

## Voices of Volunteering: 75 Years of Citizenship and Service

### Interview Transcript

### Title Page

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**Interviewee's Surname:** Greeves

**Title:** Mrs

**Interviewee's Forenames:** Ann Elizabeth

**Gender:** F

**Volunteer/Employee Roles and Dates:**

1977-Present (2015) (Volunteer)

1977-Present Royal Sussex County Hospital Out

Patients Department Tea Bar

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**Interviewer's Notes:**

Ann Greeves (AG) talks about her time as a volunteer for the Royal Sussex County Hospital Out Patients Department (O.P.D) Tea Bar since 1977 to the present day. She describes the food and drinks that were sold, particularly the pride she felt at making the sandwiches and scones for the tea bar and her enjoyment at talking to the patients. She describes the changes which have occurred over the last 38 years, both within the tea bar but also overall within the charity. She also talks about receiving her long service meal and becoming a Diamond Champion, concluding by discussing her views on the future of Royal Voluntary Service (RVS).

**[Jennifer Hunt]: This is Jennifer Hunt with Ann Greaves on the twelfth of March 2015 at her home in Brighton. Ann would you just like to introduce yourself?**

[Ann Greaves]: I'm Ann Greaves. I've served The WRVS for thirty-eight years. I did Mondays and Thursdays for a few years. In those days we just had a little wooden pot where we kept our money, we didn't have any tills. And we had china cups to wash, we had tea towels to wash and tea cloths. And then we made all our own sandwiches. And we had coffee, tea. I think we just served coffee and tea in those days and squash. Our sandwiches were egg, cheese or cheese and Marmite for a few years. And then I had to go across to the main kitchen of the hospital every Monday to get all the trays of eggs and cook them and mash them all up. The cheese came grated and we used to have big pots of Marmite and Bovril. And we made our own sandwiches, put them in plastic bags and sold them. And we, you know, we used to take a pride in making our sandwiches and everybody seemed to like them.

**[JH]: And why did you join WRVS?**

[AG]: Well, I went to Hannington's in Brighton, which was a big shop, they had a coffee morning and I was really, I, I was a secretary at Abbey National Building Society for twenty-one years and I left and I did a job at Securior and then I sort of was semi-breakdown. I didn't, I didn't have the confidence to go across the road. And they had this coffee morning and about volunteering up the hospital and they said that they'd pay the bus fares and expenses. So I said well, if they did that I could manage to give my free time, but I couldn't in those days afford the bus fares and that so that's when I started. I said I didn't want anything to do with money or anything, nothing responsible. And my first visit was Flo, a lady named Flo, she lived in Brighton. And she just left me with the money and I just had to get on with it. I said 'Well, I didn't want any responsibility', because I didn't feel well in those days but she just left me to get on with it, she walked out and left me to do the money and everything. And then from thereon I got my confidence up and I knew I could do it then. So really I always say that originally probably they made me better and that's why I joined it.

**[JH]: There's a real benefit to volunteering then?**

[AG]: Yes.

**[JH]: It shouldn't pick it up too much.**

[AG]: It won't pick it up, right, yes. So I did two mornings a week then. Well, I did get up to about four mornings a week. I used to cycle up there, put my cycle in the big hall at OPD, which was very dirty and filthy hanging in cobwebs in those days, it never had a ceiling in it, it was like Noah's Ark, just went up. And I cycled up there and Chrissie Morgan ran the canteens but I think we only had a couple of canteens in those days. She did it all free of charge except for telephone calls at home she could put in for. Her husband I think was a councillor in Brighton, but she was a lovely lady.

**[JH]: So Chrissie was the Hospital Organiser for the area?**

[00:05:00]

[AG]: Chrissie Morgan, yes. She was a very kind lady, she treated us all like a family. And then occasionally we used to go down Edward Street, we had The WRVS building there and they used to give out, make holidays for children and give out clothes to people in Brighton, people in Brighton that hadn't got clothes they gave them out. And then well, I suppose I've been to, I've been in the whole thirty-eight years at OPD but I have done A&E.

