

Sheffield U3A 1960s Fashion Project: What We Wore



This document has been compiled by members of the Sheffield University of the Third Age (SU3A) who formed a Fashion Group as part of a wider Remembering the 1960s project. The group met regularly during 2018, sharing memories, photographs and often actual items of clothing that they wore during the 1960s, when most of the group were teenagers or young adults.

The 1960s was a very exciting time to be a young fashion-conscious person, with most having enough spare cash to enjoy the many new styles pouring out of the waves of creativity which characterised the decade in so many ways. New easy-care fabrics became available, and cloth was still cheap enough to enable most women to copy the latest designs by making garments at home. In fact, the ubiquity of home-dressmaking was a key factor which emerged from our project and represents one of the biggest changes in everyday clothing between the 1960s and 50 years later. In those days almost every family had someone skilful enough make their own garments, and doing so was generally less expensive than buying clothing.

Many books and a wealth of information and online resources are now available for students of 1960s fashion history and it is not our intention here to repeat that well-documented narrative. Instead we wanted to tell our own stories and record our personal recollections of our favourite outfits and memories associated with them. We did this by sharing and talking about our photographs, by showing each other garments and accessories we have kept and treasured, by reminiscing, and by writing up those reminiscences. Together, that body of information is represented by this document, which is an *ad hoc* and entirely anecdotal account of the early fashion loves of a random group of people now in their 60s and 70s who had the great good fortune to grow up enjoying and wearing the wonderful, liberating and colourful styles of the 1960s and early 1970s.

What was really interesting about what emerged, is that every single photograph and every item displayed was immediately recognisable as being '60s' and could not have come from another decade, such was the distinctive styling of that era. Even normal, 'non-trendy' people wore items that we now consider iconic to the 60s.

A big Thank You to everyone in the group, together with their friends and relatives, for the wealth of information they uncovered, for their enthusiasm and knowledge, and for sharing it all so readily. We hope that you enjoy this journey into our fashion youth and that it will evoke memories for you as well.



Group members, friends and family modelling some of the garments described in this document at the SU3A Sixties Evening, 13 October 2018.

Begin where you can!

We began by thinking about what we remembered as characterising 1960s fashions and seeing if we could find examples of them. The following is our list and in the event we did cover most things, but not, alas, any 'kinky' boots! Shoes proved the most difficult: for whatever reason, people don't seem to keep shoes!

Items **highlighted** are those we obtained examples of.

1. Paisley and paisley-derived swirly patterns
2. Matching items - took a variety of forms eg matching tweed coat and skirt; matching dress and waistcoat; dress and jacket; long waistcoat and trousers etc
3. Real fur
4. 'Man-made' synthetic fibres: Bri-nylon, Tricel, crimplene; Bushbaby etc
5. Knee high white socks
6. 'Kinky' boots usually of tight fitting leather or vinyl in bright colours eg white or red. Knee high boots in black caught on because of Honor Blackman and the Avengers and then the white Courreges ones
7. 60s colours: orange; pink, brown; purple even before 'psychedelic' designs
8. Trouser suits for women
9. Wide flares eg loons; contrasting triangular material sewn into bottom of jeans to flare them out
10. Early 60s ski sweaters; mohair sweaters (from Beatnik 50s); ski pants with stirrup strap under foot
11. Mid 60s fine knitted polo necks for men under jackets.
12. Student look: army surplus- long warm greatcoat; dyed Gurkha jacket, grandad shirts etc
13. Long scarves: wool, and chiffon in summer
14. Patchwork
15. Hippy look: Maxi skirts/dresses after 1967; tie dye; beads; plastic bead bags; suede fringes; afghan coats; kaftans
16. Biba look: hats, feather boas; skirts on bias; skinny sweaters for men and women
17. Carnaby St boutique dresses
18. Mini skirts eg suede with panels and scalloped hem
19. Waistcoats short and long
20. Checks and tartans
21. Older women: crimplene tunics with belts
22. Bags with big circular metal buckles
23. Jewellery: plastics in bright bold colours
24. Peter Pan collars
25. Drop waists, or high waist smocks
26. Textured and/or coloured tights
27. School: gingham; gymslips
28. Bridesmaids: broderie anglaise
29. Crocheted dresses and tops
30. Op art.
31. Spade shaped pockets on skirts and pinafore dresses etc,
32. Trench coats (which have never really disappeared).
33. Coloured nylon 'pantaloons' trimmed with lace for winter were a good solution to the shorter skirts (not so mini to begin with) to cover suspenders because tights didn't become available till mid-sixties.
34. Paper dresses!
35. Little mirrors in clothes
36. 'Beatle' jackets
37. Mods: sharp suits, narrow tapered trousers; parkas

Our story begins with evocative memories from **Christine**, a member of our group, who was 11 when the decade started:

“Fashion changed as the Sixties progressed eg from girls wearing gloves and hats with Summer outfits to shorter miniskirts and then midis. Synthetic fibres enabled innovation in colour and design. (Eventually, technology enabled natural fibres to be mixed with synthetic to produce fabrics which were more attractive to wear). Sadly, we are now finding traces of Viscose from automatic washing machines are entering our water.”

She recalls:

- Honey Magazine (monthly)
- Lycra in bras
- Advent of tights, liberating you from suspenders (and the worry about bending down in a moderate miniskirt)
- Knee-high leather boots (as per Honor Blackman in ‘The Avengers’) and Courreges ones in white plastic
- Bermuda shorts
- Pink denim jeans
- Fizz colours: one year, Cole Brothers’ (now John Lewis in Sheffield) window had a beautiful Spring display of pastel sherbet colours such as lime green, pale pink and orange with white (like my frilly striped Viva Maria Terylene and cotton lawn blouse of 1967 which I wore when in the audience of University Challenge in Manchester).
- Deerstalker hats: I had one in green corduroy and wore it with tartan tights, green and black trimmed sling-backs, green wool and Courtelle pinafore with black leather buckles with black polo-necked jumper underneath. However it was a bit much for Doncaster, and heads turned!
- Cape coats: mine was in black and white boucle tweed with black wool braid trim around the slits bought from C&A Modes.
- Butcher-striped aprons and other retro items such as bentwood hat stand, enamel mugs, reed woven fishermen’s bags, Sou’westers. These were the sort of things Habitat offered as well as the Army and Navy Stores. Carnaby street in 1966 had old mangles painted up, enamel signs etc. Such a lot was being discarded and ‘modernised’ but good design and natural materials were appreciated by some. This was a design reaction and it was important to visit The Design Centre when I went to London. In the North, in the early days, it felt that this trend was a bit unusual. My friend and I were very aware of style, materials and colour, and wanted to be both fashionable and innovative. This interest extended to buying a cast-iron skillet for spaghetti Bolognese for example from the Rag and Tag Market in Sheffield, bought for a song and still in use today!
- Biba’s Bazaar in London, Lewis Separates on King Street, Sheffield (later bought out by Chelsea Girl), Peter Robinson’s in Sheffield for browsing at their teenage range on the top floor, Shape on Carver Street for looking at furniture, furnishing fabrics and ornaments. Unusual wallpapers (ordered from books) from a shop called Brighter Homes in Doncaster. Cosy Kardomah cafes in Manchester, Leeds, and Nottingham, with their tiles tables, Russian tea in silver holders, Italian coffee and two-tone Denby Pottery soup dishes (these were bought out and turned into Wimpy Bars).
- Markets such as Doncaster, Rotherham and Mexborough were a good source of remnants especially from the woollen mills of the West Riding. My mother was a dab-hand at tailoring and dressmaking. Other sources of fabric by the yard were The Spinning Wheel in Hallgate, Doncaster; Cole Brothers; John Lewis in Oxford street, London; Cockayne’s in Angel street, Sheffield (later to become Schofield’s

whose main store was in The Headrow, Leeds); John Walsh's, rebuilt after the war (later House of Fraser, Sheffield), and an independent shop Leslie Fabrics, on the upper floor balcony of the Castle Market development.

