

**MANX HERITAGE FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPT**

‘TIME TO REMEMBER’

Interviewee(s): Mrs Moira Ann Cashen

Date of birth: 29th August 1942

Place of birth: Ramsey, Isle of Man

Interviewer(s): Elizabeth Ardern-Corris

Recorded by: Elizabeth Ardern-Corris

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TB [Tuberculosis] as a child
Early schooldays
Growing up in Ramsey
Working for *Aristoc*
Sunday School and outings
Miss McQuaid and Manx Tartan
Misses Gibbs from the Grove in Ramsey
The Queen’s Coronation
Rogation Sunday
Reverend Mock and Church Choir

Moira Cashen - Mrs C
Elizabeth Ardern-Corris - EA-C

EA-C I'm Elizabeth Ardern-Corris, it's the 13th April 2012, I'm at the home of Mrs Moira Cashen in Andreas. Mrs Cashen can you tell me a little bit about yourself please?

Mrs C Right. My full name is Moira Ann Cashen, nee Buttell, and I was born on 29th August 1942 and I was born in the Ramsey Maternity Home. My mother was Elena Ann Clarke, born at *Ballaseyre* in Andreas, and my father, Frederick Buttell was, as far as I know, was born in Ramsey – probably a home birth. He was the youngest of fourteen and he grew up and married my mum. At that time he was a gardener and chauffer – I don't know who for, but we lived at the Livier [Livery?] workman's cottage at the Dhoor. And then he must have eventually gone to war and he consequently died of his wounds just after I turned three. My mum was left alone with me as an ill child in hospital, and she was left living at home with her mother-in-law.

EA-C Tell me about why you were ill as a child.

Mrs C I was ill because I had contracted, somehow or other, TB of the spine, and I was in hospital for a very long time – I'm not sure exactly how long, but I know when I came home my mum, because she'd been widowed, had to take in lodgers to earn a living and I was consequently put out to *Ballaseyre* Farm with my grandmother and there was ... none of the other girls were married then, they were all still home, so they all looked after me as sisters and whatnot, so I was on the farm. And I know that because I'd been off my legs for so long, they used to rub them daily with olive oil, which I hated because it was so (*laughter*) ... but I eventually recovered alright and I consequently started school when I was six.

EA-C And where did you start school?

Mrs C Albert Road in Ramsey – went back home to live with mum then, and ...

EA-C And can you remember your first day at school?

Mrs C No, not really, just because all the other children had been there so long, you were just ... and you were the only one – new one in – you just got taken along with the flow, you had to go with it, you know. (*laughter*)

EA-C And who was the Headmaster at the time?

Mrs C Headmaster was Mr Walker, and the Headmistress of the infants department was a Miss Cannell. There were two Miss Cannell's there; one was little Miss Cannell and the other was thin Miss Cannell (*laughter*) – that's the only way we could describe them! But they were all very nice and I got on well with all the teachers at Albert Road – so much so that I did very well.

EA-C Well can you describe the school to me a little bit please?

Mrs C The school ... it had ... I think it was three infant's classes, and then when you were eight you went up into the juniors, which was ... there was two classes of the junior over the other side of the main hall, the infant's classes were one side of the hall and the juniors were then ... and after the first year in junior class you were upstairs – and there's an upstairs hall as well, so you were upstairs then until you were ready to go to the secondary school. There were three classes to go through there. And you just had the one teacher for all subjects all year.

EA-C And would you have worn a school uniform?

Mrs C No, no, you could ... there was no school uniform in them days. All that was basic uniform was your slipper bag for your pumps, which you made yourself at school – that was one of your sewing lessons, was one of the first things – to make your pump bag – I can still make one. (*laughter*) And then, also when we were at junior school, the girls made a diurnal skirt for themselves, which was a skirt with elastic in the waist, which we all wear now! (*laughter*) But they're called diurnal skirts and they're made with plain material, elasticated waist, the hem on them and then you had to embroider a pattern on them – your own design. That was ...

EA-C And what were the boys doing when you were doing sewing lessons?

Mrs C (*laughter*) I have really know idea what they were up to! I don't know what the boys did – probably a bit of modelling or painting or something, 'cos the girls didn't do much artwork. Ours was all domesticated, sort of thing, trying to learn your sewing and different things like that. And to make something that was useful, not to make something that was going to be put in a cupboard and not used at all. So ...

EA-C Did you have a favourite subject at school?

Mrs C No, I seemed to do alright in them all, I didn't ... nothing ... well, yes of course, I loved sewing, because I grew up to do sewing for a living eventually, so ...

EA-C And were you an only child?

Mrs C Well, no, by the time I got ... by the time I was seven I had a baby brother, which I'd wished was a baby sister, *(laughter)* 'cos we had girls names picked, you know, not boys, and I wanted my mother to take him back and change him! *(laughter)*

EA-C And can you remember how you felt having a new baby brother in the house?

Mrs C No, not really, because I think, by the time you're at school yourself, you've got a life of your own. I think if you're younger and you've been just a home with mum and then a baby comes along, you do have different feeling for it, but no, he had to be ... he had to be ... well, he was my toy, really. Had to be the school pupil – had to be all sorts of things, poor fellow! *(laughter)* No, I didn't feel anything at all, just a bit disappointed that he was a boy, but not now, I don't think the house would have been big enough for two girls, really. *(laughter)* But I'll say one thing, I don't ever remember my mum being fat, ready to have him, and I don't remember the next day her being thin. It didn't mean anything – I didn't want to know where he came from, or what. I just thought that she could have changed him if ... I'd really, really wanted, you know! *(laughter)*

EA-C Did you make a lot of friends at school?

Mrs C Yes, yes I didn't seem to be short of friends at all.

EA-C Are you still in touch with any of them?

Mrs C Well yes, that's what happened to us really, they're all here, all the ones I'm still in touch with, yes. But my best friend that was my bridesmaid, because she smoked, she died about twelve years ago, and I really, really miss her, because she was from five years old ... five or six years old, she was ... you know, was my pal, and she only lived yards up the road and she was an only girl, an only child, so yea, we got on very well together. She was the sister I didn't have and

it was nice 'cos she'd go home if we fell out, like you do!

EA-C How did you get to school, did you walk?

Mrs C Walk, yes, 'cos we were in Waterloo Road and it was only literally down the road to the school, yes.

EA-C And would you have gone home for lunch?

Mrs C Yes, yes we did – even when we got to the grammar school we went home for lunch. Bit of a disaster if it poured with rain of a lunchtime, 'cos your gabardine coat never kept out the rain, you'd be trying to dry it in front of the fire, and it would be a damp, warm coat to go back to school in! *(laughter)*

EA-C While you were at school, did you do PE [Physical Education] or sports?

