

Castle Markets Project - Oral History

Interview Transcript

Interviewee Details

Name: Alexandra Walker

ID Number: CM_033_Walker

Place of Birth: Hull

Year / Date of Birth: 1931

Interview Details

Interviewer: Helen Finnerty

Date / Time: 10:19, 23/03/2013

Place: Sharon's Café, Castle Market

Summary

Time	Description
0:00	Why Alex comes to the market
2:02	Changes in the market
2:46	Café's
3:08	New market for young people. Young people don't care about history
4:29	
5:12	Memories of café and wife
6:17	Council has ruined markets
7:33	Hull market
7:58	Alex born in Hull not Sheffield Sadness that friends gone

Transcript

Helen: OK so today's the 23rd of March 2013, can you tell me your full name?

Alex: Eh?

Helen: Can you tell me your full name?

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Alex: Tell me?

Helen: What's your full name?

Alex: Alexandra

Helen: Alexandra?

Alex: Walker

Helen: Walker. OK and are you from Sheffield?

Alex: No

Helen: Where are you from?

Alex: I'm from 'ull.

Helen: OK, so when did you move to Sheffield?

Alex: In the 60s

Helen: OK and how long have you been coming to the market?

Alex: Since the 60s

Helen: Since you moved here?

Alex: Yeah

Helen: OK and why, why do you come to Castle Market?

Alex: I like it

Helen: OK, why do you like it? What things?

Alex: Well, the atmosphere, got a bit of atmosphere. The people, they're nice and that's why I like the market

Helen: Do you buy anything here?

Alex: Oh I buy lots of things here, you know

Helen: What things do you buy?

Alex: Oh I buy my shopping, I know what I want to, what I like and what I don't like, you know. I come for a coffee

Helen: OK

Alex: I've been to all these cafes for a coffee

Helen: Right

Alex: You know and that, you get talking to people and it passes the time away

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Helen: OK

Alex: You see 'cos I married a Sheffield woman

Helen: OK is that why you moved to Sheffield

Alex: Yeah, well I was unemployed in 'ull, so I come to Sheffield. I lost 'er, you know, and I've been here ever since. I go to 'ull now and again just to see my own home town, see what they've done to it, which they've messed about with it a bit but that's the council for you, you know [Laughs]

Helen: Right. What changes have you seen here in the market?

Alex: Hmm?

Helen: What changes have you seen here in Castle Market?

Alex: Well, I can't tell you really, it's, to me it's always been the same. Mind there's different stalls have emptied and different people gone in 'em. You soon get to talk to them and it's alright. Well half of them's alright anyway

Helen: Have you got any favourite characters? People you know here?

Alex: There used to be a café down there, Joan's, but she's gone. I used to go there regular but now I come here now, I always go to where there's a good cup of coffee

Helen: We're in Sharon's now aren't we?

Alex: Yeah and I'll be sorry when it goes

Helen: What do you think about the new move?

Alex: Well, meself, I don't like it but they say it's for the younger generation, they don't worry about the old generation, they're thinking about the young generation. In other words they've shoved us to one side more or less. And that's what they've built that market for, it's not for us it's for them that's growing up today, you know and they won't know, well they won't know anything about it, they won't know the 'istory of this market

Helen: Yeah that's why we're talking to people.

Alex: You tell 'em what the market was like, and as you start explaining to them they're still no wiser so it's a waste of time doing it in the first place in't it?

Helen: But if we do some projects like this and collect memories from people then hopefully that will be passed on to future generations

Alex: Well

Helen: Can you tell me

Alex: I can tell my grandson but is he going to take any notice?

[Laughs]

Alex: This is it, you know I don't think they will

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Helen: Can you tell me what your earliest memory of the market was in the 60s?

Alex: Eh?

Helen: Can you tell me a particular memory you have from the 60s or later?

Alex: Yeah, I used to go down stairs at the bottom here, to a café with my wife and I still go down and sit there and that's it really

Helen: So for you the café's are important?

Alex: It's downstairs the other café and that's it, you know.

Helen: So

Alex: Memories of walking with me wife [Interruption – someone talking about the snow] I've got one or two friends in the market I've known for quite a long time, you know.

Helen: Do you still meet up with your friends here? Do you still meet up with your friends here?

Alex: One of them down there, I don't know his name, I've known him for a bit and I still don't know his name but he knows mine - life in the fruit market, when the fruit market's on. That was a good market, all it wanted was a roof on top but they had to go and pull it down and make a mess of it. They've spend a bit of money to do it but the council had to go and pull it down. You know they stuck blocks up there but it's no good. The Rag and Tag market that was alright, I used to go round there but it all went and what they've done now a car park, waste of money.

Helen: Do you think you will go to the Moor to see what it's like? Do you think you will go to the Moor to see what it's like?

Alex: I don't know, I don't know, probably I will and then I'll start going to Doncaster or Barnsley

Helen: Hmm, yeah

Alex: Or nip over to my own home town 'cos they've got a real old market, it was there in the '30s, built before the '30s, even before I was born and they've still got their market and it's a tradition, it's a market, the people like it, they've altered it a bit, I'll admit that but there again there's memories there an all. I'll just go and have a look at it, that one in 'ull they've even stuck a pub in it now

Helen: Is it an indoor market?

Alex: Eh?

Helen: Is it an indoor market?

Alex: Yeah, it's indoor yeah. Indoor market yeah, they've knocked half of it, well closed some of it down you know and that. To me it's still the market

Helen: And do you come here every day? Do you come here everyday to the market?

Alex: Yes, yeah, oh yeah, come down here and that you know, come here or go to the other café's, talk to my friends, you know, all that. They've destroyed it, destroyed the market altogether.

Helen: Would you mind telling me Alex when you were born?

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Alex: 1931, born in 'ull not Sheffield

Helen: Yeah, but do you think of Sheffield as your home?

Alex: 'tis now, but if I could move to 'ull I'd move, I'd go tomorrow

Helen: Do you still have family there?

Alex: No I've got no family, no. All my mates I knew in 'ull are probably gone now, I don't know, I would think. All that sadness, you know.

Helen: Well it's a really snowy day today so you obviously like coming here, because to get here was a real challenge. Thanks very much Alex for your time and for your interview. Thank you