

Home Life

In the 1960s



Introduction and Index

Thank you to those who contributed in any way to our reminisces of living in the Sixties.

A decade of change between the relative poverty of the fifties to the more affluent Seventies.

This document is in 'no particular order' and I have tried, by including an Index, to point you to anything you may be particularly interested in but many contributions contain a variety of memories.

I have a few contributions that I am either not sure or just do not know who wrote them, it you read something and think 'I wrote that' let me know and I will change the 'anon' wording.

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1. Memories of home life from Wendy Mustill

The biggest change for our family's lifestyle between the 50s and 60s was after my mother became critically ill in 1960. After her recovery she lost her Christian faith. Prior to that every Sunday was observed religiously. Outside play was not allowed, and indoor activity was restricted to reading or playing board games quietly. We went to morning service then to Sunday School in the afternoon dressed in our best clothes. We lived in a small Welsh village where everything was closed on Sundays including the 2 pubs, and the streets were more or less deserted apart from churchgoing.

From 1960 onwards, we still went to morning service but after Sunday lunch we then went out for excursions in the car, something which had previously not happened even though Dad got his first car in 1957. There was no frivolity though - it was always educational such as a castle or somewhere for a good healthy walk. When we acquired an old caravan, things relaxed a bit and the beach was allowed at weekends.

As there was hardly anything organised for children or teenagers in the village except Brownies, Guides, Cubs and Scouts, my sister and I were thrown back on our own devices for entertainment in school holidays. We used to roam freely across fields and lanes, and up the mountain, or go out on our bikes. We would ride for miles and be out all day. The only thing we were frightened of were the gypsy encampments and their dogs.

From 1963 I attended a grammar school 5 miles from home so in the holidays it was very difficult to meet up with friends who could live up to 10 miles away in other isolated villages. It got more and more boring to be on my own in the village as I grew into a restless teenager so I used to go and stay with my grandparents in Liverpool during the school holidays, which was much more exciting! We didn't even have a telephone until I was 15 in 1967. The main advantage now looking back was that I just got on with schoolwork during the week as there was literally nothing else to do for the few young people in the community.

I learnt lots of useful life skills during my 60s adolescence. I learnt how to play the piano, how to sew and knit my own clothes, how to bake, and most importantly how to keep myself occupied by walking, reading, studying, drawing or writing etc. To this day I prefer my own company and am never bored although I have lived on my own for long periods in my life.

Our family social life was almost exclusively the extended family. My father was reclusive and hated participating in social activities or strangers coming into his home. I think that was a result of 6 years' service in the RAF throughout the war. Our friends were not made welcome and could only use the dining room! This all eased up a bit towards the end of the 60s when we started having boyfriends, but they were always viewed with intense suspicion.

If we visited it was nearly always to our numerous relatives in Liverpool. We all got together at Christmas and at weekends they also came to stay in our caravan on the North Wales coast.

I found the atmosphere in our nuclear family as well as the village generally very claustrophobic and parochial. My parents argued a lot and there was nowhere to escape from it. There were also lots of petty rules and not a lot of fun at all. As the decade unfolded it seemed to me that all the fun was going on in other parts of the country and was completely by-passing non-conformist Welsh villages! At the age of 12 I decided my way out was university so I just worked steadily towards that goal and so it proved. When I left at 18 I never returned to live in that village again and in fact my parents themselves left it in 1974 and emigrated abroad.

Inside of our vintage 1930s caravan – hardly the lap of luxury!



Family get together at Christmas, early 1960s



Wendy Mustill

Teen years at home: Sue Beardon

I was quite a gadabout and don't remember being at home much. When I was it was with a whole lot of friends who came round to play our piano. Someone taught me to play the opening bars of the Moody Blues "Go now" and I drove my parents mad playing it. And we also had guitars and banjos. In the summer we would take our guitars down to the open-air swimming pool. One of the people I played with there went on to form a band called Fairport Convention.

On Saturdays, we would go to Notting Hill to Portobello Road market and spend our pocket money on second hand clothes, old army jackets, feather boas, bell bottom jeans etc. If my parents went out at the weekends we would ask friends round for parties. At one of these parties someone managed to pull the phone out of the wall, and once one of my friends had a suede jacket stolen.

At home we always had a lot of people passing through from places like South Africa and Iron curtain countries. My mum hosted Anti-apartheid meetings in our front room and exiles from South Africa often came by. One of my cousins married a white South African girl and went to live there, and when we went to family occasions my father would warn us, on pain of death, not to raise the issue of apartheid.

Although we were Jewish, in my own home we didn't celebrate any of the holidays, but at Passover we would always be invited to a Seder night at one of my uncles' houses. There the youngest cousin would have to ask the questions Jews traditionally ask at Passover about our exodus from Egypt.

I went to the local grammar school and did well even though I don't remember doing any work! Most girls at school had pictures of pop stars under their desk lids. I had a photo of Rudolf Nureyev, the ballet dancer. However, when the Rolling Stones came on the scene everything changed. I once disobeyed my mum and went off with friends to an all-night Rolling Stones concert in Tottenham. My mother stayed up half the night waiting for me to come home. My father was furious. I must have driven them both balmy!

I wasn't unhappy at home and I thought the world of my parents. They taught me how not to just go along with the herd, and I am grateful for that. They helped me appreciate there was a whole big world out there and to be curious about it.



HAPPY DAYS GROWING UP



Sue Beardon

Memories of the great gale of 1962

Anita Robinson

One of the things I remember most vividly is my brother waking me up to say that the storm seemed to be threatening to blow his window in. We were sitting on my bed chatting when there was an almighty crash, we rushed out of the room to find one of the chimneys had blown through the roof, leaving a gaping hole in my brother's bedroom, the chimney bricks were scattered all over his bed so, if he hadn't come to me he could have been seriously injured.

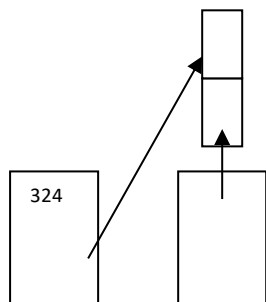
The following morning, he & I set off together (me to cross the city to school, he to go to University) we picked our way down the road through lots of debris - bricks, garden sheds, dustbins etc., to find, when we got to the bus stop, that all the glass had blown in, not only on the bus shelter but on Dempsey's shoe shop. The pavement was littered with a sad collection of shoes! However, the bus came on time!

When I arrived at school a very tall tree in the grounds had been half wrenched out of the ground & was swaying alarmingly near to several classroom windows. We were told in assembly that if we were in one of the affected rooms to sit away from the window! These days the entire school would be closed until the tree was chopped down.

It took several weeks for our roof to be repaired. Meanwhile, the television aerial was fixed to a tree in the back garden. To get any sort of picture one person had to climb the tree and twiddle it, while another one had to yell instructions out of the dining room window in a relay from a third person looking at the television in the living room!