Mrs C No, I was not allowed to do PE [Physical Education] or sports because I ... with not being very well as a child, as a baby, I'd had to wear a leather brace on my back 'til I was secondary school age, anyways, you know – can't really remember liberation day, but it felt funny, but you felt naked, 'cos you felt your back was open to ... you didn't want anybody to touch it or anything. But there's nothing wrong with it, you know, but you just felt ... I suppose it's like a horse without a saddle, really. And err ... I was glad to be rid of it because you couldn't wear any nice little girl's underwear, you had to have a vest with arms in it, otherwise it would have cut you – it did cut in the summer one time, it did, because you got too hot. So yes, it did restrict me there. But once I was free of it, the specialist told me then I had to learn to ride a bike, the next time I'd seen him I had to learn to swim, and the time after that I had to learn to dance. And that was in place of what people now have physiotherapy. So yes, it worked out very well and it's kept me quite fit. I'm fitter than some of these others that ... *(laughter)* like creakin' gates!

EA-C Was there any other times you missed school because of ill health?

Mrs C Only roundabout my tenth ... well, I'd had my tenth birthday in Noble's Hospital. I got a sore hip and they couldn't figure out what was wrong, but it disappeared as quick as it came. It was just as though he had done something, and then another day you got up and it was fine – never had any repercussions

from it at all. I don't know what they put it down to, but they were quite amazed, because I could not walk, and the hip was swollen – it definitely was because you didn't need to see, you could feel it was bigger than the other one, but I've never had anything since, so I must have done something.

EA-C During your hospitalisation, you would have missed out going to normal school.

Mrs C Yes.

EA-C Was there any provision made for you?

Mrs C Yes, yes there was a teacher, a Mrs White if I remember her name, and she was a very nice lady, but she didn't seem to be on hand very often, which pleased the boys in the hospital, they used to think it was wonderful – no more lessons! But I really felt I needed something because you get bored, you know, especially if you ... if you were really, really sick, yes, but because I was in just because I couldn't walk, the rest of me was alright, my mind was working fine, you know, and I used to watch the nurses, you know, doing ... I remember one Irish nurse, she was learning to make a bed properly, and I always think now if you go into hospital visiting someone, I think that Irish nurse, if she could see the way these beds are now, because if there was anything wrong with the bed, the matron would just come in, strip it, and make her do it again, and I was nearly in tears for her, but she got it right, you know, and ... because the beds today in hospital, they're so untidy, they're dreadful, you know, and I bet that nurse made it to a matron, because she had such training. And the matron said to her in the end when she got it right, she said, 'It's the only way to learn, to keep going 'til you've got it right, 'cos once you've got it right, that's it!' And I used to have to ... they used to give me bits of jobs to do in hospital, cutting up or making cotton wool balls or something, and err ... but used to ... as a child, you got quite bored with that after a while. You needed – at ten years old, you needed something a bit more than that, but they tried their best, you know, and I was glad when the teacher was in, you know. But of course she didn't know what stage you were up to in your ... at your school back ... you know. And of course, a lot of the time I was in, was the summer holidays. I was in for three months, but I suppose nearly half of it was the summer holidays, so I didn't really miss too much, you know.

EA-C Well, when you eventually did go to national school, did you find that you had

missed out on a lot?

Mrs C Didn't seem to make any difference, just catch up, and that's why I say, I think if a child's got it, they can catch up, you know.

EA-C Well, tell me about when you moved up to secondary school – what was that transition like for you?

Mrs C Horrific! (*laughter*) Didn't sleep the night before, because the older ones had told you, 'Oh, wait till you get to the grammar school,' you know, 'you'll know all about it.' You think, 'Know all about what?!' But I didn't settle to that type of teaching, I didn't settle to the changing of classes for every lesson, and change of teachers – you seemed to no sooner sat down ... and of course you had to carry all your books with you for the lessons of the whole day. If you couldn't get ... it's alright if any of your lessons were actually in your form-room, but if you weren't back in it, apart from registration in the morning, if you weren't back in until maybe the next day, you had to have all your books with you for that day, and if you forgot any of them you got detention! So yes, I found that quite traumatic. But I got through it, I didn't ... apart from the night before I went to the school, I didn't lose any sleep over it after that. 'Cos I used to think, why are they all saying, 'Wait until you get there.' It's just a wind-up that the older children do, and you fall for it. And of course the time comes when you can do it to somebody else!

EA-C Did you have to pay for all your school books?

Mrs C No, no. They were all there, and, not like today's children, you could leave what books you didn't need today, you could leave in your desk. They weren't marked or torn up by children, they just didn't, because whether any damage had to be paid for those days I don't know, but they weren't, they were safe, the only trouble was that if you had forgotten any yourself, for the lessons, wherever they were. Yes, no, I didn't. I wasn't very good at physics (*laughter*) physics master caught my friend and I copying out the words of the latest pop song and we weren't allowed to sit on the back row any more, we had to sit in the front row after that, so he could see what we were up to! (*laughter*)

EA-C And who was the head teacher there?

Mrs C The head teacher when we went ... I think was Mr Hovington.

EA-C Was he a strict man?

Mrs C No, he wasn't too bad, no, I never got into any conflict with any teachers, I settled once I got me routine sorted out, and remembered to bring me books and all the rest, I seemed alright. The geography master who I still speak to – he just lives in the next close – I loved geography but I could never get my head round it, and I was telling him a couple of years ago, I said, 'All that geography you taught me might not have meant anything to me, but it's ... my son is very good at it.' So he said, 'Well, you must have stored it all up and given it to him then.' (*laughter*) So no, I didn't see any point in physics which was ... but I didn't dislike the teachers because of it. And I think I was lucky that all the teachers we got, we didn't get any of the ones that weren't very nice, the ones ... I think when you are in the A or B stream you get the better teacher, you know, but ... yes.

EA-C And did you excel in any subjects?

Mrs C Just the sewing, really. Domestic Science I used to think was ... the jobs she used to give you to do – iron a tea ... a tray cloth and this that and the other, and I used to think, 'If you are a mother at home with children at your feet and that, ironing a tray cloth will not be your top priority.' (*laughter*) But of course they had to ... it was the curriculum – it had to be taught. And after our first year of ... at the Grammar school, you had to – if you were in the B stream – you had taken the same subjects as the A stream, and ... in case they had placed you in the wrong class, and me friend and I excelled at French. I'm afraid we didn't excel at anything else, so we couldn't go up into the A stream. And the French teacher was very upset. (*laughter*) You know, she really was. But the funny thing is, when I was away in France two or three years ago, although I can't speak French, we went in a museum and the first part of the museum was a special display and had it in three or four languages, but when we went into the usual museum, I, as I say, couldn't speak the French, but I could read it, I could understand it, so it's ... something stayed in there, you know.