**[JH]: Mm, mm.**

[AG]: Where else? I have done the Eye once but I thought it was quite miserable in there, but OPD is the, it's very nice.

**[JH]: So you've mainly been in the Outpatients Department canteen?**

[AG]: Mm, mm.

**[JH]: And what did you know about WRVS before you joined?**

[AG]: Nothing. Not unless, I just happened to go down to Hannington's and there was a coffee morning and sat down for coffee and somebody, somebody was up there, I don't know whether it was Pearl Hemming or somebody was sitting at a table and they'd got all the adverts in for WRVS, yes. Oh, I just had a chat and started.

**[JH]: And did you wear uniform when you first started volunteering?**

[AG]: Oh yes, that, that apron there. That was my first apron, tabard, or whatever you call it, yes.

**[JH]: And has your uniform changed over the years?**

[AG]: Oh yes, we have tabards now, yes. Well, I've got my tabard in. You don't want to see it do you?

**[JH]: No, but could you describe what it looks like for me?**

[AG]: Oh it's, it's got a rounded neck and no, no sleeves and two flaps that join press studs under the arms and it's got 'WRVS' across. And then well, I put my long serving medals and everything on that.

**[JH]: And do you wear all your badges and your Long Service Medal when you're in the canteen?**

[AG]: I do, yes. It's, it's a talking point with patients actually, you know. Some of them are very scared and they like you to talk to them and they sometimes say 'What's this, that', and, you know, and it starts a conversation, mm.

**[JH]: Do you feel that that helps the patients?**

[AG]: Yes, I do think so, yes. Because a, a lot of people don't realise that we're volunteering and they don't really know the difference between volunteers and the paid ones now. And it is a joke at the moment that I've done thirty-eight years there, you know, part of the furniture. [Laughing]

**[JH]: Can you describe before the, what the Outpatients canteen was when, like when you first started, has that changed?**

[AG]: Yes, yes. It was, have you ever been in Outpatients at Brighton?

**[JH]: No.**

[AG]: Mm, oh well I'm not very good. I suppose it was just a little section from here to there, and that was our counter with drawers underneath and this little wooden box, wooden bowl where we

kept all our money. And then the, the sink and the taps were here and then at the back we had the cupboards with the cups and saucers and spoons. But now the hospital's taken over that tiny room for the records and the computer room and we've been put in to a much bigger canteen which WRVS paid to have done next door to that, and that's the modern one. Yes, we used to have to clean it before we started in there, and, oh, it took about, I mean I've always got there about quarter past seven in the morning and then I've left at twelve. That's approximately for thirty-eight years I've done about quarter past seven to twelve either twice a week, as I used to, or up to four times a week but now I only do once a week. But it's now gone from what I call a charity to a business now, it's like working in Sainsbury's now.

[00:10:36]

**[JH]: I think you, when you wrote to me you said it was like working in a supermarket.**

[AG]: Yes.

**[JH]: Yes.**

[AG]: Because it's all money, money, money now. Like we used to keep Lucozade for the diabetics, and if any patient started to be poorly we used to just have a bottle of Lucozade. We're not allowed to do that now, they've got to buy it, you know, it's come to that position. As I say, the motto was 'patients first', but it's not now.

**[JH]: Before you were able to help patients without thinking about the moneymaking side of things then?**

[AG]: Yes, yes. We could give them a, you know, a drink and if they were in trouble. I used to love that, I used to, we used to be able to go out and help the patients where now we're not we're stuck in a room behind a counter which we can hardly move in with a till and a computer like so we can't get out to the patients and look after them like we used to. But if there's two of us on I do wander out. And I've made many friends actually with patients, and of course, the staff know us, yes.

