus coming home from the centre of town and the smog/fog was so thick that the conductor of the double decker bus had to walk in front of the bus. Because the driver couldn't see the kerb because it was so thick. And so we crawled along like this until I got home and walked up the road. And got home and washed my face. And I remember seeing a line of soot coming down from my cheek through my nostrils where I was breathing in this smog. And so this was what people had to endure. And of course, was very bad for health. And I'm afraid Glasgow lungs were not very pretty things when they were being examined."

"The buildings were very black. There was a terrible environmental problem then which then disappeared. As coal burning stopped and it gradually disappeared. It's no longer an issue. But it's certainly something you can remember very clearly of these times."

Hugh Livingston, born 1940, brought up in Hyndland and Fintry

"We also used to get fogs, yellow fogs because of the industry that was all about. They used to have sales in the shops afterwards for things that had fog damage. It was yellow, yellow fog and it made a mess of things. You couldn't see an inch in front of you sometimes. That went on up until the '70s even. I can remember being stuck up in Balloch, where I was teaching, because the fog was so thick, the buses weren't running. That was common. The blackout and the fog."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up Old Kilpatrick

"It was terrible, it was really bad. No wonder so many people died. It was so thick you really couldn't see your hand in front of your face…The worst one I saw was when I was working in Manchester coming out of work one night. And it was terrible… in fact the bus we were on couldn't go any further and we'd to walk."

"They were pea-soupers. Really thick because of all the coal burning all the time. It was absolutely horrendous. Glasgow was just black. And it's only recently they've started to clean up the buildings after all these years. And it's the same with Clydebank."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"People to this day in Glasgow call them fog. But it wasn't natural it was industrial smog. It was absolutely awful. I mean it was so bad that it would slow traffic to a crawl and my Father had decided he wanted to get a small moped to go to work rather than take two buses. So, in the Winter when they had these temperature inversions the smog would just be grey. You couldn't see out your window. My Mother would be a nervous wreck because he was trying to drive home in this terrible weather. I remember coming home from school on the bus. Because I went to high school in the city. And it would be like night time and the bus would be crawling along trying to find its way. I mean you've no idea how bad it was. Eventually, in the '60s, they introduced what they called smoke control acts. And a lot of that improved. But in the '50s it was awful."

Murdo Morrison, born 1950, brought in up Scotstoun and Drumchapel

"I remember walking home from my work and you walked on the tram lines because that was your guide to get home. I remember walking along Alexander Parade on the tram lines. My underskirts were black and it was up my nose. If people had a car someone would walk with a torch to give some guidance to where they were going. So, it was quite horrific. I can remember going to my work and there were lots of traffic jams at the end of Alexander Parade and Castle Street and the bus would be sitting there for ages. When you worked in the Telephone Exchange, I wouldn't say they didn't believe you, but if you were two minutes late they would phone the Bus Company to see if the bus was late."

Marion Penny, born 1940, brought up in Townhead and Ruchazie

"I remember that, oh yes, pea-soupers. During the winter smog in the early days was a real problem. You could taste it; it was just horrible. Even covering your mouth with a scarf you'd get the taste and the smell of the chemicals in it. It was pretty horrible stuff. It could sit there for days and just wouldn't move. But you just had to get on with it, making your way to school, keeping your hand on the hedgerows as you went along, hoping you didn't bump into anybody and listening for cars. Fortunately, in those days there weren't very many vehicles on the roads, so it wasn't too bad. The only bad road I had to cross when I was younger was Great Western Road. Which I suppose was quite a busy road even then. And it had trams running up and down the middle of it. So, I can remember them. But you could always hear them coming."

Graeme St Clair, born 1947, brought up in Knightswood and Springburn

"I'll tell you a story the smog. I used to play chess for Hillhead High School, and we were playing in the Southside. I think it might have been Shawlands Academy. And the chess match always started round about five or six o'clock and always finished about eight o'clock. And on one particular evening where there was heavy smog coming down, we got there, but everybody left separately. And I knew if I took twenty-five steps out there, and turned sharp left for another twenty-five steps, there would be a bus stop there and right enough. And coming towards me after about twenty minutes standing waiting on the bus, a bus came along with a man leading it in front with a flash-light, a torch. And of course, the bus driver had his lights on, so I figures, oh that's great he's going to take me to Bridge Street, I think it was, there was a underground station, a clockwork orange type of thing. And that's what happened. But on the way to Bridge Street the fellow was out there with the torch and doing his thing. The bus was moving about half a mile an hour and then they discovered they were on the wrong side of the road. That's how heavy-duty smog could be. When I got from Bridge Street to Kelvinbridge, I virtually had to hang on to the railings on North Woodside Road to get up to Park Road. And at Park Road I fundamentally put my right hand out on the building feeling my way along until I came to Gibson Street. Then turning right and going up to Otago Street, and then crossing. And I got home about ten o'clock at night or something like that."

"That was the worst experience I ever had in smog. Pretty dramatic stuff actually. Fortunately, today, that's all gone."

Peter McNaughton, born 1944, brought up in Clapham, Glasgow and Comrie

“It was really bad. You had to wear a scarf. When you came down the stairs and walked across the road to get to the railings where the wee school was and find your way round. It was almost like blind man’s buff.”

“My Granda, my stepgrandad, Billy-Da he was Irish, and we lost him. Hinshelwood Drive was a circle as I said, and he kept going round the wrong way and turning. Then we found him and took him home.”

“There was a tram depot right beside us in Ibrox. And you used to see them going in the fog but they were lucky because they went on rails and they had a lamp. And I think the conductor sat on the front of the tram, shouting get out the way, get out the way.”

“The smog didn’t help, there was a lot of chest infections and lung problems and the works like the Galvey, lorries with asbestos. And the smog just added another layer to that and of course it was industrial trade that was causing the smog in the first place. So what a hard life they had. You just couldn’t get out the bit.”

James Love, born 1943, brought up in Craigellachie and Glasgow

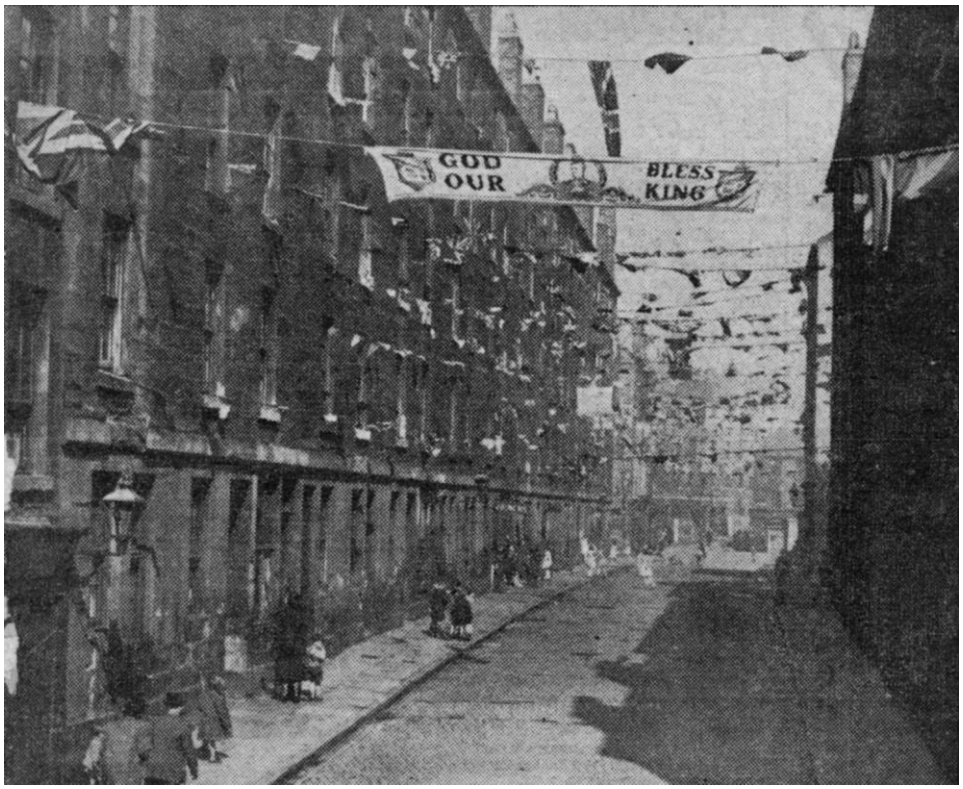
“I remember if it was a foggy night, and you were coming home, you didn’t have a car or any luxury like that. You had to go on the bus and then walk the rest. And by the time you got home the insides of your legs were black and your underskirt…you used to wear an underskirt, no trousers for ladies then, and it would be coal black, really filthy dirty by the time you got home. It was terrible. I don’t remember anybody wearing masks. Sometimes they used to walk out in front of their cars. And you’d see somebody with a torchlight walking in front of a car to show the driver the way. There were some real pea-soupers we would call them. But it made everything filthy. And then after that they went on to no-smoke coal or something.”

M. McKinnon, born 1937, brought up Govanhill and Southside

Chapter Twelve

The End of WWII

The Second World War in Europe came to an at 02.41 on the 7th of May 1945 with the signing of the surrender document by the Chief of Staff of the German Forces High Command. Victory in Japan, and therefore the end of all hostilities in WWII, came on the 2nd of September 1945 with the formal surrender of the Japanese onboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay. Worldwide, an estimated seventy-five to eight-five million people died during WWII. In Scotland around thirty-four thousand combatant deaths were suffered, and around six thousand civilians were killed during WWII. Countless others were injured or otherwise affected by the war. Many of the civilians who were killed in Scotland, perished in the Clydeside air-raids of 1941.



We have evidence that there were some people in Glasgow and the surrounding area, who saw no reason to celebrate on VE day, as they still had relatives fighting in the Far East. On both VE day and VJ day, the celebrations were marred for many by the loss of sons, daughters, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, and spouses. One man, who was a child at the time, remembered the tragic story of one of his neighbours, who had lost her husband within the last weeks of the war in Europe. The adults spoke in hushed tones about how she would not be coming out for VE Day as she was not in any fit state to celebrate.

Industry had been booming on the Clydeside with factories producing munitions and armaments for the war. The Clydeside shipyards alone made a massive contribution to the war effort. At the back of some people's minds was the worry that these jobs would go with the coming of peace. Women may have feared losing their jobs to returning servicemen, as this had happened to their

mothers after WWI. The employment situation, after all, had been poor in this area before the war. In the Glasgow shipyards, four hundred and ninety-three tons of ships were produced, compared with three hundred and twenty-two tons in the few years before the war. This may have put an edge on celebrations for some. Some children and teenagers would have picked up on these fears from their parents, and feared for their families and for their own futures.

Nonetheless, VE day was celebrated on the 8th of May 1945. Some people could not wait and started celebrating on the 7th of May 1945. Celebrations took place throughout the UK, with the largest ones being in the centre of London. Street parties sprung up everywhere. In Glasgow and the surrounding area street parties and official celebrations took place in all areas. There was a formal two-day holiday, with schools closing for the duration.

'V.E. Day Bonfire', by Joyce Kelly, Artist in Residence, Communities Past & Futures Society

In Glasgow it was said that there was a party in every street. There were no official bonfires, and other bonfires were discouraged, but many were lit nonetheless, and countless effigies of Hitler were tossed on them, accompanied by loud singing. Police attended seventy-five fires and arrests were made for the theft of firewood.

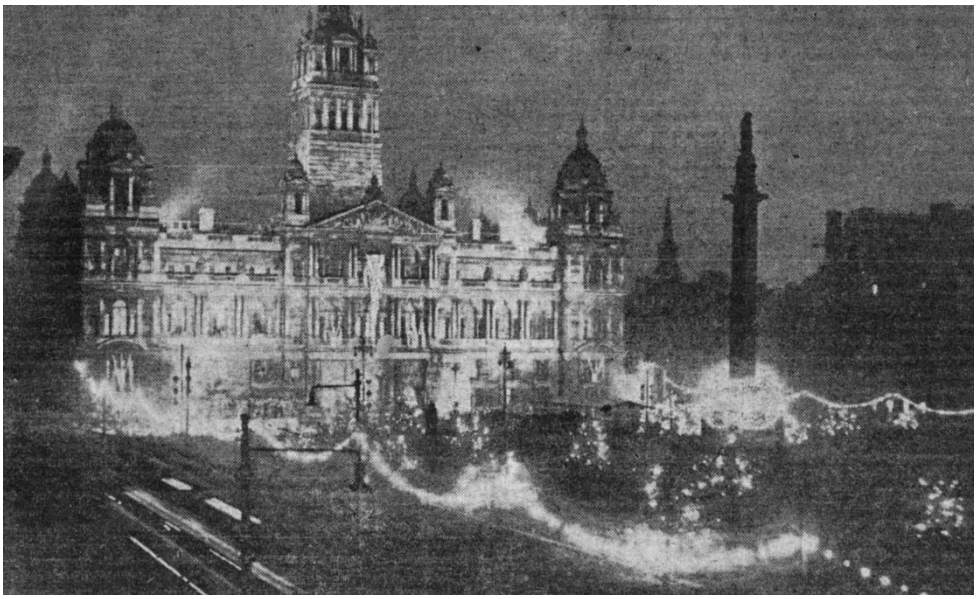
The Chief of Police and Glasgow Corporation gave conflicting advice on the putting up of bunting. The Chief was concerned that bunting might fall on the heads of horses and cause them to bolt, but the council encouraged its use. A lot of the Union Flag bunting that was used dated back to the coronation of King George VI, in 1937. Flags of other allied nations were also flown, and there was also bunting bedecked with Saltires.

The bells of Glasgow Cathedral and many other churches rang out across the city. In Glasgow and Greenock, ships sounded their foghorns, signalling the letter 'V' in morse code in celebration. In Greenock, most of the town turned out and were thanked by the Provost for the vital role the town's industry played in the war effort. In Glasgow and Paisley, buildings such as the City Chambers, Glasgow University, and Paisley Cathedral were floodlit, which must, combined with many fairy lights, have been quite a spectacle for a nation used to six years of blackouts. Some children would never have witnessed so many lights. We know that more than one child of the time remembers VE day as a very colourful affair.

George Square saw a crowd of over one hundred thousand people. These were mainly women as a lot of factories and shipyards did not observe the holiday. There were also servicemen of many different nationalities, including a Dutch sailor who climbed atop the statue of the Duke of Wellington and thanked the people of Scotland for their contribution to liberating his country.

Celebrations there went on until 1.30am, with other unofficial parties also carrying on into the wee small hours. There was reported to be very little in the way of drunkenness.

Victory in Japan day saw far more subdued celebrations in Glasgow and the surrounding area, but there was bonfires and celebrations. A shortage of bread put a dampener on the mood of some, as this reminded them that the privations of war were far from over.



Childhood Memories

"The End of WWII"

"On VE Day we went up to Bath Street and stood on the raised steps of some office to get a good view of what seemed to be an impromptu parade. There was great excitement much hugging and kissing (not me I was only 8). We never needed Social Security since my Father was working but I remember we got, during the War and after, a bottle of concentrated orange juice and a bottle of cod liver oil, these I was sent to collect at offices across from the West of Scotland Cricket Ground in Partick. We also got free milk at school in small bottles of about 1/3 of a pint although on some days you could get more than 1 bottle."

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

"What I remember before V.E. Day they had what they called the Auxiliary Fire Service. And that was like wee grey trucks. And I think they had a fire pump on it and that. And you'd see them going up and down the road, going to fires and what have you. And I've got a faint recollection about Caledonia Road. It was bonfires out in the street. People celebrating V.E. Day. It's a faint recollection as I was only five at the time."

Alf Duffy, born 1940, brought up in the Gorbals and Pollok

"My eighteenth birthday was spent as a barman (counterhand) in the Seaforth Bar, in Gorbals… It was also Victory in Europe (V.E. Day) and everyone was celebrating the end of hostilities, except me. The last place one wants to be, during victory celebrations, is behind a pub bar. On the customer's side of the bar. Great. But serving a mob whose thirst knows no limit, it is the pits. The pubs had to close at 9.30pm during the war and by the time the last customer had left the premises and we had cleared up, it was after 10pm."

"I did not drink beer or spirits then, so getting drunk was out of the question. I walked to George Square, a ten-minute walk. It seemed that half the population of Glasgow were there, singing, dancing, and a lot of people drinking. It was a strange feeling for me observing the crowd but not being part of it. My pals were in the services and I had no desire to join in the fun on my own. It was my birthday but I had no desire to celebrate so I went home. I suppose I was dead tired after serving drinks all day. Serving in pub, or indeed a shop, is hard on the feet."

John Power, born 1927, brought up Saltmarket and Garngad, Glasgow. Courtesy of his daughter Dini Power

"I remember a big bonfire in Carfin Street. I wasn't too concerned about it because I wasn't allowed out because I was quite wee. And I wasn't allowed out because of the bonfire. So, I had to watch from the window. I knew that was the end of the war or Victory in Europe."

M. McKinnon, born 1937, brought up Govanhill and Southside

"VE Day. That I remember. My eldest brother Ellis who was always a bit of an electronic geek. He ended up being a bit of an inventor. And he was always into electrical things. His crystal sets and all that. And he got a board and with electric bulbs made the letters VE. And on our house…We'd an upstairs downstairs. A terraced house. And the lounge downstairs protruded. So, you could stand on the roof of it. And he had this board up there. All lit up. The VE. And I can remember that all the street…Well, that part of Tantallon Road were all out celebrating the end of the war in Europe."

Philip Cohen, born 1937, brought up in the Gorbals and then Shawlands

"Yes, V.E. Day was a very colourful occasion and I guess it was summertime, yeah, it would be. And it wasn't raining, it was sunny and the place was festooned in flags, and it wouldn't be Saltires then, but it would be lots of Union Jacks then. And it was a great party atmosphere. And probably people dancing and things like that. It was a very jolly and happy occasion so it was, it stood out in memory. It was nice to have experienced that."

"You got the sense that something important had happened. I was too young to appreciate the significance but you knew it was a memorable event, definitely."

Hugh Livingston, born 1940, brought up in Hyndland and Fintry

"I remember being called in. My Mum coming to call me into the house because myself and some of my friends were dancing around the street shouting 'We won the war, we won the war'. And she dragged me into the house and said, 'Don't do that'. So, I got into trouble for doing that."

"We had a huge bonfire, well it seemed huge to me, at the back of our house in the field. And it had a large wooden swastika on the top. And I think some of the younger boys lit it before it was supposed to be lit. And my Dad rushing out with a bucket of water to put it out until it was dark. I remember that bonfire very well. Collecting wood for it, going around asking people if they had any old wood."

"There wasn't a street party. I just remember walking down to Dykehead Cross with my Mum and Dad and seeing the lights. And a lot of people gathered round there and hugging each other. It was a great occasion. That was just V.E. night."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"They used to test the air raid sirens regularly. I think it was once a month and the sirens would go off, just to test them. I've got a vague memory of there being this corrugated iron thing in the back garden, obviously it disappeared along with all the rest of them, but I do have this Anderson shelter, round corrugated iron roof dug into the garden. I also remember my Father or my Mother telling me that one of the houses at the back of us had been destroyed. And you could see there was a slight difference in the house that replaced it from the ones that had been there before."

Graeme St Clair, born 1947, brought up in Knightswood and Springburn

"I remember there was celebrations for V.E. Day. There were celebrations all over the village. Street parties and things like that. I particularly remember they had benefit concerts for men who had been prisoners of war. There were a few in the village who had been prisoners in German prison camps. I particularly remember one for a man who had been a prisoner in a Japanese prison camp. Because this poor man was sitting because it was for his benefit, and he was so thin and he was a kind of yellow colour. I can still see that to this day. Very jaundiced looking. We used to love these concerts and we knew all the songs."