EA-C You mentioned earlier about doing swimming lessons.

Mrs C Yes.

EA-C Where would you have gone swimming?

Mrs C Well, I don't know why, with the Board of Education wasn't paying, because we did have a swimming pool in Ramsey, but when it came to swimming lessons, I was allowed to the swimming with them, and we walked from the Grammar school up to the Iron Pier in Ramsey and went swimming there. The first time we went swimming there the rain came on and the teacher said, 'It's alright to swim in the rain, but,' she says, 'what about all our clothes?!' They hadn't anything ... didn't have plastic bags in those days! You know, we had the gym-bag which was cloth, so no good leaving it there, so we got there and did a prompt turn around and came back. But we did get for about another couple of swims, but of course it was only for the summer term and if you had to rely on the weather on the day of your games period – it was very hit and miss, which was very disappointing for me because I felt I could join in with them. *(laughter)* So ... yea.

EA-C You grew up in Waterloo Road in Ramsey.

Mrs C Yes.

EA-C What was life like growing up in the town?

Mrs C Well, I did ... I just accepted a lot because I used to spend my weekends out with my grandmother, or, by then one of my granny's daughters had married and she had another home so I used to ... I was able to cycle then, so I used to be out with them quite a lot, so town didn't bother me too much. And during the week there was GFS – Girls' Friendly Society, which I joined, which I liked because it was sewing and knitting and things like that. And there was the Youth Club which was in Waterloo Road, which was only a few yards up the road. We only – me friend I and only went there on a Saturday for the dancing, *(laughter)* – we weren't interested the rest of the time. We did try it, but we didn't want to go there and play *Ludo* or something because we could stay at home and do that. And so yes, it was alright, and the ... girls, we used to play together a lot, and when we all had dolls prams, my friend, she was the youngest of three sisters and didn't have much of a doll, but they had a Scotty dog, and she put the Scotty dog in her pram with the baby's dress on it, *(laughter)* and we were walking in Waterloo Road this night, all the parade of us with these prams, and of course there's an elderly couple up there, and they

had no children, but they took a great interest in us all, and they come to look at all our babies in the pram, and they got to Rona's at the end and *(laughter)* honestly, it's a wonder they didn't have a heart attack. *(laughter)* They looked in and there's this dog looking up at them! 'Oh,' they said, 'how do you get the dog to lie there?' She said, 'It's quite happy to lie there and be pushed round in the pram – it's the next best thing to a doll.' So yes, we had a good enough mixture, you know, with things, and there was Saturday night, when we got a bit older, we used to have to go over the street on a Saturday night to *The Courier* office and buy *The Green Final* for our dads to see their football results in. And then it was to the chip shop on the way back, so yes, it was ... it was alright. I do remember, only once I said I was bored – I never said it again, 'cos me mum gave me a yellow duster and told me I would never need to be bored again, so ... boredom didn't come into it, I always found plenty to do. *(laughter)*

EA-C Can you tell me about some of the other shops that you remember as a child in Ramsey?

Mrs C Well, there was a lovely cake shop at the bottom of our road, and ... well, my mother used to say, 'Your shop hasn't got to be in the right ... hasn't got to be in the main street, it needs the right lady behind the counter and the custom will come to it,' which proved it, because when this lady was on her fortnight holiday, which was all they got those days, the owner of the shop could afford to be able to bake the cakes and serve in the shop herself because there wasn't many customers when her assistant was on holiday, so I remember that distinctly. I remember doing messages every Saturday – when you got to a certain age Saturday morning was going out doing the messages for your mum – the fresh things she needed on a Saturday. And I remember one of the first times I took my brother out, he'd be ... well, she made him go in the pushchair so I wouldn't have to watch for him running off into the road, and the loaves those days were wrapped up in tissue paper, and by the time I got it home he had a hole eaten in it, *(laughter)* 'cos the prams – you could see the baby when the baby was in the pram because you were pushing it, but when they got into a pushchair, you were pushing them ahead of you – I didn't know he had eaten *(laughter)* ... and when we got to the house he was ... although how little he was, he had covered the paper back over it completely. So that was the end of taking him shopping for a while – he spoilt it for himself! But, you know, you did have your little chores to do, but you didn't seem to mind it, it was all part and parcel and it learnt you to shop, you know, learnt ... my mother, up until she

died last year at 93, and she was only ill for the last month, and she never had a shopping list – never – she said, ‘Once you start putting it down on paper you can’t think – you don’t need to think when it’s on paper – keep it going.’ And she did, and I don’t do shopping lists either, not been used to it.

EA-C We’re talking the days now before supermarkets ...

Mrs C Yes.

EA-C ... so there would be little small independent grocery shops.

Mrs C Yes, yes.

EA-C Can you remember the names of any of the shops?

Mrs C Well, we dealt with Martins on the Quay. And we used to go ... there we did have to do a list, I had to go down on the Saturday morning with it, it had to be in by a certain time, and it would get delivered by Saturday teatime. But that was the only time there was a list, and that was only because if you didn’t write it, you’d have to go down there and he’d have to write it, so ... but that was the only time. And yes, that was delivered on a Saturday at teatime, and then of course it was just ... the door was open and it was put on the hall table and you had to cart it all out to the kitchen to be packed away in various cupboards or larders or wherever it was put ... yes. And the paper shop, it was a Miss Edie Looney ran it, she was a spinster, but she was a lovely lady. And then the bread shop was Quines and that was also alongside Miss Looney’s, Quines the baker’s, we got a lot of bits and pieces from there. And the cake shop I was talking about was Corlett’s in Waterloo Road, and err ... no, we didn’t really go very far. There was a pork shop also in Peel Street where me mother used to get a bit of cooked meat, but the butchers she dealt with was Crellins, and they, one time, were up at the old cross, had a little shop there, and they moved into Parliament Street in Ramsey. But yes, I remember going there, and she always used to give you, whenever she got a piece of roast, there was always a bit of suet put with it to cook with, to cook the meat with, which nowadays they all do without, but it gave it ... that’s what gave all these meats the taste – not like today, you have to put something on them to make them tasty! (*laughter*)

EA-C Do you remember ever seeing the fishing boats coming in?

