

Voices of Volunteering: 75 Years of Citizenship and Service

Interview Summary Sheet

Title

Page

Ref. No.: CARL

Collection Title: Voices of Volunteering

Interviewee's Surname: Carling

Title: Mrs

Interviewee's Forenames: Lily

Gender: F

Volunteer/Employee Roles and Dates:

1984-Present (2014), Scarborough North
Yorkshire

1984-1985, Meals-on-Wheels and Emergency
Services

1985-1989, Local Organiser Meals-on-Wheels

1989-2006, Publicity and Fundraising officer

2006-2014, Meals-on-Wheels and Emergency
Services Volunteer

Date(s) of recording, Tracks (From-To): 23/09/2014 (Track 1)

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Interviewer's Notes:

Lily Carling (LC) talks about her time as a WRVS volunteer from 1984-Present (2014). Comments on being involved with Meals-on-Wheels (MOW) and becoming a local organiser, managing the accounts and vans. Also mentions being an Emergency Services (ES) volunteer and some of the other services provided by WRVS such as Books-on-Wheels (BOW). LC discusses her involvement with local publicity and fundraising and how this work changed overtime. She concludes with how she feels about Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) today and its future as well as her most memorable moments of being a volunteer.

[JENNIFER HUNT]: This is Jennifer Hunt, with Lily Carling, on the 23rd of September 2014 at her home in Newby, Scarborough. Lily, would you just like to introduce yourself.

[LILY CARLING]: Yes I came to Scarborough to live in, in 1965, and before that we lived overseas for some years. My husband was with GCHQ and we had done some years in Cyprus. We have four children, and it was quite an event really because we came here on a fortnight's notice in the middle of the season with nowhere to live. But since then I've grown into the area and I consider myself as good a Yorkshire woman as you'll get now. So taking it a little further I became involved with the WRVS when the children were grown up, I did work which it was a part-time job for a market research company. I worked from home and I could do it as and when I needed to be in touch with the interviewers or book their work or check their work. And, and for a long time I'd planned to become a, a Meals-on-Wheels lady. My mother's cousin, who lived to well into her eighties, she had Meals-on-Wheels in Loughborough, which is where I originate, and it, they were so helpful to her that I always planned that I would do Meals-on-Wheels at some stage in my life. And when the time came I, I saw a piece in the local paper asking for volunteers so I, I went along to join up, and I was really disappointed in one way because I could have done it years before. What I hadn't realised was that although Aunt Clara got her meals from the same people every time, in fact when, in Scarborough they had a rota system, which meant that you only did it once a month so you could do it more often if you wanted. But it, I could have done it years before, I just thought I had to commit to at least once a week, you know, or twice a week. So, so that was how I joined, and I went to my first meeting and anyone that was with WRVS from a few years ago knows that more things happen than you expect. I went as a very raw recruit and I came out in charge of the Meals-on-Wheels van and the bunting. So, so that was my first introduction, and I hadn't even delivered a meal by that, that [Laughter] time. So I went, I eventually went on and I became a Local Organiser when the, the, the current one stepped down. But it also developed in other ways because we had eight vans in our area and the arrangement for each area was different. And in this area we had to provide our own

vans and the Social Services maintained them and paid for the petrol, you know, the running costs of them. And so it was always a struggle to get the money for the vans. And it, it had long been understood that the WRVS didn't advertise, that Lady Reading when she set the, the whole system up, always said that the work should be maintained by stealth, and that doing it was its own reward. Well that was when she set it up and there were, there were five major charities at that time and, by the time I joined there were a hundred and fifty three thousand and counting so you were fighting for your slice of the cake all the way along. And I just pushed and said 'Well if, if we don't advertise we will die, we need to make people aware that we need both money and volunteers'. So, because I pushed so hard I got the job. And I was one of, of just a few I think that did it, and I used to go around talking to various groups and telling them what we did and made sure that we kept our profile high in the, in the local paper. And then of course, because you'd been to the local groups, like Probus and The Lions and Rotary and lot, lots and lots of local groups, and ladies' groups, you know, the, not so much the WI because they had their own way of doing things, but there were lots of smaller groups.

[00:05:11]

So I, I would go along to talk to them, and then when we needed to raise money for the, the vans, you could then write to them and say perhaps you remember, and the response was lovely. And it was made even better because, I don't know whether you noticed but Scarborough is geographically isolated, there is nothing in any direction for eighteen miles so that if you asked for the money for a, a van for Whitby the people in Whitby responded beautifully, and the same in Scarborough. And it went as far as Filey, I went as far as Bridlington, I did actually do some talks quite far afield, but that was the local thing, and keeping them in people's eye and minds all the time. I quite enjoyed that actually, it was quite good stuff. And then of course, there was the, the Emergency Service side of it, had some fun with that. Am I allowed to tell a story?

[JH]: Yes, or, mm...

[LC]: **Mm.**

[JH]: We can get to that in a bit. Which year did you start volunteering?

[LC]: I started about 1984, I'm not a great record keeper, but I do remember it was about 1984, and it would be in the spring, I think. And, as I say, I saw the, I saw an advert, the Local Organiser was stepping down and she wanted somebody to, to, well somebody else was taking over, so they, they'd sort of timed it with that and asked for volunteers at the same time. Mm, as I say, I, I could have done it years ago, that's the bit that really upset me, that...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: I thought you had to be, give a greater commitment than that, so that was a bit annoying. So yes, is there anything you'd like to ask me?

[JH]: Mm, what did you know about WRVS before you joined?

[LC]: Only that my, my aunt Clara had Meals-on-Wheels, that, that was enough for me to want to do for other people what somebody had done for her. Because she was, she was dearly loved, she, she had, on a personal note, she'd missed out on life a lot because for some reason my great aunt, her mother, hated men. And she started courting her young man at eighteen, did Aunt Clara, and my Aunt Hannah, or great aunt Hannah said in the way that families sometimes do, 'Well if you get married that's it, I don't want to know. I shall probably go and drink myself to death'. And Aunt Clara never said a word about it. And my Aunt Hannah lived to be eighty..., oh well into her eighties, and Aunt Clara didn't get married till after she died. And she waited a year, to show respect, so she was well into her sixties when she married and sadly her husband died about two years later, and he'd been around all that time. And I just felt that she'd done so much for her own mother, and people had been kind enough, because we didn't live locally, my, my mother went of course, but, and looked, sort of kept an eye on her, but, but it was that daily contact for the Meals-on-Wheels that made the world of difference to the end of her life. And it stuck with me, it just stuck with me. So so, yes, it was the Meals-on-Wheels thing. The rest I found out afterwards.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: So that was, mm, mm.

[JH]: Mm, can you tell me about your first day with WRVS?

[LC]: Oh, my first day? My first day they sent me out with a lady that had done it for years. She's quite high profile in Scarborough so I won't say any more than that. But she was a delight, and she, she knew everybody, everything and she gave me a run down on all of them. She told me the ladies on Meals-on-Wheels that had been Meals-on-Wheels lady that, before, you know, that had done it themselves. And one in particular. In those days we didn't have packed meals, they were delivered in little containers, metal containers with lids on, one for the main course and one for the pudding. And so they were told to have a hot plate ready, so when we went in we dished it up on the hot plate and then we took away the containers, we washed and dried them and put them in the van, so we had two lots.

[00:10:18]

So as the next day's deliveries went they took the clean ones to the kitchen, took the other ones back. And this one particular lady, well Marjorie said, and that's as far as I'm going, Marjorie said [Laughter] 'She's a bit of a pain', she said, 'she, there are so many vegetables she won't eat, and she always asks you to take them back with you'. So of course, I went in and she said 'Oh peas', this lady, 'peas, I hate peas', she said. 'I don't want them on my plate', she said 'take them away'. And I said 'Well don't you have a, a kitchen bin', you know, and, and so she said 'oh well I suppose', so we got her out of that because', of course, these peas would be slopping around in the bins then. [Whispers] I have got to cough.

[JH]: Yes.

[LC]: Yes.

[JH]: There we go.

[LC]: So you, you found your own way to deal with them. But the lady that took me round on the first day she gave me a, a little background on all of the people that I was taking the meals to, and so it was helpful because you could understand them better and their positions better. So, yes, she was good, I enjoyed that. And what I did enjoy even more, was on a couple of occasions I got the local reporter to do meals with me, so they could report from a personal angle.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: So they could write about doing Meals-on-Wheels and rushing down to keep that meal hot when it was a cold day, you know, so that, that worked very well as well. And they learned a little bit about the people that we delivered to. The only thing was that they, they tended to stop and talk too long and you had to get on to get the meals out, you know. But it was a novelty for them and an eye opener for them because they could talk from experience so, I don't know whether you'd be allowed to do that any more because, of course, you'd have to have CRB checks wouldn't you? But that was earlier days, you know, well, well they were vetted anyway, it's, it's not so bad, no.

[JH]: And you talked about delivering the food, how did you keep the food warm in the vans?

