

NSW DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING

‘Millers Point Oral History Project’

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: **Janet and Cathie Farley**
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Janet Farley

Cathie Farley

Note: The opinions expressed in this oral history interview are those of the interviewees and do not necessarily represent in whole or in part the position of the Department of Housing, the Government Architect's Office, the Department of Commerce or the Oral History Consultants.

00:06 START OF TAPE MP-SM10 SIDE A

00:10 Tape Identification

Cathie, if I can start with you, can you just tell me about your early memories of growing up in Millers Point and maybe just start with your date of birth.

00:42 Cathie: I was born 2 August 1958 at Crown Street Hospital, I always mix them up because we were born in one and some of us born in the other. Of course came back, well my memory is being back to Munn Street, the house that I have my first memory of is 20 Munn Street. My early memory of Millers Point in a sense hasn't changed much in the buildings around here but it has changed hugely as far as things like cars, the people who are around, because we were a fairly good little community and knew mostly everybody. I mean you didn't know everybody, you can't know everybody in the Point, especially when you are young and I suppose we did live a bit sectionalised. We lived down in the Point, there was The Rocks and then there was Dawes Point and although you knew people from all those areas you sort of didn't really intermingle a lot. Millers Point to me was, I suppose a bit like an old black and white movie, it was a bit black and white, it was a bit old, had a lot of character. Still has a lot of character, but that has changed.

How has it changed?

02:02 Cathie: Well like I said, it is more colourful now, there's lot of cars, there's not the community that was around before. A lot of the people who used to live on Millers Point have moved, you don't have a lot of your generational people any more, there is a few still here, and those that are still here that you know, but there are a lot of people now that you don't know, wouldn't know, never met and probably will never meet.

You mean by generational people going back a few generations in the Point?

02:32 Cathie: Yes. An example is myself and my son, a first and a second generation family, but there was people who were fourth, fifth and sixth generation families, so they had been around for a long time. There were strong family connections, like you knew who was related to one another, like the Lucks and the Kays and the Floods, there was that kind of family mixture. A lot of those people aren't here any more, or if they are there is only a few of them left.

Well try and take me through Munn Street when you were living there, take me through the neighbours, what you remember of the names of the neighbours.

03:11 Cathie: Don't remember a real lot of the names because I was only about two when we lived in Munn Street. Munn Street was sort of like a long terraced-style street, it went quite a way down the road. We played out on the street a lot and we had quite a big play area. There is now a park in front of our street, which there wasn't before, it was a roadway

which led down to Hickson Road, had a little staircase that went down into Hickson Road. I sort of remember some people, and mum may have to help me here, I remember Kitty, but I can't remember the surname.

Janet: Kitty Hare.

Cathie: Then there was Mrs McBride, Lil O'Shea.

Janet: Mrs Smith.

Cathie: Aunty Lottie.

Janet: Lottie was in the house that you are in now.

Cathie: There were sort of like those ladies that I sort of remember. One of the ladies was like the aunty of Georgie Hare, who didn't live on the Point for a little bit of time and came back to the Point. I have just a small memory of that.

You said you played on the street - what kind of games did you play?

04:25 Cathie: Hopscotch and just chasings, mainly running up and down the front. I suppose because I was two I wasn't really allowed to go very far from the front, I had to stay on the terraced way.

Janet: She never got any further than the terrace.

Cathie: I was allowed to sort of go up to the pub and maybe down the street a little bit but that was as far as I was allowed to go from the front and I suppose I knew that, and didn't venture very far.

That was the Palisade, the pub. I believe you used to play at the King George?

04:58 Cathie: Oh yes, the King George, best place in the world, not any more. It was a little brick cottage, had big grounds around it, like a couple of basketball courts and a little park area, which down the track the kids were involved in. They built a little tiny pool, just a wading-style pool, but we all helped build a crocodile and stuff like that, one of them papier-mâché crocodiles, that was quite good fun. That was the main place when we were a bit older, the main place you went to play, because it was open from a certain time in the afternoon after school. It was only open for blocks of time, like it might have been open from four to six o'clock a couple of afternoons a week and Wednesday night it used to be open for roller-skating.

Janet: Saturday mornings.

Cathie: Saturday mornings, Friday night.

Do you remember Mark Burgess used to work there?

05:47 Cathie: I don't remember Mark as working there because he is slightly younger than me, so therefore didn't go to the King George when he was one of the 'sirs' at the King George. But do know Mark and have contact with Mark now because one of his young boys now plays for the local football team that Alex plays with, my son. They are different in age group but they both play for Paddington-Woollahra, so we do see Mark occasionally.

Just moving from Munn Street into Merriman Street, you had to move because of the houses being knocked down, and we'll go back to your mum for that in a minute, when you moved into Merriman Street what was the atmosphere like in that street?

06:31 Cathie: Oh, a very different street. Merriman Street was a closed street, sort of like a cul-de-sac, I mean you had driving capacity to enter both ends of the street because trucks had to access the wharves and the wool store, but basically it was not a drive-through street, like you couldn't drive through it to anywhere, so really the only people that came into the street car-wise would be people who lived there. There were a lot of cars but the only cars that came into the street were really the residents' cars. There were a few more kids in Merriman Street, you had Mark Olsen and his sister, I can't remember his sister's name. You had the Slades who lived up the street, the Pinters, the Golds, they lived round in Bettington Street, but there was a lot more kids.

07:37 Cathie: We had a park up the top of the street, Merriman Street Park, so I suppose the playing in the street still was a playground and playing up the park. Used to play games out the front, like cricket or hopscotch again, chasing games. If one of the kids had a bike you might have a ride on the bike or something like that. So very different, more open, I suppose, felt more open. You had a paddock behind the house. We had a big yard so we had a lot of playing in the yard. I suppose we stayed a little bit later too in Merriman Street because it was pretty safe, so we were outside, especially in the warmer months, summer and spring, you were outside more, playing.

Now your mum was telling me that she had to go out and do double shifts as a cleaner, were you the eldest?

Cathie: I'm the eldest, yes.

So how did you manage looking after the others, what was it like for you? I know your dad was there sometimes but what was it like having that kind of responsibility?

08:40 Cathie: I suppose you didn't think about it because it was just like it was your job. It sounds strange to say it, but it was a bit like mum would leave instructions on what you had

to do and you had to look after the kids, because being the eldest you were in charge of the kids all the time. I don't know, mum would have things ready. You'd have breakfast like you do now, Weetbix or Cornflakes and that sort of stuff, so that was pretty easy to put together. I suppose we all knew mum was out working so we had to be on reasonable behaviour and just do what we had to do, we all had a job and we did that. Whatever was for dinner was ready, mum would have that pretty much on the stove and cooking, I would just have to do whatever for dishing it up.

What would happen if say a child fell over and broke an arm, would you know what to do then?

Cathie: Well I suppose we were pretty lucky, no one did.