"The adults didn't talk much about it, as far as I remember, but we did know what was going on. 'Cause my father was a great cinema fan and I was his companion. So, you so all the newsreels. You saw all about the war on the newsreels. I particularly remember the newsreel of the end of the war. When they came across one of the concentration camps at Belsen. I remember seeing that on the newsreel. And being shocked at these people. They were so thin and their eyes were staring. I'll never forget that."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up Old Kilpatrick

"I remember the actual V.E. Day and I wasn't very enthusiastic about it. I didn't fully understand what it was all about. And, in fact, on the evening I went to bed in the normal way, seven o'clock or whatever. And we went to bed at that time, and I was woken up by the noise and when I looked out our one and only bedroom window, the place was crowded with people, up and down the street. So I went and realised I was in the house alone, that my parents and my brothers and sisters had gone. So I went out looking for them. And there was a sort of a square opposite the house and there was a huge bonfire, absolutely huge. And the place was so crowded and everyone was, I suppose, were all drinking. I wouldn't have noticed that at the time but I'm sure they were. It was certainly a happy occasion and this huge, big bonfire. But I never did find my parents not until later when we were back home. But I didn't find them on that evening. So, I spent V.E. night literally on my own, wandering about looking for my parents in this lovely bright bonfire lit surroundings. So, I certainly do remember that."

David McNeice, born 1937, brought up in Greenock and Millport

"Towards the end of the war when I was older and I was a Guide rather than a Brownie, we went camping regularly. I remember vividly when the war with Japan ended, we were in Guide camp, and I think because we were older the war impacted more. I remember V.E. day but I particularly remember that day at Guide camp when the leader of the camp came and told us that the war with Japan had ended."

"We were on the train and Pitlochry Station somebody got on to the train and announced that Churchill had been defeated, lost the election. I remember the shock horror of the fact that the person who had lead the war, and was such a great man, was politically defeated. I remember my Father being ashen. Not that he was particularly political but just the fact that they could've kicked Churchill out. I remember that very well."

Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

"There were air raid shelters. We used to climb up the back of the air raid shelter. And we used to jump from the air raid shelter on to the roof of the midden. And sometimes you couldn't jump and you'd to dive and grab it with your fingers and then climb up. They were all bricked up but after a lot of time and effort with an old hammer we could open some of the bricks. And I used to think, how could folk go in there during the war, and they were that close to the tenement. And why were they so close to the tenements? What if the bomb actually missed the tenement and hit the air raid shelter? They were only about twenty feet away. And what if it hit the tenement and the tenement dropped on top of the shelter?"

"I remember a bomb site on what we called the old end of Maryhill towards Killermont or Bearsden. There was a couple of streets there got pelted."

Sandy Boyle born 1948 brought up Maryhill

"Not so much in the Gorbals, but in Kinning Park there was lots (of bombed out buildings), because it was on the way to the docks and there was lots of things there. It seems such a short few years after the war but to me when my Mother talked about it, it was like the olden days and it had actually only been a few years."

Cecilia Murray, born 1942, brought up in Gorbals and Castlemilk

"Gosport had a cinema called The Ritz. And it was bombed with an incendiary bomb. And was burned to the ground with the exception of the façade. And for years and years afterwards this was one of our famous places to play in the rubble behind this façade. The word Ritz R.I.T.Z. was in huge letters at the top of this façade and remained so until probably '47 or '48. And eventually it was knocked down."

Ian Coombe, born 1942, brought up Gosport, then Glasgow

"The street we were in, I was brought up in Florence Street. And the kind of major road at right angles to ours was called Caledonia Road and it was slightly wider. And in the middle of the road was air raid shelters. Because what the problem was like ,if we were wanting to go to shops on the other side of Caledonia Road, there was a passage way at the end beside the shelters. And I believe there was a few children knocked down. They would go in one side, through the passageway and out the other end and hit with a car. Again, here was hardly any traffic back then. But I remember my older brother saying a girl up the next close to us. That's how she was killed. She had run through the passageway in the shelter and came out the other side. And a vehicle of sorts, whether it was a car or lorry I don't know, that hit her. And across the street we were in, in the backcourt, there was a couple of air shelters in there. I can remember them. That was the only ones I can remember."

"Another thing I do remember is what they called the Emergency Water Supply. A massive water tank that held thousands of gallons of water. The idea being any bombing that took place, you know, it would be there for the Fire Brigade. I remember them."

Alf Duffy, born 1940, brought up in the Gorbals and Pollok

"There was a lot of kids in the neighbourhood and the boys they built a bonfire. There was this big area near where we lived it was called The Mill Dam and right in there was a huge, big fire. I don't remember there being any adults there, but there was a lot of kids there. I remember my sisters and I going down to watch and it was blazing away. The older boys were having a lot of fun. I'm talking about mid-teens and all that stuff- they're the ones who built it."

Rene Walters (nee Catherine McMenamin), born 1938, brought up in Dumbarton

"At the bottom of 97 Otago Street like all these tenements they had a bomb shelter. And there was a baffle wall immediately outside the shelter. And this is where you came down to empty your bins. You came down through that and round the baffle wall to the bins. And in shelters-it was all a sort of a limestone on the walls and on the ceilings. And we used to get hold of candles and we would light the candles. And you would see 'PMcN loves VH' (Valerie Hall), things like that."

"You had to empty your bins twice a week down there. It was always a bit spooky. You'd go down and then it became darker as you went down into it."

Peter McNaughton, born 1944, brought up in Clapham, Glasgow and Comrie

"We used to play on a rubbish dump just across the road from the flats where we lived and we used the soot that chimney sweeps dumped there. We used that as face paint, I can remember that very clearly, and we played in air raid shelters. There was an underground one and two overground ones. We played kingball on the top of the overground ones. And we lit fires, forbidden fires, in the underground one and once nearly kippered our friend. Because two of us stood outside with our legs against the opening to stop the smoke coming out because we could see our mothers looking out the window, and there was still a friend inside tending the fire and she came out, quite red faced, gasping for air. So we nearly killed her."

Christine McIntosh, born 1945, brought up Hyndland, Broomhill and Arran

"I remember there was celebrations and things like that."

"They put music on and the older ones were all dancing, I remember that. My older sisters went to George Square, and they were all dancing and singing and them coming back and saying oh it was great, you weren't dancing with anybody special, you were just dancing about and photographs being taken. We were getting the Times to see if they were in it, but they weren't in it, them and their pals."

Cabreg, born 1935, brought up in London Road, Glasgow, and Pollok

"We were still making models of spitfires. There were still air raid shelters in the back yard and there were still vacant lots where bombs had taken out buildings and it was like that for a long time… The one that I remember (air raid shelter) most was in Anniesland. Each of the blocks had like a brick structure behind it and there was one behind each block. So I think they were communal for people in that part of the block. I don't know if they went underground because I never got inside one. I just saw the outside but they looked just like brick boxes and they were in the back yards and they were there for a long time after war. Eventually they took them away."

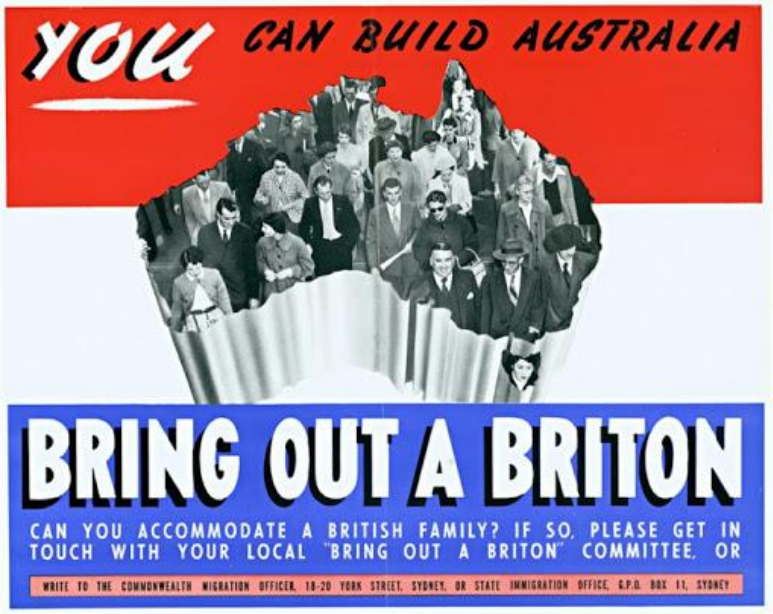
Murdo Morrison, born 1950, brought in up Scotstoun and Drumchapel

Chapter Thirteen

Post-War Housing

Glasgow still had some of the worst slums in Europe at the end of the Second World War. The war and resulting shortages of builders and building materials had brought house building to a low level, with only 4,882 houses being built by the corporation between 1940 and 1945. There had also been few repairs to existing housing stock during this period, much of which was in poor condition. An official report estimated that fifty thousand new houses would need to be built each year in order to solve the post-war housing problem in Glasgow. In 1951, Glasgow had more overcrowding than other large cities in Britain. Surrounding towns, such as Greenock and Clydebank, had similar and sometimes even more acute problems due to the extensive bombing which these areas had suffered. Greenock's housing issues ranked amongst the most severe in the country at the end of The Second World War.

A post-war wave of emigration from the British Isles to various countries provided a solution to the housing problem for some. Although not all emigration from Glasgow and the surrounding area, or indeed, Britain, was prompted by housing problems. A few of our respondents immigrated for work reasons, and some for love. The Australian Assisted Passage programme began in 1945. Adults were charged ten pounds and children travelled for free. Over one million people used this scheme between 1945 to 1972. New Zealand had a similar scheme, which started in 1947, and over seventy thousand people from the British Isles had taken it up by 1971. Over half a million people immigrated to Canada in the twenty-five years after the Second World War. Other popular destinations included South Africa, Rhodesia, Nyasaland and the USA. For those who stayed at home, options varied.

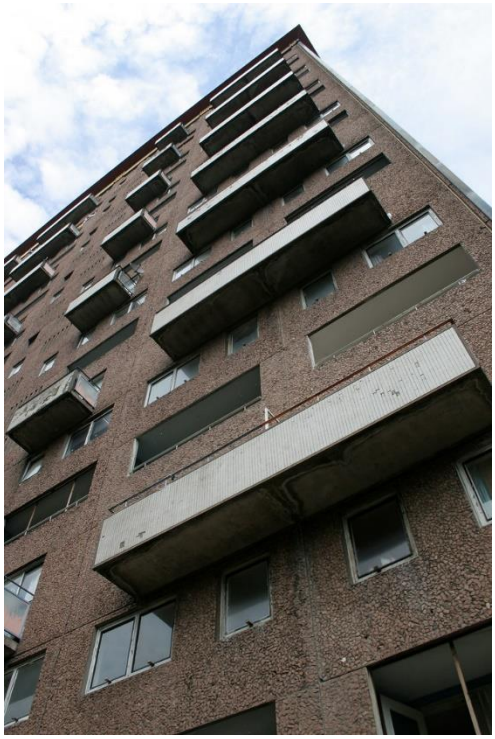


As was the case during the war, grass roots movements, and actions that were encouraged by the Independent Labour Party, and the Communist Party, resulted in people squatting in buildings, and in former POW and army camps. The latter had also been suggested by the Secretary of State for Scotland, in 1943, as a solution to the wartime housing crisis, but his ideas were not taken on board by the Government, which was more focused on creating new housing after the war. In Scotland, people are thought to have entered army camps as early as 1945, before the war ended and a year before this happened in England. They were motivated by poor existing housing, the lack of housing stock, and having to live in overcrowded situations with relatives. Many made improvements to their surroundings, including modifying former POW and army Nissen huts with new stoves and partitions that created more rooms. Others put up curtains, and created small gardens. The Department for Health, and in some cases the local Corporation, eventually started charging rents after deciding that some income was better than none. Some of the camps were still squatted into the 1960s. Children often enjoyed these camps as they were frequently surrounded by countryside in which to play. Glasgow Corporation did not put many of the 'squatters' (an official term disliked by many who lived in the camps) on the list for rehousing, which naturally caused delays in those people being given permanent housing. These mavericks were given verbal support from other members of the public who sympathised with their predicament. A couple of our respondents remember seeing people living in these camps in post-war Patterton in East Renfrewshire, Pennylands in Ayrshire, and Greenock.

Plans for prefabricated houses, or prefabs, as a way of abating the housing crisis, were put in place by the Government as early as 1942.There were more than 3,210 prefabs built in Scotland between 1945 and 1966. Families with young children, and families of returning servicemen, were at the top of the list for these houses. Many people enjoyed the comparative luxury of the prefabs, which were pre-constructed and made of materials such as steel, asbestos and corrugated iron. They had inside toilets and mod cons, such as fridges and washing machines, which made them very popular with people who had come from poor housing conditions. Their quality did vary though, and there were some issues. Problems stemmed from them having flat roofs and plumbing complications, that included toilets that flushed hot water. A couple of our respondents lived in prefabs, and one very clearly recalls her childhood in a corrugated iron construction in Scotstounhill, Glasgow. She

remembered that they were of a brilliant design, and she felt that nobody ever voluntarily left their prefabs and that everyone loved them. She also said that the surroundings provided great freedom for the residents, and that there was a thriving community around her. She also said that ice developed on the windows in the winter, but pointed out that most people put up with that. Around fifty per cent of the prefabs built during this time were demolished by the 1970s, but some still survive.

Housing estates were built on the outskirts of Glasgow in the late 1940s and 1950s, in places such as Drumchapel, Castlemilk, and Easterhouse, in an attempt to deal with the housing crisis. In Greenock, estates were built at sites such as Larkfield, Pennyfern, and Brachton, amongst others, with a total of five thousand new homes built by the Corporation there by 1960.These places were often seen at first as wonderful, by people coming from housing that was overcrowded and often had outdoor toilets. Now they had front and back doors, and baths. One of our respondents remembers that when he was a child, his house in Drumchapel had a bath, and water was heated by the fire until it got an immersion heater in the 1960s. He also remembers there being wee plots of land available for local people to grow food. Some people reported missing their old communities because people from the close-knit tenements of old were sent to various parts of the city. A lack of amenities was also cited as a reason that these housing schemes fell short of the mark. Shops were sometimes sparse, and, in some cases, people had to travel into Glasgow to pay their rents. When the Housing (Repairs and Rents) (Scotland) Act, 1954, was introduced it brought with it the



demolition of three 3,200 homes in Glasgow, in just ten years. This increased the need for estates and brought about the building of high-rise flat blocks from the 1950s, into the 1960s. High-rise flats were often poorly constructed, and some would say, ill-conceived, eventually causing issues such as damp and isolation. Others have fond memories of the flats which brought, at first, improved housing for many. Residents recall that there was a sense of community in these flats for many years.

New Towns were also built in an attempt to cope with the housing problem. East Kilbride was the first, in 1947, followed by Glenrothes in 1948, and then Cumbernauld in 1955. Two more New Towns at Livingston and Irvine were built in the 1960s. New Towns had many of the same benefits and disadvantages of housing estates. They also had the advantage that they often attracted large employers, such as the Inland Revenue and Rolls Royce.

Despite the introduction of new housing, the 1961 census showed that there were still 11,000 homes in Glasgow that were unfit for habitation.

Childhood Memories

"Post-war Housing"

"Our prefab was the corrugated type. We had a side garden, a front, and a huge back garden. The land had recently belonged to a farm and indeed the rest of the farm was still across the road from us. This was where the farmer had grown vegetables so it meant the soil was really, really good. And we could grow just about anything in that garden, the soil was amazing. We had three doors. We had a back door from the living room, a side door from the kitchen and a front door from the hall. There was two bedrooms. There was a living room. A kitchenette which you could eat in as well. And we had a fold out table that could go down or lie flat against the wall. So, you could either have loads of room in the kitchen or you could eat there as well. Now we had a fridge which came with the house and not a lot of people had a fridge in 1948/49. That was one of the advantages of living in a prefab, having a fridge. We had a coal fireplace and pipes going through into the bedroom which supposedly kept it warm. I suppose there was a bit of heat when the fire was on. Out the back we had what looked like an Anderson shelter, but it wasn't, and that was where we kept the coal. I don't think anybody ever voluntarily left their prefab. Everybody loved living in them. You had your own door. You had a big garden. You were comfortable most of the time. I mean in winter you would get ice inside the glass but most people in Scotland got ice inside the glass in winter. They were very functional houses and we certainly loved it. I don't know anyone in a prefab who didn't love it. The bathroom had a separate toilet. So, there were no fights when someone was using the loo and somebody else wanted a bath or a wash. The toilet in these were separate from the bathroom. So that was a good bit of design as well."

Marlene Barrie born 1946, brought up in Scotstounhill and Blairdardie

"When I think about it, I really had quite an idyllic childhood. I mean we may not have had a lot of money but we had space, we had gardens, we had the farm across the road, we all had bikes. We'd all go away for hours and hours in the summer on our bikes sometimes quite far. Sometimes in the farm across the road the farmer would let us ride his horses. We had dingle's pond and we used to skate there in the winter. Sometimes I used to go over to Crossmyloof Ice Rink. We really had lots of things to do and lots of space to do it in and lots of freedom. You could be out all day. You knew adults would be looking out for you wherever you were. Or checking if you were doing something wrong. There didn't seem to be the same fear around as there is now. As long as you came home in time for your tea that was the main thing. I think the space and the freedom we had was just amazing."

Marlene Barrie born 1946, brought up in Scotstounhill and Blairdardie

"East Kilbride was started as a New Town in 1947 and one of my school pals and his family moved there. We were on the list for rehousing but it never happened. Prefabs were put up in many locations mostly outside Glasgow. I did not know or see any homeless in our part of Glasgow."

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

"What I really wanted to talk about was the sense of community there was in this little group of twenty-four, twenty-three prefabs. Because. I think, the children were all about the same age. All the parents were roughly about the same point in their lives as well, roughly age wise. And there was a real sense of community. You know, the parents used to put away… something like sixpence a week would go into a fund. And then twice a year they would have a party. So, in the summer we would have a picnic outdoors. There was a community sort of square in the middle of the houses. And so everybody would do baking and make things. And they would set up trestles. And they would have this big, sort of community picnic. Mrs Ferguson used to bring her piano out into the square. My dad would play the piano. The men would have races. The kids would have races. We'd play musical chairs. And that was like sort of our summer party. We also did things like that for The Coronation. But we had a party like that in the summer every year. And then at Christmas time we'd have a party somewhere for the kids. And there would be presents for the kids and Santa and all that kind of thing. So, there was a real kind of feeling of people working together and helping each other out. I mean not being in each other's pockets but kind of always being there. And these little functions that we had now and again sort of kept everyone socialising."

Marlene Barrie born 1946, brought up in Scotstounhill and Blairdardie

"My father was demobbed in 1945. I was born in 1946. And we moved into the prefab in 1948. So for that two years we had lived with my mother's parents in Kingsway. And in that house, as well as the two sons that still lived there, was another brother and his wife and his…one of his children. So, people were crammed in, usually to grandparent's houses. You know a room for each family or something. And that was quite common. So, to get the prefab…My uncle who also lived with my aunt, his wife and child…They managed to get a prefab as well in Lincoln Avenue which wasn't that far away. And another uncle who got married later, after the war, he eventually got a house in Drumchapel. But if it hadn't been for our grandparents having a house that was a reasonable size then they would have been struggling. But they must have been quite cramped when they all lived together in that…It was a four bedroomed house but when you think of…there was my grandparents, there was the two sons that still lived with them, there was my mum and dad and me, eventually. There was my uncle his wife and their kids so…Yeah it would have been pretty cramped. So, it was pretty desperate that they built these prefabs I suppose. I think mainly they were for people returning from the services. I think they certainly had priority for them. I know my mum said to me that the day they said they were releasing these prefabs she was up at the crack of dawn. And she was at the front of the queue to make sure she got her name down for one."

Marlene Barrie born 1946, brought up in Scotstounhill and Blairdardie

"It was a tenement, a typical tenement of the time. It was a room and kitchen. We were on the top flat and I'm guessing it was built in the late 1800s. And what they'd done was, at some point, they had built a column of toilets up the back to try to modernise it. Because there was no indoor plumbing at all. We had no bath inside. We had no toilet, and so each landing had a shared toilet and that was it. So if you wanted a bath you basically put a tub in front of the fire and you heated water in a kettle and you filled it up. Now you just hop in the shower and it's no big deal. But it wasn't that easy in those days. Especially if you had three children. We had a very old-fashioned range - it was a fireplace in the middle and cooking rings. That was the sole source of heat in the flat and we had a boxed-in bed in the kitchen. And my sister and I shared that until my brother came along, because it was warm in the kitchen. They would do what they called 'banking the fire' and put what they called 'dross' on the coal fire to try to keep it going overnight because if it went out, in the morning. We usually didn't buy kindling. What we did was we'd take newspapers and make long tubes out of them. We'd roll them up and then we'd twist them to what we call firelighters. And we'd put some coal on top of that and they would burn long enough usually to get coal going because we weren't going to go to the store and buy kindling."