From birth, I lived at 324 Woodseats Road in terraced housing with a common passageway to four properties – two on each of the passageway. Each 'pair' shared a yard at in was common practice for neighbours to take it in terms using whitening on things like steps.

Next door's (outside) toilet was immediately adjacent to their house and ours was joined to theirs, which means the occupants of 324 had to walk across the yard and past part of the neighbours garden to get to the loo.



The toilet door was ill-fitting – there was a gap at the bottom, and sitting on the loo in wintery weather, was a case of watching snow blowing under the bottom of the door.

In my early memories loo paper was squares of newspaper pushed on to a nail sticking out of the toilet door. There was also no electricity through to the loo, which meant that, at night, dad had to cross the yard first to light the candle that hung precariously on the beam that supported the water tank. For night time 'calls' we had 'potties' under the bed. I have a memory about how, one morning, my mother lost her step whilst carrying the potties downstairs (to empty them) – but I shall draw a veil over that!

In the early sixties we succumbed to sophistication, and had real toilet paper - no not even the dreaded Izal, but something smoother from the Fine Fare that replaced the Woodseats Palace cinema. My dad also ran an electric cable across to the loo. Luxury! But still the snow blew under the door!

This all changed in the mid sixties when we had an indoor loo installed in the bathroom. The only problem now was that my parents had to walk through my bedroom to get there, so my parents 'potties' remained.

5

Remember

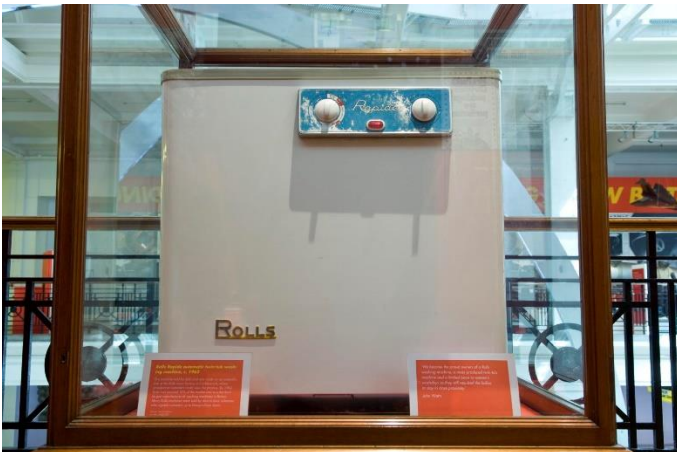
Izal Toilet paper



Starlight Rhapsody Transistor like Christine Shepherd owned and lasted through teenage years, student years until she entered the world of work.



Twin tub washing machine like Christine Shepherd's parents bought for £59 in 1960



Previously we had lived on the Wybourn Estate in a two-bedroom Council House. Heating was an open coal fire with a back boiler for hot water, therefore upstairs was very cold in Winter. Conversely in summer we had to keep the fire going if we wanted hot water. The toilet was off the back porch, opposite the “coal-hole”, and again in winter a visit could be quite character building. We had a gas cooker and a hot water copper in the kitchen for washing clothes. Electrical fittings were very sparse, a single light in each room with a Bakelite and a single power point downstairs. We sometimes power electrical devices using an adapter in the light fitting. Until the 1950s upstairs lighting had been gas. The gas & electricity supplies came via coin in the slot meters (one shilling, I think).

In 1962 we applied to move to the new Hyde Park development and were allocated a “flat” on Hyde Park Terrace. Our new house was technically a “maisonette” not a flat because it had four levels. There were two main floors and two mezzanine floors. There were three bedrooms, a bathroom/toilet, living room with large windows commanding view of the city, fitted kitchen and a second toilet on the lower main floor. We entered by a door leading onto the main terrace walkway, similar to the “Streets in the Sky” of Park Hill. The kitchen had a balcony to the rear of the premises. There was ample lighting and electrical sockets in all rooms. The house was centrally heated from the district heating system powered from the municipal incinerator. Our weekly rent of 18/6d included heating and all external maintenance. A novel feature was the “Garchy” waste disposal system. The kitchen sink had a removable base about 300mm (12 inches) diameter beneath which was a large chamber. Waste of any kind could be placed in this chamber which, when full could be emptied by pulling a plunger. The waste would then flow through pipes to a central location from which it was transported to the incinerator.

Compared with our previous home, this was luxury. In the early days, it was common to see visitors from all parts of the world being shown around the development which was regarded as an example of architectural innovation.



Hyde Park flats being built.

Home Life Memories

Our Pets

We had two budgerigars, kept in the kitchen, which would have been frowned on today, we also had a large guinea pig.

Recreation

We had a bagatelle board when I was about eight and I was given my first (Wilson) tennis racket in 1958.

We were not a sporty family, but my father taught me to swim in Altrincham baths. When we moved to the Wirral I had to swim in the marine lake in the evenings. My father would walk on the land beside me, still in his suit and tie. I remember cutting my feet on the barnacles as I got in and out. The open-air swimming pool was a roped off part of the lake and we had to brave the jelly-fish which we sometimes caught in the metal rubbish bins. I remember swimming in the rain when the air temperature was 55F.

In the early sixties wandering on the 'heath' (a stretch of National Trust land overlooking the Dee estuary) was my main form of exercise.

As a girl guide I felt it my duty to climb trees and practise stalking, hiding in the bracken fern. I also made fires and cooked dampers.

In the mid-sixties I took up sailing both on the afore-mentioned lake and out in the bay. I wasn't confident enough to helm but made quite a good crew. My mother despaired when I came home covered in bruises!

Shelagh

Men's and women's work in South Yorkshire

Heavy industry (coal mining, coking, glass manufacture, brewing, for example) in my town, Wath –on- Dearne, South Yorkshire) meant jobs for men and largely ancillary ones for women such as in the canteen and shop work. There was some light industrial factory work in the town such as sewing machining. Women worked in clerical roles and as secretaries in local government and in businesses such as solicitor's office, estate agencies, banks. Publicans were men, but a wife might be involved in the then new enterprise of catering!

There were quite a few women councillors over the Sixties on Wath UDC, I remember. There were some professional women: teachers, district nurses, librarians; some civil service jobs such as clerical posts at the Labour Exchange and Royal Mail postwomen, but men were in the higher ranks (such as the HMIs that came to our junior school.) The managers were men including in the Fire Service. I knew that there were women in the police but was only aware of one, the mother of a school friend. Exceptions: an optician in the town was a woman, the one taxi firm was run by a woman (but maybe this had been her father's firm previously) and our butcher's daughter (manfully) tried to run her father's business in which she had previously assisted, but sadly gave up and got a job elsewhere. I think most of my school friends' mothers were housewives. As the sixties progressed the odd one took an often poorly paid part-time job locally.

