



CITY OF SYDNEY
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS

Name: Michael Toohey

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Place: Town Hall House

Interviewer: Lisa Murray

TRANSCRIPT

0.00 **MB:** This is an interview with Michael Toohey, conducted by Lisa Murray for the City of Sydney's History Programme on the 14th of May 2010.

LM: So, here we are. It's Friday, the 14th of May and my name is Lisa Murray and I am sitting here in Town Hall House with Michael Toohey and we're going to be talking about Waterloo and this is in relation to the history of Waterloo and to help me with my book on Redfern, Waterloo and Alexandria. O.K. Michael, so we might just start for the record if we could - - -

MT: Yes.

LM: - - - if you wouldn't mind giving us your full name and when you were born, if that's all right.

MT: Yes, I'll just consult my notes. Michael ***** Toohey ***** 1959, Crown Street Women's Hospital.

LM: Crown Street Women's Hospital?

MT: Yes.

LM: And I understand your family is a long term family in Waterloo.

MT: Yes, that's correct. My mother's family, the Madigan family, moved there in the 1880s or the 1890s, yes.

LM: And so can you tell me a little bit about your mother's family and their names?

MT: Yes, I'll try and remember, yes. James Madigan was the father. He came out – my mother's grandfather, James Madigan – came out from Ireland and he had a family in Surry Hills and he also had some more family in Elizabeth Street, Waterloo. He was a bootmaker.

LM: A bootmaker?

MT: Yes. And then he was in Elizabeth Street for a couple of years and then he moved into Morehead Street where he passed away after living there for ten years or something.

2.02 **LM: And so he was your mum's grandfather and then so then your mother's father and mother, what were their names?**

MT: My mother's mother's name was Lucelle, L-U-C-E-L-L-E, Lucelle Gertrude Lancaster and she was born in Chippendale, in Queen Street Chippendale in 1878. And her husband, John Joseph Madigan was born in Arthur Street, Surry Hills in 1871.

LM: And so that was when the Madigans were still in Surry Hills more rather than Waterloo?

MT: Yes, Waterloo. I think they moved to Waterloo about 1880, 1885 or something.

LM: And do you know how your mother's parents met?

MT: No, I don't, I don't. I can tell you that she was fifteen when they married and he was twenty one and they married in 1894.

LM: And was that when they moved to Waterloo or when - - -

MT: I think they were living in Waterloo then.

LM: When they got married?

MT: Yes, yes. They lived with his parents for a little while in Morehead Street before moving to Beaumont Street.

LM: O.K, so in Beaumont Street.

MT: That was Beaumont Street in 1903.

LM: And Beaumont Street, was that where your mother was born?

MT: Yes, yes.

LM: And what was your mother's name?

MT: Beryl Joyce Madigan.

4.01 **LM: And was she the eldest child or - - -**

MT: She's the youngest child.

LM: The youngest child?

MT: Born in 1920, yes, she was the youngest child and the eldest child was born in 1894.

LM: So it sounds like it's a fairly big family.

MT: It's eleven, eleven in the family, yes.

LM: Eleven children.

MT: Yes, seven of which were born in Beaumont Street.

LM: And was it a very big house in Beaumont Street?

MT: No, it was two rooms, it was a little cottage, two rooms with a separate kitchen out in the yard.

LM: That seems extraordinarily small to have eleven children in.

MT: Yes, it is. Mum, my mother said by the time she was born in 1920 half of her siblings were grown up and had families of their own – they were more like aunties and uncles.

LM: Yes. And so they would have been living elsewhere?

MT: Yes, around the area, yes.

LM: Still, even so five or six children remaining in a house with two rooms.

MT: Yes. Yes, yes, the girls slept in one room and the boys slept on the floor in the other room.

LM: And your mum's mum, she was looking after all those kids.

MT: Yes.

LM: Did she work or - - -

MT: No, she was a housekeeper, she was just a mother and a housewife and she used to take in washing and ironing from the neighbours in order to make ends meet.

LM: O.K, so for a bit of extra money for the family.

MT: Yes, to feed the family, yes.

LM: And they would have gone through the Depression, I guess, living there?

MT: Yes, yes, they did. I think they went through a couple of depressions but the one in the 1930s was the really severe one.

LM: Yes. And did your mother have any memories of that, that she passed on to you?

5.59 MT: Yes, yes. They had to scrimp and save. She had a bantam - my uncle found a bantam somewhere - and she used to dress it up in doll's clothes and put it in a little pram and wheel it around.

LM: And bantam, we're talking a bantam chicken.

MT: A rooster chicken, yes, yes, it's a rooster, yes, yes, and that was her little toy or plaything, yes. And she used to have to go up to the local bakery up in Wellington Street with a pillow slip and get thruppence worth of broken biscuits to feed the family, yes.

LM: Yes, so again, I guess, trying to get things to make ends meet.

MT: Yes, yes. The whole family left school at leaving age at fourteen or twelve, whatever the age of the day was, and worked and brought their money home, gave it to their mother and then their mother gave them their spending money from that.

LM: Right, so it was really about supporting the family as a whole?

MT: That's correct, yes, yes.

LM: And what was the name of the bakery that your mum went up to?

MT: My mother said it was Gartrell White's Bakery, yes.

LM: And that was on Wellington Street?

MT: Wellington Street, at the top of Walker Street.

LM: O.K, yep. And what did you mum's father do?

MT: He was, like his father he was a bootmaker.

LM: He was a bootmaker as well?

MT: Yes, yes, yes.

LM: And what did your mum do when she left school?

MT: She worked in the boot trade too.

LM: She worked in the boot trade as well?

MT: Yes. She worked at Hunter's, opposite Redfern Park and she also worked at McEvoy's, which I think was in Chippendale, I think, yes.

LM: And did she have a particular job that she did in the trade?

MT: She said she was a perforator.

LM: O.K. I think that's - - -

8.01 MT: Puts the holes in the shoes, yes.

LM: - - - yes, I think that's to put the holes, I suppose, for the laces and things as well?

MT: I suppose so, yes, yes, and patterns and things, I imagine, yes.

LM: And so did she continue doing that work in the boot trade once she got married?

MT: Yes, she did, and when she fell pregnant with my brother she had to leave work then and she never went back.

LM: Right, O.K.

MT: Yes, so she left work about 1944.

LM: And when did your parents meet?

MT: They met at the Austral Bronze Ball; my father worked at the Austral Bronze in Alexandria – he grew up in Beaconsfield.

LM: Austral Bronze.

MT: Yes, and they met at the Austral Bronze Ball.

LM: And what was the name of your father?

MT: Thomas Harold Toohey.

LM: Do you know where the Austral Bronze Ball was held?

MT: No. It may have been Waterloo Town Hall, it may have been Alexandria Town Hall, one of those two places.

LM: Yes, because the factory was located between those two.

MT: It was in O’Riordan Street, yes, yes.

LM: Yes.

MT: Yes, that’s correct, it could have been any one of those two places; I’m not sure where it was held. It may have been Waterloo Town Hall, I don’t know. My parents married in Mount Carmel Church and they had their reception, wedding reception, in Waterloo Town Hall.

LM: Did they?

MT: Yes.

LM: Would that have been upstairs in the main hall?

MT: Upstairs. Yes, yes, that was upstairs, yes.

LM: Isn’t that lovely?

MT: Yes.

LM: Because, of course, the town hall is pretty much opposite the church, isn’t it?

MT: That’s correct, yes, yes.

LM: Did the church ever have sort of wedding receptions in the hall that they have there?

10.04 MT: No, not as far as I know.

LM: No. So I guess a lot of families probably did the same in the area - - -

MT: Same thing, yes.

LM: - - - getting married at the Mount Carmel Church and then going across - - -

MT: Yes, I suppose they would have, yes.

LM: - - - to the town hall, yes.

MT: Yes.

LM: Do you know if it was a big wedding?

MT: Yes, it was a big wedding, yes. Yes, I have photos of it that I'll show you.

LM: Really?

MT: Yes. Yes, it was a big affair, it was a big affair.

LM: And a lot of their family was living in the area, were they?

MT: Yes, yes, yes, yes. Dad's family was Beaconsfield and mum's was all Waterloo and yes.

LM: And when they got married did they find a place of their own?

MT: They lived with my mother's sister in Kepos Street, Redfern – is that the right pronunciation - - -

LM: Yes, yes.

MT: - - - for six months. Then when there was a house became available in Walker Street they rented that and then they had the opportunity to purchase it, so they paid it off. They lived there six months after they were married, so in the middle of 1941 they would have moved there - they were there for over fifty years.