"Every once in a while, chimneys would catch fire because what people would do to get the fire to 'draw' they would put a big newspaper in front of it. This was to try to stimulate the draught but every once in a while, the paper would go 'up the lum' as they say. And every once in a while, there was a lot of creosote and soot up there and it would catch fire and it was scary because it would be like a blast furnace. And then you got worried that it would either set everything on fire or they'd call out the fire brigade because then you would get into trouble."

Murdo Morrison, born 1950, brought in up Scotstoun and Drumchapel

Sandy Boyle in his family's prefab, Maryhill 1950

"It was day and night. Somerville Street was an old tenement with an outside toilet. It was only a room and kitchen and that had five of us in it. Some families had a lot more in their room and kitchens. When we moved up to Ellisland Avenue it had three or four bedrooms, it was like day and night with an inside toilet. It was a coal fire as they still used coal then. It was great, plus when you were up there it was all countryside. We could walk right into the hills. Drumchapel wasn't even there then; it wasn't even built. It was great moving from a tenement with wash-houses. It was a new adventure moving up to that."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"We lived in a prefab. And we left the prefab in Burnhouse Street in Maryhill and we moved to Oran Street to a tenement. I was three, three and a half. I can still remember wee bits of the prefab. When we moved to Oran Street it had no garden. At least we had a garden in the prefab."

"I do remember the prefab vividly. Our back garden, at the end of the back garden, was a canal. And my Mother was terrified that we would fall in the canal. So she had my reins on and a big bit of rope on the back of the reins, which was tied on to the clothes pole so I could only get so far. I couldn't get to the water. In those days, the canal was used commercially and boats used to come up it like Para Handy's Vital Spark. The wee sort of Clyde puffers. And they'd be towing barges going up to I think it must've been McLelland's Rubber Works and all that. We were near a bend near the aqueduct that went across Maryhill Road. And these wee boats used to blow their whistle, you know the ship's horn, and I was terrified. I couldn't get into the house because the rope was at its tightest and I was running and my wee legs were going. But I couldn't get away from this noise. I remember that. I've never ever forgot that."

"When I was about three-and-a-half, we moved to Oran Street and in a tenement. And the close…sharing toilets and all that. Whereas in the prefab we hud a bathroom and an ice box. Wasnae a fridge but it was an ice box. We never had any of that in the tenements. So, the prefabs were great."

Sandy Boyle, born 1948, brought up Maryhill

"We lived in Ibrox, and we stayed in 47 Hinshelwood Drive but we had a room. My Granny had the apartment in the tenement. It was three stories high and we were at the top. My Granny, she worked at Ibrox in the Rangers Football Club which was only fifty yards away. And nicely she gave us a room when my Dad came out the army. That's where he met my Mother up in Craigellachie. The way they met each other was, the nearest he came to conflict in the war, was he backed his lorry into my Grandfather's fence and my Grandfather came out and gave him a row. And my Mother happened to be there, and that's how he met my Mother. So they got together, they married and I was born and then we moved as a family down to Glasgow. And I presume as there was no accommodation we moved in with my Granny."

James Love, born 1943, brought up in Craigellachie and Glasgow

"I would be about ten or eleven. We moved up to Pollok by then and when children played outside and all that as against nowadays. And it might have been the summer holidays and we had walked away up near Thornliebank/Spiersbridge on the old Stewarton Road and up the Stewarton Road. We walked by this ex-army camp because it was all the Nissen huts and all around them was gardens. And I remember seeing people there and I think they had washing out. And it was years later I found out it had been a German Prisoner of War camp."

Alf Duffy, born 1940, brought up in the Gorbals and Pollok

"Post War we began to see more exotic fruits than had been available before. It was 1947 before I ever saw a banana for example. Butter became available and brand name margarines. Rationing ceased and much more and varied foods were available."

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

"I was fourteen and a half when we went to Castlemilk to a new house there with our own bath and toilet."

"Our house was getting demolished and my Mother would've loved to have stayed in the New Gorbals. And we hung on and hung on but she was easily fobbed off, you know… a woman on her own. And couldn't shout the way some could and the close was getting emptier and emptier. You know there was hardly anybody living in it. So it was scary living up a close that used to have loads of people in it. So, she just accepted the offer in Castlemilk and we went there."

"I remember lifting the letterbox and looking through. It was a sunny day and it looked lovely. It was just two bedrooms, living room, bathroom and a kitchen. It was painted, the walls were a pale grey and pink, quite fashionable."

"There was a wee row of shops up the top. A butcher, a chemist, a Galbraith's. Yes, there was shops. But you tended to look down on your local shops. My Mother would say don't go to that butcher, go to the one at Croftfoot. I've still got that snobiness about butcher-meat because of my Mother."

Cecilia Murray, born 1942, brought up in Gorbals and Castlemilk

"The tenement in Oran Street was a normal tenement. We stayed in the close. There were four families in the close. Four single ends they called it. We had a room and kitchen at the front. My Mother used to go out every two or three weeks and wash the close. And I had to go to the wee shop across the road, I was about five, to get what they called a slab of pipe clay which would be about the size of a mobile phone nowadays. And that was what my Mother used to put round the border, the edge. So, your close was your pride and joy. Because it was always washed and fresh pipe clay put down. That's what people were like in those days. Everybody knew everybody. There wasn't that much traffic in the streets, you could go out in the street and play football. There were buses, but hardly anybody had cars. The only people that did have cars or vans were people that got them supplied by their employer."

Sandy Boyle, born 1948, brought up Maryhill

"It had three fairly substantial rooms, a kitchen, a large sitting room with a coal fireplace. My parents had a bedroom and there was a very large room overlooking the corner of Otago Street at Gibson Street for my brother and I. And there was a slightly smaller room which was my sister's room and that was overlooking Otago Street."

"All, or much of our childhood before the summer was spent playing games in Otago Street. which was a very secure area because it was almost like a cul-de-sac. Of course, we had the trams that ran up and down Gibson Street so we didn't have to go too far for transportation."

Peter McNaughton, born 1944, brought up in Clapham, Glasgow and Comrie

"There was seven of us in the one room. And somebody, I think it was my Father maybe, wrote to the Daily Record or somebody said write to the Daily Record. And they had an article about it, and within a month we were offered a house in Pollok. So, we moved to Dormanside Road."

James Love, born 1943, brought up in Craigellachie and Glasgow

"Only in as much as the necessity for prefabs. The prefabricated houses that they built and that was purely as a result of homeless people."

"I do remember people living in Nissen huts and prefabs."

David McNeice, born 1937, brought up in Greenock and Millport

"The period at the end of the Forties and start of the Fifties was a fairly happy time for me. My brother and I had a loving, employed father and mother and plenty of aunts and uncles. We were well fed and clothed and I loved playing in what I considered a huge flat, which in fact it was. At that time unfortunately in Scotland in general and the city of Glasgow in particular we had the most horrendous overcrowding with dreadful sanitation, poverty, unemployment, with all that follows from that. There was an extreme lack of proper housing. Many soldiers were returning from the war and had to join their wives who were staying children with their parents. Many thousands went to Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the US at this time."

Colin Stevenson, born 1944, brought up Hillhead and Jordanhill, Glasgow

“I remember the prefabs I think they were near Hampden. There was a whole lot of prefabs built there at Mount Florida but I was never inside one.”

M. McKinnon, born 1937, brought up Govanhill and Southside

“Eventually we found a flat of our own at the top of the hill in Hillhead Street just up from the University. I can remember going up to view the flat with my mother and my uncle (second eldest of my mother’s brothers) Duncan's wife. The flat I thought was huge. It was no 44 Hillhead Street and of course was empty except for a very old fashioned "candlestick” telephone. I would be between two and a half and three at this point.”

“Our top floor flat was a wonderland for me. We had huge rooms which you would have needed a private coalfield/oilfield to keep warm. Times must have been hard and it was a very cold period but I of course was blissfully unaware of this. Creeping into the kitchen one day I wanted to see my wee brother lying in his "Moses Basket" on a chest of drawers. I caught hold of the edge of his basket and tumbled him out onto the floor. I have to say that Alan, as he is called, seems to have suffered no ill. Looking out over the city at night it was a magical place of lights everywhere and we lived at the top of one of Glasgow’s high spots. Our streets and closes were lit by gas at that time and the "Leerie" came round to light the lamps and to turn them off again when it was light. They gave a funny pale greenish light. The lamplighter always had a word for me. I can remember that we still had ration books and my mother and my aunts had big discussions over what to buy. Probably because of the first war my brother and I were the only children out of the eight. This was probably caused by the fallout of the first war, e.g. not enough men left to go round, and those that were left had no real job security.”

Colin Stevenson, born 1944, brought up Hillhead and Jordanhill, Glasgow

Chapter Fourteen

The formation of the NHS and the impact it had in Scotland

by Jennifer McKeeman

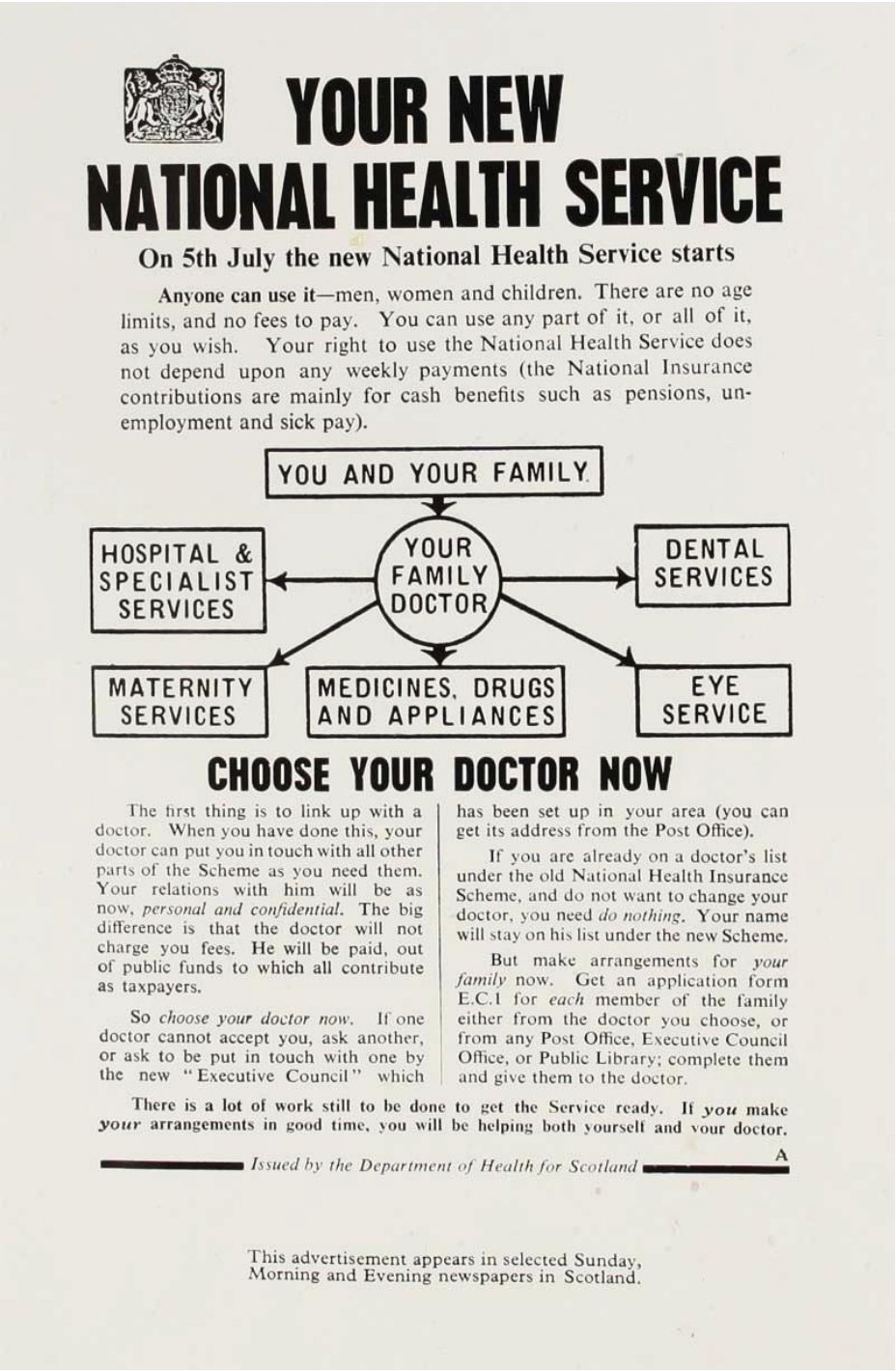
5th July 1948 was a momentous day in British history as the National Health Service (NHS) was finally introduced. This was the culmination of years of bold and pioneering planning to make healthcare no longer exclusive to those who could afford it, but to make it accessible to everyone. The National Health Service, fondly named the NHS, was launched by the Minister of Health, Aneurin Beavan, at the Park Hospital in Manchester; it was the first step toward creating a strong and reliable healthcare service. However, the formation of the NHS was the product of years of challenging work and motivation from various figures, who felt that the current healthcare system was insufficient and needed to be revolutionised.

Prior to the creation of the NHS, anyone requiring a doctor or access to medical facilities was expected to pay for their treatment. In some cases, local authorities ran hospitals for local ratepayers, an approach which originated from the old poor law. By 1929, the Local Government Act amounted to local authorities running services that provided medical treatment for everyone, and in 1937, Dr A. J. Cronin's novel, The Citadel, provided further momentum to address the inadequacies and failures within the healthcare system. He had observed the medical scene greatly and the book helped prompt new ideas about medicine and ethics, which inspired both the NHS and the ideas behind it. There was a growing consensus that the current system of health insurance should be extended to include dependants of wage earners, and that voluntary hospitals should be integrated. When war broke out in 1939, discussions around reform were put on the back burner, despite the growing issue of lack of health provisions in Britain. By 1941, the Ministry of Health was in the process of agreeing a post-war health policy, with the aim that services would be available to the entire general public. In 1942 the Beveridge Report put forward a recommendation for health and rehabilitation services, which all parties across the commons supported. Eventually, the cabinet endorsed the white paper put forward by the Minister of Health, Henry Willink, in 1944, which set out the guidelines for the new NHS. The idea of a health service that was funded from general taxation, not national insurance, and where everyone was entitled to free treatment, was taken on by the next Health Minister, Bevan, who brought about the NHS in the form we are now familiar with.

In Scotland, the NHS changed the lives of hundreds of thousands of people who until then had been unable to afford even the simplest medical treatments. Prior to the NHS, patients had to face an unequal treatment system of voluntary and municipal hospitals. The purpose of most voluntary hospitals was to treat the sick and poor, and unlike in England, most did not charge patients for treatment. Affluent patients were treated at home or in private nursing homes. Consultants usually worked unpaid in the voluntary hospitals, relying on outside practise for their income. Municipal hospitals ran by local authorities were a product of the welfare system created by Poor Law legislation and carried the stigma of the old workhouse. In the 1920s and 1930s, waiting lists in Scotland were growing longer. In Edinburgh, the waiting list for gynaecology had reached 2,800 by 1929, and the Scottish Board of Health's Hospital Services Committee stated that there were many people in Scotland who were unable to get the hospital treatment they needed. For these people, a shortage of beds meant prolongation of their suffering, and action was often delayed beyond the point where effective treatment was possible; many people died before being admitted to hospital. By 1939, the old system was teetering on the verge of financial collapse and, in wishing their successors well, the directors expressed the hope that the spirit of public service, which has built up the voluntary hospital service, would continue to animate the Health Service of the future.

Parliament passed the National Health Service Scotland Act in 1947 and it provided a uniform national structure for services, which had previously been provided by a combination of the Highlands and Islands medical services, local government charities, and private organisations, which in general were only free for emergency use. The new system was funded from central taxation and did not generally involve a charge at the time of use for services concerned with existing medical conditions or vaccinations, carried out as a matter of general public health requirements. Within the first month, at least 90 per cent of Scots had access to a family doctor for the first time in their lives. In its inaugural year, the NHS in Scotland provided free eyeglasses to half a million people in need, while another half a million people received free dentures. However, some have argued that Scotland had already established itself as a home of medical excellence prior to the introduction of the NHS. Scotland was central to some of the biggest advancements in modern medicine; therefore, it was no surprise that the introduction of a free universal healthcare like the NHS owed much to the developments in Scotland too.

Scotland continued to be at the forefront of many medical advances. In 1958, Glasgow produced the first practical ultrasound scanners, which unlike X Rays, carried no risk of radiation, and unlike other experimental ultrasound models, did not involve patients getting into a bath. The Glasgow model proved simple to use and cheap enough to be affordable by hospitals in the developing world. Its initial success was unlocking the secrets of the womb, showing how babies grow and develop, and it was refined over the years to help diagnose a range of diseases by providing images in 3D colours.



YOUR NEW NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

On 5th July the new National Health Service starts

Anyone can use it—men, women and children. There are no age limits, and no fees to pay. You can use any part of it, or all of it, as you wish. Your right to use the National Health Service does not depend upon any weekly payments (the National Insurance contributions are mainly for cash benefits such as pensions, unemployment and sick pay).

YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

HOSPITAL & SPECIALIST SERVICES

YOUR FAMILY DOCTOR

DENTAL SERVICES

MATERNITY SERVICES

MEDICINES, DRUGS AND APPLIANCES

EYE SERVICE

CHOOSE YOUR DOCTOR NOW

The first thing is to link up with a doctor. When you have done this, your doctor can put you in touch with all other parts of the Scheme as you need them. Your relations with him will be as now, *personal and confidential*. The big difference is that the doctor will not charge you fees. He will be paid, out of public funds to which all contribute as taxpayers.

So *choose your doctor now*. If one doctor cannot accept you, ask another, or ask to be put in touch with one by the new "Executive Council" which has been set up in your area (you can get its address from the Post Office).

If you are already on a doctor's list under the old National Health Insurance Scheme, and do not want to change your doctor, you need *do nothing*. Your name will stay on his list under the new Scheme.

But make arrangements for *your family* now. Get an application form E.C.1 for *each* member of the family either from the doctor you choose, or from any Post Office, Executive Council Office, or Public Library; complete them and give them to the doctor.

There is a lot of work still to be done to get the Service ready. If *you* make *your* arrangements in good time, you will be helping both yourself and your doctor.

Issued by the Department of Health for Scotland A

This advertisement appears in selected Sunday, Morning and Evening newspapers in Scotland.

As well as advances in diagnostic equipment, Scotland was also leading the way in terms of medical research and treatment schemes. In 1950, a Medical Research Council study by Sir Richard Doll and Sir Austin Bradford Hill revealed the link between smoking and lung cancer. This led to the Health Minister, Iain MacLeod, publicly accepting the link at a press conference in February 1954. Around 80% of the adult population were smokers at this time, with Scotland having consistently higher rates than the rest of the UK. In 1951, rising levels of tuberculosis, and a chronic shortage of beds and nurses, led to a special scheme for Scottish patients to be treated in Swiss Sanatoria, as public concern and media coverage contrasted Scotland's increasing waiting lists with the empty beds available at reduced rates in Switzerland. The first flights to Zurich began in June 1951, in a UK wide scheme for 400 patients to be treated at Davos and Lysine, more than half were from Scotland. It was publicised as a first triumph for an egalitarian NHS, as British people were able to enjoy the best tuberculosis facilities in Europe that were previously only available to the rich. By the time the scheme ended in 1956, more than 1000 Scots had been treated.

Childhood Memories

"Healthcare"

"My Mother and Father always said thank goodness for the N.H.S. I would have been about two when the N.H.S. came in. So, they were always telling me about what it was like. Paying for doctors and only getting what they could afford. When I was three, I got pneumonia and I was in hospital for about three weeks, I think. And of course, penicillin had come out by that time and I was fine. So I used the N.H.S. when I was very young since I was three. And I've used it for the rest of my life since then. And I worked for the N.H.S. as well."

