Salford Heart Care

Celebrating 100 Years of Salford with Salford Stories from our Members

SALFORD HEART CARE

SALFORD

A CENTURY OF CITY PRIDE

Salford CVS

Making a difference in Salford

Salford City Council

Salford Stories: Norma (1934)

Norma was born on 19 April 1934 at 55 Meadow Road, near Peel Park in Salford 7 (Lower Broughton). Her earliest memories are shaped by the war. The family home was hit during the bombing, and many nights were spent in the shelters beneath the building where her father worked, sleeping on wooden bunk beds while the air-raid sirens wailed above.

One night on the way to the shelter, all the telegraph wires came crashing down around her, trapping her in the middle of them. She still remembers the moment a man lifted her to safety - a stranger she often thinks about even now. The Blitz left deep scars on the community. Many of her parents' friends were killed. Norma recalls sitting in the shelter beside a father holding his young daughter on his knee. She had died when the fireplace collapsed during a bombing raid, and he had dug her out of the rubble himself.

Norma's mother, Agnes, was pregnant at the time, and after being bombed out the family had to go to Blackpool. Her sister was born in Victoria Hospital in 1940. Not long after, Norma, her mother, her older sister and her brother (now 96) were evacuated to a small village called Wray, about ten miles from Lancaster.

Norma was placed with a woman she remembers as "not a very nice lady" - the woman even cut off all her curls! She went to the village school and, despite the upheaval, she grew to love the countryside. Life became happier when her mother arrived with her younger sister, and the family were reunited. Norma made a lifelong friend, Dorothy, who still lives near Wray; the two girls would walk three miles over the moors to school together.

Her memories of Wray are filled with warmth: paddling in the river with fish sliding over their feet, scrumping apples from the orchards — she can still smell them now — and the weekly treat of fish and chips served through a lady's front window every Friday. When her mother moved in with her, they lived in Rose Cottage, which still stands today, modernised but recognisable. Norma has visited several times and keeps in touch with a local historian who writes about the village as it once was.

Looking back, Norma remembers her early years during the war as a mixture of sadness and beauty. There were frightening moments and heartbreaking losses, but there was also the peace of the countryside, the kindness of friends, and the simple joys of village life. "I did enjoy my early years," she says. "There were some sad times, but I loved the country-side of it."

Salford Stories: Sheila (1943)

Sheila was born in 1943 in the front bedroom of 56 Fiddlers Lane, Irlam. Her arrival was overseen by Doctor Moffat, long before the NHS existed, and she grew up surrounded by family, neighbours, and the close-knit rhythms of old Irlam life. There was a 14-year age gap between Sheila and her older sister.

Sheila's early years were shaped by church, friendship, and familiar local landmarks. She attended St John's Church and proudly sang in the choir. Many evenings were spent at the youth club at The Endowed School with friends including Sylvia and Ellie - names still familiar to our members today.

She first attended Irlam Primary School before earning a scholarship to Ducie Avenue Technical High School in Moss Side, an impressive achievement at the time. Getting there was a daily adventure: running down Fiddlers Lane to catch the bus to Irlam Station, taking the train to Manchester Central, sprinting to Princess Street for the number 42 bus, and finally walking to Moss Side. Sheila stayed until age 16, gaining several UCLI qualifications and a typing certificate.

After leaving school, she worked at C&A in Manchester until Christmas, then began a new chapter at Irlam Steel Works.

In 1960, Sheila met her future husband, Eric, at a Valentine's dance at The Co-Op Hall on the corner of Silver Street. Eric lived on Eldon Road and worked first as a butcher before joining Irlam Steel Works. They married four years later and lived with Sheila's mother until securing their own home on Addison Road - where Sheila still lives today.

Eric later worked at a car factory in Liverpool and then at the Royal Ordnance Factory (The "R.O.F.") in Patricroft, where munitions were produced.

Sheila's family history stretches across London, Delamere Forest, and Salford. Her grandmother, Eliza Smart, came from London "in service", while her grandfather travelled from Delamere Forest to find work and became a tram inspector in Weaste - a role captured in a treasured family photograph.

The couple settled in Salford, raising six children. Sheila's mother, born in 1897, was the youngest. Around 1902 the family moved to Irlam, living in the cottages on Fiddlers Lane. Sheila still has a photograph taken outside those cottages on her mother's wedding day.

