

Astrid Wonneberger

Salvaging the Past - Shaping the Future
Perceptions of Changes in the South Docklands

St Andrew's Heritage Project

A nighttime photograph of a city waterfront. In the foreground, a body of water reflects the lights from buildings and cranes. Several large construction cranes are visible against the dark sky. In the background, modern buildings with lit windows and balconies line the waterfront. The sky is a mix of dark blue and orange from the setting or rising sun.

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Dublin, April 2009

Astrid Wonneberger

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Introduction

During recent decades the entire city of Dublin has undergone an experience of unprecedented change. Triggered by the Celtic Tiger economy, Dublin faced dramatic growth with social, economic and infrastructural consequences. New apartment and office blocks characterise the new image of the city, while the “dirty old town” of the past is vanishing quickly. Unemployment rates have fallen drastically and many emigrants of the 1980s are now returning to their homeland.

Among the areas particularly affected by urban transformation are the Dublin docklands. However, not all of these changes are perceived as positive. The traditionally working-class communities see their heritage and communal structures threatened and try to save as many memories of the past as possible. Amidst these changes a lot of dockland community’s common heritage has already been lost, some of it irrevocably. Yet much has been saved. Local publications by St Andrew’s Heritage Project have collected both historical evidence of times past and living people’s perceptions of the Pearse Street area’s dock-related culture. “Journeys from the Steyne”, “Along the Quays and Cobblestones” or “The Diving Bell” give a detailed insight into life and work on the docks, before the introduction of containerisation and mechanisation brought an end to this era. After years of dereliction, unemployment and social exclusion, the Pearse Street area again faces many changes but also a new hope in the course of the regeneration of the entire dockland area.

However, whereas previous heritage publications have looked specifically at the past and documented the life on the docks, this project follows a slightly different approach: The central themes are the current changes, their impact on the community and – most importantly – the perceptions of these changes among local residents. This project will look at the current transformations and record people’s perceptions of these changes. It will focus on the impact this regeneration is having on the area, both on a communal and individual level. It will also research to which extent the social and economic regeneration of the docklands has been successful.

This project began as a joint project with Trinity College. It soon became obvious, however, that it would be difficult to combine the different angles in only one publication. For this reason, it was decided to publish the results in two different books.¹

The project followed two methodological approaches:

In order to document the dramatic physical/architectural transformations the area has undergone over recent decades, we collected old photographs and took new ones of the exact place today. The archive of St. Andrew’s Resource Centre served as a basis for this. Where the archive had received the picture from a different source, it is noted. Richie Kelly, who as a professional photographer has documented many changes in the entire dockland area over the last decades, provided additional

1 This research was carried out by Mary Muldowney, a historian at TCD. The results entitled “Trinity and its Neighbours – An Oral History” were published in 2009 by the School of History and Humanity TCD.

material. Noel Watson and I took most of the current photographs of the area.

As an oral history project, the main focus rests with people's perceptions and descriptions of their everyday lives. The main method was interviews with people from various parts of the community. Perceptions, opinions and stories by community leaders were as important as descriptions by other residents of the community. Elderly residents had as much to say as younger community members. Each interviewee is shortly introduced at the end of the book.

Despite this empirical approach, this book is not specifically aimed at an academic audience, but at the wider Dublin public in general and residents of the Pearse Street area in particular. For this reason, not every interview statement was checked for its historic accuracy. With a focus lying on people's perceptions, I consider this not as important as it would be for a history book. However, dates are added where necessary in order to put statements into context, and the photographs are dated (as far as possible) and include background information on the depicted scene.

The analysis of the statements provides a cross-section of opinions and views held in the community today. On the one hand, we get information about differences in the perceptions between younger and older people as well as between men and women. On the other hand, it also becomes obvious that many ideas are widely shared, particularly among members of the same age group.

The social and economic regeneration of the area has been one of the major objectives of the DDDA Master Plan (1997). Therefore this will be another important topic to be dealt with. To what extent have people gained economically, in terms of employment, education, housing, quality of life? What are the benefits for the community in general and the individual specifically? What are the most positive achievements, what are the flaws? This will also include residents' perceptions of the future of the community as well as their own fears, wishes and hopes.

The narrative interviews for this project were conducted between 2002 and 2007. Involved were St Andrew's Day Centre, Greenore/Rostrevor Housing complex for senior citizens as well as other residents, some of whom have moved out of the area years ago, members and participants of St Andrew's Youth Service and youth groups. A short profile of each interviewee can be found at the end of the book.

Each interview started off with a *grand-tour* question, such as "In your opinion, what are the major changes of the area in the last decades?", "Which aspects in your life have changed?", "What is better today than in the past?", "What was better in the past than today?" and "What do you wish for the future of the community?" The open answers provided an overview of opinions on this topic. Very quickly, after only a handful of interviews, a pattern began to emerge. The most frequent topics mentioned were centred around the following themes: The urban landscape, The quays – life and work on the docks, Community, Poverty, Housing, Education, Traffic and Visions for the future.

According to this pattern, the following pages will be structured along these themes. After a brief introduction, which summarises the statements and also provides the historical context, the statements of the interviewees will speak for themselves. In order to make them easier to read, they have been edited. Repetitions were deleted; slips of the tongue corrected and passages covering the same theme combined, without changing the contents of the statements. Omission of large parts of the interviews are marked by [...]. Where necessary, names or local references are explained in footnotes. Sometimes during group interviews, more than one person added to one story. In order to improve the readability of the passage, I combined the whole story to one and gave all contributors as reference.

All contributions to this project help to salvage the past of an economically and historically important area in Dublin and provide a vision for the future.

The Urban Landscape

The most visible changes in the docklands are the physical transformations the area has undergone over the last 40 years. Up to the 1960s, the district east of the Custom House, along both sides of the Liffey was one of Dublin's most thriving economic areas.

The docks were the economic heart of the communities based in the port district. Their life and culture centred around ships coming in to be loaded and unloaded, coal, timber and other goods from all over the world to be stacked, processed in local industries and distributed to consumers all over Dublin and the rest of Ireland. The Hammond Lane Foundry in Pearse Street, Boland's Mills at the Iron Bridge, the Gas Company and Goulding's Fertilizer Company on Sir John Rogerson's Quay, the Glass Bottle Factory on Ringsend Road and dozens of coal yards in and around Pearse Street provided work and a living for thousands of families.

However, most of these old industrial buildings fell derelict in the 1960s and 1970s, when the docks declined due to containerisation and new technologies in the port industry. In need of deeper water basins, the port moved further east and left the old docks, moorings and berths along the quays derelict.

Due to their economic importance, it is not surprising that memories of the old architectural landscape are deeply anchored in older residents' visualisation of the area and have thus survived. But not only do elderly people give detailed and vivid descriptions of the Gasometer or the Guinness boats along the

quays; younger people also recollect some reminiscences of the docks, either based on their own memories or stories from their parents and grandparents.

Therefore, as is emphasised often, the physical urban industrial landscape was and still is a fundamental part of people's memories, heritage and culture of the dockland communities. It is not surprising that they are very critical towards the demolition of the old dock-related structures, even though they had been derelict for decades. Being afraid of losing their shared past, culture and identity along with the old landscape, they would have liked to see a lot more buildings and other features preserved.

Whereas the traditional industrial buildings were mostly built of bricks, the new style of architecture uses a lot of steel and glass and therefore gives the entire area a completely new and more modern look. This, however, is often criticised as – again – it takes away from the old character of the area and wipes out memories of the past. For this reason, those projects which do not tear down old structures but at least keep the façade, refurbish it and then use it for a new purpose, are generally welcomed. One example of such a project that is very much appreciated by local residents is the Gasometer in Barrow Street, which was converted into apartments.²

Other projects were directly taken on board by community members themselves. One example is the Diving Bell on Sir

2 In 2008, the apartments were still empty, as the prices were too high to sell. For this reason, there are now plans to turn the building into a hotel instead.

John Rogerson's Quay, which had been lying derelict for decades, before it was restored as a millennium project and visible reminiscence of the area's past by St Andrew's Resource Centre, Dublin Port, the Nautical Trust, FÁS and the Dublin Docklands Development Authority (DDDA). Similar projects are planned for the future.

The following records illustrate this attitude. They also show how important these landmarks are still, and this includes old street names and local nicknames various sites and buildings were known as. The statements also illustrate that people's vision for the future of the area does not favour a complete demolition of derelict sites and the old working-class heritage to create a modern "world-class city", but rather prefers a combination of the old and new to preserve more than just the mental memory of times gone by but also architectural features of the "dirty old town".

The old and new photographs – all taken in the Pearse Street area – give a vivid impression of how fundamentally the south docklands have changed – so drastically that some residents complain that they can barely find their way around an area they have lived in all their lives.



1 *Aerial View of the docklands and the Liffey mouth in the early 1980s (St Andrew's Archive).*

St Andrew's Church
Westland Row



City Quay Church



Queens Square
(today Pearse Square)



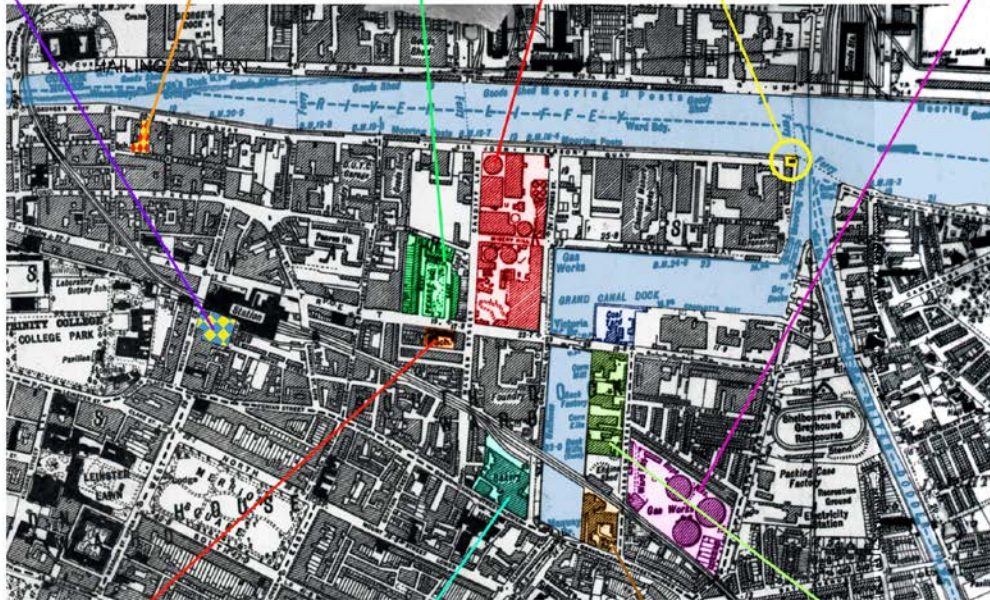
Gasometer
Macken St



Hailing Station
Sir John Rogerson's Quay



Gasometer
Barrow Street



St Andrew's School
(today St Andrew's
Resource Centre)
Pearse Street



Old Boland's Bakery site
(today Treasury Building)



The Meat Packers



Boland's Mills

2 *Map of the area (ca. 1940s): Highlighted are several important features in the south docks, many of which have since been demolished (St Andrew's Archive).*

We are steeped in history; we have the Dáil³ in it and so much culture in our area. But our local history is not getting preserved in the way it should be. Like the Health and Safety across the road there in the new buildings. There is little resemblance in what the street used to be. There was a grocery shop on the corner, the bookies, a yard that belonged to display contract. In the back they had horses and they had a little cottage where the caretaker lived. They used to do deliver ship furniture and all that sort of thing. And then there was a little lane after that, with a bit of garden front into it, and at the end of the lane there were four little houses. Then there was a path up and the butcher's, and two or three shops. Then there was a house and over it a hairdresser, and the chipper. There is nothing resembling that anymore now. And that is only my time living here; I am only living here 26 years. Where I lived before in 14 Fenian St there is an apartment block now. They were tenement houses. And there are offices and apartments now. And there was a little factory there and the pub at the corner. And where the tax office is, there used to be a

3 Dáil Éireann: Irish Parliament.

home for boys called Smiley's. There were orphans. There is no resemblance now in some of the streets. And that is sad. There are a lot of things gone. You don't sit down and think about it often, but when I do think about it, I say, all the changes! [...]

When I saw they were going to put back Archers⁴, I thought it would be great. But the lane in Princess St, this big glass thing, it has no meaning whatsoever. No resemblance of the community, no resemblance of business. It is just a big cold glass place. And there was a lovely place down there. They should have kept some facades so that we kept a bit of our heritage. We are losing our heritage more and more. The Gasometer in Ringsend is absolutely brilliant; it is brilliant the way they did that. But everything else is getting thrown out. I also would have kept the Gasometer on Sir John Rogerson's Quay. I think that would have been absolutely great. [...] Why did they have to pull it down? They should have kept it like the one in Ringsend. And they put nothing in to resemble it. [...] Like the pub down there at the corner of Pearse Street and Brunswick Place, Lunch's or the Widows later, that was in the community for decades, and now they are going to build apartments there now. Like Becky's, that had a lovely front. The only one that has remained much the same I think it McKenzies on the top of Westland Row, and the Windjammer is exactly the same original place as long as I can remember. I was in it three weeks ago for the first time since I was a kid. There used to be more pubs in the area, there used to be one at every corner. No harm to lose some of them, but they are all selling them now to developers. It is all about money. Our culture and our heritage are getting thrown out for money.

*Betty Watson (*1942), 15/09/2006*

4 Archers Garage in Fenian Street, a listed building due to its art-déco style, was illegally demolished by a developer in 1999. On threat of a €1,000 000 fine, he rebuilt the garage. The building does now house a bank.



3 *Archer's Garage in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

We went in to the old Gasometer in Barrow Street and had a look. We were surprised what they can do inside. Because if you look at it, you don't really realise how big it is. And we were surprised what you can get into it. The walkway into it is nice. They have improved it in that way. Now you can walk through from Barrow St to South Lotts now. That has improved, because it was just a closed-off wall before that. [...] For the likes of us, old neighbours, it is nice to look at these old buildings and say, at least one thing is still there that you remember as a child. We were born and reared around there, so it is nice to see one thing.

*Betty (*1944) and Marie O'Neill (*1942), 18/09/2006*



4 *The Gasworks in Barrow Street being demolished in 1996 (St Andrew's Archive).*



6 *The inside of the converted Gasometer apartments (2006) (Astrid Wonneberger).*



5 *The same site in 2009: The completed Gasworks apartments blocks (Astrid Wonneberger).*



7 *View of the Gasometer at Barrow Street from the top of Boland's Mill in 1996 (Richie Kelly).*



8 *View from the Altro Vetro building on MacMahon Bridge of the Gasworks apartments in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

The building at the end of Sir Rogerson’s Quay was called the Hailing Station. It was also called Hatchel’s Corner, but many people don’t know that. The ship would come up the river. The East Link wasn’t there at the time. There was only little light in the middle of the river to lead the ships. A light buoy to keep the ships in the deep water. When the ship came up along Ringsend, where the Dodder meets the Liffey, the captain would shout over to the berthing master, “where shall I berth my ship?” and he would shout back, “no 6 or 7” or whatever it was. So the ship came up the river and the berthing master assistant would cycle up on a bike and stop where the ship was about to berth.

Otherwise there would have been turmoil, because a lot of ships came up the river at that time. [...] The building is part of the dockland walk, because you have to pass it by. But there should be a preservation order on it. Because it is going to wreck and ruin. It has been there since the beginning of the port. Now there is talk that they are going to put a huge skyscraper there. U2 will get their studios there. They are just throwing out old things like that! [...]

We also want to keep the name “Misery Hill”, because there is so much history attached to it. There was a leper colony at the top of Townsend Street and they walked the lepers down to the ships to sail them on to leper colonies. On Misery Hill there were also hangings, gibbets. We can get in touch with the city councillors and the city council to keep the name. We already had a good example of that. The founder of the first Christian Bros School in Dublin in Lime St. Later they put a plaque on the wall, but when the building was rebuilt, they never put the plaque back. So we got in touch with a few people and made sure they would put it back. And it is back up now. That was about 14 years ago. The Library - they refurbished two houses. They did a wonderful job because they kept the façade of the houses. That was a beautiful thing. I am delighted with that. But inside is a conference room now. There was a plaque on the wall, something about Eamonn de Valera and a big battle in 1916. So that plaque was taken down and a couple of us had an eye on it, but we didn’t have to do anything. The Library itself made sure they put it back. [...]

But they are renaming all these streets now, Longboat Quay and all this; I don’t know one of them. We knew them by Forbes St and Benson St. That is still there, but I don’t know what they are going to call it now.

*Gerry Browne (*1934), 18/09/2006*



9 *The Hailing Station on Sir John Rogerson's Quay shortly before its demolition in 2007 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

I don't like the new buildings in this area. Progress can be a great thing for the future, but it is not all that great from the point of view that prospectors and developers are making more money and they don't give a damn about nostalgia or anything concerning the past. They pull down a house that had maybe the greatest bit of history attached to it and they wouldn't think twice of it. And it is gone. Any house at all. It happened on the quay about ten or fifteen years ago. There was a protection order on it, but they burnt it down so it became a dangerous building.



10 *The same view of Sir John Rogerson's Quay in March 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

It was a merchant's house, on the Bachelors Walk with lovely ceilings, balustrades and fire places and everything that was done for the elite that lived in them. The developers wanted to convert it into modern apartments, but his planning application failed three times. Unfortunately it burnt down and all that lovely structure was gone. Lovely plasterwork and all. [...] It looks completely different now to what we would know about it in days gone by. [...] The ESB⁵ demolished six magnificent houses in Fitzwilliam Square. And they

5 Electricity Supply Board.

built this monstrosity. They were lovely, no tenements, but lived in by the people who owned them. And they were destroyed by the ESB who bought them. That is progress! That was the start of everybody waking up though. [...]



11 *The Gasometer, located on the Gas Company site at the junction of Sir John Rogerson's Quay and Cardiff Lane was erected in 1934. It became a very well known landmark in the city before it was dismantled in 1993 to make way for the development of the "Old Gas Company" site (St Andrew's Archive, 1980s).*

The Gasometer is another thing that should have been preserved. That was in nobody's way. It wasn't doing any harm. It was a landmark for

Dublin; you could see it from anywhere. They should have done what they did in Barrow St. They did a beautiful job there. They built into it. And they should have done there too. But I believe the only reason why they didn't do it there was for health reasons. I was connected to the gas company big time. We had a first cousin that fell off the Gasometer in Barrow St, Maxie Malone. [...] Now I walk around these streets and I see tremendous changes.

*Sonny Kinsella (*1935) and Paddy Pearse (*1935), 12/09/2006*



12 *The inner yard of the Gas Company site in the late 1980s or early 1990s (Irish Architectural Archive).*



The landscape has changed beyond recognition. When I was a kid, and that's not too many years ago, I remember the Liffey had cranes on both sides all the way down. They have disappeared; they might as well never have been there. You'd never know that was a port. And the big Gasometer there, very large site there. It had a certain charm; I know the jobs were terrible, working on the coal boats or on the docks. They were hard jobs. I got a job when I left school in a bicycle factory, just over here, Hammond Lane, I hated it. I got into work at 8 in the morning. You couldn't talk because it was noisy, noise all day long. [...]



13/14 Today, the site incorporates a mix of office, commercial and residential developments, such as Gallery Quay on Pearse Street and the Grand Canal Basin (Astrid Wonneberger 2006 and 2009).

But I would have left quite a lot of this industrial architecture in fact. I would have left the cranes as a memorial or whatever. There was a 100t crane that disappeared. That was a modern landmark. [...] I also would have left the Gasometer. It was part of the city's heritage. I would have left it there. The three over here, there is only one left of them, I would have left at least one more. There were also a few interesting buildings and structures over here on the gas site, they are gone as well. They were very interesting architecture. I would have kept a few of them. I think they turned their back on the history. They kept the chimney over

there, that's all. You wouldn't know what it was, that could be anything. The likes of that place, I think it opened in the middle of the 19th century, so there was a long history of industry there on that site. I would have kept some of the artefacts.

*Billy Ryan (*1954), 18/08/2004*



15/16/17 Three images of the yard of the derelict Gas Company site in the early 1990s (15: Richie Kelly, 16 and 17: St Andrew's Archive).





18 *Decontaminating the Gas Company Site in 2003 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

I don't like the new style of architecture at all. I said to my ma the other day, some of the old buildings were just fabulous, the details that have gone into them, and they are just throwing up buildings now that are just monstrosities. Maybe they are fabulous from an architectural point of view, but I still don't think they can beat the old style building. I think the work that went into the design is really beautiful. Even if you look at Custom House and those beautiful buildings and if you compare it to the building at the corner here, the Ulster Bank – although that looks nice from a distance, but up close there is no comparison really

between the two of them. And over in the IFSC⁶, there is nothing nice. Even the NCI⁷, I don't think nice either. It is plain, the glass in the front is nice, but it is only basic, the same with all the banks, there is no beautiful buildings or architecture anymore. [...] And it is sad to see history being knocked down. Although, where the meat factory was years ago, opposite Kitty O'Shays, that employed a lot of the men from the area straight after school, when they were 14 years old or whatever. And although it wasn't a very nice building at all, that is nicely developed, because they integrated it with the canal. So some of it is nice when it is replacing something awful, but some of the buildings they have knocked down they replaced them with big glass buildings. Another building that I hate is Goldsmith Hall⁸, at the end of Lombard St, I think that's awful. None of us likes that at all. I think Pearse Street Library when it was cleaned up is fabulous, compared to what is used to be like; it was just black and dirty. They made the back modern with glass, it is fabulous, but they kept the front and the original features. [...]

I also would have kept the Gasometer, for the history. Years ago, I think I was about 16, we did a summer project, and we knew it was going to be knocked down, so we did a project on it and we built our own Gasometer. I think I would have kept it for history reasons, like they are doing in Barrow Street, where they are building around the gas works there. To keep its history, I would have kept it. I suppose

6 International Financial Services Centre. Commenced in 1987 on an 11ha site east of the Custom House, the IFSC rang in the first phase of the dockland regeneration.

7 National College of Ireland. The dockland campus in the IFSC Phase II area was opened in 2002.

8 Goldsmith Hall on Pearse Street is part of Trinity College. Purposely built as student accommodation in 1996 (Byrne 2001:105), the building is linked to the main campus by a footbridge, which is the topic of many debates in the area. Many residents think that it prevents contact between the local community and the college.

with Misery Lane as well. The history that my grandfather fought for the Irish Army and he used to tell us stories that doing his parole and he came to Misery Hill and the Black and Tans⁹, the English army was marching up the street and he had to hide in Misery Hill, behind a stone on the ground. Little things of history like that and an awful lot of battles went on around that area as well.



19/20 The entrance to the Gas Company site at the corner of Pearse Street and Macken Street in the early 1990s (Richie Kelly).

9 The Black&Tans were a branch of the Royal Ulster Constabulary recruited from demobbed British soldiers from 1920 onwards, with a reputation of fierceness and brutality. The name derives from the lack of normal police uniform.



And Misery Hill is gone now. I hope that they do put up a plaque or something in the area that when the place is developed, just to remember these things. Because there was also a place down just past Misery Hill, there was a hole in the ground years ago, I think before my grandfather was born, and it was where parents used to bring down all the children that had asthma to inhale the fumes. So stuff like that, that was a little bit of history. I do hope that they remember to erect a plaque or something to remember these little things, because it is history just being built over. And there aren't old buildings left in the area, there are no major traditional companies in the area anymore. There are banks, but the types of jobs that people would have around here were in warehouses, meat factories, Glass Bottle Company; there are no jobs like that anymore, so there are no local companies anymore. So we have lost an awful lot of history with all the redevelopment, I hope that they still do remember what was here before. Whether they will now or not I don't

know, but it would be nice to see. because thousands of new people are going to move into the area, so I hope the older people and the memories don't get pushed away. Hopefully.

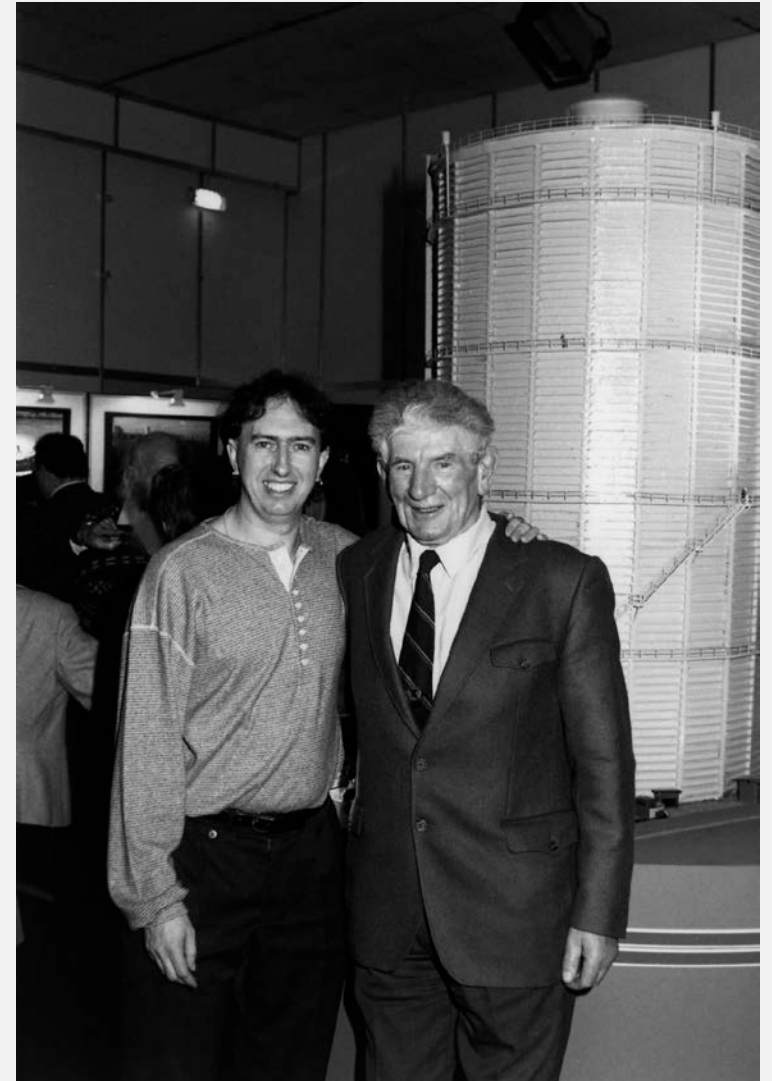
*Emma Wilson (*1975), 24/09/2006*



21 *The same corner in March 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

22 *When the imminent dismantling of the Gasometer became known Dick Vekins, a local sheet and wrought iron expert sought some sheets of the metal used in the Gasometer. From a few sheets of the original steel used in its construction, Dick built a scale model of the Gasometer which is on permanent display in St.*

Andrew's Resource Centre. This photograph shows Dick with John Fitzsimons at the launch of the model in 1995 (Richie Kelly).





23 *As such an important landmark, photographs of the Gasometer and the adjacent chimney are frequent. This one was taken from the North Wall Quay in the late 1980s (St Andrew's Archive).*



24 *The Gas Company site after the demolition of the Gasometer in 1993, viewed from the North Wall Quay in the late 1990s. Note the construction of the Millennium Tower at the Grand Canal Basin (Richie Kelly).*



25 *The Rainbow Warrior visiting Dublin and berthing on Sir John Rogerson's Quay in 2002 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

There is a huge difference between the old and the new buildings. The new buildings are full of glass. They seem to say “look at us, we are shiny, new, we are sticking out, we are a big bank with a symbol, we can actually afford to have our building mostly made of glass. We are so rich and so powerful.” That’s the impression I am getting from it. Glass and granite has its place, but I don’t think it has its place here. [...]

They have done well to renovate some buildings and keep them with the general look and shape of the quays as a whole, as they were in the past. You can see red brick square windows, arches and circular windows. They can be renovated easily. [...]

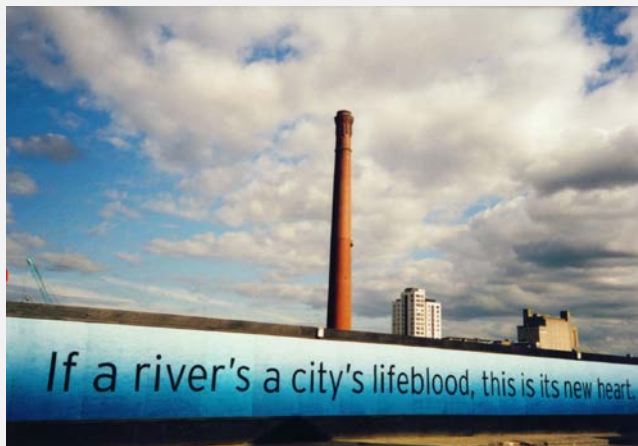


26 *The same image of the new mixed development including the chimney as the only structure left of the old industrial site in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

You can see that the north side has already been done; all the old buildings that were there have disappeared. The whole shape and size of the frontage on the quays has changed so much now, there doesn’t seem to be any consistency in how they did it, no consistency in height or shape or colour. Just big blocks of apartments, sell them for as much as you can and move on. [...]