[LC]: Mm, we had hot locks, and we used to have... Oh crikey what, what you have on barbecues to keep them hot, the, the coal, like coal in a little thing inside, that slid inside. And, and these metal containers so they would be quite hot, you had to have a, a tea towel, you know, to fish them out because they were, they were very hot. The only problem was that the lids never fitted ever so well so you had to be a little bit careful how you held them. Mm, one instance comes to mind when we, we had two or three people in the flats just at the bottom of the hill and my husband stepped in...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: When the, the other lady couldn't come and he was a driver for me, he'd never take the meals in. And we had, I think either two or three that day at the, in the flats. And I stacked them one on top of the other and Ken said 'You're not very steady with those', 'I'm fine', I said. And I walked into the hall, the hall had just been washed and the whole lot went, and I had to go and get fish and chips. [Laughter] But, but they, they, it, it was a little bit trickier but then as time went on we then got better hot locks that didn't have the, I can't think of it, what do you call it?

[JH]: Is it the grill?

[LC]: Mm.

[JH]: I'm trying to think what the hot lock, the hot lock looks like.

[LC]: It, well, it the hot lock, it was just a metal box.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And in the bottom you had a little container with, with heat, heat like, oh for Heaven...

[JH]: Is it coal?

[LC]: It was, it was like coal, and it was, you, you pushed it in and, and it was, it was literally burning away. And when you finished the round you had to dispose of it and make sure it was out, you know.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: Before you, before you left it. But it will come to me in a minute. But it, it doesn't matter really, everybody else will know what I'm talking about.

[00:15:00]

Mm, but then, again, as time went on we got these thermal lined bags, some people had them quite early on, in other areas, but not in ours. And then,, of course, we had, they, they came in the metal containers eventually, the foil containers. So it, it wasn't quite the same at all, they were pre-packed and everything else. But in the early days we got them from various places. And, if memory serves me right, when I first started doing them we got them from the, the primary school at the bottom of the hill for, for this particular round.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And then we got them from the main hospital. And when we got them from the main hospital, The General, they, people talk about hospital food but I think it would be fair to say that we have never had food that good either before or since. The food was absolutely wonderful, and we used to get it, we used to pick it up and start about half past eleven and ours were dished up and then chef would carry on doing the meals for the hospital. And you heard so many complaints about hospital food and I can only think it was because it stood so long, because chef would give you little lamb chops with mixed vegetables and the most wonderful puddings that you could think of. And then we moved to the smaller hospital, which was on Cross Lane, because the rounds got rather large for the

hospital to, to do ours, and they weren't nearly so good, they, they weren't a patch on them. The chef there was, I mean he was willing but he cut corners where the other chef didn't. In the town they got them from the local Boyes store and, and they were renowned for how good they were. But it, yes, then they sort of changed over to the frozen ones and they were pre, pre-cooked before we delivered them. I believe that's what they do now isn't it? But, and they're, they're good quality, I mean I'm not knocking them by any manner of means but, but the, the hospital ones were without doubt the finest I've come across so. And, and chef had one of these big tall hats on and he always shouted 'Morning ladies' as you came in [Laughter] and, but there we are. So, yes, the, the ones we get now they are top quality aren't they, the, the food that we get now?

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: The meals that we get now.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: I have seen them I, I've not done meals for a little while now my partner was in a nasty road accident and it seemed about the right time to step down. So I'm, I'm still a member but there's, I don't do very much at all I'm afraid, but there we are.

[JH]: And when you first started delivering Meals-on-Wheels how many meals would you deliver on the round?

[LC]: On this little route round here, anything between twenty something and thirty, which was a lot because it was only, it only covered this, this small area round here between, say, from the hospital that you might have noticed on your way out, just to the next village, so it was a lot. Nationally of course, at that time we were doing something like fourteen million, it was a huge number. Again times have changed and there are so many supermarkets now doing meals for one, but I don't think we have quite the demand for them that we, we used to. But, but, yes, with thirty meals we had to start a bit earlier for them, and we had to really race round to get them out on time. By the time you'd, well, one or two people used to ask you to take their library books back when we'd done the round or post a letter and things like that and by the time you'd finished your round you, you, you'd be on it for quite a long time.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: It's, but there, with, there were smaller, neater rounds then. I, I'm not quite sure what they do now. I think it's one...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Big round, isn't it...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: That they do locally but, but there we are.

[JH]: Mm, when did you become a Local Organiser for Meals-on-Wheels?

[00:20:00]

[LC]: Gosh I'll think about that. That's a hard one for me to say. When did I put down on, on the...?

[JH]: 1985? Would it have been around the mid to late '80s?

[LC]: Yes, that would be about right because when I took over it was Heather, Heather Rudd had just become the Local Organiser and then I stepped in.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: But in the meantime this other side of things was growing and I did it, I didn't do it for, for very long because then we had a retired gentleman and he took over. And then he did it for a few years and then Christine took over and she, Christine did it for quite a long time. So, but the for the, for the time that I did it it, it was fairly straightforward because it was quite a small round. And we used to pay our own money in, which is why I said I came away in charge of the money. Every day there, there would be a book and you would, they'd write in it how many they delivered and, and how many they got the money for. And then if there was any discrepancy we'd make a note of it. 'Mrs Smith didn't have enough change so she owes the next time'.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Or 'She owes fifty pence'. And then when we'd done the round you would go and you would pay the money in into the local bank. And then I would get the monthly statements and I would balance it all out and check with the book to see that all the monies had been drawn in. Then they altered it so that people could pay in advance, or by cheque or whatever, so that sort of fell away. The van, being in charge of the van you had to make sure it was cleaned and you had to make sure that the tyres were pumped up and it was kept full of petrol and, and you kept a check on the mileage, and you made sure that everybody put the mileage down on the sheets. And the mileage sheets had to go in, they had, had to go to Social Services, well it was actually North Yorkshire County Council at that time, and they went to them. And so they could keep a check on the mileage because that's what they were paying for. So, and we picked the petrol up at the local station. So it was very much different to what it is now, you know, in, in that sense. So I, I would do the, the money and the meals and then as time went on I took over the organising of the meals to me and drawing up the rotas and everything else, which was what the Local Organiser did.

And then it, it sort of, as I say, it just sort of snowballed somehow and, and then when we got a new chappie prepared to take on the local organising, then I could just concentrate on the other side of things. And another side that came into it about that time was the social side of being a volunteer. And we had, I can't remember what it was, oh I know what it was, it was the Fiftieth Anniversary of the WRVS and to celebrate it we had a lunch and I, I did that, and because everybody enjoyed it so I used to organise a, an annual lunch. And that brought everybody together, because people that worked in the hospital shops sometimes never even met the people that were doing Meals-on-Wheels, or people that did the hospital trolley didn't meet anybody that was doing Books-on-Wheels, you know, so it brought everybody together. And it worked in another way as well because if they, if they went to the lunch they very often found that somebody that they knew did Books-on-Wheels. 'Oh I didn't know you did Books-on-Wheels', 'Yes, what are you?' 'I'm in the hospital shop', 'Oh, do you like it? Oh I might have a look at that. You know, so you got a volunteer to do something or other else on, on a different, on a different shift.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Yes. So, so that worked very well, and it also kept all the volunteers together.

[00:25:02]

[LC]: And it gave more of a family feel to, to what we were doing. And we kept that up right till very recently actually. Mm, I think... [Whispering [00:25:16] I'll put it down.

[JH]: So you're in charge of Meals-on-Wheels?

[LC]: Yes.

[JH]: And you had all the social side. In 1987 were you involved with 'the butter mountain' at all?

[LC]: Oh, not really. I dealt with the piece that went in the paper about it, and then but the Dean Road office dealt with that more when they dished that up. I know, I know when it happened and I remember putting a piece in the paper about it to tell people where they could apply for it. But it was, whatever, there's tissues.

[JH]: [Sniffing] Oh tissues, Yes.

[LC]: No, it's alright don't, don't see yourself with a runny nose. You're at home here. [Laughter]

[JH]: [Laughter]

[LC]: I've still got my slippers on, look.

[JH]: [Laughter] And did you have a big response to the butter mountain?

[LC]: Yes we did, I do remember that we had a big response to that, but I couldn't give you details on it Jennifer, I'm sorry.

[JH]: It's okay.

[LC]: It's it, it, once I'd done my bit I, I might have gone down there, but I couldn't give you facts and figures on it. Mm, no, no.

[JH]: And where did you work from as a Meals-on-Wheels Local Organiser?

[LC]: Home.

[JH]: From home?

[LC]: [Laughter] Yes, we didn't have an office well we had, we had the Dean Road office so you would go down to, that's where it was at that time, in the town. And so you would go down there for the meetings and anything else. But there wasn't an awful lot of need to go down there because you ran your own little, little section and you went down for the, the meetings when all the local organisers and sometimes the district organisers would come. And just generally got on with your own round, and if you needed any help you could go down but you, you drew up your own lists, and you, you published your own lists, you gave a copy to the head office, to the main office and that was it you didn't need to do, to do anything else really. Mm, because each little area was, was done on, on its own by a local organiser. So that was, it worked very well.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: So, I worked from home. [Laughter]

[JH]: Apart from Meals-on-Wheels, what other WRVS services were you involved in?