Marlene Barrie, born 1946, brought up in Scotstounhill and Blairdardie

"The Uncle who was the ship's surgeon. He bought into a practice as a partner when he was demobbed. And actually, the town where he was, he did such a lot for the town, that they named a street after him when he died. That was in Fife (Chamber's Street, Cowdenbeath)."

"I can remember sitting in the doctor's surgery. I had a very bad vaccination, smallpox vaccination that I got at school and it poisoned. And I think it had been a dirty needle that was used because I remember going down to the doctors and every night for a week or ten days. He burned the wound with what he called blue stone. It was a blue stone and I can remember gripping my Dad's hand. The pain was excruciating to get rid of this vaccination. So that would be before the Health Service I think."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"Well, we always went to the doctor's office, where the local shops were. And the doctor would come to the house."

"I remember one story. My sister was sick with pleurisy and the doctor came to the house. And he wanted to put her on medicine, a special one that was just new. And my Father wouldn't let him because his idea was, he was going to make a guinea pig out of my sister. So she didn't get it and fortunately she did get better with whatever they used for medicine. But that new medicine that the doctor was wanting to give her was Penicillin. Which would've cured it right away."

(Winifred) Margaret Baker Davidson, born 1937, brought up in Glasgow and Fintry

"I remember that I had my tonsils out in Aberdeen. But it was in a private nursing home just down the road from where we lived. My memory of that was I had been promised ice cream when it was done and there was no ice cream, there was only custard, and the memory is still there. Whereas my brother had his tonsils out at home in Glasgow in the middle fifties. And in fact, he had to have them, there was obviously a stump left, taken out again a few years later."

Kenneth MacAldowie, born 1944, brought up in Aberdeen and Glasgow

"One of my cousins had polio and was on an iron lung and he almost died, so that was very close to home. Another cousin had tuberculosis when he was about 17 and he was sent out to Switzerland, publicly funded. He was sent there to recover from tuberculosis. When I worked, I worked for a while in a chest clinic and we still had tuberculosis patients, although it was into the '70s by then. I think we were all grateful for the polio vaccine. Especially when one of your cousins had actually got polio and another one had got tuberculosis."

Marlene Barrie, born 1946, brought up in Scotstounhill and Blairdardie

"What I do remember was my Mother's Mother, my Granny Steven. I remember them talking about my Granny's neighbour. I don't know what it was and my Granny saying this woman's never away from the doctors. And it was because the Health Service had started and wasting it for everybody else, never away. And that would obviously be the late '40s."

"What I do remember was when I was wee before the Health Service. I remember my Mother taking us when I was ill, I don't mean seriously ill. And down at Buchan Street. And in it there was a building and the organisation that was in the building was called a medical mission. It was basically to service the poor prior to the Health Service coming in. And I remember my Mother taking me there at least one time."

Alf Duffy, born 1940, brought up in the Gorbals and Pollok

"Because of my Mum's background (she was a nurse) she would often make reference to a really new antibiotic that had been brought out by a company M. &. B. And I think it was one of the first antibiotics that was ever used in the N.H.S. So, because of my Mum's background and my Father's. He had been a medic in The Royal Army Medical Core. So, the background was one of being used to listening to stories about how things had been and some of the older remedies that had been used. And my Mum and Dad still used when I was a child. Things like the kaolin poultice. So, it was all these things that were spoken about. I think the N.H.S. must've made a huge difference."

"Maybe when I was about three or four, I recall being taken to a doctor's surgery. And I think what I remember most was the strange smell. Because in those days the doctor's surgeries were also the pharmacies. And some of the doctors made up their own medicines on the spot. So you would see mortar and pestle dishes. It was really quite strange. The one that I went to was Oliver Springer, he had a surgery in Maryhill Road but he used to make up a lot of medications himself. So there was always that sort of herbal smell when you went into the surgery."

Heather Bovell, born 1948, brought up in Gilsochill, Maryhill

"In fact, he actually came to our house in Hyndland (Dr Cameron). When I had my tonsils removed and my tonsils were removed on the kitchen table under a kind of a local anaesthetic of some kind. I only have the vaguest of memories of that. It sounds terrible but I didn't suffer from it. As far as the NHS is concerned, no, I was unaware of where the medical care came from. I suppose I only learned about that in later life when I was a teenager or so."

Hugh Livingston, born 1940, brought up in Hyndland and Fintry

"There were health visitors, we called them Green Ladies because they wore green uniforms and special hats and they would come in to check up on you. Especially if you had young children. They were intentioned and tried to help and I think they probably did help. But again, there was this intrusion of authority. You know, there was a sense of working-class people being sensitive to being judged. But I think it was the Government trying to make sure the children had basic nutrition."

"I remember when I was in hospital that there was a lot of fresh fruit and obviously things designed to try and build us up."

Murdo Morrison, born 1950, brought in up Scotstoun and Drumchapel

"We were very well look after, after the war. After the Labour government got in. We got cod liver oil and orange juice. I used to go to Florence street clinic. I don't know if they took blood. I don't remember. I'd of screamed the place down if they'd done that. I don't know how they knew. But they said you're anaemic. An my Mother…they used to give her jars of malt extract to give me."

Cecilia Murray, born 1942, brought up in Gorbals and Castlemilk

"1947- I remember my Mother being delighted because she was getting family allowance, not for me, not for the eldest. I think it was seven and sixpence she got for my sister and the same for my brother. So that would be her getting fifteen shillings extra. But she used to let it mount up and that would go towards our holiday. The same with the dividend in the Co-operative. She used to let it build up."

"It made a difference because a doctor's visit in those days was half a crown and half a crown was hard to come by. So you needed to be really ill before you got taken."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up Old Kilpatrick

"I remember we had a doctor in Pollok Street. And I don't know whether you paid him or not. I can't just remember too much about it. I visited the doctor a couple of times. A dentist, I remember a dentist, I stayed with my Granny at that time. And she gave me a shilling on a Saturday morning to go to a dentist at Glasgow Cross and you stood in a queue. The queue was right down the stair on a Saturday morning and the people were coming out with their hankies over their mouth, blood dripping through. And that was your dentistry for you. I can remember the school dentist that was the cruellest damn thing. Going to this school dentist at the Gorbals round the corner from the Palace Picture House. And I can remember, I don't know what age I would've been, can't remember what age I would've been. And I remember getting taken into this chair, rubber apron, rubber hat and then they said, 'Open up' and I'm damned if I'm opening it. Oh, they were cruel, cruel. Then at the end they took off the rubber hat stuffed it into my mouth and I dived off the chair. There was a big wicker basket bed or settee. And I jumped on top of that on to this partition. And I sat up there like a cat and they had to go and get my Mother to take me away. They were cruel, cruel people."

George Burns, born 1926, brought up in Bridgeton then Kinning Park

"We had one or two friends who suffered and were in the sanatorium for months. Children of roughly my age, not too many. You got your injections for smallpox and diphtheria I remember that and then T.B. There was the injection when I was about twelve. They did the test and if it didn't react then you got the T.B. injection in the senior school. The other thing that was the great scare at that time was polio and the Salk vaccine came in, in the middle to late '50s. That was the frightening disease at that particular time. My Mother was always very careful that we didn't go and play in rivers and so on because that was felt to be a catalyst. Whether or not it was I'm not sure."

Kenneth MacAldowie, born 1944, brought up in Aberdeen and Glasgow

I have no real recollection of the start of the NHS although from August 1962 I would spend the next 46 years working for it. I had been treated for measles at the house in Milngavie around 1942 but do not know how this was paid for.

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

"The state of medicine was primitive in those days. I'll give you one example. My Grandfather had a heart attack at work and he walked home and I remember this, I remember seeing him coming home and today you would call the ambulance, you'd be on your way to, well we would call it the E.R. I know you don't call it the E.R., but you'd be on your way to hospital, and eventually… in those days people didn't have phones so you went to the call box and you called and eventually he was taken away in an ambulance."

"In 1960 there was no real treatment for heart conditions and so the prescribed treatment was bed rest. So I remember visiting him in hospital and I was very close to my Grandfather in many ways and he died in hospital. And there was just no effective treatment. In today's world it might have been different."

"I took ill in primary school in 1955. I was 5 years old and developed really severe stomach pains and eventually they went to summon my Mother because we didn't have a telephone. Nobody did. And we didn't get a telephone until 1968 that's how basic this was. Eventually she came and took me home and I was in bed and the pain just got worse and worse and eventually they called the doctor. Because in those days Doctors came to your house. By this time, I remember the pain just abruptly stopped which actually made me a medical emergency because I was now in peritonitis not appendicitis. The doctor showed up and took one look at the situation and told my Father to go call and ambulance and tell them it's an emergency."

Murdo Morrison, born 1950, brought in up Scotstoun and Drumchapel

"My earliest memories of going along to the doctor's surgery and hearing my Mother or my Father, whoever had taken me along, saying things that indicated this was new. It was so much better. And I remember you just trooped along to the doctor's surgery, went into the waiting room and sat in a queue. There was no appointment system as such. You just waited there until it was your turn and the doctor saw you. It seemed to work."

Graeme St Clair, born 1947, brought up in Knightswood and Springburn

"I had my tonsils out on the kitchen table in 1953 and the kitchen absolutely crammed with medics. An eminent Glasgow surgeon and my own G.P. and other people and a nurse. And I can remember sitting on the nurse's knee and a wire, like a tea strainer thing put over here (covers her mouth and nose) and a bit of gauze over that. And something dripped which I think would be ether and I can remember the horrible stretching feeling as I passed out. And I can remember seeing the pulleys in the kitchen while it was all happening, because I saw green rails, they were painted green with a light travelling up and down them, and a lot of banging noises, and presumably that was the surgeon's headlight. And the tools being chucked into a kidney dish and then someone carried me into the maid's room which was just off…but what always struck me afterwards was having them taken out within distance of the range and the coal bunker. While my Mother paced up and down the corridor outside trying not to listen to the noises."

Christine McIntosh, born 1945, brought up Hyndland, Broomhill and Arran

"I do remember discussions about the Health Service and how wonderful that was because my Grandfather had been a doctor and my Uncle was a doctor. And I can remember my Mother talking to me about what it was like to be a doctor's daughter in the past and how different it was going to be with the Health Service. She would talk about how people couldn't afford it and coming to her Father who was a doctor and sometimes he would take people for nothing and sometimes people would pay him with a chicken. And I was very close to my Grandmother and she was a very clever lady. She was one of the first female graduates of St. Andrews University in the days when women didn't get a special award. She was political, so she talked a lot about the Health Service and what it was like to be a doctor's wife in those days."

Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

"Sulphur and treacle. I don't know what that was for. We used to get big tubs of malt from the clinic along with the cod liver oil and the orange juice."

Sandy Boyle, born 1948, brought up Maryhill

"The one thing I remember that strikes me immediately was a visit from your doctor used to cost five shillings and I do remember when that was stopped. Yes, that was a big thing that you didn't have to pay for the doctor coming anymore. Yes, that's the main thing in my thoughts on the National Health when they introduced free health. And that's of course another great idea and that made a huge difference. Particularly to working class people who were never well paid anyway but five shillings, five shillings was a lot of money to have to pay out you know from whatever salary you got. At that time people would only be earning a couple of pounds a week, something like that. It wouldn't have been much more. So five shillings out of that… you were reluctant to call a doctor in knowing that you were going to have to pay that. Although I suspect that a lot of doctors didn't actually take it."

David McNeice, born 1937, brought up in Greenock and Millport

Chapter Fifteen

Changed Consumer Patterns

We are used to images on film and television of the 1950s being the time of the rise of consumerism. A lot of these images come from our neighbours across the sea, in the USA, where the war had not had such a detrimental effect on the economy. In the UK, rationing of certain goods continued until July 1954. This included the rationing of clothes. We asked our respondents what kind of facilities they had in their homes in the late 1940s and the 1950s, and about their access to consumer goods in general. They told us that credit became more widely available from the mid-1950s, and the economy began to improve, as well as goods becoming more affordable.

By the late 1950s, only a third of households in the UK had washing machines. They cost the equivalent of a month's wages to most people. Most of our respondents did not have washing machines until the 1960s. There were a couple of exceptions where people lived in more affluent areas of the town. One respondent, who lived in the West End during the war, reported that his mother always had a top loader washing machine. However, a great deal of people still used the steamies attached to swimming baths, introduced to Central Scotland in 1866 when the first official wash-house opened on London Road. These were introduced to help combat disease by improving washing facilities for the public; during this period there were also wash-houses at the back of tenement buildings. Even when ownership of washing machines began to increase in the 1960s, many families still used

Glasgow 'Steamie' Wash-House - c. 1940

the steamies, as large families meant that one washing machine was not practical for the job. As late as 1977 there were still nineteen steamies in Glasgow.

In Glasgow's tenements, cookers were often still coal-fired ranges and many of our respondents have described these as been in their childhood homes. One respondent had a Rayburn (the Scottish Aga) when he lived in a posh part of the city. These were often gas-fired, although some were fuelled by coal. One respondent remembered his grandparents, who lived in Troon, having one gas ring and an old coal-fired grate used for cooking during the 1940s. Electric cookers although available for many years at that point, would have been very expensive to run. The picture is unclear regarding gas cookers, but their presence would have depended on whether there was a gas supply, and on affordability.

Bush wireless set owned by Robert Brown's father. He bought it after being sent home wounded from Italy in 1945. Robert and his wife still tune into the radio. He says it's seen better days but still has a nice clear tone. Courtesy of Robert Brown.

Coal fires were the main means of heating tenement flats and houses at the time, sometimes being linked to boiler systems for heating water. A great deal of our respondents mentioned getting deliveries from the coal man, and coal being stored in bunkers outside or in their homes. A couple of our respondents have talked about having to put coats on the bed at night to keep warm; this was before the introduction of the continental quilt or duvet. In one case, the garment used was their father's great-coat from WWI.

Refrigerators were expensive and often considered to be luxury items rather than necessary kitchenware. Prefabricated homes came equipped with them, though one respondent has mentioned that the fridge in his childhood prefab was more like a cool box. Other people recall having refrigerators in the early 1950s, and not all were from particularly affluent areas. We have heard from respondents who bought refrigerators for their parents when they became wage-earners. One respondent's mum had told her that she felt a refrigerator was more important than a washing machine, which might have been because alternative washing facilities were available at the time, in the form of steamies. For most people, though, fresh food had to be bought on the same day that it was to be consumed, with people keeping milk and dairy on the windowsill to keep cool. Larders with cool air-vents were built into some dwellings.

Radios, or wirelesses as they were known at the time, were present in many homes during this era, and we have heard a number of tales of people's favourite radio programmes. We have heard from

one respondent who still uses the Bush radio his father bought in 1945, after being sent home wounded from Italy that year. He said it has seen better days but still has a nice clear tone.

In the UK, television ownership was numbered at fifteen thousand in 1947, with a rise to three million by 1954. This was possibly partly due to the popularity of people watching the coronation of Elizabeth II on the television in 1953. We have heard stories of respondents watching the event at relatives and neighbours' houses. One respondent reported that the coronation was quite monotonous for children, as it went on for hours, but that the celebrations that went along with it were good fun. Others have told us that their family had no interest in the event. The early part of the 1950s have been described as the radio years, and the later part as the TV years. There were thirteen million TVs in British homes by 1964.

Cars were a rarity during the early post-war period and one out of every three vehicles was a public transport vehicle. We have heard many stories of people travelling about Glasgow and surrounding area on trams, trains, buses and steam boats. However, car sales were increased by the end of petrol rationing, and the first motorway opened in 1958. Only a couple of our respondents had cars during this time.

The general picture regarding household goods that we take for granted today seems to be that most households in the Glasgow area were not equipped with all of these until the 1960s, and in some cases the 1970s and later.

Childhood Memories
"Consumerism"

"I bought my Mum a fridge as a surprise. She came in one afternoon and there was a fridge sitting. She always said she would rather have a fridge than a washing machine. She felt it was more important having a fridge."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"My Dad won a competition in the Sunday Mail and got T.V. set and a radiogram at a different point."

"We went through to my Uncle in Cowdenbeath and watched it there (The Coronation). A lounge full of people. I remember it well; we didn't have a T.V. until after that."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

I actually don't think…I don't think my mum had a washing machine until they went into sheltered housing. That's the first time I recall…They didn't have one in Campbell Street because there was no room for it. There was nowhere in the…you could have had a twin tub and had hoses over the sink. But no, we never had a television till I was twelve. That was one of the other unusual things. Everybody else had a television. Because I remember going to an upstairs neighbour's to watch the Queen's Coronation. And, it was…the television screen was no bigger than the laptop screen and it was in this huge wooden cabinet."

"But no there was no…we didn't have a washing machine. And again, if you don't know about these things or you've never experienced having one. You actually don't miss it. I mean people hung their washing out in the back court. And each building…each house on the landing. There were metal hooks. And each person had their own clothes line. And heaven forbid that you used anybody else's line. But they were very good. If neighbours…if they'd done a big bedding wash and they needed to hang out some sheets…you would let someone else use your clothes line if they had bedclothes to dray. So, it was…It was all very neighbourly in that respect."

Heather Bovell, born 1948, brought up in Gilsochill, Maryhill

"He also built me a dolls' house when I was small. You couldn't really get toys, but he made a dolls' house. My Dad made all the furniture for it and my Mum put all the velvet covers on the settee and chairs and made curtains. My Father rough casted the front and actually I had more fun watching him making the dolls' house than when it was finished. All my friends always wanted in to play with this wonderful dolls' house. It was so realistic that the manager of the local joiner's shop asked if he could put it in the window on display to advertise the tools that he sold. And he was inundated with people coming in saying 'can I have a raffle ticket for the doll's house.' And he had to say it wasn't in a raffle. It was just to advertise the tools they had."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935,
brought up in Shotts

"Chicken was a treat. A roast chicken was maybe about four or five times a year. That was a luxury, a chicken at Christmas time. My Mother used to make tripe, I liked it as well. Liver, mince or as we used to call it Glasgow Caviar. I used to eat anything, Steak pie, anything like that. In those days nobody had fridges and your Mother had to go every day to get her shopping, her messages, and you never had room in the house either, there were no fancy kitchens. You had a big press in the living room. It was just another door in the living room and when you opened it, it never went anywhere, it was just about six inches deep with a couple of shelves. And that was for your tins of beans, or a tin of soup or something and just your day-to-day items. And under the sink you could put your tatties and that in. There were no kitchen units or anything like that. I suppose it was quite frugal when you look back on it. We never had anything but see, nobody else had anything either, so we were all the same, we never knew any different."

Sandy Boyle, born 1948, brought up Maryhill

"I think I was about 16 when we got a television which was fairly late. My Mother thought it would interfere with my homework. Which it did but of course. Other people had televisions. People got televisions for the Coronation. My Grandmother lived in Kingsway not far away from us. And the day of the Coronation one person had got a television for the Coronation and everybody, everybody from every house in Kingsway was packed into their living room to watch the Coronation on this tiny screen. One boy in Wykeham Place had a television very early. He was very popular because you'd go round there and ask: "Is George coming out to play?" "No, he's watching Andy Pandy." "Can I come in and watch Andy Pandy too?" (Laughs)

"So of course, every kid in the street was in George's house watching Andy Pandy and various other things."

"Other neighbours of my Grandmother had televisions and their windows were quite close to the street, so when we were out playing in the summer we used to go and look in the window of this neighbour. She used to sit with her back to the window while she was watching the T.V. and it was quite loud. She was probably a little bit deaf. So, we could all stand and look through the window and watch her television."

Marlene Barrie, born 1946, brought up in Scotstounhill and Blairdardie

"I remember during the war you kept everything thing. You had clothes and you didn't throw anything out. And when wrapping paper at Christmas would be kept from one year to the next so... and string, things like that. Nothing was wasted, that's for sure."