My mother worked hard in the home and was always busy - in addition to the usual household tasks of the time, she did painting and decorating (not the ceilings), dressmaking and tailoring for herself and me, knitting, millinery and made lampshades. She went out food shopping in the afternoon which often involved visiting different shops in addition to the dry goods we initially had delivered (free of charge) on a Friday from the grocer's. Having a gas fridge in the late 1950s and the wider availability of the supermarket when my father drove the car there, altered her routine somewhat as the Sixties progressed. Throughout the Fifties and Sixties she attended a sewing class at the Mechanics Institute run by the West Riding C.C. and was, for example, Programme Secretary for the Electrical Association For Women (catchy title!) (although she cooked by gas), in addition to being manager of the household. Looking back, planning nutritious meals and cooking which she fortunately enjoyed, took up a fair amount of her time and energy, as our main meal of the day was at lunchtime. Time was also of the essence at teatime on the days (sometimes three times a week) when my father, as an official, had council meetings in the evening at the Town Hall.

Routine was broken by the annual holiday and perhaps day trips but self-catering holidays (which meant we could afford a fortnight away) did not allow my mother a proper break!

Christine Shepherd writes about her special memories of the sixties

Getting a portable transistor radio (KB Starlight Rhapsody in royal blue plastic with applied silver stars and dial) which lasted me for years through university and cost, I believe, 18 guineas in 1959.

Coming in to see the enormous mechanical computer at Sheffield Uni in c. 1968 is another memory.

Other things like watching BBC 2 when you had to have a separate aerial to receive it. I went next door, where my friend's Gran had a special set to watch The Forsyte Saga.

Then there was my Telefunken reel to reel tape recorder-Tandberg ones in school-very heavy!

Cinema films sometimes broke down mid-showing. I guess they were oldish copies which did this because it happened in out of town cinemas more than city centre ones, I think.

At home, we got a twin tub washing machine with electric blue tubs by Rolls - he sold direct to the public. I think this cost £59 in 1959/60. This was a big advance on the single tub electric washing machine with mangle over. We even used the mechanical minute timer on the twin tub to time a boiled egg! Extra versatility!

I also remember us getting a Hoover Constellation-a metal ball shaped cylinder vacuum based on the hovercraft technology so it 'floated' along easily.

We had a telephone in 1962 which was GPO two tone green, before STD. Our neighbour, a wealthy widow with property didn't have one and occasionally we took calls from her daughter in Cornwall and I ran around to fetch her to the phone!

There you have the gist of some of my observations, really! They are essentially memories of a teenager mixed with some domestic ones.

LOVE IN A COLD CLIMATE.

Denise West.

It was January 1963 and at a dance I had met a boy. We were together all evening, chatting and enjoying each other's company. He took me to the bus- stop to go home and we arranged another date.

Being in my late teens the weather held little interest for me and had not yet become the sole topic to open a conversation with. However, even I had become aware of the snow that was falling..... and falling and that we were bang in the middle of the "BIG CHILL".



Storms and blizzards raged around us all week. I managed to get to School on a dedicated bus but it was becoming more and more difficult every day. I slept in an attic bedroom and there was ice on the inside of the window. Temperatures plummeted, rivers froze over and I remember the television relating that all outside toilets were out of bounds and unusable.

By Friday of that week, and my date night, I was in despair. Buses were hardly running and living in Crookes one of the highest parts of Sheffield did not fill me with hope. Reluctantly I had already decided my stiletto shoes were off the agenda and wellington boots did not fit my idea of "glamour".

We had arranged to meet in town at Coles Corner the usual spot where young Sheffielders met, but I had to get there. My Mum thought I was mad even trying to go but I did not know where he lived or his phone number and I liked him. I stood at the bus - stop for 45 minutes but nothing came. I started out to walk but the snow drifts made the pavements impossible to negotiate and just a few minutes left me fighting for breath and sweating.

I was just about to give up when a bent figure in a coat came up the middle of the road. It was him.

"How have you found me"? shouted.

He remembered I lived at Crookes and he had walked from Broomhill where the bus had terminated in the hope I was still hanging around waiting. We fell into the nearest pub and warmed up before he had to tackle the walk home.

Was it worth it? Yes, it was. Reader, I married him.

1960s Sheffield I spent my teenage years living in a prefab in Totley and they were very happy days indeed. Our prefab had brown paintwork (some were green) with the walls being cream. The walls seemed to be made of compressed cardboard and there was a brick base. The garden was really large with a massive expanse of grass to the front (some had enormous back gardens as the prefabs were staggered) and our back garden adjoined fields and woods. I spent virtually all my spare time there. The prefabs were deceptively large and were generally well liked. Our kitchen had a cooker, washing machine, sink/drain, a good size table and a pantry. The living room was big enough for a 3-piece suite, TV, large radiogram, piano and a drop-leaf table (used on Sundays). The fire had metal closing doors. There was a central hallway with a roof vent and an airing cupboard. However, there was no light in the hall and it was very dark with all the doors closed. There were two good sized bedrooms and in my friend's house one of the bedrooms had been divided into two with a single bed in one side and a double in the other. The bathroom was large with an enormous bath. All rooms had air vents in the wall near the ceiling and one year snow blew in and there was a small pile on my parents' bed! There was an open porch by the front door with a wooden 'lattice' which we sometimes used to climb onto the roof. Behind the front door was a small room which was ideal for storing prams, bicycles etc. Electrical sockets were round 3-pin with a 15-amp socket in the living room and 5 amp elsewhere. An outside coalhouse was built with brick ends and a corrugated iron arched roof. There was no crime or trouble - many people left their doors unlocked. I often left my brand-new bike at the top of the garden by the road and it was always there the next morning.



I clearly remember the gales in 1962. Our prefab roof creaked quite alarmingly and I remember my father staring at it hoping it would stay in place! I later learned that none of the Totley prefabs suffered damage but most of the ones at the top of East Bank Road were destroyed. The lack of damage was odd, as some brick-built houses suffered major damage as chimney stacks supporting aereals collapsed through roofs. I had a newspaper round at the time and remember seeing one house on Baslow Road, (which I think is now

Baslow Road surgery), badly damaged with a big hole in the roof and piles of bricks on the drive. As I later made my way to catch the bus to school I was 'chased' by a flying roof tile – a near miss.

I also have some vivid memories of the heavy snowfalls of 1962-63. One day the snow had drifted against the prefab and was level with the roof at one side, yet there was virtually none at the other side. The side with the snow was our usual path to the back door. My father cleared the path and I remember walking through a 'tunnel' of snow which was much higher than I was. The snow remained for ages, in fact much of it just turning to hard-packed ice. Local families would congregate at 'Wings Hill' (now overgrown) where there was a steep path ideal for sledging. A 'hump' was constructed near the bottom and I have a (very poor) photograph of my friend going over this – his sledge was airborne and he was also airborne but above the sledge! Most years the sledge track stopped at the bottom where it was wet and sludgy, but in 1963 this was all frozen and the sledge would continue down the icy path, onto the private road which led to Woodthorpe Hall (also frozen) down the road for a way, then down another bank onto the frozen Totley Brook.