[LC]: Well that did take a lot of time of course, doing the publicity and, and going to talk to the various ones. But I was on an, on Emergency Services and we were never called out very much for that. But one incident does stand out, it really does stand out. And we had been approached but, or the District Organiser had been approached to ask if we would support the fire service and of course, you, you supported everybody, didn't you, the police and the fire service and, and whatever was needed. And there was a, a moor fire.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: On Wheeldale Moor, and what had happened as a rule was that the firemen would, as they went, turned out to these things, if they were on, on call for a long time, they would just grab some

tins and, and they would go out and, and just feed themselves as they went along. And in this particular case it went on for days and so they did call us in. So we, we used our van, with the, we had a van at that time.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And so we drove out to Wheeldale Moor and they told us how to get there and they said 'We've got some shopping in because they've brought some stuff for you to cook'. And so we drove out and they said 'Well when you get to a certain point, you're really off the beaten track. But you'll, you'll find us', because she said 'you have to follow the, the ribbons in the trees'. So when we got to it, there along this track were trees tied with lovely little red ribbons, red bows. They looked gorgeous, for all the world like lovers' knots. But written across them in big letters was 'FIRE'.

[Laughter]

[00:30:07]

[LC]: So we followed the, the, the things and we got to a clearing, and there was their mobile canteen. And if you considered it, it was a bus, it looked like a bus, a converted bus. And they had seats along the main part of the bus and little tables, and the kitchen was six foot square that's all, pretty much where you'd find the driver's camp. And of course, the regulations called for two things in the, in the kitchen, six foot square, one for the preparation of food and one for the washing of hands and there wasn't a drop of water in either of them, I mean they were, they were drinking out of the, their squirters, you know, [Laughter] their hoses when we got there. Anyway, we got organised, and until we had arrived they had just been opening tins, enormous tins of beans or fruit or whatever, and just dishing some of them out just as it came. So we all did a full day, and when we got there, I mean the food was there, and we took some with us, we started off just doing sandwiches, bacon sandwiches and different sandwiches, and the time we finished in the in, towards the latter, the...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Later in the day we cooked a proper meal, with potatoes and minced beef and all the rest of it, in this tiny little kitchen. I mean there, there was barely room for two of us with all the gadgets that were in it. And the men were so appreciative, and what they did they, the, the fire was about half a

mile away from us nevertheless everything was covered in a thick black soot, you had to keep wiping things down.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Because it was covered in this thick black soot. And they would come up in this thing that looked like a space buggy, and it could stop in its own length, it was that powerful. And they would come up in, a few at a time, and we would feed them and they would go back down. And at the end of the day they took us back down to our cars, or our van, in this space buggy thing, and they thanked us, enormously and, and they said, and, our presence there had been lovely, you know, because the nice ladies had cooked for them and everything else, it had lifted their spirits. And also as one chap said, [Laughter] it stopped them swearing, because there were women there. But it was, it was a revelation it, it was the only time I've ever done anything quite like that, and to see how they worked, and you read so much of moorland fires, and I'd like to bet now that when you read about one you'll remember the story I've told you, because they were just bricks, they just came, I mean they didn't even have a hot drink, they just drank out of the hoses, they opened a tin of something, it could have been cold beans or just a tin of fruit, and they just ate enough to satisfy themselves. But of course, somebody had to cook it, which they had to do it for themselves, so their break wasn't really a break. So they came up and we were looking after them, but that does stay with me. That's, in fact I did the report on that, I've still got a copy of it somewhere. But it's it, that got passed all round when I did that one, that was quite good fun, it was good fun. But these red bows in the trees, you know, and the, the soot and the men, I mean they were, they were black, you know, when they came up from the, from the thing. So yes, I took my hat off to them, they deserve a lot of gratitude. I know it's a paid job but it's, some jobs go beyond that don't they?

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: So, yes.

[JH]: And why did you decide to join Emergency Services?

[LC]: It was a natural follow on, because once you'd had the skills and you were trained, so you knew exactly what to do it was just a, a natural cycle somehow that your affection for WRVS became such that you just did it. You have to remember as well that volunteers get as much out of it as the people

that they go to. I could name half a dozen people that I remember with, with great affection, well more than that, they, they're just lovely people and helping the firemen we, there wasn't an awful lot of need for it in Scarborough, as I say that was the one that stands out for Emergency Services.

[00:35:34]

But it was just being part of WRVS. It was just the affection for the service I suppose, that's the only way I can put it. And you just felt useful. Most people that are volunteers like to be useful and that was just another branch to what you were doing. And you were well trained, I know when we had floods I, I was called on but then I wasn't needed. And I know of one place that we went to, we went out to Malton where the floods were very bad there, and they said would I, would I go, and I said 'Yes'. But then I think Social Services stepped in, or somebody stepped in and we weren't needed. But I do know that the, the WRVS ladies that went, they said that it, it wasn't particularly well organised till the, till they got there. And they put all their training into use, and they made lists of everybody that came in and where they went to and, and the, the time of day. And, you know, just...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Just kept a record so they knew where everybody was, which goes right back to the war of course. So, so yes, that's, that's why, just a natural extension of it, you just did it. It's like feeding the walkers if you, we have quite a lot of big walks round here and at the end they have a, a depot where they have to clock in, and their times, you know, the time he's put down and then they're clocked out and clocked back in again when they finish. And I've done that a time or two where we've gone down and just fed the walkers as they've come in because they've done a lot of miles. And yes, it's all part and parcel of it really.

I never did Books-on-Wheels. We did a survey for the hospital on accidents, I remember that. And we were in the A&E Department and we did it for the... Now we did it for the paediatrician at the hospital at that time, and he was doing his own study on accidents to children, where they were most likely to happen and the time that they were most likely to happen. And so we went along to A&E and we sat and anybody came in with a child we, we would just ask them, without being personal, you know, what had happened to them and where it had happened, and we just kept a record for him. And he did quite a good study on that, so that was, that was a good one. And on the back of that we got an invite to the hospital, an, an insight to how things happen in, and work in

different wards and, and departments. So it, it was two way very often, you learned a lot from what you did for them.

[JH]: [Pause] Did Emergency Services change over the years while you were involved?

[LC]: Yes it did, because, as I said, when, when we first were trained and we started to do it we were in charge of it and everybody on Emergency Services' lists kept their own little supply at home, everybody had to have things like a bucket and a scrubbing brush and a tea towel and things, and you kept that, and tea and coffee. And so, because in the event of an emergency you were allocated various places that you could use but there was always the assumption that when you went in it might have to be cleaned and you would have to set it all up and make it fit for. And we had blankets in the store room, in, in the, in the, whatever. And we had our own equipment and so it was all there.

[00:40:21]

And we, well we had, we had the lot, we, we had the cookers, the portable cookers, and we had Thermos flasks, and we had big pans, we had blankets. And then, as I say, we had a list of places allocated to us, it could be, it could be a school or a church room or whatever and if we were called on then we would go to the place that we were allocated and we'd take all the equipment and we'd set it all up. But then, as time went on Social Services sort of became more prominent and so they, they sort of took over more of the organising of things and we sort of, I suppose you would say we played second fiddle to them, because at least in this area because well that's really why the whole thing changed wasn't it, because Social Services became very adept at doing what we had done and so therefore our, they called on us less and less. And that's, that did change, we, we became the second string as opposed to being the, the main, the main mover, if you like, the prime mover in the Emergency Services work.

I know, I know there was a lot of work done to bring us up to date with all the things that were, were expected of us. I mean times change don't they? And everybody has to be checked and double checked and, and at, the last time I went to an upgrade would be, oh, nine, ten years ago. I went to that in Filey, I think that was, Filey, and we were given all the different ways of doing things then and what we had to do, and it had changed an awful lot. In other words you, you more or less just turned up and somebody would tell you what to do. You'd still count your lists, but not in the way that we

did before. So, so that was it, it was different. We, we became second player as opposed to prime mover, because then Social Services, they, they hardly called you out. And I think I'm right in saying that when the WRVS lost its government funding, it's Home Office funding, that we did ask for a small retainer fee so that we could keep our equipment and stuff up to date and our training up to date. And I think that what happened was that a local, lot of local services, or local councils didn't want to pay that, so, because they had, had their own paid workers, so I think a lot of it fell through because of that. Yes, that's the way I seem to remember it, I'd forgotten that, you know. It's funny that, isn't it?

[JH]: Yes.

[LC]: You can't remember everything they say. Have a good try though. [Laughter]

[JH]: How did you feel when you were called out on an emergency?

[LC]: Oh it was just another adventure, it never bothered you at all it was just one of those things. I don't think, I don't think anybody ever baulked at being called out. It might have been inconvenient and they might have said 'Well can you do me next', you know, 'I'll do the next shift', or whatever. But I don't think anybody, anybody ever baulked. And when you have adventures like going to feed the fire service, I mean it could have been much worse, but there was no danger, well there was no loss of life or anything. I could imagine it would be a lot more traumatic if you were dealing with a, a place where there were fatalities, but floods and things like that tended to be the norm I think rather than anything horrendous. I mean if you think about Lockerbie, it must have been horrendous for the volunteers.