- Pale pink peppermint flavoured lipstick!

"All so exciting and a lovely contrast to working hard on school work!"

Early 60s

Whitsuntide

In the early 1960s it was still traditional for ordinary people to buy and wear their new summer outfit at Whitsuntide. **Wendy** recalls:

"Each Whitsun my sister and I got new clothes: sandals, dress and even once summer straw bonnets. That tradition died out in the early 60s."



Whitsun dresses with velvet belts and straw hats!

In Sheffield the traditional Whit Monday parades, often organised by Nonconformist chapels, lasted into the 1970s. Here is **Julia** on her 1961 Sunday School Whitsun walk. She is wearing a floral full-skirted "sticky-out" dress and white shoes:



In the early 60s before the teenage revolution, teenage girls dressed very much like their elders and looked much older than their actual age. Here at this party of 13-14 year olds, **Lyn** wears a homemade dress with a classic Peter Pan white collar while her friend appears to be wearing a string of pearls. Another wears a mohair cardigan.



School uniform from the mid-60s:



Girls' uniform was modelled on boys', with ties, blouses that resembled shirts, V-necked jumpers, and blazers with the school badge. It was also the tail-end of 'gymslips' or heavy woollen serge tunic-skirts that had been regulation uniform for girls since the 1920s.

After the advent of miniskirts, 'petticoat inspections' were regularly held whereby the girls knelt on the floor and a teacher with a ruler would measure the distance from their skirt hem to the floor, and check that no petticoats were showing! About 2 inches was the maximum distance allowed above the knee!

Matching outfits

Suits or 'costumes' comprising matching coats and dresses; coats and skirts; or skirts and jackets were a fashionable item for women in the early 60s. They came in light fabrics for summer and heavy tweedier fabrics for winter. Here is **Jill B** who was an art student in 1964 wearing a herringbone tweed coat and matching skirt from John Lewis:



and here are **Julia and friend** in 1965 on a trip to London wearing skirt and jacket suits in similar tweedy fabrics:



Lyn wearing a matching dress and jacket in a lighter fabric, with typical pointed toe shoes of the early 60s:



Stephanie owned a blue Courtelle suit, which she bought for a wedding - white hat, gloves etc. and also wore for her interview to be a nurse. That would probably have been 1964.

Mini skirts

For most people, the most defining item of fashion from the 1960s was the mini skirt. Skirt lengths had been shortening since the early 60's, with 'ya-ya' skirts appearing as early as 1962 in London. It is not known who 'invented' them but certainly Mary Quant was an active proponent of them and is also credited with inventing the coloured and patterned tights that soon replaced the nylon stockings and suspender belts that were unsuitable to wear with rising hemlines. Mini skirts remained popular well into the 1970s.



Claire wearing a Moroccan loose flower print cotton top as a mini dress.



Pat C on holiday in 1967 wearing a short cotton dress with Peter Pan collar, bought in Oxford Street London, and round-toed shoes with strap.



Lyn wearing a diamond check 'op art' pattern button-through mini shirt dress. Op Art (short for optical art) was a distinctive black and white abstract pattern that uses optical illusions to create swirling or 3-D effects. **Christine** painted buttons black and white to add to garments. **Wendy** designed an abstract pattern for O-level Art and had it screen-printed in black onto white cotton.

Friends of Michelle's Dad wearing very short minis:



Mini dress with halter neck and keyhole design still being worn in 1973:



Art students

Jill B was an art student at Ealing School of Art in the early 60s. Here she is aged about 16 wearing a Liberty print dress made by herself to her own pattern, empire line, with a dipped front and elbow length sleeves. She copied dresses from Mary Quant, Harrods or Liberty:



By 1968-9 Jill was an art student at Goldsmiths College. Like most other girls, by then she had grown out her fringe and hair into a long straight style. Here she wears a black Mary Quant dress with a Peter Pan collar bought in Carnaby Street. She also wore Biba.



Sarah was an art student in Manchester in 1965. She sent the following photographs and writes:

“We used each other as models, though one photo was actually in Honey magazine, when they came to colleges and universities to produce a 'Northern edition'. Unfortunately they are black and white, but they bring back memories for me.

The one with the car was taken by a photography student as part of a number for an advert for the car, though the mink cost more than the Daimler. The client didn't use this one, but a much more glamorous one where I lay on the bonnet, and you couldn't see the coat.

The next one was bright orange and yellow, and was designed by a fashion student. They used fellow students like me to model their designs in the annual fashion show, until they realised that to make a real impact they should hire professional models, which they started to do the next year, hiring mail order catalogue models, of whom there were plenty, as Great Universal, Freemans, etc, produced their catalogues in Manchester.



“The one where I look very sulky is the one Honey used when they produced a 'Northern Edition'. The dress was fabulous, by Lee Cecil, in cream twill, beautifully tailored, and more special than I had ever worn before. I really wanted it. It was above knee level, which in '65 was considered quite short, though of course by the end of the 60s, as you know, we were wearing considerably shorter garments. I was a real fashion victim, working evenings and weekends so that I could dress in the latest clothes. I was a good dressmaker, and with Manchester being the centre of the textile industry I could get fabric, so I copied Quant, etc”



Another art student was **Christopher** who was 17 in 1966 and studying at Bradford Art College. This is his first passport photo wearing pastel blue cravat and pastel green shirt:



Weddings

Wendy and her sister were bridesmaids at their aunt's wedding in 1961. They wore broderie anglaise dresses, in pastel blue, hand-made by the bride. The dresses had side pleats.



The bride had a disaster with her dress. When she went to collect it two days before her wedding, she found that instead of just taking up the long sleeves, the shop had cut them short. She refused to buy the dress and instead was forced to go to the chain store C&A and buy a cheap replacement.

The family group shows the style of hats, suits and coats worn:



Viv sent a wedding picture from July 1969 in Rotherham. She made the watermarked taffeta dress and white broderie anglaise frilled bonnet:



Angela's wedding dress was made by her sister who was studying fashion at Birmingham College of Art at the time. It was actually like a coat since she was married in mid-December 1966, with a gathered back and a short train. It was white cotton with a blue lining and she wore a bonnet covered with white daisies. Angela on her wedding day, and wearing her dress at the SU3A Fashion Show on 13 October 2018:



At this early 1960s wedding it was the bridesmaid who wore a crocheted bonnet with an Empire line dress, while the bride had a false hair top-knot encircled by a “tiara” very similar to what Princess Margaret had worn:



Jan's parents dressed for a wedding in 1963 display the formality of the early years of the decade. Her father wears a morning suit and her mother a real fur stole, hat made of scrunched-up velvet, and a 'costume' of wool tweed.



Lyn as a bridesmaid aged 13 wore a dress of flocked nylon which she “loathed with a passion.” Flock fabric is material to which layers of added fibres have been adhered to create a raised pattern effect.



At 16 Lyn preferred this dress. She wore it once more after replacing the short sleeves with long cream lace ones but then “the whole 60s casual thing came in” so she never wore it again. Notice the Alice bands, simple darted dresses, and pointed-toed low stiletto heels.

