



Port Augusta – then and now

Transcript – SRG 660/1/22

South Australian Housing Trust History (Oral History)

Interview with Mrs. (part only) Queenie Chapman (Q.C.) and then Mr. Harry Chapman (H.C.) on 25th May 1982 at Dale Street, Port Adelaide, by Susan Marsden (S.M.) Re their experiences as tenants at Port Augusta (Edinburgh Tce., 1956-1967, Carrig Ave., 1967-81) and at Dale Street, Port Adelaide (since 29/8/81).

Also describe. earlier experiences at railway camps, outback (Tarcoola etc.) They came from Wales.

S.M. 25th May 1982. The following is an interview with Mrs. Queenie Chapman, at her house at Dale Street, Port Adelaide. It's a Housing Trust unit, one of the new Housing Trust units. I've interviewed Mrs. Chapman, and if he comes home soon, Mr. Chapman, about their life as tenants of the Housing Trust in Edinburgh Terrace, Port Augusta, as well as more recently in Dale Street. The interviewer is Susan Marsden.

Tape Switched Off

S.M. Well, I've got here that you moved into 28 Edinburgh Terrace Port Augusta on 17th of the third, 1956, would that be right?

Q.C. Yes, yes.

S.M. Do you remember the day you moved in?

Q.C. Not really because we moved from Tarcoola, which is on the east-west railway line, and I had a young baby, that's how we got the Trust home, because of my illness, you know, I had toxæmia, right through when I was carrying him, and I was transferred from Tarcoola into the Port Augusta hospital for three months before I had him, and then we got the Housing Trust. My husband um, got the certificates to give to the Housing Trust, so that we could have a house, because they won't transfer you from a railway house into a Trust home, unless you had a certificate, in those days. And that's how we came to live in Port Augusta. However, we were there, up in Edinburgh Terrace for seven years, and then we got a transfer down to 6 Carrig Avenue, and we were there for ooh, it must be a good twenty odd years, you know, twenty years any rate.

S.M. 1967 to 1981.

Q.C. I always forget dates. I'm no good at all. And any rate, the family grew up and got married. Well I've got two sons still up at Port Augusta and one in Tasmania at the moment.



S.M. Had you come from England before that?

Q.C. Oh yes, we came out in 1949. We left there in December '49, no '48, and we landed in '49, in January.

S.M. And you went straight to Tarcoola?

Q.C. No, no, no. Actually we landed in Port Adelaide, in Outer Harbour, and we stopped with my husband's uncle for a couple of months, and my husband got a job with the railways, and they moved us out to Olodea. That's on the trans line as well. And the only people out there were the Aborigines. And there was a mission about five miles from the railway, which had four houses. Oh, when I looked out the window of the train and saw all the Aborigines, oh jove, you know I just wondered what had hit me, because I'd never been to anywhere like that. And the funny thing about it, the train had stopped in Port Augusta, for refuelling and that, you know, it was a steam trains then. And they had the Commonwealth Stores there. So I went in there and I thought, oh well I'll get a loaf of bread, and a half a pound of butter, that would do us, you know, I could get it at the local shops. Half a pound of butter and nobody said a word in the shop, you know, about it. 'Cause we said we were going to Ooldea, and nobody said, oh you, half a pound of butter won't be any good! And when we got there, it was only the four houses. 'Cause we had to send the order down to the stores once a week. We had bread twice a week, off the 'tea and sugar', that's what they called the train that brought the groceries and the bread. And oh, my God it was hot. Oh, just sand and nothing else, you know. And, it was really hard there, although we didn't really notice it. And we used to have a lovely time, you know. You had to make your own fun I suppose.