[00:45:22]

I used to mention them in the talks that I did because they said that the, the community rallied enormously and everybody raided their freezers to give them the food to feed the, the rescue workers and things. And, in other areas they, the WRVS worked in caves, you know, to, to feed emergency service, when I say 'emergency service' workers I meant the, the police and the Army.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And, and others, and the fire services So yes. So do we still get called out?

[JH]: Occasionally.

[LC]: Oh right.

[JH]: It depends on the area.

[LC]: Yes.

[JH]: And whether we've still got...

[LC]: Yes.

[JH]: An Emergency Service team there or not.

[LC]: Yes. I know it's still about.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: If, if that makes sense.

[JH]: Yes.

[LC]: But I haven't heard of anything very much at all just lately, mm.

[JH]: We got called out in Sheffield the other week.

[LC]: Mm.

[JH]: Well a few, I think it was a few, a couple of months ago maybe, there was a...

[LC]: Mm.

[JH]: Suspicious package, mm...

[LC]: Right.

[JH]: In a block of flats, and we were called out to set up a rest centre.

[LC]: Oh right, okay. Well that's good, that is good. It, it's, I mean the majority of them were trained in the early days, I suppose they'll be all like me so long as you're fit on your feet, I mean you, you, you're still alright. But I should imagine that one or two of them now would be a little bit past it. Do they still train?

[JH]: Yes.

[LC]: Good, that's good. I still remember my training, you know, it's I'm sure that if, if the need arose you'd, I'd just slip back into it because they did train us well there is no doubt about it. So right, next question.

[JH]: What did your training involve? Was it practical or...?

[LC]: It was, it was, it was practical. They, it was setting up, it was setting up for cooking. It was providing blankets, it was just whatever was needed. It was cleaning the place for a start. It was, it was recording everybody that came in, who was with them. It recorded anybody that was picked up by family, where they went to so you could say at any one time. You'd got the doctor who, you were told to get the doctor if there was anybody that was poorly. If there was anybody that was really distressed you sat, sent, sent somebody to sit with them. We were stopped doing that because we didn't have the necessary training. I'm not quite sure why that was considered necessary. a friendly ear, a sympathetic ear and a cup of tea is the same no matter what the trauma, and I'm not sure that we needed to be trained in the skills that they're given sometimes. That's, I don't know. I just, I mean you have this counselling don't you?

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: But what is counselling but a, a sympathetic ear and, and getting it off your chest? I know there are probably ways to ask questions and things but a lot of people responded very well to sympathy

and I, I didn't see that it was necessary to fetch in a professional to do it. But we weren't allowed, that was stopped, that's what changed as well you see. So that was... Yes, but it was just generally looking after people and keeping a record of where they were, making sure they had clothes if they needed them, because we used to have a clothing store as well you see, so they...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: They, it came in handy if the clothes you were sort of stuck in was sop, sopping wet then you just got rid of them. I mean they were all clean that we stocked. So they were quite useful.

[00:50:00]

When that side of things closed down we had a dreadful job getting rid of all the blankets. A lot of them went to vets to, so they could be cut down for beds for smaller animals, you know. But it's amazing, because we had some wonderful blankets given, that was really soft wool ones. [Laughter] But, mm.

[JH]: Is there anything else about Emergency Services which we've not discussed that you'd like to share?

[LC]: I'm trying to think what else I did on Emergency Services. [Pause] It's not strictly speaking Emergency Services, but it was the team I believe that run it, and I went to Harrogate to The Harrogate Flower Show because they used to run a crèche there and they always made sure that they had people from Emergency Services, I think I'm right in saying this, because of accidents and dealing with things like that so they always took some of the provisions with them to allow for anybody that perhaps went into shock or you, or something like that. Of course there was the, there'd be the Red Cross tent and St. John's there as well. But I did go through to see how they ran the crèche, that was quite interesting. And as I say feeding the walkers. There's, there's nothing that, that you highlight, except when we fed the walkers I never did the onions for the meal, I, my eyes stream so I did, I did make sure that somebody else got that job, [Laughter] I wouldn't have seen for a week with all the onions we did. [Laughter] But, but, mm so...

[JH]: What other roles have you had with WRVS?

[LC]: Well the main one of course, was the talks and the talking to groups. I really enjoyed that because you, what I tended to do was to give them the history of WRVS, working on the principle that you can't know where you're going until you know, you know where you'd been. And so you would give them how it was set up and how it expanded, and the things that we used to do and the things that we no longer did, and why help and support was still important. Yes, it, you cover all sorts really, and also there were times when it was like a one off. And I remember that there was a local gentleman that died in the town and he left a lot of money to the town so you could apply for money from his estate, that was another one. So I went along to talk to the people that were dealing with the estate and they were very generous to us I think if I, I know it was thousands we got. And then another time we had a fire in the telephone exchange and different organisations and businesses were encouraged to apply for funds. Well of course, we relied on the phone, in those days when anybody was discharged from hospital we, we didn't have the Social Services involved then, and what happened was that the hospital would ring us to say that Mrs So and So was being discharged, and could she have meal, a meal? And so the way we used to work, at least around, in here in Scarborough, we used to get that woman put on, or man, put on the meals list for that day, so that when they got home there was a meal delivered to them. Then we would do the paperwork and put them on properly and make sure, and work out which days they needed to be on. But then we lost that because the phones were out so that put us down for quite a few days while they sorted them out, well quite a long time actually.

[00:55:09]

And so we, on, I said that we couldn't look after our people like we wanted to and they, I think they got five thousand, that was quite a lot of money then. And that was something else that Social Services took over because eventually if anybody applied to, for Meals-on-Wheels they didn't come to us, we didn't vet our own people, the Social Services dealt with them. Well it could be a fortnight before they dealt with them and they would be waiting all that time for a meal to come to them. And we just felt that an awful lot was lost that way, because they were so run off their feet they just couldn't do it, whereas we could pick up the phone and say to somebody in the kitchen 'Put another meal in', and we would ring whoever was on duty that day and say 'You've got an extra one, it's Mrs Smith at 95...', whatever. And they would just take a meal to her and then we'd do all the paperwork and, and get her on. And, but she, in the meantime she'd have a meal. So that, yes, I'm afraid that we lost out on that one as well, so, we, because we couldn't offer the service that we had done before.

So other than that, well we, we just did everything and anything. We went to, I remember we went to a show once, I can't remember where that was we had a display. Oh, and when we had the local, I'm trying to think what they called it, the local traders in the town, we had the, the town centre, all along the main streets had stalls and...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: People could apply to have a stall. So we had a stall for WRVS and we had, we dressed up, I remember one year being a gnome. [Laughter]

[JH]: [Laughter]

[LC]: With a hat [Laughter] with a bell on the end. [Laughter] And another year I was an Edwardian lady [Laughter] with a straw boater and a long black skirt and a red jacket. [Laughter] And we would have a stall and we would have leaflets that we could give out for people, for volunteers or people that needed meals. So that was good because that did attract a lot of attention and we did get some volunteers from that, because it was all about money and volunteers and everything, you know. So, yes, so yes, we joined in that. Oh lots of things, there's lots of things. And then Social Services wanted the shop back in the town so they gave us an office, and that was rather tucked away it wasn't on the main drag so people had to find us. They, they couldn't go to the office when they were in town or the, it was, it was a converted shop actually, but people would pop in on the off chance to volunteer. And by the time it moved our daughter-in-law was a, well she was one of the few paid ones, she only worked part-time but she was in the office at Gladstone Road, it moved from Dean Road to Gladstone Road. And then they closed that down, that's when Julie left because for her, they moved out to Eastfield, for her to get to Eastfield she, it would have been quite a trek on the bus each way, and for just a part-time job it didn't really, it didn't really seem to, to be the answer for her. So they moved out to Eastfield and they had the little depot there, and of course, that's where they do the meals now and do the, they cook the meals, or heat the meals, and the office is there. So, it's quite compact but it is a, it is off the beaten track so that it's not the same, you have to put yourself out to go and find it. And there is no way to make contact with the people. We are, we are out on a limb there, to be honest.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And it's not favourable for recruiting or keeping us in the public eye, which is a shame but it's all down to money I think isn't it? So you just have to go along with it. Yes it's, it's sad, without being too negative it's just, it would have been more, it would have been ideal if it had been a more exposed situation, but, as I say, needs must, so...

[01:00:28]

[JH]: How did you first become involved with publicity and fundraising?