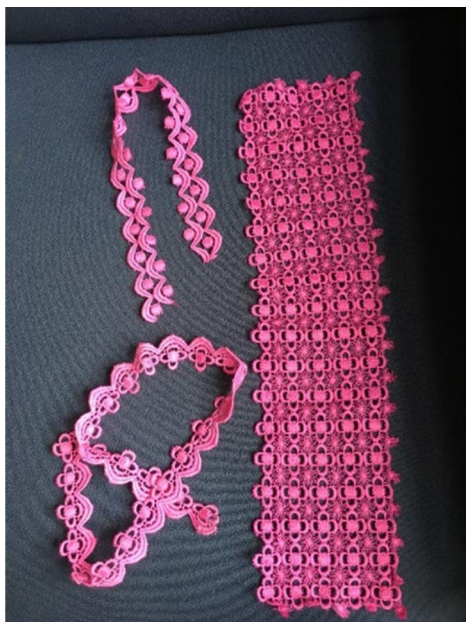


Lyn's own wedding was in 1971 but illustrates some 60s trends. The bridesmaid wore a Laura Ashley type dress instead of traditional satin from Debenhams or Cole Brothers and her pink suede shoes cost £5.



Lyn made her own veil and headdress as "I wanted something more 'casual' than traditional tiaras". It was clusters of artificial lily-of-the-valley.

The material was lace – here are some remnants of the fabric, now dyed pink:



The wedding of **Myra** and **David** in Sheffield in 1970 illustrates typical wedding styles of the late 60s: double-breasted jacket and flared trousers; brightly-coloured paisley print tie; tartan coat; low heeled square-toe shoes; broderie anglaise material for bridesmaid dresses:



Stephanie was married in 1970. Her bridesmaid's dresses were in blue and white cotton floral material, a close-up of which is shown in the photo of the doll:



Stephanie's wedding dress was subsequently recycled:



“A miniature of my wedding dress. A friend cut it down to fit my daughters when they made their First Holy Communion”.

Her going away outfit was a red wool dress and coat, worn with a white hat. It was bought in London and the designer was Barry Sherrard:



Previously in 1969 Stephanie had been a bridesmaid at her brother's wedding. Her dress was home-made in dark red velvet:



When **Rita** married in the early 1970s in a Registry Office she chose a non-conventional outfit. As the wedding was in December she wore a warm wool maxi-dress in woven autumnal shades made by the famous designer John Bates whose fashion label was Jean Varon. Bates was an innovator: as early as 1962 he was designing plastic garments, and some consider him to have invented the mini-skirt.



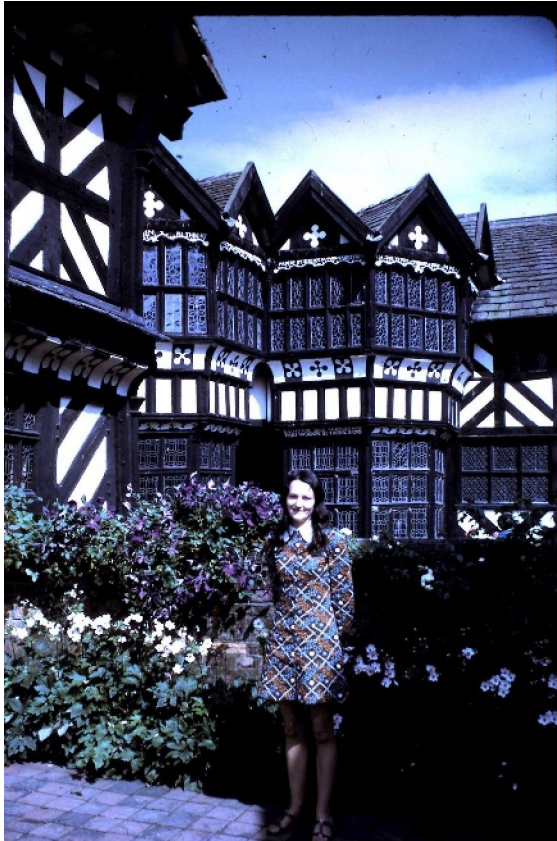
The dress today with close-up of the unusual weave. Rita's mother hand-sewed the long-sleeved blouse. The outfit was completed with a felt hat and brown patent leather handbag with matching shoes.



Everyday 'gear'

Clothes were often referred to by the slang words 'gear' or 'clobber'.

Lyn's wonderful photo archive encapsulates so many aspects of the 60's look:



A-line check dress in brown and blue with contrasting white Peter Pan collar.



The dress on the left was a riot of rainbow stripes in contrast to her Mum's bri-nylon top and cotton skirt. The same friend about 3 years earlier with her mother, wearing a mohair cardigan with a large collar.



Suede hipster belt, polo neck sweater and flared panelled mini skirt. Mum in coatdress-style crimplene.



Skinny rib neon pink top with belt in pink/turquoise to match sleeve trim; mini skirt; low heels with straps. Pale pink lipstick.

Skinny knit ribbed tops were worn with mini skirts and later with flared trousers for a long, lean profile. Here is **Claire** with Vidal Sassoon-inspired haircut in 1966 wearing a hand-knitted sleeveless skinny rib and later in the 60s wearing a skinny top with bell-bottomed trousers:



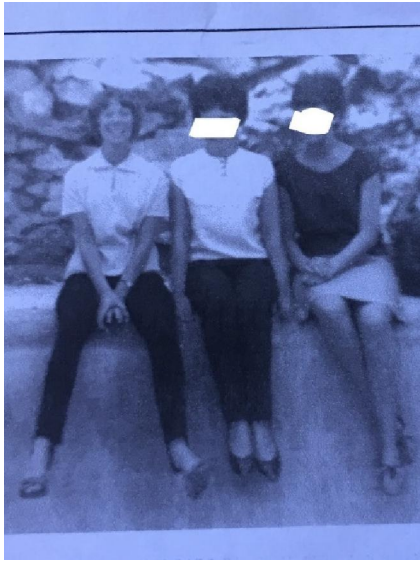
Trousers

Women wearing trousers had become a fact of life in the Second World War when 'land girls' who were women working on farms while male workers were away in the armed services wore trousers for practicality. After that, trousers were there to stay for women despite the formalities of many workplaces forbidding them. Ski and cropped 'capri' pants were popular leisure items throughout the 50s and early 60s, but it was after Ossie Clark in 1964 and Yves Saint-Laurent in 1966 introduced their designer 'trouser suits' that trousers became an acceptable item of dress for women both in formal situations and especially as leisurewear.

Here is **Anne** in 1960 with a friend wearing the popular 'ski pants' that had a strap going under the arch of the foot:



Here is **Julia** with two friends wearing narrow-legged trousers on holiday in 1963:



Denim jeans crossed the boundary from lower-class workwear to style icon after James Dean wore them in the 1950s film *Rebel without a Cause*. By the mid-1960s the front zipper had replaced the fly for both men's and women's styles and they became the *de rigeur* item of casual clothing for hippies and indeed most young people from the time of the first great pop music festivals. As the decade drew to a close, the hems of jeans got ever wider, and many who were teenagers then recall opening the side seams of jeans and stitching in triangles of contrasting coloured fabric to make 'flared' jeans.

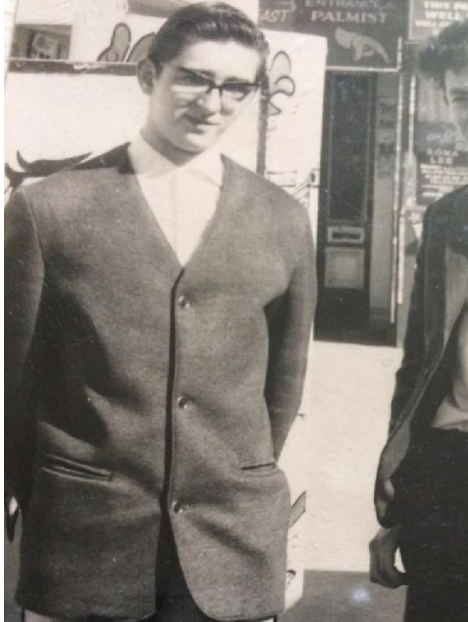
Lighter-weight cotton wide-flared or 'bell bottom' trousers were called 'loons'. They came in a wide range of bright colours and could be bought mail-order from advertisements in magazines such as *Melody Maker*, or if you lived in Sheffield, from a shop called - we think - Charlie Shuttleworth which sold imported loons.