S.M. Of course

Q.C. I was very shy then, 'cause I was only about 20 or 25, something like that, you know. And um, we didn't have a bed or anything. But oh, the ganger there was very good to us, and they lent us a mattress until we could get one. And I say we sent down to the stores, the order form, and we just put 'a bed'. You know we didn't think. 'Cause, at home, in Wales, you get the mattress and the bed as complete. And when the bed came

S.M. No mattress (laughs)

Q.C. No mattress, just the spring base. Could've died. Well, I had two boys then you see, two little boys. But they got lost one evening, oh, must've been about four or five o'clock, something like this, and they'd, they had wandered off, like playing in the sand and that. And we had an Aboriginal used to come in and, Charlie his name was, and he used to peep through the window and say "Queenie, Queenie, can I have some tea" or "can I have some bread", you know. So we got Charlie and we told him the boys were gone and off he went, and he brought them back, one on each shoulder. But they were really friendly, you know. Oh we got on well. Look those women and the men, they'd do anything for a drop of tea and bread, stale tea, anything as long as it was tea and a crust. They were happy, you know. Bit of sugar.



S.M. What was your first impression when you moved to Port Augusta?

Q.C. Well, Harry and I were very pleased. We thought it was lovely, you know, we thought, oh it's a big place. Of course we had been all along the line, you know. We moved from Ooldea, to a school camp, called Reid, so that the oldest boy could go to school. He was five in at Ooldea, and we transferred to the school camp. And then, we went from there to Kalgoorlie, and it wasn't satisfactory. So we moved back to Haigh, that's nearer Kalgoorlie, Haigh. And that was another camp. And then we moved from there again to Reid, by this time of course my husband was a ganger you see, and we moved on to Reid again. That's twice we were there, and then from there we went up to Willochra, that's up the north, just past Quorn. Oh when I saw that place, I said to my husband, "oh, we're not stopping here very long. And we only stopped the amount of time you were allowed, about nine or ten months, and he saw this transfer to Tarcoola, and that's how we, we lived at Tarcoola for two years. And then we got to Port Augusta.

S.M. What was Port Augusta like when you moved there? It would've still been fairly raw wouldn't it?

Q.C. Oh yes, oh it was. Well, the, opposite our house then, in Edinburgh Terrace, there were no houses at all on the other side. There was just scrub, you know. Nothing there at all, only this one set of houses going up Edinburgh Terrace, and, oh, it wasn't half say as it is now. You know it's all grown, they've built all on those, that scrub, and streets and that, you know, houses and shops and, they built the bridge. Have you been there?

S.M. Yes.

Q.C. And built that new bridge, over to the west side, and oh, and the west side, it's grown tremendously over there. You know they built, in fact one of my sons transferred, although he was over in Port Augusta West, and he was in a double unit, see. So they applied for a single unit, and they just transferred over to the, still in the west side of Port Augusta, but they built all these houses, and a big shopping complex. In fact I haven't seen the shopping complex yet, you know. And a new school, because all the children from the west side used to have to come over to the south side. Most of them, because the school over the west, the old school, only took, would only take so many, you see, and there was no room for all the new children.

S.M. What did you think of the Trust house?

Q.C. Oh the Trust homes are very nice I think. We had a single unit in Carrig Avenue.

S.M. What about Edinburgh Terrace?

Q.C. That was a double unit.

S.M. What did you think of that?

Q.C. It wasn't too bad, but the thing was, Harry was on shift work, down at ETSA, and, shiftworkers, it's no good in a double unit I don't think. You know, if your husband is a



light sleeper, and you've got noisy neighbours, well it doesn't work out, and the neighbour we had, she kept the, there were the two main bedrooms. This would be the main one, and the other one was on that side of the road, you see, which should've been their main bedroom. But she didn't, they had their room in the middle front bedroom there, and they used the big room, she used that, for her ironing and the children to play in. 'Cause they were only little tots. Well, he couldn't sleep you know. They often used to wake him up. So that's how we came to put in for a single unit, and then of course went down to Carrig Avenue.

S.M. What rent were you paying when you moved in?

Q.C. Oh now, you're asking me something (laughs). I've got a terrible memory. I couldn't even tell you.

S.M. Looks like, original rent 57/6d.

Q.C. Most probably would have been.

S.M. And where did most of the people work, can you remember? When you moved in there? You said your husband worked at ETSA.