Another cherished photograph shows a street party on Addison Road, featuring family and neighbours including Annie Walton (her dad's sister), Florie Denneney (her mum's sister), Mrs Ashton, and cousin Madge Coward.

Before marriage, Sheila worked at Irlam Steel Works. Her commute took her from Higher Irlam to the bus stop near the Catholic Club, then down Preston Avenue, under the railway bridges, and onto Cooper Road. Just beyond the tunnel stood a small police/security hut marking the entrance to the Steel Works - now the site of P&A Packing.

In 1969 she moved to John Myers on Corder Street in Eccles, working in the catalogue offices. She later worked at Custom House at Salford Quays, typing records of confiscated items stored at the Queen's Warehouse - some with a memorable smell of drugs.

In 1983 Sheila joined the North West Regional Examinations Board at Orbit House in Eccles. She worked in the offices sending out exam papers, while her friend Pat worked in payroll. Staff enjoyed generous flexi-time, long lunches, bank holidays, and six weeks off in summer. When the board moved to Manchester, Sheila was made redundant, while Pat continued on to JMB and later AQA. She then joined P&A Packing until taking early retirement.

Sheila and her friends carry vivid memories of old Irlam and Cadishead, recalling places long gone but still alive in local history:

- Irlam Catholic Club was once two houses; its car park used to be the Palace Picture House.
- Irlam Conservative Club had the “Palli” upstairs.
- The Ship Hotel stood nearby, with a market behind it selling carpets and furniture.
- Tesco Express now stands where The White Lion Pub once was.
- A smithy on Boat Lane made horseshoes.
- The Turog Bakery on the corner of Boat Lane produced the famous “Turog” loaf.
- The site of Higher Irlam Post Office was once a row of terraced houses.
- Police houses lined Fiddlers Lane - the buildings remain, though no longer in police use.

Sheila remembers Irlam Hall as a spooky place where children dared each other to go near. The park had a paddling pool, and the tennis courts - still there today - hosted netball tournaments for Irlam Steel Works teams.

As a child, Sheila visited Fiddlers Lane Moss with her mother, where prisoners of war worked and waved to local children. The site where Makro later stood was once a Navy camp.

Other memories include:

- The famous triangular orange Jubbly ice pops being made on Delhi Road.
- Peggy’s Café nearby, along with a coffin maker’s workshop.
- A Christmas shop behind what is now Single Block bar.
- Buses from Manchester starting at Victoria Bus Station, with the number 10 passing under the arches in Salford.
- The land where Moorfield Shopping Parade now stands once hosting fairground rides.
- The area near the Rialto used to be Royles Engineering, then the Basket Works, and later Irlam Inks.



Sheila’s mother at St. Luke’s School, Weaste (1902)



Sheila’s mother at St. Luke’s School, Weaste (Year unknown)



Family wedding, Fiddler's Lane, Irlam (1927)



Sheila's grandfather was a tram inspector, Weaste



Street Party on Addison Road, Irlam year unknown

Salford Stories: Pat (1941)

Pat was born in 1941 and began her working life at just 15 years old, joining Irlam Steel Works - the vast industrial site that once stood where Irlam Industrial Estate is today. She worked in the Cost Office as a *Comptometer operator*, adding up figures for the payroll department. In those days, workers clocked in using cards that were punched with holes to match the number of each job. Pat remembers the rhythm of the works, the noise, and the sense of community that ran through every department.

Pat's dad also worked at Irlam Steel Works and drove from Davyhulme each day, making the Steel Works a true family workplace.

After leaving the Steel Works in 1965, Pat moved to Salford Council Offices on Astley Road - then known as *Irlam Urban District Council*. She worked in the elections department, delivering polling cards and preparing everything needed for polling day. Schools were used as polling stations, which meant local children enjoyed an unexpected day off. Pat also helped count the votes after the polls closed, playing a hands-on role in local democracy.

Pat later joined the North West Regional Examinations Board in Eccles, based at Orbit House behind Eccles Precinct. She worked in payroll at a time when wages were still paid entirely in cash. In preparation for payday, Pat would collect the money from the bank ("using a different coloured shopping bag each time" - so as not to draw attention). A commissioner accompanied her for additional security - a reminder of how different office life once was.