Janet: That's it we were lucky that way. She could always call the next door neighbour.

09:51 Cathie: We could call the neighbours but I suppose we were pretty lucky, there was no accidents, no one burnt themselves. I mean I think I am the only one who used to do things to themselves. The one time my brother got hurt mum was home, when he fell off the swings and split his head, Laurie Coles helped mum look after that. There wasn't any sort of accident but I knew there was neighbours close by. There was always someone home, if mum wasn't home and if dad was working there was always someone, like Aunty Ruth was next door, Amanda Pinner, I would have called her Mrs Pinner then, rather than Mandy now.
Was Aunty Ruth a real aunty?

10:36 Cathie: No. We had lots of uncles and aunties who weren't uncles and aunties, like Uncle John across the street and I mentioned Aunty Lottie before, but none of them were actual aunties or uncles.

So what was school like, what school did you go to?

10:48 Cathie: Went to Fort Street Primary School and school was good, It was big, well it seemed like it was big, back then when I went to school there was like three hundred kids. Kids used to come from Ultimo and Pyrmont, so it wasn't just Millers Point kids. It seemed like a big school, I thought it was a big school until I took my son there. You knew everyone and you had some of those kids come to school that you didn't really know, the ones from The Rocks, so you got to go to school with some of the kids you didn't really know, like the Browns and that, that lived around in The Rocks.

So there really was that sense of them being quite different, even though they are really quite close?

11:34 Cathie: Yes and still is. It is funny because you say it sometimes. I remember one time we were trying to explain to someone how we didn't really have much to do with the people in The Rocks and they were like, 'Well, that is only a couple of streets away,' but you

just didn't do it. You had your own community down where we lived and that is where you stuck. You might know them, you might see them at community days or stuff like that, or at the King George, or at school, but you really didn't play with them.

Just turning to Janet now. Janet can you tell me how a Scottish woman like yourself got from Glasgow to Millers Point, how did you come to be here?

12:13 Janet: Well as I said it is a strange story. I had a brother John out here, he was a seaman, and he had a ticket, where the hell he got it from I don't know but he had a ticket and he sent it over to me mum for one of the boys to come across but when the ticket arrived the boys were in the army, so naturally they couldn't come. My sister, who was next in line got engaged, so I was the one, as far as that was concerned, I was the one that got shipped out. I don't know why but that is how it happened.

You were very young, you were only about seventeen.

Janet: Yes I was seventeen and I came out here in 1956, let's say 1956-1957.

After a short time in Brisbane you ended up back in Millers Point because your brother was working around here.

13:10 Always had to pick up the ships in Sydney, in Brisbane naturally, he was picking up there, but maybe had to come down to Sydney to pick his ships up, so that is why I came here.

So you started off in a boarding house, did that feel strange being the only female in that boarding house?

13:33 Janet: No, not really because I suppose being a young lassie living amongst a lot of men they looked after you, so you really didn't come to any harm. There was a lady taking care of the house, Miss Grace, and she was great and she was there if you ever needed any help.

Where as that boarding house?

13:52 Janet: The boarding house was in Bettington Street, where Kath, the daughter lives. She mentioned stairs, leading up well, where the stairs were, that is where the boarding house was, you had to go through a gate into the boarding house. It was a large house and then from the boarding house the rest of houses, like it was as if it was going straight into the water but with the Bond Store being at the end of the street that is where the houses ended.

Cathie What about the other boarding house you lived in at Dalgety.

Janet: That was Mrs Walkers, but I am talking about the first one.

The first one was this one in Bettington Street?

14:33 Janet: No that was the second one, Bettington Street, the first one was down Dalgety Terrace. Mrs Walker used to run that house, men and women used to live in that house, the very first one, but the second one was where I had Cathie.
So tell me how you met your husband.

15:02 Janet: He was down fishing and I was stupid enough to be down there and we met. We got together and it just happened.

He was an Englishman?

Janet: He was a Pom and he came from Sunderland. So that is how we met, and we ran about for a few months and then we got married and had Cathie.

At that stage you went to this other boarding house.

Janet: I was living in the boarding house when we had Cathie.

What did your husband do?

15:52 Janet: Man of all trades. When he got work, he worked, and when he didn't..... he was a boilermaker and welder by trade. It was casual work. He was known as the 'Compo King' because he got himself off work for injuries.

So that meant that you couldn't really rely much on his income?

16:25 Janet: No, that is why I had to go out and work the way I had to try and do just the best we could to support the kids and give them a decent sort of life.

If you could just run me through your cleaning shifts, when you used to leave at four-thirty in the morning.

16:41 Janet: I used to go down about half-past four in the morning to start work at the Customs Department. I worked there until just after seven-thirty, eight o'clock, to get home and make sure the kids were up, ready for school and fed and lunches ready. Then I went back to the Wynyard Hotel to do a housemaid's cleaning job until after lunch time. Then I done the housework and whatever else I had to do before the kids came home about three o'clock, so as I could start work down the Customs again until after seven o'clock at night.
It is a long day.

17:21 Janet: It was a long day, but as I said, I had to do it so it was something you just got used to, it was something you had to do to survive. There were no pensions in those days, you got very little from anybody in those days.

You were saying you used to clean the pubs as well.

Janet: After I left the Customs Department I took the cleaning jobs on, I started in the

Captain Cook and then I done the Palisade after I left the Captain Cook and then I done the Wynyard Hotel.

How were the Palisade and Captain different from the Wynyard Hotel in terms of the clientele?

18:12 Janet: Well, the Wynyard Hotel was always closed, it was early closing in them times, and it was more business people up at the Wynyard than what it was down the Palisade and the Captain Cook because they were working-class wharfie pubs type of thing. So you got in there and done whatever and with the Captain Cook your toilets were downstairs, type of thing.

When you say early closing what time were they closing?

18:47 Janet: Well early closing was supposed to be six o'clock, or nine o'clock, but there were some of the pubs the doors were closed, but everybody was still in the pub drinking. *So they were locked in.*

19:03 Janet: Yes. They left you alone to do your job, type of thing and what you couldn't do, you done the next morning, you'd just go down there a wee bit early.

The famous six o'clock swill, when the men would order loads of drink and knock it back - there are stories of people because they drank to fast vomiting and all that.

Janet: Well that was part of your job, you just had to clean it. You had to clean the toilets, you had to clean what was lying on the floor, or wherever else.

In those days did they have the tiled floors to make it easier?

Janet: Yes they always had the tiled floors.

Cathie: The carpet came in much later.

19:46 Janet: Sometimes when I'd had a night out on the town I would ask Cathie to come down and help me do the pub, type of thing, and I think poor old Cathie done more the pub on a Sunday night.

That was so you could get away early.

Janet: Took me too long to do it.

Cathie: Too many whiskies.

20:11 Janet: Anzac Day was the day I used to do the pubs as well, but I used to make sure the returned soldiers, when they had one I had one with them, and many times, as I said again Cathie came to the fore. She used to come up with me to clean the pub and many times she came down when I was doing the toilets and me standing on the mop, sound asleep. It was good times.