**[JH]: And apart from patients is there anyone else who uses the canteen?**

[AG]: No, no, it's locked up. It has, the keys have to go at the end of the day in a pouch to the manager, I, Elizabeth or Alex, and she puts the keys in a locked up cupboard and then we have to collect them in the morning and undo the seal. There's loads, seems to be lots of forms we have to fill in before we start now. We have to put the number of the seal that we break or the number that was recorded the night before when the person left. Yes, so I don't know, it's just gradually increased the volume of work. And I had one lady, we worked together for eight years but she left and I did it for a long time by myself after that because I knew exactly what to do and I found it easier just to get on with it myself. As I say, I used to cycle up and they let me put my cycle in, in OPD but they wouldn't now for health reasons. [Laughing]

**[JH]: And when you first started in the 1970s, 1980s what happened to the profits that the shop made?**

[AG]: Well, it all went to the hospital. This is why we, we enjoyed working because all the profit that we got went to the hospital. We just had to pay for the eggs and cheese and that for the hospital but we knew all the rest went to the hospital but I'm not so sure now.

**[JH]: No. I read in some report that the hospital, the money that went from your canteen went in to things like redecoration, new curtains and...**

[AG]: Yes, and machinery, equipment, equipment, you know, it used to. And then there was, there was a moment when I got rung up by Chrissie Morgan to say the hospital was in trouble and she recommended that I could help them out. And it was cleaning the instruments for the operations and she, she said that I could be trusted to do it, and I worked for two weeks in the middle of the hospital as the operating, as the operating equipment came out from the surgery, they came out on trays and we had, I, I had to sterilise it because there was a lot of staff off with bad heads that fortnight for some reason at the hospital. And yes, that, I thought that was lovely that I was trusted to do that job because it was the tubes that used to go down in to people and they all had to be cleaned and disinfected and that. Yes, I thought that was very kind of Chrissie to agree for one of us to go in and do it. So yes, I remember that, just remembered that.

[00:15:33]

**[JH]: Were there any other things that you did for the hospital with WRVS?**

[AG]: Mm, I did go on the Emergency callout service but we never got called out so I never went. No, no, because Jean Wilson used to run that. And no, I haven't done, I've only worked in the hospital.

**[JH]: And did Jean Wilson work in the hospital too as well as Emergency Services?**

[AG]: No. She was down Edward Street in the office but that property has been sold now. She used to be down there with the clothing. Doctors used to give a letter to WRVS to let people have clothing if, if it was needed. And then they used to arrange holidays for the children in those days, but they don't do it now.

**[JH]: No. Were these children who were coming to Brighton for a holiday or were they local?**

[AG]: No, no, they were Brighton people that needed a holiday, they were too poor. The doctors would recommend them to go away. I think they had caravans, I don't know where WRVS had these caravans but they took them away for holidays, yes, mm. But now we don't know what the collecting boxes are for now, you know, we have these collecting boxes?

**[JH]: Yes.**

[AG]: And often people say to me 'What are they for'? I say 'I don't know'. It doesn't say what they're really for.

**[JH]: No.**

[AG]: I hope I can go on working, see if I can get another medal. I think it would be forty years.  
[Laughing]

**[JH]: You mentioned before that originally you sold tea, coffee and the sandwiches that you made?**

[AG]: Yes.

**[JH]: Has that changed?**

[AG]: Yes. Because we used to make them ourselves and we used to put them in plastic bags - the two sandwiches, the one sandwich is cut in half in each bag, and I can't remember how much we sold them for. Well, I know on Mondays we, we kept, we tried to really pile the egg in so people used to come, like it on Mondays because they used to know they had a nice thick sandwich. And then we came round to opening tins of tuna that we mashed up in a bowl, and it was a lot of work those days but it was nice. And we used to sell scones too which they don't sell now. A lot of people now say 'Haven't you got scones'? But we've got all this other rubbish now. It was much easier then, you just had a tea and a coffee or I think we could do Bovril in boiling water, it was just those three things. We didn't have all this extra stuff, cappuccinos and lattes and espressos. [Laughing]

**[JH]: Did you have like a machine then that does the cappuccinos and things?**

[AG]: We have got a machine, yes, yes, but it was all done with a kettle. We used to heat the milk up on the ring, electric ring. I think Chrissie Morgan used to take the tea towels home and wash them at home. But we never had any trouble in those days with germs, we didn't have people ill and now you can't breathe on anything.