Q.C. ETSA. A lot of them work at ETSA, and the Commonwealth Railways. They were the main industries, apart from all the private firms and things you know, and the shopping areas.

S.M. How far were you from town?

Q.C. Not a great deal, about four or five miles I should think. But you could walk it. I mean, it wasn't really far. And it was only one street, you know.

S.M. Was only one street of houses?

Q.C. No, no, I mean, the shopping area. There's what you call, they say, if they're going to the city, yes, you know, you say you're going into the city, whereas up there you say you're going down to the street. Which is right too. We always used to go down in the car, down to the street. But they had shops up at Willsden, that's the name of district see, Willsden. Oh yes, we had a car for, it's just a case of having. You really need a car, you know. I have a sister up at Whyalla and they haven't got a car, and she has to depend on friends you know, if they want to go anywhere.

S.M. She's in a Housing Trust house there is she?

Q.C. Oh yes, yes.

S.M. How did you find them as a landlord, the Housing Trust?

Q.C. Very good. Never had any problems at all. You know. No I think if you pay your rent constantly, you know, keep your rent paid every fortnight or whatever, you wouldn't get any trouble any rate.



S.M. Where did you pay the rent?

Q.C. . At the Housing Trust in Port Augusta. We used to go down to the office. The same as we do here. We go down to Barrow Road.

S.M. Did any of the women work?

Q.C. . Oh yes. Well we had the hospital there, and a little shopping place up in Willsden, plus the post office and your shops, you know. And oh, quite a few people worked at the hospital.

S.M. Who minded their children?

Q.C. Oh well if they were school children, they'd most probably be in school and just play around until the parents came home, you know. But if the men were on shift work, well it isn't quite so bad then. But um, I have worked from time to time in cleaning jobs, but not for long. My husband starts grumbling, you know, pack it in. And no good to your health, you know.

S.M. Did your children like living at Port Augusta?

Q.C. Well they were, yes, they did, well they were really brought up there, more or less. 'Cause Baden, that's the youngest one, he was only about two and a half months when we moved there, you know.

S.M. Had you been tenants in a council house before you came to Australia?

Q.C. Yes we had, no we hadn't, I beg your pardon. But we were squatters, over in Wales. And, the what they call the race course. They used to have soldiers stationed there during the war. Well when they became empty, all these um, what do you call them?

S.M. Oh, Nissan huts?

Q.C. Nissan huts. When they became empty, we had been living with my mother and father, and then, when people started moving into these huts and things, and my husband's sister and her husband moved in, well we decided to do the same. And then we moved in there, and that's where we left from actually, to come out here.

S.M. Whereabouts was that?

Q.C. Earlie Cardiff in South Wales.

S.M. Did you notice that Port Augusta changed while you were there?

Q.C. Oh yes. It changed a lot, really did. 'Cause it's grown and grown. You know, all the different shopping areas. There's one big one over at Carlton, on Carlton Parade.

S.M. Were you involved much in community activities yourself?



Q.C. Not really. Although I did belong to the um, it's a slimming club, called the Slim Heads Health Club. And I was the treasurer for ten years, and they gave me a lovely do when I left, and that little sugar bowl...

Tape Switched Off

S.M. You were also in the bowling club?

Q. C. I played for ETSA. There are three bowling clubs in Port Augusta. ,- TO

S.M. Did you have much to do with each other, the Housing Trust tenants, in your street?

Q.C. Oh we had a few friends, you know, but not really with our close neighbours, you know. And then of course, the house next door, they put Aboriginals in there. But that wasn't why we moved you know. But my husband's been a sick man for so many years, and so, he wanted to come down here, so that he'd be near the hospitals, you know, the big hospitals. But, because he was in and out up Port Augusta quite some time you know, with his back and...

S.M. How did you find moving down here to Port Adelaide?

Q.C. Oh well, at first I wasn't very happy, because, really I missed all my friends, and one friend in particular, and of course I miss seeing the grandchildren and that. But um, it took me a long time, because I didn't know anyone here, and it was at the end of August you see, well the bowls hadn't started then. But once the bowling started and I joined a bowling club, it was all right.