Were there local returned soldiers from the community?

20:54 Janet: I never got to know them it was mostly the really old ones that used to come from different places to play the two-up.

Cathie: There were some local returned soldiers.

Janet: I am just saying not a lot, Frankie Sullivan and that, but not a lot. They came round more for the two-up.

Now I was asking you about the fights in the pubs, did you see any fights?

21:21 Janet: Just the local mob, punching over maybe a gambling debt or somebody assaulting their wife and that, not a lot. You just turned your back, you never paid any attention, and it was over and done with. It was more word and mouth than throwing punches.

Cathie: There was that one big fight that time that was outside the Palisade, in the middle of the road when there was a few of the wharfies and some of the seamen.

Janet: I can't remember that one, Cathie.

Cathie: That was quite a big fight one time, there was a disagreement over turfs, I suppose. They had their pubs, you'd have one pub that was more the wharfies' pub and one pub that was more the seamen's pub.

Do you remember when that one was?

22:05 Cathie: Oh it was a long time ago, it was about twenty-five years ago, might have been thirty years, I was only pretty young. I remember wondering what was happening as I was coming down the road from school and there was a bit of a biff going on in the middle of the road with quite a few blokes.

Just getting on to the houses you were in Janet, I know you started when you were married and had Cathie in 20 Munn Street, that was just a small house.

Janet: Two bedroom. The front room was your lounge room but sometimes you made that into a bedroom so you could have three bedrooms. Then we went from there to Merriman Street where I had the five rooms.

That was 43 Merriman Street, so when you walked in the door what did you see?

23:01 Janet: When you walked in the door to your left you had your lounge room, your front room. You went up the hall and there was another room, a bedroom there. If you kept along you went in your toilet and you had the back verandah, so you had the inside toilet upstairs. To your right you went upstairs to all your bedrooms, so you had your front room,

your back room and two attics at the top. Downstairs you had your kitchen and another big area that you used as a kitchen for cooking and stuff and then you had your big backyard. The laundry was out the back and there was a toilet out the back. You had your laundry with a big copper.

Did you have hot water inside?

23:59 Janet: Yes you had hot water, your copper, you had to use bits and pieces of wood to keep it boiling but everything else was hot water and stuff.

So how did you feel when you got that house?

Janet: I thought it was great, I am sorry I ever left it because I think it was one of the best houses in the best streets as far I was concerned that was ever on Millers Point.

How did you get out of Munn Street into that house? Did you ask specifically for it?

24:29 Janet: Well there was a lady actually living in it, Mrs Essie Seymour, and she had that house. We was offered a house on the opposite side of Merriman Street, it was a smaller place, and it was her mother's house many years ago and she asked my husband, unbeknownst to me, if she could swap for the house we were having to the one we got. That is how I happened to get the big house instead of the little one and it was great. At the time I thought I could have choked him because what has he got me now type of thing but it was one of the best houses.

So tenants could organise that themselves.

25:17 Janet: Well you had to go through the Maritime Services to make sure it was all right, you just couldn't say you were going to move in here, but they didn't really try and hamper you if it wasn't causing any problems. This lady was willing to swap a big house to a small one and we were a big family so that is how that came about.

Once you were in did they take much of an interest on how you got on?

25:46 Janet: All they did was they sent the rent man, Jack, his name was Jack, he came round each week and picked up your rent and you never heard from them unless you needed something done.

Cathie: Unless they were painting, they were always painting.

What sort of choice did you get with the colours when they were painting?

26:08 Janet: You didn't, love, you just let them in and let them go for their life. Every house was beige and that was it.

How often did they paint?

26:25 Cathie: Every twelve months or two years, they were painting all the time.

Janet: Not in our bloody joint they didn't.

Cathie: Well it seemed like it. Being a young girl it seemed like they were in there, painting all the time.

Janet did you have much time to chat with the other women?

26:45 Janet: We had our little afternoons. We used to sit outside on the stoop, on the stairs, type of thing, and have a gab, have a cup of tea, especially on a Saturday afternoon when you knew the kids were right and they were out playing and you just sat there and had a cup of tea with your next door neighbour or whoever passed by. I was never tied down to anything, I done me own thing, type of thing.

If somebody got sick in the street what would happen?

27:13 Janet: Nothing really because if you were sick you went to the doctor, the doctor was just up the street so the doctor was nice and handy. Where the shops are now that is where the doctor was.

What was the doctor's name?

Janet: God, love, we had that many.

Cathie: Was Dr Johnson there?

Janet: No, Dr Johnson, he was always up in Caltex House. There were many doctors, I couldn't really tell you.

I am thinking more if somebody was stuck in bed for a while, would people help?

27:43 Janet: Oh yes, the neighbours there for anything that needed to be done. We were there for people's shopping, helped to clean the house, whatever anybody needed we were always there to try and help.

What about new Australians, did you have many Italians and that sort of thing?

Cathie: We had a few. There were the de Lombardos. There wasn't a lot.

Janet: Just a few. She remembers more stuff than I do, love.

So when did you give up the cleaning?

28:25 Cathie: Just after dad died, about twenty-six years ago.

Janet: Yes, my husband died and I decided that was it. I was entitled to a pension then, I suppose I got the widow's pension, and that was that. I thought well I have done enough, time to sit down and enjoy life.

Was that when you moved in here to High Street?

Janet: We were still in Kent Street at the time when my husband passed away.

Cathie: You were in 88 then and not 41.

Janet: We moved from 88 to 41 Kent Street.

29:16 END OF TAPE MP-SM10 SIDE A

29:18 START OF TAPE MP-SM10 SIDE B

So Kent Street, Janet, can you describe 88 Kent Street.

29:28 Janet: Well 88 Kent Street, when I first moved into it, I don't know if Cathie will remember this or not, we went into the house and it was like a big concrete block. There were no doors in the place, it was falling apart, the floor was concrete and when I got a bucket of water to swill it down it was like being in a swimming pool. It was a bloody disgrace, that is all I could say at the time, but it was offered to me when you have no money to go out and buy your own at the time and it was like 'take it or leave it'. That was what I was told, 'Here you are, here are the keys, take or leave it,' so you had to take it.

Why did you have to leave Merriman Street?

Janet: Well they were pulling the places down, they were pulling the whole area down.

30:29 Cathie: The wharves had resumed the area because they built that modern wharf they have got now.

So Cathie, you are saying that when they did that, they pulled down those houses in Merriman Street and had to re-house people that changed the community a bit?

30:40 Cathie: It changed the community a fair bit. There were things like my mum just described, people were offered places and they had to take it or leave it. Where there weren't places available here, or they didn't want to take a place here, they were offered places outside of Millers Point, at Dundas, mum mentioned Dulwich Hill. Some people chose to move out altogether, some people had a bit more money, I suppose, and they decided to rent privately. Some people had bought holiday houses up the coast, so some people moved to their holiday houses. So it changed the face of the community in the sense of a lot of old school people were no longer here any more because they had moved.