LM: Wow. And that's where you grew up, in Walker Street?

MT: Yes, that's correct, in Walker Street, yes, yes.

LM: And you mentioned that you have at least one brother.

MT: Yes, I do. It's just my brother and I; there's nearly fifteen years' difference between us.

LM: O.K. That's a kind of big gap.

MT: Yes, yes. Yes, he went to Mount Carmel School, yes, and yes.

LM: And where did you go to school?

MT: I went to school at Cleveland Street. I went to Cleveland Street for a little while and when I went into second class they turned it into a high school and then I went to Waterloo School for my primary years and then back to Cleveland Street.

LM: And then back to Cleveland Street again?

MT: Yes, yes.

LM: And so would a lot of people have done the same thing as well, sort of had to like go to Waterloo?

MT: Yes.

LM: Cleveland Street, did that become the main high school for the area?

12.02 MT: Yes, it did. Yes, yes, it did. Those that didn't go to Mount Carmel went to Cleveland Street and some left Cleveland Street and went to George Street School.

LM: George Street School?

MT: Yes, Redfern, Redfern, George Street, Redfern.

LM: Yes, yes, of course.

MT: Redfern School. Yes, my mother went to George Street School and Mount Carmel, she went to both of them and, yes, and so I went to Waterloo and then back to Cleveland Street and a lot of them went to Redfern, George Street School and then back to Cleveland Street.

LM: And back to Cleveland. But there wasn't really another high school around the district, was there?

MT: No, no, no, only Sydney Boys' High School but that was an exclusive school.

LM: Yep, O.K.

MT: Yes, and it was a fair way away.

LM: Did you have to do tests to get into the Sydney Boys' High, was that how that one worked?

MT: I think you did, I think you had to have a sibling there already or you had to pass an exam.

LM: Right, yes, right. But Cleveland Street School was just a school that it covered the whole area and that took everyone?

MT: Yes, yes, people from Glebe went to Cleveland Street as well.

LM: O.K, right.

MT: Because there was nothing else around.

LM: There was nothing else around, no, no. And so you went through high school. What are your memories of going to school?

MT: High school or primary school?

LM: Primary, we'll start with primary school.

MT: Primary school, yes, we used to walk – I used to walk up Walker Street to a friend of mine's place in Kellick Street – Wayne Steele – and then we'd watch a bit of tele and then we'd walk to school and we'd walk down past Mount Carmel Church, through the park into Pitt Street and there'd be Cottee's cordial factory there and we'd go 'round the back and get into the oranges. They had big wooden crates of oranges behind their factory and we used to get a couple of oranges and eat them going to school, yes. Yes, because I remember doing that.

14.02 **LM: Just liberating a couple on the way?**

MT: That's right, yes, and the Housing Commission was in full swing and they'd pulled down a lot of the old terrace housing in Pitt Street and Green Street had gone and Mary Street, they'd all gone, I don't remember those, and Phillip Street was just a lane, it was like Phillip Lane, it was narrow, and that was all vacant land and we just used to walk through there on the way to school and circuses used to set up their tents there - - -

LM: Really?

MT: - - - when the circus came to town, yes. So I went to a few circuses on those blocks of land over the years.

LM: Would they come sort of around school holiday time or any time of year?

MT: Yes, yes, around school holiday time, yes, yes.

LM: Do you remember the names of any of the circuses?

MT: No, I don't, I was too little. But they had elephants and lions and things and monkeys, yes.

LM: That would have been really exciting - - -

MT: It was.

LM: - - - having them just setting up in amongst sort of, you know, the vacant land and then just all the houses around.

MT: Yes, just a big – yes, yes. There was a large clearance of houses, it was mostly paddocks, yes, and we used to play when they were building the flats and new housing, we used to play in the estates as they were building them, you know, with fireworks and things like that. We had cracker nights and stuff, yes.

LM: And things like Cracker Night, would you go to one of the parks or was that something you'd just do around in the streets?

MT: No, we did it in the street; we did it in the street. We all got out in the street and shared our crackers and lit off skyrockets and threw crackers at one another and watched, you know, flowerpots go up in smoke and stuff like that, put 'em underneath and let off – kids, yes, yes.

LM: And I always think that going past places like the cordial factory, you know, Cottee's and things - - -

MT: Yes.

LM: - - - there must have been some pretty nice smells coming out and there were things like Stedman Henderson's Sweetacres further down at Rosebery and - - -

16.05 MT: That was, yes, Rosebery, yes, yes – my auntie worked there.

LM: Really, did she?

MT: Yes, yes, she worked there, yes. Yes, I don't know what she did there but she worked there for a little while. I don't remember when it was – I remember the factory being there but I don't know when it was operating.

LM: Remember when it was going, yes.

MT: Yes. There was the toffee apple lady came around on a Sunday in an old FC Holden – that's the one with the round stoplight and the diamond blinker on the back – 1962, I think, and, yes, she'd come 'round, ringing the bell and she'd have two baskets, one with green ones and one with red ones of a Sunday and she'd charge you sixpence for them.

LM: Was that a lot of money at the time?

MT: No, it was about twenty cents now, I think, or it might be a dollar now, it's a bit hard to say. Ice creams were sixpence and you get a huge, big brown paper bag full of lollies, mixed lollies, for sixpence.

LM: And where was your favourite place to go get your mixed lollies from?

MT: Paddy's Milk Bar in Elizabeth Street at the bottom of Raglan Street – it's a dentist's now. He made the most creamy milkshakes and ham rolls. He'd have this cupboard with bread in it and he'd open up the sliding cupboard and the smell of the fresh bread would just waft out and he'd cut the roll in half and he'd cut the ham off the bone, he'd give you two liberal slices of ham off the bone. And you'd have that and you'd have a chocolate milkshake and that'd be it.

LM: I'm salivating.

MT: Yes, it was great, it was really good, yes. There was a shop next door to where I grew up for a little while before it closed, yes, Whizby's. Whizby's, it was called Whizby's, yes, a fellow called Whizby.

LM: That's an interesting name, Whizby. Is it with a Z or with an S?

MT: Don't know. Didn't know him but - - -

17.56 **LM: Yes, you just knew Mr Whizby.**

MT: - - - but I just went in – I was only tiny, yes, I was only small, yes. I only went in there for some lollies or something, I can't really remember. But my mother and father and my brother and different ones, they could remember. I'd only heard them refer to it as Whizby's shop.

LM: Yes.

MT: So, that's the only reason I knew it – I might have been five or six when it closed down. And there was a farrier opposite us; Normie Stead was a farrier, used to shoe horses; he used to do a lot of

trotters. And do you remember Penfolds, the stationers, the horse that used to go around Penfolds?

LM: Yes, I do.

MT: He used to shoe those horses too.

LM: Right, specifically for Penfolds?

MT: Yes, for the old driver, the driver that used to drive the horse – his name was Eric and he was an old guy and Normie Stead used to shoe the horses. We as kids used to stand there and watch him; we were fascinated.

LM: And that was just happening opposite you where you were living in Walker Street?

MT: Yes, yes, yes, on the corner of Clarendon Street and, yes – the house would have been on the corner of Phillip Street and Walker Street and the back shed was his workshop. He had all his tools there and he had a fire – it must have been a gas fire, I think – he used to turn it on and heat the coal up and then he'd put the horseshoes in and pull them out and bash them, put them on the anvil and hit them with the hammer and file the hoof of the horse.

LM: And so there must have been people coming up and down the street all the time on their horses to get them shod?

MT: Oh, in trucks, in floats.

LM: In horse floats?

MT: In horse floats, yes. The only one that didn't was the Penfold fellow. He's have his horse behind the cart, one pulling the cart and the other one following the other one.

LM: Right.

MT: Yes, yes.

LM: And you mentioned that he also shod some of the trotters around.

MT: Yes, from Randwick or Moore Park – you know, it was the Sydney Showground, yes, I suppose, yes.

20.04 **LM:** Because there were a number of racetracks, I think, around the area for a long time.

MT: Before I was born, yes.

LM: Before you were born?

MT: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. Victoria Park in Zetland there and there was Rosebery where Eastlakes Shopping Centre is now.

LM: Yep, yep.

MT: There was Kensington, which is where the University of New South Wales is and there was Ascot which is where Sydney Airport is now, at the bottom of Wentworth Avenue it was, on Botany Road. And, yes, that was about it, I think. There was another one, Moorefields, where Captain Cook High School, James Cook High School is, there was another one. And you had Randwick and Canterbury and Rosehill.