27 *The Gasometer as seen from Cardiff Lane in the mid-1980s (St Andrew's Archive).*



28 *Advertising the new development on the Gas Company Site in 2002. The chimney is the only structure left from the old industrial site. This picture was taken while the decontamination of the site was taking place (Astrid Wonneberger).*



29 *The Gallery Quay development on the same site in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

The old gas company site has been derelict for donkey's years. And of course it needed developing, nobody is denying the fact. But again glass and concrete, and it is just like Lego, square, there doesn't seem to be anything put into it, no love. The only structure left on the site is the chimney. They took down the Gasometer, which was a huge icon as far as Dublin was concerned. Anyone that ever sailed into Dublin Port, first thing they would see, was the Gasometer. But this chimney is the only one left in there now.

*Noel Watson (*1965), 26/07/2004*



30 *Misery Hill (ca. 1970s) (St Andrew's Archive).*

I feared the Gasometer all my life, I was afraid of it. But I would have thought of it as a landmark. I think I was more afraid of it being taken down than anything else. Because we were brought up with the idea that if anything happened to that, we would be all dead. That was the fear. Ok, some things would have been nice to keep, but we got the chimney. The Gasometer was only a bit of metal. Yes, it was a landmark, but it was not as old as some of the other structures in the area. So yes, when they were taking it down, I would have been one of those who were fighting to keep it, but now it is gone, so it is gone.

And I see what is in its place now – ok, on that particular spot it is offices, but when I see where and how people are living now, 35 years ago nobody would have thought to ever see that. So that helps you to overcome the disappointments, if you had any.

*Dolores Wilson (*1948), 13/03/2007*



31 *The old street has disappeared. A new street has taken its place (February 2009) (Astrid Wonneberger).*



32 *Hanover Quay in the 1980s (St Andrew's Archive).*



34 *The International Meat Company being dismantled in 1996 (Richie Kelly).*



33 *The same view in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*



35 *The site today contains private apartment blocks. (March 2009) (Astrid Wonneberger).*



36 *Aerial View of the Gas Company site taken from Boland's Mill in 1996 (Richie Kelly).*

Certainly I would have left more of the old buildings. So what we are trying to do now to compensate is trying to get Docklands [DDDA] to use dock-related artefacts. That is something that we would have done in the branding document, when they do this fancy glossy brochure. Instead of using these glass buildings, put the library into it. The Custom House. Instead of showing all these young 20s, 30year olds, show families and different age groups. To give it a sense of reality.

To keep the Gasometer wouldn't have been possible. I know that it couldn't have happened. I don't feel I lost something, because we have it downstairs here in St Andrew's. That is it. It was built of original sheets, so it is unique. It was a great landmark. You always knew when to turn. But we got the chimney that will be kept. [...]



37 *Aerial View of the Gallery Quay development taken from the Altro Vetro building on MacMahon Bridge in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

FÁS¹⁰ approached me and asked could we do a millennium project together? I said yes, brainstormed with Jim and he said we could restore the diving bell. We brought the stakeholders together, Dublin Port, DDDA, FÁS, the Nautical Trust and the community. [...] And they all put in their share of money to restore it. The tube had to be restored. Then we published the booklet as well. Now I have this fellow coming up to me. He wants to have more stuff on the quays, cranes and all. Charlie Murphy from Dublin Port tells me there isn't anything over

10 National Training Agency.

there, but there is a surplus in Belfast, so we could buy them. So there is a move now for to get that balance. I can make my voice heard and get things done. I wouldn't just complain about the glass, but I would ask, what could we do to get a balance? If we had a crane there now... Many people do not really appreciate the campshires as an amenity. They are always yearning for what was without thinking about what they have now and think about how can we stop this surge away from the old. Drag them back, because it is possible. We are putting pressure on them now to buy the cranes. There is a letter going. I put my name on it and others as well, for buying artefacts. Pressure on the DDDA. When the bell was restored, we knew that we couldn't maintain it.



38 *The Diving Bell on Sir John Rogerson's Quay placed in 1989 awaiting refurbishment (mid-1990s, Richie Kelly).*

Docklands will put in the lights in it now and finish it up. So we handed over the bell officially to the DDDA. So they are responsible for it now and they will complete the restoration. It will get a final coat of paint and mannequins put in and lights and information boards. But there is still construction work going on there, so we said leave it until everything is finished. The DDDA will maintain it and when they are gone, whoever will be in place then will continue to be responsible for it.

*Betty Ashe (*1941), 15/03/2007*



39 *The same view in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*



40/41 *The Diving Bell on Sir John Rogerson's Quay being refurbished in 2000 (Richie Kelly).*



42 *The Diving Bell and crane on Sir John Rogerson's Quay in the mid-1990s (Richie Kelly).*





43/44 *The refurbished Bell on Sir John Rogerson's Quay in 2002 and 2006 (Astrid Wonneberger).*



45 *An old crane on Sir John Rogerson's Quay in the mid-1990s (Richie Kelly).*

The Quays – Life and Work on the Docks

Until the 1960s, the quays and docks with their thriving port activities, boats coming and going with goods from all over the world, dockers unloading coal and timber, horse carts transporting goods, warehouses stacking fruit and spices and prostitutes loitering on the corner were a lot more for the local residents than just a place of work. They were a centre for the entire community life.

For children the docks were a place of adventure, a huge playground. Even though they were not allowed to play among the treacherous piles of timber or barrels, jumping off cranes or swim in the Liffey, many residents still remember chases or other adventurous games on the quays. Being children, they wouldn't listen to the warning of the parents, so accidents were frequent. The dockside was also a place of learning. Watching different trades work on the docks, meeting sailors from all over the world or drawing and learning the origin of the flags from the incoming ships meant a never ceasing source of information.

Of course the docks and port-related industries in the area were mostly a place of work. Work was abundant. Until the 1960s, the port area was one of Dublin's most important places of employment. Apart from the shipping companies, who needed thousands of casual dockers every day for loading and unloading their ships, the gas company, Boland's Mills and Bakery and dozens of coal yards provided work and a steady income for thousands of families in the Pearse Street area. Horse cart drivers who delivered coal from the coal yards to the factories

and private households were a common feature of the urban landscape in those days, as was the pall of smoke hanging over the city.

The quays themselves witnessed women bringing billy cans to their husbands working on the boats, picking up fish from the trawlers, "spunkers" emptying Guinness barrels and lots of busy activities in and around the numerous pubs, where men would spend their hard earned money before or after a long working day. With the exception of the Ferryman, which was then called The Eight Bells, and Kennedy's, all of the pubs from George's Quay to the end of Sir John Rogerson's Quay have disappeared.

Particularly well remembered are the so-called "button men". In 1947 the labour unions introduced a button system to regulate the labour market on the docks. 650 union members, and later an additional 150, received a button which from now on guaranteed first preference at the so-called "reads", where the workers were chosen for employment on the boats for the day. What had originally been a means to award experienced dockers quickly developed into a two-class system among the dock workers, as the deep-sea buttons were handed down from father to son and newcomers had no chance of getting one. The system is therefore perceived critically by many former dock workers, while button men are still proud of their union involvement.¹¹

11 Apart from the following interview excerpts, see also examples in Kearns's oral folk history on the docks and quays (Kearns 1998/2001: Chapter 7).

The port activities along the quays are gone entirely. The increase in the size of ships along with new technologies in international shipping made the eastward expansion of the port necessary and left the quays unused. At the same time, being no longer dependent on the labour concentration at the port, many factories moved out to the suburbs, where it was easier to expand. Coal was gradually substituted by oil and gas in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, until in 1990 the usage of bituminous coal for heating was banned altogether in order to combat air pollution. Today, no coal boats sail up and down the Liffey. The Guinness boats have disappeared. So has the famous Isle of Man boat. Only an occasional cruise liner or tall ship moor along the quay from time to time, and on the north side the replica of a Famine ship “Jeanie Johnston” has found a new home since it was bought by the DDDA in 2005. Apart from these occasional maritime reminders, especially celebrated once a year at the DDDA Maritime Festival, very little today remains of the thriving docks, a place of good and bad memories, and its importance for the dockland communities.

The docks have changed an awful lot. I was born and reared and married on them. [...] We lived right facing the Custom House, on the south side. The Ulster Bank is there now. [...] Heiton’s [coal yard] owned the house then. It had solid mahogany banisters and doors in our house, because it was officially the Liverpool sailing company’s house. They used to book their tickets there and used to store the oil and things in it. We took the furniture out of it, and my mother was born in it. It was beautiful. And now there is not one house on them except

Kennedy’s, that is still there. That is the only house left on George’s Quay. That is very sad. [...] In those days we never had a dull moment. And if you were punished and put in to bed, it was a heaven to you, because you could see beautiful things near the river with the light and the boats. You could make up fairy castles and all. The reflections of the lights from the boats were beautiful. So it wasn’t punishment at all if we were put to bed. When I go down there now I don’t recognise the place; the whole thing is all new now. It was more lively then. Men used to walk or cycle up to the factories on the quays, because there were no bridges. Now you have tons of bridges and no work. And there are no ships coming up the river now. In our days they came up right outside our door.



46 *The derelict Irish Life site on George’s Quay in the 1980s (St Andrew’s Archive).*

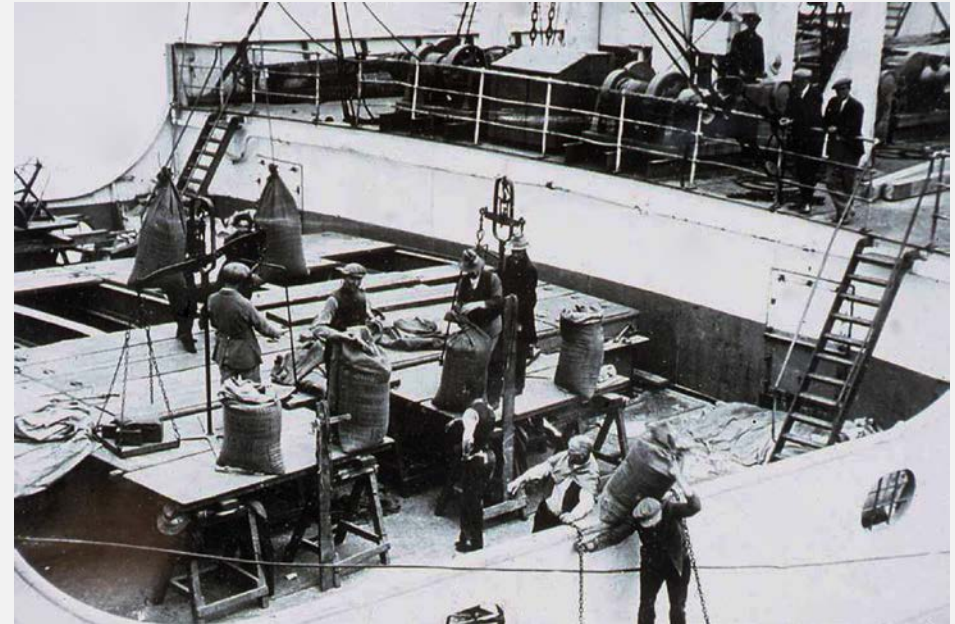
During the war we always had white bread from England. And the sailors would give us tea. We had a regular trade. And there was a man in our house, [...] he knew all the sailors so he would buy all the things off them. The same way with tea, we would give them eggs and they would give us tea. The ships would stop directly outside our door, and the seamen would know us all from children. The dockers would get their share too. It would be an exchange, we would give them eggs, and they would give us tea. They would only deal with the people that they knew and that lived on the river. [...] And you could ask them, what have you got here, and if they hadn't what you wanted, you could order it and the next time they would have it for you. They were regular men, they always came in on a Wednesday. [...]



47 *The same site today is home of the contested Ulster Bank (2009) (Astrid Wonneberger).*

The Guinness boats came up too, most of them on the north side. Only one came up to City Quay. Now no ship comes up the river anymore, because of all the bridges that go across. There were no bridges then across the river. Butt Bridge was the last bridge. It was great then.

*Lily Byrne (*1922), 18/09/2006*



48 *Discharging grain at Alexandra Basin in the 1930s (St Andrew's Archive).*

We weren't allowed to go on the quays, because the boats used to come up when we were kids and all the prostitutes used to come down. So we were not allowed. The only time we went down there was when our father was with us, because he knew some men down there. They used to give him fish from the fishing trawlers and things like that. The fishing trawlers came up the river then. He used to get fish off them,

because he knew the men on them. So we were always warned as kids, you never go down, because you always get found out because we will get told. So we never went down. That's how we remember the quays, you never went down unless you were brought down. But it was a real adventure for us to go down to the quays as kids.

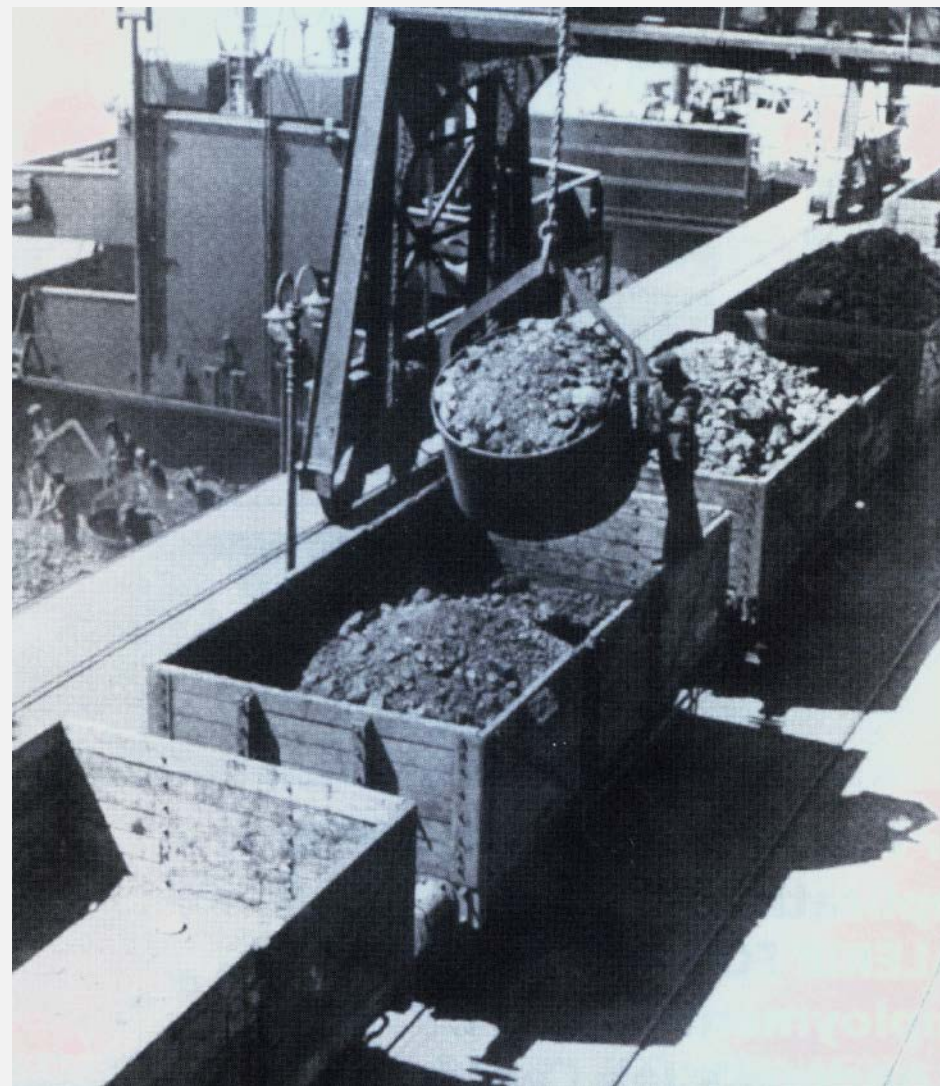
*Betty (*1944) and Marie O'Neill (*1942), 18/09/2006*

The docks have changed completely. There were hundreds of men working on this side of the docks and hundreds on the other. There were all sorts of auxiliaries, hauliers, who hired out the lorries or horse and carts to the different coal companies to shift the coal from the boats to the yards. Fitzpatrick's on Misery Hill was one of them. Then you had small restaurants where the men could go in, who lived too far away to go home for their dinner. They were called eating houses. They would get a cheap dinner there during the day. You had everything in this area. There are all apartments now. This place was like a film set up to five years ago from about 25 years ago. It was desolate.

We could see so many things when we were kids and went home from school. We could go into the blacksmiths or the wheelwrights. Later they developed the active playground, but we really had it. We could see so many things. As far as the docks went, we were not supposed to go that way, but later when we were older we would have. And you would see the ships working.

We used to go to sodality in City Quay, a monthly religious meeting. My father told me, "if I catch you on the docks, I will throw you into the river". And he caught me and he threw me into the river. But I could swim. My father was a docker, but after sodality you always went over to the quay to look around.

*Tony Dalton (*1937), Chris Sands (*1937), John Murray (*1937), 19/09/2006*



49 *Discharging coal arriving from Wales on Alexandra Basin in the 1970s (St Andrew's Archive).*



50 Bobby Parrot and Paddy Gainer working coal in the 1950s (St Andrew's Archive).

I lived on the quays. [...] People used to say how could you live down there, because it was so far down the quay. It was like an island. There were no houses near, only factories. But we were reared there and we loved it down there. [...] I saw every ship that came up. [...] Lovely ships came up the quay. Navy boats, American boats, cargo ships with coal. It was always full, and on Sunday evenings you would see lots of people coming down to the quays for walks with their children, from different parts of Dublin. [...] Every nationality came up that river, it was wonderful. And we had no problems. The men came down and worked hard. [...] My father worked in a factory on the docks. And when the phosphate boats and the ore boats used to come up, the men were sent out from the factories to the men in the boats to fill the tubs

with ore and the phosphate, and then the crane would bring it up and then the men would tip it down to the lorries. [...]

Everything's changed now. [...] There is nothing there now. Not even a ship comes up now. Nothing is coming up the river now. Absolutely nothing. Everything is gone. [...] Everything has gone silent. Even though they are building the new houses, it is not the same. It is colder somehow. That community thing is not there. [...] All our old neighbours are gone. And they are missed. It has gone very lonely here. We had good fun years ago. We always had laughing. We didn't live together, but you always knew the neighbour was there if they were needed. It was a very close community.

*Carmel O'Connor (*1929), 28/08/2006*



51 Val Harris and men working coal in the late 1940s (St Andrew's Archive).

The industrial areas were forbidden to play in. But I remember the Hammond Lane had all the waste ready for shipment on the quay. Beside that they had brought in the timber from Sweden. And we used to play on it, even though it was forbidden. And of course the timber could move.



52 Hammond Lane scrap yard, Tedcastle's Coal yard and Doyle's shop on City Quay in the 1960s (St Andrew's Archive).

Another thing that was great for playing on was the pulp. They were bales about a meter square, and they would be all stacked up on the quays, and we would use these then as mountains or whatever we wanted them to be. Or we would play cowboys and Indians or

whatever. They were forbidden by the owners and there would be a watchman, but we would play there anyway. They would have been unloaded from the ships, because there were no containers at the time.

*Sylvester Keogh (*1935) and Chris Sands (*1937), 05/09/2006*



53 The same view in February 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).

The docks were our education of the world. We had this university of the world. We would see the economics, we would see what was happening in the world. We would see imports of American trucks that were brought in at the end of the War. You take a child now today who grows up in the suburbs. He sees nothing. I regard this as the university of the world. We could go down and see a farrier at work, we could see

a wheelwright, so all the time it was accumulation of knowledge. And this is where we were fortunate. We were never deprived. We were never bored and never short. We had a variety of interests. Bored – we didn't know what the word meant.



54 Dockers loading a cargo ship on Alexandra Basin in the 1950s (St Andrew's Archive).

There were certain times of the year we did certain things. When the winter started we used to go down to the quays, get all the slack, go into the bank and get the water and make the balls and put them all out. Slack balls. They would be drying all day. What child now in the suburbs gets that kind of exposure?

*Sylvester Keogh (*1935) and Peter Grainger (*1936), 05/09/2006*

My mother's family was all at sea and we lived on the docks and all that – we were not supposed to walk home from school on the seaside. We were supposed to come home directly from Townsend Street school. But occasionally we went along the quays. And I used to collect flags and the origin of the ships. And when I came home, I would write the colours of the flags, for instance the Spanish flags, and then I would follow up with the details of the country, the language for instance. That was my geography lesson. Later a friend of mine went to sea too. But then you could read the list of ships in the paper and you'd see where all the ships were. My mother's father had a brother who lived in Ringsend, Ned Byrne, he used to come every now and again on a Sunday to my mother to get a half crown for a drink. And he would tell us stories about sailing, and they were almost all lies, but we just loved those stories. And the big one was they were shipwrecked on a desert island. And the cannibals they put on the pot and they took a few of them, but I am still alive because there was no meat on me. This was always the last story. The sea was always very important. [...]

The B&I¹² shed is still there, in Lime St. But when I was a child, it was like a wonderland. The spices, the brandies, the smells! We only knew them from Christmas, for the puddings. We never saw those things. My father had a button, but by then he had passed it on to my brother. Tea, rice, all these things that we had never heard of. Luxuries, they were exotic. And he would get them for us. And about the community thing: My mother used to give me little parcels, bring that to Mrs So-and-so. Because she had it and it was needed for the pudding or whatever. The smell was great. One section was filled with spices and flavours from all around the world giving off wonderful aromas. The building is still there, but the smells are gone of course.

*Chris Sands, (*1937), 05/09/2006, 19/09/2006)*

12 British and Irish Steam Packet Company.



55 *The Banana Stores on Sir John Rogerson's Quay in 2006 (Astrid Wonneberger). The Tropical Fruit Company bought under-ripe bananas from the ships and put the fruit into the stores to develop before delivering them to the shops.*

There was a scrap place on the quays, the Hammond Lane, and we used to make trolleys out of it. Everybody in the flats had a trolley. And we used to race one another. We would sit on it and somebody else would give you a push. We made it ourselves. And we played pitch and toss. In the past we would see somebody do something and then do it too. That's how we learnt.

*Paddy Ashmore (*1935), 05/09/2006*

The main streets used to be so full of traffic that you either had to play in the lane way or the docks, because we had no parks in the inner city. The nearest park you would have would be Stephens Green or the Custom House. Merrion Square was privately owned at the time, so that was not available. The City Council leased it then and Archbishop Ryan gave it over to the City Council for a public park. And then there was Ringsend Park. Our swimming adventures used to be in the river Liffey, because the only other thing we had was the penny baths. And if you hadn't got a penny you went into the Liffey to swim. Or the canal. There was a lot of drowning and a lot of young people got killed on the docks. Because all along the docks used to be full of stuff that was unloaded from the ships coming in. All along the wharves was storage for them to be taken away. And that was where all the children used to play. [...] One of the accidents I remember happened when I was about eight years of age. That would have been around 1939. There was a tremendous amount of wood coming in for Brooks Thomas. They were a big importer of wood from foreign countries. And they were gaps in between. And the young fellows were playing hiding on one another. And when a young boy was running between these piles of timber, both sides of the wood moved in and crushed him. He was killed. The fire brigade had to come down and get all the wood before they could get him. That was only one of many that were killed there. I wasn't there when that happened but I remember it when it happened. Health and safety at the time almost did not exist. Today they would be told exactly how to pack and all this. At that time it was just get it done. They just unloaded the boat and it stayed where it was until it was taken away. The most dangerous thing on the docks was scrap. The Hammond Lane for instance. If they were looking for a wheel for example, all of a sudden the scrap would be on top of you.

*Sonny Kinsella (*1935), Chris Sands (*1937), Paddy Pearse (*1935), 12/09/2006*



56 *Guinness boats and barrels on City Quay in the 1950s (St Andrew's Archive).*

My father worked on the docks, and his father before him and my brothers worked on the docks. [...] And you could see your father working on the boats when you went to the quays. We went down there often. [...] My husband's father was drowned outside City Quay Church. He was a seaman and missed a step. He was three weeks in the water until he was found. So there are sad stories too.

*Ann Masterson (*1929), 28/08/2006*

My brother used to bring down the billy can of tea and his lunch to my father, who worked in the coal. And he used to work in the rain and all. It was really hard work. My father died at 37 with a heart attack. He left my mummy with six of us. And then my mother had to work, she

worked in the ESB at seven. My sister was 16, so she had to look after us. And I looked after my little baby brother, I minded him.

*Madge Carey (*1933), 20/09/2006*



57 *Guinness loading beer on Sir John Rogerson's Quay (1991/92) (Richie Kelly).*

Guinness's used to have the barrels there on the quays. They were empty. They'd be taken up to the brewery to be filled up again. And spunkers, the hoggers, they used to drink the rest that was left. Spunkers were people who were alcoholics but they had no money to drink. So they used to bore a hole in the barrel and get the dregs of what was left and drink it. Two of them had to work together. And they lifted the barrel up on top of another barrel. And they went down with their

faces into the barrel and emptied it. But there was red raddle around the barrel, and when they came back out they would have red raddle around their mouth. Red raddle had to wear off, you could not wash it off. It is a paint. Landlords used to put it on the walls of the hall, so children wouldn't play in it, because they would get it on the clothes. That was the reason why red raddle went on the wall.



58 *The same image of the quay taken from Matt Talbot Memorial Bridge in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

It was the cheapest form of paint, and it came off on you. And there was no way you could get it off your clothes. And these spunkers would walk all around town with this red raddle on them. They put it on the barrels as part of identification. There were three different colours

for the different beers. There was blue, orange and red. Porter, stout and a third. The red was porter, the blue stout. When you mix them together, they used to call it a fifty. Half and half. It was a lovely drink. And the third was a ale.

*Sonny Kinsella (*1935), Bart Nolan (*1929), Chris Sands (*1937), Paddy Pearse (*1935), 12/09/2006*



59 *Guinness Lighter Killiney with barrels in the 1960s (St Andrew's Archive).*



60 *City Quay Church and the quays in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

There were a lot of pubs on the quays. There was Tobin's at the Point, Austin Smith's, Bergin's, The Oilwell, The Last Post, Leo Ferguson's, Kelly's, McManus, Kennedy's up on the top. Eight pubs on the quay. On this side alone. The one on the corner of George's Quay, there was the Happy Brig. The Ferryman used to be called the Eight Bells. That must be at least 200 years. Kennedy's is also still there, near Butt Bridge. They were all early opening houses. They opened at six or seven in the morning, because they were near the docks. That's why they were allowed to open that early. And people would go in. You couldn't get them out! They were waiting and queuing up to get in. And there was a hangout for prostitutes all along there as well.

My uncle used to walk from Dolphin's Barn down to the market to get a 7.30am bus to be there in time for an 8 o'clock read. And he'd have two pints and three halves before he'd go to work. Amazing. [...]

There were about eleven public houses in Townsend Street from one end to another, and every single one of them had their own customers. They were always full.

So there were eight on the quays, eleven in Townsend St, and then there were a few in Pearse Street. Kerrigan's was an off licence, but you'd get a pint there. Then there was Charlie Reilly's, The Wood, Moroney's, Coughlan's, Slattery's, O'Neill's. So five at least in Pearse Street. And five in Fenian Street. Every one had their own customers. [...]

Years ago, there would be two fellows and they would be drinking with each other. And a row started between them. And out into the lane, coats off, then they would beat each other up, and afterwards they'd shake hands again, go back into the pub and start drinking again. There would be no knives coming out, no stabbing. Only fist fights. And they would go back with their hand around each others shoulders. Still friends. It seemed that above all the people who would fight would be friends. And there was begrudging families too. They would fight over anything. Drink always brought out the worst in people. But that still happens today.

*Paddy Pearse (*1935), Sonny Kinsella (*1935), Charlie Kinsella (*1936), Chris Sands (*1937), Bart Nolan (*1929), 12/09/2006*



61/62/63 *Moroney's in the 1980s (St Andrew's Archive) later renamed the Pearse Tavern (2003) and the Padraig Pearse (2009) (Astrid Wonneberger).*



64/65 *The Widow Scallans on Pearse Street in 2003. The pub, dating back to the 1820s, was demolished in 2006. In 2009 the site contains a Spar supermarket (Astrid Wonneberger).*



66 *The closed Dockers pub in 2005 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

67 *The site of the Dockers pub awaiting regeneration in March 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*



Where I lived there were a lot of dockers, and when they worked on a coal boat, they were black. But when they finished work at six o'clock in the evening, they wouldn't go home. They would go to the nearest pub. And what they earned on the day, they would spend there. At that time the pubs closed at ten at night, and if they had something left, they would give it to the wife to get a bit of food for the children. And they would buy drinks for their friends who hadn't been lucky to find work that day. The next day, the friend would get work, and then he would buy you a drink. That was that sort of neighbourly behaviour of people. If you had it, you shared it. But that is gone.