Did you ever think of moving out of the community, Janet?

31:25 Janet: No, because I didn't want to move - this was the only place I knew, and I knew it was the only place for work. When I first came here I had to go out to Five Dock, years and years ago this was, and it was like another world to me. I was up at four o'clock in the morning trying to get a bus back into Wynyard to go out to, I can't even remember where the hell it is now, I used to go out to a carpet factory. That was where I first worked, in a carpet factory, making carpets, Five Dock. As I said, Five Dock was another world, I think I lasted a week and packed it in and that is when I got into the cleaning.

So when you got this house at 88 Kent Street did you just decide after you got over the shock to start in and try and make it habitable?

32:26 Janet: As I said, there were no carpets on the floor, like there are now, there was no paint, the cupboards were falling apart. You had to go and do something.

So what did you do?

32:44 Janet: Well, that is why I was out working. I went to Waltons, actually, Waltons. I was in debt to put furniture and stuff in the house, carpet for my husband and the kids if nothing else, it was a disgrace, so it was.

I believe it didn't even have hot water.

33:06 Janet: Nothing. Actually, being truthful I nearly got electrocuted because we had a hot water system in the bathroom and the bathroom is out the back and I went out one night to the club, and what we had to do was have a long lead, leading from the bathroom into the lounge room to get the power to keep the hot water service going. It must have had a faulty lead and I came home this night and the dog had been sick, and I came in to get hot water and as I lifted up the bucket, one of those old tin buckets, I got a surprise you never want in your life, love. That is how we had to manage, so we had to sort it all out to make it better.

It flashed up did it?

34:05 Janet: It flashed up and I was on my tiptoes and I had the cops at my door, thinking my husband was doing me in. It never got any better because when the Housing Commission came in..... well, they have helped me because I wouldn't have had a home otherwise. I had no money to buy a home or a piece of land, or anything else, like a lot of people did, so you had to depend on the Housing Commission to put a roof over your head, you had to be thankful. But at the time I wasn't thankful to the Housing Commission when I was put into the house that I was put in at the time. When I left there they were doing it all up. I took my furniture but all the beautiful carpet I put down on the floor, that was all

ripped up, you were never reimbursed for it, and I was put in near the Captain Cook then. *But if you were actually in a dangerous situation like that, with the wiring, would they not come and fix that?*

35:12 Janet: No, because as far as they were concerned it was nothing to do with them, nothing to do with them.

Cathie: See, the hot water service was purchased by mum because there was no hot water in there.

So you either had to put up with no water or...

Cathie: It wasn't their responsibility.

35:29 Janet: You had to, like we done for a long time, use the boiler, the old copper, in the laundry to boil the water to cart the water into the bath to give the kids a bath. There was nothing wrong with the hot water system, it was the long lead. My husband loaned the lead out to a friend and he gave us one back and it was faulty, but we didn't know, and by the time we realised it was faulty that is when it hot-wired.

This is 1970 and you didn't have proper hot water?

Janet: No.

When did you leave 88?

Cathie: About seventeen years ago.

Janet: I think I have got the receipt.

So in 1988 you left number 88 and you went to another part of Kent Street?

Cathie: Number 41.

Janet: I have got the receipt in there, actually.

What was 41 like?

36:24 Janet: Oh nice, it was just all done up, it gave you an extra dining room and another back bedroom, that was downstairs, and you had your big kitchen, your laundry and your toilet downstairs. Your lounge room upstairs and your bedrooms upstairs and your bathroom and toilet and shower. That was good, that little house, so it was.

How many kids had you at home then?

36:55 Janet: Ah just the two, the son and my youngest daughter, Jeanette, she lives at Coffs Harbour at the moment. There were just the two of them and the son moved above the paper shop, he got a flat because he worked there and so it was just me and my daughter.

How did you get that place? Again did you put your hand up to move?

37:16 Janet: No, I didn't. The Housing Commission moved us out because they wanted me out of 88 Kent Street to do it up, and when they done it up the woman that is in the house now lived next door to us. So as they were doing houses up they were moving people into the redecorated houses.

So finally you moved here to 36 High Street, when did that happen?

Cathie: That was about seven years, 1996.

Cathie, you moved into the Kent Street place at the age of twelve.

Cathie: Yes, I was just starting high school.

Where did you go to high school?

Cathie: Leichhardt Girls' Junior High, so I went to Leichhardt.

That was quite a way to go, wasn't it, why did you go so far?

38:22 Cathie: Well the only choices of school then - there wasn't a lot of choices of high school. We had Fort Street Girls' of course, up the top, but that was a selective high school and although I made it into the school we didn't have the money for me to go there for one. Number two, all my friends were going to either Vaucluse..... what was the name of that school Tricia went to?

Janet: Dover Heights.

Cathie: Dover Heights or Leichhardt Girls' Junior High were really the only two selections of school that you could go to, so I went to Leichhardt Girls' Junior High.

Janet: 41 Kent Street we moved in, in 1989.

Can I have a look, is that a tenancy thing?

Janet: Yes.

Schedule of Letting. Department of Housing, 25 August 1989, 41 Kent Street.

Janet: This one is 1984.

The rent it says is a hundred and eight dollars thirty, is that per week?

39:51 Cathie: A hundred and thirty one per week mum was paying in 1984 at 88 Kent Street. Two twenty five weekly rent, that was probably when mum had Jeanette and Andy at home because they took into consideration all wages coming into the house.

Janet: That is when I had the two kids living in the house, that is why I was paying that much rent.

Cathie: Mum was working in the pubs as well then.

So the rent was a proportion of the income of the household.

Cathie: I think it was eighteen per cent, or something back then, it is twenty-five per cent now.

Did you ever find it hard to actually meet the rent?

40:28 Janet: No, not really, no it was always there, we were always able to have the rent together.

40:36 Cathie: I suppose I do, coming in on that, I find it hard to meet the rent at times because I'm a single parent. I have a really good job in the sense of the income that I earn a year but the Department of Housing do a percentage of wage based on gross income and unfortunately you don't get your tax. I worked it out the other week that I'm paying about sixty-two dollars a week of my rent, which is just the tax, so I have got to pay that out of my net income, so it makes it a bit hard. Unfortunately I have just recently gone into a loan for a second-hand car and I find it hard sometimes to pay the amount of rent I have to pay.

Would it be easier or more difficult out in the private market?

41:22 Cathie: I don't grumble about it too much because I would have to pay more out in the private market. I mean if I was going to get similar, maybe something a bit more modern but something similar to what I had, I would be paying again probably another fifty to seventy dollars a week for something decent in the private market, so I suppose in that sense I'm a lot better off. And being in the community I have lived in all my life, too.

That means something to you does it?