LM: So, yes, there was quite a few in the immediate area at one stage.

MT: Yes, yes, nobody had anything to do and nobody had any money, so that was their entertainment. They'd go to the cricket ground or the sportsground and watch a fight, a title fight. If it was really big then it'd be on at the sportsground.

LM: Yes. Did you go and watch sport very much?

MT: I used to go to Redfern and watch South Sydney play.

LM: Yes.

MT: Yes, that was about it, yes.

LM: And would you sort of go down basically whenever there was a home game?

MT: Yes, yes, just with our friends, with my mates and we'd go down there and we'd collect bottles, get the money on the bottles and buy some lollies after the game, yes, smoke the cigarette butts that people had dropped on the ground, we used to get into them. We used to play football on the oval after the game and when they were training we'd go over and we'd have a game of football amongst ourselves when Souths were training, yes.

LM: Get a bit of inspiration.

MT: That's right, yes, yes, yes.

LM: And so after you went to Waterloo Public you went off to Cleveland High School?

22.06 MT: Yes, yes.

LM: Do you have any particular memories going there?

MT: No, not really. We used to walk – I used to walk through Redfern Park and up Chalmers Street, yes, that was about it. No, no particular memories there.

LM: What subjects did you take in high school?

MT: I took history, music, woodwork and metalwork, yes, yes.

LM: And with music did you learn a musical instrument?

MT: Yes, I learnt the recorder.

LM: Yep.

MT: Yes, I learnt the recorder, yes, yes. I used to play that and I got my appreciation of classical music from the teachers in the music class – yes, it was good.

LM: Do you enjoy going to hear classical music today?

MT: I do, yes, yes. We used to go to the Sydney Town Hall - - -

LM: Yes.

MT: - - - and to the Sydney Symphony Orchestra of an afternoon whenever they were playing – it may have been a rehearsal, I don't know - we used to sit up in the gallery and a lot of other schools came as well but I do remember that and I used to enjoy that and we went to the Opera House a couple of times, yes.

LM: And woodwork and metalwork, I guess you really enjoyed that?

MT: That was good. We were making things, you know, stools and seats and toolboxes and decorative wooden pieces for the ball and, yes, pencil cases. And for metalwork we'd make metal forks, barbeque tools and door stops, you know, for to stop your door from slamming, yes, yes, and stuff like that – that was good, yes, yes.

LM: And when did you leave school?

MT: I left school at the age of seventeen, seventeen in 1977 – 1976 I left school. Yes, got a job with my father at Frank Cridland in Young Street as the storeman and packer.

LM: O.K.

24.06 MT: Yes, and I was there for a little while and they retrenched me from there because I wasn't old enough to get my forklift ticket, yes, fork driver's ticket. So I got a job then in a printery in Rosebery, Bridge Printery. I was there for twelve months and then they put me off and I finished up in Applied Power in O'Riordan Street near Collins Street; they made rescue equipment for the rescue workers, for the police and the ambulance and stuff, to cut people out of cars and homes and stuff like that, yes. And then my uncle got me an interview on the South Sydney Municipal Council 1978 so I've never looked back, yes.

LM: And so you've been with South Sydney Council and City of Sydney Council since then, is that right?

MT: That's correct, yes. Yes, South Sydney, City, South Sydney, City, that's it, yes.

LM: Yes, with the amalgamations and in and out - - -

MT: Yes, that's right.

LM: - - - as the boundaries change.

MT: Yes. I was four and a half years in the Parks Department, at Beaconsfield Park.

LM: And you specifically looked after Beaconsfield Park, did you?

MT: Beaconsfield Park and the areas, area of Beaconsfield. Yes, O'Riordan Street, Bourke Road and all the other streets in between, Queen Street and Victoria Street and Ralph, Gillespie Avenue, right up to Gardeners Road; we used to mow Gardeners Road and trim the poplar trees and stuff like that. And then I went into the survey, into the City Council, when City Council amalgamated with South Sydney I went into the Survey branch then. And I was there for twenty five years and now I'm with Assets, yes.

LM: And what do you do in the Assets area here?

MT: I'm a footway inspector. I walk the streets, looking for trip hazards and graffiti and stuff like that, yes.

26.04 **LM: So you wouldn't be based very much in the office, you're out and about a lot, are you?**

MT: I'm out and about in the morning and in the afternoon you download it into the system, the computer system, and it gets sent to the depots to fix.

LM: Right. And that's all a sort of automated process - - -

MT: Yes.

LM: - - - once you've documented it?

MT: Yes, yes.

LM: And how do you document it, Michael?

MT: You have a Dictaphone and you go out and speak into the Dictaphone. You give a trip, it might be a tree root damage and people could trip over it and you say what the trip is and you give an address, nearest cross street and then you come back to work and I write it down - like you do, you listen to the recording - and then I put it into a database system. I find out where the trip is and there's four different areas and they go to the different council depots and depending where it is you send it to that particular depot.

LM: And are you responsible for a particular area that you have to patrol?

MT: Yes. I'm not responsible for one area. When people are too busy to look after their area properly, because they might be away for various reasons, I'll go into that area while they're away and then I'll maintain that area for them till they get back and then I'll go to another area - which is good, because I'm at a different area regularly. I go from Rushcutters Bay out to Rosebery and, you know, Glebe and Paddington, like yes, yes. Yes, so it's great, I walk everywhere.

LM: And you must know the city very well then.

MT: I do, yes.

LM: All the streets and - - -

27.54 MT: Yes, yes. I enjoy going back to the old haunts that I grew up in and look around but it's not the same. It's new; time marches on and things change; people move out and new people move in to start a life of their own and, you know, it's not the same as it was; we're too independent now, yes.

LM: And you were telling me before that Waterloo changed a lot when the Department of Housing came in.

MT: That's right, because a lot of strangers moved into the area. The elderly people moved out and retired up the Central Coast or wherever they moved to and those that stayed behind gradually faded away and new people moved in that didn't have any history of the area and they - - -

LM: No sort of connections.

MT: No, no connections, they came from everywhere, all different suburbs and walks of life and they didn't know who the old identities were and what they were about and stuff like that; they didn't have a belonging of Waterloo.

LM: And these changes would have been happening all while you were growing up?

MT: Yes, while I was going to school, yes, yes. They happened gradually; with all change it happens gradually, you don't really notice it. They pulled down the old houses where your friends used to live and where my mother's friends lived and they put up new housing and, yes, it's just not the same. Young people move in with their own families and some elderly people but, yes, they don't have a history. They probably do now but at the time then in the '70s and '80s they didn't have a history of it; they just thought it was always like it is when they moved in there.

LM: So I guess for the Waterloo community that's quite a disjuncture, isn't it, it's like quite a wrench - - -

MT: Yes, yes.

LM: - - - because you're a third generation Waterloo family?

MT: Yes, yes.

30.00 **LM: And there must have been, I suppose, a lot of your friends - - -**

MT: They moved away.

LM: Yes.

MT: Yes, they moved away, yes. Whenever there's a death from someone from Waterloo and they get buried from Mount Carmel the whole of Waterloo turns out to them. They might be living up the Central Coast or Wollongong or somewhere and yet they'll make an effort to come back and say farewell to their friend or their relative and you catch up with people you haven't seen for twenty years or something like that. And it doesn't seem like that, you just automatically just gel and you talk and you reminisce, and it's really good to do that and I find it really, really interesting that even to this day that someone that's moved away from Waterloo for twenty years, if they come back to get buried from Mount Carmel Church then the whole of the community will come back to say farewell to them, yes.

LM: So, the Mount Carmel Church was really a very central part of the community at Waterloo?

MT: Yes, yes, it was, yes, yes.

LM: And you got baptised - - -

MT: Yes, I got baptised there, yes. My parents got – well, my mother got baptised there too.

LM: As well as being married there.

MT: Married there and confirmed and all the rest of it, yes.

LM: Yes. And we've got here the commemorative centenary issue from 1959 when you were baptised.

MT: Yes. Yes, that's correct. It's an article saying 'Baptisms for the month of August 1959' – it was their centenary issue, yes, and they put it out. And I remember - I know all these shops.

LM: Shops. So, around this centenary issue of the Mount Carmel Messenger there's a whole lot of different advertisements for different shops.

MT: Yes, yes.

LM: What are some of your memories of these shops, Michael?