*Tony Dalton (*1937), 19/09/2006*



68 *Sir John Rogerson's Quay ca. 1900 (from the Larry O'Connor Collection; St Andrew's Archive).*



69 *Sir John Rogerson's Quay in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

The shipping has changed. When we were all young there were lots and lots of ships coming up the river. There is nothing coming up now. There is nothing in the river now, it is very quiet. All those cranes that used to be on the docks, they are all gone. All the docks are gone. There are none on this side of the river and only a few left on the other side. Everybody who went away from the area would see the difference. There are improvements. Years ago there was very little work. There were a lot of dockers, but sometimes very little work for them. There is improvement there. Unfortunately they moved all the docks from the south to the north quays. We don't have docks here any more. We miss them now. I miss the ships too, all the foreign ships,

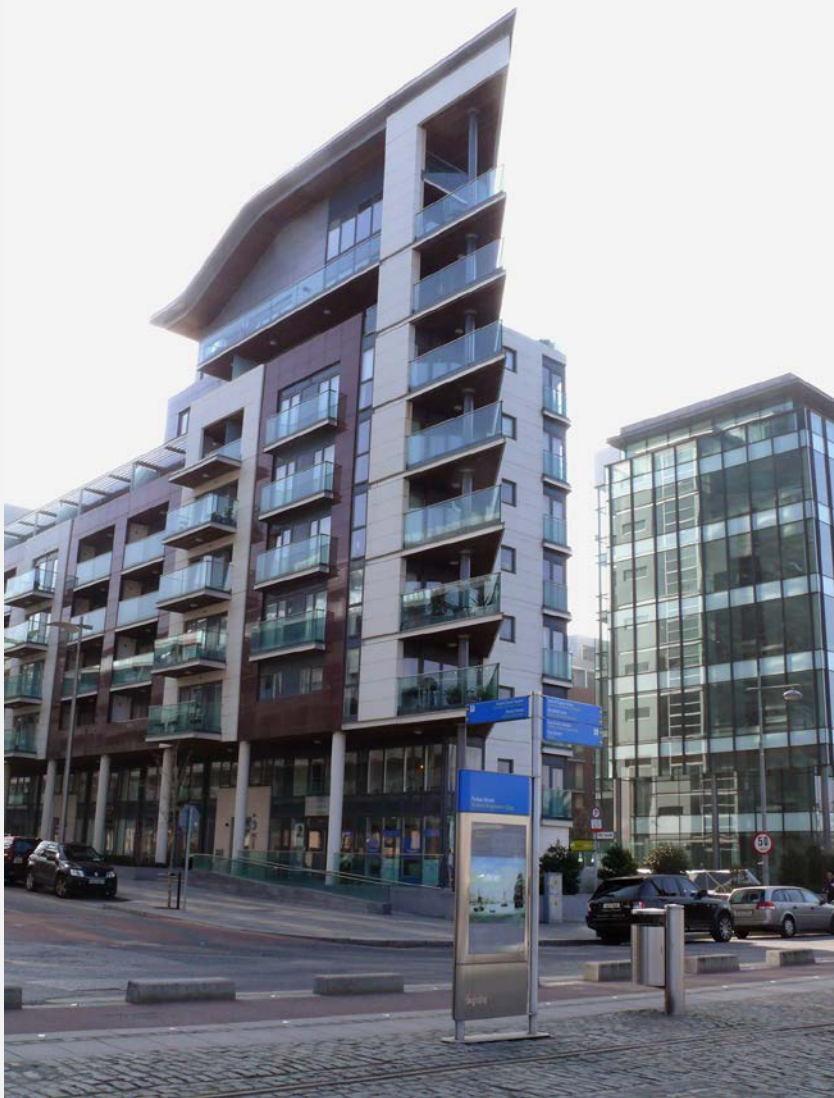
and there would be hundreds of people visiting them on a Sunday, all the families would be there to look at them. Today there is nobody on the quays. For those that lived on the quays all the ships that came in were very exciting. We miss the ships, because we lived on the quays and saw the ships coming up and down all day. And there are no people there now, whereas in the past there were all nationalities down there. There is nothing on it at all now. That is very bad.

*Eileen Brennan (*1924), 24/08/2006*



70/71/72 *Three photographs of Kelly's pub on the corner of Forbes Street and Sir John Rogerson's Quay (70: Terry Thorpe, 1988; 71: Richie Kelly, early-1990s; 72: St Andrew's Archive, 1980s). The pub closed down in the early 1990s. Due to the redevelopment, the original Forbes Street disappeared and was substituted by a new street close to the original.*





73 *The new corner of Forbes Street and the Quay (Astrid Wonneberger).*

There were a lot of pubs on the quays. Kelly's was one of them. That's gone now. It was a real sailors sort of pub, near where the Gasometer was on the quays. You got a lot of sailors in there, because people used to use that part of the port, ships used to come in there. That's another thing that has disappeared from Dublin that there are no sailors anymore. All the pubs on the quays have disappeared. There are no ships coming in there anymore. That pub wasn't so much a dockers' pub, more a sailors' pub I'd say. And they had pool tables in there, and a juke box, it was a bit rough and ready with no pretensions. You were there for the serious business of getting drunk, playing pool, listening to the juke box or maybe, if the mood was right, even getting into a fight. They also used to have dogs, so you knew you were in a good pub. They don't make pubs like that any more. I think the term to describe it would be raffish or rakish. Lovable rogues.

There is this story. This happened in the late 1970s or early 80s I think. The owner was a bit eccentric, to say the least, and he was annoyed that his customers were watching sport on the TV rather than drinking his beer. With that he said, "You're not here to watch, you're here to drink!" But the people didn't pay any attention, so he then proceeded to remove the TV set from its wall mountings, carried it out of the pub and across the quay and dumped it into the Liffey.

There is another story, again this concerns the owner. From what I can remember he had two large Alsatian dogs as guard dogs. One day one of the customers was feeling a bit peckish and finding no other food available decided to take a chunk out of one of the dog's ears. I don't know if he seasoned the ear with salt or if he enjoyed his meal. Presumably he did.

I don't know how true these stories are, but these are open legends. Dublin has plenty of them. You hear these stories. But this pub is gone now. It closed down in the mid to late 1990s I think. I collected an old large screen TV set from the pub around the year 1998/99/2000.

The pub was closed at the time and semi derelict. It was due for demolition as it was on the old Gas Co. Site.

*Billy Ryan (*1954), 18/08/2004, 12/08/2007)*



74 *Inside Kelly's pub in the early 1990s (Richie Kelly).*

The docks were very busy. My father's brother was a docker and he worked here on City Quay at the Bristol Steam Navigation Co. Very busy place. But you were warned not to go down there, because it was dangerous. They were working on the streets and there were trucks and carriages. And I know people who were running along collecting the coal. But that wasn't a thing we did. When the American boats came in, my mother would bring us down looking at the American sailors. She was young at the time too and flirty and looking at the slim tall

Americans. I suppose they came in because it was just after the war, when things were starting to open up and the world was beginning to get itself back in order. They were quite frequent. And then there were the older girls who would go off with the sailors. So it was always a great buzz in the area. Different kinds of people.

*Betty Ashe (*1941), 15/03/2007*

There was a good bit of work on the docks, on the boats and all. Coal boats, they'd bring in loads of coal. All the different coal yards. There was a lot of work. The men could go out in the morning, and they'd pick the numbers they wanted. There was a good bit of work in them days.

And there were a lot of different coal merchants. There was Wallace's coal yard, Heiton's coal yard, Tedcastles, Andy Clarkin's, Donnelly's. I couldn't tell you the amount of coal yards there were. They supplied the factories and the houses. Everything was coal, coal, coal. We used to call it "black diamonds". There was plenty of money in the coal.

I worked there. I went out in the morning - that time it was mostly horse traffic. You went in there in the morning time, the earlier the better, you cleaned your horse and harness, and you were ready for a 8 o'clock start. The stable manager would feed the horses early, and we'd go in early, at 7.30am, because you want to pull out the horse at 8 o'clock, to start loading. That was your routine. To get out there and do as much as you could. Because you were paid at the time by the ton. The more tonnage you done, the more money you got. [...] There were men for filling the bags, then they'd put it onto your shoulder and you loaded it on to your cart. But we didn't do any filling, we were driving the horse cart. Then we did the unloading when we got out to the ladies' houses and the factories. We got it off as quick as we could and to get back and get another one. And the more tonnage you got, the more money you got. [...] Most of the factories got the big orders. But

then, the rich people, around Rathgar, Terenure, and all them places, what we called the gentry, they used to get their orders in the summer and stock it for the winter. That kept us going. Because it made a lot of dirt going through the place with the coal, so they used to stack it in the summer. [...] They were nice people, they always gave us tips, and they'd have a nice cup of tea for you then, and put you sitting down at the table. And they looked at you and maybe they'd say, "I think my husband now is about your size. I have a suit here, would you like it?" And they'd give you clothes that you were never short. If they got to like you and you'd go to them, they'd ask for you, you see. That was good. They were very good people. They used to take pity on us. [...] But of course, you had to do something for a living. [...] You met some terrible nice people in your travels. If you worked there, you wouldn't want to work anywhere else, because every day was a pay day. It was really good. It was a bit like slavery, you got wet and all, but I liked it, and I got the tips every day, we called it the beer money, to go and get a pint of Guinness. You didn't have to wait till Friday, so that made the job. [...] So I would pull in and have a pint in the pub. When I went into the pub, I got a pack of biscuits to bring out to the horse. And sometimes I'd get talking and forget all about it, and he'd start whinnying and whinnying and they'd say in the pub, "your horse is hungry, he wants to go to his dinner." And I said, "I know what's wrong, I forgot to give him his biscuits," and I got the biscuits and they'd have to come out and have a look, they wouldn't believe it. And then they'd see him eating the biscuits out of my hand, and they'd be thrilled with it. Soon and they'd bring him out biscuits. It was a hard life, but it was grand. And you were mostly your own boss, it was up to you, the more you done the more you got. [...]

I worked 30 years in it. I was driving the horse and cart, just coal, briquettes and the wooden logs. Anything to do with the fuel. [...]



75 *Horse and cart driver on the old Swivel Bridge (Tara Bridge) in 1926 (St Andrew's Archive).*

I worked all the time for Wallace's. It was right opposite Boland's. The stables were on the right hand side when you came in, and you passed by the office. They were facing the water. The bridge used to rise up and the boats used to come in there, and on the left hand side they'd tie them up and that's where they'd be unloaded. There were cranes there for unloading, in the yard. And on the other side of the basin was the gas company. The gas company had boats coming in there too. They were unloading coal there as well, because that's how they were making the gas. Wallace's had two boats on their own.



76 *Display Contracts on the corner of Sir John Rogerson's Quay and Windmill Lane in the mid-1990s (St Andrew's Archive).*

When you started in a coal yard, you weren't constant. It was a kind of a time it was a seasonal job. In the winter there was plenty of work, because the winter was the time the coal was being burnt, and in the

summer it was very slack. Old people were dying and young people were coming into the job, and you had to work kind of up the ladder. The longer you were in, the more constant you could become. It was not permanent. In the winter there was work for everybody. But when the slack period came, you had to be there early to get a job. [...]



77 *The same corner in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

In the morning you had the horse cleaned and it looked beautiful. You had him as long as he lasted. Some of them wouldn't last too long with that work. You got more money for the more loads you'd done, so they worked them hard and they didn't last so long. But I couldn't do that. My favourite horse was called Jack. He was a chestnut and very tall. He

used to follow me around like a dog. And he knew my step when I was coming in in the morning. And my wife used to prepare stale bread for him, and if I forgot it, he'd keep his head around and couldn't understand that he hadn't got his bread. I loved the horse and I loved to talk to him. And I always brought him back cakes. We'd bring a little lunch with us and made tea in the hut. The stables and the huts were all in the coal yard. The horses belonged to the coal yards. When I worked there, they had over 30. Maybe 16 of them would grass, the others would work. If the horses looked well, the people you delivered to were delighted. And they would ask for you again, so it was better for me too. So I used to do alright. [...]



78 *City Quay in the early 1980s (St Andrew's Archive).*

In the summer we had to put the horse out to grass: We went out for let's say six weeks. And say there was 20 horses, ten would go out and

ten would work. And whoever were the ten senior men, who were longest in the job, they'd be working, the horse was working. And when they went out to grass, the others would come in and we'd go to work. If it was good in the summer, they would bring in the horse for us, that was better for us too. [...]

The coal was a thing of the past, when the oil and different things like that came in. So we lost all the factories. But you always had the private houses, but it didn't give us much employment. A lot of them had to close down, at the end there was only one left. That kept us going, the private houses, they liked a coal fire in the winter.

Tommy McDonald (1916-2005), 26/09/2002



79 *City Quay in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

Community

Another important perceived change, particularly by older people, concerns the character of the community. While all interviewees expressed their opinion that the community spirit in Pearse Street is still alive and much better than in many other Dublin areas, most of them also emphasised that the sense of community has declined over the years and was much more intense in the past.

The community spirit was based on the close physical connection of work and living space, friendship and comradeship, and kinship. In a neighbourhood where 164 people in one street only, Townsend Street, were related to each other – as Bart Nolan counted in 1954 – everybody knew everybody else.

Mutual help and support was a strategy of survival in an era where a regular income was not always secure and widespread poverty common among the residents of tenements and even corporation housing. Women left their children with a granny or a neighbour when they needed to go to the washhouse to do some washing and returned this favour the next week.

Despite the poverty, the memories of those days are predominantly positive and often romanticised, and bad memories are generally mentioned less frequently. The interviewees talked enthusiastically about cups of tea that were given any time to visiting neighbours, the one radio in the tenement whose volume was increased so everybody could hear it, communal street parties and sing-songs and the often-quoted

doors that were always left unlocked, so neighbours could come in any time, because there was nothing to be stolen anyway.

Children generally felt safe growing up in an area where they would know all the neighbours and shop keepers. They would collect food from the local shops and neighbours and play in the yards cooking their own dinners. If the neighbour had a horse, he would take them around in the cart and the local rope maker on the quay would give them a piece of rope to play skipping with or make a swing.

One important pillar of the community was the parish church. Religious festivals, such as the Corpus Christi processions, in which the entire community took part, were as important as the weekly mass. Private events, such as weddings or funerals, became communal events in the sense that neighbours helped preparing the ceremonies and wakening the dead. The Church's function for maintaining a community spirit is generally acknowledged.

While married women with children had mostly to stay at home in the past and therefore had more time for the neighbours, there are plenty of occupational opportunities now for women. This is generally welcomed but is seen as a factor that makes it difficult to visit neighbours regularly.

The dispersal of inner city communities from the 1960s onwards brought huge changes to the social structure of these neighbourhoods. Most families who had to leave the area felt disrupted and alien in their new living quarters, even if their housing conditions were so much more comfortable. For this reason, some people tried everything to move back, even if it

meant giving up a comfortable flat in the outskirts and go back to live in an inner-city tenement for a while, until a new house or flat in the area became available.

Facing dereliction and the disintegration of their community, the residents who stayed in the Pearse Street area started to counteract this development. Starting small with school and church projects, the efforts of a few community activists first developed into a Social Services Centre for the elderly and finally culminated in the creation of today's St Andrew's Resource Centre, which provides services for all parts of the community and is generally acknowledged as a very important feature for the community.

After all these efforts, some form of community spirit has survived. Today, however, it is not used as a strategy for survival as much as a means for political unity within the community. Only functioning communities can represent their own interests in the context of urban renewal. They also serve to give people a sense of belonging and provide services that are needed most, on a local level.

In that sense a community spirit and a functioning community are as important today as in the past, and statements that lament a sense of community that was so much better in the past and the wish for a better community spirit today are not mere nostalgia but express a longing for communal security today.



80 *Kitty Fox's Shop on Queens Terrace in 1977 (Geraldine Murphy).*

Sense of Neighbourhood

The sense of community was much stronger than today. When we lived along here we could go into anybody. Even over the wall my mother would always be talking to her next door neighbour. The same now up where we live. Betty Watson always calls me over the wall. And we looked after one another, we really did. [...]

That somebody died and nobody notices would never have happened in the past. Because people always were in and out of people's houses and you would know what was going on. And even if you are an old bachelor, people knew that you came in at certain times and they always reported you if you weren't there. Someone always

said, we miss such and such person. But with the way life is now, people are working all the time and they haven't got the time. And nobody knows when that and that person was seen last. [...] When we got the bus for the day centre, we collected the folks and there was a man missing. The bus driver came in, so I walked in with him. Legally you are not supposed to go into someone's home, the laws have changed too. In the past you could, there wasn't this rule. Then the telecom fellow, who was there too, broke the window and saw the man on the floor. They opened the balcony door and went in. But we were later told that we shouldn't have done that.

There are so many houses broken into, that's why they changed the regulations. Years ago you could go into people's home, because the doors were always open for you. Now you have to lock yourself in, because you are afraid of your life to leave them open. That's the truth. [...]

There are a lot of people working now. Years ago most women never worked. They stayed at home. When we were rearing our children, we always came together. Then they were reared and you are either in the community if you are involved with your children or do voluntary work, or you just close your door. Many people don't get involved. And the young women now they need to work for their mortgages. [...]

A lot of women worked doing cleaning jobs. But it was all evening work, so all day you were there for your children. That has all changed now, because the way we live has changed.

*Stephanie Cannon (*1936) and Betty Watson (*1942), 04/09/2006*

Years ago they used to have these processions. When it was Our Lady's birthday, everybody would be decorating the streets and who had the best altar going, and the men put all the flags and buntings out. It was really fantastic. It was a really happy life. And on a Sunday there would be a football match for the men and there comes the accordion out and

they would be all dancing and singing and drinking in the streets, in Moss St, very very happy. Everybody would be getting out singing and there would be bags of winkles and cockles and they would be all cooked and put out and everybody would be having the cockles and winkles and all. It was fantastic. Everybody would cook something, a pig's head sometimes or ham sandwiches and everybody went into one another's house. And they would all bring out their dishes. It was like a street carnival. That lady over there lived over on the quays. She would remember it too. This could happen once a month, each time the team played and they won, the Liffey Wanderers, then we would have this street party. When my dad died, the flag was put over his coffin, because he was in Liffey Wanderers Football Club.

All of that has changed. People have changed. We left the key in our doors for our neighbours until about ten years ago, but now you can't do that anymore. And the neighbour are nice friends, but there is no going in and having cups of tea and have chats spontaneously. In the past if a little one of my neighbours came home from school, I would take her in and give her something to eat. Real neighbours, we loved it. [...] And the way everybody got together and all the people in the community were happy. You can't see that now. People don't seem to bring themselves into the community as much today. [...]

Our neighbours were brilliant. We could go into any of their houses and you would get sugar or bread or milk if you were short. And years ago you would get bread cheaper on the north side at a bakery, so we would go over with huge pillow cases and get them full of bread for half a crown. And another bakery would give us cakes very cheap, because he knew us. We were all in the neighbourhood. And we knew what time to go and what time not to go. And you would meet the same people.

I had to stay at home on Fridays every now and again to mind my little brother so my mother could go to the wash house. And sometimes my mother would take us there too and put us all in and

scrub us and wash us. At that time we didn't have baths in our corporation homes, we only had a big tub under the bed and every second Saturday night my mother would take it out and put us all into it. [...]



81 *Queens Terrace/Pearse Grove in the 1970s (St Andrew's Archive).*

We had a huge big yard for all the neighbours. The boys used to play football on one half and on a Friday we'd say, "we are not going up for our dinner, Mother." "Why not?" "We are making our own." And we would go around. And all the neighbours and the shops – Lilly Kelly and all, she had a shop around the corner and Betsy had another shop, all vegetables – they would all give us a little onion, potatoes. [...] For free, no charge. And we would boil them all in a huge big pot. The mothers would be looking for the pot, but we would have it down there

and boil our dinner. I must have been around nine or ten then and I remember it well. And all the neighbours would be there too. [...] We'd give them all some of our stew too. And we thought it was beautiful. We had seen our mothers doing it. But we did a little bit of cooking in the school as well, that's how we knew how to do it. [...] And all the children were around and we used to make a camp of sacks. And they would be all nailed up and my mother wouldn't see us for the whole day. That was all in the yard, because we used to call it a playground. That was in Moss St. [...] And there were horses and a neighbour who lived facing us was blind, but he would always put the kids up on the cart and he would drive them all around, and they would be delighted. I had happy times really.

*Madge Carey (*1933), 20/09/2006*



82 *Queens Terrace was demolished and rebuilt in the early 1980s. This photograph shows the site in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

As children we used to play shop. And we hoped that our mother would break a lovely cup or something so that we would have china for the shop. Lovely memories. We would play it on the stairs and on the streets. And you would play Piggy. Piggy was square boxes marked with chalk, and if your mother emptied her box of polish we would get them for Piggies. And you would put on numbers and if anybody walked on the line you were out. Things like that.

*Carmel O'Connor (*1929), 28/08/2006*



83 *Damien and John Byrne playing in Pearse House in 1986 (St Andrew's Archive).*



84 *Children playing in Pearse House in 1947 (St Andrew's Archive).*

Holles Street was full of tenement houses when we grew up. [...] And we used to put a rope around the lamp post and swing on it. And we played chainies, with broken cups. And marbles. We were happy enough with it. [...] We had a good old time really.

May Bird (1929-2009), 06/09/2006



85 *Children playing in Pearse House in the 1980s (St Andrew's Archive).*



86 *Pearse House celebrating the complex's refurbishment in 2006 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

As kids we used to play in the flats. When we went to mass or when we came home from school and got a chance, we went to Prince's St. There were factories along there and we used to sneak out when it was sunny and sit down and pick the tar off the road and make marbles with them. It melted in the sun. I have the impression we got warmer summers, and we were always able to make marbles with the tar that used to be between the cobblestones. [...] When the tar got cold, they were as good as real marbles, and we played with them. [...] There wasn't much traffic. Horses and carts, but hardly any motor cars. There was the odd bus, but not as many. We used to go across the road. A

woman had horses in a stable over there and we used to feed the horses the oats. There were animals and all. There were stables, loads of them. And there was a rope factory on City Quay straight at the corner where that new bank is now. They used to sell the ropes for the ships and for bailing and all. We used to go in there as kids and they used to give us a little bit of rope on our way home from school. If your mother knew you would be doing that you would be dead. We weren't allowed to go far. We used to play right facing the door where our mother was sitting outside the door watching us, every day when we went out to play. And if I went over to another block, she always wanted to know where we were. And yet we escaped every now and again. There was always an old granny who would be sitting at her door. And your mother would go in and make a cup of tea and bring it out to the old granny, that's when we got to escape.



87 *Andrew's Court Playground in the early 1990s (St Andrew's Archive).*

And there was another big thing when I was a child. When we were living in the flats, I was about 12 years of age, there was a granny, and obviously she wasn't well. And I was sent in to sleep with that granny every night in her place and in her bed, and I got up every morning to get my breakfast before I went to school and brought her a cup of tea. One morning after I had gone to school she was found dead.



88 *Children swinging on the lamp post on Sir John Rogerson's Quay (ca. 1950s) (St Andrew's Archive).*

We used to be swinging around the poles with ropes and playing skipping and chasing. So if the granny said something to you, you respected them. Kids don't have that nowadays. A lot of kids don't have grannies. So I think there should be more interaction with seniors, because it is good for them to recognise people in the community in that way. I did a project with the Youth Department once and I don't

see myself as old. And I came up from the bus one day carrying two heavy bags, and there was this young fellow saying, "ah, Betty, give me one of your bags I will carry it for you." As a child, we would always automatically have done that, but you don't get that very often now. In some ways I suppose the kids are afraid because the older person might be afraid they would rob them. So a lot of stuff in the culture has changed because of the drug situation and the drink. A lot has changed in that way.

*Betty Watson (*1942), 15/09/2006*

I think the biggest change was that in the past nobody had anything. But if anybody had anything, it was always shared. The neighbourliness was fantastic. You looked after one another. But that seems to have gone. With apartments here now, nobody knows their next door neighbour. And it is a crying shame that it did go. [...]

I lived in one of the large tenement houses in Fenian St, where there were eight or ten families. My family was one of the first to get electricity in, so my mother bought a radio. It was a three storey house. And the neighbours would all stand outside and shout, "Mrs Murray, higher up the radio, we want to hear the news!" So we always had the radio very high for the neighbours. But we had an insurance man, Mr Burke, and he'd walk in and lower it down. "Isn't that nicer, Mrs Murray?" And the mother would say, "what about the neighbours, higher it up!"

Tenement means we only had one room. There were ten of us plus the dog. She had pups twice a year. When the mother wouldn't feed them, I had to get up at two o'clock in the morning to feed them. And I would have to heat milk and then start to show each pup how to take milk. And they would all be screaming, put out that light, we want to go to sleep! That was the type of way you lived. We had no choice. But the neighbours were fantastic. You could always go over and ask

for a bowl of sugar. That's the way people were, but that is all gone now.

*John Murray (*1937), 19/09/2006*

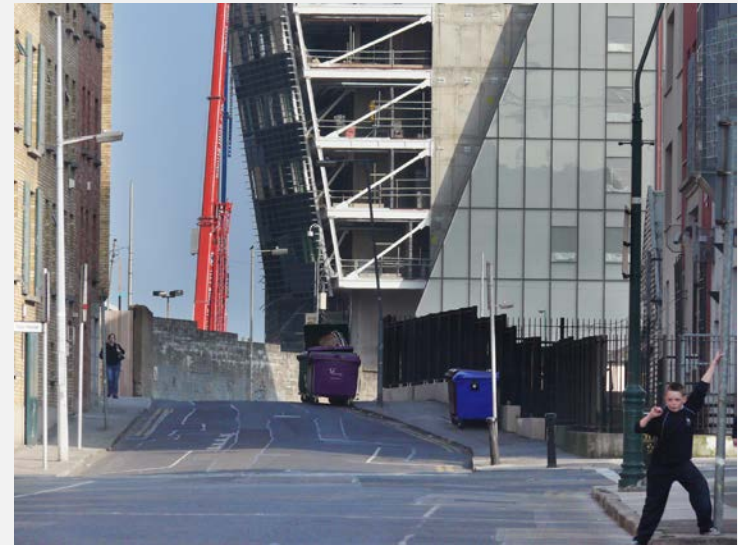
People were poor but they always shared. And if your child grew up, you would always look for someone who would use their clothes. Like my brothers, when they got good jobs, they wanted a steak, and my mother would always heat it up and send it up to a pensioner on their own. Now people don't know whether a person next door is hungry or not, but when you were in the tenement, you knew whether that man was working. And you knew whether he was a good man or a man that gambled. And you looked after them. You don't know your neighbours anymore.

*Lily Byrne (*1922), 28/08/2006*

There was more camaraderie in the past. Everybody knew everybody. If your mother was sick, somebody else would look after the children. If a woman had a baby, all the children were thrown out and the midwife would come in. If anybody was sick, there was help. It was terrific, or if somebody died, the neighbours rallied around. It was great.

*Paddy Pearse (*1935), 12/09/2006*

They tend to glamorise the old days, which were not very glamorous. But what made them really good was the sense of family, extended family, a sense of neighbours, closeness, familiarity, feeling safe. That was a lovely warm feeling to grow up with. That has changed, because people are much busier now. They work, even grannies like myself work. We haven't got as much time for one another. But we all have our little circle of friends and family, but families now have had to move away.



89/90 Two photographs of the corner of Hanover Street and Misery Hill (ca. 1980s) (St Andrew's Archive).

91/92 The same corner in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).

So a young couple today does not have the benefit of an extended family around them for support. But on the other hand it makes them very independent. So there is an upside and a downside.

It is nicer to grow up in the support structure of an extended family. Because for me family is everything. And it is lovely when you are out somewhere and having a conversation and someone tips you on the shoulder and asks, how are you? And you can say then, that is my cousin. And I have quite a lot of cousins in this area. People say to me: You are related to everybody! I am not really, but people like to feel that way. You grew up together and there is this sense of feel and there is always that warmth and that draw to people you went to school with. Recently one of my class mates appeared out of the blue, she came back to Dublin from Scotland. And I bumped into her sister, whom I didn't recognise, and we started to talk. I gave her my phone number and asked her to tell Ellie to ring me. Many people would ask me, because I still live here, did you ever hear from this or that one? Ellie rang me from Patrick's Street where she lives now and we went to lunch together. And she told me her story and I told her mine. She had never really forgotten me and I never forgot her. [...] There is all that good feeling stuff.

*Betty Ashe (*1941), 15/03/2007*

The sense of community was much stronger in the past than today. The church had a lot to do with that. They had this procession every year. And the people would come out and they would decorate the streets and the houses and they would have made shift altars outside. So that gave a lot of community spirit. That was one item. There was a football league. They used to play it in Powerscourt [housing complex]. There used to be five-a-side. With thousands of people. That was community again. And there was various other things like that. [...] Like the hooley. People would gather in the house and they would have a sing-song.



93 *Children playing in Pearse Square in the 1980s. The playground was refurbished as a park between 1996 and 1998 by Dublin Corporation (St Andrew's Archive).*

If you were short of a little bit of sugar, you could knock on the door of your next door neighbour. You would never be short! Now you have to run over to the next shop to get it. In those days you would get the couple of slices of bread from your neighbour. It was that much closer. And if somebody had a party or had a few bob – often they were spontaneous – then they would knock at your door and invite you along. That is gone.