Cathie: Oh yes, absolutely.

So just going back you - you went to high school and I believe you moved away from the area for three years?

42:09 Cathie: I moved. I didn't move until I was twenty-four, I lived at 88 Kent Street from the time we moved up there, when I was twelve until just after my twenty-fourth birthday. I was working in the pubs at the time and I decided to go and share a flat with a girlfriend for a short period of time so I moved across the harbour to McMahons Point. I didn't feel like I had moved away, really, because I still worked here, I still had a family connection here, so I didn't actually feel that I had moved away, I just had a bed somewhere else, basically.

And you could still see the Bridge.

Cathie: And I could still see Millers Point.

What made you come back?

43:01 Cathie: Probably because I missed Millers Point so much. It never really felt like I had done the right thing in moving away, I think it was just the thing you do when you are a young person, you think it is time to move out of home. I couldn't really move into Millers Point because there was nothing to rent as such, the only choices you had to rent were boarding houses or things like that and I suppose at that time I thought well, I'll try moving out into a flat. There weren't flats or anything like you can rent now in the private market or stuff like that, you had to be on a Department of Housing waiting list and apply and I suppose I never ever considered myself to need Department of Housing housing, so I would never have put myself on the list for a house. My way back into Millers Point initially was a boarding house funny enough, like mum, I lived in a boarding house in Kent Street, 77 Kent Street.

How was that run at that time?

44:00 Cathie: It was a privately-owned place, Queensland Jack was the name of the bloke who owned the place. It was again, like mum's first one, her second one, it was all men. I suppose unlike mum mine was a little bit different. I felt quite secure in Queensland Jack's place but I also didn't a little bit because I knew a couple of the men there, like Mick, one of the workers who I still see occasionally. He is quite an old bloke now but I bump into him every now and then and he asks me how I am going. There were a couple of people there that I felt quite comfortable with and felt quite safe with but there was quite a few people there that I was always a bit worried when I had to go out and use the bathroom, because it was a communal shower and stuff like that, so I was sometimes worried about that. I was quite happy that they all went to work early in the morning and at the time when I would be getting up most of them were gone for the day.

What was Queensland Jack like?

44:52 Cathie: Oh, he was a real character. He was an English guy, a Pom or something, but he had lived in Queensland for a long time so that is why they called him Queensland Jack. He was a robust little thing but he was a nice guy. I used to work in the Captain Cook Hotel, so he was one of my customers, I suppose, first up. When I was trying to work out what I was going to do as far as staying away from the Point or coming back he was the one who told me he had a room that he thought would be suitable, so I decided to come back.

How much were you paying do you remember?

45:34 Cathie: I do, it was twenty-five dollars a week, which was great because when I left

McMahons Point I was paying a hundred and twenty dollars a week for renting a place over there on my own.

That was about 1982 was it?

45:46 Cathie: Something like that. I was twenty-four when I moved out of home, so I would have been about twenty-seven. My rent went up from sixty dollars over a period of three years, it went from sixty dollars to a hundred and twenty dollars in the time I lived at McMahons Point. Then I came back to Jack's place and it was like heaven because it was twenty-five dollars a week and that included electricity and gas and I actually was able to get out of debt while I was living with Jack because I paid off my Bankcard and all that sort of stuff.

In that house you had your own room?

46:22 Cathie: I had a huge room. I had a studio apartment in McMahons Point. I flatted with someone first and then when I moved out from her I had a little studio apartment and this room was almost as big as my studio apartment. It had a balcony on it and the balcony had a gas stove and stuff, it was sort of set up like a kitchen. Didn't have any running water in there, so I used to have to bring water in from the bathroom. We had a shared bathroom, shared laundry.

So you were self-sufficient apart from the bathroom and just bringing in the water.

Cathie: It was a huge room. Like I said, I had a lounge and a big bed and all sorts of things in there, it was a big room.

How do you think he made a living if it was that cheap?

47:09 Cathie: Well, Jack used to be a seaman, or something like that, so I think he might have had a golden handshake or something when he finally left the sea. He had a lot of rooms in there, there was a lot of blokes in there. I'm not saying that we all paid the same amount, I don't know whether he charged me twenty-five dollars and other people paid a bit more, or some people paid a bit less, I think depending on where you were in the house depended on what you paid. It must have been enough, I suppose back then you didn't need huge incomes, like you do nowadays so it was plenty good enough for him. After I moved out of his place I know he ended up being a Department of Housing boarding house, I think they bought his tenancy off him.

Tell me about that because that was a big change in the area, when the Maritime was replaced by the Department of Housing, how did that affect you both?

48:07 Cathie: I suppose initially for me it didn't affect me that much because I wasn't really

living at the Point when they very first took over. Oh yes, I was, I was living in John's place. I suppose the change was initially it sounded quite exciting because there was talk of them going to renovate the places and stuff like that.

Janet: Do all the wonders.

Cathie: We were certainly told things weren't going to change as far as our tenancies and stuff like that and that didn't end up being the truth.

How did things change?

48:42 Cathie: Well, of course you have to sign leases like you do, but all of a sudden you had a fear factor over you because the Department of Housing had very different policies from the Maritime. The Maritime didn't really have any policies and the Department of Housing had policies on income and things like that. All of a sudden a lot of people didn't fit into their policies so a lot of people moved out in that first two or three years of the Department of Housing taking over because they didn't meet the policy. They either had holiday homes - and you are not allowed to own a home - they had lots of income, which weren't huge incomes but it was enough to put you over their caps, or their starting incomes. So yes, a lot of people moved out altogether.

How do you remember it Janet, when the Housing Commission took over?

49:32 Janet: Well with me, I was in a different situation, I had two pays coming into the house, type of thing. I wasn't affected too much. I was up in the big house with Trish and Crystal. I am talking about payments, not kids.

Where were you at the time?

Cathie: Mum was in 88 when the Department of Housing took over.

50:04 Janet: That was when I first went under the Housing Commission, in the big house in Kent Street. It didn't change me in any way because I hadn't got anything better. The only things that changed was, as Cathie said, as soon as the kids were grown up and went into the workforce your rent would simply go higher, so you didn't seem able to get out of the wee bit of hole, you were always robbing Paul to pay Peter, or Peter to pay Paul type of thing, to make sure you had your rent money.

50:48 Cathie: Mum has got a letter in there that says in 1984 her rent was a hundred and thirty-one dollars a week, whereas it was sixty dollars with the Maritime, so it jumped quite a lot.

Because they had more policies it sounds as if they were more hands-on in a big way, the

Department of Housing, that you were under more scrutiny.

Cathie: One had to supply more information, yes.

51:17 Janet: Say Cathie came to live with me, and so I had to tell them that she was going to be there until whenever, so your rent went up. When Cathie left it took them a while to get back to the drop in your rent. It was just different, I find it hard to explain.

What if you just didn't bother telling them, how would they know?