Culottes or divided skirts were also popular in the mid-60s. Here **Jan** wears lightweight culottes with a suede sleeveless slipover over a blouse in 1968:



Coats to die for

One of the most famous styles of the decade was the round-necked 'Beatle jacket' worn by the Fab Four for their early TV performances. It was characterised by the absence of a collar. Here is **Glynn** in Blackpool in 1963 wearing a V-neck version:



David Lean's 1965 film *Dr Zhivago* was extremely influential on fashion, especially the many winter coats worn by Julie Christie in the movie. On the left is a *Dr Zhivago*-inspired coat bought with **Lyn's** first teaching pay rise: "The most wonderful thing I had ever owned." On the right, **Lyn** in a classic mid-60s check coat, worn with chisel-toe shoes, gloves and floppy hat.



Christine recalls:

“There are many other memories about what I wore such as the long red guardsman cloth coat with black frogs and trimmed with black fur on the bottom in the style of Lara from the film *Dr Zhivago*. Another of my Mother’s memorable creations! When I went back after Christmas and wore it, boys (often with long hair) suddenly became gentlemen and opened doors for me! I, in turn, felt like a lady!”

Check was a pattern favoured by all age groups eg **Rita’s friend** wearing a crimplene mini style at a late 1960s wedding and **Myra’s mother** wearing a plaid winter coat in 1970:



The ‘military’ look was another popular coat fashion trope, especially after the Beatles wore 19th century military-style jackets on the cover of their seminal 1967 album *Sergeant Pepper*. Here is an original woollen cavalry style jacket worn as a trophy by American Indians adorned with Eagle feathers. Worn in early 1970’s as fashionable Romantic Look with a sixties white lace scarf:



Wendy remembers buying a white Gurkha jacket in the Army and Navy Surplus Store in Liverpool in 1969 and dyeing it red.

Brian was 17 in 1969 when this photo was taken at a free festival in Weston Park, Sheffield. His girlfriend wears a typical cotton check smock top with flared jeans, and there are several army surplus-type greatcoats in the background.



Some men's styles have hardly changed in 50 years. This wool overcoat by Burton was bought as a 21st birthday present for **Joe** in 1964 and is still as good as new:



Another popular style in the 60s was the Reefer jacket or pea coat. Originally worn by 'reefers' in the Navy who worked the sails midships, the jacket was designed short to just above the thighs to allow for freedom of movement climbing the rigging. They were made of wool for warmth and as a water repellent. After the end of the Second World War, the Navy sold off unwanted reefer coats in Government Surplus stores. As part of the cool military look, the Reefer became very chic especially after Michael Caine wore a suede version in the film *The Italian Job*.

Here **Jan** wears a Reefer Jacket with a mini skirt in 1967:



Sharon bought this 1960s jacket in a vintage shop. It has very unusual fur buttons and was made by a clothing company called Lerose which had 3 factories in Birmingham and about 6 shops around the West Midlands. The firm was most productive in the 1960s and 1970s and specialised in jersey, which is the fabric of this jacket. The firm closed down about 1988.



Burberry is a UK fashion brand that has been adored since its founder invented water-repellent gabardine in 1879. King Edward VII is reputed to have instructed his valet to “Fetch me my Burberry”. Surplus stock of the trench coat style adapted by Burberry for officers in the trenches of the First World War was made available to civilians after the war and rapidly became a hit with the well-to-do. In the 40s the trench coat featured in *film noir* and famously in *Casablanca*, and it resurfaced as the ultimate chic in the French New Wave films of the 60s, being worn by men, and women such as Charlotte Rampling and Charlotte Gainsbourg. Michael Caine also popularised it in the 1971 gangster film *Get Carter*.

This vintage mac owned by **Wendy** shows the classic ladies' trench style as well as the iconic chequered Burberry lining:



The trench coat style was not restricted to the original designer. **Wanda** wore a Marks and Spencer version:

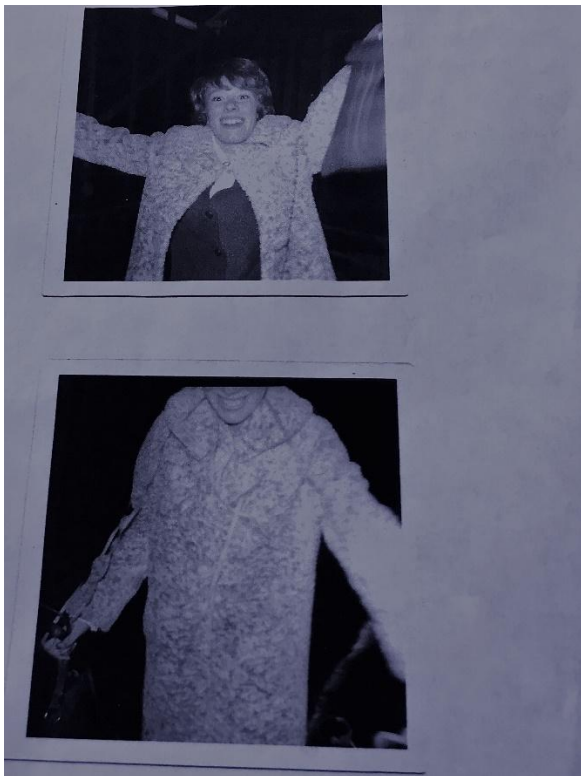


Real or faux fur coats were also very fashionable. This car coat belonged to **Don** and is made from the famous Borg false fur fabric that became widely-used in the 1960s.



Faux astrakhan (the imitation curly wool of a newborn or foetal karakul lamb from central Asia) was also popular in the 60s as a coat trim or for an entire garment.

Here is **Julia** wearing her astrakhan coat in 1963:



Vivien wearing a real red fox jacket bought in Doncaster and a large floppy brimmed hat circa 1973:



Claire remembers buying mail order from *Honey* magazine a white faux fur knee-length coat which she sewed together herself. There was a Honey boutique franchise in Robert Brothers shop on The Moor, in Sheffield.

Later, in 1970, Claire bought a real fur coat from a second-hand shop in Brighton:



Lyn also owned a fur coat. She had a “double breasted kid-skin coat I bought for 21 1/2 guineas in April ‘67. It was above the knee length with collar and revers, pockets inset in the side seams and large shiny buttons with a pattern similar to frosted glass. [Still have 2 of them in my button box]. I converted it to single breasted to accommodate my first pregnancy in 1975, then stopped wearing it altogether when the fur backlash came in. It has since been cut up to make fancy dress outfits for the grandchildren and a stole for an Amdram production of *Separate Tables*.”

This faux leopard skin 60s coat was bought from a charity shop in the 1990s. It was handmade to a very high standard:



In the late 60s, ‘Afghan’ coats became *de rigueur* for the aspiring hippy look. **Wendy** remembers being given £20 by her father for her 18th birthday to buy a “good winter coat” and returning with an Afghan coat in brown suede embroidered in green which smelt very strongly in the rain, much to her father’s disgust.

Claire owned a similar style Afghan, worn here in the early 1970s with bellbottoms:



The Hippy Look

Following the Summer of Love in 1967 and the Beatles' trip in 1968 to visit the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, 'ethnic' style fashions from the sub-continent and north Africa became extremely popular, such as the Afghan coats already mentioned.

Clothes for young women became less fitted, looser, and a trend began for long skirts which again lasted well into the 70s. The lightweight fabrics from India such as printed cotton and semi-transparent 'cheesecloth' provided cheap and ubiquitous summer wear.