S.M. What do you think of these houses?

Q.C. Oh I think they're lovely. In fact it's that warm in these houses. The houses up at Port Augusta, they get really cold you know, in the winter. Like ice. Oh, I used to freeze. Mind you we always had the heaters on and that. But these, we've not had the electric blanket on, down here, and we only put the heater on last night, for about a half an hour and it was warm. They're terrific these houses. They're that warm, and yet in the summer, they're cool. Oh it's really good. And mind when that north wind is blowing and it's really hot, you have to keep your doors closed, and it's surprising how cool they are.

S.M. It's nice too to be so close to the shops?

Q.C. Oh yes. We're close to everything you know. Car Registration, Social Service, and all the things you need. Don't have to go far at all. And we often go over to West Lakes, you know, it's lovely over there, in the shopping area, beautiful place.

S.M. How did the two ports compare with Port Augusta? Did you have much to do with old Port Augusta?

Q.C. Not really. But still, we never ever called it old Port Augusta, because it's all grown. All, you know, gradually grown, and that's an expression that I've never heard, the old Port Augusta. It's never used. People never think of it, you know, as being old. It's not really old. See, when we went through to *Ooldea*, on the train. I can always remember the hotel on



the corner, () by the station, and a few old houses there. But, I think that's all there was then. It was just like a little country town, you're through, and you've seen nothing (laughs), were nothing to see. But um, of course it had grown even in that time, you know, that we were on the line.

Tape Switched Off - Mr Chapman arrives.

SM, I was just asking Mrs. Chapman about your experiences at Port Augusta. What did you think of the Housing Trust house you moved in, when you moved in at Port Augusta?

B.C. Well um, see in the first one, Edinburgh Terrace, that was quite good. After coming in from the bush. You know on the Nullabor Plain the last six and a half years. And we really thought it was great. And I'd had my name down for a house for seven years, and they couldn't believe it. And then my wife was taken very ill, and I came down to Port Augusta, took a bit of leave, see her in hospital. And they told me that um, you're going to have to put your name down for a house. I said, "I've had it down for seven years". And they hardly believed me. They said, "We'll soon find out." So they phoned Adelaide to find out, and they said, "Where do you want to live? Port Augusta or Adelaide?" I said, "Well I'll stop in Port Augusta because I've got a good job at a power station." And I was there for 24 years, on shift work. And then we moved from that house because it was something like this, you know, and I wanted to get my sleep properly, you know with the. And the people next door they had their bedroom for a kindergarten sort of thing and that didn't work out too good so, we went to a single unit, which was very cold, and very hot in the summer.

S.M. Why was it so cold and hot?

H.C. Well they were weatherboard and they're built up off the ground. And during the floods they built the land up, but all the underneath was just like underneath the table, they're all and the wind used to come up. Even with a carpets right through, it was still the same. But mind you we had the house for twenty four years, till I had my accident. And then, decided I might come down here because my kidney op required three months hospital. I had kidney operations and for my back and that, and now my heart, so.

S.M. Yes, good thing to be near the hospitals.

H.C. Yes, that's one of the main reasons why I came down to be near the hospitals here.

S.M. You applied to the Housing Trust for a transfer to town did you?

H.C. That's right, yes.

S.M. And got it straight away did you?

H.C. Practically, yes, for medical grounds.

S.M. And when you were at Port Augusta, I was asking a bit more about what it was like living in the Housing Trust areas. Did you find that people, other Port Augusta people, treated you differently if you were Housing Trust tenants, or not?



H.C. No. Not at all, no. Everybody was one great family up there. You know, they are a bit different down here, you know. Along here they're all right, I mean we know our neighbours here and the people next door, you know, they're very quiet.

S.M. But you found that at Port Augusta you were all quite friendly?

H.C. Oh yes we had a lot of friends at Port Augusta. This is the whole thing, 25 years at Port Augusta, well. And we played bowls at Port Augusta and we played for ETSA well. We've been playing down here, for West Lakes, but we haven't got a club house yet.