51:50 Janet: Well they wouldn't in a way, but they always seem to find out, so we don't know if they were watching you half the time. I don't know, I can't explain. As I said there were people in some of the houses, best of luck to them, had six or seven grown-ups but they would sometimes be paying less rent than I would.

52:15 Cathie: I suppose it depended on how honest you were. You were just asking how would they know? I suppose on some levels they wouldn't know because they couldn't have access to your tax information, or things like that, but I suppose there is always that fear factor that if you didn't tell them the truth you'd lose your house.

52:31 Janet: After a while they started coming every six months to check over the premises. Well they haven't done that for a while, they haven't done that for over twelve months. So when they came in they'd have a little piece of paper, 'Who is living here, Mrs Farley?' 'Well it is just me.' 'Anybody staying with you?' 'No, just my daughter comes every now and again.' So that's how they monitor.

Do you feel as if you are a kind of a bit under surveillance, or as if that is a bit intrusive?

53:13 Janet: No, love. I'm not doing anything, I am here on my own. Cathie comes and has a coffee, my grandson comes to have a coffee. My daughter comes from Coffs Harbour when she can and has a week or so here, so she is on holiday. My rent is paid and I don't owe anybody.

Do you know anybody who wasn't able to pay their rent and if so, were they ever evicted?

53:42 Janet: Yes but that is different situations. There was one young man that was born and bred here and got married and had kids and he done the wrong thing, he let people into his home while he was living there and he put his trust in these people but the rent never ever got paid and the house was not getting looked after. So these two chaps moved out, left the young man to face the music and he was so far behind in the rent he gave up. He gave up the house and moved back to his wife. That is the only one I've heard of.

Cathie when you were working at the Captain Cook - was it still a working man's pub then?

54:38 Cathie: Yes. When I first started working at the pub it was an early-closer, but not as early as the six o'clock closing. It was early closing when I first started, so it was primarily just a workers' pub, mostly wharfies, a few seaman. Very early in my time of working in the Cook it became a late opener, which was the ten o'clock-closer, still primarily a wharfies' pub. It turned into something a bit different, I think we started to get a lot more businesses and stuff around, white collar workers, so you had a lot more business people.

55:35 We had Fletcher's and that, which was associated with the wharves and stuff but a lot more white collar workers, so you had a slightly different clientele. Had a lot of local people from the Point. A lot of times if there was no shift work happening on the wharves you had mostly locals there in the afternoon, to the night time when it closed, maybe your local seamen because they would be on different kinds of things. If the ship was in port they would be in port or they might be waiting for their ship to come in, so you had a slightly different clientele as I got older.

I am moving you along a bit now, from the Captain Cook and your single days, you have a son now and you are back here living in Munn Street.

56:24 Cathie: Well I moved back to the Point, rented in the boarding house for a while. My Uncle John, who is not an uncle, was a seaman and he had a Filipino wife and he used to go over to the Philippines quite regularly. He made me an offer of living in his house, looking after his house while he was away, but also an opportunity of living with him, so I ended up moving down to 18 Munn Street, which is underneath next door where I live now. The Department of Housing took over while we were there so I became a tenant with John from that. Then they wanted to, as mum was talking about, renovate the places, we were the only one living in that block, there was only a block of four houses left and we were the only one living in that block at the time, the other three houses were vacant. They did the two houses up next door and they wanted to do up our place and the place above us but a lot of the services were connected, like the water and stuff, so they couldn't do upstairs while we were down because they would have had to switch things off for long periods of the day or night and so they asked me if we would move. They originally offered a move around to Dalgety Terrace but because I knew the place next door upstairs was vacant I sort of negotiated on John's behalf, because he was away, to try and stay there. He had lived there since 1965, or something like that, he had been living in Munn Street for a very long time. So we negotiated to move upstairs and we were upstairs until about maybe 1988, 1989. Uncle John unfortunately got cancer in the throat and he died.

58:09 This is where it gets quite interesting, I suppose. Technically I didn't meet the

Department of Housing's criteria because I was a single woman with no children at that stage and I was earning a fairly good income. I had left the pub game by then and I was working for the Waterside Workers' Federation, Shipping Clerks' Branch, in an office just up the road, where 'Show Face' the make-up shop is now. I was working for them and I was on what was considered a higher income than a moderate income and so I actually was supposed to move out of the house because I didn't meet their policy. I suppose luckily for me I had a really good tenancy officer at the time, I think his name was Ken Smith, and I put up a really good argument of being in the community, except for that short period of time all my life, had strong ties to the community, wouldn't live anywhere else if I had the opportunity in the Point any other way than in the Department of Housing, and so they did let me take over the lease.

59:13 I suppose it was fortunate for me because in 1991 I fell pregnant with my son and then became a single parent, requiring housing. I ended up leaving the Waterside Workers' just before he was born and I went to work for the Aboriginal Development Commission, which turned in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, which is now defunct. I ended up earning a good government income, so I have always paid the top rent. I haven't paid market rent but I have always paid the top rent, like twenty-five per cent of my income.

59:56 END OF TAPE MP-SM10 SIDE B

00:06 START OF TAPE MP-SH11 SIDE A

00:07 Tape identification

We were just talking about that you had consolidated your tenancy in Munn Street, your son had been born. How did you find the Department of Housing then? Since then you have been a tenant with the Department of Housing, how did you find them as a landlord?

00:36 Cathie: I find the Department of Housing okay as a landlord, I won't say they are sensational, I find some difficulties you have, which you do, you have changes of staff all the time in places but you are never told. You have new client service officers, you often find out when you are ring up asking for the latest one. I suppose the other things I have difficulty with is the way that we pay rent. I understand that we get a subsidised rent, so therefore we

don't pay market rent, which is great. I am very thankful for the time I've had with the Department of Housing and having the long tenancy, being in one spot, not having to move regularly, like some of my work mates move every twelve or eighteen months and stuff like, so very thankful for that. The difficult things I find is how they work the rent out when they base it on gross income and you don't get your tax.

01:30 How you can't do some things. Like they have got some archaic policies that haven't changed for a long time, like they have got a thousand dollar cap, which they are changing the threshold I hear, but if you earn over a thousand dollars a week gross you've got to pay market rent. Well now the rent has changed because where we live Millers Point has turned into this trendy area because it is near The Rocks, and it is near Dawes Point - that has now been done up - the value of the places have gone through the roof and the market rent in my place is four hundred and forty-five dollars a week, well, I couldn't afford to pay that if I was earning the thousand dollars gross because you've got to take your tax out and that only leaves you a net income, and then you've got to live on that and if you took the rent out you'd have nothing to live on, so that would be very hard.