One of Pat's proudest achievements was her work for the Mayor's team. She noticed that the mayoral chain often marked the clothing of the ladies who wore it. Pat was asked to find a solution - and she did. She decorated the underside of the chain with velvet to protect their outfits, a thoughtful and practical improvement that was greatly appreciated.

Salford Stories: Jean (1939)

Jean was born in 1939 on Dixon Street, just off Oldfield Road in Salford - close to where Sainsbury's now stands. Born on the eve of the Second World War, Jean says she was too young to remember much about the conflict itself, but her childhood memories paint a vivid picture of Salford life in the 1940s and 50s.

When Jean was around five years old, her family moved to Liverpool Street. Most of her relatives lived close by: she lived on Lewin Street for a time, while her grandma lived on Art Street just around the corner. Homes were simple, with the toilet outside in the back yard and no bathroom. The tin bath hung on the wall until wash day came around.

Jean's Uncle Charlie Smith was a butcher on Liverpool Street. Next door stood a theatre and a picture house, where her grandad played the piano for silent films. He also played at the Druids Pub - still standing today, now a takeaway - performing all night in exchange for a pint.

She was christened at Christ Church on Salford Crescent, opposite what is now the University of Salford. Christmas gifts were modest but treasured: a stocking with an apple, an orange, and a few nuts.

Jean attended Hope Street School and later Regent Road School, leaving at 15 with a qualification in domestic science. She remembers the clinic on Regent Road, where she and other children received "sun ray" treatment - sitting in a circle in their underwear around a glowing lamp, turning halfway through so both sides of the body were exposed. Many Salford children recall this, though those in more rural areas, like Irlam, did not.

Her father worked at the Steel Works off Oldfield Road for around 30 years, and her great-grandma ran a herbalist shop on the same road. The family lived near the huge gas storage cylinders that once dominated the skyline. Jean remembers people pushing large trolleys to collect coke and coal, and cattle being herded down Liverpool Street on their way to the abattoir. Washing lines stretched across the street, and neighbours would rush out in a panic to pull their laundry down before the cows passed - though one cow famously ended up inside someone's house.

Television was still new, small, and black-and-white. Jean recalls the excitement when her auntie was rumoured to have bought a colour TV - only for everyone to discover it was actually a plastic screen with coloured stripes placed in front of the set to *pretend* it was colour.

Her grandad also worked at the steel works, helping to produce what was then the largest gear wheel ever made, destined for a company in Canada.

Jean met her husband in 1956. He was from Ordsall, seven years older, and worked as an auto electrician before completing two years of national service in Germany at the later age of 21 (rather than at 18).

She remembers a square on Liverpool Street, possibly called Bentleys Buildings, where houses were arranged around shared toilets in the centre. She also recalls the Trafford Docks area, where people arriving on cargo boats would visit a local furniture shop called Roberts to buy sewing machines to take back overseas.

Middlewood Locks was another familiar place - then home to the steel works, now transformed as part of the wider Salford Quays redevelopment.

Around 1957, Jean's father received a £600 inheritance, allowing him to buy a house in Weaste on Liverpool Street - a rare achievement at a time when most families rented privately.

In 1965, as demolition began across Salford, Jean and her husband were offered a house exchange. The choice was between Little Hulton or Irlam. The older couple they swapped with wanted to be nearer the hospital, so Jean moved to Cutnook Lane in Irlam - where she still lives today, despite originally planning a short stay. At that time, Moorfield School was just opening, the Tiger Moth pub didn't exist, and there were only around 50 houses in the area.

Jean worked for a fishmonger on "Twenty Row" near Glenmuir Close, then moved with him to a greengrocer's on Fiddlers Lane. She later bought the shop herself and renamed it "Jean's". She went on to buy another grocer's shop on Claremont Road in Moss Side, commuting daily from Irlam. When nearby buildings were demolished for regeneration work her business went very quiet, so she took over her sister's job delivering meat to Italian restaurants in Manchester – she was skilled and confident driving a large van around the city.

Jean married at St Luke's Church, with the reception held at her parents' home. She and her husband lived with her mother-in-law for three months before securing their own place.

She remembers Salford Royal Hospital when it was on Chapel Street, and gave birth to her son at Hope Hospital in the older building that still stands today. She also recalls attending Ladywell Hospital for "fever treatments".