**[JH]: Is it all pre-packed and ordered - the food now then?**

[AG]: Yes, it's Ginsters, basically Ginsters. And then they go, then we've got our store over in the main building where the storekeepers, we, we fill in an order form if we've seen a thing, mm, biscuits and crisps and drinks we fill in the order form every week plus the other computer forms and everything. Then we did stop doing tea cakes and toast. We had a microwave and because the children's microwave broke down they took it away so we don't do it now. That's another thing you see, on Mondays people are fasting all over the weekend and if I'd get there early I could get everything going. Like eight o'clock people are asking for food but now I can't do tea cakes, any more, toast now. And the sandwiches quite often don't come in to about half past ten so there's nothing apart from biscuits. I mean how... [Pause] Yes, so we've got no facilities now for heating up slices or anything or sausage rolls now, they have to buy them and eat them cold.

[00:21:03]

**[JH]: Do you think that the canteen has the same importance for patients now that all that change has come in?**

[AG]: Yes, it's very important to staff as well as patients. Years ago the staff didn't use to come. But now people don't take their drinks and their eats with them now they come and spend the money. Yes, it is important, yes. And specially OPD they, they treat us as their friends, you know, they're very kind. Doctors come and the nurses come. We get to know exactly what, what they want. And the taxi drivers come in and they have drinks too. But it can get very busy there. You get the odd patient that's rude to us but we have to deal with that.

**[JH]: But it's all part of the job really?**

[AG]: Yes, yes, mostly people are kind. I do try to help people if they are in trouble and that's it. I think 'Well, that's what I go there to do'. But, as I say, now it's like working in a supermarket, it's just not the same atmosphere.

**[JH]: Do you think that's because there's more staff involved rather than just volunteers?**

[AG]: No, it's just the money, money, money, they want profit. I mean Jackie gets told that, you know, we were down on, we're down on our money, like on Mondays. Well, unless people come and buy things you can't do anything about it. If they cut down on clinics you can't do anything about it. But Cardiff tell her, you know, we're down on profits. There's nothing we can do about it. The sandwiches don't come until half past ten or eleven, lots of people need them at nine. And we, we could sell things but we don't, we can't.

**[JH]: Has this change come in recently or has it been more a long-term?**

[AG]: It's long-term, yes. So it's been years like this, yes. Ever since we've had the new canteen next door to our little room. And Ginsters... [Phone rings]

**[JH]: There we go, you were talking about the since you moved canteens then it became more about money.**

[AG]: Yes, it's money because Ginsters do all the sandwiches and the coffee machine is hired, as you might know, we hire the coffee machine. And like last Monday see we were all set for doing everything and the men came in to take the coffee machine to pieces in the middle of the morning.

**[JH]: When it's quite busy?**

[AG]: When we're busy. They hadn't told us. So we had to resort to, we have got a little coffee machine, I put that on immediately but if that doesn't work we, we do sell jars of Nescafe so we can always, we can always do a drink. But it's got commercialised now. As I say, we've got so many people paid now, there's supervisors, all different, and I never know who really... I know who Jackie is because you never meet them.

**[JH]: So is Jackie always there at the...?**

[00:25:00]

[AG]: She's always there, yes. She gets there about eight o'clock, she's always there Mondays when I'm there. And now we've got a new lady Alison, she's lovely, to help Jackie. But Becky went, now we've got Alison. No, but they have lost a lot of volunteers. I think we lost six volunteers a fortnight ago and she's just struggling, she just can't get people to work now.

**[JH]: Do you know why those volunteers left?**

[AG]: I think they get fed up to think we're having paid staff and people 'I'm working hard for nothing', and they don't get thanked for it, we don't really get thanked for it at all. I mean you might see in the magazine, you know, different, when we get the WRVS magazine it's very rarely down here anybody gets thanked, it's for Meals-on-Wheels and different things, you know. I think the morale generally is very low now in The WRVS. I'm sorry but it is.