31.59 MT: Clancy's Butcher Shop were there – I think his father was there before him – he was on the corner of Wellington Street and Elizabeth Street opposite the hotel, the George Hotel, and he's been there, he knew all my mother's family and I knew him – he had sawdust on the floor, yes, to catch the blood, yes, I remember him going into there. And there was another butcher shop, not that one (indicates visually) but there was another butcher shop on the opposite corner of Phillip Street, it was the side of the road, Phillip Street and Elizabeth Street, there was a butcher shop there but we didn't go – and there was a butcher shop in the middle between Raglan Street and Phillip Street and another butcher shop there and a fruit shop and a fruit shop up next to the butcher shop in Wellington Street and it was like a community. And there was a hairdresser's and there were other grocery shops and there was a post office with a park behind it. We used to play in that park but it's not there any more, the park; when they built the new post office they used all the land.

LM: All the land?

MT: Yes. And, yes, so there was a whole – it was like a little village and they were all like villages then; that was where you did your shopping, yes.

LM: And with Mount Carmel Church, did your parents or did you go regularly to church?

MT: My auntie took me to church, my father's sister. She was a spinster and she used to go to church regularly and I used to spend Saturday afternoons with her. We'd go to the pictures or the zoo or the Botanic Gardens or a ferry ride somewhere or on the bus somewhere. And I'd spend the night there at my nanna's in Beaconsfield and we'd walk up the next morning, we'd walk up to Mount Carmel Church. So I went to church till I was about twelve, I think, regularly at Mount Carmel, yes. Father Payne was the parish priest and then after that was Father Doyle, yes, yes.

34.02 **LM: And did a lot of your school friends go to the church as well or did you have sort of different friends at the church?**

MT: I had different friends. I had friends from Beaconsfield where I spent my Saturdays and I had friends from Waterloo where I lived, you know, and some friends went to Mount Carmel Church but not a lot of them.

LM: But it was still very much part of the community because of all the rituals and - - -

MT: Oh, yes, I knew everybody, everybody knew me that was at that church, they knew who I was and stuff like that. None of us kids, we can never, ever get up to any mischief. We used to get up to mischief as all kids do and when you got home you'd get a belting because your parents'd know about it before you got home. Someone would've seen you doing something you shouldn't have been doing and because they would know my family, yes. Yes, that was the only regret.

LM: You're too well known.

MT: That's right, yes, yes.

LM: So what sort of mischief did you try and get up to?

MT: Oh, we used to play "knock down ginger" which you knocked on people's doors and ran away before they opened them, you know, that sort of thing, yes. Smashed a few windows in derelict buildings, yes, and got into backyards, into people's backyards and we'd swing around on the clothesline, yes.

LM: And you mentioned there were sort of a few abandoned houses because of the way that the Department of Housing sort of took over or resumed the houses.

MT: Yes, yes, that was sad. We used to break into the yards and play in the houses, you know, something to do.

LM: Yes.

MT: We used to make our own fun, yes, yes, when we weren't going over to Redfern Park and playing footie. And we played cricket in the street and we'd play chasings and hidings and things like that, we'd play it all in the street and the cars'd come past and you'd have a go at them for coming past while you were playing cricket or football or whatever it was – touch football.

36.08 A lot of my family lived in the street or around, around the different areas and I grew up with the second cousins, with my cousins' kids; yes, we were all pretty close.

LM: And so this is all in Walker Street?

MT: Walker Street, yes, and Phillip Street, yes, yes.

LM: So how many of your, I guess, extended family were in there? So you're in Walker Street?

MT: Yes, and there was me cousin had a family opposite in Walker Street and another cousin had a family in Phillip and Beaumont Street on the corner, yes, yes. That's funny.

LM: And then you sort of went further afield, down to Beaconsfield on Saturdays?

MT: Yes, that's my father's, yes, family where he grew up, yes, yes.

LM: And that was the thing you did at - - -

MT: And I had other cousins down there, lived in Victoria Street.

LM: In Victoria Street?

MT: Yes, yes.

LM: And was that a regular thing, you did it every Saturday, sort of go down to your - - -

MT: Yes, down to my grandparents' place and my auntie used to take me out in the – I'd get down there about lunchtime and she'd take me into town, into the pictures and, as I said, or to the zoo or the Botanic Gardens was a favourite or we'd go on a ferry ride to anywhere, you know, Manly or Watsons Bay or Lane Cove River. Yes, she'd just take me out and she said she enjoyed it because she got out herself as a result, yes; her and I were very close.

LM: That's nice.

MT: Yes, yes.

LM: And was she staying with your grandparents to sort of look after them - - -

MT: Yes.

LM: - - - because she was the spinster?

MT: She was the spinster, yes. Yes, so she looked after the grandparents, yes, yes. And then there was mum's sisters brought me up as well. One lived in Wellington Street and another one lived in Kepos Street and another one was out at Mascot, moved from Alexandria out to Mascot – she married a milkman and he had a milk run in Waterloo.

38.14 Yes, yes, he came from Mascot to Waterloo; he had a milk run in Waterloo and he used to deliver our milk for us and a lot of other people with milk. And he used to collect the money of a Saturday morning - he had three people working for him, one in Alexandria, he was in Waterloo and I don't know where the other – might have been parts of Redfern, I'm not real sure but I know it was Alexandria and Waterloo – and they used to collect the money of a Saturday and he used to go to the local pub and like count the money while he was having a drink and a bet and stuff like that. And nobody batted an eyelid, they just let him be and, yes – you wouldn't get away with it now.

LM: No.

MT: And it was milk with the cream on the top. They were in glass bottles with metal caps, bottle tops on 'em, you know. We used to get the bottle tops and flick 'em like a flying saucer, yes. Yes, so I spent a fair bit of time out there as well. My cousin'd pick me up after he'd finished the run about two o'clock in the afternoon before I'd go to kindergarten or when I got home, he'd take me out there and his mother'd bath me and then my brother had just got his licence and he'd go out there and pick me up and bring me back home.

LM: So you - - -

MT: So I had about four mothers.

LM: Yes, it sounds like you were very well looked after and loved and cared for by a lot of family.

MT: Yes, 'cause they were a very close family, living on top of one another, like in that little home, in that little house and they were a

very, very close family and all the cousins were reared by all the aunties, yes; it was just the mothering instinct, yes.

LM: And did you enjoy that, being able to sort of play with all your cousins and - - -

MT: Yes, yes, yes. As I say, they were my cousins' kids really, my second cousins.

40.02 **LM: Your second, yes.**

MT: Yes, 'cause see my mother was the youngest of eleven and half her family was married and moved away when she was born and my brother was born in 1944, I was born in 1959, so there's a big gap there; he was nearly fifteen when I was born. And, yes, so mum was forty, I think, when I was born, yes, so I mostly grew up with me second cousins and stuff.

LM: Yes.

MT: Yes.

LM: That would have been good.

MT: It was.

LM: And you said you went out with your aunt to the pictures and the city and stuff. Where did you go, do you remember the name of the theatre at all that you used to go or what you used to watch or anything like that?

MT: Used to watch Disney movies. We seen Mary Poppins at the St James Theatre, she said, she told me it was on at the St James - I don't remember but that's what she said. And, yes, we'd go to all the theatres in town, go to the Plaza, which is McDonalds now in George Street and we'd go to the Century, which was next door to that, to the Plaza and all the movies that were in town and we went to them all and, yes. And we'd go to Manly, yes, and, yes, the Botanic Gardens; I used to like chasing the pigeons in the Botanic Gardens and stuff like that. It was good, yes, yes, and she'd tell me stories about her mother and father, so I used to enjoy listening to them.

LM: And you're an avid family historian, I understand.

MT: Oh yes, I've got the family history bug. I've traced my family back in Australia and stuff like that because my father's mum's people came from Paddington; he was a soldier at Victoria Barracks and he was on Fort Denison and my nanna was born at Middle Head at the fortifications at Middle Head there, she was born there and, yes, so there's a lot of history, there's a lot of history there, yes, yes.

42.11 **MB:** But you weren't as close to that side of the family so much?

MT: No, no, I wasn't as close, no, my grandmother being in Waterloo. I was about six, I think, when she died but I still spent some time up there, yes.

LM: And are there any other particular shops that you remember around the area that I should keep my eye out when I'm looking at maps and things like that?