Hugh Livingston, born 1940, brought up in Hyndland and Fintry

"I built radios. I had a crystal set. I was probably ten or eleven. And I learned and understood that in order to get reception from a crystal set you had to have an antenna and a very good ground and headphones. Because all it was, was a cat's whisker. The only place where I could get a good ground was in the bathroom sitting on the toilet. So, I used to spend a lot of time sitting on the toilet listening to the light programme with my headphones on. So quite often there would be people banging on the door wanting me to get out of there. Eventually my Dad went down to the Barras one Sunday afternoon, as was his habit quite often, and he brought home a real radio which I was very excited about. And that was mid to late '50s, because I locked on to Radio Luxembourg which was a popular radio station for teenagers at the time. The reception was pretty bad and I can remember realising one time that to get the better signal you had to have a good ground. But on the table beside my bed there was no ground on this set and so I rigged one up. I got a bunch of wire and I went into the bathroom and I tied it to the cold-water pipe under the sink. And I ran it across the hallway under the carpet into my bedroom. And I had one end of the wire in my right hand and I had a nut on the back of the chassis of this radio on my left. And as I touched the two of them, I shot across the bed and ended up against the wall, my hands were bleeding. The reason was that it was what was known as a live chassis radio so you had 250 volts and it came across me and I got the fright of my life. I didn't tell anybody mind you, but it was a stupid thing to do but there again, I was learning. It nearly did me in, but I was learning."

Ian Coombe, born 1942, brought up Gosport, then Glasgow

"We had a radio and got a television when I was ten. A huge, enormous thing with a tiny wee screen that wasn't any bigger than an iPad. But it was as big as a cooker, big valves, and I remember having to stand holding the aerial, round a bit, left a bit, over a bit, no no no, go round, and back a bit. Nobody could get up in the loft for an aerial. These aerials tied on to the windowsill and stuff like that. It was just a black and white picture and one station."

"You used to get Wells Fargo, Lash Laroo, The Lone Ranger, The Range Rider, Wagon Train, all black and white cowboy things, they were fantastic. I used to love all them. There were cartoons but you never got much. You had Bill & Ben the Flowerpot Men, Muffin the Mule and Pinky & Perky. They were all that phoney because you could see the strings. But the cowboy things were good."

Sandy Boyle, born 1948, brought up Maryhill

"There was no room for anything like that in the single end. My Mother used to go to the Steamie or she would take it up to a place called 'The Bagwash'. You put all your stuff in a pillow case and you take it up to this laundrette at the top of Maryhill Road and they'd weigh it and then tell you how much it cost to wash it all. And when you got it back it was always damp. So, you'd get it back and hang it out on the washing line out the backcourt."

"The Steamie was in Maryhill Swimming Baths the public baths in Gairbraid Avenue. The Steamie and the swimming were in Maryhill Baths."

Sandy Boyle, born 1948, brought up Maryhill

"My brother Heimy must've been after he qualified as a pharmacist. Bought my Mother a Frigidaire fridge and sometime after that a television. I grew up with no television, it was radios and on a Saturday night huddled round the radio."

Philip Cohen, born 1937, brought up in the Gorbals and then Shawlands

"There were such amazing shops in Glasgow, big posh stores - Copeland and Lye, Pettigrew & Stephens, Trerons, Forsyths - all plush big department stores. In Forsyths I got my school uniform from there, made to measure, I remember that."

Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

"At that time, it was very hard to make phone calls. At Christmas time you had to order them so that you got a line for it and it was like three dollars to even get on the phone and three dollars a minute or something like that. And so you couldn't talk very long. It would've been wonderful if we had the things we have today. It was hard to keep in touch. It was letters that was about it and a few phone calls. Then it got better as the years went on of course. When my Mum and Dad were alive, it was a recording box. We had a real recording box, not like press the button like we do here."

(Winifred) Margaret Baker Davidson, born 1937, brought up in Glasgow and Fintry

"Married women, like my Mother were housewives and my Father did not expect my Mother to go to work. Being a housewife was difficult during and after the War. There we had no labour-saving devices apart from a vacuum cleaner. We had no hot water in the house until a few years post-War when my Father installed a Geyser. My Mother's wash day was Monday morning and a fire had to be lit under a large boiler into which the clothes went to be stirred and mashed with a wooden pole. They were then put through a mangle and hung out to dry in the backcourt if dry and on the pulley inside if wet. No electric irons the iron was heated at the fire. Baths were taken in a zinc tub in front of the fire with kettles used to heat water. Toast was made by holding bread in front of the fire on a toasting fork. Due to shortages during the War my Mother spent a lot of time baking."

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

"The only reason I remember this was I was always a big football fan and it was in the 1950s and it was The Coronation Cup they called it, a cup for the football. And somebody said 'Oh, so and so's uncle's got a television so we'll try and get up to see it,' but I never got up to see it. I think the first television really that I saw myself was black and white. We were too young, we were always out and about. In my time it was short bursts of programmes like a wee news program and later on it would be the highland dancers and that. Scottish Television was just in its infancy then."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"My Mother had a washing machine with a wringer and when I look back on it, it was the same water that was in the washing machine. You did your whole washing in the machine. You'd take out your stuff, put it through the wringer and we were always told to stay away from that wringer because it was electric. But no dryer."

"We had a telephone. We had the lines where there were several people on it and you sometimes had someone on the line and you'd pick it up and they were speaking. So, you couldn't use it at that time."

(Winifred) Margaret Baker Davidson, born 1937, brought up in Glasgow and Fintry

"I don't know how my mother did the washing. I think it would be in the sink in the kitchen. But it must have been a huge task with three children and a husband and all this sort of stuff. They had a mangle of some sort. You know…They would stick that under the sink. Then they would bring it out and attach it somewhere or other. Then they would mangle the clothes. They had a real rough time women, I think, in those days."

"And then my father…I think about 1956 or 1957 or thereabouts we got a television set. I know there was a lot of snow on it. You gave it a bang. The snow went away. You know. That type of thing."

"And I know we had a telephone. And the telephone was not for phoning your pals. The telephone was for emergencies. Fire, ambulance, police. That was it. There was no, like today, casual chit chat over the line and all that sort of stuff."

Peter McNaughton, born 1944, brought up in Clapham, Glasgow and Comrie

"My Dad brought back a wind-up gramophone from WW2. The irony is he bought it in Camden, New Jersey, which is about 10 or 12 miles away from where I'm sitting right now. The Victrola Factory is there. The building survived but the factory is long gone. They preserved the building. In WW2 he certainly sailed into Philadelphia and he bought records and stuff there and so the irony is I'm back where that gramophone came from."

Yeah, that was one of the things we did. We'd wind up the gramophone and play Glen Miller and Artie Shaw and some classical and it was interesting. I wish I had that gramophone today."

Murdo Morrison, born 1950, brought in up Scotstoun and Drumchapel

"Well we bought stuff on HP like the television. Everybody had to get a television and doing the likes of that and washing machines/fridges. Because I am of the opinion, come the '60s I'd say the U.K., not just Glasgow started to get a wee bit disposable income. And were able to buy these things and foreign holidays and a car. I mind my older sister, her husband, he had a wee mini, they were just wee boxes on wheels, just a tin box. But it was transportation, getting you from A to B. I would say everybody did the H.P."

Alf Duffy, born 1940, brought up in the Gorbals and Pollok

"My Father purchased an old Vauxhall car and we drove to Callander sometimes to visit old friends of his. I often sat on my mother's knee during these trips. Callander was about 30/35 miles away. This car was of an age that it had a temperature gauge on the bonnet. I can remember my father in a rage running out to the gauge and taking it off whereupon he got scalded in a rush of rust red water and boy did I laugh. That laughter was of very short duration as my dad had a pretty short fuse!"

Colin Stevenson, born 1944, brought up Hillhead and Jordanhill, Glasgow

"I was not so much aware of happenings during the War apart from the latter stages D-Day onwards. From around 1943 when I started school I started to listen to the news with my Mother and Father. The War completely dominated the News to such an extent that, at the end of the War, I asked my Father if that meant there would be no more news."

"Following the War, a series of glossy magazines, most with War pictures relating to various actions, were published many of which I read. They also contained first and accounts by the participants. I also joined Partick Library in 1946 and have read much about the War ever since and still take an interest in TV shows or Films about the War."

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

"This period took in the death of King George 6th and India's independence. I can remember listening reverently to the King's speech on the radio on Christmas day. I can also remember Princess Elizabeth visiting Glasgow and my father giving me a little Lion Rampant flag to shake at her car. At her Coronation we all got a tin of sweets to commemorate the occasion."

Colin Stevenson, born 1944, brought up Hillhead and Jordanhill, Glasgow

"In those days there were a lot of small shops. In Drumchapel we had a row of shops not far away, certainly within walking distance. We had an R.S. McColl, I don't know if they exist anymore; kind of like combined newsagents/sweetie shop/tobacconist. We had bakeries. We had small grocery stores. And then later on in the '60s they built a shopping mall in Drumchapel. But yeah, you had stores close by, even in Scotstoun. The thing I miss which is long gone now, is the old-fashioned sweetie stores. You know, the candy stores, where you would go in and they would have these big jars and you would ask for a quarter pound of something and they'd take a little paper bag and they'd scoop it in, weigh it and then they'd twirl the bag so it had a couple of ears and hand it to you."

"A lot of stuff came in bulk in those days, even into the late '50s and '60s. Like up in Anniesland there were a whole bunch of shops. My Grandparents lived in Anniesland and so we'd often visit theirs especially in the summer when school was out and they had greengrocers and when you went in, in those days, when you wanted potatoes, they were in a big bin and they would weigh them out and tip them into your message bag. If you needed cheese it came in rounds. Those people had it down to a fine art, they could guestimate what a half pound of cheese was just by eye. And they had these cheese cutters like two handles with wire and they'd weigh it and they'd wrap it."

"Glasgow stayed basically like the '40s until well into the 1960s and it was only in the 1960s that things started to change. When you started to get supermarkets and pre-packaged food. In the old days you'd go down to the butchers and there would be sawdust on the floor and you would ask for sausages and they'd do their own butchering in the back, you know, it was that kind of world."

"The one thing I do want to talk about is the wonderful ice cream and fish and chip shops that we used to have. In Anniesland near the canal was an Italian owned Ice cream shop called Valenti's. And they made their own ice cream and the other place that made their ice cream was The Milk Marketing Board, they had such fantastic ice cream. But Valenti's you would go in there and they'd have things like they called them oysters and they had nougats, wafers, ninety-nines with a Cadbury's flake and raspberry syrup."

Murdo Morrison, born 1950, brought in up Scotstoun and Drumchapel

"I remember as a wee boy playing outside the Steamie. And I remember my Mother would be in one stall and my Granny would be in the other doing the washing. And they had what they called big clothes horses where you hung the clothes to dry. I remember all that in the Steamie."

"You'd see women either with their washing in the pram or else they had big bundles on their back walking to and from the Steamie. Where we were the Steamie was about half a mile away."

Alf Duffy, born 1940, brought up in the Gorbals and Pollok

"We had a television. I think we must've got it after the Coronation. I can remember a black and white television and washing machines. I think we got a single one or a twin tub and of course because there was so many of us. I think my Mother had one. I can remember I had a twin tub too when I came here (Fife) at first. I can't remember my Mother having a fridge."

Marion Penny, born 1940, brought up in Townhead and Ruchazie

"We didn't get a television until I was about twelve in the late '40s. We didn't get a television for a long time. My Father was very slow to accept it. He was very concerned about putting all that money out and having it break down. And then they got into this thing where you rented them. You would rent your TV. And if it broke down you could take it back. I remember it was the day that King George died. I remember looking in a store window in Dumbarton and it showed some of his funeral, we didn't have a TV. then. Definitely not coloured, for a long time after that."

Rene Walters (nee Catherine McMenamin), born 1938, brought up in Dumbarton

"I do remember people had a bit more money, because there was nothing to spend it on. You needed coupons for furniture. You needed coupons for clothing. Coupons for food. So people had a bit more money. Not because they were earning more, but because they couldn't spend it then."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up Old Kilpatrick

"I remember the radio being on then (when they moved to a place on their own) because my Mum used to turn it up so that she wouldn't be late for her work and if it wasn't transmitting and she would turn it up full volume. And when it did start to transmit there was this piercing noise coming through and that was time to get up for her work. But before that I wasn't aware of a radio."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"Obviously, a car and a television. The Coronation of 1953 there was a neighbour who had got a T.V. in. And there was a big house gathering and that's when I said we went out to play cricket because we got fed up watching the television."

"There were things like Kenwood Mixers. My Mother always had a washing machine it was a Thor, it was a top-loader, not a twin tub. It did the full thing. Gas cookers were there. I remember we had a wash-house, a toilet and a maid's room. And that was knocked out to extend it and make it a kitchen. And then we had a breakfast room. We got a Rayburn, the Scot's equivalent of an Aga, and after we got that, the breakfasts were bacon and egg most mornings rather than the porridge."

"The house that we had, had bars on the windows at the back and I remember my Father sawing these off. It had been a blind organist that had had the house before and there was blood red walls and the dark wood my Father stripped down and it was back to the light wood."

Kenneth MacAldowie, born 1944, brought up in Aberdeen and Glasgow

"I suppose it must have been because we didn't have to use clothing coupons to buy a new dress. And a time when I got a suit, a skirt and a jacket and a great school friend got the same one, exactly the same. I still remember that."

"I can remember my Father getting a car as he'd given up his car during the war and that was nice. And as I said, buying a big expensive house rather than living in a rented tenement flat."

Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

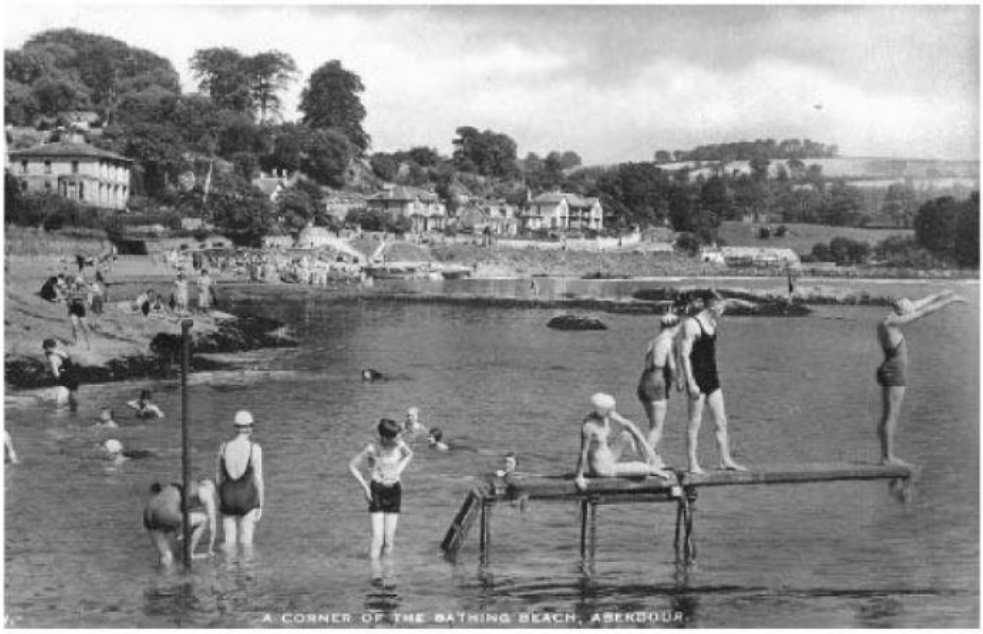
Chapter Sixteen

Leisure and Youth Culture

Holidays

People did go on domestic breaks during the war but not in substantial numbers. Instead, many towns organised ‘stay at home’ holidays, and organised a series of events for residents, such as gymkhanas, sports events, fancy dress parades, and bathing beauty competitions. Travel was difficult as many of the seaside towns in the East and West of Scotland were used for defence purposes (US anti-submarine bases were stationed at Dunoon and Lochgoilhead), and the Clyde steam boats or ‘steamers’ were requisitioned by the forces. It was also difficult to find boarding houses and hotels to stay in elsewhere, as many of them were being used to house military personnel. This was the case until the end of the war but holidays and day trips to the Clyde Coast and resorts like Dunoon and Rothesay became popular again after the war. The east coast resorts,

including Arbroath, experienced a boom in the summer of 1945, and resorts further north, such as Buckie and Macduff on the Moray Firth, got more visitors than ever before, with some travelling from England.



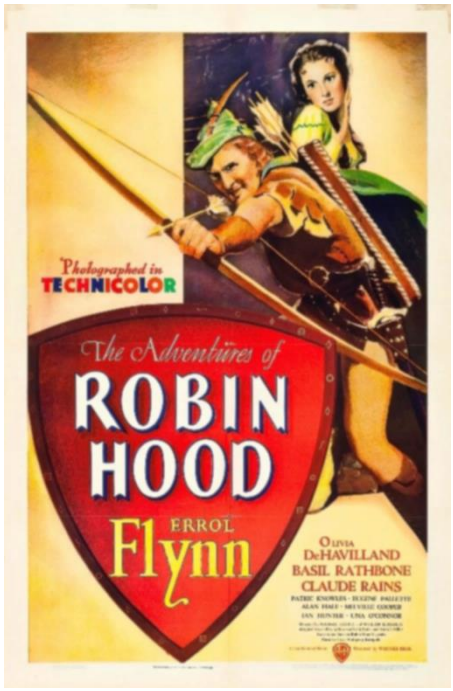
At the start of the 1945 Glasgow Fair, 257 trains left the city for a range of destinations within Scotland. Foreign travel was still relatively rare as the immediate post-war situation was prohibitive, but Scots were able to return to their favourite English resorts, despite travel and accommodation costs being more expensive. By now, eighty per cent of workers in the UK had at least one paid week of holiday per year, and the number of holidays allocated to workers increased a little further at the start of the 1950s. As that decade went on, more people travelled south to holiday in resorts, such as Blackpool and Scarborough, which offered more varied forms of entertainment and variety theatre. Indeed, both of those resorts came to celebrate Glasgow Fair weeks – naming those holidays 'Scots' Week', as so many Glaswegians visited the towns then.

Our respondents have described their travel experiences during the late 1940s and the 1950s. These included a broad range of destinations within Scotland; we have heard lots of stories of trips 'Doon the Watter', day trips and holidays to places like Rothesay and Dunoon, travelled to on steamer boats. Others took bus tours to places like Balloch, the Kyles of Bute, Ardlui, and Ayrshire. Others went further afield, to places like Arbroath, Stonehaven, Fraserburgh, Macduff, Buckie, Nairn, Fife and Portobello. Some stayed with family, some spent summers in family-owned or rented accommodation, such as houses and caravans. We heard of a couple of families spending their holidays in cottages on Arran, and one family travelling

to stay in converted railway carriages outside Irvine. This is only a snapshot of the many destinations that our respondents visited during the late 1940s and 1950s. A few of our respondents were fortunate enough to go abroad during the 1950s, to places such as Portugal, Austria, and Italy. Others travelled with schools to Paris and to Switzerland. Scout trips were taken, and in one case they went to Norway. Another respondent travelled to Belgium, Dublin, and other destinations, as his father worked on the railways and the family got free rail travel. In general, though, most people did not start going abroad until the 1960s.

The Wireless

The wireless had been a major source of entertainment and information during the war years and this continued into the 1950s, when ownership and access to domestic electricity increased. Radio programmes remembered by our respondents include: 'The McFlannels', a very popular Scottish programme (1939- 1953/54) about a working-class Scottish family and their contemporaries - the posh McVelvets and McSilks, and the lower middle-class Corduroys and Canvases, and so on. The McFlannels spent the war years as the 'McFlannels at War', with story lines featuring rationing, blackouts and air-wardens. People also recalled: 'The Man in Black: Dick Barton Special Agent', a James Bond type of show; 'Life with the Lyons'; 'Tammy Troot' from the Lavinia Derwent books and read by Willie Joss on Children's Hour, which was on between 5pm and 6pm each evening; and



'Journey into Space'. They also listened to sporting events, including boxing and football, amongst others.

The BBC had produced radio programmes specifically for women since the 1920s, these were promoted to housewives, mothers, and daughters, and included domestic advice and tips, but they also included programmes that interested women in the world around them. Direction shifted slightly during WWII and a range of talks and magazine programmes were introduced that were aimed not only at women and girls in the home, but also those working in the factory and in the forces. The intention, here, was to provide news and information, as before, but also to maintain women's and girls' morale.