One day we were just ready to set off on holiday when a letter arrived giving us notice to quit and offering a new council house on Fraser Drive. My father concluded that there was little he could do until after our holiday, so off we went. On our return, we found that a row of only five prefabs had been given this notice, yet they were surrounded by others who had not. Two of our neighbours had already moved (including one who was looking after our cat – which disappeared never to be seen again). My father, (a council employee) queried this odd state of affairs with the council, who decided to withdraw the notices and extend the life of the prefabs. All five families were offered the option of either a brand-new house on Fraser Drive or to retain the prefab tenancies. It was agreed to stick together and the final decision as to what to do was left to my father. We remained in the prefabs and the two neighbours, who had moved out, returned. Such was the love for those prefabs. The location may well have had something to do with it!



In the garden of our house, near London, 1960 (approx.) in my guide uniform.

I was very proud of my uniform and looked after it very well, being meticulous that I polished my badge, had my tie correct and always had my money in case I needed to make a phone call. I had a brown lanyard signifying that I was a pack leader and helped the local Brownie pack. I later went on to be an assistant guider with the Brownies. My memories include the fact that the day John F. Kennedy was shot I was helping the Brownies at a first aid competition.

When my parents moved from this house, they took a cutting of the peony, that I am standing next to in this picture. Every time we have moved, we have taken a cutting and today we have a flourishing peony in our present garden.



This is the house where I was born and brought up.

My parents lived there until 1974.

We were about 3 miles from Wembley and could hear the cheering from the stadium on occasions.

13 Things we collected and other memories

Stephanie

Green Shield Stamps. Collecting these started in 1958 and was a scheme that rewarded shoppers with stamps that could be used to buy gifts from a catalogue. It was very popular for quite a few years but gradually decreased in popularity, and eventually cash could also be used as well to buy things. In 1991 the stamps were withdrawn and the operation took on the name of Argos. My mother was a keen collector of these stamps and would buy things for the home.



My brother collected **bus tickets** but sadly one day my father and brother had an argument and my father threw all my brother's bus tickets on the fire in anger. My brother cannot remember this but I can.

Both of us collected **postage stamps** and I still have my collection.

Robertson's jam/marmalade golly figures. Again, my mother was a stanch collector of the stickers on the marmalade/jam jars and when you had a certain number you could send off for a little figurine. My daughter now has the mini orchestra and football figures my mother collected. Sadly, today, they are considered not to be in good taste but were seen as totally harmless in the Sixties. Reluctantly, I will not put a picture on.

My mum did a lot of knitting. Mostly by hand and for pleasure. Around 1960 she bought a knitting machine and I can remember in an afternoon she could complete a whole sleeve of a cardigan. She found the speed good but it was not so relaxing to do. She made a lot of doll's clothes that she would sell at the church Christmas fair and also some toys particularly a kangaroo with a little roo in its pouch. Nicknamed by our daughter as a "Bice".



THE BICE FIG

My brother was born in 1960 and since I was only 18 months older than him, the prospect of two lots of terry nappies to wash (presumably by boiling them) motivated my mother to buy an electric washing machine. It was the only time she ever bought anything on hire purchase ('the never-never'), knowing she could pay for it with the Family Allowance which she would receive for her second child. She recalled that she received 8 shillings a week.

We were still using the machine into the late 1960s. It had a square lid, made of aluminium with a textured pattern of tiny dots in rows. This lid lifted off and clipped back on as a shelf behind the tub. Stored in the tub was a wringer made of two rubber rollers which would be swung out when the washing machine was set up.

You filled the tub with hot water and soap (we used Omo powder) and a central paddle moved the laundry round. I can't recall if there was another lid to stop this splashing.

When it was finished, the laundry must have needed rinsing and I can't recall how this was done. Maybe the tub had to be emptied and clean water put in? This would seem to limit laundry to one mixed load at a session.

To remove the water, each item was fed into the wringer; the squeezed-out water flowed back into the tub and the flattened item plopped onto the shelf behind. Obviously there was a skill to putting the item into the wringer so that it came out as little creased as possible. I was allowed to help with this when I was older and could be trusted not to crush my fingers in the moving rollers.

It was important to dry all components of the machine carefully before putting it away with the lid back on, otherwise it would get mouldy or at least smell very musty next time.

If it was too wet to hang the washing outside (on a line; no rotary lines then), we had two wooden airing racks which squeaked as opened them to their full height.

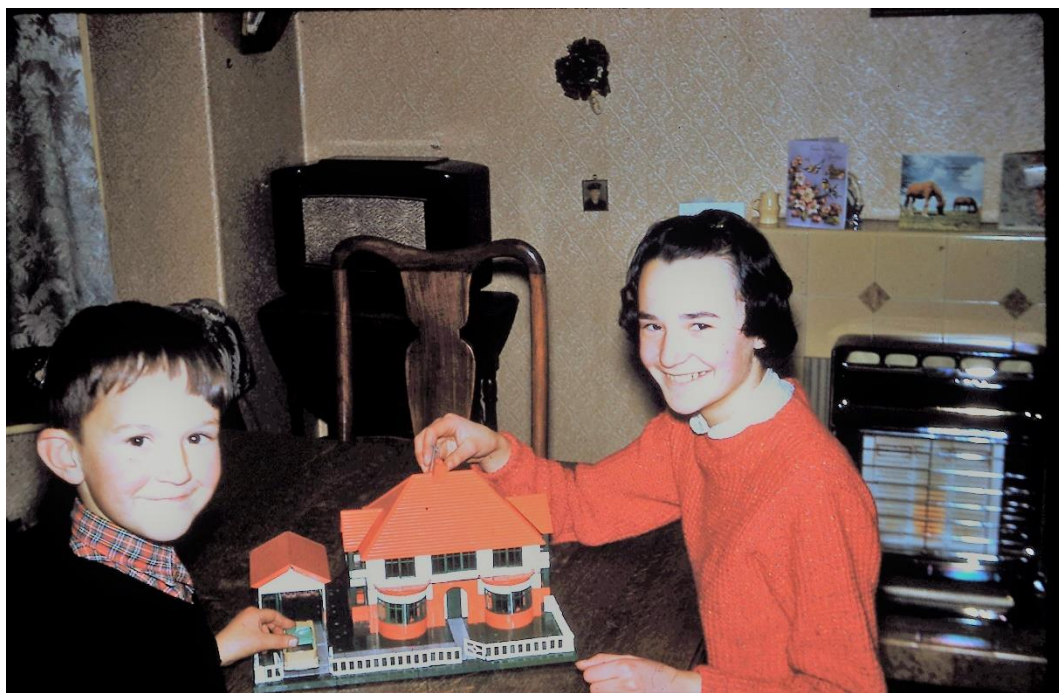
In about 1970 my mother took a part-time job and we got a twin tub washing machine. Washing in soapy water was carried out in the larger tub while the smaller one was used to rinse each load. Cold water was added to the small tub and spun off, with the process repeated until it ran clear into the sink through a hose hooked over the edge.