94 *Child playing in Pearse Square in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

It was a stronger sense of community in that there were certain women who would take it upon themselves to lay out a corpse. They would go as far as washing the corpse. My mother was involved in that. If a neighbour died, she would go in and would lay out the corpse and they would do the shroud and all that. [...] That was community. There was almost an unwritten rule that the family didn't prepare the body. The neighbours did it. And even the prayers and all that, the neighbours would take over. And then the corpse was laid out in the house and a candle lit and there would be a procession of people all day long coming in to visit the corpse. One lady had this set of funeral bed linen. And she would blank up the walls over the corpse. They were special

sheets that she had. And those were reused all the time. And somebody would make a cross behind the bed. And then they were carried to the church. There were loads of men carrying them to the church. That was community.

At baptism the child would be brought around in the flats and there would be coins inserted into their little hands. It was bad luck if you didn't give them any money, if you didn't cross their hand with silver. That was the tradition.

*Sylvester Keogh (*1935), Peter Grainger (*1936), Chris Sands (*1937) and Paddy Ashmore (*1935), 05/09/2006*

I would like to go back to about 30 years ago, when all the girls in my block in Pearse House would paint the whole place and scrub it, it was great. And then the processions would be coming, it was great. They would be coming from City Quay and the men would carry Our Lady on their shoulders. We would have the flowers all out and the altars arranged for the processions. And we would scrub and decorate the whole flat with buntings and flowers. That is all gone. The processions were in the summer time.

*Carmel O'Connor (*1929), 28/08/2006*

We used to have Corpus Christi processions every June. And everyone got out and decorated the windows with paper flowers and flags. I used to love making the paper roses. The streets looked gorgeous. One street looked better than the other. All for the big processions. When the small kids were making their first communion. [...] And all the sodalities. All the religious processions were nice, and all the streets were outdoing one another with their decorations. And everyone was there, you would meet everybody there. It was really a day for everybody.

Weeks beforehand they would make altars in front of their doors, and they would all make up the streets. They marched in the parishes, Westland Row and City Quay.



95 *Corpus Christi procession in Boyne Street (ca. 1950s) (St Andrew's Archive).*

They started from outside the churches and walked up to Pearse St, along Tara St and back down Townsend St. And then around Moss St and back to the church. They went on Holy Days, Corpus Christi particularly. They put up flags and all. Everybody got out and did their bit. Everybody was together. It was great. There was a coal yard in front of our house and we would all be painting the walls with white paint. We would be exhausted afterwards.

They were hard times, but good, because you knew you had neighbours. If anything happened, everybody got together. Now you could be dead in your bed and nobody would know. That has changed.

Nancy Coburn (1919) and Eileen Brennan (*1924), 24/08/2006*

The church used to be a very central point, Sunday was a big issue for most people; they all met at Mass and talked afterwards. And then during the year there would be a number of religious festivals, the Corpus Christi procession and that. [...] They had a procession around the community. Every parish would have their own one. [...] And there was the whole idea of novenas. [...] The church also ran social events, dances, céilis, the whole matchmaking thing, and of course christenings, marriages, deaths, all the important events were centred around the church. [...] And that would have kept people together who shared worship. It wasn't that strong in the city, but if the priest said something against you and mentioned your name, you were practically ostracised. So in that sense community spirit was stronger in the past.

Today now, community spirit means a different thing. Certainly has since the 1980s. Community now means communities take political action to ensure better housing, better services in their communities, which in the most part has started to happen, because even governments now take the other side of it and say we do need to supply better services to the communities, [...] not enough, but they are starting to come around to it. That's why the community spirit now needs a new push. [...]

St Andrew's is essential for the community today. If it wasn't for St Andrew's, we would still be stuck in the 1980s with high level of drug use, unemployment, petty crime and poor schooling. St Andrew's has helped us to develop from a majority working-class to a more middle class community. It has helped to maintain the community spirit by recognising the needs of the community, the issues affecting the community and helping people in actively engaging in these issues. I

am very proud of what St Andrew's – and my involvement in it - has achieved for the community.

*Noel Watson (*1965), 16/08/2004, 17/06/2007*



96/97 Corpus Christi processions in Markievicz House and Townsend Street in the 1950s (St Andrew's Archive).





98 *Corpus Christi Procession in 2007 (Noel Watson).*

Socially the church was really good, because after mass our team used to meet to play football. It was socially good, but it was also about power. Abuse of power also happened. I always said I had been to mass, because if I said no, I would be hit. The social aspect was good about the church. For instance the sodality nights. We went to town after it.

*Chris Sands (*1937), 12/09/2006*

The dereliction was traumatic. We felt helpless and hopeless. Life was so changed and different. You'd meet people who had been moved out

of the area in town and they'd been living in houses with bathrooms now, but it wasn't the same for them. Their children grew up with that, so they were grand. But it was very traumatic for the parents who were moved out. Moving away from mothers and sisters and the extended family. When my sisters were moved out, they said they wanted to be put together, next door to one another. And they were. And they were moved again to Clondalkin, and they said they wanted to stay next to each other and they were. [...]

Everybody would have different recollections of how St Andrew's started, but I can remember that I got involved in school activities when my kids started school. The first thing I got involved in was in taking them on trips out to the zoo. Then there was a social service council operating in Baggot St school. These councils were set up in the 1940s by Archbishop McQuaid to help the poor. So we would make pyjamas there. All stuff was bought from the wholesalers at a very good price. We bought the material and we had the machines there and made the pyjamas. The shop was open on a Thursday and the parents of the school kids, not just from Baggot St, would come up and buy them at a good price. I did that for 18 years, until they closed them. Because then at that stage you had Dunnes and Pennys so the need wasn't there. Then there was a slow awareness that you could make changes and make things happen. You could make a difference. Not necessarily as an individual, but as a group of like-minded people. Then Sr Stanislaus Kennedy was touring around the country at the time encouraging people and communities to fight back. And with support from the church and Fr Tom O'Keefe, we set up the Westland Row/City Quay Social Service Council and we got premises from Trinity College across the road from the church. At that time we had quite a high percentage of older people who would have been dependent on welfare and the service council looked after them. And now I am still working today as a senior, I think that says it all how far we have come. And I am not unique. If they are not working for a

career, they are looking after their grandchildren, doing home help or whatever. Active. And independent, financially and in many other ways. And they can go off for weekends and have a great time and so on. That says it all for women, I think men always had a great time. Because women focused on looking after their men and their children.



99 *St Andrew's Resource Centre during the South Docks Festival in 2008 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

We set up the Social Services Council in Westland Row, services for the elderly. At that time the school curriculum changed. And Betty Watson and her people started looking for a second chance for themselves to learn about this new curriculum to be able to support the

kids. So that's how the grinds programme was set up. At that time, the students giving the grinds would come out to the homes. My two younger kids would have had grinds from different people coming in. They were the things that were happening there in Westland Row for many years. Then this building here at St Andrew's was no longer needed as a school because of the depopulation and we applied successfully to the archdiocese and got it. The objective of the organisation from the very beginning was to strengthen the community and have a one stop shop. And different people do it in different ways. But it was to provide a one-stop shop for this community to have their needs addressed. All under the one roof. And it has evolved into that. To give people a sense of hope. And there were barriers and negativity, mistrust and suspicion, there was all that negative stuff, but we overcame it by focusing on being inclusive. [...] Everybody has access to the services here in St Andrew's Resource Centre which means that in the indigenous community there is no family that does not access the services, often at more than one level. You have the granny there, the grandchild there, the daddy here, mother there and so on so forth. It has been a positive success. This organisation has given people hope and it has given the people back their dignity. Once you give people hope and opportunities, their dignity follows. And their sense of self-worth and being able to contribute something. Look at the people who work here, or who have worked here and have moved on. People have gained in many ways, even if it was just through encouragement and support. The job centre was a major asset, because that improved incomes. More people were working, more money came in, less dependence on welfare. Then we moved on with the DDDA, where our younger people now are inspired to much greater things. And we always have to be innovative and creative, never ever presenting a problem, always presenting a problem with a solution.

*Betty Ashe (*1941), 15/03/2007*



100/101/102 The annual South Docks Festival has been a community event since 1987. The festivities culminate in a parade through the area and ends with a Fair in Merrion Square. These photographs were taken in 2004, 2006 and 2008 (Astrid Wonneberger).

60 years ago there was a bigger population. There were about 40,000 people living in this area. It was a very busy area then with people. Housing was very poor. There were a lot of tenement houses. Dublin Corporation, as they were called then, moved in and started demolishing some of the older housing and moved people out of the area. So we went down to a very small population of about 5,000 people within the two parishes. That had a very depressing effect on us

in the sense that we are now a very small community. In the 1960s and 1970s, the whole emphasis came on housing and social issues. People realised that they had problems, whereas they probably didn't realise they had problems years ago. Now they realised social needs, senior citizens needs became very prominent in the area. Before that we would have done our own little bits and pieces. Resident groups might have been involved to address issues at the time. We also started with the community games to get kids involved. And I felt that was a very positive thing to do. There was a lot of development going on just around the area, but there were no new houses built in the area. But what we did get was office development. And office development had a negative effect in the sense that we felt that we were being clustered into a little corner, towards the quays, as Mount St was getting all the offices. This was in the 1960s and 1970s. At that time I became very aware of the fact that we needed to fight. The social services centre was then set up in the 1970s to address some of the issues, mainly around social issues. And also we were involved in setting up a day care centre for the senior citizens. They were the two issues we took on first. From that on then, as a social services council, we were very aware of other issues that were coming up, like the housing, other needs, employment. The whole employment was changing in the area. The big employer Hammond Lane Foundry had gone, the Gas Company was on its way out, the coal yards were gone. The docks had moved. So a lot of work our community was used to was gone. And another one was hotels. We had a lot of small hotels in Westland Row. Some people would have been employed there, we had the tradition of that kind of work too, services. That started changing in the 1970s as well. So now we had a very high unemployment rate within the area.

There were a lot of things happening in Dublin at that time too. In the north inner city you had the Gregory Deal¹³, so they were being

13 The Gregory Deal was a deal brokered between Charles Haughey, Taoiseach and local independent TD Tony Gregory, who held the

looked after. That was before the drug issue. It was done with Sheriff St and those areas to rebuild the north inner city. Even before the IFSC. But nobody was taking any notice of us, because we were on the south side, so we were seen as we didn't need it. But we did, because we were dying. But we were fighting back through the social services council. And we would organise a lot of objections to office development within the area. But from there then we also started to look at other issues, such as housing, unemployment. So when we got the opportunity to move down to the old school, which had been also another part of our decline, because it had to close down, we opened up St Andrew's Resource Centre. And through that we addressed a lot of issues then we had been talking about for so long that we couldn't do anything about, like the Day Care Centre for the elderly, which was there even before St Andrews was founded. We also had the adult education to address the second chance adult education. We have a fabulous youth service. The best in Dublin at least, I think, in the sense that they have done so much good work and we don't have proper premises, but that has never held us back. Money has never stopped us. We have always gone ahead with things and then look for money afterwards. So we have always been progressive. Through St Andrews then we got all these things running, like the job centre, which was very successful, then the computer classes came in, so we started to retrain our people, because we had the IFSC and we needed to retrain our people. St Andrew's was a major success. It is still the biggest employer in the area, it contributes to the economy of the area, plus the social aspect of it, because people can come in and use the services.

From the foundation of St Andrew's we then started to look at the future. We in St Andrew's cannot really address housing. We can help people with information about housing, but we can't address

balance of power in Dáil Éireann, in the 1980s. It promised benefits (housing, employment etc.) to local people in Gregory's north inner city constituency.

housing. So we set up the Grand Canal Docks Trust (GCDT), which had since come to docklands. A lot of the issues that we had been talking about in GCDT are the issues that we were ready to go into Docklands and say, this is what we want. GCDT was set up around the early 1990s. So we were all geared up for the changes to happen here, we wanted to be the forerunners. There were changes going to happen, so we better be up there, because we had had so many experiences of what had been done against us, with the development of Mount Street and nobody listened to us. And now we said, we are getting an opportunity to go in there. So we took on Docklands and we went in with a positive attitude. I mean we still fought our corner. The 20% social and affordable clause came into being. We now have a voice that we never had before. St Andrew's had a great voice, but for this part now we had a voice that we could go in there and talk to people we could never talk to before, like developers. So we see this as positive.

*Dolores Wilson (*1948), 13/03/2007*

The Urban Village

A community feeling was further enhanced by the seemingly rural character of many Dublin neighbourhoods until the mid- to late 1950s. Farmyards, cottages with pigs, chickens and stables in the back yards and horse carts on the streets provided an image of rural Ireland rather than that of a big city. Numerous local shops and businesses made the neighbourhood almost self-sufficient, residents barely had to leave the community to fulfil their needs. Finally, the fact that everybody knew each other and many residents were interrelated confirmed this impression. For these reasons it is not surprising that the phrase "urban village" is still used frequently to describe the south docklands.



103 *Children jumping off MacMahon Bridge and swimming in the Grand Canal Dock Basin in 2006 (Noel Watson).*

Our neighbourhood was unique in one sense, in that it was what we refer to as a linear village. We were bordered on one side by the Liffey, and on the other by the aristocracy, which was Merrion Square. So down Pearse Street down to the river you had this linear village. There was another village joined on to us, which was Ringsend, but that was another corridor to cross, a no-go area for us. The iron bridge was the border, but the real border to Ringsend was Ringsend Bridge. So this was our village. And we had a village mentality. We were a village in our communications and everything else. And there were a lot of intermarriages. In that sense I find we were a unique people. And the

fact that we were living in the docks, there must have been a foreign influence as well. Because we did have people who have German ancestors for instance. [...] Or Norwegian and Belgian. [...] So we are kind of a mixed race. And in the past there was also a Spanish influence in City Quay.

*Sylvester Keogh (*1935), 05/09/2006*

We didn't have chickens, but there was Leo Kennedy, my daddy's cousin. He lived at the end of the street and they had pigs, chickens, pigeons. He used to go around collecting the slop from the people. The skins from the potatoes and the cabbage leaves, and he collected it from everybody for the pigs. He had a good few pigs. Maybe he sold them, I don't know. It was a big house down the end. You could go through from his house out to Brunswick Place, where the big office, the red one, is built now up here. There was a pigeon place there too, where they could ring the pigeons. That is gone as well. He owned all that. [...] There is a good few changes. There used to be a good few shops in and around Hogan Place. A chemist, a butchers, a vegetable shop. A place that sold carpets, an antique shop, and Larry's, the grocery shop. And two bookmakers. They are all gone now, there are houses and offices now.

*Stephanie Cannon (*1936), 06/09/2006*

They had stables and all in this area. And they had a pond for the ducks, where Burns's is now today. Boylan's mother had a stable there. And another man collected manure for a little garden that he had. [...] There were pigs all over the city. Peterson's Lane was called scab alley. The swine fever broke out then in 1950. And after that they took them out of the city and then there were no pigs allowed. My aunt had 20 pigs here until 1951. She lived in the back of the school. Then the Kennedys had 30 pigs in Harmony Row. And a different Kennedys milked the cows at

the back of their house in Pearse Street. In the summer they brought them out to Rathfarnham. They were called city farmers. There were hundreds of them in this neighbourhood. The first farmer around here was my grandfather Byrne, my mother's father. He came from Laragh in Co. Wicklow. And the lane over here is named after him, Byrnes. He had 120 horses in that lane. And he had contracts with the gas company, the Hammond Lane, Bishop's, Beckett's, the builder's providers and the soap factory in Barrow St, Richardson's. And he used to hire all the people in the neighbourhood.

*Paddy Pearse (*1935), 12/09/2006*



104 Horse Stable on the North Wall in the early 1990s (Richie Kelly).

My husband's mother, they had a coal business. They had a big yard and stables and all. That's where I moved in when I got married. Flower and McDonalds I think was the name of the coal yard. He worked there and then he started to deliver coal with horses and carts himself. That's why he had the big yard. [...] And they had a hen house and chickens. I remember one time, my little fellow had his confirmation. And we bought twelve chickens and brought them home. And we put the chickens in the chicken house, but they were all cocks, there wasn't a hen among them. They were big white cocks, I was afraid to go out into the yard. We had to get the water in the yard, but I was afraid of them. That was a private house, but it is not there anymore.

*Nancy Coburn (*1919), 29/08/2006*

We lived in a tenement in Macken Street. [...] My dad had a few horses and the cabs and the carts. There were seven rooms in the house where I lived in, and there was a big yard as well attached to it. There was me and my father and my mother and my brothers. There were seven of us. No sisters. My mother adopted a girl, so she had someone to look after here when she was old. Today you would never know that there were houses in Macken Street, it's mostly flats there now. So my dad had horses and everyone used to come in and have a look at the horses, and my mother used to give them, the people who were sick, the new laid eggs, to anyone that wasn't well. We had chickens in the yard too. She'd keep the eggs especially for the people not well. They were grand people in them days, they are still grand people now, but they were more helpful to one another.

Tommy McDonald (1916-2005), 26/09/2002

At the end of our laneway there was a pig yard. When you finished your dinner up at one o'clock, the slop went to the pigs in the city farm

yard. And next to the pigs were cows, where you could go in and buy the loose milk. So it was very much urban rural stuff, which was a great mixture. [...]

Residents of the area owned the cattle. Kennedys were the milk people. They had the cows, milked them and sold the milk. But they had a farm yard somewhere outside the city. The Martins had the pigs. They were butchers as well. I don't know whether the pigs were for killing or whether the fact that they had pigs made them become butchers. I don't know which came first. But it was a very common thing all around Dublin at that time. And to see the horses and carts going around collecting the slop for the pigs. We had another one in Railway Terrace, where another Kennedy family had pigs. So one lad used to go around in a horse and cart collecting the slops. So it was a very common thing in the city.

*Betty Ashe (*1941), 15/03/2007*

Poverty

Wide-spread poverty, particularly in comparison to today's material standards, is another fundamental topic. Most interviewees referred in their descriptions to the 1930s through to the 1950s, but some are dated as late as the 1970s. Casual jobs only provided irregular income, and often enough some of it (or all) was spent on the day in the pub. Employees in factories had a steady income, but even that was often just about enough to get by and guarantee survival. Second-hand clothes and small, often hand-made gifts at Christmas and other special occasions were the norm. In comparison to those conditions today's lifestyle gives the impression of affluence.

The changes in housing conditions, which will be dealt with in a later section, and better health care are issues that are seen in a very positive light.

Poverty was also – at least partially – responsible for the closeness of the community. A sense of community was essential for survival. Resources were often shared and exchanged. Thus poverty was both the result and the cause of an economic system that was based on “urban subsistence” – a concept which will be looked at later in this section.



105 *Barry's Yard, Townsend Street, ca. early 1900s (The Darkest Dublin Collection/ Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland).*

General poverty

We have gone from when everybody had nothing to where everybody has everything. They were living from different things, the pawn office was a big thing. And that lasted a long time. People were buying a suit for their kid, putting it into the pawn the next day. Most people did that. That happened all over the place.

It certainly happened where I lived. My mother had an old-fashioned mangle. Big long thing, and she was the only one in the flats that had one. And from Saturday morning to Sunday night, someone was using that. Not just her, also neighbours. It was to wring the wet clothes out and then you would hang them on the line to dry. And then

they would bring the mangle to the pawn office first thing on Monday morning. And that went on every weekend.

*Peter Montgomery (*1938) and Tony Dalton (*1937), 19/09/2006*



86 *Magennis Court off Townend Street in 1913 (The Darkest Dublin Collection/ Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland).*

People always want more for their children than they had themselves. And sometimes they tend to go overboard. If someone next door has Nike runners and you can't afford Nike runners that is what drives people out to work so much. Some people spend ridiculous money on runners. Years ago we only had one pair out of Dunnes, but everybody had the same.

People were different years ago, because people hadn't got the money. Some people had, where the dad had a job. The others were

very poor. Today they have everything more, and some even want more. I don't know whether that is good or bad, I think it is good that they have more and there is more for the children. I mean when I was 14 I had to leave school and go to work. So had we all. None of us got educated because there wasn't the money for it. Today there are more opportunities for children. They can even get their Master's. [...]

Children today should be taught how people had to live years ago. Some people had nothing on their floors, only bare boards. And you had to scrub them, but you could eat your dinner off them, they were like milk. The kids should know more about that because some kids today think that they just have to ask for the stuff and they get it. Years ago we were happy about whatever we got for Christmas. Now they are getting bikes and everything. Computers and all. Years ago there was no such thing. You got a few pennies, and an apple and an orange in your stockings and a toy, and you would be happy with that. Today they are getting loads of stuff. Some of them are really spoilt now. They get everything, they just have to ask. [...] That's how some of them go out and do what they are doing, get on drugs and all that. They have too much, some of them have too much. But in general it has changed for the better for children today. They have everything.

*Stephanie Cannon (*1936), 04/09/2006*

There is a big difference now in the cost of living. People say it was grand then, but it wasn't. If you hadn't the income coming in, you were poor. Even if people were working, you were poor. It was much harder then than today. And people had pride, they wouldn't ask for charity.

*Lily Byrne (*1922), 28/08/2006*

It was a hard and poor life in the past. Very often people talk about the "good old days". They weren't that good. The wages were low. They shouldn't be glamorising it, people that are going to write about it. It

was a shared poverty. They were poor and they bought what they could and made their pennies stretch. So I think it is also important the whole side of the real poverty that was there. The early mortality rates, the bad hygiene, the way society split into the haves and the have-nots. In Dublin, in this area for example, you would have had very poor people living all the way down here to City Quay, and down on to Sir John Rogerson's Quay, and maybe for a few streets up. They would have been very poor, full of slums, tenement houses, maybe 15 families living in them and ten people in each family. And then all of a sudden you get as far here as Grand Canal St or Hogan Place and the whole thing changed, where you could have one huge tenement house like in Merrion Square with one family living in it. And the amount of money that one man in Merrion Square would pay for one suit would be one man's year's wages in City Quay 200 metres away. So things like that, the differences have changed. And people are not poor anymore.

*Noel Watson (*1965), 05/08/2003*

My early days were in Merrion St, until I was about six or seven years of age. Then that house was being sold. We all rented at the time. It wasn't a tenement. The house is 5 Merrion St today. There were two families living in that five storey house. And a shop underneath. The house was being sold and we were relocated by the owners to a house here in Pearse Street. Again it was rented accommodation. My father was offered the house to buy, and there was no great interest at the time in owning a house, because that meant maintaining it. My father had a good job, he was a butcher. So we were never short of meat. My mother was very good at knitting and sewing, so I had a very good life. I had one older brother, he is in England now, myself and two sisters after that and a younger brother. So there were five of us. My father always worked. I didn't really know poverty in the real sense, but I have seen poverty. I have seen people who wouldn't have had shoes, who would have worn Wellingtons in the summer, because they didn't have shoes.

I have seen kids running to this school here in their bare feet. I have seen poverty, but it didn't touch us really. We would have been viewed as having a good life.



107 Asylum Yard/Marks Court, Towsnend Street in 1913s (The Darkest Dublin Collection/ Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland).

My father was kind of an entrepreneur as a butcher. He would use the barter system. He would swop sausages and rashers for fruit or whatever. With friends and mates. He worked in Summerhill and later in Drimnagh. They would meet up and play cards in each other's houses. And he would bring home all the fat from the meats and he would make dripping and then he would sell the dripping. And I used to deliver the dripping on a Saturday night for a shilling. He had his regular customers. It was safe to wander around the streets then. [...] And my father brought home flower bags for sheets, so there was

always something coming in. Some kind of recycling going on. I don't know where he got them from. But an older cousin of mine told us that my father was the first person to dissect chicken and sell chicken portions. We have nothing to prove this. My father also held some license for meat and he sold it to the meat company or something – but again, since he is dead 42 years you have no way of proving this. His brother is dead too, so these stories get lost. [...]

It was quite a comfortable life. But the house itself didn't have a bathroom. It was a nightmare to get washed in the morning with cold water. We did have indoor running water, but it was cold. [...]

When I hear other people talking about sharing stuff, I didn't have that sense, because we didn't need people to share with us. [...] My mother would be the one who was generous. She would be the one who would make hats for people going to weddings. She would be altering stuff, knitting. A lot of the women knitted then anyway. She was very good with the needle as I am and my younger sister is. Then we had neighbours who would borrow a half crown on a Saturday and give it back on a Thursday, borrow it back on the Saturday. So I didn't have any experience of people sharing with us, but we would be generous to them. [...] I never had the sense that we needed people to do things for us. My mother also used to get the man of that family to do stuff for us and she would give him a few bob for that as well. So I suppose in a way that was how it was returned, because he would do a bit of work.

*Betty Ashe (*1941), 15/03/2007*

We didn't have a lot of money, but when I was born my brother was 16 and earning money. My parents lived in my grandparents' house when they got married. When my grandmother died, there was only my granddad. But he had his own room in the house and we shared the other one, one room for ten people. That was in Clarence Place. Then we had the kitchen downstairs and the parlour, as they called it.



And you didn't touch the parlour, because it was kind of a shrine to all the old furniture. When my grandfather died, we took over the whole house. In those days the kitchen was really used, it was really homely, you had chairs around the fire and all that.



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Magennis Court in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).

I had a very happy childhood. I played a lot on the streets. I played beds and skipping and chainies, and the boys played football on the streets. I had five brothers, so I played football with them as well. On the one hand one could consider us lucky, but on the other we had no bathroom, but then of course we didn't know any different. The toilet was in the back yard, and it was painted nice and it had light, which a lot of the other houses didn't. So it was nicer than many others. My dad had a little garden in the back, so we had a few flowers. But across the street there were tenements and they lived in very cramped conditions and then you had substandard housing as well, really really bad. It was hard to imagine how you could live in it. But they did. People lived in it. I did Irish dancing as a kid, and went to piano lessons, so I was privileged, even though we weren't rich by any means. We were very poor. Pawn offices were all around and people used them constantly. There was a turf depot down the street. My brother used to collect turf there for the old folks. And they would give him a couple of pence for collecting for them. The old people had a docket from the government, so they didn't have to pay for it.

The people did work together well, because they had to. Three of my brothers went to England to work in the 1950s. Then there were only five of us left. My father was a white collar worker, which was quite unusual. He was a man ahead of his time in the sense that he – he left school at 13, went to several jobs, jeweller, post telegraphs, technician, then he got to UCD¹⁴. And he became a draughtsman. And he worked until he was 72 years of age. They had to replace him with two people then. He also was in the old IRA in 1921. He was unusual in that everybody else was walking around with black faces from the coal dust, and my father always asked us to check our nails, our shoes had to be spotless. So I was very lucky. But I didn't feel different to any of the others. I went to the same school and all. Even though he had a great

job, the money wasn't great. The money was probably better on the docks and in the coal yards. But it was a regular income. My mother would have done what everybody else did to get by. Because I was the youngest, I probably didn't see a lot of the struggle. [...] My older sisters and brothers would probably describe it differently. [...] I had a very happy childhood.

*Dolores Wilson (*1948), 13/03/2007*

Urban Subsistence

Casual employment and a cultural knowledge of resources to secure daily survival were an integral part of port areas all over the world until the introduction of containerisation and mechanisation ended this labour-intensive economy. Casual income and low wages made it very difficult to save money, so the local pawn shops and money lenders were an indispensable neighbourhood feature. Apart from the factories, most of the dock workers changed their work place every day depending on which ship they were hired for on the day. The manual jobs did not need a long formal education but were learnt directly on the docks. "Learning by doing" was the motto. Personal flexibility to use multiple sources of income and the willingness to accept any possible job - be it dirty or dangerous or short-notice - were as important as personal networks, family ties and often enough favouritism or bribery. The infamous matchbox has become a well-known symbol for this. It was commonly used to hand over some money to the stevedore in the pub after a day's work in order to make sure that he would pick one again at the next so-called "read". The stevedores were employed by shipping

14 University College Dublin.

companies, and they were in charge of choosing men to load or unload a ship. One of these “reads” took place at eight o’clock in the morning near to where the East Link Bridge is today, but there often were several reads during the day at different locations.

The dockside with its numerous ships bringing in cargo from all over the world was an ideal place to get things that were hard to come by in other parts of the city. While some goods, such as loose fruit, were distributed freely from the ships every now and again, others were spilled “accidentally on purpose”, so people could pick it up for their own use. Coal is a good example. Many people remember the tubs that spilled coal or the lorry driver who went around the corner too fast so coal fell off the back. Pilfering was also very common, but usually not considered a serious crime. “Goods were fecked, not stolen” was the usual description.

No source of goods remained unused regardless of the legality. That was also true for derelict houses and industrial sites, where timber was taken. This was not without danger, and accidents where people were injured or even killed by collapsing walls were regular occurrences.

Working conditions in general were very poor and often dangerous. Stories of fatal accidents on the docks, health problems and the lack of safety are common, and these stories counterbalance the nostalgia often connected to these memories. In any case, people often had no choice but were happy enough to find employment.

