

Social Care Institute for Excellence

Interview Summary Sheet

Title Page

Ref no: C1597/12

Collection title: Care Leavers' Stories

Interviewee's surname:

Title: Mrs

**Interviewee's
forename:** Amy

Sex: Female

Occupation: Retired housewife

Date of birth: 1917

Dates of recording: 26.06.13

Location of interview: Interviewee's home, Bromley

Name of interviewer: Khatija Hafesji

Type of recorder: Canon XF 305

Recording format : .mxf

Total no. of tracks: 1

Mono or stereo:

Stereo

Total Duration: 52:45

Additional material:

Copyright/Clearance: Full clearance except surname to be redacted

**Interviewer's
comments:**

Amy discusses wishing the interview to be confidential- this was discussed with her and she agreed to just have her first name used.
Interview refers to Lily, another housing association resident/neighbour who also grew up in same children's home.

C1579/12 Amy

Track one [00:52:45] [Session: 26th June 2013] [00:00:00] Amy was born in 1917, near Southall in London. She was one of six siblings. Her mother died in 1921, and she and her two sisters were taken into Farnborough Hospital. The two elder children remained with her father. Discusses the lack of memories she has of her mum. Describes her father who died in 1945 at the age seventy-nine. [00:03:20] Describes Farnborough hospital as a kind place, others have called it a workhouse. Moved to Mitcham Children's Homes with her sisters Hilda and Lily. They travelled in a charabanc. [00:05:56] Describes life in Mitcham children's homes. The children had everything they needed, describes the daily routine. Describes scrubbing floors as part of this routine, but they were very happy whilst doing so. Had a strip wash afterwards in a big trough. [00:10:55] Discusses dress and uniform at Mitcham Children's Homes where everyone was always dressed to perfection. Recalls going on trips to nearby Tooting in a blue bus to visit Woolworths. [00:14:35] Describes food and entertainment of Christmas day. Recalls there was no love or affection. Dad, Lucy, and Charlie would visit them at Christmas with permission. The other children must have been orphans. [00:16:47] In 1930, Amy, Lily, and Hilda returned home to their father, Charlie and Lucy. They could not afford to take the day off work to welcome them. Describes how Lucy had to run the home after her mother died. [00:19:55]

Track 1 [cont. from 00:19:55] Lucy worked in the cinema and Charlie as a decorator. There was more money coming in at home. Muses that during the slump years the children's homes were being closed down. [00:20:39] Described adjusting to home and school life. Not much love and affection at home. [00:23:15] Recalls holidays to Dovercourt whilst in the children's home. These holidays ended when Amy returned home. Wonders whether they were lucky in the home. Amy's husband had worked in other orphanages, including Annerley, which she describes as crueller. [00:25:18] Describes meeting her husband Steve for the first time as an acquaintance. Amy moved into a bedsit and began living an independent life, whilst working in a house. Amy got a full-time job in a hospital. She then met Steve again, fifteen years later, whilst working at Barrows and Welcon's. Describes her encounter with Steve in detail. Two years later they married; Amy was 47. [00:32:24] Describes life for her during the war. Amy worked in a factory in Birmingham. It was hard work, long hours, but enjoyed going to the pictures with the Birmingham girls. Amy loved it. She lived amongst the Birmingham families. [00:35:45] Amy did not give much thought to the war itself. Mentions rationing. [00:36:44] Amy reflects on his childhood. She feels that she suffered through Mum dying, lack of kisses and cuddles, and considers the impact of this on later life. Amy backs off from people now if they approach, and there was little love and affection at home. [00:39:07]

Track 1 [cont. from 00:39:07] Amy mentions being too old to have children, but did not want children. Reflects on the impact of losing her mother. [00:40:13] Amy has lived to be ninety-five and the only thing wrong with her is her sight, and she goes out less now. Amy misses Steve, who died at the age of ninety. His health was not as good as Amy's, and she nursed him in his later years. Describes the day that Steve died. [00:43:12] Recalls that Steve worked in a children's home and taught the boys carpentry. Steve was not cruel to the children but others were. Amy muses on her forgetfulness for daily things, but her clear memory for the past. [00:45:47] Amy describes how she heard about the opportunity to be interviewed. Amy asks how the material will be used and confidentiality. [00:47:40] Amy relates an anecdote about her war experience whilst still living with her Dad. Amy narrowly missed falling bombs in her local area during the war. She also recalls seeing a bomb come down slowly on

a parachute which killed many people. Amy was glad the war ended, but stayed in Birmingham for an extra year. She mentions that people did not grumble. [00:51:50] Amy asks about the second interview with Lily. [00:52:45] [End of interview]