MT: Not that I can remember. There was a fire; a service box caught fire in Phillip Street. It's corner of Marriott, Marriott Street and the little lane, Blackburn Lane or something, that block at the bottom of – you come up Phillip Street and the pub's on the corner, you go down over the hill towards Moore Park there and then it's just at the bottom of the hill but that caught fire and my father took me to watch that smoulder like after it was all over, that caught fire. And Gartrell White's Bakery which was David Lynn's Liquor, that building caught fire up the top of Walker Street, we watched that. And the terraces caught fire.

LM: The terraces?

MT: Yes, the terrace homes caught fire in 1988, I think. 1988, 1989, something like that, yes, in January. There's an article in the paper; I have to go to the Mitchell Library and copy it for you and that took out the whole terraces from the middle north, north, northerly, and it stopped at my mum and dad's home because the shop, it got pulled down, the shop, and there was another double storey place built and it had a double wall so there was no oxygen for the fire to spread so it stopped at my parents' home, so they just got smoke damage.

44.06 Then – that was in January – in the August they were flooded. A water main burst outside Redfern Park; where the baby health centre used to be at Redfern Park, that burst, so they were under a metre of water or more. Their home got flooded and me uncle got carried out by ambulance officers, I think, waded out in the water because he lived in Phillip Street. So I'll get those articles for you.

LM: Yes, yes.

MT: Yes, that was interesting: fire and flood.

LM: To survive the fire and flood and at once.

MT: Yes. So that added to the demise of those homes too because they were never repaired, they were just left and the new places built, yes. But when I get into my storage – which will be this weekend – I'll sift

through it and see what I've got. I've lent some stuff to other members of the family and once you do that you can kiss it goodbye.

LM: It sometimes happens that way, yes.

MT: You know, it just happens that way but it's all replaceable.

LM: And you also know a little about the shooting that was at Waterloo Town Hall.

MT: Oh, it's only what I got told.

LM: Yes, but a lot of people talk about it.

MT: Do they?

LM: But I haven't heard – yes, a lot of people sort of say “Oh, and there was that shooting at Waterloo Town Hall”.

MT: Yes.

LM: So what have you heard about it?

MT: Well, I got told the names but I've forgotten the names. There was a benefit on for a barmaid, to raise money for a barmaid – she must have been ill or going into hospital or something – and the shooter – it was a revenge killing – and the shooter – or he might have been stabbed. It was shooting, wasn't it?

LM: I think it was a shooting.

45.55 MT: Yes. Anyway, the shooter was dressed up as a woman and they were all dancing around together and when he got to where the chap that he had to kill he shot him. And some of them witnessed it, some of my family witnessed it and one bloke dived out the window, out the open window to get away before the police came to interview them and other people - as soon as the police turned up other people ran, scooted through the policemen's legs and stuff like that and, yes, they just got out of there but a lot of people didn't realise he was dead until they saw the blood on the ground, they thought he'd just collapsed.

LM: Right.

MT: Yes, yes. I don't know if they caught the – I don't think they caught the assailant 'cause he was dressed as a woman.

LM: So no one really knew who he was?

MT: No, I don't think so. I think the local people knew all about it, you know, that knocked around those circles.

LM: Yes, but they didn't talk about it?

MT: No, no, you looked after your own; you just minded your own business and stuff like that.

LM: Yes, yes.

MT: Yes.

LM: And I was wondering how much you're aware of things like – I understand that the Cauliflower Hotel had a bit of a reputation and someone was telling me the other day that Roger Rogerson killed a bagman out the back of there and was like “Really?”

MT: He might have, yes, yes, he could've. I didn't hear anything about that, I didn't hear anything about that at all, I don't know, but that could've went on; that sort of thing went on. There was opposite my grandmother's place in Beaumont Street there was the backyards of the places in Elizabeth Street and one of them was Johnny Ferrier lived there and he was a gangster or a goonster, whatever you want to call him, and he had a reputation and people were frightened of him but he looked after his own. My mother said she'd never felt safer walking down the street. There was his gang was coming towards her in Beaumont Street and he was with them and she was just walking along, going to a dance, I think.

48.05 Anyway, Johnny Ferrier, this gangster seen her and threw his white handkerchief to her and asked her to get that “muck” off her face, that she was done up too much, and she had to wipe all the makeup off her face, so she didn't have any makeup on and he asked two of his gang to escort her wherever she wanted to go. And she said “I don't need an escort, Johnny”. He said “These people will look after you, Beryl, don't worry about it”. “But I don't want” – “Beryl, just let 'em go with you, eh”. So she did and she never felt safer, you know. Everyone said he had a reputation and he was this and that. She said “I never found him like that”. Her mother used to tell him what to do; everyone was frightened of Mrs Madigan.

LM: Really?

MT: Oh yes, because she was such a strong person. Like, she was a lovely person and a kind person and charitable and people respected her so much that her word was law and he used to do all he could for her, yes. So, for people that knew other people there was like – it must have been like a code or they looked after their own and she was very safe, her and her siblings and I imagine other people of the area would have felt just as safe with him around. And the Mangan family were part of the Waterloo Push in Beaumont Street.

LM: Yes.

MT: They lived in Beaumont Street, the Mangans, when that barmaid got raped in Moore Park. Did you hear about that?

LM: No.

MT: That's, yes, there was a gang of youths pack raped a barmaid - the hansom cab driver was in it. She worked at the Cleveland in, in Cleveland and Bourke Street and the hansom cab must have picked her up and didn't take her home or whatever happened and drover her to Moore Park and I think about six of them raped her.

50.05 And they could never find them; they couldn't prove who it was but four of them hung for it. They were only kids and I think two of them got a fair bit of gaol in Darlinghurst Gaol, 1880 something.

LM: This would be the Mount Rennie rape.

MT: Yes, Mount Rennie, yes, that's correct, yes, yes, yes.

LM: And some of them were - - -

MT: The Mangans from Waterloo.

LM: Mangans?

MT: Yes.

LM: How do you spell that?

MT: M-A-N-G-A-N-S, or M-A-N-G-A-N, yes, Mangan family, they were in Beaumont Street.

LM: In Beaumont Street.

MT: Beaumont and Clarendon, yes, there's an old - the house is still there. Yes, they were part of the Waterloo Push. But I don't know, you know, I'm not saying they were involved but they were just part of that gang.

LM: No, but they were part of that gang.

MT: Yes.

LM: Yes.

MT: And there were a lot of pushes around in the 1800s, which is my mother told me about it because her mother told her about it.

LM: Yep. So that must have been pretty upsetting for the community to have that happen, I would imagine.

MT: Yes, yes, yes. There were a lot of protests and petitions in place because they couldn't prove who done it. They know the gang involved, they knew the people involved but they couldn't pin down to individuals, so innocent people died. Yes, so my mother told me about that.

LM: It's really interesting because I've obviously read about that from a historical point of view.

MT: Yes. Yes, I have too, yes, yes.

LM: But to hear that that incident passed down sort of through community history and family history, that that incident - - -

MT: Yes, my mother told me about it when I was at school and I hadn't read about it in the paper at that stage, I didn't know, and I read – you know, the Daily Mirror used to have a historical section, that's where I read about it. And I thought, "Wow, this is what my mother told me about", yes.

52.08 Yes, and another time mum's sister and brother were walking with the washing basket down Beaumont Street – they were only little kids – and a horse careered away from its owner and was charging up towards them and me uncle dropped his end of the basket and ran and my auntie got underneath the basket, she tipped it upside down and got underneath it - - -

LM: That was probably quite sensible.

MT: - - - and the horse just probably ran past or whatever, yes, yes.

LM: That was quick thinking on her part, I'd say.

MT: I suppose it was.

LM: Probably couldn't have carried the basket by herself.

MT: No, no. So, he just dropped it and ran away. Yes, it's funny to hear things like that, you know, yes.

LM: Yes. And whereabouts do you live now?

MT: I just live at Paddington now.

LM: At Paddington?

MT: Yes, in the Olympic Hotel at Paddington. I like it there, it's great. It's just a room but it does me. It's got an en suite and it's handy to everything, Paddington.

LM: Yes.

MT: And with my family history I can wander around where my ancestors walked and look at the homes they lived in and so I think it's about a half an hour walk to work.

LM: Do you walk into work?

MT: Yes, I walk into work straight down Oxford Street, yes. When my father's parents married they lived in Paddington, in Rose Terrace – well, near Rose Terrace there, Dowling Street - and for recreation they used to window shop of a nighttime, the shops in Oxford Street before it was widened, like before, yes, when it was old Oxford Street.

LM: Yep.

MT: They just used to look at the shops like everybody else and just window shop for recreation, yes, yes.