Mrs C Umm ... if you were down the quay, yes, you'd see them, but they were such an every-day part of life it didn't mean anything in particular, but, you know, one thing I do remember is when the railway line used to run along the quay in Ramsey, you were specifically told, 'Do not ride your bike between the railway lines, because if you come off you'll be in the harbour.' Well of course, the minute you're told not to do something, where are you all – down riding between the railway lines, aren't you? If they hadn't said anything you wouldn't have bothered, but you were told not to do it, because if I remember rightly, between the railway lines was cobbles, so I mean, it was quite likely you would come off, but I don't remember any of us falling in the harbour, but ...

EA-C And where did that go from and to?

Mrs C It went from ... where Ramsey Bakery is now, that was the train station, and the train used to go across Bowring Road and down the quay as far as *The Mitre Hotel*, and it was getting coal for the trains, yes.

EA-C Do you remember going on your first train journey?

Mrs C No, not really, I don't. I suppose it was a Sunday school picnic to Peel, I would think. No I don't, I'm not interested in trains really – my husband is, but I'm not. He's talking about going on holiday on little train rides. (*laughter*) Well you see, when we lived in Waterloo Road – and trams – but you see, when we lived in Waterloo Road, the trams – our back garden – one of our back garden walls was the gable end of the tram station – the tram shed. So we heard trams morning noon and night, so ... because you're seeing them all day every day, you weren't really interested in them, they were just something else that went past. But of course my husband, living in the country, wasn't seeing them such things, I said no, when you're hearing the train coming in at midnight, clanging and banging and walloping. (*laughter*) And dad did actually drive them at one time, he was ... that was one of the jobs he tried, yes.

EA-C Would a lot of tourists come up to Ramsey to visit?

Mrs C Yes, oh yes, 'cos my friend, my best friend, her mother took visitors in, and a lot of the houses in ... and my aunt, who lived further up, she took visitors in as well, yes, lots of those houses in Waterloo Road had a few visitors each.

EA-C And can you remember what would be the most popular attractions up in the north of the Island?

Mrs C Well, Mooragh Park, and the swimming pool, and of course a lot of people were just content because they wouldn't – apart from having to spend money to get here – they wouldn't have a lot of money when they got here, and they were quite content to be on the beach. The beaches would be packed, morn and noon, you know. Then they'd go home at teatime, everybody knew when it was teatime because the shore would become deserted. But no, that's mainly what they did. And then of course there was mystery tours going from the market place in Ramsey, so they could go on them, but they only went down and jumped on, you didn't have to book days ahead – if the day was good, you went. And of course, if the day was bad, they weren't going anywhere, so ... that was the main thing, really.

EA-C Can you tell me a little bit about your house, what was that like?

Mrs C The house was a Victorian house. It's still in Waterloo Road. I was looking at it on the internet 'cos it's for sale. They haven't changed, they haven't changed the old fireplace, they had the old metal fireplaces, they're still in, but of course they're back in vogue now, but me mother and I hated them. It was three ground floor and then two floors up off that and then the attic. My mum always had about three lodgers in – permanent – she went for permanent lodgers rather than visitors 'cos they were ... they'd be men who was here and they were working. It was mainly gas, was the main supply of fuel. Did have basic supply of electricity – very basic, just enough for me mother to have an electric geyser for heating water, because even the fire didn't heat the water, and everything else was gas – gas cooker, gas lights – you know, everything else was that way. Only cold water in the house, no bathroom, and because it was rented property and he was a bit of a skinflint, known to be a skinflint, and only done major – only done repairs when the house needed major repairs instead of doing it as it went along. But as you went in the front hall, there was a large front room, which was the best room, then there was the sitting room, then further down the hall was the kitchen, and then beyond that was a back kitchen. There was an outside flush toilet in the yard, and there was a shed. Then across the lane, which was access just by three houses, ours was the middle one, we had quite a big garden. We had a big garden 'cos the other two houses didn't – one house had none at all because the tram shed was there, and the other one had a very small basic

yard. And then in the house, up the first flight of stairs, there was a bedroom, then you'd turn and you went up about another five stairs and there was two bedrooms. One was a really big bedroom which in ... I don't know why it was left that way, but in all the other houses it was divided into two room, but it was only one in ours, and I had that to myself, and in the winter it was cold. It had a fireplace, but you didn't have a fire in the bedroom, and when it froze outside there was ice on the inside of the window which a lot of people will vouch for before double glazing, and my mum and dad and baby brother were in the back bedroom – it was quite a good size as well, but nowhere near as big as mine. *(laughter)* And then you went up another flight of stairs and there was an inside flush toilet, and then you went up another flight of stairs and there was a good landing with three good sized attic rooms, which two of the lodgers insisted on having because they loved it there because they weren't bothering anybody once they were up there. And the spare room that was up there was just what everybody has, a junk room. So that was basically the house.

EA-C And did you have chores to do as a child?

Mrs C Oh yes, yes, you had your chores to do, you had the dreaded yellow duster, *(laughter)* through being bored, but yes, you had messages to go on and various things; you helped drying dishes – me mother always washed them, but we ... I dried the dishes and when my brother was old enough he had to start drying the cutlery, which you ... you know, not the knives of course, but he started somewhere. As soon as you could reach the draining board, that was it! And to this day I hate drying dishes – I'll wash, but I hate drying, *(laughter)* I feel I've done my share of them! And yes, you had various other little jobs to do. You had to keep your room tidy, and if it wasn't ... my brother and I had a shared toy cupboard which children today would look on in horror of us because I had the top shelf and John had the bottom. And when it got ... it had one of those little latches, you know, that just hook over into the ring, and if it got to the stage where it wouldn't shut, when we came home from school the next day it would shut – it would have been cleared out and anything we weren't using very much was gone – you didn't ask, it was just ... it was just gone, and that was all we had was the toy cupboard. We had a blackboard that I remember a neighbour gave to us when his son outgrew it, and John had a little trike and that ... you know, but we were content because none of the other children had any more anyways. That's all you wanted, you went outside and invented your games. And that was another thing, we used to go to the Coronation Park, which is still

in existence in Ramsey, and that was usually a summer's evening we'd be up there, and the mums would be up watching and they'd be doing their knitting while the children played so there was never any trouble or anything because there were so many mothers there. They were mothers those days, they did look after their ... 'til you were quite big. And so that was basically it – you had to set the table, and clear the table and things like that, but ... yes, we always had ... there was no such thing as, 'Just come to the table, it's all ready,' but you – everybody sat at the table, and even when we had our own son at home, he sat at the table and he still does now. I think if you start that, they carry it on. He was ... the only time we ever let him go and watch telly was if there was a one-off something that wouldn't be on again. Now it doesn't matter 'cos they're on umpteen times. But, no, as children we always had to come to the table, yes.