Her son attended Moorfield Primary School and later Irlam High School, then known as Alfred Turner.



An example of Light Therapy Treatment



Jean's mother with her brother on Lewin Street in 1947. In the background is Liverpool Street, showing the fish and chip shop. Uncle Charlie's butchers is next to it on the right and the Old Princes was on the left.

Salford Stories: Alan (1952)

Alan was born in 1952 on Alder Street in Salford, growing up in a world where industry, community, and post-war change shaped everyday life. His mother worked in the toy department at Lewis's in Manchester City Centre, while his father worked at Tower Glass in Greengate - a specialist glassware maker producing pipettes, laboratory glass, and lenses for spectacles. Later, his father became an estimating clerk for a plumbers' merchants.

Alan's early memories include the air raid shelter in the back yard - not underground, but a solid brick structure with thick walls - and the outside toilet that many families still relied on. He remembers Moore's Bakery nearby, and next to it, Fields End Coaches, which took Salford families on day trips to places like Prestatyn. The same coach would pass through Irlam, picking up passengers at the Margarine Works.

He recalls The Cattle Market Pub, where sawdust was scattered on the floor to soak up blood from when the abattoir workers came in. The Paddock Pub was another local landmark.

Food memories were very different from today. Alan's grandad, as a young boy, would ask the abattoir for a "bag of lips and lugs" - the lips and ears of cows - which were boiled with vegetables to make broth. Sheep's bladders were sometimes brought home too, stuffed with newspaper and used as makeshift footballs.

Bomb damage was still visible across Salford. On Osborne Street, gaps appeared where terraced houses had been destroyed during the war. Highfield Road had once held 100 houses - 50 on each side - but one entire side was demolished after being hit by a large bomb during the Second World War.

Alan attended Langworthy Road School, a building that had previously been a hospital, before moving on to Salford Technical High School on The Height.

He remembers school health routines of the time: children lining up for a spoonful of a thick, brown, malty substance - all from the same jar, using the same spoon for every child. He also received "light therapy treatment" at school, though unlike many children who were treated in groups, Alan recalls being on his own.

Alan's father grew up on Gladstone Street, next to Salford Lads Club - an area known for being "a bit rough". The street and houses had gas lighting and no electricity, and police officers patrolled in groups of three.

His grandad lived in Gregory Street near Bexley Square before moving to Little Hulton. He was the first person Alan knew to own a television. He bought a 9-inch set especially for the Queen's Coronation, and neighbours crowded into the house - and even peered through the windows – just to catch a glimpse of the broadcast. His grandad, at the age of 54, had to fix the aerial high up outside the house using ladders.

His grandmother was born in 1898 and left school at the age of 11 to work at the local cotton mill. She worked a 56-hour week, Monday-Friday 10 hours a day, and Saturday for 6 hours, for a very low wage.

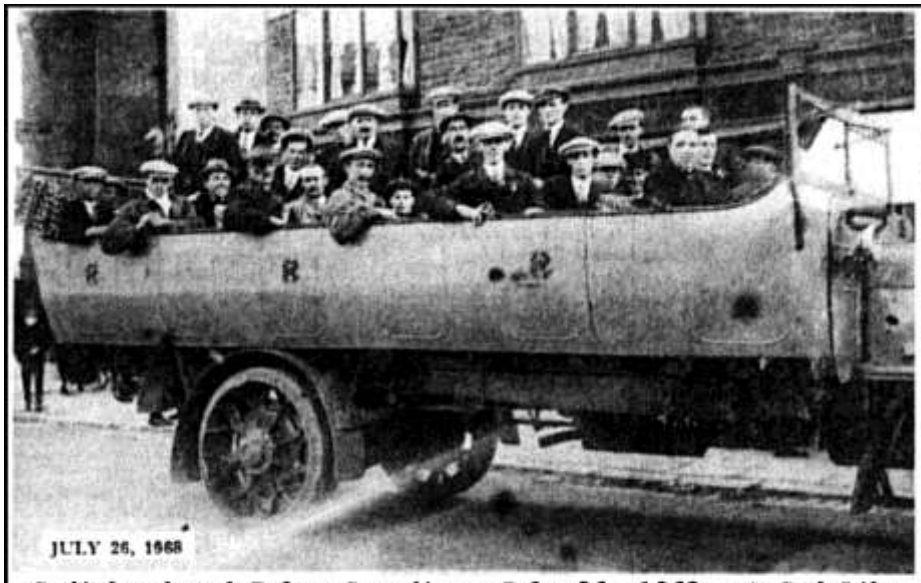
Alan also remembers Chimney Pot Park, where a reservoir marked "EWS" (Emergency Water Supply) stood. He believes this was also the site of an air raid shelter. The area has since been transformed into the well-known "upside-down houses".