02:15 As far as getting things done - initially the place was great because it had been done up, but they don't keep the work up. There is a lot of disrepair in my place, even though I ring the Maintenance Line and that they do fixes, but they don't really fix the problem. You have a balcony that is almost falling apart but because it is not in their works at the moment it is not going to get fixed. I think the changes to their policies and stuff, they don't get that across real easily, you find it out accidentally or you find it out if you decide to go and research the Internet, or stuff like that, they don't let you know about changes. They do send out things like newsletters and stuff but I am sorry, in today's society when you are so busy sometimes you look at those things, and other times you don't, but there might have been a really important change in there that might have been better to have done it by correspondence.

So you'd prefer to see direct letters?

03:13 Cathie: I think when there is major changes that affect people's life it should be a direct correspondence to you, not a newsletter. There is a change in the policy and then they don't tell you there is a change in the policy, and you don't know about it. I think there should be more direct contact about that sort thing. I think the other thing - what mum said - I know it is hard, like everyone has got big work loads, I think if their client services officers came and had more regular visits to the area they could see what was happening as far

repairs, they could see what was happening as far as ??? living in houses, and you would get to know them, rather than being a faceless name on a phone.

As regards the one thousand dollar cap - would you prefer to see it maintained a percentage of your income rather than reverting to market rent?

04:00 Cathie: I heard they bringing in a thing called the threshold and we were supposed to have been getting correspondence on that last week, which we haven't got yet, so they are making some changes to some of their old rules but I don't think they have gone far enough. I think they need to do things like set their thresholds to CPI movements and stuff like that, so that they are looking at real wages rather than looking at some old policy. I heard that even though they are changing these thresholds from a thousand dollar cap to a higher threshold in some instances and therefore charging a higher percentage of your income, thirty per cent of your gross was what I heard if you are on a high income, they still will have a bottom income limit to get into the Department of Housing - that hasn't changed for fourteen years. I mean real wages have changed in fourteen years so that is just ridiculous. I think I would rather see a percentage of income rather than having a threshold or a cap, you are still going to get fairly high rents. I am not saying people on huge incomes, like double incomes or something, shouldn't move out of Department of Housing and rent privately, or buy if they have got that kind of income, it is not about keeping houses unavailable to people who need them, it is about looking at wages more realistically as they move every year, there are real moves but the Department of Housing don't seem to keep up with that kind of time.

Just on the more social aspects of the community, your son is now almost fourteen - how has his childhood in Millers Point been different from yours?

05:44 Cathie: Oh, immeasurable. I suppose the difference is that there is not the sense of community that there was because the community is so transient now. You don't have your generational people, and the people who come in are happy to just have a house and they will have a house anywhere, they don't care whether it is in Millers Point or not, so they don't have the sense of community, the sense of ties to the area. You can't play on the street like you did because there are too many cars. You don't have King George V Playground like we had, they changed that to a sporting complex and there is supposed to be access for the kids but there is not really. If you don't pay to go there and if you are outside of the age group that is allowed to go there you can't access there at all.

06:32 They have a youth centre but it is only open certain blocks of time because it is only funded a certain way. We don't have sporting areas in here, we don't have football grounds

or sporting clubs, so there is none of that to access. Although the kids seems quite tight, there is a lot of kids, they don't have a sense of anything, so it is very different for him growing up here. I am still happy he has grown up here because I love Millers Point and couldn't imagine living anywhere else but he doesn't have that sense of community.

I can see that it is obviously something that is a big loss for you, that he doesn't. Janet, do you feel as strongly about the place as Cathie does?

Janet: Oh, I wouldn't move anywhere else - if I had to move I don't know where the hell I would go to because this has been my home since I came from Glasgow, I haven't been anywhere else.

Did you find that you were accepted straight away?

07:44 Janet: Oh yes, especially at Millers Point where I landed, I have never had any cross words with neighbours or anything, even over the kids. You just told the kids to get inside or bugger-off, or something. They wouldn't move me anywhere else because I'd have a chain around me.

What difference has it made with all the new fairly flash development around Walsh Bay and that, has that changed things?

08:17 Janet: No I don't recognise it, it is just part of the wharves as far as I am concerned. It is just a building they have put on the wharves. What concerns me most is the one that they are going to do next year, or whatever, the Hickson Road one, when the Corrigans move out. This is where we don't know how it is going to affect us.

That is the Patricks' site?

08:41 Janet: Yes. This is the part that nobody has told us anything about, we just know that it is going to happen sooner or later. For anything else, as far as I am concerned Millers Point is me and my kids type of thing, well they were born and bred here. You may as well say I was born and bred here because I've spent more time in Millers Point than I ever did in Glasgow, so this is my home and it is going to be a lot of fighting to get me away from it.

I can actually imagine that there would be quite a lot of similarities between Glasgow, which is very working-class, and a community like Millers Point.

09:23 Janet: Well in Glasgow, where I lived it was the ordinary working-class people, like they are here. You had your barrows, like they have got the markets here, we called it the barrows at home, so Saturday you went down there. You did your work, you came home, you got dressed, you went out if your mother allowed you, you had to do your housework before you went out. That is why I'm a good cleaner, love, because I learned it at home. This is the only place you ever want to be - in Millers Point, as far as I am concerned.

Cathie what do you feel about the Patricks' site redevelopment, have you kept up with what is happening?

10:05 Cathie: No, I haven't kept up with it as much, I suppose I was a bit disenchanted about what happened with Walsh Bay. I was actually on a committee that was fighting what did happen down there, not that I didn't think Walsh Bay needed development, it did. It was a beautiful set of old wharves that was sadly lacking, but I think unfortunately we got shafted as far as what they ended up giving approval to have done down there. I think that has primarily changed the face of Millers Point and Sydney because this was an old place, it was the birthplace of Australia, and I don't feel it has the same sense of being the birthplace of Australia any more.

10:48 It's now like trendy apartments and marina and all that sort of stuff. So I suppose because of that, and it is a sad thing to have to admit in a way, on some things I have just put my hands up and gone whatever gets done down at Patricks, so be it. I am saying that now but another part of me probably will go 'I really need to know what is happening' because we really need to know if we need to sort of try and fight it as much as we can. I mean sometimes you can't fight what is going to happen but you have to try and have the best case scenario happen that you can have. Maybe we can't stop it, but maybe we can have the best case scenario, so it doesn't make it even more different around here than it was.

Well half of it has got to be open space, it is about twenty-two hectares, I think.

11:44 Cathie: But the half of it they are going to make open space is the half where there is already a cliff, so it would be open space anyhow if they didn't build up over a certain height. I think that is what they have got to be careful of. Unfortunately down there you've got more availability, I suppose, to be able to make it modern because it will tie into Cockle Bay and Darling Harbour and I just feel it could end up being a big extension of Darling Harbour, rather than something that fits the area it is going to be built in, so we could lose that character.

What about the people you grew up, how many of them are still around?

12:27 Cathie: Not a real lot, hardly anybody. Most of my friends, I suppose, a lot of them who had their families here moved away from the Point because they had holiday homes, or it wasn't going to be economical for them to stay here, or they didn't fit the Department of Housing's policy, so I don't have a real lot of close friends in Millers Point anymore. There is a lot of older people, a lot of old families that are still here who I know, and do see, and still have something to do with. As for young people - there is almost no one.