EA-C Can you tell me what age you left school at?

Mrs C I left school at fifteen.

EA-C And did you go on to get a job?

Mrs C I did go on to get a job, but because my birthday was the end of August, all the apprenticeship jobs to hairdressing and things like that were all taken up by those that had left school in the term that they were fifteen. Those that had left in December had the choice of all sorts of things, and those that left at Easter got ... because that's when the apprenticeships seemed to start, so when I came to leave there wasn't any apprenticeships left, and you'd have to wait until the next year, so I applied and got a job at *Aristoc*, that was making nylon stockings in those days.

EA-C What position did you get there?

Mrs C I ... well, lots of people won't believe it, but you used to have to mend the ladders in stockings. 'Cos quite a lot of the stockings were mended because they got snagged – they couldn't afford to throw every one away that got laddered, and you wouldn't know it had been mended. There was a machine that used to ... but you had to be quite dexterous else you made a big hole in the stocking if you got it wrong, instead of just being one ladder, it would be ... (*laughter*) And then I went on to be a seamstress then, putting the seams in the back of the stockings, and that wasn't a bad job until they ... when they had the square

shape at the back of the heel, but when the pointed heels came in, that was a different thing altogether, that's – for a week or two your wages went right down, because you were paid by piece-work – you were paid by what you did, not by the hour, so if you didn't do much in the hour you didn't get much per hour. But those pointed heels were a bit of a nightmare because they were all in very little steps and they had to match, and when the examiner got them and they were examined next, the examiner got it and it didn't match, and one or two of the examiners we didn't like them getting our work because they would send them back! (*laughter*) They had ripped them out and do them again.

EA-C Did you get much training for that job?

Mrs C Yes, but you seemed to ... you either picked it up quick or you ... or you didn't, you know. There were those who couldn't manage to co-ordinate the footwork and the machine, because they were fast, they were very fast, and I had a friend there and she ... they never had another worker like her. She used to earn fantastic money, she was so quick, but one day she was at the next machine to me and she just turned round and she went silent, and she turned round to me, and she said, 'Moira,' and she was going grey, and I said, 'What's wrong?' and there was three ... there was a needle and two loopers that we used to call, that used to come together, and the looper was quite thick, more or less like the thickness of a sack needle, and she'd got her finger in it and it went through her finger. She was just turning this funny colour as the seconds were going on (*laughter*) so I just had to stop and shout for a mechanic, but all he done, he unscrewed the thing and they took her off to hospital with it in. It didn't stop her, it wasn't long before she was back, it was just the shock of it I think, you know, but that was ... there weren't many incidents really. I think if she hadn't been so fast it wouldn't have happened! (*laughter*)

EA-C What kind of wages would you ... could you have earned?

Mrs C Ooh, back then, in the 19 ... in 1957, some of the girls were earning about thirteen pound a week, which was ... which was very good, it was more than some of the men-folk were earning then – I don't think Tommy was earning anything like that wage then. And of course, me friend, Avril, she'd be nearly twenty pound a week sometime. The most I got to was thirteen, thirteen plus, and that was a ... I must have left me brain behind I think, that week! (*laughter*)

EA-C And could you keep all that wage yourself or did you have to hand over some?

Mrs C No, when I got home, half had to go into the house ... housekeeping and I could keep half. But then out of that you had to clothe yourself and pay for your entertainment, whatever you wanted. And it was ... it was quite heart-breaking having to hand over half of what you earnt. But of course there was a payslip in it and mother wanted to see the payslip, so ... there was no way of getting away from it, you know, 'Oh,' she'd say, 'you've done well this week!' (*laughter*)

EA-C Was there a large workforce at *Aristoc*?

Mrs C Yes, there was a very large workforce at *Aristoc* – I can't remember how many, but you see from the photograph, that photograph I showed you of the *Aristoc*, that was the ... that was all of the workers. There's no ... the guests wouldn't be on that. You were allowed to bring a guest, but they wouldn't be on the photograph. And then you've got to consider one or two of them wouldn't be on it because they would be away or something, you know, they didn't all come to that party. But they were a bit well renown were the *Aristoc* parties.

EA-C Why do you say that?

Mrs C Because, by the time the guests come, some of us were a bit well-oiled (*laughter*) and weren't really interested in whether the guests came or not – as you can see from that picture! (*laughter*) But no, the firm were very good to allow ... you know, to allow you to ... your partners or whoever to come, because it wasn't really heard of those days. If the firm had a party, it was just for the staff, you know, but they were very generous. But they didn't ... well, *The Beach Hotel* had us once or twice, but some of the other places only had us once! (*laughter*) I wonder why?!

EA-C Who owned *Aristoc*?

Mrs C They were a firm ... they came over from away and they really were ... I don't really know who, we weren't really interested in who owned it, they were the best payers in the business and that's why everybody wanted to work there. Some of the men left joinery jobs and all sorts to come and be knitters in the factory. One or two of them took a while to get used to the heat in the knitting room – it was very, very hot, it had to be for the nylon. But no, they earned very

good wages and so much so that they could go and buy houses. Some of the first men – you know, local men, to be buying their own houses. It was wonderful for them. And of course, they still had their trade if they didn't succeed at it – most of them stuck it out, it was worth it.

EA-C Who managed the factory while you were there?

Mrs C Well, we had a manager, Mr Lockwood, was in charge, and then there was a man called Mr Niece, was the dyer – he was seeing to the colours of the stockings, and then we had a Mr Wallace, he was in charge of the girls – what a job! (*laughter*) But he was very easy going, he must have ... well, he had two daughters and a son so maybe he was used to the women, but nothing would bother him, they couldn't shock him or anything, he would just plod around and they'd get the work done from them, you know. He was very good. And then they had a mechanic, Mr Sid Hoarley, and his apprentice, Laurence; and Sid wasn't bothered with the women, but Laurence was a bit embarrassed at first 'cos he was only a young man, you know, but he soon got hardened off to everything. But the man who used to get the most, teasing was a man used to come round, vermin control, you know, and he was only a little man, and he ... they used to call him the 'Mouse man,' 'cos none of us ever found out what his real name was, and as he'd go walking through the factory they'd sing to the tune, 'Daisy, Daisy,' 'Mouse-man, mouse-man give me your answer do.' We all thought he would never come again, but he used to keep coming round and in the end he was waiting for them to start singing. (*laughter*) We used to sing a lot, you know, used to sing as we worked. Yes, the girls get started, one or two of them wouldn't bother, but the seamers certainly did sing, it was lovely. Yes, I thought it was a wonderful place to work. I can't really have any complaints about it at all, really. One or two girls were naughty, going ... 'cos you could go ... you didn't have to wait 'til break-time if, because on piece-work, if you had several breaks ... there was a break, there was a mid-morning break and of course, lunch-time break, and mid-afternoon, but if you had any other breaks in between, it was your loss, not the firm's, so that was one thing about piece-time. But one or two of the girls would stay out a bit long smoking in the loos (*laughter*) 'cos smoking was all the trend then, so, you know ...