Salford once had both indoor and outdoor markets, as well as a market on Churchill Way. Later, a market opened at Salford Precinct, becoming a busy hub for local shoppers.

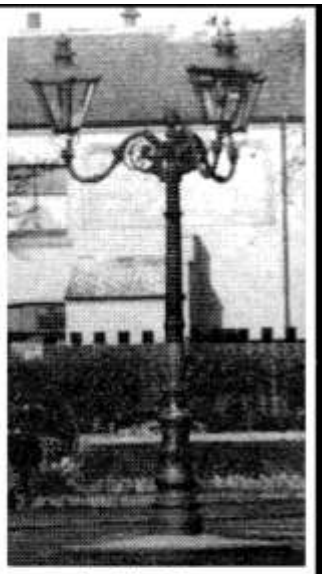
Alan married Barbara (from Partington) at St Luke's Church in Salford in 1974. Like many young couples of the time, they faced a long struggle to find a home. Council housing had a 20-year waiting list, and they were not considered a priority. Despite saving for years, they were refused a mortgage by Nationwide and found homes in Urmston too expensive. Eventually, they visited Irlam Estate Agents, where Steve Jones helped them secure a mortgage - but only with a larger 12% deposit. They bought a semi-detached house on Annabel Road for £7,450, a far better deal than the smaller terraced houses of the same price in Urmston.

Alan remembers the excitement when "Big Tesco" opened on Fairhills Road in 1975. People queued in cars and on foot, causing long traffic jams as locals visited the new supermarket for the first time. The site where Lidl now stands was once a car garage, and a playgroup operated near the current Lidl car park.

At the side of The Ship Hotel Pub in Irlam, was a barn which was used as an indoor market. Originally, it was used as stables for horses that pulled the mail coaches. Later, the stables were used as a garage for the charabanc for the local coach company - run by the landlord of The Ship (see picture below).



Cadishead and Irlam Guardian, July 26, 1968, at Cad Lib. Memories of 50 years ago revived of the district by this picture of Irlam's first charabanc. Owned by Mr Arthur Roby, landlord of the Ship Hotel, Irlam, the charabanc went on regular trips to the seaside, particularly Blackpool, driven by Mr George Nixon.



Jubilee lamp at Cadishead.

Salford Stories: Margaret (1945)

Margaret has lived in Salford for 80 years, and to her, it will always be home. She was born and brought up in the city, and although her family didn't have much, what they did have was love, kindness and a deep sense of community. Everyone looked out for one another — that's what made Salford special then, and she believes it still does today.

Some of Margaret's happiest memories are from her childhood, coming home from school to find her mum waiting with a gentle request: "Go and check on the older ones down the street." Off she'd go, running from shop to shop along Arlington Street, making sure neighbours had everything they needed. That early sense of responsibility, of caring for others, has stayed with her throughout her life.

Margaret has seen Salford change dramatically over the decades. In the 1950s and 60s, the slum clearance programme reshaped the city and scattered many close-knit communities. It was during this time that she moved to Irlam, where she raised her family. She feels fortunate to have made so many wonderful friends there, and she's incredibly proud that her children formed friendships that have lasted a lifetime.

As Salford celebrates its centenary, Margaret hopes the city never forgets its roots. Her wish for the future is simple but powerful: that we continue to build strong, caring communities, holding onto the spirit of old Salford while creating a new city we can all be proud of. "Happy 100th birthday, Salford. You've given me a lifetime of memories."

Salford Stories: James Burrows (1930-2020)

When the war was declared against Germany in 1939, I was nine years old, and I lived in Salford. Salford then was much different than it is today. Many small streets were close together, there were lots of factories for people to work in, and the large Salford Docks — now Salford Quays — where ships from all over the world would come, bringing all sorts of goods like food, cotton, coal and iron for the factories to use. They would also take things that had been made here to countries abroad.