I should add that we wore each garment for far longer than we do now, so there was far less washing generated. As a young child, I definitely did not have clean underwear daily and I can only recall owning three summer dresses so these must have been worn for several days each before washing.

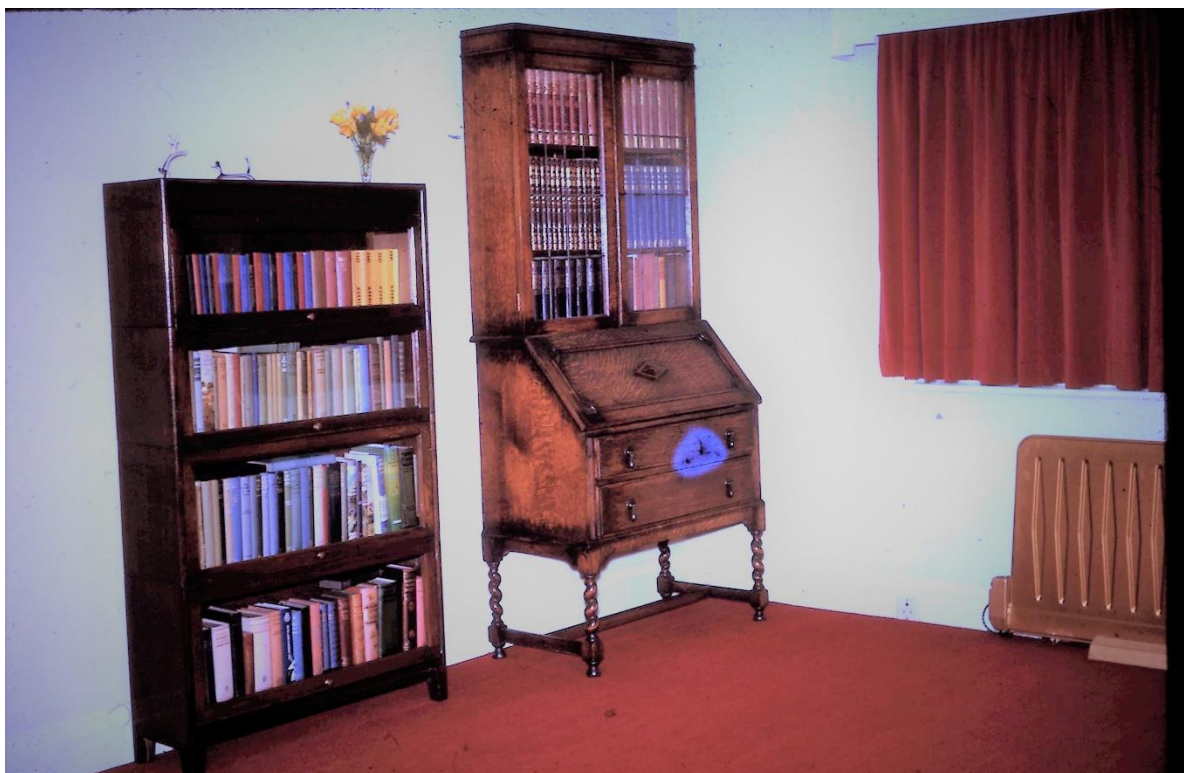


15

Lyn's birthday party 1960
and
Lyn playing with her brother



Photos courtesy of Lyn Armstrong



Refurbished lounge 1963 Red carpet and velvet curtains



A Personal Account of the Generation Gap

I started to feel very distanced from my parents after the age of 10-11 when I became besotted with The Beatles. It became apparent to me very quickly that my parents totally disapproved of the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, in fact the entire emerging popular music scene. My father called the Beatles "Those scruffs from Scotland Road" [a very rough street of slums in Liverpool] and every time their song Twist and Shout was played on radio or TV, my mother used to say "Turn it off, I can't stand that blinking Twist and Shout"! I think it was really that music then the fashion changes such as mini skirts which started to alienate me from my parents. I began to think they were very old-fashioned, always harping on about the war and how awful life had been in the 1930s, and then religion became a bone of contention. My grandfather who was also my godfather insisted that I got confirmed in the Anglican Church so I not he would be answerable for my sins (I think he anticipated many by that stage!). I was 13 and by that time I had lost my faith so I spent the entire sessions preparing for confirmation arguing with the vicar about the catechism etc until he finally asked me if I actually wanted to be confirmed. I had to say I did - otherwise my grandfather would have been very angry.

I used to argue with my parents all the time, apart from about politics on which we mainly agreed. There were endless stupid rules for me to kick off about because they seemed pointless and were never rationalised to me, for example:

- ¾ white socks were not allowed to fall down
- Petticoats could not 'show' under skirts – that was a disgrace!
- No make-up whatsoever was allowed
- Nylon stockings were not allowed until you were 16
- Hair could not be grown long or coloured in any way
- Only 2 school blouses a week could be worn regardless of grubbiness
- Hair could only be washed twice a week at most
- Baths were only allowed once a week on a Saturday night
- No outside play was allowed on a Sunday, you had to go to church in the morning then Sunday School in the afternoon. Inside the house you could only read or do quiet things.
- Best clothes only to be worn on Sundays or special events eg a birthday party
- Boys were only allowed in the dining room (!)
- Had to be in by 10.30 when I started going out after I was 16

Looking back on these I can see now that it was not only the impact of the impoverished 1930s that had formed these rules, but also an attempt to prevent my sister and me acquiring any sexual attractiveness or personal vanity. It was a total failure however, and by the time I went to university in 1970 I realised that my parents were in fact exhibiting quite extreme remnants of Victorian morality and the protestant work ethic, compared with other students' parents.

ONE MEMORY OF THE 1960s

I was a teenager in the 1960s, and two things I remember particularly were the emergence of mini skirts and tights. Unfortunately they came into fashion in the wrong order.

At the beginning of the 1960s, I was working as an office junior for the National Health Service, and I often had to climb a large staircase to the upper floor of the building where I worked.

A young colleague of mine was rather large, but she was determined to wear the latest fashion no matter what.

One day she was wearing the latest mini skirt, and I had to follow her up the staircase. Tights had not come in and she was wearing the customary suspender belt and stockings. I looked up as I followed her and you can imagine the sight that greeted me!

Thank goodness for tights!!!

Janet Taylor
Local History Group

Wedding 1961 Style.

How very different weddings were in 1961 when compared with today's big and expensive events.