All these features are prototypical for an economic strategy that can be called a form of “urban subsistence”.¹⁵ Poverty and subsequent dependence on networks and neighbours, however, also had a positive side in that they strengthened the sense of community. Knowing that they would get help back when they needed it, people often supported each other, shared if they had been lucky to get more tea or whatever from one of the ships than they needed themselves. Despite this nostalgia, people are generally happy about the modern circumstances with their material wealth, regular income, job opportunities and safety, where the pawn shop has become a rare institution and lost its meaning for everyday life.

There was a pawn shop in Mount St. People used to bring their stuff up there. I can tell you a few yarns about that. There was this woman who used to have a shoe box and brought it into the pawn all the time. And the man knew her. And this time she put a brick in it instead of a pair of shoes. But he never opened the box, and she got the money anyway. She collected it again though. Years ago the men always used to be dressed up on a Sunday and on the Monday their suits would be back in the pawn. Because people were poor then. We never went to the pawn,

15 This concept was developed during the social anthropological research project „European Port Cities: Disadvantaged Urban Areas in Transition”, funded by the EU between 2002 and 2005 and coordinated by the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology at Hamburg University. Apart from traditional dock neighbourhoods it can also be applied to street vendors, homeless people and other groups who depend on similar multiple strategies in an insecure urban environment. (See also Ethnoscripts 8/1).

because my daddy had a job. Some men didn't have a job. [...] Some men went to work and they used to bring the key for the wardrobe with them, and sometimes the women took the back of the wardrobe off to take the suit to the pawn. They did awful things then. Some women used to bring china cabinets and all to the pawn. People were very poor then.

*Stephanie Cannon (*1936), 06/09/2006*



110 *Lady Aberdeen Pawn Shop on Townsend Street, ca. 1900 (Larry O'Connor Collection/ St Andrew's Resource Centre).*



111 *Today, in 2009, the site is home to the Ulster Bank (Astrid Wonneberger).*

There was a woman standing outside the gas company and she was a money lender. And all the lads going into work could borrow money from her. [...] But there were also money lenders who would have their heavies outside, if they knew that your husband worked in the gas company of the Hammond Lane across the way. They would say to you, your wife owes me such and such amount of money and I will give you a day or two. The husband would go home and bash up his wife. So the wife cleared out to avoid being bashed and every day on the radio at one o'clock the news came on, and there were many calls then looking for missing people, particularly young wives.

Some of the money lenders took the children's allowance. Some of the shopkeepers gave credit, but they would take the children's allowance book. And when that person came in on children's allowance day, the shop keeper would go with them to the post office and when they got their money, they would have to pay the shop keeper whatever they owed him. [...]

There was a police fund somewhere in Pearse Street and sometimes a boy would disappear from school to take him there and get new clothes for him. The free boots were stamped so they couldn't be taken in the pawn. If you didn't collect the free boots you could also go and buy an ordinary pair and only pay the difference then. And my mother in law would get the ordinary ones because they didn't have the stamp and she could give it to the pawn.

*Tony Dalton (*1937) and Chris Sands (*1937), 19/09/2006*

Life is much better today. There is nobody short around here now. You don't have to go around to get a lend of a meal in the middle of the week off somebody who got their pension earlier than you. You don't have to pawn your suit which used to happen often in the past. They'd pawn the suit on a Monday morning and they'd get it out on a Saturday night. And the only reason you'd take it out was if you had a girl friend. I used to know a woman who used to tie up a bag of rags. Absolutely no use to anybody. And she'd send you to the pawn shop and you'd say, Paddy, that is for Maggie, and he'd give you the half crown. Once they knew that you would return it, they'd give you the money. There were a lot of pawn shops in this area. There was one in Townsend St, one on Erne St, one in Mount St. And there were two penny dinners. One beside Holles St hospital. That's still there. And one beside the baths. [...] The quality of the food has also improved immensely.

*Bart Nolan (*1929) and Chris Sands (*1937), 29/08/2006*

The shopkeepers in the 1950s would always sell small amounts of things, one egg, not a dozen. At the end of the week you would pay your bill, because when the dad got paid, he gave the money to the ma and she paid the bills. If she didn't she was in trouble, because she wouldn't get credit anymore. Everything was ad hoc. You paid as you earned it. [...] And you got credit. It was tough on the women, she didn't get holidays. And they lived in tenements. But I liked that life, because even though everyone was poor and nobody had money, they all shared what they had. There was no such things as nowadays, where you shut your door because it doesn't concern you. In my times you were playing cards on the streets. There was no money anywhere. We used to talk around the table. We had conversation. Today families don't talk anymore, they only watch TV.

*Gerry Browne (*1934), 18/09/2006*

I lived in Marks Lane, right behind Marks Church. [...] There were two friends of mine, Dolores Murphy and Mary Ashe. And the three of us used to go over to this house that was empty. People were taking it apart to get wood for the fire because they didn't have money to buy it. And this day we were over there playing mothers and I decided to go over to our own house to get a little bread and jam. That's what you went in to get. And as I had gone over there was a woman there and she pulled the rafters down. And didn't the whole place fall down! The woman hurt her leg, she had a limp for the rest of her life. But the two toddlers she had with her, they were killed. I was probably just lucky, because I had come out to get the bread. [...]

I know there was a family living two doors from us and they used to go down to the dumps to pick the cinders and bring them home for the fire. There was people who went to the docks alright, and when the coal boats came in and the coal fell off the big tippers or tubs, they picked it up. My brothers were dockers and my sons tied the ships up there and my husband used to tie the ships up. And when the tubs came

out of the boats there used to be people there and pick up the coal that had fallen off.

*May Byrne (*1930), 04/09/2006*



A friend of ours got killed when she fell off the back of the lorry. The lorry was coming from the gas company full of coal. And she climbed on top of it to throw the coal off and she fell off the back of the lorry and got killed.

*Carmel O'Reilly (*1921), 04/09/2006*



112/113 The beginning of Pearse Street at MacMahon Bridge in the 1980s (Richie Kelly) and 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).

There were lots of activities along the river. And you had all kinds of people walking around there. There were a lot of factories and firms, and men had to walk to their work. [...] Often you saw men running and jumping on the back of a wagon when it had to stop in traffic. Scutting as they used to call it, to get a lift. And many times a young fellow would be knocked down. It was dangerous. [...] They would jump up on a wagon and pull something and throw it off a wagon and jump down, and the man driving the car would notice it. That's where the phrase "fell off the back of a wagon" comes from.

*Lily Byrne (*1922), 28/08/2006*

A lot of things that would be considered insignificant today were big things in our times. The first banana boats for instance, the first shipments of oranges. And they had to come to the weigh house. And the fellow would climb the sides and be throwing down bananas. And when they were unloading the ships, coal would be spilled accidentally but deliberately so the older people could go and pick them up. And that was the same with the bananas. They had to go to a weigh house. There was a corporation weigh house. The lorry had to arrive. They weighed the lorry, then they weighed everything and took away the weight of the lorry.

*Chris Sands (*1937), 05/09/2006*

There was a lot of bribery on the docks. It wouldn't be nice to talk about it and I wouldn't give you names, but yes there was a lot of bribery. [...] You were always open to pressure. [...]

Families of stevedores would employ their families first, brothers, cousins. I knew a family here who did that. And if you played for Pearse Rangers, you got a job. Stevedores would pick the same 30 men every time, because they were either related or drinking companions. If they didn't drink with the stevedore and didn't buy him a drink at night time, or if they were non-drinkers they got a matchbox and put a ten shilling note in it, which was maybe a quarter of a day's work, otherwise the stevedore wouldn't employ them the next day. They didn't get work. One of the first things Jim Larkin wanted to get rid of was that people got paid in pubs. He was anti-drink as well. [...] So there was a lot of bribery. And people knew there was bribery going on. And it is all finished now, because it has all changed now.

There was widespread bribery on the docks in the past. But it was mostly to get a bit of work.

*Peter Montgomery (*1938), Chris Sands (*1937) and Tony Dalton (*1937), 19/09/2006*

Of course there was a lot of pilferage going on on the docks. In those days you put bags into a ship, today it is all containers [...] and you can't rob at all. [...]

Hector Grey's boats with all the knick-knacks, they were robbed left, right and centre. There was only a day's work in those days, because it was only a small boat. There could be three day's work on other boats, which were bigger, but this fellow would rather take a day's work on Hector Grey's boat because of the amount of stuff he could rob off that boat. [...]

My father worked on the docks. My mother made him big pockets on the inside of his clothes for the tea. When a banana boat came in, my father would go out to the docks maybe eight stones, he would come back maybe 14 stones. The bananas weren't ripe when he brought them home, but he would bring them home and put them in a wardrobe. And we would ask him every day, are they ripe yet? [...]

Whatever people got caught with, they got away with it. They were suspended for about two weeks, but that was it. There was a lad in charge of it at the time, a great lad, Liam, he tolerated the dockers all the time. In one instance, a man came up to him that he needed money for his wife, and he would spin a story. Liam would be sitting there and listen and then he would say to Slim, this is the third time that this man came in to me with the story of his wife being sick! And Liam knew all this, but he was such a generous man, he would always give someone money. And the money was only used for drink, that's what it was. [...]

There are stories about seamen and maybe the dockers who would take their share of the Guinness barrels. In other words, they would accidentally break the wooden cask. [...] They broke the casks accidentally on purpose. They were deliberate accidents. Then they would drink it on the spot. They would see it as their share. [...]

The meat companies would send over their meat for export, and anybody who was at the ship got their meat. Everyone got their meat.

Even the people who lived there went down and got their share. They'd take it and go back to their business. There was never a word said.

*John Murray (*1937), Peter Montgomery (*1938), Chris Sands (*1937), 19/09/2006*

I remember my mother used to send me around to the neighbours with little bags of raisins, currants, nuts, whatever, coming up to Christmas, because – now it wasn't always legal, because I had brothers who worked on the docks. And they had managed to get some produce. It wasn't robbed, better fecked. Fecked wasn't really robbing. It was managing to get it, you know. They wouldn't have robbed a local shop keeper. They would have robbed a company. It was part of working on the docks. Some of the men working on the docks had lining put into their coats, so that loose tea could fit in. They would have big pockets stitched up. When my mother would get it, she would put it in little bags and she would send me to go to Mrs So-and-so and give it to Mrs so-and-so, because we had it and we had more than enough, so someone else was going to get it too.

*Chris Sands (*1937), 29/08/2006*

We never had to buy coal. I remember my mother crying when we went to live out in Crumlin, having to buy coal for the first time in her life. Because we always got coal and brought it home. But when she moved out there she had to buy coal. So she was crying because she was upset.

On the ships there is the tub. When that was lifted from the hold of the ship to be put on a lorry, there was a man on the ship. He was called the singer out. It was usually an old man or someone with an injury. It was a charitable job. But when they were bringing this over, accidents would happen and some of the coal would be tilted over. They were deliberate accidents if you like, because then the older people would come along with a bag, and they would pick up the coal.

And the lorry man would be a local, and he would go around the corner fast, and the top of the coal would fall off. They would do it for all the old ones. In later years I used to get a bucket of coal at the gas company boats, and I would come up and I would tip the coal at different places so they would all come around and pick it up. I shouldn't have done it. I could have been sacked, but... It was a necessity, it was hunger.

*Bart Nolan (*1929) and Chris Sands (*1937), 29/08/2006*

We got coal on the quays too. And in the gas company, we went over there to get a bag of coke. We lived on a corner on the quays, and the lorry used to go around the corner there to go to Sheridan's coal yard. And as it was going around the corner, the coal fell off the lorry, and we would all stand in the hall waiting for it to go and then we would collect it with our little bags.

Then there were the ice stalls and the banana stalls. You were never short of a banana. We got them from the stalls, because we knew all the men. But we also got them off the ships. We would be there when the ships arrived and they would be throwing bananas. We would fill up the pram with bananas. Most of them were green, we would have to let them ripe. We didn't have to pay for them, they would throw them to us. Or we took when they weren't looking. We didn't steal them now.

I remember one man, the minute he'd see me, he came over and threw bananas at me, when he saw the children in the pram. They would be loose bananas, that had fallen off the bunch. The workers on the boats were very kind.

*Eileen Brennan (*1924) and Nancy Coburn (*1919), 24/08/2006*

Health

Another change that is viewed very positively is the general improvement in health. Poor sanitary facilities, overcrowded living conditions, malnutrition, rats and poor medical care provided fertile soil for diseases such as TB. The bad working conditions, where men breathed coal dust every day on the boats or fumes and gas in the factories did further damage to the people's health. Even though today's public health system is far from perfect – as the last section in this book will illustrate – people are generally grateful for the improvements.

I walk around these streets an awful lot and I see tremendous changes. Some for the better and some for the worse. For the better are things that are done for health reasons. Sanitation and health is much better now than it was years ago. The children of our days were really poor. And the children today are well clothed and well fed.

*Paddy Pearse (*1935), 12/09/2006*

The worst thing about the gas company was the bad working conditions. The workers should have been sent to the doctors, because they suffered. It was very unhealthy, the fumes and all that. I think at some stage they put up a warning that working here is a danger to health. I think the bottle house was the same, with all the heat.

*Peter Montgomery (*1938), 19/09/2006*

There were three Gasometers in the South Lotts area and the big one on Sir John Rogerson's Quay. The ones where we lived in South Lotts were built earlier, in the 19th century. And they floated on water, the

pressure of the gas kept them up. So they had no bottom, and the gas used to seep into the water, and the smell sometimes got really bad, because there were leaks and the smell of gas was horrendous. It couldn't be good for anybody's health. I have got asthma; it could be caused by it, because this area in Dublin was the only really industrial area in the whole city, except for a few other places like where Guinness brewery is. Ireland was never an industrial country. Except for Belfast and some industries in Cork, this was the only area that had heavy industry, iron foundries, gas works, flour mills, that sort of stuff. This has all disappeared now. None of it is left, nothing. The port itself. It used to go up here. All both sides of the quays was the port, and the basin as well. Not a lot of traffic used to be in there, but they used it for coal boats. [...] It was like that since I was a kid, because I lived here since I was about five, and there was a lot of heavy industry, and I remember the noise and the factories. No one in their right mind would buy a house down here unless you had to. It was not like it is now. It was an industrial area.

*Billy Ryan (*1954), 18/08/2004*

Happy Days

Despite the poverty of the time, dangerous working conditions and poor housing, many interviewees mention a general feeling of nostalgic contentedness. Everyone was – more or less – equal in their poverty and hardship was a way of life. Nobody had it much better than anyone else. Therefore nobody felt deprived. With little material wealth available, people, particularly children, were happy with the little things they got. Older interviewees have expressed the difficulties today in buying for their grandchildren.

People are also grateful for economic benefits they experience today. A secure income, good pensions, technological achievements make daily life so much more comfortable and are generally appreciated. Women particularly talk enthusiastically about the opportunities and freedoms they have today. In the past, they had very limited choices. Marriage usually meant leaving the factory job, as they were expected to look after their families instead. In that sense, in spite of all the good memories, no interviewee would particularly like to go back to the “good old days”.

They were lovely times compared to now. I remember one time I wrote a letter to Santa Claus. And I put it into the stocking in the fire place for Santa coming down the chimney. That’s how innocent we were. And my mother had no money. She was hoping to get a little bit of dinner together for Christmas. That was the tradition to write your wish on a paper and put it in the chimney, so he would get it when he came down. And I had asked Santa Claus to bring me a doll and pram. My mother had seen me but she never said a word. I really thought that I was having a doll and pram on Christmas morning, but I didn’t. And that happened with lots of people. [...] They were still lovely times. We hadn’t got much but we were all happy and jolly. There were no arguments, no rowdiness. Nothing like what is going on today. The

children today have too much really. We were very innocent but we got by and we are still here. The children today have too much and they don’t know what it is to want. [...]

114 *Child playing in the derelict Gas Company site (ca. 1980s) (St Andrew’s Archive).*



Today times are generally good. My concern is with young people today, I find that they have such a good time before they get married and settle down that when the time comes to get married and get a mortgage and everything else, they have to give up a lot of their freedom and their good days. And that causes a lot of friction. [...]

I used to buy my vegetables and meat in Moore St because it was cheap. I had eight children. I had five before I had a washing machine. [...] My grandchildren have their washing machine and their dish washer and their microwave, things they think they can't do without. My microwave is an ornament really. [...] Things like that are good, especially for couples who are out working. Because when I got married I worked in Jacob's. And when you got married, the women had to leave. So you were home all the time really. [...]

Times are good today. And the pension is good.

*May Byrne (*1930), 04/09/2006*

One time at Christmas my mother went up to the shop and I thought she wouldn't be back in time, that Santa had been there. And I was after getting a long black stocking for Christmas Day and I thought she wouldn't be back in time. So I got a scissors and cut a hole in the top and hung it up on the knob of the bed, and one for my brother. There were seven of us at the time. And when she came back she was nearly going to kill me because I was after cutting the new stockings that were for Christmas Day. [...]

They are good memories of the past, [...] but I personally must say I am not bad off today either. 199 euros a week I have to live on, but I have no rent, I own the house. My family are good and they help and do shopping. In that way I am lucky. They come to visit and I am never lonely. I have an electric chair to go up to the bathroom. I had a stroke and I have an invalid pass. So personally I am not bad off. I have no worries. I am very lucky with my family. [...] One boy lives beside me three doors up and one girl lives in Dundrum. She works in Leinster

House and parks her car around the corner from my house. So I see her every day.

*Carmel O'Reilly (*1921), 04/09/2006, 06/09/2006*

I suppose we are all a lot better off today. Financially, living conditions, we all have bathrooms and running hot water, central heating, which we didn't have in the old days. So life has moved along for the better. I suppose progress does change an area in a sense that something is lost, but you gain an awful lot. So you have to balance what you have lost to what you have gained.

*Betty Ashe (*1941), 15/03/2007*

Housing

Poverty found its most visible expression in poor housing conditions, particularly tenement life, a characteristic not only for the docklands but for the entire inner city of Dublin until the 1960s, which has been documented in detail before.¹⁶ Cramped conditions with more than ten people sharing one room, rats, animals and the occasional homeless person sleeping in the halls, no electricity, no running water and toilets in the back yard characterised the daily life. Due to the lack of bathrooms and washing facilities, public baths and washhouses, like those in Tara Street, were important features and also served as social meeting points.

Realising the dreadful conditions in tenements, which were becoming increasingly dangerous due to the bad condition of the buildings, Dublin Corporation started their public housing schemes in the 1930s to provide housing for the poor in the inner city and relieve the drastic housing situation. The Pearse Street area witnessed the erection of Markievicz House and Pearse House in the 1930s. Further blocks were built in the 1950s (Leo Fitzgerald) and 1960s (Macken Street Flats).

The new flats were luxurious at the time. Running water, in-door toilets and electricity were tremendous improvements in comparison to the tenements. However, living conditions remained very cramped. Due to high numbers of children, ten

people or more still lived in a two-bedroom flat. For this reason, some children were often sent to stay with their grandparents. And yet, foster children were also frequent. Rather than being sent to an orphanage, family members or neighbours would take children in, whose parents had died or could not rear them themselves for various reasons.

After three young girls died when a house collapsed in Fenian Street in the 1960s, Dublin Corporation began a large-scale demolition of the last tenements and dilapidated private houses and cottages in the inner city. However, while owners of houses were usually offered places in the new corporation complexes or new social houses in the area, not all residents who had been renting got a new home in the area. The majority were offered accommodation in the newly designed housing estates, such as Tallaght or Ballymun.

Many residents did not want to leave the area they had grown up in. There was a fear of leaving the close neighbourhood where their friends and relatives continued to live, and they tried everything to get a flat in the area. Squatting was frequent. If a flat was empty, someone moved in without official permission hoping the corporation would give them the flat legally later. Despite all these efforts and further intensified by growing unemployment due to the changes on the docks, the number of residents in the area fell from over 30,000 at its peak around 1940 to 5,000 in 1990.

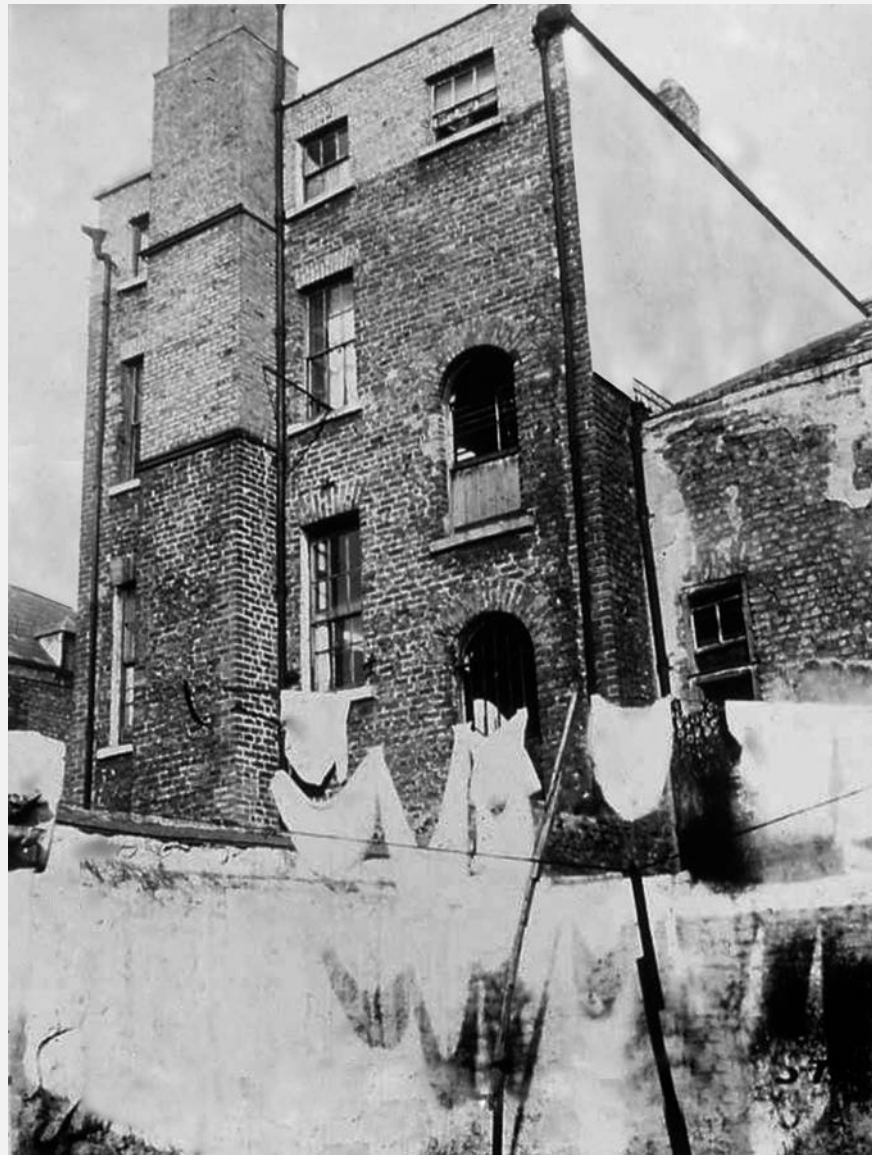
The latest phase in the housing development began in the late 1990s and brought further changes to the community. Triggered by the Celtic Tiger economy, house prices in Dublin

16 See particularly Kevin Kearns: „Dublin Tenement Life – An Oral History“ (1994).

have increased dramatically over the last 15 years. Although the need for housing in the area is still huge and thousands of new apartments are being built in the course of the regeneration of the docklands, many people still cannot afford to buy or rent accommodation in the south docklands, outside the social housing schemes. And that space is limited, even with the introduction of the 20% social and affordable housing scheme in the docklands in 1997.

For this reason, one of the most frequently mentioned criticisms about the current situation is that many people still have to move out of the area, even if they preferred to stay. However, this might slightly change in the near future when the first affordable housing schemes will be ready to be distributed.

Another criticised aspect are the gates in many new apartment complexes which make it impossible to walk in or deliver the local newspaper, so they do not resemble at all the old accommodation where neighbours visited each other regularly and children just knocked at their friend's door to play. The increasing numbers of new residents from outside the area are thus not just socially, but also physically separated from the established community. Integration and communication become very



difficult. However, realising this problem, many developers and the DDDA have shifted away from this policy and only few of the most recent complexes are gated, a trend that is very welcomed by both old and new residents in the area.

A general loss of the sense of neighbourhood and growing anonymity are new features that are deplored by all interviewees, and hopes for the future always include an undivided neighbourhood.

115 Tenements in the 1950s (rear of 135 Townsend Street) (St Andrew's Archive).

The tenement houses in Dublin's inner city housed many families, often having as many as ten children in one room, boys and girls, as well as their parents and as many as seven families in rooms throughout the old tenement, and if it was a bigger house it housed more families. The rent differed according to the size of the room. Some rooms would be two shillings, some a half crown, and the bigger ones three shillings. In those days that was dear enough, especially to the unemployed. In some cases, families who fell into arrears with the rent and couldn't pay up were evicted out onto the street. Their furniture for what it was worth was put out onto the path beside them by the bailiffs who were employed by the owner of the house. The children would be taken in by some neighbours while their parents would stay out on the street minding the furniture, even right through the night in hail, rain or snow.

In those days they had not started to build the corporation houses. They built the flats first and housed the people from the condemned tenements into them. In later years they started to build houses in areas outside the inner city. On the north side Cabra was the first housing scheme to be built, then came Crumlin, Drimnagh and Ballyfermot. These consisted of two and three bedroom houses, with kitchen, front parlour, back room, bath room and toilet and a front and back garden. As many old tenement houses were unfit to live in, the people were given the choice to move into one of the houses and according to the size of the family you got either a two or three bedroom house which was ideal especially for the families with boys and girls. Remember they all had to sleep in one room prior to this, so this was a palace to them, and to have running water in your own house was a great bonus to them.

As time moved on, families, neighbours, relatives and friends began moving out of the inner city to different locations breaking up the generations of old neighbours who had lived all their lives in the old tenement houses. To most of them it seemed they were moving out to the depth of the country, a complete reverse to their way of life in the

inner city. Now they had plenty of open spaces, green fields, no shops close to home, not as much traffic on the road and new neighbours.

At the beginning the schools had not been built and all school going children had to travel back to their old schools in the inner city by special busses called the Ha'penny Bus. This bus brought them to school at 9 in the morning and then took them home again when school finished at 3. The adults going to work or back into the city, as it was called, had to travel by bus paying the full fare of two pence. If you had a bicycle you would cycle into work and home again, the journey being about three miles or a little more in some cases, and this was in all kinds of weather. This was something most of them weren't used to, as in the inner city they only had to walk short distance to work or school from the old tenements where they lived.

This was a complete new way of life for the people who were used to streets full of shops and heavy traffic on the roads. The children used to play on the streets, down laneways or on the docks. Now they had the wide open spaces and fields, all foreign to what they were used to. After a year or so, many families moved back into their old neighbourhood. They just could not get used to the country way of life, as they put it, and in other cases they just could not afford it. The rent being seven shillings and sixpence for a two bedroom house and ten shillings for a three bedroom house plus the bus fare when they had to travel was far above their means as compared to when they lived in the inner city. But as time went by, most families began to settle down. Schools, shops and picture houses were now being built in all areas, and more people were moving out to these new housing schemes. Families were now growing up and becoming more prosperous, as the school leavers were now working and bringing more money into the household.

Eventually the housing schemes became bigger and bigger and many more families moved out from the inner city as the old tenements became in danger of collapsing and were being condemned by Dublin

Corporation Dangerous Building department. Over the years three of these old houses came tumbling down after a night of very heavy rain, in one case killing two young girls of school going age. The tenement house became a thing of the past and were now taken over by developers turning them into a heap of rubble, and building in their place modern office buildings, luxury apartments and shopping centres. [...] In the past Dublin was classified as a town. Now it is a thriving city. The day of the tenement has long since gone, but living in the past in Dublin was more neighbourly than living in the present.

And they are facts. That is me living that. I lived right through that whole story.

*Sonny Kinsella (*1935), 12/09/2006*

We lived in a tenement on Sir John Rogerson's Quay. [...] Myself and my younger brother couldn't go out on a Monday afternoon when we came home from school because that was my mother's wash day. She was in the kitchen with the big tub and her washing. We had to stay there and when she emptied the water into the buckets we had to carry it down to the yard. It was hard, but it was also a happier life. We never complained. There was only one toilet in the yard for five families. And no toilet paper, we used to tear sheets of paper.

The women were always giving out about it, especially the ones upstairs, that they had to come down such a long way. At some stage, the women of the tenements all got together and complained to the landlord and said they weren't paying any more rent until he would put a sink half the way up the house, so that the people from the top of the house had only to come down two flights of stairs instead of five. I think they had a party in the yard that night when the new sink was put in. It was fantastic.

*Eileen Brennan (*1924), 29/08/2006*

We were all living in tenement houses. [...] There was no electricity. Accommodation was awful. [...] There were nine of us in one room in the tenement. And my father was ten, but he died of TB. There was a lot of TB in the area. People died very young, often at 48 or 50 they were old. You slept like the cowboys. You had a straw mattress and you rolled it up in the morning and you'd roll it out at night time. My two sisters would go over to my grandmother in Townsend St. And I went to sleep with an aunt and uncle two doors down. And most families were the same. That was common, it was almost fosterage. Especially with the big families. Very often the older children went over to other family members for sleeping at least, often for more. There were a lot of grannies who reared children in this neighbourhood. They had to stay with grannies because of living conditions. They were awful conditions, but we were kind of happy. We were innocent. It was family and it was community. [...]