Next to the docks was Trafford Park, which was where all the big works were, and it is still there today.

The month was September 1939, and the first we heard was the Prime Minister, Mr Neville Chamberlain, announcing on the wireless that war had been declared. We soon realised what this meant when lots of dads got letters from the War Office telling them to report for duty, to be made into soldiers, sailors and airmen. The children had to say goodbye to them, not knowing when they would see them again.

Lots of ladies also went to work in the forces, as they were known. The ones in the Army were called WRACs, the Navy ones were called WRENS, and if you were with the Air Force you were called WAAFs.

Not everyone could go and fight for their country. Many people of all ages had to stay at home and work in the factories to make all the things needed for war — tanks, planes, guns, and the millions of bullets, shells and bombs. Aeroplanes were made in Trafford Park. Lots of things were made in the factories in Salford and Eccles, and they all went to the ships in Salford Docks to be taken by sea to the countries where our soldiers were fighting.

The Germans, whose leader was called Adolf Hitler, had been preparing for war for a long time and had many more aeroplanes, ships and soldiers than England. We were told on the radio that it wouldn't be long before they would be sending their big aeroplanes to fly over all the big cities to drop bombs onto the factories and shipyards. At that moment we had very few of our own aeroplanes to try and stop them.

Sirens were fitted to the big factories, and men called Air Raid Wardens were kept on the roofs of the buildings on the lookout for approaching enemy aircraft. The air raids usually took place at night, and when the planes were spotted the sirens were turned on. They made a very loud noise which warned everybody in the city to run to the nearest air raid shelters.

In the streets they were large, thick buildings with brick roofs and bunks inside. They had lots of bunk beds, and you had to stay inside until you were told by the Air Raid Warden that it was safe to come out and the "all clear" siren had sounded. It was very cold in there in the winter months, and you had to keep all your clothes on and wrap blankets around you to keep warm. Many times you were in there for most of the night and could hear the bombs exploding. Even so, we still had to be up bright and early for school the next morning.

Bombs hit many houses and just flattened them, and the people who lived there had lost everything. They often had to stay with neighbours or relatives.

The air raids were becoming more frequent — almost nightly — and it was feared many children would be killed in them. It was decided the best thing to do was for kind people who lived in the countryside, where there was very little bombing, to volunteer to look after children from the cities. They would become the new mums and dads for the time being, until the war was over.

Can you imagine what it was like? Going from home to school one night, then getting to the railway station in the morning, saying goodbye to your mum, giving your mum a kiss, and then going to live

with someone you had never met before in your life — and staying with them for the next five or six years in a place you did not know.

Most children were lucky and stayed with people who came to love them and treated them just like their own children. Others were not as lucky. Where there were three or four brothers and sisters, they often had to be separated and put into more than one home. Some children couldn't settle in their new surroundings and pleaded to go home, and a few ran away and had to be returned.

After a few weeks it wasn't too bad. We had all gone together from my school, and our teachers went with us too, so it wasn't all new faces, and we gradually settled into our new home.

News from home came by letter, and mums would tell their children if they had heard anything from their dads who were serving overseas. Now and again, when she could afford it, my mum would send me a postal order for two shillings and sixpence, which was a lot of money in those days, and I would spread it out over the weeks to buy my comics. *The Dandy* and *Beano* were always favourites, or sometimes I would buy *The Hotspur* or the adventure comics.

There were cinemas in the place I stayed, called Lancaster, and we would go on Saturday mornings to see cowboy films and the serials, where you saw part of the story each week — like *Flash Gordon*.

When you left your own home and went to live with somebody in another city, it was called being evacuated, and you were known as an evacuee.

Because of the war, everything was hard to buy, and your parents were given ration books. These were small books with coupons inside. You couldn't buy anything unless you had the right amount of coupons. The coupons were for food, clothing and furniture. The worst thing for the children was that toffee and chocolate were on coupons. I can't remember exactly, but I think you were allowed two ounces per week.

The war ended in 1945, and we were all to return back to Salford to live once again with our real parents, who we had only seen on the odd occasional visit during those long six years. Let us not forget the people who had looked after us all those years — it was very hard for them when we left, as we had become part of their family. Some of the children were going home just to mothers because their fathers had been killed in the war in the battles against the Germans.