S.M. What were the streets like when you moved in?

H.C. Oh quite good.

S.M. Were they? They were made were they?

H.C. Oh yes, the roads were all done. We went into the first new one, the brick one.

S.M. At Edinburgh Terrace?

H.C. Yes, at Edinburgh Terrace. They were nice you know, had a beautiful garden out the back. Fruit trees, everything you can think of in the back garden.

S.M. No problems with water?

H.C. No, no problems with water.

S.M. What about sewerage?

H.C. Sewerage? Quite good. Normal sewerage.

S.M. Was it.

H.C. Although, not when we went there first. But then they put the (septic?) drains in, and then the uh, it was all right then.

S.M. Did you have any problems before? Because I have heard sometimes there were problems?

H.C. Not a great deal, no, no. Just had to be careful of the water that's all.

Q.C. At first we used to have to empty it into the tank, you know. We used to use all our sewerage stuff on the trees and things.

H.C. On the trees, we used to pump it out.

S.M. You had to pump it out yourselves did you?

H.C. Yes, that's right, pump it under the trees.



S.M. How often did you have to pump it out?

H.C. With the family...

Q.C. It used to fill up so quick, they were only little holes.

H.C. They weren't very big, and of course we had the children then, you know. Because it's different only when there were two of us.

S.M. So, did the Trust provide a pump for you to do that?

Q.C. No. Had to get your own.

H.C. No. Just a hand pump, you know, (Douglas (?)) you know, it's a section pump, and it was on a long pipe, big long pipe, and just stuck it in, one end, the suction end, and then just sort of sucked up itself and put the water out. But it wasn't a great volume, you know a very small volume because there was no pump to boost it up.

S.M. So how long would it take to empty it?

H.C. Well we used to just leave it on the garden, and I'd say start in the morning, it ended by say three o'clock.

Q.C. Of course the only trouble was the smell, you'd tell it all over the place, you know.

H.C.) in that muck out lake up there. Muck out they call it.

S.M. What do they call it?

H.C. Lake Muck Out.

S.M. Why was that?

H.C. Well the lads were at a power station, all the ash from the power station comes right down into the lake, and it's, oh, it's absolutely, specially in the summer.

Q.C. That's the first thing you come to as you go into Port Augusta from this way. And oh, the smell.

H.C. Like coming to the abattoirs here. But that's the first thing you come, now they've got it, um, they've got bird life on there now. Lot of bird life you know. But it's only when the tide goes out that you get it, worse in the summer time. In the winter time it's not so bad.

S.M. Something building across the road

H.C. Yes, yes.

S.M. More Housing Trust houses?



Q.C. Yes, they're going up quick.

H.C. Once they get the area built up I think it'll be very nice down here. And we're just starting to find our way around a bit now. And I discovered I got a relation over at Glenelg, so we went around and seen them. And of course my wife's brother's right over at Ingle Farm, and I have twin sisters out for a holiday, she's over there.

S.M. Living in the Housing Trust houses?

H.C. Very good, yes. There weren't so many Aboriginals around them days. You know they all lived on a mission, and now they're all filling up the Trust homes.

S.M. Is that a problem?

H.C. It's a bad problem.

S.M. Why's that?

H.C. Well, you can't blame the, they're just uneducated. They go in, one thing they've done, electric stoves, they've filled it up with wood and lit a fire. And my son's on the land tank, he had to go out there, they're all after electric power. People are selling houses fast as anything now the Aboriginals are coming in. They're all selling out now. And they're all moving out of () over to the west side, because of them.

S.M. What, all the non-Aborigines? Yes.

H.C. Yes, yes. But the Aboriginals were in next door to us. They'd been, I think, three days. They put lovely concrete paths down for them, beautiful big garage.

Q.C. Oh that was () that garage.

H.C. Yes, but I mean it was new.

Q.C. Mm, oh yes.

H.C. And within a week they had all the louvres torn to pieces, all the guttering pulled apart. Used to dive through and out the front windows. And I never seen anything like it in my life.