**[JH]: Was it higher when you first joined?**

[AG]: Well, yes. When we were all volunteers and no paid. Even between the paid staff there's friction because yes, there's friction between the paid staff, yes. But I mean we all work together nicely but there is friction. Well I've never known, I've, well, I mean I've been in business, I've never

known a company have Jackie and her sister and her son all working, I've never known that. Whenever I've had to do interviews at my job we'd never allow relatives to work like that. I suppose she can't get anybody else to do it you see. But she is in trouble now, she hasn't got the staff.

**[JH]: When did you notice paid staff coming in to WRVS?**

[AG]: Mm, when we had this new executive down in Cardiff, he seems to have brought in paid staff then.

**[JH]: Was that Gerry Burton around the sort of 1990s or are you thinking of David McCullough and...?**

[AG]: No, David McCullough, yes. We've got more, I think they had just probably one supervisor paid up to then and after that us ladies were paid some sort of minimum wage, you know, but now we've got several of sort of one parent family ladies working and they're only allowed to work so many hours otherwise they lose their credits and that.

**[JH]: So they sort of get a grant currently?**

[AG]: Yes, I think they get family credit and everything and they're allowed to do so many hours and work so much otherwise if they go over that amount they, they lose. And also if they do extra hours they're not being paid for it they have to take time off. Well, we can't, I don't think Jackie can afford to let them have time off because we haven't got the staff, I think that's where it comes in, yes, still. And I suppose we shall have to put up with how we feel. [Laughing]

**[JH]: And with the recent name change to - well, dropping the 'W'?**

[AG]: Oh yes.

**[JH]: Have you found that that's brought more men in to the organisation?**

[AG]: Yes. We've got, actually we've got, I work with Paul. Yes, we've got one, two, as I know four men now work, yes, yes. Yes, well, I don't see why they shouldn't if they haven't got jobs. They've got free time, I don't see, we all get on alright together.

**[JH]: What did you think, what did you think about the change in name?**

[AG]: It hasn't made any difference to me really. They've not bothered to change our motifs at all, not even bothered to change the signs in the hospital. So I was told by two people that visited us, patients at Lancing, WRVS had gone to the, the, they'd dropped the 'Womens' off there, but otherwise nobody takes any notice of it really.

[00:30:19]

**[JH]: So when patients come in do they still refer to you as WRVS?**

[AG]: WRVS, yes, mm. I think quite, some of them are quite surprised that we don't get paid, but I wouldn't want to be paid anyway. [Laughing]

**[JH]: Have there been any other changes to WRVS that you've noticed?**

[AG]: We, we don't get the get-togethers like we used to. We used to have parties down at Edward Street, and if anybody got a long-term certificate or medal we used to sort of all be given it at a party. We don't have parties it's all gatherings, I put it like that gatherings now. We now go to The Emerton Buildings, we get invited by the hospital once a year to have a buffet or a Christmas do up there, that's just once a year now. Otherwise I suppose it's not any different. As I said in that thing if we, if anybody was ill Chrissie used to send a bunch of flowers to people but not now. And she used to, you know, ring us up quite regularly, make sure we were alright but you don't get any of that contact now.

**[JH]: Do you think that Royal Voluntary Service has lost its social aspect?**

[AG]: Yes, it's lost its personal aspect, [Laughing] yes, definitely.

**[JH]: And how do you feel about that?**

[AG]: I feel a bit bitter really because, as I say, we used to be close knit and now we're just a number, yes. As I say, there's not many of us volunteers left.