EA-C Were there several different processes involved in making the stockings?

Mrs C Yes.

EA-C Can you tell me about those?

Mrs C Yes. Well, first of all they were knitted; then they used to come out and they were steamed; Mr ... the man who used to do the steaming was Mr Wellings and we call him 'Boots' – his nickname – he didn't mind; and then they went to be ... then they came to be seamed; then they went to be dyed; and then they ... no, after we'd seamed them they were examined; then they went to be dyed; and then they were ... they were sort of seamed again on leg-shapes – they were pulled onto leg-shapes and steamed; and then they were packed on a packing belt. There'd be always one man on the belt looking through a magnifier to see if there was any flaw once they'd been ... 'cos they were lying nice and flat then; and then they were packed at the end of the belt. Yes.

EA-C And do you know where they were sent to – where were they sold?

Mrs C Well, they were sold in local shops – Boyd's in Ramsey sold them – and I think Misses Clarks sold them and they also had a contract which wasn't known at the time, but it doesn't matter now 'cos the factory's finished – they used to do for Marks & Spencer and you used to get people saying to you, 'Oh, I wouldn't buy *Aristoc* stockings, rubbish!' They go all the way up to Marks & Spencer and buy them there! And apart from having a stamp on the welt saying they were Marks & Spencer, they were exactly the same thing! (*laughter*) That was it, you know.

EA-C Was the packaging the same for Marks & Spencer?

Mrs C No. No, no, they had their own packaging which they've always had for no matter what it is. And they had standards, you know, but it used to kill us hearing them saying, 'Wouldn't wear *Aristoc* stockings for the life of me.' (*laughter*)

EA-C You mentioned earlier about the shape of the heel ...

Mrs C Yes.

EA-C ... becoming pointed rather than square.

Mrs C Yes, up the back, yea.

EA-C Why did that happen?

Mrs C Fashion, fashion. The square heel had gone out and they wanted to go to a point at the back and into the seam instead of squared off. Yes, no, it was just a fashion. And then they had some colours they brought in – blues and pinks and all the rest of it, but they didn't last long, they're all trends, you know, and we had one or two girls working that ... similar from school, their parents were over here either as lighthouse keepers or ... there was one or two children that were in the home, the children's home in Ramsey, and until they got sorted out what they were going to do with their lives, you know ... I think they were allowed to stay at the home – I could be wrong here, but I think they were allowed to stay at the home until they were sixteen, until they got sorted out, either into a job, because they weren't, I think, allowed to move into a place of their own until they'd proven they could work and earn money to keep themselves. Until then they had to stay at Dalmaney and they were ... and Ballacloan and they were ... they'd be instructed how to manage their wages, but we had a lot of children from the RAF and lighthouse people and children's home with us through school life, so they must have all found their place in life and I've been organising a reunion since 1996, we've had ... the third one's coming up and we've just found one of the lads whose father was at the lighthouse at the point of Ayre, but hasn't replied, he's on *Friends Reunited*, but he must be like me, only looks at it now and then. And he has been back to the Island in 2010, but he said he couldn't find, really, anybody he was looking for. But of course, as another girl said, 'Might be able to find the fellows, but the girls, you don't know what surname you're looking for,' so, you know. But some of them I would love to have really known how they've made out in life. One of the home boys we do know runs a taxi – well, was, he's probably retired now, but was running a taxi firm in Chicago, so ... you know, it hadn't held him back, anyway. You know, some people think that being in a home, or like the lighthouse keepers and the RAF people moving around a lot makes a difference, but children seem to cope with it somehow or other. You know, you hear people saying, 'Oh, I won't move because my child – have to change school.' Move! child ... the child will accept. They're quite resilient really – I know, I managed it myself. (*laughter*) But I stayed at *Aristoc* for six years and ... 'til I got married, and then I didn't work until I'd had my son and he was three years old, and the Glen Mona Factoring [sp ???] in Ramsey, which was in ... which is now the Freemason's Hall in Lezayre Road, that was a jeans factory, and they were looking for out-workers to do the seam across the top of the hip, the back

pockets, and so they brought me a machine out and they used to bring the work out and I used to do that at home, so that worked quite well, I could stay at home with my own son, and worked in well that way. That was the Glen Mona Factoring [sp ???] Company in Ramsey, run by Mr Tom Robinson. So ... yes, I worked ... I worked for them ... I worked for them from when I ... for about six years with them, as well. And by then my son was old enough and I worked then for the Board of Education in the kitchens, either working in the kitchens or as a dinner lady. And then, I must admit, I did have a row with the cook, and I handed in my notice, and I said ... I told Miss Garlick, in Douglas, that I would do relief work for any of the schools in the north for when anyone was off ill, and that's what I did. I did that for nine years until my son left school. And then I did dressmaking and alterations until I started working for T H Corkill's in Parliament Street, doing curtains and furnishings, and I stayed with them until they closed, and then I retired. So, that's what I've basically done.

EA-C When did *Aristoc* close?

Mrs C *Aristoc* closed, they ... they joined up, they changed from making stockings, 'cos my mother went to work there, she went to work there just before I left, and they started making baby-grows and different things, so I don't know who it was that took them over, because by then I wasn't interested, but it was never the same as when it was the nylon factory. And I don't know whether they started doing some curtains as well, I'm not sure now, but I can't say when it even closed. But, you know, I enjoyed my six years there. Probably I would have liked a career in hairdressing, but it was not to be, it was not to be.

EA-C Just looking back over your life, Mrs Cashen, do you think you've had a good life?