<u>Cinema, Theatre, and Dance Halls,</u>

Cinemas continued in popularity during the 1950s, despite increased television ownership in the later years of that decade. Televisions were small, and the choice of programmes was limited, whereas cinemas, or 'picture palaces', were often seen as glamorous places (the odd 'fleapit' notwithstanding), where a modicum of escapism from austere times was possible for a few hours and for a small amount of money, or a jeely jar. Our respondents frequently went to the cinema, or the 'pictures,' as children and young adults during the 1940s and 1950s, and always talked about those outings with enthusiasm. They have told us about 'kid's clubs', and rolling in the aisle with laughter, and in one case about sneaking in without paying. Popular movie genres included westerns, spy films, and comedies. 'Robin Hood', starring Errol Flynn and Olivia de Havilland, was a favourite for many children, as was 'Tom Sawyer'.

The 1950s saw the last great days of variety theatre in Glasgow and surrounding area. There had been a great tradition of variety theatre performance in the Clyde's coastal resorts, as well as in the city. Television and the decline of domestic resorts (which materialised when Scots discovered cheap flights and 'all inclusive' holidays abroad), meant that a lot of theatres closed in the 1960s. Some music hall performers, like Stanley Baxter, Una McLean, Rikki Fulton, and Jack Milroy, went on to gain further fame in television. Additionally, going to the theatre was expensive, and not all of our respondents were able to go there; though a number went to watch pantomimes at Christmas. A couple of our respondents participated in singing and dancing performances at Glasgow theatres during this time.

One of our respondents described dance halls as 'all the rage', and probably where most people met their friends or sweethearts. He and another respondent remember tennis dances in areas like the West End of Glasgow. He mentioned the famous Locarno in Sauchiehall Street, as does another respondent, who also remembers going to Glasgow from Clydebank to visit the Barrowland Ballroom, the Majestic or 'Magic Stick', F & Fs in Partick, and the Denniston Palais where they would do the Palais Glide, made famous in the Matt McGinn song 'The Wee Kirkcudbright Centipede.' He also spoke about the number of good dancers there were, and the importance of dressing up for the occasion.

Other popular leisure activities

Ice rinks like the ones in Crossmyloof and Paisley, were popular with the young, especially on Saturday mornings. Rinks rented out skating boots, and luckier skaters could buy a pair at Lumley's and other stores in Glasgow. A couple of respondents took part in sports activities, such as football, rugby, and cricket, both at school and in local parks. Two respondents have spoken of playing the bagpipes, a passion which continued beyond their school years. Another couple have talked about the importance, during this era, of visits to swimming pools, or swimming baths as they were known.

Parks in Glasgow contained a number of activities for children and adults. We have testimony about trips with Sunday schools from the Gorbals in the 1940s, on horse-drawn, ribbon-bedecked lorries, to one of the many Glasgow parks. The kids would get a packed lunch and have races in the park. One respondent reported that the trip felt much, much, longer than it actually was.

We heard from another respondent about attending the shows on Glasgow Green, the oldest public park in Britain, during the 1950s. She told us that there were many things to see and do for children and adults, including a mini circus, boxing bouts, and dancing girls. She also remembered getting three pence back on a bottle of juice to use for her entrance money to the shows.

A wide variety of bands played during the 1950s at bandstands like the ones in Queens Park, in the city's Southside, and at Kelvingrove in Glasgow's West End. Music genres included rock, skiffle and Scottish country dance bands.

Youth Culture

By the mid-1950s, the standard of living for most of the population was higher than it had been at any time in memory. Post-war consumer culture now included not simply the canned food and cheap clothing but also household appliances and automobiles. Average weekly earnings rose 50% between 1950 and 1955, during which the cost of living rose by 30%. Full employment was the norm, so the rise in living standards was not limited to certain industries or certain regions. Until 1970, the level of unemployment rarely rose above 2%. Harold MacMillan told an audience in 1957 that: 'Most of our people have never had it so good'.

‘Post-war Fashions’, by Joyce Kelly, Artist in Residence, Communities Past & Futures Society

The direct implications of this statement are clear, from an economic perspective. Britain was a nation finally shaking off the doldrums of post-war austerity, with rationing (abolished in full by 1954) becoming a rapidly fading notion with staple food now cheaply available, the luxuries and conveniences we now consider to be the central appeal of modern suburban life were becoming widespread. The shift towards increasing leisure time, particularly with regards to women, was significant. Fashion once more became important, though many women still made their own clothes mass-produced clothing became readily accessible and affordable; shopping outings with friends was popular. The burden of domestic drudgery was lifted by labour-saving devices, such as automatic washing machines (introduced to Europe in 1951) and electric steam irons (1952), was symptomatic of an increasingly affluent middle class. However, popular culture both reflected and challenged MacMillan's statement.

Radio had been crucial in keeping up morale during WWII, but in the 1950s this was eclipsed by television – owned by 5 million families in 1956. The BBC was committed to a particular kind of moral and educational programming in both its radio and TV broadcasts. Millions tuned in to watch the coronation of Elizabeth II, giving the event a unique sense of immediacy. Millions also tuned in to watch sporting events such as rugby, football and tennis – the downside of this was that spectators became armchair fans, and the number of members attending sports clubs declined precipitously during the late 1950s and 1960s. Similarly, the popularisation of TV drew audiences away from the cinema, leading to a decline in cinema attendances.

In literature and drama there was an outburst of the 'angry young man', filled with often brutal portrayals of post–imperial Britain. At this point, there seems to have been two warring perceptions of both Britain and Scotland: firstly, that they were changing beyond all recognition; secondly, that they weren't changing at all, but were instead mired in their own past and were therefore class-bound, rigid, and industrially backward – without any outlet for the creative and chaotic impulses of its young men and women.

By the 1950s, our wartime children had become teenagers and young adults. Musically, swing was still popular, and youngsters loved watching and listening to big band musicians at dance halls and ballroom such as Majestic, Astoria, the Locarno, Dennistoun Palais, and the Barrowlands, all of which had resident orchestras. Bill Fanning and his orchestra, pictured, were popular in Glasgow clubs in the 1950s and into the 1960s, including the Queen Mary Jazz Club, in West Nile Street.

However, many young people, of all classes, began to chafe against the trappings of the new post-rationing affluence that appeared to characterise all levels of the economy: abundance fuelled discontent. That was then articulated in a youth culture that appeared to reject all restraint in behaviour, dress and entertainment. Historians debate when exactly a socially distinct youth culture emerged; some argue that the teenager came into being in the 1950s. Created through a combination of the post-war baby-boom and the end to both rationing and 'utility lifestyle',

teenagers had spending power, their own ideas, and a sense of optimism and determination that their parents had been denied. In any event, the Scottish music scene became very eclectic, with big band swing, folk music, jazz, blues, skiffle, and rock 'n' roll, all vying for supremacy.

The folk-song revival of the 1950s and early 1960s brought to Glasgow entertainers like the Ian Campbell Folk Group, The Clutha, and Matt McGinn. These were especially popular amongst young people who were politically aware. Meanwhile, Skiffle, which originated in the United States, became extremely popular over here in the 1950s, Lonnie Donegan led the Skiffle boom in the UK, where it was also played by The Vipers Skiffle Group, Ken Colyer, and Chas McDevitt. Skiffle was a major part of the early careers of some musicians who later became prominent jazz, pop, blues, folk, and rock'n'roll performers, including Cliff Richard, Tommy Steele, Adam Faith and Billy Fury, who later put British rock 'n' roll on the map.

Suddenly, youth music had gotten fast. Music had become sexy. Rock & Roll had been loitering on the fringes since the late 1940s, and now came to the fore. It has been argued that the onset of American popular culture on British youth was very difficult for the mainstream establishment culture to absorb. Nevertheless, rock 'n' roll was here. Its immediate lay in the rhythm and blues, with either Boogie-woogie and gospel, or country music. It was influenced by jazz, blues, gospel, country, and folk. Leading American entertainers included Bill Haley and the Comets, Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, Fats Domino, Little Richard, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Gene Vincent. Of course, there was also Elvis, the hip-shuggling dynamo who became the undisputed King of rock ‘n’ roll. And yet, during this same period, accordionist Jimmy Shand scored a hit with country dance classic, ‘Blue Bell Polka’, the same year as Bill Haley’s ‘Rock Around The Clock’, and a kilted teenager from Leith, called Jackie Dennis, made it to American TV with songs such as ‘La Dee Dah’ and ‘Purple People Eater’. Notably, Scotland's biggest musical hit of the era was ‘Hoots Mon’, an instrumental featuring ‘mock Jock’ interjection by Lord Rockingham's XI; this stuck at Number 1 for three weeks in 1958.

There is no denying that Scotland’s leisure and music scenes were incredibly diverse in the wake of WWII, with Scottish youngsters leading the vanguard to change. Whether or not those changes were for better or worse is for you to decide!

Childhood Memories

"Leisure and Cultural Activities"

"My Granny was one of them (homeless during the war) and she had about four of a family still staying with her. They were quickly rehoused in Old Kilpatrick. I do remember somebody taking me up to Clydebank. And I remember a tenement had been sliced down by the bomb and I thought it was very funny because there was a toilet, a lavatory pan, just at the edge where the bomb had split the building."

"Our house had blast damage but we were able to go back to it after a couple of months. I remember there was a big hole in one of the internal walls and this is what it was. It was blast damage."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up Old Kilpatrick

"Well, it had two bedrooms one living room and one bath. It was quite a good size bathroom back then. And we kept the coal in a cupboard. The coal man would come with a coal bag on his back. We also had a coal bunker outside. We had no fridge until I was almost twelve. We got a very small refrigerator. I shared the room with two sisters. And we had a sitting room and my parents would sleep on a pull-out couch. Settee. It was a nice house. I was very happy there. And you know it had a nice yard. The people upstairs had the side yard."

Rene Walters (nee Catherine McMenamin), born 1938, brought up in Dumbarton

"The Aberdeen holidays was either out Deeside, that way. When we moved to Glasgow we went back to Aberdeen once, and my parents said they were never going back for holidays because they had to spend their time visiting people and didn't really get a break."

"My Mother had to go in for a fairly serious operation that was 1951/52 and my Father took my brother and I doon the watter and away days here and there because my Mother wasn't fit."

"After that we went to Aberdour to a hotel on the Fife coast and we did that for two years. In '55 we went to Stonehaven and it was a wonderful summer of weather, I remember that but that was Glasgow Fair and it was the last time my Father ever took holidays in Glasgow Fair because he met a whole lot of people. In those days, a lot of Glaswegian people went to the North East on holiday and Stonehaven also had an open tennis tournament so there would be people up there. The other thing I remember up there was the open-air swimming pool and it's one of the last three still open in Scotland. 56/59 we went to Rockcliffe on the Solway and we'd go the first fortnight in July."

"In 1960 I went with the school to Brittany. And then my parents were in the Lake District and I got off the train at Carlisle and joined them. The last family holiday I went to was to the Cotswolds to Moreton on the Marsh in 1961."

Kenneth MacAldowie, born 1944, brought up in Aberdeen and Glasgow

"My Dad on a Saturday morning would take me down to Buchanan Street Bus Station. And they used to have coach tours and there were these sandwich boards all along the bus station area for day trips and you could go to the Trossachs, the Kyles of Bute, Balloch, Ardlui. And you could go down and get on the Waverley the paddle-steamer, Helensburgh, Ayr, Ardrossan. You could go all over the place on these coaches and he never knew where we were going. We got to Buchanan Street and he used to call me Champ and he'd say, 'Where do you want to go to Champ?' We had lovely days. I remember going to somewhere like Helensburgh and the weather was somewhat inclement but we'd always manage a game of pitch putt by the seafront, him and I in his trilby, he wore a trilby hat all the time. And I always remember the rain pouring off his trilby hat as he leaned forward to putt his shot on the course. We didn't mind about the weather. We then had lunch in a café on the seafront and it would be egg and chips. And then eventually we'd meet up with the coach and get back home for about six or seven o'clock in the evening."

Ian Coombe, born 1942, brought up Gosport, then Glasgow

"I first went abroad probably when I was about 18. I had been working in Butlins Holiday Camp for six weeks in between my fifth and sixth year at school. And when I was there, I met a Malayan girl who was studying Physiotherapy in Glasgow and I met some Finnish people and they invited my Malayan friend and I over to Finland for a holiday. So, the next year we flew out to Helsinki and we stayed for a couple of weeks that we met in Butlins and then we set off and we hitch-hiked up over the Arctic Circle. And then we hitch-hiked back down through Sweden then back to Glasgow. And the girl that we stayed with in Finland was called Tarja Halonen and she became the President of Finland. I met her when she worked as a cleaner in Butlins Holiday Camp in Minehead, and she ended up becoming the President of Finland. So that's my claim to fame."

"That was the first time I went on holiday under my own steam but when I was fourteen, we went on holiday to France with the school. We had a school trip to Paris. Yeah, that was the first time I went abroad…was a school trip to Paris. That was good fun. We went by train and over the ferry across The Channel. And then the train to Paris, And then we had…I'm trying to remember how long we had there, it was at least a week I would say. And we stayed in a... I think what was normally a sort of boarding school there. But of course, it closed for the summer. And that was very nice. We did all sorts of sight seeing all over Paris. We had taken a river cruise, we were up the Eiffel Tower, Sacre Coeur, Notre Dame. We had a reception in the Mayor or the equivalent of the Mayor in Paris. Gave us all a reception in the town hall. So yeah, it was great fun. I had a really nice time. It was really good, yeah. And it was a great opportunity you know to travel. I think it cost my mum and dad about fourteen pounds. I seem to remember that figure. So that was what they had to pay towards the trip. But it was a great experience and I think it did give me a kind of a travel bug. Because I spent most of my holidays after that hitchhiking around Europe. So, I think that trip to Paris and the Geography teacher we had gave me a travel bug. And I've still got it. Obviously (laughs)."

Marlene Barrie, born 1946, brought up in Scotstounhill and Blairdardie

"The apartment had a recess bed, two chairs, sink. You had to wash at the sink. We had like a little zinc bath that my Mother used to bath me in. When we first moved to that house, my Mother was delighted getting a room and kitchen. It was two nice big rooms and the hall had a bunker in so that was good and my Uncle helped us with the flitting. He had a coal lorry, not that there was much to take, a mattress, a couple of chairs, a sideboard, a table. How we had all that in one room…however, that was the stuff she got taken up. So, we decided I was to sleep in this recess bed in what was to be the kitchen. We had a big range. The next day I was itching. There was bugs, there was bed bugs. They live in the wall and infested our things, so it all had to get thrown out. So we didn't have a bed. So the sanitary men came and put paint on the walls, like green paint, inside this bed recess. I think it had something DDT in it or something like that and that cured that problem. But she had to get a bed. Somebody said you can have this, it was like an iron bedstead, like an old brass bed. It would cost a fortune now. So that was in the front room this great big bed and then she had to get a mattress. She went down to the Co-op in Bridge Street and saw she couldn't afford one. A man took pity on her and said 'look we've got one here but it's got a bit of oil on it so she got it for a cheap price."

"You know, I can remember washing my feet with my socks on to get them clean at the same time. That was in the room and kitchen.

"We had to use a potty, a chamber pot, and it got emptied in the morning. There were three families in the stairs and the people in the middle. My Mother reckoned the father had T.B. and she didn't want us using the toilet. She cleaned it and all that sort of thing. But she didn't want us using it."

Cecilia Murray, born 1942, brought up in Gorbals and Castlemilk

David Walker on the left with his Uncle Roland and cousin, Doon the Watter.
Courtesy of his daughter Alison Finlay

"There was two places that we went to. We went to Dunbar a lot on the east coast and we went to Prestwick. And I think I was taken to Aberdeen once and I was very young then. I don't remember if it was a bed and breakfast but our room was on the top storey, and the little bed that I had, the mattress made the most funny noise when you lay on it. And I'm pretty certain it was straw that was in it. It was some sort of rustley material that was in it. The one memory I have of the Aberdonian holiday, and not a good one I might add, was that my Mum and Dad took me to see a Norman Wisdom film and my Mother laughed so much that she started to cry and she took my Father's hankie to wipe her eyes. Forgetting that he had cleaned my feet at the beach and the hankie was full of sand. And she ended up in the Infirmary at Aberdeen because her eye was full of grit."

"The Dunbar holiday we went to Dunbar for years. Dunbar had an outdoor swimming pool which was actually filled at high tide by the sea. So not only did you have salt water but you had seaweed and crabs and various aquamarine animals that could join you on your swim."

"Prestwick, that was later on. There was a lovely outdoor pool at Prestwick but a modern pool properly cleaned and everything."

"So, these were the two places my parents took me and I don't think even when I left home, I think the furthest they ever went was the Isle of Man. Apart from my Father's time in the army. My Mum was never overseas. Never abroad."

"I started travelling when I was 16-17 whenever I had a job, I was desperate to see Europe and my very first holiday was L'Estartit on the Spanish coast. It was very near Lloret de Mar. I smoked then and I remember you were able to smoke on the plane with an ashtray in the seat handle. I went with a friend for a week and thought this was absolutely wonderful. There was certainly no factor 50 in those days, we bought the Spanish suntan lotion which was olive oil and vinegar mixed up in a bottle, so not only did you stink, but you burned to high heavens as well. Happy days indeed."

Heather Bovell, born 1948, brought up in Gilsochill, Maryhill

"Because my Father was in the railway, we got free passes. We went to Belgium once and I think I was nine or ten. And I think all they paid was the Channel fees for crossing from Dover to Ostend because it was still British Rail train ferries as well. We went to Dublin, Blackpool, all these places and it never cost anything for travel. My Father, he was still in the Army Reserves, I suppose they call it the Territorial Army now. And he used to take his holidays from work so that he could go to the annual T.A. camp. So, he'd get his holiday money from his work and give that to my Mum that was for our accommodation and spending money. Because when he was away with the Army for two weeks, he was getting Army pay and he was away with all his pals. And that's how we could do it, it didn't cost any money for transport. It was more than a lot of my peers did. We used to go to Millport, Rothesay and then on Sundays nearly everybody in our street in the summer holidays, it was Saltcoats we went to because everybody's father worked on the railway. So, everybody had a free pass."

Sandy Boyle, born 1948, brought up Maryhill

"We had a butt and ben, we didn't own it, we just rented it and I think it was in Largs way. I can only vaguely remember it. My Mum was down with us and Dad used to come down at the weekend after he closed the shop."

"The first proper holiday I was at Shawlands ,so I was more than eleven, and my Mum and Dad paid £30. An awful lot of money. And I went with the school to Paris for three weeks."

Philip Cohen, born 1937, brought up in the Gorbals and then Shawlands

"We're not as young as we were then, but still we did lots of things then. We started our travel probably and we spent our honeymoon in Djerba in Tunisia, a little island off the Tunisian coast. And the whole honeymoon for three weeks was seventy pounds, including the flights and that included the hotel and everything. For the two of us it was seventy pounds. Seventy pounds then was more than it was today, but it was still pretty reasonable."

"That would be in February 1965 and we were looking for some place to go to in February that would not be rainy and dark and so forth. So we were lucky it was possible to go there then. Places in North Africa and the Middle East are not as comfortable to visit now as they were then. So, we had opportunities to travel then that we took advantage of."

"Our family holidays I remember were in Carradale, down in Kintyre north of Campbeltown. And we went there for a few years and I have wonderful memories of family holidays there. We got the chance to go out one night on the herring boats. Charlie that we lived with had his own herring boat. And the boats went out in pairs for ring-netting. And one night my Father and I went out with him and we saw the herring being caught and then being brought in and you had breakfast in the morning on the ship, fresh herring, and it was a wonderful memory. We also went to Brodick in Arran".

"My first overseas holiday was with the boy scouts' troop and we went to Norway. The whole troop went to Norway. We took the train down to Newcastle and then we took the boat from Newcastle to Bergen and we travelled there by train to the middle of Norway to a little town called Litheall. And we camped with a troop from Oslo and so we met some Norwegian Scouts there and at the end of that we travelled into Oslo and we each were billeted with one of the Norwegian Scouts. And so we spent a few days with our hosts in Oslo so we could see a little bit of Oslo then. So that was my first overseas trip. So that probably gave a bit of a sense of wanting to do some travel. I think the next one was a school trip to Interlaken in Switzerland in 1955\56 somewhere around then. Train travel, across the Channel and then train from there into Switzerland and that was another overseas trip. But other than these they were all mostly in Scotland and holidays and things like that were in Scotland."