Now I am old, I can look back and remember these things that happened in the war and be glad I survived to tell you about them. It is up to your children now, when they grow up, to make sure there are no more wars and everyone can live in peace.

Salford Stories: Serena (1977)

Serena was born at Park Hospital, Trafford in 1977, and spent her entire childhood on Prospect Avenue, Cadishead. The youngest of three children - with a seven-year gap to her brother and five years to her sister - she grew up in a home where her siblings often felt like extra parents, stepping in with caring responsibilities while her mum and dad were out working.

Serena's father was born in 1947 on George Street, Irlam and then moved to Marlborough Road. At the age of 15, he left Alfred Turner High School and started working with his father at Bracegirdle's Builders on Tramway Road, Irlam, before moving to Bastable's in Barton, as a foreman joiner.

Serena's Grandad, Tom Taylor, once owned farmland on Cadishead Moss and built a family home there - the farm was eventually sold, but the house he built still stands today. In the early days, Serena's mother also worked on Cadishead Moss, cycling to the farm with the family dog perched in the front basket and a baby in the child seat behind her. Later, she moved to G.U.S. (Great Universal Stores) in Patricroft, right beside the Bridgewater Canal.

Some of Serena's earliest memories are of cold mornings at the pelican crossing near Fir Street, where the local lollipop lady would look after her because it was too early to go into school and her older siblings were travelling to their own schools elsewhere.

She began playgroup at the Salvation Army Hall in Cadishead, next to School Lane and Outram's lighting shop, before moving on to Cadishead Nursery and Infants on Lords Street. She remembers being moved up from nursery to the infants one afternoon after finishing her reading book with the teacher. Like many children of the era, she endured the warm, slightly sour bottles of free school milk - a smell she hated - yet she was often chosen as milk monitor. Her favourite job, though, was helping in the school tuck shop at break time.

Cadishead Junior School on Allotment Road marked a big step up. It was a time of growing up quickly: walking to school alone, wearing a key on a rope around her neck so she could let herself in and out of the empty house. She was usually the first one home and was responsible for laying the real fire and preparing tea. The headteacher, Mr Thornley, left a lasting impression with his kindness, his piano playing, and his beautiful singing voice.

Serena went on to Irlam High School, where she became Deputy Head Girl in her final year. It was there, aged 14, that she met Stephen - beginning a relationship that has now spanned 34 years, including 25 years of marriage. After leaving school, she studied at Worsley College in Walkden and later at the University of Salford. She was the first person in her family to go to university - a milestone she was immensely proud of, even though her dad wasn't happy about the decision and wanted her to get a job instead. Choosing education meant stepping into a world no one in her family had entered before, and it shaped the path she would follow for the rest of her life.

Her childhood and teenage years were full of community life and unforgettable moments:

- Dreaded swimming lessons with Mrs Manley at Irlam Pool, diving to the deep end to retrieve a brick.
- Collecting food and supplies for starving children in Ethiopia during school charity drives.
- The excitement of school closing for the day when the heating broke - or for polling day.
- Christmas parties at Patricroft URC in Eccles and upstairs at the Border Club (the Red Rose Pub) in Irlam, where one year she spotted Father Christmas wearing her dad's brown shoes.

Alongside her sister, Serena was part of “Irlam Beau-Belles” morris dancing troupe, led by Pamela Beaumont from The Height in Salford and her daughter Mandy. They practised at Irlam Steel Club and travelled to competitions across the country.

Her nana, Hilda, lived in the bungalows behind Moorfield Parade, where Serena spent many early childhood days. She often joined her nana on visits to neighbours to see if they needed any shopping. Trips included Higher Irlam Post Office, The Co-Op, Hanbury’s and Bonus - the shop where you could buy absolutely anything.

A dreaded visit to the dentist on Liverpool Road, Cadishead (next to Lytherton Avenue and opposite “Woodwind”, the music shop) was always softened by a stop at Abernethy’s sweet shop for a ten pence mix.