Mrs C Yes I have, considering how ill I'd been to start with, and it should be encouragement to other people with children when they think they're not going to be able to fit in. I always believe there's a slot for everyone if you can just find it and don't ... so long as you're doing something and you're enjoying it, it's better than doing ... maybe I might not have liked the hairdressing if I'd have got into it, I might not have been able to cope with the customers, because my neighbour is a hairdresser and she has ... well, she doesn't tell tales, but she says, 'Ooh, some days ...' you know, and there's one thing, I've never had any stress from any of the jobs I've done. Oh, I did do a stint of work for Breeze

Trading at Jurby, packing stuff for airlines, you know these little packages you get, salt and pepper and different things, and I don't know how I got into that, I really don't, but I do remember the day the boss came in and said, 'Everybody stop,' he said, '*Court Line's* gone bust!' That was the airline, and we were packing stuff for them. He said, 'They've gone bust, stop everything right now.' And all the sugars and all that we had, we had to open the packets and put the sugar all back. (*laughter*) Well, he had to get something, he couldn't just lose out on that, but that was alright, too – there was good things there. It was a good laugh too, yes. No, I've had a ... I can't say I've had really any regrets. It's no good regretting, anyways, you only go round with a chip on your shoulder. What's for you is for you. No, I've quite enjoyed it.

EA-C What would you say were the major influences that had most impact?

Mrs C Well, apart from school, I would say Sunday school was very important on a Sunday, up until going to primary school there was loads of children going to Sunday school, but once we got to Secondary school – grammar school, a lot of them dropped off from going. But the vicar we had, or that had just started with us at the time, the Reverend Mock, was very child orientated, and keeping them at Sunday school, and he came up with this idea that he would have a choir of his own, and you could either – some of the boys were already in the main choir, but the girls were never really encouraged 'til they got ... until they were grown up, but he thought he'd have a choir of his own, and you could go into a communion choir, which was ... I'd never heard of ... I'd never heard of it before, and I've never heard of it since, maybe in some other churches, but it was in ours. And we had to have special practice because there were things we'd never sang before, so that was good, going down for practice for that, and then he decided that we should be distinguished from other members of the choir when we were all together, and he came up with a marvellous idea of this blue veil, called it 'Mary Blue' he did. And that's all we had to distinguish us from anybody else. And they're quite comfortable to wear because they were just ... they were square, but there was just a little tape on them to tie round the back of your head, and it stayed on quite well, whether you were inside or out, which was very handy, especially when we had to go to Rogation Sunday, which was not always a nice day.

EA-C Can you explain what Rogation Sunday was?

Mrs C It was the blessing of the sea. It was a parade from St Paul's church, down to ... past the harbour master's house on the quay, and round onto the promenade in front of the lifeboat house. And he had the blessing of the sea there, and then we would walk back past the Catholic church, up through Dale Street, back to St Paul's church. So that was Sunday afternoon of Rogation Sunday.

EA-C Is that still carried on to this day?

Mrs C It has been renewed in this last year or two, but I haven't been into it, but I have seen reports of it in the paper. Maybe I will go this year. I was going to say, St Paul's [Church] was unusual with it ... unusual with its picnic day. Most of the children's picnics from other Sunday schools were on a Saturday, but St Paul's, for some reason which I've never really found out why, was always Ascension Day, which was a Thursday, which we were delighted with because we had another day off school, and it was usually to Glen Wyllin, as we got older it went to Peel, which we thought was a great ... great trip, going all that way. Our main thing was Glen Wyllin because there was so much there to do. There was ... we had our tea there, in the cafe, and it was a great ... I don't know what you'd call it – a thrill or what, when the train used to go over the ... go over the viaduct, the cafe didn't half rattle, because it was mainly made of galvanised, we were quite relieved when it had gone past! (*laughter*) And the picnic – I can't really remember what the teas were, it would probably be a salad because they didn't do cooking in those sort of cafes in those days, and probably followed by jelly and ice-cream or something. But my main thing when I got there was, I had to go to this machine that you could print out your name, address on a metal strip, and I used to spend my money on that! (*laughter*)

EA-C How much money would you have been given to spend?

Mrs C Oh, not a lot, because nobody had very much money those days. I suppose if I had a shilling it would be ... and I think it was a shilling, because half of it went on this machine. Mother used to say, 'What a waste of money!' (*laughter*) But anyhow, it was all enjoyable, and there's lots of ... there's the motorboats on the lake – they had a lake down there which is now gone, and they had a good playground with roundabouts, swing-boats which I loved, we could get them going. If you got a good strong girl the other side you could get them up a fair height. In our Sunday school, the head teacher was Miss Rice, but she never taught me, my teacher was Miss McQuaid, who, at the time, was running ... was

trying to start a Manx tartan in her own right, and she was very proud of it, and she ... you know, I wish I had taken more notice of her and followed her progress through how she managed to produce it and all the rest, because she was ... she had a sister, but her sister wasn't as forthcoming as she was, and she ... you know, persevered through, which was quite hard times to do it, all those years ago, now it's easier for a woman to put things through, but a woman on her own, which she was, it was very hard, and I can't remember where on the quay she had her little shop. I can't just recall where it was, just cannot. But they lived ... the TTs more or less sort of nearly went past her house twice, because she's ... well, the Hairpin, you know, she could see them from the front door and she could see them past her back door. She had quite a small house, it's been done up now, of course it's been sold to somebody else now and been done up, but that's where she lived, right up under the Hairpin, more or less. It was quite a way up. For her to come down on a wet Sunday, to come down to church, 'cos there was no cars those days – it was really dedication to the job. Another of my teachers was a Miss Quayle, and she taught me for two years because she sort of got promotion – when we went up a class, she came up with us. But of course, she wasn't much younger ... much older than us. But of course, at the time, you think your Sunday school teacher – and your teachers, you think they're ancient! (*laughter*) But all in all, Sunday school was enjoyable and was something to do on a Sunday, and if it was a special occasion you would have been to church in the morning, you'd been at Sunday school in the afternoon, and that was ... took care of most of Sunday for you. And usually, Sunday night was spent doing the homework, which you were supposed to have done on the Friday night.

EA-C Would you have worn your Sunday best?

Mrs C Yes, oh yes, you had your Sunday best on, and you had ... you weren't allowed to put it on 'til the last minutes before going. And I, in the winter time, I used to wear a beret, and the berets always had a little bit sticking up in the very top, and my berets always ended up with a hole in them because I used to hold onto that and spin the beret, (*laughter*) spin the beret round. And my mother used to say, 'I don't see it coming off the other girls' berets, but it's always off yours!' – That's why! (*laughter*) When it was a special occasion and we were at church in the morning, you used to remember an odd person or two coming in because they were a bit more eccentric than the others. And two of the ladies were very eccentric and I didn't realise how important, in later life, become to Ramsey,

were the Misses Gibbs, from the Grove Museum. We just thought they were eccentric old ladies, didn't know a thing about their home up the road, because we never went that far out of town. And it was the ... in the summer, they had a summer outfit and they had a winter outfit, so you know when Spring had come, they'd be in their summer outfit, and you knew when winter had come, they'd be back in their winter ... they only basically seemed to have the two outfits, but you knew them by them. And that was great. They were quiet, kindly ladies, and never told you off – might have given you a look of disapproval, but they never actually told you off. So ... but I can't remember, really remember anybody else in our church that I can instantly bring their face to mind, but they were ... and as I say, realised later in life how important they were ... would become to Ramsey.