Janet: They are all gone.

13:08 Cathie: Within the last two years I think the last person I really had close contact with, who was a grown-up friend, who lived in Millers Point, Laurie Poten, decided to move to Mollymook because they had to pay market rent, because of their two incomes and it was getting to a point where it was unaffordable. Laurie kept getting out of work but Kim's wage was just high enough to make them market rent and it was getting to the point where it was just not affordable to stay here. So there is virtually no one at Millers Point any more that I grew up with, as such.

Do you have much interaction either of you with tourists?

13:45 Cathie: Occasionally, I suppose, because people come past and they might be lost or something. I have had a couple of times when people have asked if I live here and they'll ask me some questions about what Merriman was like, because there is all wire fencing now, so it just looks like the wharf. Sometimes they'll ask me what it used to look like down there, so I'll tell them about the houses and I'll show them. In one part of the cliff you can still see where there is a tap and a step, or something, so you can tell that there used to be something there. Other than that, not really.

How do you feel about tourists coming through?

14:27 Janet: I don't mind, I normally have a gab out the front and a lot of them I take in and show the house, because they often ask me what the houses are like and so I said, 'Come on in here and you can look,' and they think it is wonderful. A couple of weeks ago a chap came down the street and stopped, and started talking to me and he was a seaman who used to come in down the bottom end of Munn Street, where the wharf brought in the Pommy ships, so he was a seaman and the *Dominion Monarch* was the name of the ship. I said, 'I remember when you all came up off the ship and straight in the Palisade.' I have fun. A lot of them have taken photos of me window because of all of the wee bits and pieces I put on my window - they think it is great. So I have a good old gab with the tourists.

How well do you know your neighbours now, Janet?

15:24 Janet: I know them all but I don't get on too much with the next door neighbours, they are just new, well they have been here a couple of years but they are old people and they keep to themselves, type of thing, more than anything else. I talk to anybody here unless I get the shits with them and then I tell them what I think of them and that is the finish. Otherwise you take me as I am, as my daughter knows. If people are nice to me I am nice back.

How do you feel about people talk about this place being a village and it was officially proclaimed a village a few years ago, how about the level of services? Like the butcher has just closed. Are you happy in what you have got in terms of services?

16:15 Janet: Well I am lucky in a way - I am still able enough to jump on and off a bus and the Community Centre up on the Village Green, they have a bus Thursday mornings and Thursday afternoons and they'll take you to Marrickville, and you can do all your shopping there, and you get it delivered, so you've got nothing to carry. As far as I am concerned I'm quite contented.

Okay. Does the community organise anything else, do you something social like Bingo or anything?

16:46 Janet: We did up there but it all fell through because nobody wanted to play. Shoot and Shuffle, there is three of us left out of eight, so when we go over to Ultimo or Rootfield [???] and places like to have a game once a fortnight.

Shoot and Shuffle - is that a card game?

17:11 Janet: No it is on a big board and it has got little pots, and it is like a version of bowls and instead of bowing on a green you do it on a table. Actually it was the Mortimor Brothers, the footballers, they are the ones that brought it out.

Cathie, what do you think will happen with Alex, he is going to high school in Balmain now and he was telling me that there were about six kids that go on the bus over to Balmain. Do you think he will feel the same sense of attachment as you, or do you think he will move out?

17:51 Cathie: I think he already feels the same sense of attachment as me, he has always said he wants to live in Millers Point all his life. I think unfortunately he won't be able to. See the Maritime Services Board, you sort of had a continuation of tenancy as long as you were in the house and you had family members, it was almost like the house became yours all the time, whereas with the Department of Housing they don't have the same policy, you don't have an automatic right of tenancy just because you live there. I think because the rentals don't move on real wages and stuff like that, unless I am always in the house and am able to retain it Alex probably won't ever end up with it because either his income will be too much or he won't qualify in some way.

18:45 I suspect that he will move when he is old enough anyhow, because you do try your wings and there is nowhere for him to live in Millers Point. He couldn't probably afford any of the rents in any of the apartments around here unless he does really well. I hope he does do really well, I hope he does fantastic, and then he could afford to live here if he wanted to. But I don't think he will be afford to rent here when he is ready to try his wings and he probably won't be able to take over the place if something happened to me. I think no, he

won't continue to stay within the community, just because he won't be able to.

Well just to sort of wrap up - could you try and paint me a word picture of what it is that really fires you up about Millers Point. Imagine someone from Scotland who has never seen this part of the world, just try and give me little mental snapshots of what you like about the Point.

19:42 Cathie: Like the fact that what you have just said it has been designated as a village - I always imagined if we lived in a country town, Millers Point would have been the country town. It is a little area in Millers Point, which is right next to the city, it only takes you a few minutes to get into the city and you are in a whole different world. I'd like to think, although it has changed, that if I was explaining this place to someone new I would say it is a little old town on the outskirts of the city, it has great people, it has a real sense of spirit. I often used to liken to being an indigenous person, I never really understood when they talked about their sense of land, I like to liken people who lived in Millers Point who have a sense of it, that we have a sense of spirit and it is a real attachment to the land in some way. I would probably describe it to them in that way.

Is the Bridge important as a part of it?

20:56 Cathie: I suppose the Bridge is important to it because it has always been there. I suppose it is the dividing part of where Millers Point starts and where the city ends, so to speak.

What about the shipping, how big a factor is that in it?

21:16 Cathie: I think if they do get rid of Patrick's I think that will be very important. I mean Millers Point was a shipping town, it was the wharfies, it was the ships, it was the seamen who established the community here. It is a working port. I mean, I get annoyed by the noise sometimes myself, but I know this place is alive when I hear the wharves working, when you hear the containers being delivered and the ships rocking because you can sometimes feel the vibration. The windows sometimes vibrate, depending on what ship is against the wharf, you can feel the vibration. Yes, it is it is a working port town and if that is gone then it is just going to be another place in Sydney, I don't see how it would be unique any more.

Janet have you anything to add?

22:13 Janet: No, I think Cathie has said it all. As I said years ago - I don't know whether Cathie remembers or not - when people first started coming in here a lot of them said, 'Why would you want to live here, it is nothing but a dump!' Now people are paying millions and millions of dollars to move into the dump. I've never classed Millers Point, never in my life time will I ever class Millers Point as a dump. Sometimes that is why I always end up in fights, because people used to try and put us down and as far as I'm concerned we are just

as good as the people on the North Shore. That is me, Millers Point is *my* Millers Point,
always be until they chuck me out, or she puts me in my box.

Okay, we will leave it there, thank you so much, both of you.

Janet: You're welcome and I hope everything goes well with you.

23:10 END OF INTERVIEW WITH CATHIE AND JANET FARLEY AND END OF TAPE
MP-SM11 SIDE A.