

<Can you remember anything else from that time? Any of the things that you were up to, what were you doing: playing in the streets?>

Played in the streets a lot, played in the streets a lot. When we'd be out there, we werenae I mean, we didnae think that maybe within a year we'd get invaded, these, the war was... When you're a child it didnae really impinge on your life. <mmhm> Until you're a good bit older. So you had a kind of carefree life. There's there wasn't much traffic in the street, so street games we played a lot. <right> You didnae get seen playing peever unless everybody was away out the the. The girls played it and they were good with the peever, right. But we played rounders and this part outside our close was the start of a slope down towards ***** Street. <right> So the person with the bat would stand round about there, and then somebody would throw the ball up to him and some of these kids could whack it. And they're whacking it downhill. <mmhm>

So we played that. Another game we played was cigarettes. And for cigarettes, again it was played right outside my mother's door virtually. You would, one person would be het as they say, so the rest of us go over and we'd all go in a huddle and we'd pick a cigarette: Craven A, uh, Woodbine, aw different cigarettes, Capstan. So, somebody'd go in the middle and would shout a cigarette so if it was your cigarette you'd to come out and you had to try and get over to the other side of the road hopping on one leg with your arms folded across your chest. Now when it was a well developed well developed young girl with a big chest, when she gave you a whack one whack done you, you know, you're on your back. You always hoped it was somebody on the thin side. So that was the game cigarettes and we also played kick the can, and that was down at the ***** close. And there was a wee stank thing on the pavement <uh-huh> and the can was put there under a lamp post. And uh again, that was a thing, the guy come in the lights and the thing with the horrible smell off it. But that was at the lamp post so, we play that on a winter's night. And then a couple of people would be caught, they'd be in the den and then if the guy's looking for somebody else, if you got out a close and you could run doon and boot the can down the street everybody got free again. <mmhm>

And that's how-- uh the rules of kick the can. Ah played alevio, which you're up and down closes getting chased. Ah, the big thing with the boys, summer's night thing, we played football all hours, right? Against the power station wall we played three and in. And when the ball was g-- crossed in at an angle, and it was between the lamp post and the edge the corner of the power station, it was a goal. Now, what was also interesting at that point, it didnae happen before or after, there was what we called a pig bin there. And this pig bin was right beside the lamp post. And this was food, food bank people put it in that and it went to feed the pigs. There was nothing wasted during the war. <mmhm>

Uhm, they came tae our close, ***** , right at the start of the war. And the men came and they took down all the iron railings. Now all the iron railings were cut off all the properties in Govanhill. They even took them off churches. And at the end of the war they were still lying up in ***** Street and places in yards. I don't think they ever actually used them but it was to get the people used to the idea that, you know, we need to make sacrifices. But the football was great and then you could either play in a close, on a wet day you could play wee heedies now that was done with a tennis ball. <mmhm> Now when I look at some of the chancers that's playing now, getting sixty thousand... These wee boys would throw the tennis ball up, they hit it against the wall and keep trying-- hit it without it touching the ground. With their head! Some of them could do three hundred. <mmhm mmhm> Spindly-legged wee kids, and I watch guys now, Match of the Day, that have no idea how to control the ball, right? So you played these games, um, what other games have we played? We played cricket. For a cricket you would go up tae a wall, a power station wall, and you would chalk the stumps, the bails, the whole lot, and it was just a question did you, you know,

did you-- you saying you hit the wicket he said you didn't, you know? Especially summer, then you would play games like that. <mmm>

But occasionally, uh, towards the end of the war, school holidays, your very first day school holidays in Govanhill where we played, where our wee pals played, we always made it down to *****, to outside ***** the newsagents, and we got the tram there, and we got the tram car up to Clarkston. Now that was a real toffee nosed district. Beautiful place, lovely shops. And there was a place called Overlee Playing Fields. So we would go there and we would play our football there. As you went round to Overlee Playing Fields at the railway bridge there was a tiny shop about the size of a sentry box, virtually. It was right on the slope as it went down to the hill towards the railway. And there's a man there whom I found out later was invalided out the army in the Second War, uh, he had shell shock or something. So he would send you sell you these wee drinks. Now these were called penny pops. What you used was the wee jars that the salmon spread was in. There was a wee kind of grooves all around it, you know, and he would fill that oot a lemonade bottle and that was a penny. We'd maybe get it going there, or coming back, or if we had money we'd go in between, and then we'd go down there and there was chutes and swings and everything but mainly we played football. And on one occasion we met these boys who were well spoken and they came from Clarkston: 'Would you like to play cricket?' And they had pads and real bats, you know, and we played them and we were no bad! We're coming fae *****, I mean, its eye to ball and things like that, these things don't cha- but they were nice guys and there w- wasnae a problem. We were just pals. And then we'd go down and play in the river. Now a lot of people-- kids would drown over the years in the river. Our mothers would say 'No, you've not to go near the river'.

<This is the river in Clarkston?>

The river come down, aye, uh through Busby, Clarkston <mmhm> right at the foot of it, you know? <'kay> And we would wade to the other side to go up the hill, <mmhm> right? Just for the-- we done it just because we wanted to go to the other side then you would come back, sometimes you'd use stones, sometimes you fell in. <mmm> But there was bits that was a bit deep and uh and there was wee bits of waterfalls, and we'd try and fish and do things like that. But it was just adventure, it was out in the open air, and we didnae go up for an hour, and then go on our mobiles and say to our mothers 'we might be a bit late', no, we went up there till it was dark.

Interview conducted by Dr David Walker © Scottish Oral History Centre and CSG CIC Glasgow Museums Collection