54.04 **LM: I suppose then, you know, as much as now, you know, window-dressing and all of that was quite important.**

MT: That's right. And furniture, the latest furniture was on display and accessories. It hasn't changed but this is before catalogues, I suppose.

LM: Yes.

MT: You know, yes, yes. You could do that then; have displays in windows and that.

LM: And after Oxford Street widened too there were a few sort of department stores and things down that way, like Buckingham's and - - -

MT: They were always there, Buckingham's, yes, yes. I remember when that caught fire.

LM: Do you?

MT: Yes. I was watching Souths play Easts at Redfern Oval and I was on the hill where the old scoreboard used to be – that was on the corner of Phillip and Elizabeth Street – and we could see all this smoke, all this black smoke was billowing up from a hill a fair – you know, not that far away and the smoke came up and it drifted over and, yes, and I heard the next day that it was Buckingham's went up, yes.

LM: That was a huge fire, that one.

MT: Yes, yes.

LM: Been quite a few big fires, actually, around the Redfern/Waterloo area.

MT: Yes, yes.

LM: There was a big one to do with Hudson's Timber Yard too.

MT: Yes, yes, that was in Botany Road, that was recent, yes, yes, yes, that was huge. Well, yes, timber.

LM: Yes, it goes up quickly.

MT: Yes. And the wool stores of Pyrmont, they went up - - -

LM: That's right.

MT: - - - where the swimming pool is now, that was a fire in Ultimo there, that was a fire and - yes, but there was a few in Waterloo, a few fires. Federal Matches went up - - -

LM: Did it?

56.01 MT: - - - in Elizabeth Street. Don't really know where it was but it's in Elizabeth Street opposite the oval, near the oval somewhere but I don't exactly know where. I always thought Chubb's were there but it must've gone up before Chubb's, the safe mob, you know. So, that was Federal Matches.

LM: Yes, I've heard of Federal Matches.

MT: They were there.

LM: Let's have a look at this map here.

MT: And I had my picture taken. When I went to the James Cahill Kindergarten we went down to the fire station in Elizabeth and Bourke Street and I had my picture taken, holding the fire hose but I don't have it any more - it might be at the library, I'm not sure, I'll have to have a look, yes.

LM: Bourke Street.

MT: I must find out when they changed the numbers in Walker Street because mum and dad lived in number 4 Walker Street and when I was going to school it was 81 Walker Street 'cause they used to get

Redfern's mail and Redfern used to get their mail so they changed the numbers, yes.

LM: I wonder if it something to do - - -

MT: And then went from Redfern to

LM: - - - because it used to be like there was Redfern municipality and Waterloo municipality and then they got amalgamated into the City of Sydney and that was in 1949.

MT: '48.

LM: '48?

MT: Yes, yes.

LM: And I wonder if the numbering changed then.

MT: No. If you look at that of 4 Walker Street, Waterloo. So, it would have been when I was at school, I should imagine. See, in 1959 it was still number 4.

LM: Must have been, yes, late - - -

MT: So, it might have been, it must have been done in the '60s 'cause I never knew it as number 4, I've always known it as 81.

LM: 81.

MT: Yes, yes, and the doctor used to come – when the doctors called into your home – he used to say “It's number 4, isn't it?” “No, it's not number 4, it's 81”. “But it used to be number 4”. They said “Yes, it used to be”, yes.

58.03 **LM: I guess it must have been to stop the confusion of numbering.**

MT: Oh, I see what you've got; you've got an old RE sheet.

LM: I do.

MT: Yes, I know what's going on.

LM: It's a bit small but - - -

MT: Yes, when I was out at South Sydney they were in a big red cupboard, hanging up, yes.

LM: Yes.

MT: They digitised them all now, have they?

LM: Yes, yes.

MT: O.K.

LM: I'll show you on the website.

MT: O.K, yes, because I'm only used to seeing the real, you know, the original thing, you know, like really heavy, huge big document, you know, yes, all right and this is condensed, yes, yes.

LM: So it's a big small but when you download it from the internet - -
-

MT: Town Hall, yes.

LM: - - - you can zoom in and actually see it all which is much easier to see.

MT: Yes. Gee, this brings back memories. Steelbuilt's, yes; Wellmore Brothers, yes.

LM: What did Steelbuilt – that sounds like they're some sort of metal manufacturers – what were they?

MT: No. What you've got behind shelving, metal shelving just like that but metal, you know, with the holes in them - - -

LM: Right, yes, yes.

MT: - - - and lockers.

LM: O.K, lockers, yes.

MT: Yes, yes, yes. And see I worked for Cridland, Cridland's would be there somewhere in Young Street. Cridland's, see. Frank Cridland Pty Limited - - -

LM: Yes.

MT: - - - I worked there and that was – where are we? – Phillip Street, that went up in smoke.

LM: That's the one you were talking - - -

MT: That's the one we were talking about, yes, yes, that went up. That was Dandy Smallgoods, that one, Dandy Hams, Bacon and Smallgoods – what's that say there? - Cambridge something.

LM: That says Reckitts & Coleman.

MT: Coleman Australia, yes, yes.

LM: Dandy Smallgoods.

MT: Yes, Dandy Hams and Bacon – it might have been after that.

LM: It might be, yes.

MT: Oh yes, gee. James Cahill Kindergarten, there it is, there it is.

60.01 **LM: That's associated with the kindergarten union, is it?**

MT: Is it? I don't know, I don't know.

LM: I think it would be.

MT: That's where I went to kindergarten.

LM: Yes. And so did your mum walk you over to the kindergarten?

MT: Yes, my mum and my auntie, yes, mum's sister and yes. Yes, and I spent the day there and stuff like that, yes.

LM: So it was a pretty good location where you were in Walker Street.

MT: Yes.

LM: So you're close to Redfern Park and also to Waterloo Park.

MT: Yes, that's 67 there, where that black bit is.

LM: Yes, yes.

MT: See next to the black bit, that's where my mother was born, in there, and I lived in 81 which is next to the corner.

LM: Yep.

MT: Second from the corner, yes. So they didn't live too far away. There was mum's eldest sister lived there at 113 Baptist Street and where she lived when she first got married was 67 Kepos Street and her brother lived in 69 Kepos Street, so right next door; everyone was in walking distance.

LM: A family affair, yes.

MT: A couple of aunties lived in Walker Street opposite us before they moved away. Once they got some money behind them they moved away, you know, to a bigger place but mum wanted to stay.

LM: And why do you think your mum really wanted to stay? Was it to do with the fact that it was all of her relatives around or - - -

MT: I think so, I think she felt secure there; it was the only place she's ever known and she didn't want to make new friends, I suppose, yes, because all her family were living there.

LM: And you mentioned at the start that your dad worked at Austral Bronze.

MT: Yes, that was Austral Bronze.

LM: Yes, that was - - -

MT: Down here somewhere, I think it's – yes.

LM: We're just off the map we've got here.

MT: Yes.

LM: Yes. What did he do there?

62.02 MT: Now there's a good question. He served his apprenticeship there; he was the apprentice boilermaker.

LM: O.K.

MT: Yes, he worked in the rod mill of the Austral Bronze; don't know what he actually did. But mum's brother worked there for fifty years – they were friends and mum's brother asked – they were mates and they said to my father "Are you going to the ball on Saturday night?" and dad said "No, I don't". He said "Why aren't you going?" and he said "I don't have anyone to take", you know. He said "Oh, my sister's not doing anything. You can take her, I'll bring her along", so it may have been Waterloo Town Hall, don't know. But, yes, so that's where they met, at a ball, so there you go.

LM: That's a lovely story.

MT: Yes.

LM: And so did your dad always work at Austral Bronze or did he work anywhere else?

MT: He worked at Austral Bronze till the war finished.

LM: O.K, yes.

MT: He left school and he worked at Austral Bronze and then when the war finished he worked for McMahons Carriers - - -

LM: Yes, I've heard of them.

MT: - - - like the carriers up in Redfern, in Redfern Street.

LM: Yes, so that'll be off this map, off the top, so we've really only got Phillip here.

MT: Okay.

LM: Yes, it's the next sheet up.

MT: Yes.

LM: But, yes, I've heard of McMahons.

MT: Yes, yes, he worked there for a few years. Mum's elder brother was a boss, like a, yes, overseer there, yes.

LM: And so McMahons originally started out with like horses and carts - - -

MT: Drays, yes, yes.

LM: - - - but then later on when your dad was there were they trucks?

MT: They had trucks and, you know, war trucks.

LM: Yes.