Hugh Livingston, born 1940, brought up in Hyndland and Fintry

"It was a house and they called them a garret, on the roof. It was a house like that. I don't remember how big it was. My older brother he stayed in it with my Mum and I and my brother Joseph. He was born in Rothesay in 1944, so it was obviously not a bad size."

"Right across from the house was a school that my brother went to. I was too young to go to school."

"I remember there was a wall in front of our house and I fell off this and broke my arm."

"I remember the Castle it wasn't far from us."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"We went to Portrush. We went to Scarborough. We went to Filey. We went to Jersey."

"My Dad's family I think originally were from Ireland. He knew Portrush, Carrick Fergus and the Giants Causeway. And he was quite anxious to take us there and that was when we went over the border to get the sweets. I remember a girl on the coach sitting on a pound of boiled ham she had in a parcel. At the border, the customs came in to see if you had anything to declare. And she was frightened they would take this boiled ham, so she sat on it."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"Coming from the middle of the city it was fantastic down there and where this place was you were about a mile from the beach at Irvine Bay. Where this hut of my uncle's was, was right at the very back of the facility. And over the fence you had cattle coming along, cows would come along to the back fence and feeding them with old bits of bread and stuff like that. That was the '40s."

"I remember as a teenager going to the Youth Hostels with people I worked beside and going cycling holidays. I mind doing that around Scotland to the Youth Hostels. And I mind one time a couple of us, we hitch-hiked around Scotland, again to the Youth Hostels."

"It wasn't until about 1960 with a bunch of guys, we went to Morecambe one year and another time we went to the Isle of Man. Which was the normal for the Glasgow Fair when everybody just left the city."

"Again, that was before people started to do foreign holidays. In the early '60s you had to be a member of an organisation. In 1961, me and my Mother flew to America where my older brother was staying and I went again a couple of years later with these charter flights."

Alf Duffy, born 1940, brought up in the Gorbals and Pollok

"Before the war and after the war we used to go to Kinghorn on holiday. I think we went once during the war and I remember the beach being covered in oil and you couldn't really play on the beach. But after the war we went back to going to Kinghorn. We'd go on the train and throw a penny over the Forth Road Bridge for luck. I remember there being a camp in Kinghorn for Polish soldiers. And there were a couple of camps in Old Kilpatrick of Polish soldiers."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up Old Kilpatrick

"The holidays would consist of going out to Stirling to my Aunties. We used to go to London as well and my Mother would come with us. Sometimes when I got a wee bit older I used to go myself in my teens when I was fifteen/sixteen. They would put me on the midnight train, it was a corridor train, a steam train and it took about fourteen hours to get to London believe it or not. Because I think it would stop for about an hour to let the ones that were in the sleepers to fall off to sleep and then it would start again plus they would do the same at, I think, it was Crewe to help them to waken up. It was some journey."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"Anstruther. We went to a caravan because you could keep your eye on the kids and it was a change of things when I look back on it now. Eventually we went to Ibiza. We've been to Spain and various places like that but mostly it was the caravan in Anstruther. And St Andrews was brilliant as well because we had the car by then. And we had a cousin in Tynemouth between Whitley Bay and North or South Shields and she had a lovely big house down there so we used to go down there and stay with her sometimes, so that was good, and I had quite a lot of relatives down Newcastle way. We squeezed in a lot of visits and we went to North Berwick, Primrose Valley, Spain, Greece. We've done alright."

Cabreg, born 1935, brought up in London Road, Glasgow, and Pollok

"My Father took my brother Alan and myself on Camping trips away up north to places like Gruinard Bay and Sutherland. My mother's father Duncan MacCallum was a native Gaelic speaker and the areas we visited contained a large amount of Gaelic speakers. Indeed, on one holiday in 1955 in Skye we visited friends of a friend of my father and two of the older folk present could not speak English at all. The people we knew in Gruinard Bay, their old mother had very, very limited English. It was not necessary in a largely Gaelic speaking community. Fast forward to 2020. All the areas in Argyll which were Gaelic speaking in my younger days are no longer so, they don't in many cases have any Scots people in them anymore. When a language is not spoken in the playground any more it will die, and that I am afraid to say is what is going to happen to Gaelic. It will be used as an academic language for reference purposes only."

"My pals in the local Scouts were adept at making "twist" bread over a fire on a green stick. We BB boys were just as good. We had graduated to sausage, bacon and eggs for our camps. We (BB) boys hiked all over the Trossachs area. One of our favourite areas was going over Ben Lomond and either down the lochside to Drymen and home or over to the Kinlochard road and to Aberfoyle on the bus. I have stood on the Aberfoyle bus soaked to the skin for the hour and a half it took to get home and a warm bath. The loveliest weekend was usually at the end of May and it was often sunny. There would be about twelve or fifteen of us older lads sleeping in three to a tent. I usually had a tent and stove to carry and my own cooking gear."

Colin Stevenson, born 1944, brought up Hillhead and Jordanhill, Glasgow

"We had good family holidays in Argyll at Benderloch and Kilchrenan. Here my brother Alan and I caught many a handful of trout. Probably there are none left now because of acid rain from extensive forestry. My Dad still took us to Callander and we fished the River Teith."

Colin Stevenson, born 1944, brought up Hillhead and Jordanhill, Glasgow

"Well, we went to a little village in Ayrshire called Dailly. And it was because my Grandfather had friends there. So somebody would rent out a room and we would go and stay in it. There was an ice cream shop there I can remember that because I don't know how they did it, but sometimes they burnt the ice cream. But it tasted burnt but we thought this was great. My Mother and Father, rather than get a bus or a train we would walk to Girvan which is about five miles away. And we would walk up what they say was the high road on the way in. And then come back on the other road coming back after playing all day on the beach."

Marion Penny, born 1940, brought up in Townhead and Ruchazie

Christine McIntosh, aged 3, with her parents Daniel Findlay and Margaret Findlay (no relation to Margaret Findlay, ambulance driver). Lochranza Arran, 1948

"I was a member of a swimming club in Glasgow and I was really fond of swimming. We camped a lot with my father who had been in The Scouts. It was great and I took my own family away often in a tent. The girls played ropes in the street and, if we were favoured, we were allowed to "Caw" the long rope so everyone got a turn. We were out of doors nearly all the time unlike today where there are computers and video games. We really were pretty healthy. A lot of the boys were in The Cub Scouts and later The Scouts. Some of us others were in the Boys Brigade a more church orientated youth movement. I have never been a church member but our local company had a pipe band and that was for me...I suppose that we were a bit immature for our years, my parents had known the hungry thirties and did not wish to harden us up at all I think."

Colin Stevenson, born 1944, brought up Hillhead and Jordanhill, Glasgow

Margaret Findlay, ambulance driver (no relation to any respondent) during blackouts in Glasgow WWII. Courtesy of Carol Findlay.

"I know that I had a very privileged childhood because of my parents' liking for escaping the city in the summer. In fact, I think we were climbing Goatfell in Arran when war broke out, when war was declared. So we all had eight weeks off school until I was fourteen. I regarded it as my second home. We started going abroad when I was fourteen and then we'd only take the Brodick house in August. And ended up going there until I was married. And my husband joined us for the last of such holidays."

"Well, we first had a middle of a week in Paris. That was the first time. Because my mother thought I wasn't doing well enough in French and she thought I should hear some real French being spoken."

"And after that we went to Austria and Italy."

"We very privileged because it wasn't as popular as it is now. I know now that I had a lot of things that other people didn't get. It was great."

Christine McIntosh, born 1945, brought up Hyndland, Broomhill and Arran

"We never went on any holiday with my Mother. She couldn't afford a holiday. But once I had to go with my Granny's side. A couple of Aunties were going to Ardrossan and said I could go. And I went there and there was a lot of younger kids. I was a very quiet kind of kid you know and coming from a small family, there was all these kids jumping about and all that. My main memory was sitting on a bench at the sea front writing postcards to everybody on my holidays. I don't remember much about it."

Cecilia Murray, born 1942, brought up in Gorbals and Castlemilk

"It had to be during the war, I think. We took the train up to London. And there were a lot of soldiers on the train and they were sitting on the floors and it was packed. And my Father he got a little anxious because one of the soldiers was being very friendly to me and hugging me. And Dad didn't like that. I remember him making us move. He was overprotective."

Rene Walters (nee Catherine McMenamin), born 1938, brought up in Dumbarton

"I remember going on holiday. My Mum and my Aunt took us to Dunoon a lot. I don't know where we stayed, it was in a boarding house. I have photographs because the photographers used to line the streets along the prom and take your photo, so I've got a couple of them. We went regularly to Dunoon."

M. McKinnon, born 1937, brought up Govanhill and Southside

Graeme St Clair on holiday at Rothesay

"We went abroad very quickly. I remember we went to Portugal, the first country I went to with my parents. We used to go in Scotland up to Nairn or somewhere my Father could swing a golf club. We went to France, we went to Portugal, abroad. It was exciting to go abroad."

"After I left school before I went to university, I went to Switzerland for three months in the summer. An international holiday course with all sorts of kids from different countries. That was partly because the Head Teacher of Craigholme School had a friend who ran a posh school in Switzerland."

Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

"When it came to holidays, I suppose I was really lucky. The earliest one I can remember was going to Dublin with my Mum and Dad, when I was seven or maybe eight. And sailing from the Broomielaw to Ireland. And we spent two weeks there. My Mother by that time was a secretary with the S.B.A. and at that time this was the Scottish Bookmakers Protection Association. It sounds a bit like the Mafia but it was actually… the bookies at that couldn't operate betting shops, that was illegal, and they all operated on courses, dog courses and race courses. So my Mother was the secretary of this association and the trip to Ireland was partly because of that. Because I can remember going on car journeys to see horses training in Ireland which was really quite interesting as well because the Irish horses were and I suppose are, still the best in the world."

"I can remember we stayed in Bray which was the holiday resort for Dublin and I can remember the old lady…it would have been a guest house rather than a hotel. And I always got milk and biscuits at night before going to bed. And she would look after me when my Mum and Dad went out."

"I used to go up to Fraserburgh with my Uncle Alec and Auntie Mary. I loved Fraserburgh as well. It was my Uncle's family up there. I met a lot of interesting people up there. One of them had been quite a senior officer in the Gordon Highlanders who had been captured by the Japanese and had spent many years in a prisoner of war camp."

"Knightswood Juveniles was a particularly good young (pipe) band in those years and we won The World Championship. And as a result, we went to play all over Holland. We visited Gouda and various places. Played in big hotels. We lived in a hotel in a seaside resort called Noordwiyke ann Zee which was Nordvike by the sea. It was quite basic. It was bunk beds, quite rough, but it was good fun. That's how I got my first foreign holiday."

Graeme St Clair, born 1947, brought up in Knightswood and Springburn

Jim Smart aged 16.

"I saw my first film, Bambi, with my Mother at the only cinema in Milngavie… The radio was much used back then, one program in particular cleared the streets briefly every night around 6.30pm. This was 'Dick Barton (Special Agent) and for 15 minutes every night there would be no kids out playing. This program also aired an omnibus edition 1 hour long on Saturday morning, in case you missed any episodes during the week. We also listened to 'Children's Hour' 'The McFlannels' and my Father was very keen on Scottish Dance Music, played every Saturday evening, with a different band every week."

Jim Smart, born 1938, brought up in Glasgow and Milngavie

"All my mother's family were fairly long lived, except, unfortunately, my much-loved Uncle Colin, who died when I was twelve. He used to come on a Saturday morning and take my brother and myself out to a museum, or down to the Clyde quays to watch the ships sailing down. Kids today would be a long time waiting just to see one. A favourite of mine was a visit to one of the big railway stations in Glasgow of which there were four (today two).When you went in there was always the noise of the engines blowing off steam. We spent ages there. My uncle Colin was a pretty good amateur artist and he was always trying to drag me away from the guns, swords, and armour up to see the Rembrandt pictures, I think there are three and perhaps the most impressive "Christ of St John on the Cross" by Salvador Dali. Myself, I could not draw my breath, but I knew real talent when I saw it. You can see that all of us young folk had endless things to do. Shortly as I became older there would be even more."

Colin Stevenson, born 1944, brought up Hillhead and Jordanhill, Glasgow

"A holiday was a bit of a luxury in those days. My Dad worked for an English-owned company so we didn't get our holidays at the Glasgow Fair. We got ours in the first two weeks in August. So, we were a little bit unusual in that regard. Some years we couldn't afford a holiday, most years we could, and the place we went to most often was Arbroath, and I loved the place. It was just a marvellous place for kids to go on vacation and we looked forward to it every year. One of the big features about Arbroath was Kerr's Miniature Railway which is still running. I follow them on Facebook and I just found out that after many years, they have finally decided that they have to close down. They'd been there since the '30s and it's a very sad thing but they just don't have the rider-ship anymore. Times have changed. It's amazing they kept it going as long as they did".

Murdo Morrison, born 1950, brought in up Scotstoun and Drumchapel

Chapter Seventeen

What Became of our Respondents?

"I started off as a commis chef in the 101 Restaurant in Hope Street Glasgow. My Mother had to get a provident cheque. There were only certain shops that accepted them and the man used to come every week to take the money. You paid the man every week. It was like a loan, a cheque. Because nobody had bank accounts or bank books or any money to put in the banks. So she took me down to a shop called Dallas's in the Cowcaddens to get my chef's clothing. That's my wee white jacket, my aprons and my checks and my chef's hats. You had to buy your own what they call PPE nowadays, industrial clothing. You had to buy all that in those days. Nowadays they get it all given. it's all part of the job. I was stuck in there for about six months. And my Uncle spoke for me and I got a job in Weir's. Just going messages to the canteen and taking prints up to the drawing room to get photocopied and making the tea and all that. And then when I was 16 I started my apprenticeship as an apprentice fitter. Then I went back to cooking and that's what I've been doing ever since."

"Then I joined the Merchant Navy and I had 35 years at sea and that was an eye opener. I never dreamed in a million years when I was a wee boy from Glasgow with scuff marks on the back of my legs, from where my wellies used to rub, that I'd be lying on a beach in Bermuda, or anywhere else for that matter. I was round the world umpteen times. I wish I could do it all again and do it better."

Sandy Boyle, born 1948, brought up Maryhill

"Well, I finished up as a P.A. Secretary in local government. I had been in other jobs before that, but I enjoyed what I was doing. I had aspirations of being a nurse, but my Mum really talked me out of it. She didn't think I'd make a good nurse."

Grace Wilson Blair, born 1935, brought up in Shotts

"I went to Rutland Road in Govan. Got interviewed by a fellow called Mac. And he was the head of the hire purchase department. The first day I went there, the following Monday, I think it was, I went down to the workshop at lunchtime to see Ellis who was repairing T.V.s and said 'Ellis, I'll never be able to thank you enough'. I just fell in love with it and for forty years I just stayed in what I suppose is Consumer Credit. Litigation, Data Protection Officer for the company."

Philip Cohen, born 1937, brought up in the Gorbals and then Shawlands

"Going to sea and going to join that big ship at the tail of the bank. Huge big ship and twelve of us, twelve boys into this little launch at Gourock and steaming out towards this huge, big ship. I was in awe. To me it was a 25,000-tonne liner. Up the gangway, up to the deck and the Bosun said 'Right who knows their international code?' Me! 'Who knows their morse code?' Me! Then, 'Who knows their signals?' Me! So I was the first one to get picked to go as a bridge boy. I didn't know what a bridge boy was. It sounded good and they wanted three. I can't remember the other two boys. But we all slept in the same cabin and what have you. That to me was my greatest memory."

"It was just something I wanted to do, I loved it, I really did. I liked my time. I was eight years at sea, and I loved every moment of it. I loved going away and then there was no communication, so people didn't know when you were getting back. Because I wasn't a good letter writer. But then none of us were and when you get home (knocks on table), 'Oh, oh, you're home. Oh, when're ye going back?' (laughs). You know that was the sort of thing. And when you were going away, 'Oh, cheerio', that was it, no hugging, loving, cuddly kisses, no tears, no farewells."

George Burns, born 1926, brought up in Bridgeton then Kinning Park

"When I left school, I applied to study Radiography. So, I did that and I qualified as a Radiographer. And that then would give me all the opportunities I wanted, you know, I could work in Canada. My qualifications were recognised all over the world really. So, there was nothing to stop me going wherever I wanted. It was a fairly decent job which I enjoyed."

"I left Scotland with a five-year plan. I was going to work in Toronto for six months. I was going to work in Vancouver for six months. I was going to work in San Francisco for six months. I was going to work in Australia for six months. I was going to work in New Zealand for six months. Then I was going to come back up from the South of India and take a trip back up through India and then back to Glasgow five years later. And that was my plan when I left home. And then I got stuck in Toronto for four years. I did travel all over Canada and America, but I worked in Toronto for four years."

"I was 26/27 and I thought - I have to decide where I'm going to live. And in the end, I decided to come back to Scotland. I was an only child; my parents were getting older. I didn't fancy being in Canada and having that long distance worrying about them and all that. So I decided to come back to Glasgow."

"I was only going to come back for three months, and I was going to go to South Africa for a year or so before I finally came back to settle in Glasgow. So, I came back and went back to the Southern General to wish them all a Merry Christmas or Happy New Year or something. And they said !"Oh, do you want a job?" and I said I'm only back for three months for a holiday and then I might want a job after that. "You're here for three months, please come and work for us we're short staffed." I said okay I'll work for you for three months. So, I worked there for three months. But then I got a job with 'NoOnCall', and I decided to stay there, and I think when I left thirty-five years later, I think I was still on that three-month contract."

Marlene Barrie, born 1946, brought up in Scotstounhill and Blairdardie

“After school I got a job as a Trainee Cost Accountant at British Polar Engines in Helen Street. But I used to come up north when I was at school from the age of 13, maybe. So, I used to come up north for eight weeks and stay with my Granny and Grandfather. And I loved it. And after working as a trainee cost accountant. I thought no, I’ll go up north as a trainee surveyor. But they were only going to pay me eighteen shillings a week and I couldn’t afford that. Because I’d to travel to Elgin which was twelve miles away and give my Granny and Granda some digs. So I decided I’m not going for it. So I became a labourer in the railway. And my Granda still worked at the same station where I was born. And I loved it. I was there for a year or two. And my Faither, he thought I was a trainee surveyor and I never told him. He only found out when he came up on holiday and I never knew he was coming. And his train carriage stopped at the Craig station and here’s me standing outside doing my porter bit. And this is when he first found out. After that, the station master at Craigellachie said you’re too good, so they sent me, I didn’t want to go, and I ended as a station master’s clerk in Elgin.”

“A boy came one time I was selling a ticket. He was in charge of the Hydro Board in Elgin, and he went to Bellahouston Academy. And he said, “Where do you come from with your accent?.” And he said, “Right, I’ll give you a job in the Hydro.” And then from there I went to an office in a distillery. And I ended up as distillery manager making the Famous Grouse at Tamdhu.”

“After that I bought a chip shop in Portsoy on the coast. And then I sold that and worked in a seafood factory in Buckie. And then before I was retired, for the last two years, I worked with young lasses in Asda.”

James Love, born 1943, brought up in Craigellachie and Glasgow

“Radio officers are now extinct as you are probably aware. You go on a ship today and it’s just a satellite. There’s a golf ball above the bridge and that’s the satellite antennae. So, radio officers are no more. So, I was very happy that I was able to get under the wire, as it were, and do a job. Morse Code particularly. We used a lot of Morse Code. I pride myself I can still send and receive thirty, thirty-five words a minute without any problem. As I often do on the internet just for fun. I emigrated in 1963. I was in the Merchant Navy in 1960. I was with Union Castle Line South Africa, Cunard Line in the North Atlantic and some cargo ships. And then I decided that I better get a shore job. Because, you know, time was getting on. And pension and so forth. So I came ashore in the early sixties and I came to Canada. I went to college for a few months before I came to Canada. Came over here and I joined a large telecommunications company. I also went back to sea. I hadn’t quite wrung the salt water out of my socks as the saying goes. So I went back to sea for about 9 months in the early sixties. On an iron ore carrier down to South America. Being caught in a few Caribbean hurricanes. I had had enough after a year just about and I eventually came ashore for good.”