We had no radio, because we had no electricity. And we couldn't afford one. But the woman next door, Mrs Dowling, used to have a battery radio. And she would put it on the window so that we could listen to the news in the next house to her. That was community. We had no electricity, but they were rich, they had electricity. [...]

We had electricity for the horse, but not in the house. We went around with the horse cart selling coal. I was working since I was nine. I used to go to the market before I went to school to collect fish. Wednesday and Friday you had to eat fish. We were all Catholics at the time. We needed the electricity in the stable to see in the morning if the horse had gone sick at night or anything. The horse was more important than I was, because the horse had to supply food for three families.

*Bart Nolan (*1929), 29/08/2006*



116 Dilapidated tenements in Fenian Street undergoing demolition in the early 1980s (St Andrew's Archive).

Jamie Chambers and Ned Chandler used to sleep in City Quay, under the bookies, and on the coke around the gas site. The rats were talking to you down there of course. Ned came from a wealthy family. I don't know what happened. He was a well educated man and his family had a house in Sandymount. [...] His ghost was said to walk around the gas site after he died. He also used to sleep in our hall. I used to throw a few old coats over him at night time. There were always people who slept in hallways, but they were usually known by the family who lived there. They might be a cousin or connected in some way, and they would allow them to sleep there. But the lighter man used to come around at night and lit up the hall to make sure that there was nobody sleeping in the hall. [...]

There was another fellow who used to bring his ass into the hall to sleep. He came into our house and they had to run him out because people would fall over the donkey. He had no home, but he used to work with his ass. And at night time when he had nowhere to go he would bring him into any tenement hall. All tenements were open all the time in those days, and he'd bring him in. And there was another who used to bring his ass into his living room in Moss St. He used to look out one window, the ass would be looking out the other.

Sonny Kinsella (*1935) and Bart Nolan (*1929), 12/09/2006



117 The new buildings which took their place (2009) (Astrid Wonneberger).



118 Tenements at the corner of Townsend Street and Mark Street (1920) (St Andrew's Archive).

Tedcastles, which later became the ESB central stores, had been Tedcastles Stables. When I was maybe six, I woke up on a Saturday morning to hear all sorts of activity going on, and above all it was the local teenagers, fifteen to twenty years old, chasing the rats. One of the advantages we had in Pearse House was that they were solid concrete buildings. So you didn't have infestation like in the tenements. I didn't see a rat until I was at least 12. Whereas other people grew up with them. But here when they decided to turn it into the ESB central store, they disturbed the rats who were living in that building which was derelict at this stage. But because they were now going to build on it, the rats came out. And the young lads were running around banging them. It was a game to them. [...]

It was quite common to chase rats. All tenements were full of rats. Our tenement was full of rats. We lived over a cellar. And that's where the rats lived.

I killed 36 rats in only one day in the dock mill. They had oats in bags, and when we pulled the bags the rats would run out. So we decided that we would make a corral. Everybody thinks that the rats go your throat, but they don't. When they come out they are blind, so they try to jump over you. When they'd run out, they'd hit the corral. Then they jump and you would get them with the shovel.



119 Today, the corner is home to Markievicz House (2009) (Astrid Wonneberger).

The worst place used to be Dwanes, the waste paper place. The girls had to bind the bottom parts of their legs so the rats wouldn't bite them. When they put the paper in a heap, they'd kick the paper. And if you disturb a nest, the rat will bite you. So they used to put paper around their legs.

*Bart Nolan (*1929), Chris Sands (*1937), Sonny Kinsella (*1935), 12/09/2006*



120 Toilet in the back yard (ca. 1950s) (St Andrew's Archive).

We lived in a small cottage house facing the railway, where Rostrevor [housing complex for senior citizens] is today. We weren't living in a tenement. We had three rooms in the cottage here. Some people had only one room. Six or seven of them in only one room. I had two brothers and a sister and my parents, so there were six of us. We had a kitchen, a parlour and a bedroom. [...] You had to go out to the back

yard to the toilet. It was a long yard, and the toilet was at the end of it. And you had to have an umbrella when it was raining. The water was in the yard too until it was brought in. My dad knew somebody to bring the electricity in, and the water, he knew a plumber too. That must have been in the 1940s. [...] You also had to bring the coal in from the yard. You had no central heating. You had to go to bed with a coat on you to keep you warm. [...]

My daddy was from Macken St, he was born and reared there. And one day he got the cottage there. When they got married they got it. It was only rented, not owned. Then we moved to Macken Street and bought the house there. That then came under Compulsory Purchase Order and we had to sell it then. That's how I got Hogan Place. They offered me Ringsend first, but I said no. I didn't want Ringsend and waited for Hogan Place to be finished. I was going to Ringsend in fact, but our house was not fixed up at the time, we hadn't got the money yet. So we had to wait until it was fixed up and we went to Hogan Place then. But I wouldn't have liked Ringsend, I would rather have Hogan Place.

*Stephanie Cannon (*1936), 28/08/2006, 04/09/2006, 06/09/2006*

Where I come from it was like a tiny little village. It was on Marks St, Marks Lane, right behind Marks Church. You went in through three stones. That's where I was born. There were two storey buildings and also cottages. And my mother had a shop where we lived. There were three brothers and myself and one sister. My father had died. We only had one bedroom. The boys would sleep under the window and we on the other end. And my mother used to sell coal. That would be all in one corner in the front of the living room.

People started then to move out when the flats were coming along. We also moved to Pearse House. And when we moved we thought we were living in luxury. Really. When we got the keys from the corporation and went to see the flat, I will always remember it, it

was beautiful. We had a bath in the kitchen, no bathroom, and our own indoor toilet. That was marvellous. And we had hot water. It was magic. [...] In the regards of the times, we hadn't got much. Nobody had much, but everybody helped one another. Where I lived they were nearly all dockers. And they were lucky if they got a job today. They used to get paid by the day. And my husband would be after getting a job, but if my neighbours husband came in and gave his wife money, she would come over and say, "here, I give you a lend". And that's the way the people were. Everyone was so neighbourly. There was really no danger or nothing. Where we lived in Pearse House we had the playground. And we had lovely times and we were never afraid to go to the park.

*May Byrne (*1930), 04/09/2006*



121 Hogan Place showing tenement houses in the mid-1950s (RTÉ Illustrations Library, St Andrew's Archive).



122 The same image of Hogan Place in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).

When the Corporation knocked down the tenements and put the people in flats, instead of keeping the same people in the new houses, they shifted them all over the place. The idea was that they wouldn't have a ghetto. When the house fell in Fenian St, they pulled down all the houses in Fenian St and York St. They split the people up so they wouldn't create a ghetto. That was in 1962 when the house collapsed. We lived in Pearse House since 1939. [...] I was two year old when we moved there. And we were there until ten years ago when my father died. He was the last to live there. When I got married in 1960, we got a room in York St. But when the houses fell in Fenian St, the corporation knocked down all the tenements. They took people to court to get

eviction orders to get them out! People didn't want to move! [...] Sometimes they only had seven days to pack and move out, but there weren't enough flats for them. So sometimes they had to put them into shelter first. They put the men into Griffin Barracks and the women into a shelter in Tara St.

*Tony Dalton (*1937), 19/09/2006*



123 Markievicz House in the 1970s (St Andrew's Archive).

When I was young there were eleven of us in the family. We had two bedrooms and a living room in Markievicz House. We moved there when I was five years old. Before that we lived in a tenement in Townsend St. My parents got a flat in Markievicz House, it was

absolutely great. It was a big improvement, because we had our own toilet, where we shared one toilet with seven other families before that. We had running water in the house and a hot and cold tap, and if you lit a fire you got hot water. It was great. But we only had one bedroom and there were nine children at the time, plus my parents. And two of my sisters had TB. That would have been rampant when we were kids. They would have been in hospital most of the time in their young life. So we got a bigger flat then, which was two bedrooms. So the boys would sleep in one bedroom and the girls in the other. And my parents were sleeping in the living room on a pull-down sofa. You didn't have space to do your homework and things like that. And therefore I used to take my book and go into the toilet to read it. And my older sister used to read in the toilet too. And they would all be banging on the door to get in. But there was nowhere else to go to read, because there were always people in the house.

We always sat down together for our dinner. That is one thing that has changed. I know that people have to work a lot for their mortgages and that, but in our days and when my kids were small, every day we sat around the table to have dinner, every evening. That was the one time the family came together. They don't come together that much now. In most families that doesn't happen anymore. So I think that is something we have lost as families. And whatever you lose in the family eventually reaches out to the broader community. [...]

When I married, I lived four and a half years with my mammy. And I had two children. I was looking for a house and went to see the local councillor who was TD¹⁷ at the time. And squatting was the usual at the time, if they saw a flat idle, they moved just into it. And usually the corporation would leave them in it and make them the tenant. My mother wouldn't let me do it, so I went to this councillor and told him I was looking for a flat. People were coming home from England and

17 Teachta Dála: Member of Parliament.

they were getting flats. So he said, if you said you were a returning emigrant, you would be housed too. But I said, I am not! I went home and was still on the list. I was so innocent that I didn't even understand that he asked me to tell a lie to be housed.



124 *The men's toilets on Pearse Street in the 1970s (St Andrew's Archive).*

In my mother's place there were seven children left living at home. Then there was Peter and I and two children. That was eleven. There were two families in the one flat. And he said, "if you had four children you would be housed tomorrow." But my mother said, "she wants to be housed now!" That's why people had lots of kids! The more kids you had the easier it was to get housed. And today you don't even have to be married. It is still very difficult for young married couples to get a flat. You are not considered like the single parents, and that is not okay.

There is not equality. The couple seems to have less chance, but it should be the other way round. When I was young and you were a single mother, you were frowned upon and had to move away. The shame was dreadful, and thanks be to God that has changed.



125 *The site is now home to Goldsmith Hall (TCD) (2009) (Astrid Wonneberger).*

When I was young there was no child benefit. My mother used to mind this young fellow, he was the same age as uncle Christie. She used to take him in so his mother could go and do a little bit of work. And she had nothing. She lived with her mother next door to us, and her mother was even hard to her. She used to treat her dreadful because she was a

single mother. I am glad that is gone. Another one on our balcony got pregnant and her mother put her into one of these homes. And the nuns treated them terribly, they had to scrub the floor on their knees. That was really disgraceful and not humane at all. So I am glad that is gone. [...]

Changes have made improvements. Housing is much better today. There is still a long way to go, because a lot of people can't afford homes, but it has come a long way since. So we have come a long way in the housing. Back in the 1950s and 60s, people were homeless then, because the tenements were all falling down, and there were too many living in the tenements to be housed at the rate they should have been housed. In that sense housing has improved a hundred percent.

*Betty Watson (*1942), 15/09/2006*

I slept with four brothers in the one bed. We had no hot water. Army blankets were thrown over us in the winter for heating. I have two sons at home today, one is 14, one is 26, they wouldn't dream of sharing their room. We had no option, we were overcrowded. The block I lived in, in Pearse House, they were all the same. The smallest family had about eight or nine children. There were some with 14 or 15. And that is no exaggeration. And they were all in two bedroom flats!

At the same time there were often orphans and strays who just became part of the families. If there was a child somewhere, somebody would take them in. My father's brother for instance lived down in Pigeon House Rd, in Ringsend. And the mother of a neighbour of his died and they had two girls. The father worked on the docks. So my aunt took them in and he would pick them up at night. But often he didn't come home until midnight, so it was too late to bring the kids home, so the girls stayed with her for a few days, that went to a few weeks. And everybody knew them by my uncles name rather than their own name, because they were so long living with that uncle of mine. I

certainly can't think of any orphans from this area who went to orphanages, because somehow they were wrapped up and taken into a family.

*Tony Dalton (*1937) and Chris Sands (*1937), 19/09/2006*

When I went to school I couldn't swim, but others could and were terrific swimmers. And I wondered why. Apart from the fact that I was probably more nervous than others, the most important reason was that most of my class mates lived in tenements. And it was easier to give them the money to go to the public baths at least once than to heat water on the fire at home. They had no other way of washing them. Whereas we had running water in the flat, so I didn't have to go to the baths.

If the dockers came out of a coal boat there, there was only cold water to wash. Big coal boats came here after the war and you would be working on it for ten days with shovels. I knew a guy who when he started this ten day job, he put on a pyjama and he'd put it up to his neck and tie the bottom of his trousers. And he wouldn't wash himself till he had finished that ten day job.

We had to go to the baths and bring our dirty clothes with us. And the fellow there would be complaining about the dirt. We also had to be checked for scabies. And our mothers would go to the wash house underneath it. And they washed all the coal gear and cement gear. You wouldn't know what you were going to work at. Timber or coal or whatever.

There was a swimming pool and along the wall there were bath tubs. If you paid for a bath you could go for a swim as well. But they wouldn't let you into the water if you hadn't had a bath. Beside that was a wash house and the women brought dirty clothes in their prams to wash them there. They would wash for themselves and then they would wash for their neighbours too. If women couldn't go, because

they had babies, the older women would wash for them. And they never got paid for them. [...]

The old baths were knocked down, they were public. The new one is privately owned.

*Chris Sands (*1937) and Bart Nolan (*1929), 29/08/2006*



126 The old Turkish Baths on Lincoln Place ca 1970 during demolition of the dome (Office of Public Works).

One of the biggest changes since I grew up is that people that I grew up with are moving out of the area, because they can't afford a house here. They moved down to Navan, Drogheda. [...] They have moved out

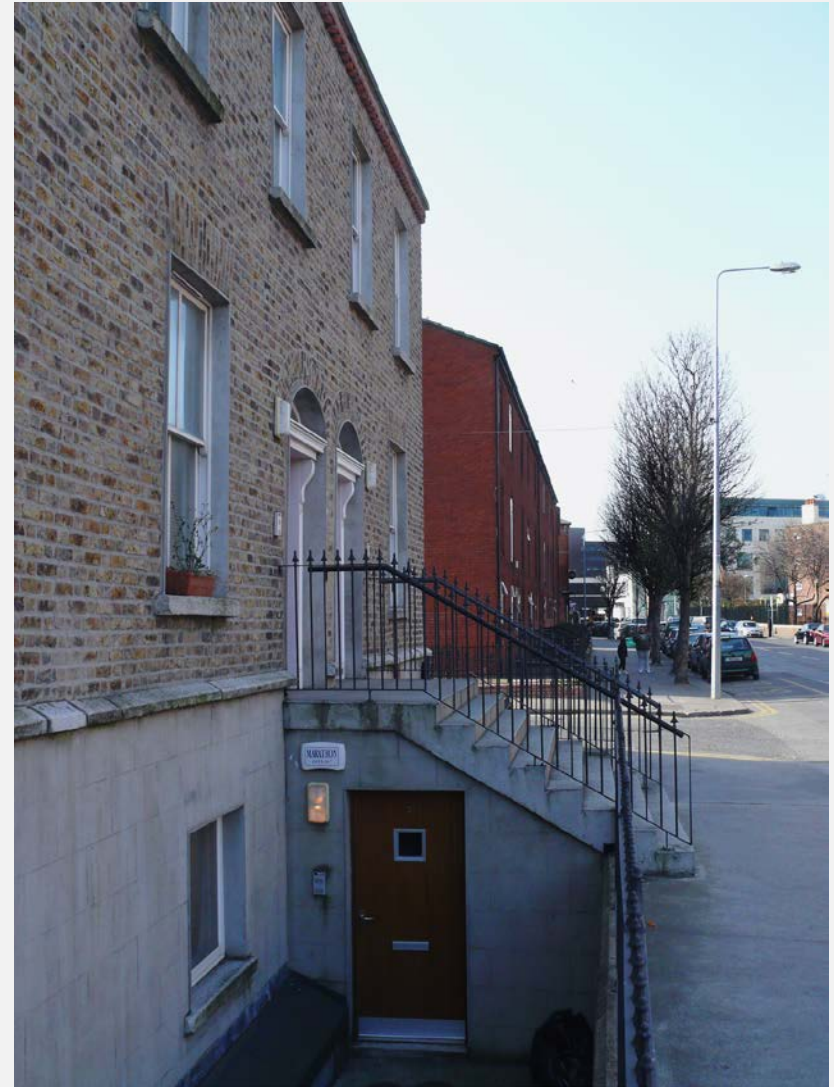
basically because they cannot afford it. Although there are apartments already built, but the prices for them, the mortgages are just too expensive. It's going to be the younger generation, the twenty odd year old now, they are still going to have that problem because the prices of the houses are rising. And there are not enough jobs to keep the area going with the prices of the houses. A lot of my friends I have grown up with moved.

*Nina Buckley (*1972), 17/09/2003*



127 The same site in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).

The communities benefited to some extent from the redevelopment of the docklands, but the number of families living in the area are a lot less than they were. [...] The population has been shrinking over the years. One big reason is that many people can't afford living here. Most of my friends, for example, got married and started to buy their properties in places like Leixlip and went as far as Meath and Westmeath, Kildare, and it went further and further again. Some of them have also taken jobs in those areas, because it is easier than commuting into the city. So the communities are shrinking because they can't afford to live here. [...].



128/129 Hogan Place in the 1990s (St Andrew's Archive) and in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).

There is not much of a point in having a hugely successful and professionally run service provider like St Andrew's if there are no people to access these services, if people are no longer able to afford to live in the area. [...] Those that can afford to buy property in the area tend to be doing it solely as investments.

*Noel Watson (*1965), 05/08/2003*



130 The same houses in 2003: only the facades are left (Astrid Wonneberger).

In our street, Hope St, there are 22 houses. Out of the 22 there are only five old neighbours. They are all very friendly, but the new people don't want to know anybody. So you don't even know who is living next door. Those houses are all owned, but there are three in the street

that are rented out, so you never know who you are getting next door to you.

*Betty O'Neill (*1944), 18/09/2006*



131 The regenerated houses in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).

Today I would think the most dramatic changes would be the new developments, and I think they are good for people and they are good for the area. I see them as very positive and very good. But the interaction with the people going into the new apartments is not very good. I would have liked to see that the people buying all these new apartments would become more involved with the community. But maybe they will integrate better later.

*Betty Watson (*1942), 15/09/2006*



132 *Queen's Terrace in the 1970s (St Andrew's Archive).*

A lot of people in the community moved out and the community broke up. And now we are getting a lot of gated communities. We want to stop all that, the gates, where the new residents are cut off from the community with their electronic gates. There are a lot of them around here, and we don't want them. [...] We want integration. [...]

So, it's all about expanding our community. For instance, when the Gas Company was planned first – of course if you talked to the Docklands they would talk about the Grand Canal Harbour, but around here we call it the Bord Gas site. The first plan was [...] to put in office developments on the perimeter. [...] They also wanted to put in offices in Macken Street. [...] But we said no, we want housing, life on the

streets, people going in and out, and doors onto the street. We want open access to the streets.

*Betty Ashe (*1941), 12/08/2002*



133 *The new houses on the same site in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

When office development started in the late 1980s and we started to fight and we got 60:40 which meant that if an office block went up so many storeys there had to be maybe two storeys of apartments on the top. These weren't for our own people. They were private. But we thought, even somebody living there is better than just offices. Then gated communities came up. People started to move out of the cities years ago and we were angry about that because we had everything

here, schools, churches, everything, and they were moving everybody out. The inner city was getting dull and dark. But then people started realising that children needed to go to college, so we will invest in new apartments. That came along, but that wasn't a good time. But we have learnt. And they have learnt too, because they realised that if you gate someone off, there is no integration. Of course everybody needs a certain amount of privacy. If you look at Pearse House now, they all have some kind of buzzers. So everybody realised that things can't be as open as they were in the past. But gated communities were a mistake. But it wasn't a mistake of the DDDA because they weren't there when it happened. It was the planners and developers.



Dublin City Council is a lot to be blamed for the faults in this city. Docklands has their own problems with certain things, but at least you can talk to them and they listened and they did make changes. If you

look at what we have now and what was there before that there is a big change.



134/135 *The corner of Macken Street and Pearse Street in 2002 (Richie Kelly) and 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger): Building the Gallery Quay apartments on the former Gas Company site.*

Change has come along slowly at first, and within the last five years it has come in very quick. Because where we were 5,000 people in the communities, now when you walk around the streets you see lots of people, even at night time now you see people in the streets. I personally think that is fabulous, to see people walking on the streets at night and not being afraid.

*Dolores Wilson (*1948), 13/03/2007*

Over here the new apartments on the Gas company site, that has changed a lot. That used to be only one big building site. And they have turned it into something massive. [...]

I have been in the new apartments loads of times. Some friends of mine live there. The first time I went over I went to see my friends. I also met a good few new people there. It is nice over there, but one friend told me that his mother keeps getting letters saying they will be evicted if he keeps having friends up there. That is stupid. He is only allowed certain people in. But it is not his fault that he lives there. But I don't believe that, because it is not fair. He has been my friend for a few years and it is not fair that he can only have one person up in his apartment. There are three friends of us and we know more friends over there. If they only allow one person of a group of friends up, it is stupid. And you have to have a pass code to get in. I mean there is a good reason for that, to stop homeless people to walk in for instance, or drug addicts. But it is like living in Ringsend and have to come in to Pearse St all the time. Now you go from Pearse St to the new apartments. But you have to have a pass code to get in. And that is not fair, because sometimes my friends are not at home and I want to go in and see if there is anyone there. But I can't. There are glass doors you can see through, but there are always houses in the way to see who is there. In the flats you just look out over the balcony and see who is down in the flats or



just knock at a door. In the new apartments you have to go in. I have done that three times, and you just have to walk out then. In the flats it is no hassle to walk in and out, in the apartments you can't because you need the swiper thing. And the gate is very slow. And you are not allowed to cycle your bike. But if they don't want people to have a bike, why do they have a bike shed? And some of the kids are not allowed outside the new apartments, because on the quays you get people drinking and messing. So what's the point for them to have a bike, if they are not allowed to cycle it?

*Jordan Byrne (*1995), 20/03/2007*



*136/137
Gallery
Quay apartments
under
construction in
2003 and
completed in
2009 (Astrid
Wonneberger).*

I have been in the new apartments. I don't think they are better than the flats, I think the flats are better. Because in the apartments they shut the playground at a certain time and you are not allowed any ball games there. In the flats we play ball all the time. And you are not allowed to run around and cycle your bike.

*Daniel O'Callaghan (*1994), 20/03/2007*



138/139 The Charlotte Quay development in 1996 taken from the top of Boland's Mill (Richie Kelly) and in 2009 taken from the Altro Vetro building at MacMahon Bridge (Astrid Wonneberger).

Education

Education is another issue that has seen significant changes over the last century. All interviewees agreed that opportunities have grown enormously since they went to school.

Education was very poor in the past. Teaching methods were inadequate; corporal punishment was the norm, even as late as the 1970s. Children were generally not encouraged into second or third level education. Moreover, the overcrowded living conditions made it very difficult for children to learn at home. Therefore it is not surprising that many people could barely read or write.

However, for the numerous jobs that were available on the docks or related industries, no formal education was needed. After leaving school at 13 or 14, boys followed their fathers on to the docks and found a job somehow, not always a great one, but work all the same. Girls found employment in factories or as cleaners and house maids in the wealthy houses in Merrion Square or beyond, but when they got married and had their first children, they usually stayed at home and were responsible for the family household.

With the decline of the docks and the end of labour-intensive work, the tradition of early school leaving and plentiful employment in the area turned into a major problem. Various community initiatives, and since 1997 the DDDA, consider education as one of the key elements for the social regeneration of the docklands.

Great progress has been made in the last decade. The education levels have gone up. Increasing numbers of school

leavers have their leaving certificate and more and more young people attend third-level education. The opportunities and choices are there, if young people are encouraged to take them. The DDDA's initiatives have certainly had a good influence, but they are not always seen locally as enough. Particularly, training schemes for people who do not want to go for third-level education are under-resourced.

Within the last 25 years, the area has moved from a working-class to a middle-class status. Education has improved drastically and unemployment rates – even though still higher than in other parts of the city – have dropped significantly. People have generally become much more aware of the importance of education, and all sorts of training classes in places like St. Andrew's, and schemes offered by the DDDA, the NCI, FÁS and others have been very successful. Nevertheless, much still needs to be done in order to give every child the opportunity to make use of the choices that are there.

We had it hard in school. The nuns ruled the school and they were hard. They used to slap you, if you couldn't come up with an answer quick enough. It was very strict. And the kids don't realise how much more activities there are today. We didn't know about second level when we were kids, only primary. Some people went on to Tech then, but it was never introduced to us in our schools. We wouldn't have known about it. We lived in Townsend Street or Markievicz House and you went from there to Townsend Street to school. And we went home from there. We would know Pearse House, but the play leader would not let you in there because you weren't from Pearse House. Now you can be from anywhere and go anywhere. [...]

But today, even though many people still live in overcrowded conditions, it is great that the children have access to the library. There is more access to areas that we didn't have access to when we were younger. Today some kid from Pearse House can take his book to the library, or stay back in school or go to the voluntary tuition or an after school service, so we have greatly improved the education and the job opportunity for our community. They are getting the opportunity to go on in education. We didn't have that. When my brother finished school he wanted to go to Tech, and my sister wanted to go to Tech. But she wasn't allowed to go because they had to pay for Tech in them days. Ballsbridge was the technical school for girls and Ringsend was for boys. Ann and Willie wanted to go. But my Ma said only one could go and it was Willie, because he was going to get married some day and be a bread winner. So Willie got to go. Today any kid can go on. It is great that any kid can go on in education. I didn't have a chance either. I was put into a job three weeks short of fourteen. And I wanted to do my primary which is like a junior cert today. But I couldn't get a day off from my job, in those days you couldn't. If you took the day you would get sacked. So I couldn't get a day off to do my primary, and I never did. I still feel I missed something. And there are a lot of people like me who think the same, that they missed something in education. Today there are lots of opportunities out there for everybody, if they last out. That is great. [...]

I think the DDDA has made a difference in third level. They are supporting third level. Because many kids financially couldn't sustain it. And that is where our community is weak, because we are coming from a working class background of working on the docks and in factories, where education wasn't a priority. Because you could work going from one factory to another and we did have a thriving dockland at the time. So if children are going to third level

now, it is sustaining them in there that is important. And the grants have made a difference. They have also made a difference in bringing kids abroad. I don't see it as a priority but travel is very educational as well.

*Betty Watson (*1942), 04/09/2006, 15/09/2006*



140 St Andrew's National School was built in 1895 and accommodated over 1,000 children. In 1972, the school had to close down due to declining numbers of pupils attending. Since its renovation in the early 1980s, the building has become home to St Andrew's Resource Centre (Richie Kelly).

The teachers used a leather strap and in the middle was a copper strip. And they would not hit you on the face but on the back side. So you never showed it. But once I got home and somehow my father must have heard about it, so he brought me up and I was embarrassed because I had to pull down my trousers and show him my marks. We almost took this for granted. If you did something, you were punished. It was the norm. If you complained about it at home, they would only say, if you got punished you must have done something. [...]

There was a lot of people suffering from dyslexia in this area. I might be dyslexic too, but we only found out much later. Today this is acknowledged, the children are treated specially. [...] The opportunities for us opened up in the late 1970s or early 80s. But the most important thing today is: you can be what you want to be today. It is there for you if you seek it out. I don't care if you write with your left hand or right hand. That is all gone now. They are encouraging both hands. The whole system has improved and improved and improved, with the result that the children can choose where they are going. If you want to go into music, fine, do it. [...] In that sense today's education system is much better.

*Peter Grainger (*1936), 05/09/2006*

There was a lot of beatings and abuse in City Quay school. I didn't want to be bashed like all the others. There was nobody like Killer Kane. Teacher Kane would bash them like mad, then he would call them in before they went home and give them money to keep their mouth shut. That was in City Quay school. [...] We often got a clip in the ear, a wallop on the hand. That was normal punishment. But Killer Kane was over the top.

*Chris Sands (*1937), 05/09/2006*

We had hard times. Our parents had hard times. But at the end of the day, we could get a job, so Chris ended up in the hotel business, I on the docks doing different things, John in the meat business. We all made our own way in life. But if we had had the opportunities then that the kids have today, we would be living in big houses.

There was no FÁS training in our time. You just went out and you knocked at a door and asked for vacancies, and if there was none, some might tell you about a job somewhere else or tell you to emigrate. Nowadays you can register with FÁS, specify what kind of work you would like to do and do it.

But the education in our days was different than today. You hadn't got the education of today, but if you went out to survive, you educated yourself. Many of my classmates got fairly good jobs and raised a family. I always admire that. We all survived. We were educated outside more than we were in school.

*Peter Montgomery (*1938), Tony Dalton (*1937), John Murray (*1937), 19/09/2006*

So many abilities and brains were lost, because education wasn't available. And if it was available it wasn't encouraged. Westland Row [school] did not encourage people, they excluded them. Most of them were exclusion organisations rather than inclusion organisations. [...]