Popular styles were loose tunic-type tops and 'kaftans' or long, loosely-fitting, long sleeved garments worn by men and women closely modelled on dress worn in the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent for thousands of years.

Anne S bought this fabulous embroidered velvet kaftan in Carnaby Street in 1970:



This beautiful example worn by Claire in 1969 is an Indian cotton maxi dress with a high waistline. She also wears a protective Hand of Fatima amulet bought in Morocco in 1968, and has coloured her hair with henna.



Claire had a great collection of this style of fashion. The unusual garment below is not a maxi skirt but a pair of wide trousers made from heavy woven cotton in Pakistan for female farm workers, and purchased by Claire in the USA:



Other garments owned by Claire included this Indian print top and matching long skirt and a couple of yards of Indian fabric in the sacred colour orange which she sewed into a loop and wrapped around herself sari-style to create a skirt. She also sewed herself a maxi skirt made from a paisley print patterned fabric inspired by traditional Indian designs:



Paisley and derivative swirly patterns were a very characteristic feature of 60s fashion.

The style often merged with Art Nouveau-inspired abstract designs in the bright colours also thought to be so typically 1960s: oranges, purples, pinks, lime greens and browns. These came to be called 'psychedelic' after the popularity of hallucinogenic art inspired by consciousness-altering drugs such as LSD.

Wendy aged 15 bought this minidress in Carnaby Street in 1967 en route to France for a school exchange visit:



This dress label says “Concept – Designed by Diana for Sambo of London”. Sambo was the trade name of Samuel Sherman who began designing clothes in the 1950s and established the very popular Dollyrocker label about 1964. Patti Boyd was chosen as their main model and shortly afterwards began dating George Harrison, thereby guaranteeing massive publicity for the label. Concept was another of Sambo’s boutique labels which used bright patterns for dresses that frequently sold out after only a day or so on sale in the boutiques of London.

Maxi or long dresses then as now were worn for formal occasions such as dinners or university balls. Here **Christine** wears for the Keele University Commem Ball in 1968 a long Empire style pink and gold printed ball dress made by her mother from material bought at Cole Brothers Sheffield, together with long pink Lycra gloves and satin sling-backed pink shoes. There was a pink velvet cape to match. The shoes were dyed for her by Timpsons to match the dress:





This sequined top was bought by **Lyn** in Spring 1966 in London for a Student Ball. It was originally worn over a long slim-fitting white crepe dress, and was worn with long stretchy cream lurex gloves:



More casual evening wear was starting to come in for this University Ball:



Lyn is wearing a real-hair hairpiece on an Alice band which cost £5! The skirt detail isn't easy to see, but it had a complicated 3-D woven band on the bottom part of the skirt. She kept the hairpiece until about 6 years ago when she gave it to the wig department at the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester where she volunteered.

Wendy bought this maxi dress for a company's dinner-dance cruise on the Thames in 1974 from Richard Shops in Oxford Street, London. It has a printed chiffon top with fluted mediaeval-style wide sleeves, attached to a black crepe under-dress:



An earlier similar design is this beautiful floaty chiffon wraparound blouse with fluted sleeves, in a purple and sage green Japanese print, dating from 1968:



The older generation

The style of clothing was a defining feature of the emerging 'generation gap' in the 1960s. Older people in particular were much less likely to adopt the more extreme modern styles such as mini skirts or tight low-slung trousers, which were designed for skinny young figures, and on many photographs elderly women can still be seen wearing the highly-tailored waisted and fitted styles of the 1950s or even the 1940s.

However our photographs show middle aged people embracing some of the new looks:



'Shirtwaister' dress from 1959/60. This style of dress remained fashionable for several years. The bodice was made like a man's shirt, but usually with short sleeves, a reverse collar, and buttoned opening to the waist. There was a full gathered skirt, and a belt in matching fabric. Here it is worn with a typically 50s style of hat that fitted over the crown of the head and had no brim or back.

Lyn still has some of the material from the beaded top of her Mum's red velvet evening dress from the mid-60s.

In 1961, **Jan's mother** was invited to a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. For this memorable occasion she chose to wear a large pink hat, with a cream matching dress and 'duster' coat. A duster coat is a perennially fashionable lightweight usually full length, non-fastening garment originally worn to protect horse riders' clothing from dust. Her accessories of handbag, shoes and gloves in a toning colour also match each other.



In 1960 Wendy's mother was in hospital. This photograph shows the family, with **her grandmother** visiting the hospital grounds wearing a hat, duster coat and string of pearls!



Make-up and Accessories

A 1960s Mary Quant blusher showing the famous Quant logo, and still not used up!



In the 1960s accessories were democratised and became cheap and cheerful. No longer did one have to be able to afford expensive jewellery or aspire to it with paste copies. Big conspicuous buckles were common on belts and bags, for example, this big heart buckle on a leather belt, late 60s:



Plastic jewellery and accessories were very cheap and popular. Here Wendy wore a bright pink plastic slide in her hair in 1967:



Jan has a plastic daisy flower brooch typical of the time and **Julia** has kept a pair of cute plastic earrings:



Christine:

“It was important to have a matching handbag (such as black patent with patent shoes or dog tooth check in black and white with black patent). I wore a Celtic style brooch of Iona Marble which I bought when on holiday in Oban. Otherwise, we made up art ones. Sometimes I wore a pendant made of Perspex with a dried leaf on a tan leather string”

Here is a picture of **Anne B** in Blackpool in 1961 wearing a 2-piece suit with matching white gloves, stiletto shoes and handbag:



Jan recalls her favourite 60s shoes:

“I had a pair of T-bar shoes with a small heel in apple green which I loved. They came from Barratts. My moon boots were white mid-calf length and I wore them with mini skirts till they fell apart”.

Wendy also remembers a pair of bright green shoes with a strap across and chunky square heels; a pair of almost flat peacock blue shoes with an ankle strap; and bright red plastic knee high boots that nearly got her expelled for wearing them with her grammar school uniform.

Christine's favourite shoes:

"I bought some French navy sling backs with cream calf leather lining from Dolcis for the Summer of 1965. They were plain, but the shape was curved at the front and the wide heel strap finished with a round leather covered button. They had a low club heel and were so comfortable! Sadly, my mother was 'damning with faint praise' because I had spent my birthday money (and perhaps some pocket money) on them. They cost 59s/11 [nearly £3] which she thought was too expensive. They *were* expensive, but good value in the end!"

Jane's favourite shoes:

"I had wedges and espadrilles: more hippy than London chic".

Trish's favourite shoes:

"I had a pair of white knee high boots that I wore with hot pants in the late 60's."

Bridesmaid's shoes in 1961 with a round toe and narrow bar:



Knee length white socks were a favourite look in the mid-60s as skirts grew shorter. This photo shows **Lyn** wearing long white socks. Taken Easter 1969 on her uncle's farm in Wales she had bought the duffle coat for university and trimmed the collar with a length of leopard-print rabbit fur. Interestingly, boys' casual clothing has not altered much in 50 years!



Pat A still has these 2 handbags. The blue one is an Italian-style knitted bag with bead trim and handle, and the other a 'Gladstone' style.



This brown patent leather handbag was made in Portugal and is still stored in its original late 60s paper bag. There were matching low-heeled shoes with chisel toes and a buckle.



Men's clothing became very flamboyant in the mid Sixties. Unfortunately we have been unable to track down many surviving examples of male garments for this project. **Brian** has kept one silk tie from the famous Harry Fenton of Shaftsbury Avenue range. The original bright pink coloured spots have now faded:



1960s Retro Look

As well as being innovative with styles such as Op Art, the 60s loved to look back, plunder, and re-model fashions from earlier days. Typography, fabrics and design took inspiration from Art Nouveau and Aubrey Beardsley, and we have seen retrospective adaptations of military uniforms, ethnic borrowings and re-worked old Paisley patterns.