**[JH]: How many of you help out in the canteen?**

[AG]: I don't really know. There's usually two at, two in the morning and two in the afternoon now Monday to Friday at OPD and, because there's A&E which is open all over the weekend. And I believe Level Eight's now been taken, being taken over by Costa and Rheumatology I believe is going to be taken over by Costa. And I think there is a question of the Eye Hospital, but up to now there's always one or two working in there in the Eye Hospital. You see we used to be able to work alone but it did come in that we had to have two, and we used to be able to do two hours where now we're supposed to do four hours. And I think you see it's usually people that are retired and they're not as energetic as the young ones and I think people would do two hours whereas four hours is quite a long time.

**[JH]: You mentioned before that you were on the Emergency Services?**

[AG]: Yes, yes.

**[JH]: Did you receive any training for Emergency Services?**

[AG]: No, no, no. That was run at Lewes. I just said, you know, 'Just put my name down and if there's anything where we needed an Emergency Service, I would have been willing to go out and help in any way I could'. But of course, Jean Wilson had her ones that were trained. I never got called and they don't do it now I don't think. I don't think WRVS goes out on emergency now.

**[JH]: No.**

[AG]: We have been asked at different times to do the Hospital to Home service but I don't think anybody much wanted to do it because you never know what hours you do then.

**[JH]: Mm. Have you been involved with any other WRVS services?**

[00:35:02]

[AG]: No, no.

**[JH]: Always the hospital?**

[AG]: Yes, always hospital, yes, yes. I used to help on the hospital service testing diabetics and I loved that job because I was handling patients, testing them and teaching them but the red tape came in about AIDS then and I wasn't insured and I said 'Well, I'm not worried about that, I'm not likely to get it', but they stopped volunteers doing that.

**[JH]: You mentioned also that you've had a few different awards over the years?**

[AG]: Yes.

**[JH]: And do you remember how you got your Long Service Medal?**

[AG]: Yes, at a party. The, that one.

**[JH]; Yes the...**

[AG]: There were several of us had it and they had a tea for us. Where was that photograph? Wait a minute. Well, yes, that was at the, that was the long, yes, that was my medal on there.

**[JH]: Yes. And did other people receive medals on the same day?**

[AG]: Yes, yes. You see that, that lady and me, myself we both received the honour from Lady Emerton. I think possibly I was the only one there. And that one on there, there were several of us and they just took that photograph as we went up there. I think that gentleman there was possibly the one before is it David Mc..., whatever his name is?

**[JH]: David McCullough?**

[AG]: That one, that one was probably before him. He came up for the occasion but I don't know any of those are left now, you know.

**[JH]: Yes.**

[AG]: It's a shame isn't it?

**[JH]: It is. So they all sort of left WRVS now?**

[AG]: Mm, yes. See everybody's old. [Laughing] I mean I didn't start doing it until I'd left my normal job. You haven't really got time if you've got a full-time job and married.

**[JH]: No.**

[AG]: And, but, as I say, that, it got me out, it, it cured me having a breakdown.

**[JH]: Yes.**

[AG]: Because it gave me confidence and I've got plenty of confidence now. [Laughing]

**[JH]: Mm, mm. And you got a lot out of being a volunteer?**

[AG]: Yes, yes, and I have, I have trained people too, I've trained actually people with me. Jackie's let me train people.

**[JH]: In the canteen is that?**

[AG]: Yes, yes. We used to have to go for a Food Hygiene course but we haven't had one for ages.

**[JH]: Did the Food Hygiene courses come in sort of in the 1980s when... ?**

[AG]: Yes, it, I think the last one was about 2000, in the 2000s, yes.

**[JH]: Yes.**

[AG]: And we've got the, we've got the thing to prove it. But of course, we don't actually cook food at, now.

**[JH]: No.**

[AG]: It's all pre-packed.

**[JH]: How did you feel about being a Diamond Champion in 2012?**

[AG]: Well I, it was a shock really because I was recommended. It was a pleasant surprise, but, as I say, Jackie never really acknowledged it was anything to do with WRVS I thought 'Well why bother, why get excited if, if your local people can't get excited what can you do'? I didn't go up to receive it because I wasn't going up to London to get it.