The first variation is that when we married no one sent out "Hold the Date" cards a year or so ahead. Unless one had told people by word of mouth, the first indication of the wedding date was when invitations were sent out six weeks before it was to occur. We did not include a present list unless specifically asked for one. Replies came back, handwritten, on writing paper, and usually in the formal style. Most weddings seemed to take place between 11 AM and 3 PM and the majority in those days were celebrated in a church or other religious establishment. Ours was it 11 AM at Saint Cyprian's Church.

The marriage service in those days was from the Book of Common Prayer if in the Church of England. We had three hymns. One for me to enter the church (the vicar disliked "Here comes the bride") and two other hymns in the service. It was all very solemn and moving with no CDs with pop music as is often the case today.

Dresses reflected the location and solemnity of the occasion, - no strapless, and bosom-revealing gowns in those days. Modesty was expected by all. My own wedding dress, which I still have, was made by my aunt, an extremely good and capable professional dressmaker. We went together to Cole's (now John Lewis) to buy the material and I chose white satin, embroidered all over with white flowers. I chose a classic princess style pattern with a V-neck and long sleeves. At the back was a short train with frills and a bow. I had a long silk tulle veil held in place by a beaded 'coronet' made by my aunt from some of the dress material.

After the service photos were taken outside the church and more at the reception venue at Norton Country Club. The reception was a buffet with minimal speeches and began at about 12:30 PM. At 2 o'clock I went to change into my going away outfit, a lovely dress and jacket in pale yellow Moygashel, again made by my aunt from a picture I had found in a magazine, and also a hat, a frothy straw and net confection.

By 2:30 PM we set off for our honeymoon and I presume all the guests stood around and chatted for a while and then went home for tea.



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18.

Brenda and David buy a house.

Buying a House in 1961

"I think I've found a house you'll like" said David when he arrived at our house one evening about four months before we were going to be married. "Do you want to go and see it?" I did indeed as we had been looking at houses for a while, with no luck.

As he had come on his motor bike, for the one and only time, I rode on the pillion seat, clutching David tightly round the waist, as he carefully took us to see the house. He was quite right in thinking that I would like it. Built in 1924 it was a good sized, bay-windowed, three bedroomed semi with a large garden. The hall was large enough to take a good sized hall table and also, eventually, a full sized pram. There were two spacious reception rooms and a smallish kitchen, a downstairs loo, a coal store and a large larder. There were two very good size bedrooms and a third smaller one. Even that was larger than most. (When we sold the house seven years later, it was bought by a family with six children because bunkbeds and a single bed could accommodate three children in the smallest bedroom.)

We agreed to buy the house for £2175. I remember saying to David 'This is the most expensive thing we shall ever buy', never thinking that in 10 years' time we would buy a second-hand Ford Cortina for exactly the same amount of money.

The next move was negotiating with the building society. David had been saving with the Halifax for a while so we asked them about a mortgage. As he was one of their customers they agreed. We were relieved as I remember mortgages were not easy to get in those days. They would only give us an 80% mortgage because of the age of the house and in 1961 only the man's salary was considered in assessing ability to repay as most women gave up work when they started a family. We had each been saving as much as we could for a moment like this so now was the time to raid the bank accounts. I was in my first year of teaching and my gross salary was £520 a year. When tax, National Insurance and Superannuation had been paid I was left with about £34 a month. I had saved every penny I could since the previous September and, with some money from my 21st birthday, I managed to contribute about half of the £400 deposit. I remember carrying my £200 share of the deposit, clutched tightly to my body, expecting at any minute to be robbed, but we managed to reach the solicitor's office without mishap. We handed over the deposit and then had to wait, impatiently, for all the formalities to be completed before receiving the keys to our very own, first home in a few weeks' time.

Then began the hard work!

Childhood Memories from Richard Carey

Mine was a happy childhood I enjoyed primary school (except maths and spelling test) but really looked forward to playing football in Millhouses park in the 6 weeks holiday. I either went down in a group and got a game against another group, or stood behind a goal (couple of jumpers) and waited to be asked to join in. I would go down at 9 in a morning play till one, then rush home for lunch, race back for 2 and play again till 5. It was then back home for tea, down to the park for 6 and play till dusk. My mum's only words of advice were 'make sure you cross Abbeydale road at the crossing'.

I often go past the park during the school holidays now and see nobody playing football or cricket in groups. They are probably in bedrooms playing football on their computer games. Very sad, not much fun in my eyes and no social interaction or physical health benefits.

I left school (Sheffield City Grammar School on Orchard Lane/Leopold Street) in 1960 with not much to my credit. That summer I worked on a farm near Shepton Mallet in Somerset and I was determined to go to Agricultural College. However, my parents insisted I went to Secretarial College for a year and that is probably the best thing that could have happened to me. I went to Westbourne Secretarial College at Broomhill and it gave me a trade which would stand me in very good stead. I started work with the Halifax Building Society on the corner of Surrey Street and Norfolk Street as a shorthand typist in June 1961. This was my first full time job. I had, of course, like most other kids, been a paper girl from the age of 11 and also worked in shops on Saturdays from being 14.

My wages were £30 per month (a very good wage for a 17 year old girl in those days) and I had to hand these over to my Mother intact!! I was not old enough and had not earned the right to "pay my board". Out of the £30 my Mother gave me back £6 for myself as spending money for the month or 30/- per week. However, she did provide all my food including packing up and also all my clothes. One night a week I went to night school, going straight from work and my Mother gave me 3/- to buy a meal out. I went to Davy's on Fargate and invariably had a prawn omelette and chips – my Mother didn't go in for "fancy" cooking so I took this opportunity to live the high life!!

It was whilst I was working at the Halifax that I attended my first Dinner Dance!!! Wow! How grown up I felt. It was held at the Hathersage Inn.

During the early 60's we still regularly experienced pea-soupers – smog. I recall one occasion when I left work and had to literally feel my way along the buildings on Surrey Street to be able to get to the bus on Leopold Street (Lord knows why buses were still running!). I managed to do this until I got to the top of Fargate and then had to somehow find my way without the help of buildings, across to the other side and on to Leopold Street. But there again, so did everyone else and I suppose everyone just pulled together and co-operated.

Even though I had left school and was working, my parents were reluctant to let me go very far. So the big night out for me was the dance on Saturday nights at St. Columba's in Crosspool. I also went to the Youth Club there where I had been going since the late 50's. Soon, however, I was itching to spread my wings and managed to persuade them to let me go to the Locarno at the bottom of London Road on Friday nights. This was thought to be the better night because on Saturday, the dancing had to stop by midnight so as not to go into Sunday!! Not that it made much difference to me anyway because I had to catch the last bus home which was at ten to eleven from Leopold Street.

In 1961 as soon as I was 17 I took out a provisional driving licence and started learning to drive. A friend of my Father taught me and my brother (who was only 20 months older than I was) and a friend (who was only three years older) took me out in their cars to practise. I only had one lesson with a driving school which was the hour before my test to enable me to use their car for the test. I am happy to say that I passed first time. Of course, it was much easier than now as there was so much less traffic. It was, in any case, a long time before I owned my own car.