[LC]: Oh, that's a good one. I, [Pause] I've got to think about that. [Pause] Well I suppose I've always been aware of, of the attractions of publicity. One of my hobbies for several years was doing consumer competitions, and if you didn't know it was on you couldn't enter, so I suppose from quite a, an early stage I was aware of the advantages that publicity could bring. And so when I became more involved, well from the word 'go' really, I was going to the meetings in Dean Road where all the other local organisers and district organisers met, and people would sit there and they would say 'Well I could use some more volunteers'. And so of course, I would say 'Well why don't you ask the paper'? Or 'Why don't you publicise or let somebody know, if they don't know they can't volunteer'? 'Oh no, no, no, no, we don't do it like that, we, we, we, we don't publicise', and I said 'Why not'? Well this went on for quite a while and in the end I'd, I'd, I think I used the phrase 'Well I'm afraid we're going to have to publicise or die, because you can't manage without volunteers and you can't manage without money and if we're not getting either then we're done for'. So, so one lady turned round and said 'Well if you feel like that about it why don't you do it but don't expect me to do it'? [Laughter] So I said 'Well does anybody mind?' And one or two sort of tut-tutted, and the others said 'Well give it a go'. And so I got hold of the local paper, I, I can't remember exactly what it was, and I said 'Will you put us a piece in?' I mean we did have pieces from time to time, it, it, we weren't without publicity.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Altogether, but it had never been done as a planned thing I suppose, or an organised thing, and it just sort of grew. And then somebody said well would I come and talk to their group, one of the ladies that belonged to another group. And of course, if you've ever organised for a group you know that it's very difficult getting new things and new speakers. And I knew that one of the district

organisers, I know she used to go and talk to groups but she'd done quite a few. But then I was the new face on the block wasn't I? You know, and it's, it, I suppose, I was going to say something different to what Bidy had said. So I went along and it just sort of snowballed from there. So every now and again I would send out letters when we needed to fund raise. But by the time it all changed and we lost the Home Office grant we were told that we couldn't do it, it was all going to be done from head office so we were told not to do it anymore, so it just finished us like that. And so far as I'm aware nobody was ever approached directly after that, not in this area, because I'm sure somebody would have told me. And it all became rather different didn't it? And so that, that was it, that was the, that was the way it worked.

[01:05:07]

[LC]: Mm, it just got cut off, you know...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: We weren't allowed to, to do that. But by that time we had, we had a little kitty and it worked, it lasted, I, well I never did, never did find out what happened to it, I'm just assuming it was absorbed. Because anybody that's ever spoken to me ever since I'll say 'Well it was in the, the kitty', but it was just for use for vehicles for this area.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And by that time we had eight, right, in the area. And there were two at Whitby, and the lady that ran Whitby she wanted to be quite independent of us, so two went to Whitby so that left us with six. And then one of the rounds closed down and so that left five. And then I don't know what happened after that because it all sort of became a bit vague. And then when they changed it all they started renting vehicles because that was the way they wanted to go, that they would hire the vehicles rather than buy them. So, what happened to the funds I don't know. I'm presuming that they would have found a way round it or they would have paid for the rental, which would be the same thing wouldn't it?

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: It would be money for the, for the provision of. So, but I never did, never did find out. And I did try to raise it once or twice but nobody ever seemed quite sure. But there might be some thousands sitting in an account somewhere [Laughter] we don't know anything about it. [Laughter] But I'm sure somebody's used it since then. [Laughter] But it, yes, it was good while it lasted and you responded to local needs and all the rest of it, but things just change, so, mm.

[JH]: What sort of events did you hold to raise funds?

[LC]: We didn't do that as such because, well it just wasn't in the scheme of thing, that came later with the changes when we lost the Home Office money.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And, oh, I'm trying to think if we, if there was an instance where we did. We, the only time that we did it that I can think of it wasn't for WRVS as such. What we used to do when we had a coffee morning, which would be our social way of working, we would have a raffle and the monies that were raised from the raffle would go to buying something for the recipients of Meals-on-Wheels every Christmas so we always kept a small kitty, and if I did a talk and they gave me some money I would ask them how they wanted me to use it. So, that a lot of, usually it went into the pot towards the vehicles because that's what it was all about. It would never be very much, twenty-five pounds. I remember we got a hundred pounds once from an Army group overseas. They, they raised it in their NAFFI and they, they gave it to us, and that was because they'd read about me doing a talk.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And they came to the office and gave me a hundred pounds for, towards the new vehicle, which I thought was rather nice. But what we did was every Christmas out of our little kitty, everybody that got Meals-on-Wheels would get either a tin of biscuits or some sweeties or something and a card, so that nobody went without a card or somebody giving something at Christmas time.

[01:10:04]

[LC]: And one year [Laughter] we did it and we, again publicity, we had a photograph of the lady down in one of the bungalows, and I'd picked her up, she'd been on the floor, she'd fallen when I went in with her meal, and I'd picked her up and we took a photo of her with her box of chocolates I think.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: After Eights I think we got that year for them. And she, she bought me a copy of the photo from the paper to say thank you for picking her up. And there were other little ways. I've got a, I don't know whether you can see from there, but I collect antique jugs, and in amongst my antique jugs I've got a little blue and white plate and that came from Mrs Harland. And Mrs Harland was on our list for years. She didn't have any children, she had some relatives, far flung, somewhere or other and I used to tell her about my jugs and things when I went in. And she had a, I don't know whether it was a tea service or a, or a dinner and tea service...

[JH]: Yes.

[LC]: That had been her, I think she said her grandma's. And when I went in one day she gave me this plate and she said 'That's for you'. So she, I said 'Oh that's kind, thank you very much, well why me'? And she said 'Well you collect pots', she said 'and I'd like to think that when some, when I die somebody would look at my plate and remember me'. So, it's up there.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: So I'll show you it. So Mrs, Mrs Harland is up there, and [Pause] that's Mrs Harland. [Laughter]

[JH]: That's a nice plate.

[LC]: Well this what I said, I mean by getting as much back.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: As you put in. I've got a painting upstairs, I think we all got a painting for Mr Robson. Well he was a Captain in the Navy and when he retired he took up painting, well he might have done it

before I don't know. But we all got a painting and I had mine framed. And, and it's a little ship on a, on a turbulent ocean. [Laughter] So, but, yes they, but that was their way of saying thank you, that was just a personal thing. I'm not sure I should declare it, should I declare it? [Laughter] But she had no family she just wanted to be remembered, so she chose where she thought it was best and it sits there amongst my, my pots.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: You know, so it's, yes. So there. So fundraising as such? No we didn't. The idea that we might do so came later, again when we lost the grant I suspect, because it was so different, it was an enormous change Jennifer.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Because we'd had this money and that ran, the basics that we got from the Home Office. And I'm sure Alice has told you this, but then we got the rest from local support. But then when it all changed that threw us back on our own devices because we didn't have that money coming in and so we had to look at another way of raising it. So what they tried to do was they, the idea, when I was told to stop raising it the clear intention was that it would be done from head office and they would approach all the local firms and all the rest of it and it would go straight to head office and replace what we'd lost. But it didn't work like that because the job was huge, you couldn't have had people in one office just doing the whole country. And so it was then suggested, or intimated, that, well the volunteers were approached rather more to ask their intentions to see how they felt about fundraising and all the rest of it, and quite honestly the people didn't want to know. And they, they had actually asked some time before when we still got the Home Office grant 'If we lost the Home Office grant, how would you feel about fundraising'? And the answer was 'No'.

[01:15:19]

It, they were quite adamant about it, and so they couldn't go down that road. And then of course, there were the other options, charity shops, well we didn't have charity shops. I suspect we may when all's said and done finish up with charity shops, it does seem to be the way that things are going. We've got more than you can shake a stick at in the centre of the town. But a lot of support is

given to the Hospice because that's a local charity. So I don't know, but I do suspect that that will be the way that Mr McCullough...?

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Goes with it, simply because it works so well for so many other charities. And the legacies, I feel, are played out now because everybody climbs on the bandwagon don't they?

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: So it's got to be something tried and tested to even give us a way forward. So, I can't think of anything else that would do that.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: It is, it's a nightmare isn't it really, fund raising in this climate?

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: I dread to think how many charities there are now. When I used to talk about a hundred and fifty three thousand, well it will be hundreds, hundreds of thousands. [Laughter] But, but yes.

[JH]: Mm. And you mentioned a couple of times the loss of the government grant and those changes. Were there any other changes that affected you as a volunteer?

[LC]: Well I think I've mentioned the other one, and that was the growth of the Social Services. I think they were the two biggest ones that affected us. I think possibly the Social Services growth affected us as much as the loss of the grant, because I've already explained that things changed when we had to go through Social Services to even get people put on the list. Where, I know, I'm not quite sure how it works now because I know it was suggested that they could do their own vetting.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: And since I no longer do Meals-on-Wheels I'm not sure whether that actually was allowed, so I may be speaking on the wrong information here, but certainly that to me would be the most sensible.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: To let the person that does the Meals-on-Wheels have direct contact with the recipient and then follow it up with the paperwork, because the important thing is to keep food in their, you know, in, in their mouths, and to make sure, especially if they've been in hospital where they would be at their lowest and they need the nourishment. So to do it the other way did seem to be a bit long winded, I hope that has changed.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And yes, mm. We shall have to find out.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: Shan't we? [Laughter]

[JH]: How did you feel about those changes?

[LC]: So far as the government grant went I felt that it was extremely short sighted because I felt it was extremely good value for money. I could understand why it was done because the Social Services were increasing in their spread of things that they dealt with and I could see that, that anybody in charge of the purse would look at it and say 'Well we're paying the volunteers but we're also paying these people, if they're getting paid to do it would it not be more sense to let them handle a lot of it'? But it, I do think that WRVS gave something that Social Services couldn't give. And one was time, and one, I hate to say it, was interest. Because if you're a volunteer you do it for the love of the job and not because it's paid. And I would, I would stick a hundred per cent to that. They were getting something in a volunteer that they weren't getting from Social Services. And I know Social, a lot of the Social Service people are very, very good but it's not the same, and I do feel it was short sighted to take away the, the thing.