Serena recalls getting lost as a young child in “Big Tesco” - a place that felt enormous and exciting in those days. It had a music and record shop on the left as you walked in, a large café at the back, and a petrol station nearby with a little drive-through hut where you paid for your fuel. Irlam also had the Kwik-Save shopping centre with an Iceland, Medina shoe shop and a pet shop. A variety of local banks could be found in Cadishead – there was the TSB, Barclays, NatWest, Abbey National and Halifax - along with Cadishead Post Office, Ray’s greengrocers, Sadie’s clothing shop, Joe’s newsagents and The Anvil corner shop. She also remembers afternoons spent wandering around the market at Salford Precinct with her Auntie Joan, and the occasional treat of a visit to Wimpey with her friend Laura.

Outdoors with friends, childhood was full of adventure: playing on the railway embankments, picking apples on Cadishead Moss and feeding them to the horses, and building makeshift rafts to sail across the “Newt Pond” behind The Railway Pub. She recalls the days when the local binmen used to come into the back garden to empty the dustbins, and the coal man would deliver sacks of coal for the fire.

As a child, Serena’s most cherished Christmas gift was a typewriter - first a manual one, and later an electronic model - sparking a love of writing and organisation that stayed with her throughout her life. She also had a wide range of work placements and experiences from the age of 10 through to graduating at 21, including:

- The Irlam & Cadishead Advertiser with Clifford Thompson
- Bastable’s in Barton
- Ennis on Irlam Industrial Estate
- Thurnall’s Engineering on Irlam Industrial Estate
- Salford Social Services at Chaseley Fields, opposite Buile Hill Park
- Salford SATRO based at the Education Offices on London Street
- Catalogue Bargain Shop at G.U.S., Patricroft
- Diviko’s newsagents in Irlam

After graduating, Serena worked in social research in Didsbury, before leaving to become a mother and spend time caring for her daughter. She later became a Non-Executive Director on the board of Salford Primary Care Trust while volunteering in the community - a combination of roles that deepened her understanding of local health needs and strengthened her commitment to public service. That experience eventually led to a permanent position with a local charity, Salford Heart Care. Seventeen years on, she continues to support local people to improve their health and wellbeing and reduce social isolation, playing a vital role in keeping her community connected, confident and cared for.

Salford Stories: Christine Hudson (1940)

Christine Hudson (born 1940) served as the Ceremonial Mayor of Salford for the 2014–2015 municipal year. She was welcomed with a parade held in her honour in June 2014, led from Cadishead Park to Wesley Methodist Church in Cadishead, with a gathering of 200 people.

Christine served as Labour councillor for Cadishead for more than 21 years, from 1997 until 2018. She focused on civic duties during her term, assisted by her daughter Collette and sister Lynda as mayoresses. During her term, she attended various community events, including the re-opening of Irlam Station House and opening a new playground at Walkden Primary School.

Christine Hudson retired as a Labour councillor for the Cadishead ward on Salford City Council in May 2018.



Ceremonial Mayor of Salford, Christine Hudson with husband, Harry.



Daughter, Mayoress Collette Nelson, with the Ceremonial Mayor of Salford Christine Hudson, and sister, Mayoress Lynda Waring.

Notes:

Irlam officially became part of the City of Salford on1 April 1974. This change occurred following a local government reorganisation under the Local Government Act 1972, which abolished the Irlam Urban District Council and incorporated the area into the newly formed metropolitan borough of the City of Salford.

Key Details of the Merger:

Previous Status: Before 1974, Irlam was an independent Urban District within the historic county of Lancashire. Along with Irlam, the areas of Eccles, Swinton and Pendlebury, and Worsley were also merged into the new City of Salford authority.

Administrative Shift: It became part of the wider Greater Manchester ceremonial functions.

Bexley Square in Salford was named in August 1825 to honour Lord Bexley (Nicholas Vansittart), who laid the foundation stone for the building that became the local town hall. The area was developed as a market hall and civic space, with the square taking the name of the prominent Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Named after Lord Bexley: Nicholas Vansittart, the 1st Lord Bexley, was a prominent politician who served as Chancellor of the Exchequer and later Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Original Purpose: The square and surrounding buildings (designed by Richard Lane) were initially developed to serve as a market hall (1827) before becoming Salford's Town Hall in 1835.

"Battle of Bexley Square": The square is historically famous for the 1931 "Battle of Bexley Square," a violent clash between police and 10,000 unemployed protestors marching against the means test. The site remained the heart of Salford’s civic administration and justice system for over a century.