MT: Yes, and he worked there – he carted wool. He went to the wool stores at Pyrmont and at Woolloomooloo and he picked up live sheep. I think, yes, he had something to do with live sheep on the back of these trucks. They must've been going to export. He'd pick 'em up from somewhere and take 'em to the wharves or they'd come from the wharves and he'd have to drop them somewhere, I just forget now.

64.05 And he and his partner told me that they had the contract to move the trams. When the trams stopped they got the contract to move the trams to the Tram Museum at Loftus.

LM: Right.

MT: Yes, but I haven't found anything about it but that's what he said. I had to get in contact with a Norman Ching or a Herb Ching or

something there, which I did inquire but he wasn't available at the time. And they said that they, yes, they put them on the back of a low loader and carted them along and every time they'd stop the chap on the tram – because it was on the float and he'd ring the tram bell when they pulled up at the lights or a stop sign, I think it was in those days, yes, and ring the tram bell. Yes, so that was interesting but I haven't got any concrete evidence about that, it's all oral, you know.

LM: No, that's great.

MT: Yes, but mum's family, mum's mother's family, Lucelle Lancaster, she comes from a long line of convicts.

LM: Does she?

MT: Yes, she does, yes, right back to the First Fleet.

LM: And you've been able to trace them right back?

MT: Yes, we've traced them right back to the First Fleet, yes.

LM: And did they stay in Sydney or did those convicts get assigned elsewhere, do you know?

MT: I don't know where they were – they were basically in Sydney. I don't know where they were assigned.

LM: Yes.

MT: All I can find out about one of them in particular, he was a gentleman and finished up with a lot of money.

LM: Well.

MT: Yes, when he died he left an estate of eight thousand pound or something.

LM: Wow.

MT: I mean it was a hell of a lot of money. Yes, and my grandmother's mother was supposed to get two hundred pound off him and her sister forged her signature.

65.58 They were looking for the Lancaster family of Waterloo and they put it in the Herald, like had the solicitors advertise it in the Herald, and the story goes that my great grandmother's sister forged – she said "Yes, I'm who you're looking for", you know. "Sign here, please", and she got the money and she opened up a paper shop at Manly or something but it's all oral history like, you know, what's in it, and I

don't know where to start looking for the advertisement for the Lancasters of Waterloo. You know what I mean?

LM: Yes.

MT: Like, in the Depression, I mean that went from 1929 to 1939 and I'm not looking in every [Sydney Morning] Herald for ten years, you know.

LM: No. Yes, that's right.

MT: Yes, so I just don't know how to go about that.

LM: Yes. Well, you could look it up on the – have you discovered the National Library's website? They're digitising a whole lot of the newspapers.

MT: O.K. No, I didn't.

LM: And I'll show you that on the computer because they're digitising them all so you can text search them and I'm starting to find out some amazing stuff, some of the firms, like some of the tannery firms from the late nineteenth century that were in Waterloo - - -

MT: Yes.

LM: - - - and being able to search the newspapers and you can find some advertisements and then you can piece together some of the company history and things like that.

MT: O.K, wow.

LM: It's really amazing.

MT: That's one thing I can't imagine in my wildest dreams, the Waterloo dams, I just can't imagine it. Like, when you look at the land it's changed that much. Like for a start Waterloo Oval's been built up, you know - - -

LM: Yes, yes.

MT: - - - and when it rained as a kid – and I played football on Waterloo Oval – you were ankle deep in water and it'd only rained overnight. Like, I mean, so that tells you something.

LM: Yes.

67.59 MT: And you look at the landscape and it all goes down to one area, you know, but it's all gone now, like, and brick buildings are there and I just can't picture it, you know.

LM: It's extraordinary, isn't it?

MT: My father learnt to swim in the brick pits - - -

LM: Really?

MT: - - - on Botany Road, you know, where it's – yes, he learnt to swim there, unbeknownst to his parents – he was thrown in the water.

LM: Really?

MT: So, you know, you sink or swim. And there was a bloke there who could swim but, yes, a lot of them would have to and that was interesting. They wagged school, they never came back after lunch, they went to Mount Carmel and they never came back after lunch. It was a hot summer's day and they all went swimming in the brick pits.

LM: And that would have been - - -

MT: On Botany Road, where Waterloo Depot is now - or Bourke Street Depot, whatever you want to call it – Botany Road and Bourke Street.

LM: Yep.

MT: Portman Street, yes, that as all brick pits.

LM: O.K.

MT: Yes, when I was working for the council in '78, '79 they made clay water pipe or sewer pipe – it was clay – that was still going, yes. It's probably just stored, probably the last of the stored stuff, yes, and then trucks were still picking up and going out. Yes, so I just can't imagine it, you know. It's a shame the ancestors aren't alive to tell you what it was about, what it was like. You know, my Uncle Billy, mum's brother, lived on the corner of Beaumont Street and Phillip Street where the chemist shop is, opposite Redfern Oval.

LM: Yes.

MT: O.K?

LM: Yep.

MT: That was a wood and coal place.

LM: Was it?

MT: Sold wood and coal, so he can go back before that was built; it was just a wooden shed, sold wood and coal.

LM: Which of course everyone would have needed for their - - -

MT: Yes, yes.

LM: - - - for their stoves.

69.51 MT: To cook, yes, the stove, yes. Yes, my grandmother had a fuel stove and a fuel copper, used to light the copper. Mum went to light the copper one day to have a bath and a big rat ran out of it - - -

LM: Oh.

MT: - - - ran out of it. Once the fire started the rat went whoosh. She said it was a big rat, oh.

LM: That would make you jump, wouldn't it?

MT: Oh, it would. You'd be going to bed smelly, wouldn't you? I wouldn't have had a bath. Yes, so you had to heat the water up and then get a bucket or a dipper and then shot the hot water into the bath and then add the cold water on, you know.

LM: It's hard to imagine now, isn't it, when you just turn on a tap?

MT: And my grandmother doing the washing and ironing. Like, I mean, using a washboard and a tub, like for sheets and for clothes and stuff. You know, like how would you have kept it clean? I mean, you've got to put it somewhere after you've washed it and then you take it to the tub and you rinse it, don't you, and then you – and she used to wring them out with her hands. Yes, she asked mum to wash something one day and wring it out or something. She said "That's not dry, Beryl. What are you doing?" she said. "I wrung it out, mum. Look, I can't wring any more". She said "Oh, go away", she said "You haven't got the strength of a kitten" and she got more water out. She must have had dreadfully strong wrists, yes. Yes, and, yes, so I don't know where she put the clothes. I mean, she used to take in people's washing and ironing, so where would she put the clothes washing while she kept washing?

LM: Did all of that. She must have had lots of sort of baskets or something.

MT: And I'm not joking, the yard may have been as big as this room – I don't think so – it may have been where your little filing cabinet is there.

LM: Yes.

MT: Might have been that big, so it's only - - -

LM: So tiny.

MT: It was only tiny.

LM: Tiny, tiny.

MT: Like it's smaller than – I thought we had a little backyard where I grew up but it was smaller than that, you know, and she used to take the washing somewhere, mum said, to dry it, to dry it on their line or a paddock or something, somewhere she took it, yes.

72.07 **LM: And just put the clothes props up and - - -**

MT: Yes, yes, yes, just part of the day, you know.

LM: Yes. I wonder if she took it down, I guess - - -

MT: Yes, you'd be a bit modern now - - -

LM: - - - no, be too far.

MT: - - - you'd have to go back to the '20s and the teens, you know.

LM: Look at the map from then.

MT: Yes, yes.

LM: Well, that's fantastic, Michael.

MT: That's about all I can tell you.

LM: No, well that's great.

MT: Can't say any more offhand. The old George Hotel got pulled down and they built a new George Hotel; a wall collapsed out onto the street; no one got killed. Yes, that's about all. And I'd been up into the church, St Michael's Church in Wellington Street. It belongs to – I think it's some units now, behind the bank, behind the Commonwealth Bank that was on the corner of Elizabeth and – it'll be in this map. Elizabeth and Phillip Street, there's a St Michael's Church, I think it's a Greek church.

LM: Here's Phillip Street.

MT: Phillip and Wellington – Wellington and Elizabeth Street, sorry. That's Wellington Street there, isn't it? Yes, that's it, and it's – there it is, see that church?

LM: Yes, St Michael's Church.

MT: Actually went in there. Yes, I actually went in there and had a look around one day, yes, yes.

LM: So, is that still an active church?

MT: No, no, it's a block of units. It's still there - - -

LM: Like the church itself?