[01:20:35]

I don't think they could give it back now, I think things have changed far too much, but I think it was a short sighted short term measure and I don't think it did anybody any favours, because the Social Services are run off their feet. And what did we get, six million?

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: It's a drop in the ocean isn't it compared to what people get now. So, I can't be *uber* critical and say...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: 'Oh they should never have done it' and all the rest of it, I can see why it was done, I just feel it was a shame because the only people that lost out were the people that need the help, so that's it. We've still got volunteers, but we don't spread...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Nearly so far as we could, we're a lot thinner, mm, so.

[JH]: Mm. Were you affected by internal changes to WRVS in 2004?

[LC]: Not really, daughter-in-law was in the sense that they moved things and she felt that she, it wasn't worth her while to...

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: Trail out every day on the bus because it was only part-time. But for the volunteers, mm, no it didn't make that much change to me really. I still meet up with people that I...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Did Meals-on-Wheels with. We do have an Association in the town, I don't know whether you know that. But when, when things wound down a little and I wasn't doing the fundraising I said 'Well now I will join WRVS Association', because I was too involved...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: With other things to bother with it otherwise. And I knew they got, had get-togethers and so I said to the female, my friend that had taken over the local organising, I said to Christine, I said 'I'm going to join the Association, I don't know how you feel about it'. So Christine said 'Oh that's not a bad idea'. So we joined the Association and lo and behold a whole lot more people joined because me and Christine had joined so, then of course the Association folded...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Because there was no Association. There was, there was talk, there were suggestions that they were going to absorb it into the WRVS/RVS mailing slot and all the rest of it to sort of keep them on board. But that didn't materialise and I think it was suggested by one of the ladies that left, anyway, that was, that was by the by. But it didn't work out, so the local group just carried on meeting and just called itself 'The Association'. So that's what they do, and they meet once a month on Tuesdays, which I hardly ever get to because Tuesday's a bad day for me.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: I do other things. But I do make the point of going two or three times a year so I am in, still in touch with quite a lot of them. So I do, we do get all that's going on in the hospital shop, [Laughter] there's a lot of them still volunteers, I still get what's, what's going on, on the Meals-on-Wheels run. [Laughter] So yes the contact is still there.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: But it's independent of the RVS as such.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: But I, I did, I can understand again because there weren't that many, many members of The Association, but in two or three areas there were. Because Christine and I joined we had quite a few come in at a later date, and they, so it was quite a strong group. And I think they've got, I don't know whether she said forty or fifty in the group.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Which is quite a lot.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: You know, [Laughter] for a little group. And they do meet once a month, and they have speakers and they have a raffle at the end of the year and that covers the speakers. And they go on a couple of outings. I've been on a couple of them with them, there's a little, tiny dramatic group. It's, it's sponsored by somebody or other and they come to a little village on the North Yorkshire Moors and we go out to that. We have lunch en route and then we go to the theatre in this little village hall. [Laughter]

[01:25:35]

[LC]: Then we all come back. [Laughter] And it's good. But I mean it doesn't cost much, you know, it's just the cost of the meal and the cost of the bus. And we share it with the local WI because we don't usually get enough for a bus full so the WI take any tickets, any seats that we can't fill.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: So it's good, it's, it's a nice way of keeping in touch, mm.

[JH]: You mentioned there that you joined The Association when you finished, really you finished with fundraising and publicity. Why did that, why did you stop from being involved with the fundraising?

[LC]: Why did I stop doing the publicity?

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Because, well because the, it was all... Look, it was all tied in with the fundraising and the volunteers. And then when we could no longer do the fundraising it didn't have the same appeal somehow.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: I would, I was quite happy to do it and I still do, did do some publicity.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: But the changes were such, in fact the last time, the last time I did the publicity I did it for Bernie when she was out at Eastfield and she had, we had an open day and we had it for volunteers and anybody that wanted to come. And there was a piece in the local paper so it's not that long since...

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: I stopped doing it. I would still put a piece in if it was, if I, if I needed to.

[JH]: Yes.

[LC]: And so it would only be a year or so ago when I last did it.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: But it gradually wound down because I wasn't doing, I wasn't doing so much for the talks, I'd done about every group there was...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: To be done and in fact I finished up going out to Malton and other places. So it, the, there was a, it was winding down...

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: Naturally. And then when they told me that they weren't encouraging anybody to fundraise any more and the, and the money was going to go to the head office and all the rest of it, then that made a difference. I have to say that I went online the other day and had a look and they are actually asking now for volunteers to speak to groups, and volunteers to raise funds, mm, fundraisers.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: And that's a new thing, that's in over the last fortnight, because it's only about a fortnight...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Since I last looked to see what was going on. So it looks as though they are going down that route. And also the talk was that, I can't remember who told me, that money raised locally would be kept locally.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: So they're, they're going back, aren't they? They're going back to how it was before, which does please me, but when you've done it you can't really go back.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: You know, so it's, again I'd be happy to talk to anybody that wanted pointers, but I don't think I could remember all my notes now.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: [Laughter]

[JH]: [Laughter]

[LC]: I probably could once I got going.

[JH]: Yes.

[LC]: Because I could still see my sheets with the highlighted bit, don't forget that bit, you know.

[Laughter] But and they'd probably want you to do it differently...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Now anyway. But that was the way for me and it certainly worked for me because people didn't know how long they'd been around and...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And how it had progressed and where we finished up where we were then. So I don't know, but I did, I did pick up on that. So it does look as though that's what they're going to do, they're going to bring back, well I say bring back, there were only two areas that I knew that did it locally. So they are going to start now doing, having local fundraisers, and I think that's much better. I think that really is much better, mm, so, to keep them in the public eye.

[01:30:12]

[JH]: Mm. And is there anything else we haven't talked about that you'd like to add?

[LC]: Oh, I think I've talked about everything else, haven't I? I mean one way and another. I've talked about my reasons for becoming a volunteer, I've talked about the fact that the volunteer gets as much out of it as, as the recipient.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: Of our work. I've talked about what I did. Mm, [Pause] I liked the social side of it.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: I, I liked the fact that I was able to meet The Queen. [Laughter] We don't, you don't hear of anybody getting any awards anymore. Mm, people used to, you could read in your local paper quite often that somebody local had got an MBE or an OBE for work done. I can't remember the last time I heard of anybody getting one, in spite of years of service.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Do they still do The Garden Party invites? I mean I went to The Garden Party one year, and that was lovely. There were, there were sort of, there must have been around ten or twelve of us and it was lovely. And they, and they really did us proud, they gave us lunch at a very nice hotel where we, we got changed, you know, before we went. And it, The Garden Party was beautiful, it really was great fun. And then there was a reception, I went to a reception at St. James, that was good. I do remember Alan Titchmarsh was there and you couldn't get near him for the ladies, [Laughter] a great favourite was Alan Titchmarsh, [Laughter] so I came home unsatisfied because I didn't get to have a word with him. I've met him since.

[JH]: Yes.

[LC]: But, but at that time I, I hadn't, but there we are. But, I don't know whether they still do these things. I mean it really is the highlight of people's volunteering to...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: To be given the chance to go to something like that, and yes it would be interesting to find that out. But they're highlights you see.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: Of the, of the, whatever, of the time you had with them. And yes, I feel a bit useless now I've said all that.

[JH]: [Laughter]

[LC]: I'm not doing much at all these days am I? I don't know it's a, they talked about a lot of things but nothing seemed to materialise. I would like to think that the gentleman that we have in charge now, he's had quite a lot of experience hasn't he with other charities?

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: He might get the format right this time because we have had a lot of changes and you, while you can understand why there have been changes it, you just hope that you strike on the right set up so that people can go on volunteering and we're much higher profiled than we have been of late. I think that's, that's what we're lacking. I don't have any feelings one way or the other about dropping the, the 'Woman'.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Because we did ask people years ago and they said that they didn't want to lose it. We were also asked if people would fundraise and they didn't want to fundraise. So the issues were quite clear cut then. It might be slightly different now because there's more of it going on it's more acceptable so I hope that people do come up and we find the right format, because we are good, we are good at what we do let's hope it continues for a long time to come. So when I'm eating my meal-on-wheel [Laughter] I can think of it, I'm happy to know that it's still going on. [Laughter] I don't know how you get a meal on a wheel, but no matter, but there we are.

[01:35:18]

[JH]: In your opinion, what was the biggest change to WRVS since you joined in 1984?