I met my husband in 1963 at the Nether Edge Dance Hall and we became engaged the following year. We immediately started to save up and in November 1964 we bought our first house. Having worked at the Halifax Building Society I knew that I never wanted to rent – I thought it was "dead money". We spent every evening and weekend decorating the house in preparation for our Wedding the following year and on Saturday the 3rd April 1965 we tied the knot at St. John's Ranmoor. Strangely enough I now live in the cottage which looks straight over to the main door of the church – I could never have foreseen that.

About this time I worked for a spell in Manchester (in Brown Street) and travelled daily from Sheffield but the station in use at that time was the Victoria Station – in fact I don't think I had even been to the Midland Station.

At that time you received (or at least your husband received) a tax refund as he would get a married man's allowance which was back dated to the beginning of the year and so everyone tried to get married on the last Saturday before the year end. Because of this it was difficult to get anywhere for the Reception. Queenie Stokes was the Landlady at the Crosspool Tavern and she offered to cater for us. She only ever catered for two Wedding Receptions – ours and the older brother of a friend. We were allowed a maximum of 40 guests and the cost per head was 6/6d which is 32 ½p, in today's money.

My dress cost £20 which I bought from a shop at the top of Fargate, and I had a grey suit to go away in. I chose grey so that I would be able to wear it for work afterwards. Our honeymoon was four days in London.

My parents bought us a second hand dining suite and his parents bought us a carpet. My husband's two grandmothers bought us an easy chair each – we only furnished one room. The previous owners left us a double bed – the wife had not wanted to take it because her Mother had died in it!! But beggars can't be choosers so we said "Thank you very much". My uncle worked for Wigfalls in Nottingham and he offered us a second hand television for £2 but we couldn't afford to have it. We didn't buy things on tick then. If you didn't have the money you just didn't have it.

Shortly after we were married, my husband started to travel further and further with his job. He was a Commissioning Engineer with the CEGB (Central Electricity Generating Board). He worked at various Power Stations – Drax, Runcorn, Tilbury etc – so we had to be prepared to leave Sheffield. By 1966 we were living in Dartford, my husband was travelling to Tilbury and I was working in London. I had to take a bus, a mainline train and a tube to get to work and back but I rather enjoyed certain aspects. I worked in Salisbury Square, just off Fleet Street and as I had always been interested in history, I found it fascinating to spend my lunch break wandering around the streets and alleyways and I spent many happy hours in the Records Office on Fetter Lane.

We rented a lady's front room in Dartford – she had other lodgers besides us. One was an elderly gentleman who had the "box room" on the first floor and the other double bedroom was rented by a chap called John who had been in the Korean War. He had been captured and tortured in a Labour Camp. I once caught sight of his upper body as he went into the bathroom and it was most dreadfully scarred. I have never forgotten that.

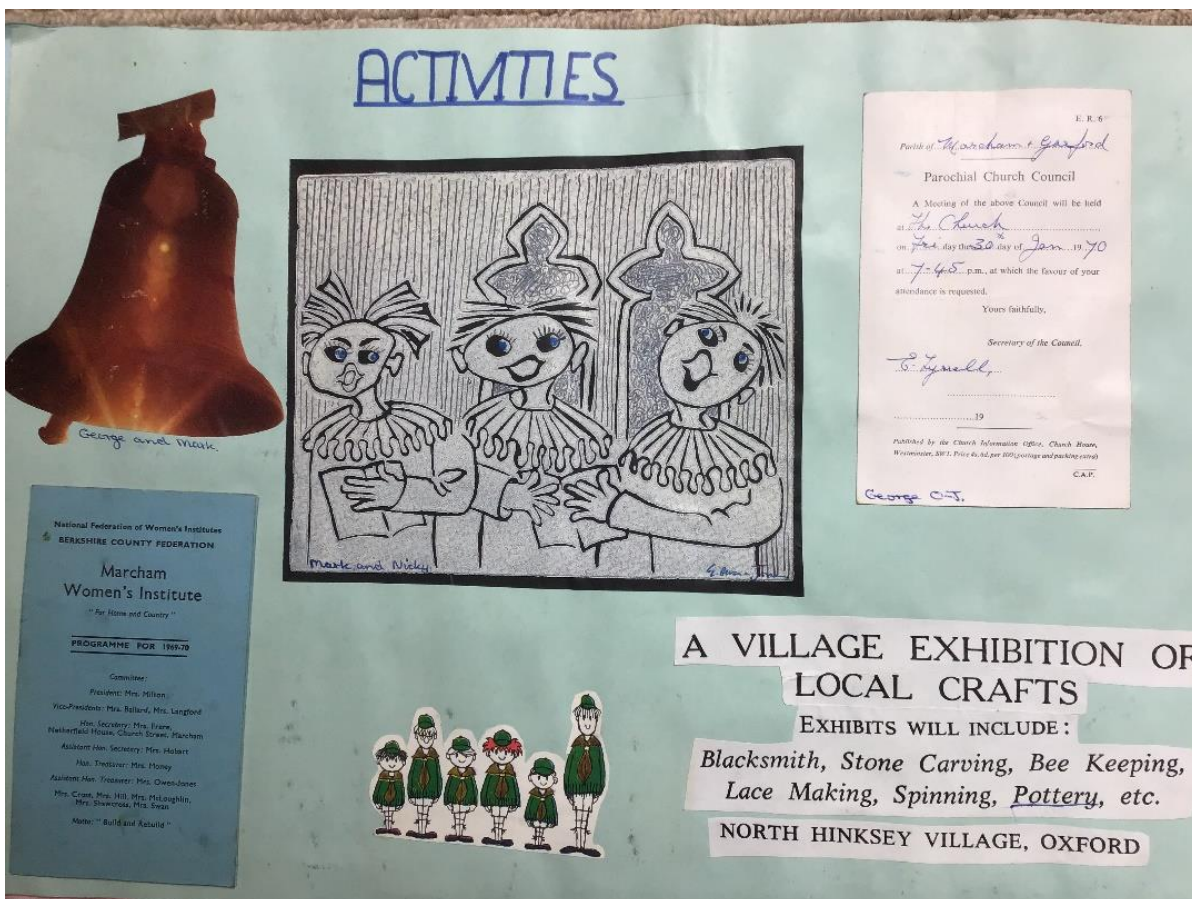
Sometime after this episode we went to live in Selby and had "digs" at the George Hotel there which was close to Eggborough Power Station where my husband worked and I worked in Woodhouse Square in Leeds, travelling by train each day. It was curious to note that my train fare each day was 2/6d for a return ticket Selby to Leeds. However, on a Friday because I went straight to Sheffield from work, the one-way ticket should have been 2/9d!!! Needless to say, I still bought a return ticket to save the 3d.