For example, mock feather boas such as this later replica were one of Biba's top selling items, harking back to the 1920's. Next to it is an original afghan wool boa worn by **Viv**:



It was a time when antiques and 'second-hand' items of clothing could be acquired relatively cheaply from 'jumble sales' and used clothing shops. Such items were scorned by the older generation who were still revelling in the new 'man-made', easy-care fabrics such as Tricel, Bri-nylon etc, but many in the emerging 'New Age' generation wanted a back-to-nature, thrifty and non-wasteful approach to clothes. Especially amongst students it was popular to buy cheap, used clothes in natural fabrics and alter them to create unique new garments. For example, collarless 'Grandad' shirts which by the 1950s had been superseded by men's shirts with attached collars were in plentiful supply at jumble sales. They were often bought and 'tie-dyed' at home into multicoloured abstract patterns. Here is a replica tie-dyed tee-shirt example made recently using natural dyes from turmeric, onion skins and beetroot:



Old waistcoats were another popular buy. **Wendy** knitted this in 1968 from a 1940s wartime pattern for a man and she still wears it 50 years on:



Claire cut down her grandmother's 1930s silk dressing gown to create a stunning wrap-over top:



She wore this with trousers at a party at Windsor Castle in 1968 where it was greatly admired by the 'deb set'!

Other vintage garments worn by Claire in the 60s included a fine velvet devore 1920s loose jacket bought from Mary's in Brighton and a satin blouse from the 1930s:



Jill on Blackheath in late 60s wearing a green tweed jacket she bought from Deptford Market and adapted, with blue jeans and wellies:



Home-made

A striking feature of nearly everyone's reminiscences about their 60s outfits was the number that were hand-made either by the young woman or by her mother or another female relative.

Wendy recalls being taught to knit aged 4 by her grandmother and from the age of 11 was making her own knitted and sewn garments. She was 10 when this photo was taken in London in 1962. It illustrates several typical aspects of early 60s fashion: her mother wearing a 'costume' or matching dress and jacket; her father wearing an early example of a leisure 'windcheater' (anorak) and 'slacks' or smart leisure trousers; sisters wearing home-made matching blazers (royal blue wool) and homemade cotton dresses. They were dressed smartly as they were on holiday in London!



Jan has this fashion memory:

“My Mum made me some hot pants and a tabard top to match, bright orange. I wore these to go dancing and had a pair of cream suede flat chisel toe shoes to complete the look. They were great for dancing in. Mum also knitted me an op art jumper in black and white blocks. I wore it with black trousers and my Mary Quant beret. I wore the beret a lot, I had long hair then, and my look was to wear it at an angle near one side of my face. Mum said I was lucky not to get knocked down crossing the road, as I couldn't see properly where I was going when I had it on. She was right! The things we did to be fashionable.”

Trish remembers:

“I also made a couple of tent style dresses which were much easier as a beginner to sew. They were bright pucci style prints one was orange and yellows and the other was greens and purples.”

Jill L sent a picture of herself, mother and schoolfriends in the early 1960s all wearing home-made summer dresses in the simple 'shift' style:



More simple-style striped shift dresses being worn in 1963 by **Julia** and her friends:



Homemade dresses including a high-waisted smock worn by **Angela** and friend in Naples while hitch-hiking to Sicily:



Claire sewed this thin silky dark blue dress in 1966. It had a high collar and a row of buttons down the front:

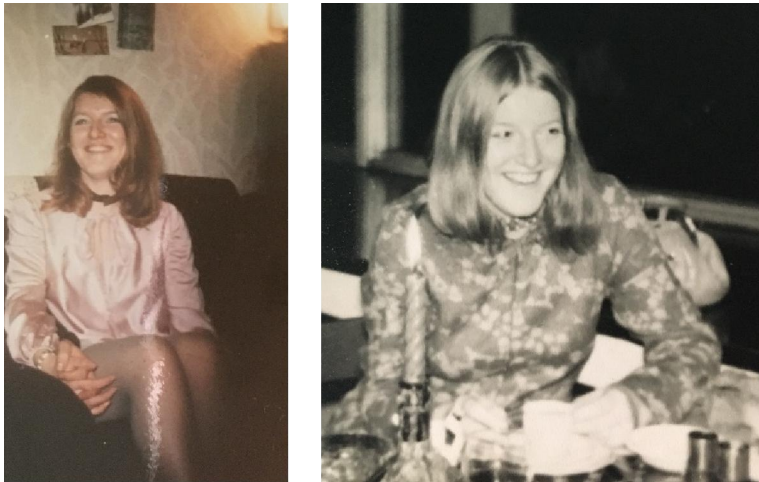


The dress below was bought at a Vintage Fair in Sheffield in 2018. It is a home-sewn dress probably made about 1964:



This dress displays many characteristic features of the mid-60s. It is made from nylon and hence would wash and 'drip dry' easily. The standard of home dressmaking is very high. The typical wide neckline and $\frac{3}{4}$ length sleeves are both edged with a frill, and the handmade buttons on the front are made from the same fabric as the dress. The length is to the knee, not mini, and the shape is straight and waistless. The buttons are double breasted and the style emulates a garment called a 'coat-dress', which became particularly popular in the 1960s, which was a cross between a dress and a coat, although usually made in a heavier fabric than nylon. The colours are typically 60s - pinks and browns - and the pattern is a swirly organic abstract.

Wendy wearing two items she made in 1968 and 1970. On the left a loose-fitting mini-dress in pink satin fabric, with home-made velvet choker, and on the right a long-sleeved fitted maxi dress with a front zip, made in a soft green/blue brushed cotton fabric:



Virtually everyone owned a hand knitted or crocheted garment. This unusual example worn by **Viv** is crocheted on the outside with a knitted lining:



Buttons

Christine has kept these examples of 60s buttons:



Other examples from the period:



Some sewing accessories from the period

A range of cotton sewing threads in typical 60s colours:



1960s sewing basket in cream, orange and turquoise woven plastic and press studs with a typical 60s design on the logo:



Orange fish sewing kit

What is notable about sewing accessories in this decade is that everything -cotton, tailor's chalk, needles etc- was still made in the UK.



And finally ... Throwaway culture...

The disposable planned-obsolescence culture began in the 1960s and even extended to disposable clothing. **Jan** remembers

“a paper dress which was blue with daisies on. I would carry it in a bag to the dance venue and get changed in the toilets. I think I bought it in Chelsea Girl. It probably lasted about 5 outings, but I felt really great wearing it. The height of fashion! It was a mini A line shift or vest dress as we used to call them”.

Personal memories

Christine

Favourite outfit(s) -year – when you wore them etc

Moygashel linen dress and jacket new for Spring/Summer of 1965. The sleeveless dress was of the two fabrics. The top part was plain turquoise and the bottom A line skirt part was of an abstract but oriental-inspired pattern in jewel colours of purples, dark blue and maroons. The blazer style jacket was in the turquoise but with Peter Pan type shaped revers and two spade pockets of the patterned linen! The buttons were covered with the patterned linen. I wore and wore it. (I am wearing it in a photo taken outside the gates of Buckingham Palace in London in July 1966.) My mother tailored it for me and it fitted properly!

Another outfit I liked from, I think, the Autumn of 1964 - again one my mother made -was a jade green pinafore with black saddle stitching and two leather buckles made of a woven Courtele (ie. washable) material. I wore this with a black woollen polo- neck jumper under, and maroon, black and green tartan tights. I had a jade green corduroy deer-stalker hat and green sling backs with black patent bootlace bows to match. The whole thing was a bit too much for shoppers on a Saturday in Doncaster and I found heads were turning, which I really didn't like! But in Chelsea it probably wouldn't have caused a stir!