**[JH]: No, it's quite a....**

[AG]: I wasn't going to that expense. Mm, oh dear, I got it through the post. I did talk about it to patients, you know, so it is a talking point, but, as I say, Jackie said my certificate was going up, put it up on the wall but never has done.

**[JH]: Did you celebrate the Seventy-fifth Anniversary in 2013?**

[00:40:04]

[AG]: No, no, nobody went anywhere, no.

**[JH]: Nobody from Brighton went up to London then?**

[AG]: No, no, we didn't, no. I don't think people like travelling these days. [Laughing]

**[JH]: Have you celebrated any other anniversaries over the years?**

[AG]: No, not down here.

**[JH]: No?**

[AG]: You see it in the magazines, you know, see pictures in the magazine, but not down here we don't, no. As I say, there isn't much conversation between our supervisors and us, they don't come around specifically and tell you.

**[JH]: Is there anything we haven't talked about today that you would like to mention?**

[AG]: Not really. I just hope I can go on and... [Laughing]

**[JH]: Carry on volunteering?**

[AG]: Yes. See if I can get the Forty Year Medal off of them, I suppose I'll be told one day.

**[JH]: And what was the biggest change you've experienced as a WRVS volunteer?**

[AG]: I think the most disappointing thing is having Ginsters pre-packed sandwiches where we used to make our own sandwiches and we used to take a pride in it. And I used to occasionally make scones and so on, but you see I can't even do mince pies at Christmas, Jackie says I can't do it, I can't even give them to staff. I think that's the most disappointing thing that we're not close enough to people. It's, it's all money, profit and it's not all going to the hospital these days. We do sell, we do give quite a lot of money but I reckon Costa's probably give the hospital, will give the hospital more than we, we can. I mean we can't if, if people aren't buying stuff our takings are dropping.

**[JH]: Where would you say Royal Voluntary Services' place in society is today?**

[AG]: I think it's very important. I mean I've got my badge on my car and twice I have been stopped when I've driven and perhaps it's been pouring with rain and a lady will come up to me and say 'I see you're WRVS, could you possibly take me home?' Twice, I mean I would be, wouldn't do it now so much but I have twice been stopped. Yes, I think it's important. I always wear my badge when I go out because if people see you are WRVS I think they think they can trust you.

**[JH]: What do you think is the future for Royal Voluntary Service?**

[AG]: I don't know. [Pause] Well, I just think it's needful but I think it wants to be reorganised, especially in the, in the hospital I think it needs reorganisation. I don't know how they can do it, they've got enough people paid to do it but they're still struggling.

**[JH]: And finally what is your most memorable moment of your time with WRVS?**

[AG]: My years making sandwiches. The initial years were we were literally putting our all in to it, you know, and helping people. You see for years they had tables outside our new canteen where we, where people could sit with cups of tea and their sandwiches and if we weren't serving often you used to sit out and talk to the patients. But now sisters, or the matron, managers have got rid of all our tables except one and they're right over the other side of the room. Because it used to be nice when you could sit and chat to the patients, they used to tell you stories about all their ailments and that, if they were frightened you could put their minds at rest. Yes, that was the most memorable, yes, yes. But it's hard work now.

[00:45:31]

**[JH]: Mm.**

[AG]: Because you have to clean the canteens as well before you start. Everything has to be cleaned, forms filled in. It's, we never used to have forms, we used to sign in to say we'd been in and that was the lot. But now well, there's new, all the new tills and that you see. We've, most of us we don't really understand it if anything goes wrong, [Laughing] we don't do it enough to understand it completely. Yes, but I got Paul working with me. You probably don't know him but he's an ex, he's an ex-European banker and he knows every little detail of money and he's very handy to have work with me. He comes in about half past nine or ten and he helps out when I get really busy and I says to him 'Take over the till', you know, 'you do the till and I'll do the donkey work'. [Laughing] But yes, it was when we were close to the patients more that I liked.

**[JH]: Well, thank you Ann for talking to me today and this will make a really good contribution to Our Voices of Volunteering Project.**

[End of Interview – 00:46:56]