Most people here couldn't read or write. I knew two uncles of mine, they would go to the labour, the employment exchange, because they couldn't read or write. They were so embarrassed that they couldn't sign their names. And a cousin of mine was the same.

*Chris Sands (*1937) and Bart Nolan (*1929), 29/08/2006*



We have moved I think from being a working-class community into being a middle-class community. We have working-class origins, depending on how you define working class and middle class. We certainly have become a much more educated community, our younger people tend to stay a little bit longer in school. There are still a lot of early school leavers, but in comparison to some other communities in the inner city, we are doing pretty good. There is a lot of employment now, more than there was in the past. Employment has been a huge issue over the years; that has now changed. What is more of an issue now is training for employment rather than employment. In the 1980s there were no jobs, it didn't matter how well you were trained, you certainly didn't get a decent job. [...] Every household would have had somebody unemployed in it in the 1980s and into the 90s.

Unemployment touched everyone, it was the biggest issue in the 80s. [...] It was really dark and miserable times in the 80s. [...] But today chances are really good.

*Noel Watson (*1965), 16/08/2004*



141/142 The Gilbert Library in Pearse Street prior to and after its renovation (1990s and 2009) (St Andrew's Archive and Astrid Wonneberger).

Then we moved on with the Docklands, where our younger people now are inspired to much greater things. Up-skilling for high-end jobs. We have 170 plus of our young people coming out of school with their

Leaving Cert who are working in the Financial Services through the schools business placement. We have an equal number, maybe even more, young people in third level education through scholarship programmes. And we will always be pushing the boat out. Yes, our young people are getting opportunities now. [...]

The new placement schemes for our young people are through the Docklands. They are the facilitator of it. And FAS is an organiser in it too. They have the clout to get the financial houses working with us. Leaving Cert students can apply, they are interviewed and if they reach the criteria they are placed in a finance house. It is an internship, a yearly contract. And if they are worth their metal, they are either kept in that company or they can move on to another company. This is for the schools in the dockland area. So now we have barristers, accountants and careers for all professions coming through that programme.

*Betty Ashe (*1941), 15/03/2007*

Traffic

Traffic is another topic that is frequently mentioned in the context of changes. In the past, there was very little traffic except on major roads in and around the docks. Vehicular traffic only became a major issue in the 1950s and 1960s. Before then, horse and carts delivering coal and other goods, trams, bicycles and walking were the dominant means of transport. Starting from Nelson's Pillar on O'Connell Street, the number 3 tram went along Pearse Street all the way down to Sandymount, before it was substituted by a bus bearing the same number in 1940.¹⁸ Bikes were so important that they even got names.

For children the streets were their playground. In light of the congestion on Pearse Street today, which makes it difficult even to cross the road, it is not surprising that many street games have disappeared. Of course there are other factors responsible for this development as well, but heavy urban traffic definitely had a part in it.

Again, traffic is an issue that is dealt with by the DDDA in their regeneration plans. There is scepticism around the proposed initiatives as to whether they will improve the situation. One example is the proposed



Macken Street Bridge, which is seen as a threat to people's health in the area. Despite major protest from the community and the DDDA the bridge was given planning permission. Its effect on the community remains to be seen.

18 A summary of the history of Dublin's tramways including a list of routes and dates can be found in the online encyclopaedia Wikipedia ("Dublin Tramways").

143 *Children sliding (ca. 1970s) (St Andrew's Archive).*

We played a lot in the streets. We played skipping. They don't do that anymore. There was no traffic on the road then, that was great.

*Carmel O'Reilly (*1921), 06/09/2006*

In the past, there was hardly any traffic, but bikes were big. Now they are cycling mad, they go up one way streets, they are crossing bridges when the lights are against them and so on. I am a lorry driver now. In the past you would hardly see a motor car. You could play on the street. You hardly saw a horse cart.

*Paddy Ashmore (*1935), 05/09/2006*

Bikes were very precious things. The police would stand there, where the post office was, at Mrs Lynch's shop. That is gone because the road has been widened. It was narrow. The police would be making checks. Each bike had a number. And you could see people coming near them and they would turn around. That didn't necessarily mean that their bikes were stolen, but they didn't know where their bikes had come from. These police checks were huge and very frequent.

At that time a bike was precious. It meant your livelihood, getting to work in the morning. I used to cycle in from Crumlin to the docks. If you lost five minutes in the morning, you might lose a week's wages. You might be idle for the rest of the week. Bikes were precious like motor cars today. And people would ask you for a lend of it. And you were hoping you would get it back.

My brother Mike had a bike. Polly it was called. And when he lost it, he had to re-christen the new one Polly. There would be no other transport at the time. No buses.

*Chris Sands (*1937) and Bart Nolan (*1929), 29/08/2006*



144 *Unloading coal on Sir John Rogerson's Quay. On top of the lorry is Tomo Brennan (St Andrew's Archive).*

In the flats there was an area to hang the clothes out to dry, but we as kids could also go out there and play. And trafficwise we could go out to the streets and play there too. That is gone. [...] All the street games have disappeared. We had so many street games. We had to use our own initiative. So all our entertainment was generated by ourselves. I don't know where they came from, but we had so many different type of games, it was remarkable. There was one game for instance that we called "Relievio". That's where you would pick two different sides and maybe there would be five on each side. And five would run and hide up in all the buildings and the other five would come and get you. And

once they touched you that was it. You had a den that you would bring them back to. And you put them into the den. There was one man left to guard them. And if somebody went through, they would all be free again. We played that in the flats. The flats were an ideal place for this game. That was one game.

*Sylvester Keogh (*1935), 05/09/2006*



145 Horse and cart in 2000 (Richie Kelly).

Today you couldn't do now what we could do when we were young. We could play football on the road. [...] No problem. Now you can't even walk on it, let alone play football. Because there was no traffic at the time, and the little traffic that we had was mostly horse traffic. [...]

We also played skittles, you would make a box up and you were pitching the skittles into the box. If you told the kids now what we played they wouldn't know what you are talking about. [...]

The transport has changed at lot of course, the trams, and the bicycles. At that time there wasn't so many cars on the road, so bicycles was your transport, and of course the train. Most of the people was using the bike, or walk. [...] The things are faster now, faster moving. The transport was all horses, doing the deliveries and all that, now it's all trucks. And because it's all

faster they don't need as many people working at that.

Tommy McDonald (1916-2005), 03/09/2002

The traffic has increased hugely in Pearse Street. [...] And there is a lot of toxic fumes. [...] And then they are talking of diverting all that traffic down Macken Street Bridge? It will still come down Pearse Street, it's not going to stop it coming down Pearse Street. It will mean extra cars are coming in. [...] There was an environmental impact study done when they were proposing that bridge and it said that the rate of pollution in O'Connell St will drop by 20%, but O'Connell St is a non-residential area, but the rate of pollution in Sheriff Street, East Wall, Seville Place and Pearse Street area will go up by 80%! And they still approved that bridge! [...]



146 *Hogan Place in 1986 with Robbie Conroy driving his horse and cart (St Andrew's Archive).*

They know there will be 2,500 vehicles passing on that bridge per hour at the peak time. So they know it's not going to do any good to the people that live here. [...] It's our children that will have asthma, bronchitis and diseases. [...] They can't turn around and recognise that O'Connell St and all those tourist attractions - they are not the heart of what Dublin is. The heart of what Dublin is is the people that live in it. Without the Dublin people there is no community. What do they want? Just tourists everywhere? [...] It doesn't seem to matter that they are killing people for it.



147 *Hogan Place in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

The bridge has been passed, even against the wishes of the residents, businesses [...] and the DDDA, who also objected to it. [...] It wasn't the bridge itself we objected to. We have no problem with the idea of a

pedestrian bridge. But we do have a problem with the volume of traffic that will pass over it. If it were built as a pedestrian and public transport only bridge, we would have been perfectly happy.

*Noel Watson (*1965), 05/08/2003*



148 The construction of the Matt Talbot Memorial Bridge in 1976-1978 (St Andrew's Archive).



149 Matt Talbot Memorial Bridge in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).

The Macken Street Bridge will be built in 18 months. There was political will there to make that happen. But we made a very good case against it and everyone felt that we had won the case, but we were still overruled by the Minister.

The bridge will induce more traffic into this area. It will increase the pollution. It is another archway for going from north to south and south to north without having to go up Pearse St. So we will gain something. But the downside is the additional pollution, both the air and the noise and the traffic. [...]



150 *The construction of the new Samuel Beckett Bridge (aka Macken Street Bridge) in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

If you had office blocks on the outside and you didn't have the housing, it will create a new boundary. But if people are living over there and their grannies are over here, it is never going to be a barrier for people coming back crossing the road. Because the junction will be upgraded and there will be pedestrian crossings as well. That is part of the agreement of the Pearse Street rejuvenation committee. We set that up and got the stakeholders together, Dublin City Council and Trinity College, to look at doing something about Pearse Street. To bring back life, the village type life to Pearse St. And the current upgrading of the street is part of that plan.



151 *Tara Street and swivel bridge in the 1920s (St Andrew's Archive).*

152 Another image of Tara Street and swivel bridge in the 1920s (St Andrew's Archive).



You get people saying, that crossing is disgraceful, there will be more people killed, and you can tell them, it will be upgraded. But they want it to be upgraded yesterday. So you need to tell them again, it will come, be patient. The mills grind slowly, but they grind. Bureaucracy can take ages. But that is something about docklands, it is an accelerating project. Things become visible very very quickly. And that is another thing we would have said: Invest in the community infrastructure. Invest in visible projects quickly, because that will give people a sense of hope that things will change.

*Betty Ashe (*1941), 15/03/2007*



153 *The new Tara Street Bridge and Loipline Bridge in 1986 (St Andrew's Archive).*



154 *Tara Street and Tara Bridge in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*



155/156 *MacMahon Bridge in the mid-1980s (St Andrew's Archive) and in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

Visions for the Future

Having viewed the transformations of the Pearse Street area and its community in the 20th century, most of its residents have very clear ideas of what they wish for the future of the neighbourhood. At the core of this vision is the community, a functioning social network which offers help and support, creates self-esteem and a general sense of belonging and pride in the area they live in.

In order to maintain and improve this community structure, which has always been a main characteristic of this dockland neighbourhood, a number of different developments are seen as crucial to address the needs of different types of residents. Elderly people, for instance, wish for a new health centre in the area. Young people would like to see play areas, particularly playgrounds that do not close at a certain time.

Education is another issue. Even though it has already improved significantly since the older interviewees grew up in the inner city and community initiatives, such as St Andrew's adult education department, and the latest DDDA educational schemes have helped to further improve the situation, local people still need encouragement towards third level education.

Other concerns centre around the issue of traffic. Nobody is happy with the current situation with congested traffic along Pearse Street all the time, not just at peak times, and limited and unreliable public transport. The new Macken Street Bridge, which had been opposed by the community, is seen as a possible threat which will worsen the situation rather than solve it. The

general feeling is rather pessimistic, which means that more effort is needed to change the situation.

The new developments are a frequent topic of concern. The high-rise debate is far from being over, even if the number of high-rise buildings are to be limited. While housing, particularly social housing, is the top of everyone's wish list, the majority also recognise the impossibility of building housing for every individual in such a limited space. Since the introduction of the 20% social and affordable housing, applied by law to developers in this area, a number of local people have been awarded apartments within the new complexes, and they are generally delighted. In contrast to offices, which create a business district with little life during the evenings and nights, residential areas enliven the streets. Many rules and regulations – more than in the old social blocks and too many for a lot of interviewees – however, are seen as a possible threat to the neighbourhood structure within the new complexes.

Despite the success of the community in terms of new social residential units within the new developments, house prices are still at the top of the list of concerns for the future. Young people see themselves forced to move out of the city, if they want to buy their own property. The affordable housing schemes within the DDDA regeneration, which are just beginning now, are seen as a good start, but the numbers are limited and not everybody will finally get one.

The gated developments of the late 1980s and early 1990s are viewed critically as they hinder integration, which is another important aspect for the future. So far, there has been

very little contact between the new dwellers and the old-established community. Different cultures, social background, needs and networks combined with gates and therefore segregated living areas – at least in the older of the new apartment blocks – have hindered any form of interaction and integration. This is something which community activists want to address in the near future. First steps have already been taken with a meet-and-greet night in St Andrew's and more initiatives are planned to finally create a community for all. This can only be successful with a high level of participation. Many interviewees also see education as one additional means to encourage particularly young people to get involved and gain a sense of pride in their neighbourhood. Introducing them to the history of the area, how their grandparents lived or the uses of the listed buildings would help to create a sense of place and identity. This could be done in the form of local history teaching in schools.

The current redevelopment of the dockland area is seen as a chance to further improve the most urgent issues the community has fought for over decades. Better education, employment, housing and health conditions, less traffic and crime, a better reputation than in the past and no stigmatisation are all included in people's vision for the future of the Pearse Street area.

All interviewees agreed that a main focus of future developments should concentrate on aspects that maintain a functioning community. Unlike the past, where a community spirit was created through family ties, overlapping work and living space and need for mutual help, today community means active

citizenship, involvement in communal events and organisations, such as St Andrew's, and this should include the new dwellers as well as the old. Integration is therefore a key slogan for the future of the neighbourhood.



157 *Children playing in Pearse Square in the 1980s (St Andrew's Archive).*

For the future I would wish that the likes of these facilities, such as Rostrevor [the housing complex for elderly citizens also holds a community facility], would be kept for senior citizens. More activities and more services. They go to the homes in the area, but they could do the same things here that they do in the hospitals rather than bringing them to the homes. [...] We also need to find ways to reach out to people to get them to come.

There are no wardens left now in these complexes to organise these things. It used to be the warden's job. Now it is only to check that they are alive. That is all and I don't think that this is enough. I think the Dublin City Council should play a bigger role in supporting these places. Rather than coming up with new initiatives that don't work, give the money to people that are doing stuff that is working. But at the end of the day you never get everybody involved, but if you leave it to the wardens nobody would get involved. Because they don't see themselves as responsible. We have social problems in the area, but there is no proper service for them in the area. Only Trinity Court and Baggot St, but everybody goes there. They don't come out and sell the service, it should be more promoted within the community. [...] Educate the youth about the dangers of alcoholism. [...]

At one time I had two people who used to come into me and I filled in the forms for them. Little things like that are important. [...] But we are losing that more and more in the community, the people who look out for each other. Welfare rights in St Andrew's is an excellent service for people with needs. [...]

A health centre would be another good thing. That is something we haven't got. We have a doctor's surgery with three doctors and one nurse on Pearse Street and one doctor in Creighton Street, but it takes ages to get an appointment. So we need a proper health centre. And [...] the youth need a place to themselves.

Definitely. There is a great youth group in St Andrew's Resource Centre, but they are working from this little office [...] and they can't have a drop-in centre and they need that for youth. So the health centre would be a priority where I can go and get my blood taken without going to the hospital and sit there half the day. A centre would certainly help a lot, particularly when you have little things where you don't want to spend hours waiting to be treated. The system isn't good. So the health centre and a youth centre would be great. Pearse Square is another thing. That was brilliant in the summer for games and sports. It was somewhere to go for the kids. They had swings for the small kids and all. But we lost that. We never got anything in place for that.

*Betty Watson (*1942), 04/09/2006, 15/09/2006*



158 Pearse Square in 1988 (Terry Thorpe).



159 *Pearse Square undergoing refurbishment in 1996 (St Andrew's Archive).*

There is no infrastructure there now for children to play. No play area. The nearest thing to here now is Ringsend Park. They are building now on green spaces, and most of the new areas are dead. We had so many areas to play in in our youth that we didn't need any designated play areas. We played marbles and pitch and toss in the streets, and we made things ourselves. [...] We had so much. [...] I hope it will never be a concrete desert here like in other parts of the world. [...] Here in the city we are using up all the green space. That is the problem, I think. We are going to have major problems with drugs and so on, because there is nothing there. If you walk along the quays now, if you come from Ringsend Bridge and walk all along there, nothing but concrete. And anything that's there is for grown-ups. Restaurants, hotels, but

nothing for children. It is lovely on a summer's day, sit down on the quay and it is very relaxing, but if you have a gang of kids, there is nothing there for them. [...] Play areas, that's what they should put in here.

*Paddy Ashmore (*1935), 05/09/2006*



160 *Pearse Square in 2004 (Astrid Wonneberger).*



161 *MacMahon Bridge and Boland's Mills in the late 1980s (St Andrew's Archive).*

When the apartments are getting made, you get people out on the streets. When they built offices there are no people, because they close in the evening and the people are gone. With the apartments you see somebody in and out. In Hogan Place where the flats are now, there used to be a chipper, very very good. I don't think offices are good for the area. They are gone in the evening and the place is dead. With the apartments there is at least somebody around.

May Bird (1929-2009), 06/09/2006

I am not too happy with the new apartments. For one thing, there are too many apartments. And there is no sense of neighbourhood, they don't know each other now.



162 *MacMahon Bridge, Boland's Mills and the Millennium Tower in 2002 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

I would have liked to see what they did in Ringsend. They built affordable houses which are quite good. And over the affordable houses they built apartments for single people. And I think that was a great scheme. But now there are no houses around. And the apartments to me they don't look well. It is just a place to walk through now. And you walk through fast and get a bus, whereas houses are different. They are neighbourly. You see people sitting out on a summers day, but you don't see that in the apartments. You don't see anybody now in the apartments.

*John Murray (*1937), 19/09/2006*



163 Grand Canal Basin and the Gas Company site with the Gasometer in the 1980s (St Andrew's Archive).



164 Grand Canal Basin with the former Gas Company site in the background in 2002 (Astrid Wonneberger).

Sir John Rogerson's Quay was all derelict for about 20 years up to a few years ago. But now there are all new offices and apartments. At least there are people in the area there now, they weren't there five years ago. I rather see that than dereliction and closed factories. They were rat infested and all. I rather see lived in apartments.

Tony Dalton (*1937), 19/09/2006



165 The same image taken from MacMahon Bridge in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).



166 *View of the Grand Canal Dock Basin in the early 1990s with Wallace's Coal yard (St Andrew's Archive).*

167 View of the Grand Canal Dock Basin from the Altro Vetro building at MacMahon Bridge in 2009. The former coal yard is now home to the Millennium Tower (Astrid Wonneberger).





168 *Sir John Rogerson's Quay in the early 1990s (Richie Kelly).*

I think the new apartments are very nice and lovely, and the people who leave the flats to live there seem to be very happy. And it brings more people into the area and more people are getting places. [...] So there seem to be more apartments for people who need them.

We also have more clubs like this for old people, so they are getting out. But we need more seats outside to let them all sit out. But it might come true.

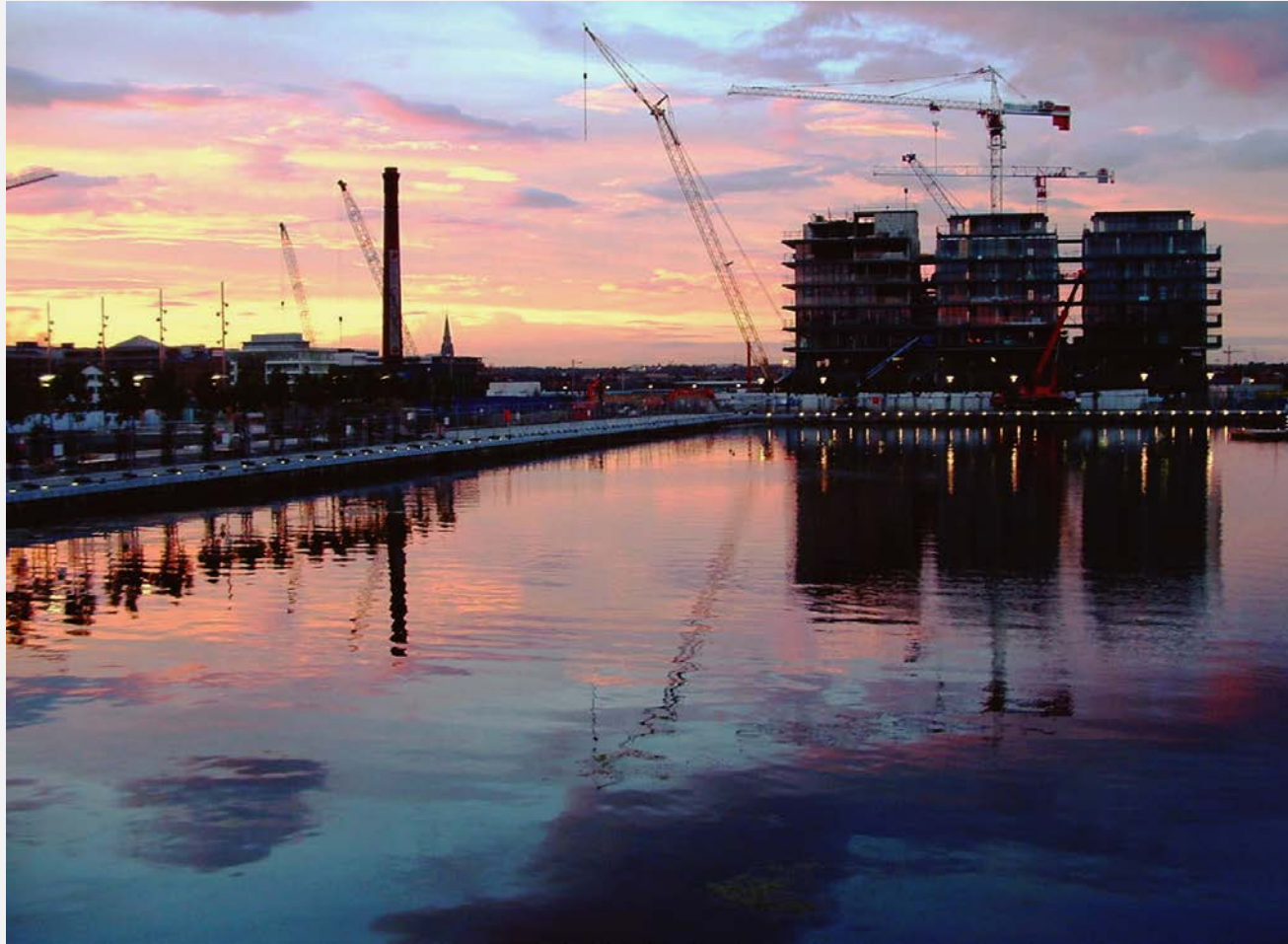
But the sense of neighbourhood declined, because a lot of people died. There are a lot of new people here now.

*Madge Carey (*1933), 20/09/2006*



169 *Sir John Rogerson's Quay in 2003 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

Part of the problem is that the children don't identify with things. A lot of them wouldn't have grannies for instance. So we try to get them to talk to grannies, but it only works with the ones in the clubs, but not with the ones you really want to target. [...] And they don't get told anything in school really about their grandparents. We are steeped in history in this area. We have Padraig Pearse, the Dáil, the museum, the art gallery. But I very rarely see a class going to the art gallery. Or the museum. That is history. The Docklands was doing something with the kids' talent competition, bringing them to Andrew's for the auditions. Why can't something similar about local history be taught there, history that is important for the kids as a talent competition. Those kids don't know what the docks were. Even my youngest kids don't know the docks, because the docks were gone when they were born.



170 Gallery Quay and Hanover Quay in 2004 (Noel Watson).

And most of the kids don't know about the docks and what was there. They could make DVDs and show them to kids in school or even in the Library. They have an archive there where they could show the thing. I don't *think*, I *know* it is very important to know about the history of this

area to form an identity when they grow up. It is a shame if a person lives in an area for all their life and doesn't know about the history. It is sad really. Very sad.

*Betty Watson (*1942), 04/09/2006*

Compared to other areas there is still a very good sense of community here today, but it is starting to slide. It is not as great as it used to be. And with the moving of the people to the new social housing I worry for the community. Because people from Pearse House, for instance, are going now into these new apartments and there are so many rules. The kids can't bring in friends, there are all these restrictions. And it is only right that there are rules. But there is only a minority who are not keeping the rules, and they won't be moving out of Pearse House.[...]

I also hope that the sense of community grows in the new apartments and the new residents, because most of them are the cream of the crop, because they are open and embracing changes and I think that is a great thing. But I am afraid that there will be a great fluctuation among them, [...] and I think the

transient community will never integrate. And I am afraid we will get stuck with that, as long as people have apartments for investment. [...] Of course you are entitled to buy an apartment for investment, but it is not good for a community. It does make a difference to a community if people are only transient. Like students, who are only there for two or three years and rent it for that time. That creates problems too, because

there was a house in the area and there were six students in it last year. At times they were very noisy, very disruptive, and that's where the problem starts. Who looks after the transient community?

*Betty Watson (*1942), 15/09/2006*



171 The same site in 2006 (Astrid Wonneberger).

The way they have done up the flats is lovely, but they should put in more housing for people. They can't afford to buy houses here. [...] We were looking to buy one. [...] There are a lot of new social ones in the area now, but not affordable. I hope they are turning that around now. Because Dublin Docklands said they were going to combine them with Dublin Corporation. Dublin Corporation used to have their own section. They used to have the 50:50, where they buy half and you'd buy half. Then they had a scheme called part 5 scheme, where it didn't go on a point scheme, but depended on how much you earned. So we went up for that and then we found that they had stopped doing that, because Docklands had a scheme too, that was only a lotto scheme, and the two of them went together. So it is all a lotto scheme now, so it is only luck whether you get it or not. For the affordable. And that is not a good system. Because there are people putting a form in and they get pulled out and then there is the likes of myself who has been on the list for three years. And I am not the only one. [...]

There should also be more facilities for children in the area. For all ages. The likes of the flats, they are putting facilities in for the infants and football pitches for all ages, but boys mostly go in, not girls. So they could put more facilities in. Pearse House has PARC [Pearse Area Recreation Centre], the club house. If they put a small one of these in in each flats, that would be good. And everybody in the flats then has somewhere for the kids to play. And the apartments should have that as well.



Before the Docklands came in, we didn't have the flats done up. I think Docklands is pushing more for the area, getting it done up and that. [...] But they are putting too many hotels around the area. I would put more affordable houses and apartments up for people. And I don't like the idea of what they are doing here, putting a 24hour bus lane, I think they should have left it as it was. Because it is going to cause more traffic now for the people. I would put more facilities for children out there and more jobs for people. [...]

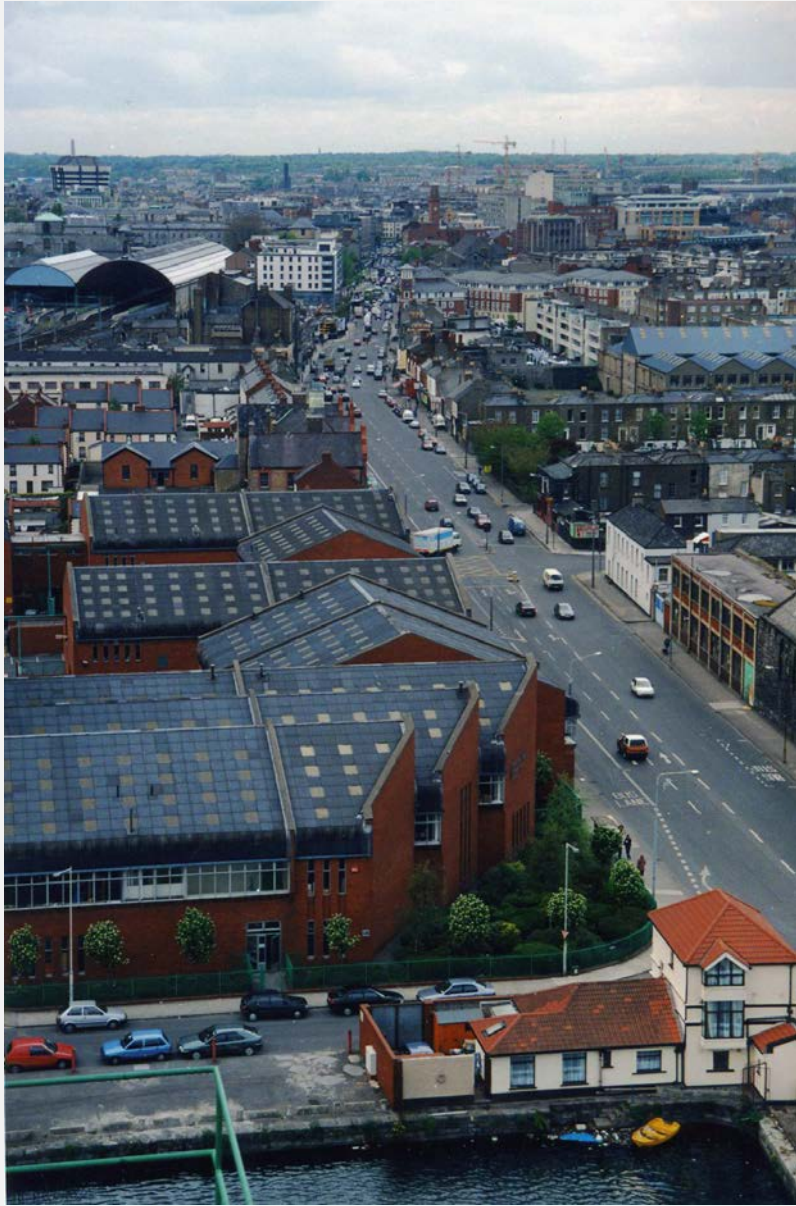
My granddad used to tell me stories about the docks. I grew up with these stories. He worked on the docks, he was a docker. I think it would be great for children if they learnt about this history. When I was in school we were told about it a bit, and then I came home and would ask my granddad a question and he would tell me. [...] But Dublin is not the same now. [...] It has totally changed. [...]