Where you were living in the 1960s and favourite clothes shops/boutiques

I lived in Wath on Dearne, near Rotherham, Yorkshire, a thriving town of c.15,000 inhabitants. Lewis Separates in King Street Sheffield had crowds queueing outside on a Saturday waiting for space up in the gallery. I bought some pale pink denim jeans from there and a beige cotton suit. They were quickly bought out, I think, as the national chain, Chelsea Girl, moved in to town.

Good sources of fabrics were The Spinning Wheel, Hallgate, Doncaster, Leslie Fabrics up on the top in the brutalistic Castle Market complex in Sheffield, the three department stores in Sheffield -Cockayne's, Walsh's and Cole Bros (John Lewis), Jessop's in Nottingham, and for woollen remnants from the West Riding mills, various market traders especially in Doncaster. John Lewis in Oxford Street had a vast selection in those days and we would try to visit annually so my mother could treat herself and me to fabric for her next project! Each year we were served by the same man of Indian ethnicity.

Favourite shoes

I bought some French navy sling backs with cream calf leather lining from Dolcis for the Summer of 1965. They were plain, but the shape was curved at the front and the wide heel strap finished with a round leather covered button. They had a low club heel and were so comfortable! Sadly, my mother was 'damning with faint praise' because I had spent my birthday money (and perhaps some pocket money) on them. They cost 59s/11 which she thought was too expensive. They were expensive, but good value in the end!

Did you or your relatives make your own clothes?

My mother made my clothes. She went to classes at the Mechanics Institute. We did a year of Needlework at school, but the pattern of white cotton blouse was 'drippy' and I didn't wear it much! We made an apron and cap (I looked like 'one of Lipton's' my dad said!) for the next year which was cookery.

Did you have many clothes?

I was fortunate to have a lot of lovely clothes because my mother was always making either for me or herself!

Your favourite accessories and jewellery

It was important to have a matching handbag (such as black patent with patent shoes or dog tooth check in black and white with black patent). I wore a Celtic style brooch of Iona Marble which I bought when on holiday in Oban. Otherwise, we made our own art ones. Sometimes I wore a pendant made of Perspex with a dried leaf on a tan leather string.

Anything else you can remember...

I remember my striped Terylene lawn 'Viva Maria' blouse (ie. with frill and high neck) from Marks and Spencer in 'fizz' colours which I wore when I was in the audience of University Challenge in late 1967. (Keele went on to win the contest and my French master from school noticed me on television when the programme went out in the following January.) In the Spring of, perhaps, 1966, Cole Brothers (John Lewis) had a lovely window display of garments in the fizz colours, as they were called, which were pastels of pink, orange, lime green with white.

There are many other memories about what I wore such as the long red guardsman cloth coat with black frogs and trimmed with black fur on the bottom in the style of Lara from the film *Dr Zhivago*. Another of my Mother's memorable creations! When I went back after Christmas and wore it, boys (often with long hair) suddenly became gentlemen and opened doors for me! I, in turn, felt like a lady!

Wendy

Favourite outfit(s) -year – when you wore them etc

About 1962 as a 10 year old, a straight royal-blue wool coat with a white faux fur Peter Pan collar. Worn as Sunday-best for church.

Late 60s, a short checked red, cream and black mini skirt cut on the bias, worn with red knee-high plastic boots and a cream skinny rib polo neck jumper.

1967 sleeveless V-neck minidress in classic 60s colours and swirly paisley type pattern bought in Carnaby St en route to France for a school exchange visit.

Tartan patterned tights c1969.

Handmade patchwork sleeveless long waistcoat.

Where you were living in the 1960s and favourite clothes shops/boutiques

I was living in a small village in North Wales so my nearest trendy clothes shops were in Chester and Liverpool. I don't remember any particular boutiques there, I seem to have mainly either made clothes or bought them in chain stores such as Chelsea Girl.

Favourite shoes

Grass-green block-heeled square-toed shoes with a strap across; peacock blue flat shoes with an ankle strap; tight red plastic knee high boots.

Did you or your relatives make your own clothes?

Yes, my grandmother and my mother were skilled seamstresses and although I could make things I was never really any good so they always looked a bit messy, for example, zips not put in flat and so on. But I definitely made and wore many dresses and skirts while at school and university. I made 3 summer dresses to go to France on exchange in 1967, including one truly awful 'tent' dress. After I started work in 1973 I made fewer clothes and I stopped dressmaking completely in my 30s.

I also knitted a lot, which I still do. I made my first cardigan aged 11 in 1963 – it was a peachy pale orange with a Peter Pan collar:



Did you have many clothes?

As a child, not many, and mainly made by my mother. We had about 2 sets of play clothes, school clothes and Sunday best. Each Whitsun in the 1950s my sister and I got new clothes: sandals, dress and even once summer straw bonnets. That tradition died out in the early 60s and my mother stopped going to church! My parents wanted me to leave school at 16 to get a job, and when I insisted on staying on, my mother retaliated by refusing to buy me any more clothes. She bought me only my school uniform, so I was reduced to making my own clothes, getting my grandmother to make me some, and buying clothes with money from my Saturday job. Consequently I never owned many clothes as a teenager!

Your favourite accessories and jewellery

I wasn't really into accessories or jewellery. We were not allowed to have our ears pierced as my mother considered that to be 'common'. Nor were we allowed to wear makeup.

Anything else you can remember...

I used to love reading *Petticoat* magazine every week in the mid-60s and seeing all the fashions that I couldn't afford and had no access to. I also followed fashion trends from *The Observer* Sunday magazine, and from the Littlewoods catalogue that my aunt used to sell clothes from. I used to go to a fabric warehouse called Waldman's in Liverpool with my grandmother where we could buy remnants very cheaply. She used to say "I've got the makings of a skirt" or whatever she intended to make.

Denise

Favourite outfit(s) -year – when you wore them etc. - Black & white four panelled mini dress (Mary Quant copy) 1963. Cousin's wedding (upset, wasn't asked to be bridesmaid).

Where you were living in the 1960s and favourite clothes shops/boutiques

Sheffield. Shopped mainly at C&A. For something special Etams Dress Shop

Favourite shoes white plastic knee boots. I wore them until they went into creases and began to split and peel off. Always wore blue flat T-bar shoes with mini skirts.

Did you or your relatives make your own clothes? No.

Did you have many clothes? - Never enough, always trolling magazines for ideas and saving up to buy an outfit and a record every month. Hardly ever worked out.

Your favourite accessories and jewelry. - Always wore earrings but not pierced until the 1980's. I had a wide, white plastic buckled belt which I wore with almost everything when I dressed casually.

Anything else you can remember...

Clothes were very important to me as they identified who I felt I was. I loved "way out" clothes but at 4'11" tall felt I was too small to carry much off. In the early sixties when I went dancing I wore dresses with very full skirts and my poor Mum had to sugar starch them so that they stuck out like a crinoline. I once had a lift home on a moped and skirt and the wind did little to cover my embarrassment and mostly his face as he drove.

I married in 1965 and from then onwards cut my very long hair which I had always worn in a French pleat or a bun to a short elfin cut. I also wore very high heels to compensate my lack of height and for which now I suffer.

My parents bought me a gold gate bracelet for my 21st birthday (1966). I still have it today but don't wear it often as it has been repaired so many times and I would hate to lose it.

Jane

Favourite outfit

My day wear was school uniform and as soon as I got in I wore jeans and T shirts. The "mini" was "in" but modesty rules at school meant we had to wear skirts to knee length: with inspections at gym changing times. To get around this we rolled our waistbands over several times or with summer dresses used safety pins to make huge hems! The summer dresses had to be made from Butterick patterns in a pinafore style...huge pockets and a boat neck were a concession to the slim line styles of friends' older sisters.