EA-C Would you say that people were very religious when you were a child?

Mrs C Not necessarily very religious. It was a ... it was a way of meeting people, going to church, it was social, more socialising. My husband says about Lezayre was the same, he went ... that's when he met everybody, it was the only time they had time off work, and you would meet them, especially when you were younger, because you weren't going out at nights to pubs or anything like that, so it was a good way of meeting people. And I wouldn't say they were deeply religious, and a few years before I was going to church, if people didn't attend church they were quite likely to lose their jobs through not going, because it was for ... that's really why they were off on a Sunday, was to go to church, and it was looked on as being the 'done thing.' And some of the families actually owned the pews – they were family pews – and especially ... I don't remember St Paul's being numbered, but Andreas church pews were numbered and you knew which number was your family pew, so woe betide anybody sitting in that shouldn't be. *(laughter)*

EA-C Did your family have a pew?

Mrs C They did in Andreas, because that's where they were from, but not in St Paul's, because that was one I went to when the family ... when my mother and father moved to Ramsey, so I didn't know anything really about owning pews there, you just seemed to sit in an empty pew – filled it up. And in Andreas church, when the sermon was going, up above the alter – it's not like that now – but there was stars painted on the ceiling, and when you got bored as a child with

the sermon, you used to count the stars, and you never got the same number twice! (*laughter*)

EA-C Church attendance over the decade has dwindled greatly ...

Mrs C Yes.

EA-C ... so much so now that there are a lot of churches in danger of getting closed down ...

Mrs C Yes, they are.

EA-C ... particularly in the north of the Island.

Mrs C Yes, yes.

EA-C Do you think that's a good thing or a bad thing?

Mrs C I think it's a bad thing. You speak to people who don't go to church and they don't want the church to close, but they don't go to it, and they've got no answer as to why they don't go to it. Maybe it's because there's too many other things on, on a Sunday. And I don't think the shops should be open on a Sunday. I'm not deeply religious myself, but I do think it should be a day of rest, and if it was a day of rest, they would go, for something to do if nothing else, they would go. And when you think about how people fought to get shorter working hours, now what have they got and done, they've got longer working hours – and there's no need ... there's no need for shops to be open on a Sunday because people now have fridges they didn't have years ago when the shops used to shut. They were shut on a Sunday and they managed! So I don't know what the excuse is why they are open, I really don't, it's a bad habit.

EA-C Just coming back to your Sunday school memories; can you remember if the Queen's coronation was celebrated in any way on the Island?

Mrs C I can't personally remember it being celebrated in any special way, but we did get our coronation mugs and medals presented at our Sunday school. And I found out since, for the children who didn't have a Sunday school, they were allocated a Sunday school to go to, to get their mugs presented. That was ... that

was something, I still have my mug and medal, kept forever – there'll be thousands of them around, I know, but it's ... it's your own personal thing that's presented to you and we thought the medal was wonderful! (*laughter*)

EA-C And of course we've got the Queen's Jubilee coming up soon ...

Mrs C Jubilee, yes, yes.

EA-C ...this year.

Mrs C Yes, so I just wonder whether ... what the children ... how they're going to get them presented to them now, because if it's through Sunday school, the Sunday schools will be overflowing! (*laughter*)

EA-C Can you remember any other special events connected with church or Sunday school?

Mrs C Just as I was saying before, the Reverend Mock created this choir, and he also ... we also had our own party at Christmas, separate, and one lesson he did teach us at this party was; we were all sitting round this table, and he said something to the child on his left, and asked them to then repeat it to their child on the left, and by the time the message came back round to him, it was completely different to what he'd started off, and we all had a real good laugh, which was a lesson to us all to listen to what somebody has said to you and don't put an extra words or change them, because by the time it's gone through a few hands it's completely different. It was a good lesson, learnt very easily, and while we're all relaxed and enjoying it. And then I stayed in that choir until right up to when I got married, and the Reverend Mock, did say when he conducted our wedding, and he did say on that Saturday, 16th November 1963, that that's his job done, and he left the Island on the Monday and he said that was ... that was a good ending to his time at St Paul's.

EA-C Are you still involved with any choirs now?

Mrs C No, I'm not involved with any choirs, although I do like ... I do like singing, but no, we haven't ... we haven't really got a choir in Andreas now, and there's no Sunday school either, which is a shame. There was one up to about a year ago, but as children grew up, and of course they go away to college, that's it, they

can't even come on a Sunday, so ... that's where it sort of ends, and that's why the Reverend Mock tried to hold onto them as long as possible, because he looked on them as the future congregation of the church. And he had a really good idea there. But it doesn't seem to have been carried on.

EA-C And what do you do nowadays to keep yourself occupied?

Mrs C (*laughter*) Well, I don't know. I'd like to know what these people who say that they're bored, I'd like to know what that is! I've never been bored, we're always ... well, as you can see from what I've got here, we're always doing something, you know, messing around with something or other. And just relaxation, as you see, I do a jigsaw or something just to unwind from anything, but I'm never wound up over anything, you know, I just ... I let it go over the top of me head.

EA-C You've kept up to date with technology – you're connected onto the internet?

Mrs C Yes, yes I am – gone wireless. My computer packed up just about ... just before Christmas. They said the motherboard had gone, and he said he could fix it, and I said, 'Well, you'll fix that, and then something else will go wrong with the tower.' I said, 'What's the next thing down the line?' So I got a laptop, got the big laptop and I got a small one, so ...

EA-C Are you able to keep in touch with family via email?

Mrs C I can do, if I need to, but there's not many of them into it, but it's just handy for ... for umm ... especially this reunion, you know, trying to ... well, then half of them aren't reading them are they? Like myself, (*laughter*) have to have a mad week or they don't, but no, I find it alright, and Nicola Pemberton can send emails through and things like that, you know, by the time we keep up with all the things we're involved in, as you can see, it's like a mini museum. Somebody's got to collect it, haven't they? That's what we keep telling ourselves, so ...

EA-C Well, I'm very glad you do.

Mrs C Yes.

EA-C Thank you so much for sharing all these memories with me, Mrs Cashen.

Mrs C Yes, yes, that's fine, thank you very much for coming – hope I haven't bored you silly! (*laughter*)

END OF INTERVIEW