172/173 *Grand Canal Basin and Gallery Quay in 2003 and 2009*
(Astrid Wonneberger).

I haven't really profited from the Docklands education scheme, because I didn't go for third level. And they are mostly supporting third-level. When I was in school they sent us letters and asked us to answer a questionnaire each year. The last thing I heard from them was asking what third level education we were doing, but basically I didn't do it, and after that I didn't hear back from them.

*Lindsey Mullen (*1984), 11/09/2006*



*174/175
Pearse
Street viewed
from the top
of Boland's
Mills in 1996
(Richie Kelly)
and from the
top of the
Altro Vetro
building at
MacMahon
Bridge in
2009 (Astrid
Wonne-
berger).*



176/177 *Panoramic view of the locks, Grand Canal Dock Basin and Britain Quay in the 1980s (St Andrew's Archive) and in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*



178 *The Old Harbour Master's House at MacMahon Bridge with Boland's Mill in the background in the 1990s (Richie Kelly).*

I am not happy with some of the new developments, because local people have been forced out. It's massive over-development in some cases. I do agree a lot of it was derelict and nobody lived in it, directly on the quays, so it didn't affect anybody. And I think it is a good place for high rise buildings, because it adds a little character. But building high rise where we are, right beside us we have a huge high rise development, it overshadows us. You look out of your back window and you have this 4, 5, 6-storey block outside your door. And that's a problem. I am on the local residents association, and we fought one of these developers and we got nowhere. We brought him to the appeal court, to the legal system, we spent a lot of money fighting him and we lost. No, I am wrong, we won, but the second time he could go because he has more money than us. So finally he got what he wanted.

Where all the cranes are over there, that's where we live. And it just overshadowed us completely.

*Billy Ryan (*1954), 18/08/2004*



179 *The site has been home to the Altro Vetro building since 2007 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

I was on the housing list for six years, that was a long time. [...] I was actually in a private rented accommodation and it was an absolute nightmare. It was up in Percy Place, just up at the canals here. At the bridge, where Bolands is. We had an apartment there. It was a little sitting room, no windows in it. It was only me and my daughter. It was a basement flat and the sewage kept overflowing on the outside, so you

couldn't even get in or out properly. There were rats. Finally, we were offered a place in Clarion Quay in August 2001. So we were over the moon and moved in in January 2002. [...] It is absolutely fabulous, so well designed. But the only thing is, they are not family orientated. They are really not. First of all there is nowhere for the kids to play. There are major problems over that. Kids are not allowed to go on their bikes, or play with their balls, or roller blades, loads of different things. In the middle there is a big grass area. I am looking onto the grass area.



180 Lombard Street in the 1980s (St Andrew's Archive).

The grass area is beautiful, but it is like dangling sweets in front of a child and they can't have them. And I can totally understand where the private apartments are coming from, they paid half a million for these

apartments and they don't really want gangs of kids running around destroying the place. I can totally understand where they are coming from, but then on the other hand, I think there are about 50 children or more between the two apartment blocks and they have nowhere to play. So it really wasn't thought out well whatsoever, it really wasn't. [...] So I think they should put in more family orientated areas and playgrounds.

*Emma Wilson (*1975), 24/09/2004*



181 Lombard Street in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).

I did not learn much in school about the history of this area, because the teachers are not local people. And school has a curriculum. [...] And their curriculum is geared towards bringing people into third level education. [...] But I think it would be great for children to learn about the history of the area they live in, because it would give them a pride in the community they live in. To be able to turn around and say, John Hogan, yes, a famous sculptor! [...] And we can be that too! [...] It's about self-esteem, how they perceive themselves in the community. And if they can see the community in a historical light as being a little bit more than a poverty trap, then they are going to see themselves in a better light.

Noel Watson (*1965), 05/08/2003



182 The corner of Pearse Street and Westland Row in the 1970s (St Andrew's Archive).



183 The same corner in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).

I would wish for the area another place like St Andrew's Resource Centre and the Swings¹⁹. St Andrew's is very good, so are the Swings. [...] The playground is great. There used to be a lot of young fellows hanging around there but now it is locked up and nobody can get in. That is much nicer. And there are lights as well. [...] But we need more places like St Andrew's and the Swings. [...] The playground in the new apartments is good. But you are not allowed to play football there at all. In Pearse House we play football a lot. [...]

19 Corporation playground attached to Pearse House.

I wouldn't be complaining about a new playground. We have the Swings, the one in South Lotts and the one in Merrion Square. But sometimes they close too early. The ones in the new apartments close at a certain time, and that is stupid, because the kids still want to play. It is a lovely place, but... And you are not allowed to play any ball games. That includes throw games. Even soft ball. That you can't play football there really annoys many of the kids there. Especially the boys. And some girls there play football too. Kids over here love football. So some of the rules are just stupid. You are not allowed cycling, no football, only a certain amount of friends, they are stupid rules. That is like saying, I have three friends but only invite two of them. That is like excluding one. You can sneak in, but then my family might get in trouble. [...]



184 Britain Quay/Grand Canal Dock Basin in the late 1970s or early 1980s (St Andrew's Archive).



185 The same view in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).

And traffic is a problem too. [...] Crossing Pearse St is not so difficult. All you do is wait for the lights to cross. And there are enough of traffic lights. But sometimes they annoy me, because sometimes you wait for four minutes, and then it gives you just 15 seconds to cross the road. And that is not fair for an elderly woman. Because there are a lot of cars coming from the quays and from Merrion Square. Pearse St is a good area, but not good roadwise. You have people coming in and out of Ringsend and in and out of town. It is like the centre of the city, even though it is not. Trafficwise. The only place where you get more traffic is on O'Connell St, and that is converted now, so you don't get much traffic there now.

Jordan Byrne (*1995), 20/03/2007

I think there should be more playgrounds around Pearse St. Because the new ones close around half five, but the Swings you can go in at any time. I used to live in Pearse House, now I live in Powerscourt. There is no playground there. But we have a big round space that is empty. We play football there. [...] But I do wish for a new playground. That would be much better. And there is far too much traffic in the area.

*Daniel O'Callaghan (*1994), 20/03/2007*



186 Grand Canal Harbour and Britain Quay in the 1970s (St Andrew's Archive).



187 The same view in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).

The new community has to be a community that is integrated, equal, that recognises everybody as a member of this community and offering opportunities to everybody. So it is everybody on an equal footing. Whether they are new to this area or from this area or from another culture or country. Throwing it open so that people feel they can walk in here and get whatever needs they have addressed. That would be my vision for the future of the community. I know it is utopia, but it won't stop me working towards that. We may not achieve it, but nobody then can say we didn't try.

The meeting that we are planning is a start. We try to get people interested. We did two days with the DDDA about active citizenship. It is no good to say we should do this or that, let's do something. Let's

test the water. Maybe a lot of services in St Andrews would not be needed by the new residents, but the food co-op would be interesting for them. Karate might be. The post office, the library, the butcher's. We will be sharing with them. You might be in the butcher's standing beside them and not know them from Adam. And the butcher is trying to engage with them, "so you are from this area, Betty over there is too", so to start that, to get everybody conscious that we need to do little things. If everybody does something – they have this ad for saving energy: What will you do? It is an individual and collective responsibility to do something. And to get that as a common approach is very hard, because there is always a barrier. How many times did I stand at the bus stop and before the bus comes you got the life story of a person waiting with you. So we are an open and friendly people, but it is a challenge sometimes to break down the barriers.

*Betty Ashe (*1941), 15/03/2007*



188 Grand Canal Dock Basin in the 1980s (St Andrew's Archive).



189 Grand Canal Dock Basin in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).

What we had to do and still have to do today is embrace change. Because if you don't embrace change, then you are living in the past and you are not going anywhere. I mean there are certain things you hold on to in your heart and your memory and that is lovely, but you have to look to the future. [...]

I think we have embraced change, we need now to keep our eye on the ball to make sure that the integration works well. We need to be very careful for that to happen. Because our people live in the new developments too now. From St Andrew's point of view, we would continue to support our old community, and we would be welcoming the new community to use our services. So we would feel that we are

now the central part of bringing the entire community together. That is as much as you can hope for I think. With the emphasis nationally now on active citizenship, people in private apartments who wouldn't have got involved in the past might now be more aware of what's happening. Because of the emphasis now on active citizenship, coming from the government. It is government policy now. [...]



190 *Boland's Mill viewed from Grand Canal Street in the 1980s (St Andrew's Archive).*

We also need a youth centre, and I think this will happen, we will have a youth centre within the next couple of years. Hopefully within St Andrews. There is always space. That is on the cards. We hope to do that through Docklands, through ourselves, and other agencies. It is much needed. At the moment the youth service has to make use of any

space available. It would be ideal to have everybody under the one roof. And I think that will happen.

Something else is that I think we will continue to get more social housing in the new developments. I would like to see us address the traffic situation; that would be an issue where we should do more. I also think that we should be watching Trinity College, because they have taken up a lot of space in the area. That's why I am glad that we are getting an extension of the community now on the gas site and along the quays. [...] Now St Andrews is in the middle of the community, where we used to be slightly on the edge. We take all in.



191 *The same view is blocked by new office buildings in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*



192 *Grand Canal Basin in 1991 (St Andrew's Archive).*

People were also complaining about the height of the buildings, but we were very clear that they could only go for a certain height in the docklands. But now we have people coming in – Trinity College have an eight storey building planning application gone through. They are going to redevelop the Trinity Enterprise Centre. I think they are the ones we should be watching and make sure that we can get the best deal possible. We have a liaison with TCD, but I don't know how much power we have. I don't think we have any when it comes to TCD. They do what they want.

I don't like to be negative, I like to be positive. You have to be positive, if you want to achieve things. You have the day centre for instance, so there is a lot happening. And the new day centre is in the planning, it needs to be redeveloped, because the needs of the elderly are changing all the time. People don't want to play bingo all day, they

want to play bowls and different things. They started meditation and exercise, so there are a lot of things coming in. [...]



193 *The same view in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

The Macken Street Bridge is going to be built soon and we fought very hard against that. I would say we were successful in our fight, but we lost the war. We fought a very good case. There were no holes in our case. Our case was better than the DCC case. They were all over the place. But it took the minister to sign off, because they wanted it. So we were never going to win it. But we came up with very good statistics on pollution in the area. There are other issues we have to be looking at. The health centre is due to be opened hopefully in the next couple of years. And there are other issues that need to be tackled. There is a lot

of asthma in the area. We have to be looking at the whole picture, because if you don't, things will slip in.

Health and traffic are issues to be dealt with. I am not worried about the youth centre or the day centre, because that will happen.

I am hoping that the enthusiasm that we have for the integration will happen in the sense that people get on with one another and that the old community gets the support they need and that we will be able to continue to support our community. [...]

We have had change, we need change to survive, but we need to monitor the change and do the best we can with it. [...] I am very proud and enthusiastic about what is happening at the moment and about the future. Because I think we have a future now, which we wouldn't have had before.

*Dolores Wilson (*1948), 13/03/2007*

194/195

Grand Canal Basin in the 1980s (St Andrew's Archive).





196/197 *Grand Canal Basin in 2009 (Astrid Wonneberger).*



198 *Grand Canal Basin viewed from the new apartments at Grand Canal Wharf in 2006 (Astrid Wonneberger).*

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Interviewees

Betty Ashe (née Rankin)



Born in 1941, Betty grew up with two brothers and two sisters first in Merrion Street and later in Pearse Street, where the family moved when she was seven years old. At the age of 15 she left Loretto National School in Leeson Lane and started to work in a sowing factory in Montague Street (off Harcourt Street). When her four children started school, she got involved in school activities and has been involved in community issues in Pearse Street ever since. Due to her commitment, she has been a community representative for the DDDA since 1997. Betty lives now in Upper Erne Street.

Paddy Ashmore



Born in 1935, Paddy grew up in Pearse House as the seventh child in a family of thirteen. He left City Quay National School at the age of 14 and for the next 20 years worked in a variety of jobs. After driving a bus for CIE and working at Irish Printers, he became a stock controller in the Mater Private Hospital, from which he retired in 2000. Married in 1961, the couple raised four children. Paddy now lives in Templeogue.

May Bird (née Richardson)



Born in 1929, May and her four sisters and three brothers grew up in a tenement house in Holles Street. When she left Baggot Street National Primary School, she started work as a receptionist. After years living in Holles Street, the family moved to Powers Court where they lived until May got married in 1953. Then she and her husband moved to Albert Court, where they raised three sons and one daughter. May loved going to the Greenore/Rostrevor Centre, where she had lots of friends. Unfortunately, May passed on shortly before this book was completed in February 2009.

Eileen Brennan



Eileen was born in 1924 and grew up in a tenement on Sir John Rogerson's Quay, together with three sisters, four brothers and her parents. Later the family moved to City Quay, where she went to school. At the age of fourteen, Eileen started work as a machinist in the Liverpool Motor Coat Company on Sir John Rogerson's Quay. She raised two children. Today, Eileen lives in Macken Street and enjoys her daily dinner in the Day Care Centre in St Andrew's Resource Centre.

Gerry Browne



Born in 13 Macken Street in 1934, Gerry spent his schooldays in St Andrew's school. In 1948 he started to work with the Esso company delivering oil, worked later for the British & Irish Steamship company, as a casual docker and store man on the docks and ended up as the worker director for the British and Irish Steam Packet Company. After an early retirement in 1992 he now lives in Townsend Street and pursues his favourite hobby: the history of the South Docks area.

Nina Buckley



Nina was born in 1972 and grew up in Pearse House. She has been involved in local youth clubs from a very young age, first on a voluntary basis, since 1996 as a professional youth worker in St Andrew's Resource Centre, where she is currently employed. In 2007, Nina and her two children Jordan and Shauna were allocated one of the new affordable apartments in Gallery Quay, where they moved in 2009.

Jordan Byrne



Born in 1995, Jordan lives in Pearse House with his sister Shauna and his mother Nina Buckley. He is a pupil at Marian College in Sandymount and is also involved in many youth activities in St Andrew's Resource Centre, such as the South Siders, the Wizz Kids (computer class) and the Mechanical Hippos, where he learnt to walk on stilts. Allocated one of the new apartments in Hanover Quay, he and his family will soon move to their new home.

Lily Byrne (née Maher)



Lily was born in Georges Quay in 1922 into a large family of ten. When she finished school at the age of fourteen, she did not go out to work, but she stayed at home to help her mother. After she got married at the age of twenty-two in The Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, City Quay, she and her husband moved to Queens Terrace, where they lived for ten years and raised four sons and one daughter. When the new developments started around Pearse Street, the family was re-housed in Leo Fitzgerald House. After twenty-eight years Lily moved with her daughter and her family to Ringsend where she is presently living.

May Byrne (neé Boylan)



Born in 1930, May grew up in one bedroom in Marks Lane with three brothers, one sister and her mother. Since her father had died very young, her mother ran a little shop selling coal. Later the family moved to Pearse House. May raised eight children. She presently lives in Albert Place and is an active member of the Greenore/Rostrevor Senior Citizen group.

Madge Carey (neé Byrne)



When Madge was born in 1933, she, two brothers and four sisters considered themselves one of the lucky families to live in 33A Moss Street Flats. At that time they were a luxury, as they had running cold water and a toilet. After her school days in Townsend Street Convent National Primary School Madge left school at the age of fourteen and got a job in the "Box Factory" in Poolbeg Street.

Two years later she got married and has since raised six children. She joined the Greenore/Rostrevor Club after her husband John had died.

Stephanie Cannon (neé Behan)



Stephanie and her twin sister were born in No 2 Railway Terrace off Macken Street in 1936. After spending her school days in Loretto Primary School, Stephanie went to work in a sewing factory and learned the trade as most girls did at that time. In 1970, she got married in Westland Row Church. After Dublin Corporation put a Compulsory Purchase Order on her house in Macken

Street, the family moved to Hogan Place, where she is still living today. Stephanie raised one son and has been on the Committee of Greenore/Rostrevor Community Centre since 1988.

Nancy Coburn (neé MacKeown)



Nancy was born in 1919. Living in South Gloucester Street with her parents, one sister and two brothers, she went to school in Townsend Street. At the age of 13, when her mother died, she left school to look after her family. At the age of 24, she got married and moved to Macken Street where she raised seven children. Today Nancy lives in Conway Court and enjoys her daily dinner in the Day Care

Centre of St Andrew's Resource Centre.

Tony Dalton



Tony was born in 1937 as the seventh of nine children. Shortly after his birth, the family moved from Townsend Street to Pearse House, which had just been completed. He left City Quay National School at the age of 14 and started work as a silversmith, at which he worked for 51 years until his retirement in 2005. An activist in the Gold Silver and Allied Trades Union Tony continued this when they amalgamated with the Irish Transport and General Workers Union. Married in 1960, the family raised five children. Tony lives in Ringsend.

Peter Grainger



Born in 1936, Peter grew up in Pearse House, before his family moved to Sandymount. He vividly remembers his hard school days in City Quay, which he left at the age of 14 to start as an apprentice tailor. Later he switched to become a sheet metal worker and copper-roofing specialist, going on to teach those subjects for some years. After marriage in the 1960s the couple

moved to Stillorgan where they have they raised four children.

Sylvester Keogh



Born in 1935, the middle of seven children, Sylvester grew up in the same block in Pearse House as his friend Paddy Ashmore. He happily recalls the thriving docks, its economies and incoming ships as his best education of the world. After leaving school, he started work in Dockrells, a large company of builders and household providers. After marriage in the 1960s, the couple moved out to Rathfarnham, where he still lives. He and his wife had four children.

Charlie Kinsella



Born in 1936, Charlie attended City Quay Boys National School until the age of 14. He then worked in Gilbey's Wine and Spirit Merchants, O'Connell Street, first in the storage areas and from adulthood in transport delivering their products around the city until his retirement. He and his wife raised six children. Charlie now lives in the north Dublin suburb of Coolock.

Patrick “Sonny” Kinsella



Sonny was born in 1935 and grew up in Townsend Street with his brother Charlie, four other brothers and two sisters in a one-room flat, which was later divided in two by his father. Till the age of seven, Sonny went to the Sisters of Mercy School in Townsend Street and then transferred to St Andrew's School in Pearse Street. At 14, left school and started first job as a messenger boy in Eason's and later moved on to stock control clerk. He then left Eason's to serve time in Harty Engineering in Ringsend, where he also organised a social and football club. After 16 years, he shifted to a new job in CPC, an American foods corporation, from which he retired in 1999. Sonny lives in Santry.

Ann (Nan) Masterson (néé Bergin)



Ann was born in No 5 Mark Street off Townsend Street in April 1929. Her family was one of the first in the area to move into Pearse House, where she grew up. She had seven brothers and seven sisters, some of whom died very young. At the age of fourteen, she left Townsend Street National Primary and went to work in O'Reilly's cardboard box factory in Poolbeg Street. After her marriage in 1952, the couple first moved to a little cottage facing

Pearse House, later to Leo Fitzgerald House and finally settled in a new house in Pearse Street, where Ann still lives today, after her husband died in 2003. A short while after, she joined the Club in the Greenore Centre where she has made many friends.

Tommy McDonald



Born in 1916, Tommy remembered with nostalgia his father's stables at Marsh Place, where he grew up. After working as a packer for a tile and brick company at Dolphin's Barn, he started in Wallaces's coal yard at the age of 20 and soon developed a special relationship with his cart horse Jack. His coal deliveries led him all over the city. Unfortunately, Tommy passed away in 2005 before this book was completed. He was buried in Mount Jerome Cemetery.

Peter Montgomery



Born in 1938, Peter spent his school days in City Quay National School. He left school at the age of 14, got a job on the railway, but shortly after left to join the Irish Army for three years. When his father Peter (better known as Blake Montgomery), a buttonman on the docks, got sick, his button was transferred to

Peter. This was the start of his long career on the docks. He later became involved in the Marine Port and General Workers Union, going on to become a senior national officer. After working for Port Rowe Stevedores and as HR officer, Peter retired from the docks in 2006.

Lindsey Mullen



Lindsey, born in 1984, grew up in Andrew's Court and went to school in Baggot Street and CBS Westland Row, where she received her Leaving Certificate. Lindsey has been actively involved in youth work in St Andrew's Resource Centre, first as participant and later as a volunteer. She and her partner had been living in a private apartment in Pearse Street for a couple of years, before they were allocated one of the new affordable apartments on Forbes Quay in 2008. Their first child Megan was born in 2007.

John Murray



John was born in 1937 as the second eldest in a family of eight. He grew up in Fenian Street before the family moved to new housing in Ringsend. John left City Quay School at the age of 14. After several jobs in Ireland and England, he went to work in Hammond Lane Foundry,

cutting up ships for scrap. When he was made redundant, he went to work in a meat factory for 25 years, becoming a supervisor and examiner. Finally he shifted to Government Buildings, from which he retired at the age of 60. He is still living in Ringsend.

Bart Nolan



Born in 1929, Bart was reared in Petersons Lane off Townsend Street, only one minute away from the docks where he was to spend most of his working life. While still a pupil at City Quay Boys National School, he worked after school hours driving a horse and cart collecting vegetables for his aunt's shop, and later delivering coal. After working in England for eleven years, Bart commenced working on the docks in Dublin, from which he retired in 1993. Married to Maureen in 1964, they moved out to live just off the Navan Road, where they reared one son, who became a top class swimmer. Today Bart is writing a book with the journalist Justine McCarthy on the subject of child abuse by swimming coaches.

Daniel O'Callahan



Daniel was born in 1994 and lives in Powers Court with his parents and three sisters and one brother. He is a pupil at CBS Westland Row and has also been involved in various youth activities at St Andrew's Resource Centre, among them the Wizz Kids computer club. As a member of the Mechanical Hippos he took part as a stilt walker in many community events, particularly the annual South Docks Festival.

Carmel O'Connor (née Wallace)



Carmel was born at home in Sir John Rogerson's Quay in August 1929, where she grew up with four brothers and three sisters. She left National Primary School in Townsend Street at the age of 14. After a month in her first job, her mother died. So she gave up work to look after her dad and the rest of the family, as the youngest sister was only twelve at the time. She stayed at home until she married her husband Christy, a local lad from South Princess Street in 1953. The couple raised two boys. When her husband passed away in 1998, Carmel joined the Greenore/Rostrevor Centre, where she is taking part in all the activities that take place there twice a week.

Betty O'Neill



Betty was born at home in 16 Brighton Terrace Dublin 4 in 1944, which is now called 95 Ringsend Road, and lived there with her parents, three brothers and two sisters. She left school in Lakelands Convent in Sandymount at the age of fourteen and started her work in a sewing factory called "Donada" in Waterloo Road. In 1974 the family moved to Hope Street, where she and her sister Marie presently live, after both her parents have passed away. She became involved in the Senior Citizens Centre in Greenore/Rostrevor, when she was caring for her mother, who loved day trips and events run by the committee, and is still an active member today.

Marie O'Neill



Born at home in 1942, Marie grew up with her sister Betty, one other sister and three brothers in 16 Brighton Terrace. After leaving school she worked in the New York Cleaners for thirty-eight years, until she became unemployed due to redundancy. When her parents suffered from health problems, she moved with them to their new home in Hope Street to care for them until they passed away.

Marie still lives in Hope Street with her sister Betty and is a member of the Greenore/Rostrevor Club.

Carmel O'Reilly (née Raythorn)



Born in 1921, Carmel lived with her parents, two sisters and four brothers in No 20 Pearse Square in two rooms in a large Georgian house. When she left school at the age of fourteen, Carmel started work in a shop in Moore Street, until she got married in 1946. After living for a while with her parents in Pembroke Cottages, she and her family moved to Pearse Street and later to her current home in Albert Place. Carmel raised five children and has been on the Greenore/Rostrevor Committee since 1989.

Paddy Pearse



Born in 1935, Paddy grew up in his grandfather's house in 32 Queen's Terrace. In 1937 he moved with his parents and 10 sisters and brothers to the newly built Pearse House. He spent many years working in Canada and is now, with his wife and daughter, settled back in Dublin. Paddy can trace his family links to the 1916 leader of the same name, Patrick Pearse.

Billy Ryan



Born in Dublin in 1954 to parents from Co. Wexford and Co. Tipperary, Billy moved with his family to the South Lotts in 1959, where he grew up with two brothers and six sisters. He has lived in the South Lotts ever since. After getting his leaving certificate in CBS Westland Row Billy started to work in the Irish Raleigh bicycle factory on Hanover Quay. He later worked for a yacht building company, studied at Kevin Street College, worked in Blackrock in a TV repair business, has worked for St Andrew's Resource Centre since the mid 1990s. He has been also involved in the Shelbourne Park resident association since the 1980s.

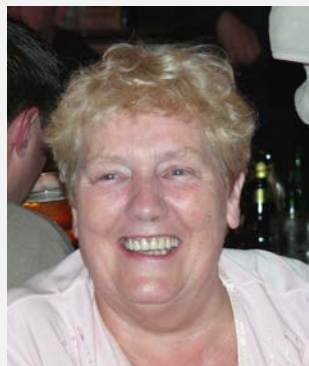
Christopher Sands



Born in 1937, the youngest of twelve children, Noel Christopher Sands grew up in the freshness of the newly built Pearse House. When he left City Quay Boy's National School at 14 in 1951, Chris started his first job at Jammet's Restaurant. In the following years, he continued his training in the high-quality restaurant business, until he became a full-time lecturer at the Dublin Institute of Technology and he has a long list of publications, in his subject

areas and others, to his credit. From DIT he retired after 32 years in 2003. Married in 1960, the couple moved northside, first to Santry and later to their current residence off Collins Avenue, Whitehall. They raised three children.

Betty Watson (née Woods)



Born in 1942, Betty lived in Townsend Street until her sixth birthday, when her family moved to the public housing complex of Markievicz House, where she grew up with six sisters and three brothers. At the age of 13 she left Townsend Street school to work in a sewing factory, as many girls did at that time. After her marriage in 1962, the

family lived in a tenement in Fenian Street, before they were offered a new flat in Ballymun. In 1979, they moved back to Hogan Place in the Pearse Street area, where she, her husband and her daughter Elizabeth are still living today. Betty has been involved in community work since 1976. She is a founder member of the Adult Education in St Andrews Resource Centre, where she spent eleven years on the Board of Management and still works today. She has also been a founder member of the tuition programme with Trinity College and has been Chairperson of the Greenore/Rostrevor Complex for the Elderly voluntary committee for the past twenty years. For her work in educational projects, Betty received an honorary M.A. award from Trinity College.

Noel Watson



Noel was born in 1965 as the second child of six and the eldest boy, to Peter and Betty Watson in Townsend Street. After he finished his Leaving Certificate in Westland Row CBS, he drifted from one job to another throughout the 1980s. In 1987 Noel settled for a time working nights in a tourist hostel off Dorset Street until he was made redundant in 1995.

Moving back to his parents' home was the only option as rent prices had increased dramatically in the course of the Celtic Tiger economy. He embarked yet again on another career this time as a youth worker, starting at the bottom of the ladder. Today Noel works as a Community Employment Supervisor for St Andrew's Resource Centre and lives in one of the new apartment complexes on Ringsend Road.

Dolores Wilson (née Rigley)



Born in 1948, Dolores remembers happy childhood days when she grew up in Clarence Place as the youngest of eight children. After her school days in Baggot Street National School, she started working at a sewing factory. At the age of 24, she got married and raised four children. As part of her commitment in the parish, Dolores got involved in community

work in the 1970s and has been a community activist ever since. She also represents her community on board the DDDA. Today she lives in Macken Street.

Emma Wilson



Dolores's daughter Emma was born in 1975 and grew up in Macken Street. At the age of 22, a few years after her leaving certificate in St Louis in Rathmines, she left the family home and moved to a "horrible place" in Percy Place. After an odyssey to various living places, she, her husband and two daughters got an apartment in the newly built Clarion Quay, before the finally settled into their current home in Gallery Quay. Emma has been working in various jobs for St Andrew's Resource Centre, before she took up her current position as a mediator in the job centre.

Astrid Wonneberger



Born in 1969, Astrid studied Social Anthropology at Hamburg University where she received a doctorate degree for her research on the Irish Diaspora in the United States. She first became interested in the Dublin dockland area in 2002, when she started to study the Dublin situation as part of a larger comparative research project on global waterfront transformation. This volume is part of the result of her cooperation with

St Andrew's Resource Centre and the residents of the Pearse Street community, with whom she became familiar with during her endeavours. She has also published on the same topic in academic journals and recently co-edited a volume on "Port Cities as Areas of Transition. Ethnographic Perspectives" (2008). Astrid holds a lecturer position at the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology at Hamburg University.