Q.C. They soon wreck a place.

H.C. I mean, we lived with Aboriginals up at Ooldea, on the east west line, you know, but I'd never seen anything like this crowd. And then, next day they threw about, new eggs, about two dozen eggs up against this, all against this rubble. We had one thrown up against our wall. Course when we told them, they blamed them, it's the Aboriginals around the corner. And then they all get, all the Aboriginals, they all come and gather into the one house, and then they light a fire in the shed. You've never seen anything like it. And there's, it's like taking an Aboriginal straight from the bush, and doesn't know anything about kangaroos and emus, what have you, you know,



and putting them straight into a home. They don't even know what a fridge looks like. Well you can't blame them. But they're, as soon as you're going to sell any houses, well they're selling to the Aboriginal Department.

S.M. Aboriginal families buy them?

Q.C. No not the families, the government.

H.C. It's the Aboriginal Department are buying them, for the Aboriginals. And all the people who've got nice homes down there, that's what coming down over our street was, beautiful home. Well it's not going to be worth a cracker. They're not going to get half the price of what it's cost them to build that lovely home. Because everybody's moving out. I mean, I've got nothing against the Aboriginals, it's not our life you know. I haven't seen many down here, but up there, you know, they're lying in the streets and all, full of wine and all that. They don't seem to be controlling them. I don't think the police do a great deal to help, and the lovely Gladstone Square, they made such a terrible mess of that. Well that's where they all congregate there, you know, with their bottles and what have you. () I think they should be selected before they go into a house to see whether they have a little bit of education. They seem to be in () from their own places you know and, they just can't cope.

H.C. But Port Augusta's all right, we liked it there. And I thought I'd done the wrong thing when I came down here first, missing our friends and, of course I had my birds and aviaries, you know, and I missed them a lot. Tropical fish, I missed it a lot. But, oh, it's when you're going away you can't have these things you know, you can't, mum didn't look after them. Knowing this condition I'm in, I've got to be careful.

S.M. When you were at Port Augusta, did you have much to do with any Housing Trust staff up there?

H.C. No, not really , no. I mean, a few chaps used to come round doing the workers, you know.

Q.C. The repair men, yes.

S.M. Was there much repair to be done on the weatherboard houses? Did you find?

H.C. Oh yes, a lot of repair work to be done. Actually, most of the weatherboard houses now, I mean they're about 27 or 30 years old, and when we put a cooler in, there were nothing but all ants inside.

S.M. White ants?

H.C. No not white ants, they were little tiny black ones, not white ants. They were black ones, and um, we tried to get rid of them but we couldn't. And even, in () house they had a grape vine, big grape vine going out the back, from the back verandah, which was very nice of course, but the ants. And you'd have them inside, you know, and they'd get into the sills and. Oh we never, had to cut it all down, those ants were terrible, apart from the flies.



S.M. Did they have fly wire there when you moved in?

Q.C. Oh yes.

H.C. Fly wire, yes, but they still get in. They come down the chimneys, or they'd get under the door, especially with cooking you get the blowflies, you know. I got a genie lamp up there going all the time, for flies, and that was quite good. We've never used it down here yet.

S.M. What used to go wrong with the house? What sorts of problems did you have?

Q.C. Well, your screens, you know in your.

H.C. Oh the screen were bad, very badly fitted, you know, and you can drive a truck under some of them like that, you know. They were like putting new ones in, and when they put them in, there was an half inch gap underneath, so what do they come and do, it's only the workmanship, taken the wrong measurements, what do they come and do, they just come along and put a strip of wood on the bottom, and nail it in. That's, not tradesmen, not tradesmen.

S.M. Would've taken a fair bit of maintenance too I suppose with painting.

H.C. There was always maintenance up there, always maintenance.

S.M. Was that just because they're weatherboard houses, or because of the weather conditions?

H.C. Well I think it's the weather conditions a lot, because of the heat, you know. And then the cold, the contracting of it, you know, the weatherboard. Yes, the heat's got a lot to do with it.