Where I was living

I was born in Dronfield and went to school in Totley when we moved to Sheffield.

Shoes

I had wedges and espadrilles: more hippy than London chic

Did I or relatives make clothes

Gran was great knitter and did crochet. I had "tank tops", waistcoats, ponchos and berets.

Mum made her own velvet and sequined evening dresses and made a mini version for my Cindy Doll. My party dresses were made by her too but as I had chubby knees I had coloured opaque tights to match the designs.

Accessories and Jewellery

I had large crochet bag on a long strap which sat across my body. We had slipper bags (for our plimsoles) at school and had to embroider out names in chain stitch. Huge plastic bangles were great to collect and have as “grown up” presents. As we had dogs, pendants and beads were often broken and we didn’t want lost beads on the carpet after an emergency swallowing by our corgi and trip to the vet.

Anything else

“I want to hold your hand” was the first 7” I recall putting on our record player at home. Wilson Peck in Leopold Street sold sheet music but it was possible to listen to vinyl before deciding to buy. I was allowed to go before each birthday and Christmas to choose my surprise with either Grandad. He could play the mouth organ and the piano (my parents say before they got a TV they made music and sang at home and wore a corduroy cap). Ties were the only sign of male concessions to the trends of the day with floral prints found in “the attic”, silk handkerchiefs and head squares had been bought in London.

Shelagh

Some recollections from me, born in 1946:

I recall, aged about 17, so 1963? having a lovely pair of nearly flat cream leather shoes with sharply pointed toes, a tiny brown leather bow in the centre and brown, 'stripey', wooden heels. I loved those shoes to bits. They hurt and gave me a hammer toe but I didn't care!

When I left home to go to Uni in 1964 I was only wearing skirts, one of which was straight with double pleats in the front, and another was slightly flared with a very narrow leather belt. Trousers were for sailing or hiking.

In about 1968-9 I recall the all-in-one 'coat-dress' because I made one out of a check wool mix fabric. I also made a long red tunic in thick ribbed corduroy and gave it large globular white buttons (which I still have somewhere). I wore that with white trousers.

And my 'going-away' coat in 1969 was also red. I wore it with a simple cream dress and black accessories. I refused to wear a hat! After I had changed into this outfit I had to walk down the stairs with my new husband and leave the reception venue, to the applause of all the assembled guests. When we got to the car we found it was covered in shaving foam and stuffed full of holly leaves and branches - and it was pouring with rain so we got absolutely drenched.

I subsequently stitched fake black fur round the cuffs and skirt of this red coat and it took on a new life!

I recall the coloured tights were of a quite open weave, almost fish net or ribbed. They were certainly a fashion item in themselves. Roll neck or polo neck sweaters were also ribbed and quite tight-fitting. People were usually slimmer in those days!

Clothes were striking but not necessarily 'sexy'. Despite dressing up like peacocks, and despite the mini-skirt, I think a lot of us were still quite 'prudish'.

Trish

Favourite outfits and year I wore them

Pink winter A line dress in wool 1966, drop waist straight dress with pleats in a new type of non-iron fabric 1967, tent dresses in cotton 1968, A line skirts in wool 1968, A line princess seamed dress 1967, Bell bottom pants in cotton 1966, Capri pants 1966. I wore most of these on the weekends and to parties as I had a school uniform for weekday wear.

Where were you living in 1960's and favourite clothes shops/boutiques.

I was living in Brisbane Australia in the 1960's. The main overseas influences on our clothing here were British designs eg Pierre Cardin, Mary Quant, Bill Gibb. We were in the throes of Beatlemania here, so we had the hairdos, boys had long straight fringes and longer hair and the clothes were Mod styles minis and maxis started to appear too. There were some Australian designers but a lot of people made their own clothes.

Another major influence in Australia was our own beach culture. Brisbane has a great climate and the Gold Coast, south of Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast, north of Brisbane have the best surf beaches in the world (I'm not biased) and there was a migration there on the weekends. Surf boards were gaining in popularity and Surfing culture took on big time. The four s's sex, sun, surf, sand and later STD's (the pill had arrived but total ignorance about STD protection) and sunburn and skin cancer.

Life for older teenagers centred around the beach and surf clubs. Little Pattie sang "He's my blonde-headed, stompie wompie, real gone surfer guy" and "Stomping at Maroubra" We all had pigtails (hair tied on both sides of head) and we all wanted to be blonde so bleaching your hair was popular. Make up involved lots of eyeliner and false eyelashes I remember.

Mum had a pair of Capri pants that I purloined, I had a pair of pink bellbottom pants and a white bikini with purple spots. There was a swimwear designer at the Gold Coast called Paula Stafford who made the bikini very popular. The French had been A Bomb testing in the Bikini Atoll in the 60s and 70s

My favourite shop was a local emporium Myers that had up to date clothes. I bought a lovely A line bias cross pattern black watch tartan skirt there. I wore it with knee high socks. Boutiques were starting to emerge but the clothes were quite expensive there. There were dress makers where you could have clothes made specially either in salon type rooms or at their homes.

Favourite shoes. I had a pair of white knee high boots that I wore with hot pants in the late 60's. Chain belts worn on the hips were the go too. Skin tight Pucci style print shirts with enlarged collars and A line skirts. I remember wearing sandals a lot and now this sort of look has made a big comeback in 2017 and 2018

Did you or your relatives make you own clothes?

Yes. I used Mum's old Singer treadle machine which was very laborious.

About 1966 when I was 17, I started to make my own clothes from purchased patterns like Simplicity, McCalls, and Butterick. Vogue patterns were a lot more expensive and they came later when I was a more experienced sewer. I made 2 A line dresses with princess seams and puff sleeves one was pale pink with white spots and the other white with navy blue spots. I had a dusty pink A line winter dress and I loved the style but the colour wasn't really right for me and it looked a bit dowdy.

I also made a couple of tent style dresses which were much easier as a beginner to sew.

They were bright pucci style prints one was orange and yellows and the other was greens and purples.

Did you have many clothes? I didn't have many clothes because I didn't work and I was still at school and wore a uniform and could only afford to make my own.

Your favourite accessories and jewellery. I had a purple glass stoned brooch a bit like the one on Jean Shrimpton's dress and some pearls that I received as a birthday present. Also had a hipster belt late 60's.

Anything else you can remember

In 1965 Jean Shrimpton visited Melbourne and went to the Melbourne Cup. There is a very famous photo of her wearing what I thought at the time was great. But it caused quite a stir because heaven forbid she wasn't wearing stockings or a hat and the dress was very short.

Check pants were very popular beach gear for boys too.

Short dress and boys with long hair

Sue B

Favourite outfits and year you wore them

1965 borrowed my sister's purple trouser suit, bell bottom trousers and three quarter length flared jacket, and never gave it back to her I loved it so much. From Biba. I often wore jeans with big floppy jumpers, beatnik style, I borrowed them from my dad. And lots of badges, CND etc. And duffle coat, and my school stripy scarf, because it looked like a university scarf.

Where were you living in 1960's and favourite clothes shops/boutiques.

London - Kensington Church Street shops, especially Bus Stop and Biba, and Portobello Road for second hand clothes, feather boas and old fur jackets and ex-army stuff.

Favourite shoes Black calf length leather boots

Did you or your relatives make you own clothes?

My grandma made summer dresses for us, which I hated

Did you have many clothes? An average amount

Your favourite accessories and jewellery.

I adored a chunky brass bracelet with Chinese characters embossed on it.

Anything else you can remember

I had a bright orange coat dress from Biba with cloth covered orange buttons all down the front, which came in at the waist, very flattering. I also remember having a fitting psychedelic minidress.