MT: - - - the building's still there but I think it's incorporating into units now.

LM: Into units?

MT: Yes.

LM: I'd never actually registered that church there.

MT: Yes.

LM: I'll put a circle around that.

MT: There you go.

LM: There you go.

MT: Yes. And St Silas', I remember St Silas' Church.

74.00 **LM: Yes. That was on - - -**

MT: Botany Road, Botany Road and McEvoy.

LM: And that burnt down too or pulled down.

MT: That got pulled down; it didn't burn down, it got pulled down. My father said that was where the Iron Duke Hotel used to be before they moved over there.

LM: Onto the other side?

MT: Yes, it was a corrugated iron building, he said. Maybe they were doing it up, I don't know, but he said it used to be on that side.

LM: I know the name of the hotel. It's very old; I've seen it on some early maps.

MT: O.K, O.K.

LM: Yes, yes.

MT: And we used to go Allen Street, we used to walk up here, used to walk through there, there and down Kellick Street when I went to Waterloo School, that's the way we used to go. None of that was there. Mead Street, we used to go down Mead Street, that was the back of Cottee's Cordials. What's that say it is? Cahill's Quick - - -

LM: Cahill's Quick Freezes.

MT: Well, that's what it might have been, yes, that's what it might have been. Anyway, they had those big crates of oranges out the back, big wooden crates, yes, behind them, yes.

LM: Penfold's Wines. You didn't liberate some wine as well?

MT: No, no.

LM: Too young for that.

MT: Yes, yes. Yes, I don't really remember that. I remember the carpet cleaners; there's the carpet cleaners, I remember that. And the Rose of Denmark, that wasn't a hotel, it was a boarding house but I remember the carpet cleaners being there, yes. And this was all – where are we? – that was all vacant, there was nothing there.

LM: All knocked down.

MT: And that was all knocked down, all that was knocked down. You could see where the streets were but it was flat, it was really flat and, yes, that was still there and this was knocked down too. That's where the circuses were, in here.

76.10 **LM: In here?**

MT: In here, yes, in here. And in here. Yes, that's where the circuses were, yes. And John Street, that John Street in there, in there as well.

LM: In here as well.

MT: Yes, yes.

LM: I mean it's weird looking at it now because it's changed so much.

MT: Well yes. See, I don't recognise any of this. (indicates visually) Me mother would, me mother would recognise it and me father and that.

MICK ENTERS

MT: She's asking me about Mount Carmel.

Mick: I used to go there.

MT: Yes, Mick went to Mount Carmel. His father and my father played cricket.

LM: Really?

MT: Yes, yes.

LM: I'll have to sit down with you too.

MT: Yes, that's it. He'll tell you more than what I can, he's older than me.

Mick: Yes, just got a short memory, that's all, short memory span, that's the only thing.

MT: Nothing a couple of beers won't bring back, Mick.

Mick:

LM: Now there you go - - -

MT: Tell them about the Mount Lachlan.

LM: - - - now there's a good way to actually talk a bit about the area, wouldn't it, over a few beers in a pub.

MT: It is.

Mick: Bloody oath. Brings your memory back, doesn't it?

MT: That's right, yes. It's good, we reminisce. I was saying when like Mick Turner and that, when there was a burial at Mount Carmel - - -

Mick: Yep.

MT: - - - they all come from far and wide, don't they, and we just catch up.

Mick: They do.

MT: We just catch up and meet and talk and - - -

Mick: Used to be a very close-knit area - - -

MT: Yes.

Mick: - - - Redfern and Waterloo many years ago.

MT: Well, yes. Yes, I was just looking at it on the map. I said "I don't recognise the map" - - -

Mick: Yes.

MT: - - - because everything was flat, see, when I was growing up.

78.05 Mick: Yes.

MT: All the places where you used to live, you and your family in Young Street and that - - -

Mick: It's all houses.

MT: - - - but it's all flat now, yes, yes.

Mick: Yes.

MT: I don't remember.

Mick: Yes, we were just talking about that. Is that the book?

LM: Yes, yes, good.

MT: Yes, we're all in, you can interview Mick, yes.

Mick: All they've got to do is try and understand me – I mumble a bit and be able to bear with me.

MT: Oh, you're no worse than me. Yes, my mother knew his mother before they were married.

LM: Yes.

MT: Yes, yes, that's how close it was, yes.

LM: Yes, yes.

MT: They lived in Morehead Street, his mother's family, yes. I was at a – there you are, I don't know if I told you this or not – when I was living at Kogarah I'd go to the Rockdale Tennis Club for my meals, we'd go there socially of a Wednesday, a couple of friends, and we sat at the end of a big table. And there was a big group came in and there was a lot of 'em looking around for chairs and stuff like that and there was only three of us, so we moved and gave them a table and they said "No, no, no, no, no". I said "Yes, yes, no, no", I said "Stay there and we'll scrunch up", you know, and something happened and they were talking and carrying on and we didn't know one another and we were talking amongst ourselves and they got up to leave and they said something about supporting South Sydney Rabbitohs or something come up about South Sydney.

LM: Yes.

MT: And I said "I go for the Rabbitohs" and they said "Yes, so do we". I said "Yes, I lived opposite Redfern Oval" and they said "Yes, so did we". I said "Whereabouts did you" – I said "I come from Waterloo". They said "Yes, so did we". I said "Whereabouts in Waterloo did you come from?" They said "Morehead Street". I said "Oh", I said "I come from Walker Street", I said "What's your name?" They said "We're the Barrons". I said "Are you related to Donnie Barron?" They said "Yes, we're his sisters, he's our younger brother". I said "Your mother was Mrs Barron" and they said "Yes, that's right".

80.02 I said "She was always in Mrs Watts' place" – remember I've told you about the two old ladies?

LM: Yes.

MT: I said "She was always in Mrs Watts' place" and they turned around and looked at one another and looked at me and they said "Auntie Lil". I said "Was she your auntie?" She goes "My mother's sister". They said "Where did you live?" I said "I lived next to Whizby's shop". "Your father was a truck driver, wasn't he?" I said "That's right". His name was Tommy", I said "That's right, yes". "You're not Dougie, are you?" I said "No", I said "I'm Michael". I said "Doug's my older brother". I said "I was probably this high last time you've met". I said, "I don't know you", I said "I know Donnie", the brother, which I did, and I said "I know your mother 'cause she was always in Mrs Watts' place" and they said "Auntie Lil", I said "Yes". So that's how close it was. Now, I didn't know them and they didn't know me but when we got talking by sheer coincidence we did know one another by, you know, all those years ago.

LM: Yes, by the connections, yes.

MT: Yes, yes, yes. So we, yes.

LM: That's great.

MT: Isn't it strange how it all comes back, you know. And I'm glad that they mentioned about Souths and stuff like that.

LM: Yes, that's good.

MT: Yes. And another time I was talking to a kid, a young bloke pushing a broom in Chippendale and I said "Hello, how's it going? It's very warm, isn't it?" He said "Yes, you look familiar. Did you come from Villawood?" I said "No, I grew up in Waterloo". He said "I spent a bit of time in Waterloo". I said "That's where I probably know you from". I said "Whereabouts did you come from in Waterloo?" He said "Oh, I used to spend a lot of time at my grandfather's house" and I said

"Where was that. I might know him". He said "It's a little house on the corner of a little lane in Phillip Street". I said "Oh", I said "Okay". He said "Do you know him?" I said "He's my uncle". "Really?" I said "Yes, his name's Billy Madigan". He said "How do you know?" I said "It's my mother's brother". "So, who's your mother?" I said "Beryl Madigan". I said "Who's your mother?" and he told me his mother's name but I didn't know her.

82.04 **LM:** **Yes.**

MT: See, they're years older than me. You know, yes so he was, yes, he was my cousin, my cousin's son, yes.

LM: **Yes, amazing.**

MT: It really is.

LM: **That was amazing, yes.**

MT: It really is, isn't it? Yes.

LM: **And I guesst that's also the thing about the extended family, isn't it? Like, you know, with your mother's family, eleven children.**

MT: Eleven children. Well, her brother, Billy, had ten children in that house, you know.

LM: **Yes.**

MT: Yes, I only knew a couple of them, though, because they stayed behind, you know, but I didn't know the ones that had moved away.

LM: **Yes. That's fascinating, that's great.**

MT: It is really.

LM: **Thank you so much, Michael.**

MT: That's all right. Thank you for interviewing me.

LM: **No, thank you. That's great.**

Interview ends