S.M. It wasn't so bad in the brick house?

H.C. No, it's quite a lot better. But the brick houses, all the walls started cracking, all the way down, didn't they love?

Q.C. Yes a lot of, the Villuris had to be re-done, their door cracked and

(both talking at once)

Q.C. See next door, the walls, some of them are shocking those homes.

S.M. Why did they crack?

H.C. Oh well I suppose, the mortar, or the heat or

Q.C. It's something to do with the foundations I think.

H.C. The foundations on account some. See they built on sand, you see, well, foundations on sand, over a period of time, must go, one way or the other.



Q.C. There were quite a lot of Trust homes in View Street, where they had to do the

H.C. Oh they had great big bolts going through, and next door, Mick Sloan's house, he had his done, didn't he.

Q.C. Yes. Where June is any rate, June is always having trouble. My daughter in law in Baew Street, she's had a lot of trouble with cracks in her walls.

S.M. Dew Street?

Q.C. Baew, B-A-E-W.

S.M. So what did they do about that, or couldn't they do much?

H.C. Oh they plastered it up, banged it all in, that's it.

S.M. Do you think they have problems with the local contractors up there?

H.C. I don't know. I think that they could have because, well even their painters. They're not painters. I don't think their contractors are tradesmen myself. I don't know, but the way that the shoddy jobs they've been doing. Whether they've got to do them cheap or what, but, I done the house up at Edinburgh Terrace myself, the rooms. But only when, well not this last house, but I got my son to do it for me, we had it done lovely. Was painted, yes, they painted, to our own colours, you know. But, when they put it on, it's, oh, it's terrible. You know they paint over anything you know, grease. When we moved into the house, and paint from the stove, and the people before, and they couldn't have been too clean, and all the grease was down, you know, the grease runs down the far end of the wall, they just painted over that. (laughter) That's true. They just painted over that. They don't care. They won't clean it off.

S.M. Could you grow anything up there?

H.C. Grow anything, anything up there. I had orange trees, lemon trees, apricots, nectarines, peaches, and along the fence was passionfruit, grapevines.

S.M. Where did most of the people work, the other tenants?

H.C. Oh most of them work at the power, see you've only got the power station, that's the big one, and the railways, which is with the Commonwealth.

S.M. Yes, that's what your wife said.

H.C. And apart from that, they've got a cement works up the road and a brick place, there's only a few there. But the main is the power station and the railways. But with the new power stations going up now, they're building houses really fast.

S.M. Are they?

H.C. Oh they've spread out right over the west.



S.M. Did you notice any unemployment in more recent years, or not?

H.C. Oh yes, yes, there's a lot of unemployment.

Q.C. Well the population is growing all the time, you see.

H.C. And up at Port Augusta, it's not like Whyalla where you've got a nice big shopping area you can go to, you've just got the main street. Well apparently the shopkeepers, private shopkeepers don't, they was going to build a shopping centre in there somewhere and then they, shopkeepers, knocked it back. And they've got a small one over in Karlin Parade, a little one (). jacks there, did they. A little jack shop at Hospital Road. We've got nothing elaborate in Port Augusta, not like Whyalla, and Westland. Like down here with West Lakes and things like that.

Q.C. Most people at Port Augusta, they either go to Whyalla

H.C. To do their shopping.

Q.C. to do shopping, or they go to Port Pirie to the plaza there. Port Pirie Plaza.

H.C. Well things are so expensive at Port Augusta. They charge for

Q.C. They've got the K Mart and all that at Whyalla and Port Pirie, you see, those places.

S.M. That's interesting.

H.C. See everything's so dear. Our petrol's dearer, about five cents a litre dearer. With beer, oh I suppose that's about four or five cents.

Q.C. But my son, when he was down here, he bought some cartons of beer to take back with him, and he saved \$10.

S.M. It's amazing isn't it.

Q.C. Yes.

S.M. It's interesting too because at Whyalla it's much more Trust than at Port Augusta.

Q.C. Oh yes.

H.C. They've got bowling alleys and all there, haven't they.