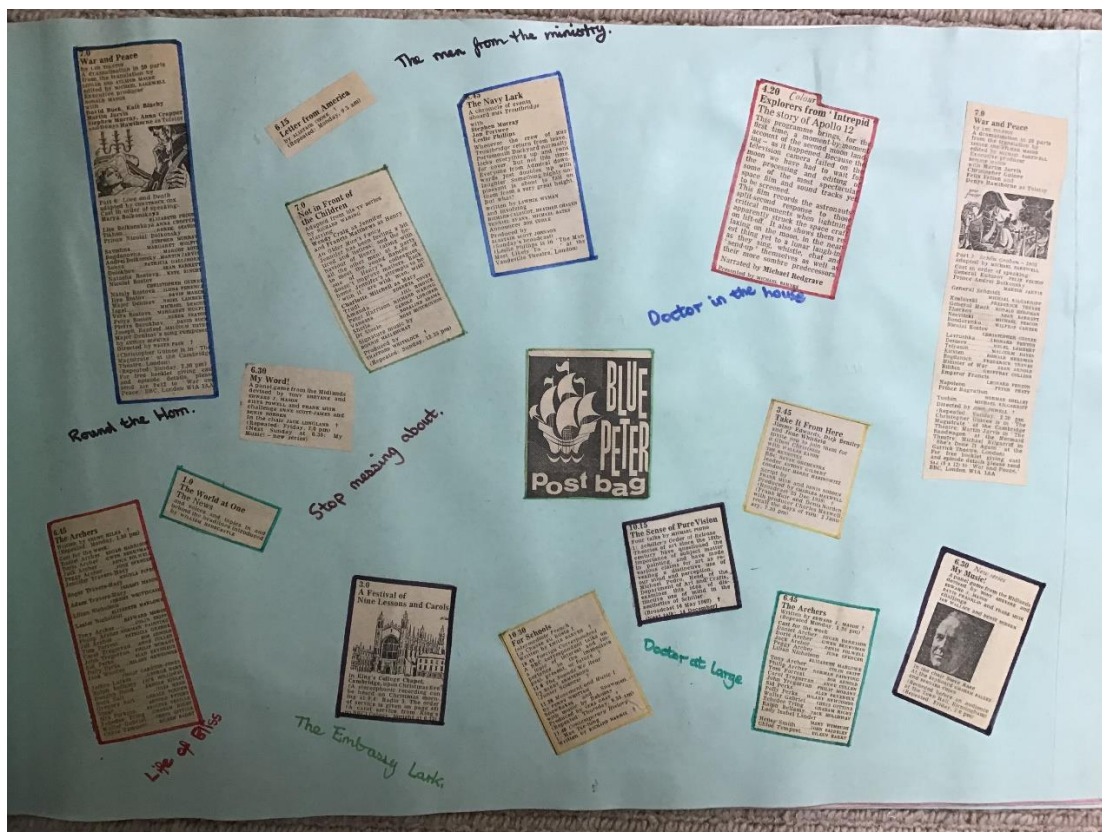
Living in "digs" was not to my liking when we had a perfectly good home of our own in Sheffield so I took a permanent job working as a legal secretary for Messrs. H. Shelley Barker and Son. My husband travelled daily though as he was by this time working for a Power Station much closer to home (I forget which one) it worked out reasonably well. I worked at the top of Angel Street on the opposite corner to C & A (I think it was called Yorkshire Bank Chambers but am not 100% sure). We overlooked the building of the Hole in the Road.

This came to an end in 1968 when our first child was born in September of that year. My husband's job started to take him further afield again and his next placing was at Rugeley Power Station. He rented a shack (described as a holiday cottage) for us in the middle of Cannock Chase in September of the following year when our son was one year old. The shack was rectangular and was made from "clapboard". It was divided in the middle with the left hand half being the living room and the right hand half being divided again into two bedrooms. The toilet block was some distance away. In the middle of the living room was a "pot-bellied" stove. It was a very wet September and the insides of the walls dripped with water. My son tripped and fell against the stove with his hand. I ran with him in a pushchair, all the way to Rugeley hospital which was four miles away. Needless to say our sojourn in Cannock Chase came to an abrupt end.

The following year in June 1970 our daughter was born but by this time my husband was working at Pembroke Power Station and we had rented a holiday flat at Freshwater East. I had moved down to Wales when six months pregnant. The nearest shops to the holiday flats (which were empty other than us) were two and a half miles away in Lamphey, which meant a five mile round trip with an eighteen month old in a pushchair. Pembroke itself was four miles away. After our daughter was born in Sheffield (I had to come back to Yorkshire for the birth in case she had been a boy!!) and I went back to Wales, I made sure we were able to get one of the CEGB tied houses in Monckton on the fringes of Pembroke. Whilst there I made friends with two other girls, Carol and Jacky and I am still in touch with them now. I would occasionally borrow the car from my husband which was a Ford Zephyr and which had bench seats. We packed three women, seven children, three pushchairs and everything needed for a day out into the one car and went down to the beach. Happy days, happy memories.

21 Nicky Husband's mother encouraged her to keep a scrap book. Here are copies of some of the pages





Whitworth's Australian sultanas 12oz net

BIRDS EYE

NEW ZEALAND LAMB

NESCAFÉ

WFD

Andrex

Kellogg's CORN FLAKES

GALE'S COUNTRY HONEY

Colman's MUSTARD

LYONS PREMIUM 19

HEINZ

SPAGHETTI

Camay

NABISCO

Kellogg's FROSTIES

ENGLISH CHEESE

BIRDS

Instant Stock Powder

Knorr

FOOD PRICES SPRING 1970

* Supermarket price.

Weight	Article	Price	Weight	Article	Price
1/2 lb.	Tea (Lyons)	1/4.	1/2 lb.	Sauwages (Large)	3/2.
* 1/2 lb.	Coffee (Marscap)	5/0.	2oz	Curry Powders	1/11
2lb.	Sugar (Frankfurter)	1/6.		Cream Crackers	1/3.
1/2 lb.	Butter (N.Z.)	2/7 1/4.		Digestive Biscuits	1/2.
1/2 lb.	Marg. (Stork)	1/1.	3lb.	Flour. S.R.	2/3.
1lb.	Canadian Cheddar	4/6.			
1lb.	N.Z. Cheddar	3/6.			
1lb.	Eggs (Standard)	4/6.			
1lb.	Bacon (Sneaky)	4/6.			
* 1lb.	Long Spaghetti	1/8.			
	Tinned Pineapple	1/11.			
* 1lb.	Baked Beans	1/4.			
	Large White Loaf	1/11.			
	Large Brown Loaf	1/11.			
	1 pint Milk	11d.			
12oz.	Jam	2/6.			
8oz.	Marmite	5/1.			
1lb.	Patina Rice	1/9.			
	Ovaltine	2/3.			

Andrex (clousterly) 1/11.

* 3oz Camay 1/3.

1lb. Potatoes (New) 1/2.

Mace Washing Up 1/6.