[LC]: Well that's a good question Jennifer. The biggest difference, the biggest difference, mm, the biggest difference, some would say losing the 'Woman'.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: Because it's been around for so long.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: That most of the men that we have didn't care whether it had Woman's Royal on, in it or not but that may have changed. It, it must be losing the grant, it must be losing the grant because any changes that have taken place since then have taken us that little bit further down. It's very hard to claw back power once you've lost it, and we did lose power because we had, at a lower level we had all the volunteers with a Local Organiser, and then we had a District Organiser and then we had a County Organiser and so it went on. But they were all volunteers. I know the county organisers, I'm not sure about the district organisers, they could claim their expenses and I know, I believe, I don't know for certain, that the county organisers had a small allowance to cover any extra costs. But it, they were largely unpaid and all the costs came out of the grant. Now it doesn't, you see, we, everything has to be paid for. So what with, what, and I'm not begrudging paid people...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Because we've, we've had some very good paid people.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: But it all, it changed from then because the format changed and everything else changed. It might have happened anyway, but, yes the changes came from then. They weren't all for the, for the worst, I mean some things did become better. But it was the, in my view it started as rather slow decline and if we had to hung on... There again having said that I was going to say had, had we hung, clung on to the Meals-on-Wheels, but that would have changed anyway because the supermarkets came into that equation, didn't they? I know that we went through a phase where we were delivering frozen ones as well as hot ones, I don't know whether they still do that any more. But, I think they do, don't they?

[JH]: Mm, they do.

[LC]: They do a week's supply, I'd forgotten that, yes. They do a week at a time. But the thing is that it, it's not, mm, it's not the same as having somebody go in is it?

[JH]: No.

[LC]: And that, that sort of lost it there. So yes it has to be that, I can't think of anything that went down. Because then, when we lost that we had to look at all the other services that we offered, and all the ones that were non-profit making they all went. So the, the little children's groups went, the nurseries. Then they had the rise of the charity shops, so that meant that people going for free clothing and blankets that didn't apply anymore because they could probably have more choice with a few shillings somewhere else.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: So that sort of saw that off. The Books-on-Wheels didn't generate any money so that went. The libraries tried to keep that going for a little while, I think they run some sort of skeleton service now, don't they?

[01:40:13]

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: But it's not the same as it was, it wasn't a person going in with books you could choose from and, so it has to be that, it just has to be that, yes.

[JH]: Where do you think Royal Voluntary Service, as it is now, place is in society today?

[LC]: I'm thinking long and hard before I answer this one because there are so many factors involved. I don't think it's so important as it was because a lot of the service that it offers are not high profile, let's put it that way. Going round to see somebody is excellent but it goes unnoticed. Meals-on-Wheels probably gets more noticed. Picking people up and taking them shopping and all the rest of it is a good idea, it's an excellent idea, but again it's one of those things that people do. I mean my next door neighbour is ninety-one, nearly ninety-two and I go round and see her...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Several times a week, and I sit there, I always say I'm nipping round, I'm never less than a couple of hours, you know, by the time I've been, and we've nattered and 'Have you seen...'

[Laughter] But nobody knows that I do it, and if I was a volunteer doing it nobody would know that I

was doing it either. We know we're doing it but it's, it's not high profile. So in the order of things today the Meals-on-Wheels is still important, the Home from Hospital is still important. Mm, shopping comes a bit lower, the visiting comes lower still. It's important to the recipient, but how many do we do it for, how many customers do we have for that? I don't know, I don't know anybody that does it, I don't know anybody that gets it. I'm not quite sure, whatever. So the, so the services that we're offering are slightly less than they were. And so because of that we don't have the high profile that we once had. Mm, I don't know where we go from here. I would hate to see it go to the wall.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: But I think in many ways, if my guess about them trying the shops is okay then yes, we would be seen on every high street, just so long as they put somewhere, it used to be WRVS just to remind people that we're there. [Laughter] But, because that's going to be a big hurdle as well to get them over that. You say 'RVS' to people they just don't have a clue who it is. And everybody that works as a volunteer still calls it the WRVS I'm afraid.

[01:44:21] Phone rings.

When I, when I... Yes, so in, in spite of my fondness for the Service and the desire to help I do I'm afraid watch with rather anxious eyes where it's going. I think if we had shops on every high street, I think that would raise the profile enormously, and especially one where you could go in and volunteer if you wanted to, that would answer a lot of questions, because I know, from what people tell me, that other charities get people that walk in and volunteer. And I know for a fact that my own granddaughter did it.

[01:45:11]

[JH]: Mm, mm

[LC]: She finished at sixth form and she didn't want to go to Uni, she's now changed her mind, she starts this week, [Laughter] or last week. And she lives in Runcorn, and she, her mother said 'Well you're not hanging around all summer, go and find something to do'. And she wasn't sure what to do and so she, she went. And she had a thing at that time, well we all had a thing at that time, about

Christmas jigsaws. So we passed them round within the family in the run up to Christmas, it's more exciting you see.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: We like Christmas in our family. And I, I'll join you in the list, [Laughter] send you in, send you in a jigsaw. [Laughter] And, anyway Kat went in to have a look at the jigsaws and came out as a volunteer. And she loved it, she absolutely loved it. It looked good on her CV because she went, she did get a decent job, but then, as I say, she decided to go back to Uni, I don't know what you did but she's doing Japanese, it's a five year course so I just hope she stays the course. [Laughter] So, at Manchester, but anyway that's by the by. And I know from when we had our stall in the high street when we dressed up, I know that people will do it on the spur of the moment, and so a shop in the high street would to my way of thinking be one of the answers to it. And, but I don't know about providing the services. The hospital shops seem to be doing alright, not sure about the trolleys, which again shows a sign of the times because at one time you had a waiting list to be a volunteer at the hospital, so that shows you how times have changed. But there's got, there's got to be a way to revive it but I'm not quite sure, as I say, that would be a step in the right direction. I hope I didn't sound too negative.

[JH]: No, no.

[LC]: Saying that, because I, I'm not a negative person.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: I don't, I do look at options and, you know, just think out which might be the best way to go, if that one doesn't work you try something else don't you? But certainly I know from what people have told me that they do come in to volunteer. And I, it happened to me just, well the week before last I had something for the charity shop, and I play bridge and there's a hospice shop just near where I play, and I popped it in, I can't remember what it was, it was just one thing, and I just, I just popped it in and I went up to the counter and I said 'I'm not stopping, I've just brought you this, hope you can use it', and left. And as I turned to go I realised that the woman...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: That she was talking to had just come in to volunteer. And I thought, 'Oh', you know, 'that's nice'.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And she wanted to work in a hospital shop, the hospice shop, but it does work.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: It does work.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: It does work. So, that for me would be the way to go, to set up the shops, mm. Because everybody goes to the charity shops now don't they? Either to hand in or to, to buy. It's surprising how many people do go, you know. It's, I went in the other week to buy a knitting pin, [Laughter] but I went in. Well I was knitting a top and I'd bought a new, well I digress here. [Laughter]

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: I bought a Gtech AirRam, one of...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Those cordless Hoovers. And it was so powerful, and my knitting was here. And a piece of wool was dangling over the edge like that, and it was so powerful it sucked it in. [Laughter] And it snapped a knitting pin and I, I'd only had it a week. [Laughter]

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: This, this Hoover thing. And I thought 'That, that's it, I've broken it, I've broken it', and I couldn't find it, I couldn't find the half of a knitting pin anywhere, and it had bounced back and gone back in my little bag. So, I thought 'Well I'm not buying, buying another pair of knitting pins, not, not to

finish that', and as, as I passed the hospice I thought 'I wonder if they've got a pair in here'. And apparently they don't have them on show because they're considered to be a bit dangerous.

[01:50:09]

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: But they had, when I said 'Do you have any knitting pins', she brought me two bucketful's out, [Laughter] 'take your pick' she said. [Laughter] So I paid fifty pence, [Laughter] bought a knitting pin. But that was, I digress, I'm sorry.

[JH]: It's alright. What do you think is the future for Royal Voluntary Service?

[LC]: [Pause] Well the short answer would be 'I don't know', but I'm not a 'don't know' person.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: I can see that there is a place for it, I don't think it's yet found its new niche.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: I do think that what they could do, and I know that locally Bernie Brown's done something to improve it, and that is to increase the Meals-on-Wheels service and offer other things as well, like Books-on-Wheels, because there are a lot of people that are house bound, and it's all very well us saying 'Well, yes the supermarkets, they deliver', but you have to get to the supermarket to buy it and it doesn't always work that way, not everybody has a computer.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: An awful lot of people don't have a computer. And I think if they offered other things to go with the Meals-on-Wheels so that they could say, well not a grocery service, but certainly Books-on-Wheels, which would be company or even, dare one say it? A few DVDs or something, so that if, if the person was alone you could take them a meal in and, but expand it so you're doing it every day, so that somebody's going in every day. It's only for a meal but then you wouldn't need to go in and

visit them because they're seeing you every day and they're seeing somebody different every day. I think if, if they, if they expanded on that then I know you, you've got this service now whereby you can order your food and everything else and, but you could increase that, you could have people that don't necessarily have problems getting out but just don't want to go out. I don't know, I think, I think you could do more with the Meals-on-Wheels, that's where it originated, that's where it found its niche and in many ways you would be returning to basics. I can think of an awful lot of people that wouldn't go to a supermarket and buy a meal for one.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And then they couldn't carry them anyway, but if they were delivered and they could do, order them, say, once a week and have somebody bring them I think they could expand on that, and I think they could expand on the shops.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: I'm not convinced that the visits and going to take them out, I think I for one would be put off by trying to help a person who is not as active as myself, getting her in and out of a car, because I only did it once and I thought 'Good heavens, if she had gone'.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Because she couldn't get in and out very well and you're helping her, I thought 'If she had fallen', I could think of all the problems.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: That would have arisen because she had fallen. And I can think of a lot of people that wouldn't volunteer to do that simply because of the responsibility. So I don't know, but maybe you don't think about that but I certainly would, and I know a lot of people as well that would. So I think they could expand on what they've got but in a slightly different fashion. But I certainly think shops, and I certainly think the Meals-on-Wheels, because the shops would raise an income and Meals-on-Wheels, if you make a small charge. I actually went on, because I come from Loughborough I go online every now and again and I look at my local rag, which is *The Loughborough Echo*. And I went

online the other day and lo and behold they were asking for volunteers for Meals-on-Wheels, and it was the Leicestershire County Council that was asking for them.