Q.C. They got a lot more.

S.M. Why do you think there's such a difference between the two towns?

H.C. Well I don't know, I think it's

Q.C. Well it's the B.H.P.



H.C. Whether it's because it's especially British, most English people at Whyalla, it's something like Elizabeth, similar.

Q.C. It's the B.H.P.

H.C. B.H.P. have made them. 'Cause the workers at B.H.P. have got a really good go, you know. But see not like the Trust, Trust[ETSA] are not good to their workers at all.

S.M. Really?

H.C. Mm, not like B.H.P. to their workers, you know.

S.M. What, so ETSA just expected you to look after yourselves?

H.C. That's right, yes. And then I had this accident, and, pretty bad spinal. And I tried to get a job, just a light job cutting

H.C. in papers. I couldn't even get that. Oh, they just said, oh if you were carrying papers along and the wind blew them off and you bent down to pick them up, you'd be gone again. They wouldn't have a bar of it. That's, I was really out, because I was a good worker you know, I was on the pot boilers and the panels, operating and, lay it on the line in 25 minutes you know, it's sort of heart breaking.

S.M. Were there ever any strikes there while you were there?

H.C. Strikes? We had one, but it didn't last. I was on floater at the time so I was lucky.

S.M. Did that affect how people could pay their rents?

H.C. It all depends on the people. I don't, not a lot I don't think. No. Unless they're really destitute, you know, but, there's big money at working up at the Trust. Especially at operator, or, you know. And also, if you're just, a fitter's mate, or, you know, you've got weekends. Like my son, he's working nearly every weekend up there, and he's doing well. That's the youngest one.

S.M. He's living in a Housing Trust house?

H.C. Yes. He's just went over to the west side, to another house on its own. A corner house.

S.M. He's quite happy with living in a Housing Trust house is he?

H.C. Course he has. I can't see much in buying a house anyway.

S.M. Did you ever think about buying a house?

H.C. Years ago I did, you know. But, no. Actually when I was in the Trust of course it was different. I was thinking of saving, you know and getting, I could've bought the house up there.



S.M. The Housing Trust house?

H.C. Good job I didn't.

S.M. Well you wouldn't have felt that it would be much good spending that much money if you needed to keep it, pay out a lot more to maintain it.

H.C. That's right. Cost you more to maintain it.

S.M. But were many people buying their houses in Port Augusta?

H.C. Yes, quite a few were buying in Port Augusta, a few years ago.

S.M. Why was that?

H.C. I don't know, whether they thought Port Augusta was going to grow and get big. This, I think, was the trend, and friends of mine, see, they were buying a house, and he drew the plans himself and everything. Very clever man, beautiful house. Had it all built, and he sold it, and he's down here on Bridge Road now. Buying a house down there. Very clever man. He works with the Trust, he comes from Wales, same as we do.

S.M. Yes. Were there many Welsh people, other Welsh people up in Port Augusta?

H.C. Oh yes, quite a few Welsh people at Port Augusta.

S.M. When you say it was mostly British at Whyalla, what about at Port Augusta?

H.C. Yes, there's quite a few at Port Augusta too, English people you know. And a lot of Irish people at Port Augusta.

S.M. Why was that?

H.C. I don't know. But there are lot of Irish people. Not so many Welsh people though.

S.M. Did they mostly live in Housing Trust houses or private houses?

H.C. Housing Trust. Some live, own their own private homes, a few, but most of them live in Housing Trust.

S.M. Why was that?

H.C. Maybe they haven't got the money to buy a house, or perhaps they were too old to think of buying a house, or, like I'd say, you buy a house, my son's got his own house, the eldest one, and you just can't take it with you. That's the way I look at it. I'm quite happy in this house. I'm starting to like it down here now. Just that well, the illness I've had, you know, has put me back. I've got to fight that.

S.M. This is very nice this place though, isn't it?



H.C. Yes, it's very. Oh it's a bit small, the kitchen's a bit small for us, but, you know, as I say there's only two of us, so, we manage.

END OF INTERVIEW