Ian Coombe, born 1942, brought up Gosport, then Glasgow

"You left school at fifteen, but you couldn't start an apprenticeship until you were sixteen. So it was a year between there and I got a job on a building site, where they were building new houses out in the outskirts to Greenock, where we had now moved to. We had moved out of the tenement. We had moved out to an estate out in the sticks, and they were expanding it. And I got a job there making tea for the labourers. And it was there that I got a chance to see all the different trades in the building trade. And I decided that I would be a painter. So then when I got to sixteen there was an advert in the local paper for an apprenticeship as a decorator. And my father wrote the famous letter and I got the job. The unpleasant thing about that was at the same time as they told me after having got the job-it was my handwriting. And I explained that it wasn't me who wrote it. And the other was there had been two of us on a short-list for the job but unfortunately the other boy was a Catholic. Even then I knew this is not right. This can't be right and that's away back in what, the '50, early '50s. It was a horrible thing you know, prejudices. I hate prejudices of any kind."

"During your apprenticeship you could get your National Service postponed. So when I got to eighteen but still had another three years of an apprenticeship. Then they allowed you to carry on the apprenticeship. But as soon as that was finished you then had to go and do your National Service. But, as I say, by that officially it was finished and I thought, oh well that's fine I'd got away with it. But no, they had a long memory and as soon as I was twenty-one, I got the notice that I had to go into the army which by that time I'd got married. Thinking, we thought well you don't have to do this National Service. So, when I was twenty-one and my wife was twenty we got married and then the papers turned up and so I had to go into the army, very reluctantly. But as it turned out I had a wonderful time. I got posted to Singapore and I signed on so that I was in the army longer than National Service. I was now a regular soldier, and my wife and oldest son were able to come. So, we spent three years in the Far East in the army. A wonderful time. It was the best decision I ever made the day that I signed on."

"When we decided to come out. We decided to stop in London where my brothers and sisters had already moved to. And then I started my own business. So I'd been self-employed all my life apart from a few months when we arrived in London, just to get to know the place. I worked for a company, but I took the chance and went out on my own and started my sign writing business, until I retired and came back to Scotland."

David McNeice, born 1937, brought up in Greenock and Millport

"I started off as an apprentice electrician. When I left school, I started going to night school. And the company I worked for were very good for the youngsters. You went to night school, and they saw your exam results and they would pay your tuition fees. Albeit you might only be talking about a pound or two. But when your wages was only a pound a week, it was a lot of money. They even gave you book prizes. And while I was doing that the company said to me 'would you like to work in the electrical drawing office, we'll guarantee you six months? So I was in there for two years and then I got back out of there again and got a wee bit more practical work, and then at the end of my fifth year that would be about 1960, they said "Would you like to come back in?" And I've been in drawing project offices ever since."

Alf Duffy, born 1940, brought up in the Gorbals and Pollok

"When I left the school, I had average intelligence. I didn't have any great speciality, but I did have a mathematical ability. And I didn't go into law because my family were all lawyers, my brothers, my father. And I decided to become an accountant. So, I studied and went to become an apprentice at what became one of the big five firms and did my exams in C.A. In retrospect, I think I met one or two actuaries who were pure mathematicians. And I think that might have been a better route because I wasn't a particularly good accountant. But eventually I stayed on in the profession until National Service which I did for a couple of years in the Corps Signals. I did my usual training, applied for the Far East, which failing the Middle East, which failing, the West Indies which failing whatever… And I was posted to Edinburgh, unfortunately. So, my frustration at not following my siblings' record of travelling the world was set at nought."

"So, I had a very undistinguished few years in the Signals. Came out, went back to work, and decided to take off in a way which was pretty unusual in those days. Because I took off for North America. The only time I'd been abroad before had been a friend who wanted help driving his car to the South of France. And I went down and stayed with his family for a day or two. Looking back, another missed opportunity."

Risk Ralph, born 1932, brought up Pollokshields, Tyndrum and Tarbert

I was saying I wasn't top of the class. I was top of the class at shorthand and top of the class in typing. And I was apparently so good, that my commercial teacher was friendly with the sewing teacher. And the sewing teacher was engaged to this chartered accountant. And he was looking for a junior. An office junior for his firm of chartered accountants. And the bold teacher that taught me the shorthand said, "Muriel I'll do that she'll take that." And so I left school on the Friday and started work as an office junior on the Monday. And that was me I started working. You had to work, obviously, once you left school for the financial situation. I think I got, I can't remember what it was, about £1.30, and I gave my mother 30p. And that was me on my own can, as they called it then. You could go on your own can. So you were responsible for buying your own clothes and all that sort of stuff. So, that was me started on my career of shorthand typing leading to a secretary all my days. But I loved it. I loved it. I still do like shorthand."

"Once I started a family, I gave up working. And then when my youngest Jennifer… She would be about four I then took a part time job in the department for National Savings in Glasgow. And I was there for 20 odd years. No, I brought my family up first. That was my work. That was my job. To look after them."

"I've been abroad for many years, in many different countries and to be honest I can't remember them all. Matthew's job when we were married, his job was an Engineer in a subsidiary of Tate & Lyle, so they were making sugar factories all over the West Indies and all over the place. And with that we had a year in Mexico, we took the kids as well."

M. McKinnon, born 1937, brought up Govanhill and Southside

"I think if things had maybe been different, I would have liked to have gone on to maybe university or college. But unfortunately, my father's health was starting to fail. And there was every likelihood that he was not going to be able to work. And as I said my parents were much older. So, I just got a job. I left school and got a job, and it was right over on the Southside of Glasgow. It was an old flour mill. And I got a job in the office. As a teleprinter operator. I mean…I know. I mean I could type because I had done commercial studies at school. So, I worked in this flour mill in their office operating the teleprinter. And went on to do other…It was really office jobs after that. Until I left Glasgow when I was 21, 22 and went to live in Aviemore. I got a job in Aviemore and live there for quite a number of years and enjoyed my life there."

Heather Bovell, born 1948, brought up in Gilsochill, Maryhill

Bovell Heather respondent aged 72 in 2020 in Doha Qatar her home for most of the year

"I was working with a number of people. It was the opportunity to travel. It was a qualification that was recognised worldwide. People say if you're an accountant you must be very good at maths. My answer to that is no, you have to be numerate but communication skills are far more important than just mathematics. You met different people. I was lucky. I trained in a firm Cooper Bros, which is now P.W.C. in Glasgow. And the clients that we had were all mainly in manufacturing. Which of course is all gone. But my year would be Babcock & Wilcox, B.M.C., Albion Motors, Anderson Strathclyde the mining machinery manufacturers, British Steel and G.K.N. There were some smaller jobs when I was training."

Kenneth MacAldowie, born 1944, brought up in Aberdeen and Glasgow

"I left school in 1958 and went to university in Glasgow and did a degree in chemistry. And after that in '62, I went to Woods Hall Massachusetts for a year to an ocean science institute called the Woods Hall Oceanographic Institute. And spent year there. And then I came back to Glasgow because I was thinking I was going to be a school teacher. Then I went to Jordanhill College and spent three months discovering that I wasn't cut out to be a school teacher (laughs) after all. So, I abandoned that and I went back to University and did a PhD in Glasgow in a subject that took me back to Woods Hall. After I finished my PhD, I went back to Woods Hall and spent the next thirty years actually working in ocean science in the Woods Hall Massachusetts on Cape Cod."

Hugh Livingston, born 1940, brought up in Hyndland and Fintry

"From Hillhead I worked in Glasgow for ten years and then I came to Montreal when I was 26. Then I had to take a fundamental decision which most people are not fazed with and that is, 'Do you turn left, or do you turn right?' because I had no idea what a large city Montreal was. I actually thought Quebec city was larger than Montreal. But I found out that it's probably a third less in size. Then I got a job here and had several jobs over the years. And age 40 I decided to, so-called, complete my education by going to Concordia University where I took a bachelor's degree. And then I went on to McGill where I took a master's degree. And then I came out and started a translation company which is called Rossion Inc. And it's still going strong and getting stronger every day. It's now being run by my daughter, who has an excellent team working with her to work on very significant large projects, as well as some smaller ones."

"On the 3rd July 1970, I got on a boat called 'The Empress of Canada' and seven days later, on 10th July 1970, I got off the boat in Montreal. And if you ask me "Do I miss Scotland?", I will tell you I miss it every minute of every day. But now I have a wife, my children, my grandchildren. So in for a penny, in for a pound."

Peter McNaughton, born 1944, brought up in Clapham, Glasgow and Comrie

"I was fifteen and I went into John Browns and the first year I was in the electrical drawing office. Like a kind of office boy. I quite enjoyed it, there was a good crowd in it. Believe it or not, even for that time, there were quite a few women in it. In the drawing office drawing up plans for electrical circuits and that. There weren't a lot of women working in the shipyards, but in that section there was. Then about a year and a half after that I went on to the ships. Believe it or not I still remember, I'll never forget it, it was The Salcetti.It was what you would call a beef boat and it went between Australia and New Zealand and then back to Britain carrying sheep or cattle, carcasses of meat. These were all fridge ships. The yard was tough really, you had no protective gear, and the noise was horrendous. We used to put cotton wool in our ears to help dull the noise because it was so severe. John Browns was old, old, antiquated stuff going away back to the Victorian times that they were using to build the ships. The toilet in the west yard, everybody used to call it the iron lung. And it was made of iron about quarter of an inch thick and it had holes in it. There were some men and they called them 'The Hat Men.' And when you went to get a cup of tea first thing in the morning in the old tins in the Riveters' fire somebody would shout - Oh! Here's the hat men coming (they all wore bowler hats they were managers) and you'd to run away. Occasionally they'd take pity on you. But a lot of the time they'd kick the cans to the floor. The conditions were terrible. It was a hard place to work, the shipyards. I was glad to get out for a while."

James McLaughlin, born 1939, brought up in Clydebank and Rothesay

"My husband, he lived in Kelvinside, I met him at high school. I went to the Scottish College of Commerce for a year, and he went on to Glasgow University, and we ended up out here [Canada then the USA]."

(Winifred) Margaret Baker Davidson, born 1937, brought up in Glasgow and Fintry

"Not very good wages, not very good conditions compared to now. And there was a lot, when you filled in a form, I remember that 'What school did you go to?' You had to put in your school and that was, "Aye, you've got the job", or "No, you've not got the job". There was a lot of that you know… I think generally there was plenty of jobs going then."

Cabreg, born 1935, brought up in London Road, Glasgow, and Pollok

"You must be [encouraged on a career path], because you had what they called the 'commercial class', and all the girls were put into typing and shorthand. And all the boys were put into the woodwork. So they definitely did steer you that way."

Cecilia Murray, born 1942, brought up in Gorbals and Castlemilk

"I worked in the telephone exchange and at that time it was part of the civil service. I remember going to an office and having to sit the Civil Service Exam. I worked there until I had my daughter. So, I worked there for about eleven-years and I didn't go back to work again until after my son was twelve, around 1990. I worked three different jobs and then went to work for the council. So that was my working life. And I did retire when I was sixty-three."

Marion Penny, born 1940, brought up in Townhead and Ruchazie

"I can remember no careers advice. But I was always going to be a teacher because everyone was teachers - my parents, my Grandfather, my Aunts. Everybody was either teachers or clergy in those days. Clergy wasn't open to girls, so I was always going to be a teacher. And I was always going to be an English teacher because it was easy for me. I could read before I went to school you know. I could read when I was four. I can remember it… That's also when I discovered I was synaesthetic; when I knew that 4 was purple and Wednesday was green. And my Mother said oh no, no Wednesday's blue. And my sister thought she was peculiar because she didn't know what we were talking about."

Christine McIntosh, born 1945, brought up Hyndland, Broomhill and Arran

"I worked for British Rail as a Secretary. In British Railways you had to sit an exam before the company would hire them and I always seemed to do well in exams. And it was a Dumbarton girl that worked in the Human Services Department at British Railways. And she would go and visit my Mother when I was over here [the USA] just to see how she was doing. And she told my Mother that when I was hired, and I had got a first class pass in the test and I never knew that. When I worked there it was right behind the old Lewis's building in St. Enoch Station. And the girl that would visit my Mother and another girl. I'm still friends with them to this day. And the last time I was back about thirteen years ago. And it was like we'd never left. We picked right up from where we left."

Rene Walters (nee Catherine McMenamin), born 1938, brought up in Dumbarton

"When I left school, I went to Jordanhill college. But we'd led a very sheltered life in Old Kilpatrick. And I was at the stage… You know when you went out your day's teaching? I felt a nervous wreck. I felt some the kids knew more than I did. They weren't bigger than me. I had stretched a bit by that time. So, I actually left Jordanhill in the middle of my second year. I hated it and my father said-well leave if you don't. So, I left and I got a job in an office in Glasgow as a clerk. In a…It was marine insurance. And I stayed there for about three years. And then I had a notion to go to London to try something different. So, I got a job with the GPO as a telephonist in the continental telephone service. And I worked in London. I trained as a telephonist in London. And then after about nine months it was shift work in the GPO. And I had been living with my aunt in Sussex and travelling. And when winter came on. You know there was fog and sometimes you never got home till as late. So, I moved into London and into a hostel for young ladies. And then quite a few of the folk that were telephonists along wi' me-one of them had discovered an advert for the Independent Television Authority. And I was a bit sort of star struck. So, I thought that would be nice. You'd see all these stars. Course you didn't. But I got the job and I worked with the ITA in Knightsbridge near Harrods for about a year. And then I began to…you know these folk that sometimes the way they talked to the telephonist. Sometimes you thought. You know, 'Who do you think you're talking to?' When I had a summer holiday, I went back up to Jordanhill in the June. And I happened to meet the head man walking along the corridor. And I said to him I had left Jordanhill, but I would like to come back and finish my time there. So he looked at my record and said well you left of your own accord but remember you would need to start at the beginning of second year if you came back. Which I did and I started teaching in 1961. And again, after three years I began to get restless. And I was in Spain on holiday. I'd been to Benidorm the year before. And we went back, a friend and I, and we decided to cash in our ticket and stay extra time, and I got a job in a bar in Benidorm. This was in the early days when it was a wee quiet place. And when I came home that winter, I was teaching again but at the same time I was writing for various jobs in the travel world. So, I ended up opting out of teaching for about fifteen years."

Robertson Elma, Born 1936 brought up Old Kilpatrick

"And then, finally got my graduate degree. And then my strangest transition of all was going from managing a shoe store to teaching at a university. And I remember going to my boss and saying, "I'm sorry, I gotta give you two-week's notice." And he said, "Oh, is it money." I said "No". He said, "You know, we can manage a little more. We'll match their offer." I said "No". He said, "Well, where you going?" I said, "I'm going to be teaching at the University of Lowell." And he said, "I can't beat that. "And I said, "No, you can't beat that." And I spent several years there teaching. And it was a great experience. I loved it. Then Massachusetts…We lived in Massachusetts at the time. The economy tanked. A whole bunch of things changed in Massachusetts. And I heard about a job down here. A friend from graduate school was working for the New Jersey Department for Environmental Protection. Came down, interviewed. Got a job. And I spent almost twenty-years cleaning up and making sure as environmental manager. Making sure environmental sites got cleaned up. And, kinda proud of that public service. And then I retired, and I started doing all the fun stuff."

Murdo Morrison, born 1950, brought in up Scotstoun and Drumchapel

"At the time Ravenscraig was probably the biggest steelworks in Europe. Ravenscraig was an eye-opener. It was a long journey from Knightswood to Motherwell every day and back. I spent a year there working in a lab. I was a Trainee Metallurgist. It was interesting to say the least, but it was a dangerous place as well, a very dangerous place to work. But I suppose for a boy of sixteen/seventeen it was quite exciting as well. But the travelling just got too much. I then applied for a job in the Post Office as a telephone engineer and I spent the next few years working in telecoms engineering."

"I did my apprenticeship with The Post Office in Glasgow. That was a two-year apprenticeship. You basically did six months in four different aspects of telephone engineering. After that, I stayed in telecoms but I moved to a private company, making and installing telephone equipment in telephone exchanges for The Post Office. And they were based down in England. So, I started working all over Scotland and England after that for a while. So I was never at home really in those days. I worked in Nottingham, Leeds, Wakefield, Stirling, Perth, all over in fact. I was a Tester Installer. In charge of testing all the equipment before it was handed over to The Post Office."

"I enjoyed that, but not the sort of work for married men because you were never at home in those days. So, I moved from them to a company in East Kilbride. A big multinational company that was making telephone exchange equipment and I started in there as a Contracts Engineer, designing telephone exchanges, and from there I moved into the productions side of it. But then 3D came in and production came in and I could see the writing on the wall and went to night school."

"I always blame it on Iain Cuthbertson of Sutherlands Law. I always wanted to be a procurator fiscal, but I never quite made it. I started up defending them rather than prosecuting them. I was a lawyer for about thirty years."

Graeme St Clair, born 1947, brought up in Knightswood and Springburn

"Well at that time it was 14, and then it went up to 15. My friend and I went round the shops and we got jobs in the city bakeries, Saturday jobs. My friend, she was able to start right away on the Saturday, but I had to wait until after the Easter holidays. I was able to work in the city bakeries during the Easter holidays, and then I was able to work on a Saturday after that. But I couldn't work before that because of the age business."

"There was plenty about here then. You fell into a job and if you didn't like it, you could fall into another one. There were all these factories down in Vale of Leven. Westclox, Silk & Dye Factory, Burrows Adding Machine and the Distilleries. In Clydebank they had shipyards and Singers Sewing Machine Factory. Half of the area was employed in Singers. And then again there was retail and there was lots of big shops in Glasgow. There was no lack of work. If you weren't working, it was because you didn't want to."

Elma Robertson, born 1936, brought up Old Kilpatrick

"I just think I've always been very lucky in managing to do what I wanted to do. And I'm a person who likes to get involved in a lot of things all my life. "

"I've kept my interest in the theatre and I was part of the group that started a theatre in Glasgow. The Tron Theatre."

"My Mother didn't work. None of her friends worked. Except for my best friend's Mother who was an actress, but that's not the same kind of thing. I suppose it became more of an expectation that people worked. I did get into trouble on leaving university when filling out a form. 'What do you plan to do on leaving school or university' and I put matrimony. I was in big trouble with the school because the expectation certainly was that well educated girls would get a job or go into a profession. And that was pretty soon after the end of the war."

"Going to university for a Glasgow girl, going to school in Glasgow, was a big transition. Crossing town instead of just going up the road to school. But it was also the time when a lot of male students had come out of the army. There was a lot of support that they got to go to university. Masses and masses of ex-service people were there at that time. It was quite exciting because I'd been to an all-girls school. I knew some boys that were the sons of my parents' friends', but it was great. I enjoyed university. I don't think I was ambitious. I just lived happily."

"I have a lot of female grandchildren, thirteen of them and they're all infinitely more ambitious than I ever was. And my two daughters were also more ambitious at that stage than I was, or my friends. I think we just enjoyed life."

"I always wanted to work in a bookshop, and I went into a bookshop, Smiths, and asked for a job and I got it. So, I worked in the town bookshop. Then I worked in the university bookshop. I loved it; it was fun. I worked full time for about five years and then part time when I had my children. I missed the bookshop when I left but I left because I had other things to do. Mostly voluntary things. The Children's' Hearing System and various things that I got involved in."

Helen Jean Millar, born 1931, brought up Pollokshields

The End

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Project Website:

www.ww2childhoodmemories.co.uk.

Childhood Experiences of War & Peace, 1939-1960

Communities Past & Futures Society received a National Lottery Heritage Fund award, and generous support from heritage professionals and other community organisations, to deliver an exciting Glasgow-based heritage project, 'Childhood Experiences of War & Peace, 1939-1960'. This intergenerational oral history project explored Scottish children's memories of living through WWII and the changes that materialised in the aftermath of that global conflict. With wonderful participation from Glaswegians, some now living far across the seas, a fantastic oral history archive was created.

Dedicated to all children who have experienced war, this book contains research and transcribed testimonies from that archive, with fascinating memories exploring a wide range of issues, including evacuation, rationing, air raids and gas masks, the impact of war on families, V.E Day, post-war housing, the introduction of the NHS, holidays, play, and much, much more.

Communities Past & Futures Society