[01:55:45]

And I know that we've got a Meals-on-Wheels service down there because I've, I know, I know of it. But this wasn't the RVS, this was the county council that were asking. And they said that they were hoping to keep the Meals-on-Wheels service going, but they couldn't, they hadn't got enough volunteers, they needed more volunteers. And they said that because of the funding for it they were having to raise the cost, and they were going to raise it over two years, and I can't remember the exact figures. At the moment it's three pounds something, but they were going to put it up to four pounds something next year, or this year, and next year it was going to be five pound something, so that's quite a lot for a meal to be delivered. It is in my book, you can buy a mini meal that my neighbour gets, they're two pounds at Marks and Spencers and only three pounds for a full one, so to have it delivered is, it's quite expensive isn't it?

[JH]: Yes.

[LC]: So I don't know. So that, that would be, to my way of thinking it, and what do they charge for meals these days?

[JH]: A few pounds at Birmingham.

[LC]: No, it's more than that.

[JH]: No. I'm not actually sure then how much they charge.

[LC]: That's something we should check on isn't it?

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: We don't know do we?

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: But certainly, but certainly that seems a lot to me. So if that's Leicestershire County Council why are we delivering them to other people, or are we charging that? I mean that, and if they're delivering them why are we delivering them there?

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Because I do know they had one there, because well it's not that long since I went, I went to a meeting of some sort and they were talking about Loughborough, unless it's in different areas of Leicestershire. We shall have to look it up shan't we?

[JH]: Mm, yes.

[LC]: I didn't carry on, I just looked at the paper and I switched off. But we can surely undercut what they're charging. And we deliver so it can't be bad can it?

[JH]: No.

[LC]: But that would, for me would be the way to go.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: Because we could make, we could make a small profit on each meal that we delivered, and since we've got volunteers delivering them, I know we haven't got many and I think a lot are paid now aren't they? But if we could get the volunteers back to deliver Meals-on-Wheels I think we've got to...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Just re-vamp it.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Have a look at, go back to basics. But that would be my way of doing it, do what we do best.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And that's what we do best. And the other services seem to be a bit hit and miss don't they? Or, at least that's how it seems to me, but maybe I've taken my finger off the pulse, I don't know.

[JH]: And what is your most, or what would you say is your most memorable moment of your time with WRVS?

[LC]: My family. Mm.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Oh, that's a hard one because most of them were off, away when I started.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: I waited till the youngest one was before I did it.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: [Pause] I suppose going to The Garden Party.

[01:20:12]

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: [Laughter] If I think about it, oh well it's certainly one of them.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Because they pulled my leg about it for ages afterwards and they all bobbed to curtsy then.

[Laughter]

[JH]: Yes.

[LC]: [Laughter] Most memorable? Oh, there have been so many happy memories, and the other one must be the, must be those ribbons in the trees.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: It's the, it's, I cannot tell you how it looked, there were all these young saplings and there was a slight breeze and these big red bows, and they must have tied them in bows on purpose.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: Because they knew it was the ladies that were going. And I had been, it was just, it was just lovely. [Laughter] So they, there they were all fluttering away and yes it was, it was good, yes. That, it, it was a, it's an, it's an image that's stayed. And I remember the Christmas runs, but that's not with my family is it you see.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: That's, mm...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: But they, they were part and parcel of it so much. And I like to think they got the habit of doing things from me, because I've always done things, and it does rub off doesn't it?

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: It does rub off.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: But that's, that's the, that's what I do remember, being teased after I'd been on it. And they ribbed me about my hat as well because I tried and tried and tried to get a hat that I liked that was

plain, that wasn't too over the top, and I went everywhere to find a hat and they, I finished up in Boyes. [Laughter]

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Which is the local, well it's like a remnants store. And I walk in and I saw, I, I went in desperation and I saw the just perfect plain blue, navy blue hat. And I bought it, and they said, the girls said 'Mother, you're never going to The Palace in the hat from Boyes'. And I said 'They have some very nice hats from Boyes'. And they said, when I came back they said 'How did you get on'? And I said The Queen said 'You look lovely dear'. [Laughter] And that was another one it was sort of all mixed up in it, but yes that was, that was good fun, it was good fun.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: So, mm...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: But I I have to, I have to say everything was done down to the minute.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: They knew exactly how many minutes it took for them to walk from the terrace, down the steps to the thing and through the waiting people, and where to put them, it was down to a... [Laughter] I thought would that I was so organised. [Laughter] There we are.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Yes it was, it was a highlight. They all liked the fact that I did what I did.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: They, they're just, they're just good, just a good family, you know, in that sense. But I've told them all the stories where the things that have happened and all the rest of it. And, but I can't think

of anything that they were directly involved with because, as I say, they were, they were all away at working and Uni and things by that time. So it was difficult, it was just the two of us. I did take eldest granddaughter on Meals-on-Wheels one day. My partner was, was poorly, and I said to Ken 'I don't know what, quite what to do', and, as I said, when she wasn't able Ken would step in and be my driver, and that got round this...

[02:00:02]

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: I, well it, we didn't have CRB checks then.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: I'd been vetted because we had to have two guarantors.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: You know, two referees. But also it meant that Ken didn't go into the house he just drove the vehicle, and he was insured to drive a vehicle so that was okay. So I remember I, my partner couldn't do it and I took Sarah with me. And Sarah at that age would be all of ten. So I left her in the van and...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And we didn't have that many on the list that day so I left her in the van and she, shot in, until I got to the last one, and that was Mrs Harland, so I took her in with me.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: See because then she, it taught Sarah the value of it.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: So that was good.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: So we went in to see Mrs Harland and she said 'Oh are you going to bring my Meals-on-Wheels next time then', or something like that, to Sarah.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And Sarah just beamed. [Laughter]

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: So that was, so they have been involved in that sense but yes, so it's, mm...

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: Yes, it's it, it has been a lovely time. I still wish we had The Association, because then I could meet up with Alice. [Laughter]

[JH]: [Laughter]

[LC]: I do miss seeing Alice, she's a, she's a lovely person. I rang her the day before yesterday actually and she wasn't there and so I said 'I'll try and ring you tonight', but, oh no, yesterday.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And I said 'I'll try and ring you tonight but if I don't', I said 'I'll catch up with you'. So I can ring her but she's out everywhere isn't she? And she loves this archives thing doesn't she?

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: She's really into it. Well you see that, that is something that if we had one here that would have been a natural thing for me to gravitate to.

[JH]: Mm, mm.

[LC]: Because I mean I, my subject is history anyway, so that would be ideal. But as it is I, I just feel as though I'm a bit out on a limb because, well limbo would be a better word, because I've not given up but I'm doing little or nothing. I still meet up with people that are doing something, but it's not quite the same. And I don't know you, you just get to the stage where you feel you've done your best at a certain thing and then it's time to step aside and let somebody else do it.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: But Yes, mm. If they did something else I might be encouraged, I don't know. I don't think I'd want to start all over again at the hospital shop or something.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: But one would like to feel useful, I don't know. I, the ironic thing is that I stepped down from one or two things about the same time a couple of years ago and it left me twiddling my fingers for a little while, hence the Bridge, because I'd always promised myself I'd learn to play Bridge, and never have done. But, my husband said 'well if ever you're going to learn, you better learn before it's too late'. [Laughter] So that's what I've been doing, so, I do enjoy it, it's a challenge. And, well, I keep me knitting, it's a stupid thing, I've knitted and sewn all my life Jennifer, I've always had something on the go.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: And then all at once I stopped, and then I realised that there was, you know, nothing.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: I wasn't doing anything and so knitting came back in fashion so I started knitting. So, I've just finished one jumper and that's another jumper. I've a, actually I pulled in, one out, it's to do a little top to go with this. Mm, I put this away and fetched it out because the colours are definitely this year. You'll take all this off won't you?

[JH]: Yes.

[LC]: [Laughter] Oh dear, but yes.

[JH]: Mm.

[LC]: So, so your remit is for how long and for what?

[JH]: It's for two years.

[LC]: Oh, that's good.

[JH]: Mm, it's a two year project, till March.

[LC]: Yes.

[JH]: In fact, thank you for talking to me today.

[LC]: Yes.

[JH]: I'll just stop it there.

[End of interview 02:09:49]