

**BECTU History Project**  
**Interview no: 281**  
**Interviewee: Alice (Queenie) Turner**  
**Interviewers: Alan Lawson and Syd Wilson**  
**No of tapes: One**  
**Duration: 01:04:30**

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Name of interviewee DRAFT.  
Tape 1 Side A

NB: The time codes given here are estimates based on readings from the original cassette recording.

Tape 1 Side A.

*The copyright of this recording is vested in the BECTU History Project, Queenie Turner christened Alice May. Laboratory worker, neg and pos, pos, assembler, neg cutter and finally librarian of The Imperial War Museum's Film Archives. Interviewers Alan Lawson and Syd Wilson. Recorded on the twenty-seventh of April 1993. Side One.*

*Right well first and foremost when and where were you born?*

Well, I was born in Stockwell.

Yes.

And I was christened Alice May but everybody calls me Queenie.

Yes.

My sister she was also, she was born a year later and...

*You didn't say when you were born.*

Pardon?

*You didn't say.*

1920.

*Ah, 1920, right.*

*Silly.*

First of May. [Laughter]

*Oh you're older than me.*

Oh.

*I'm not until October.*

[Laughter]

I'm seventy-three Saturday.

*Where did you, where did you go to school?*

I went to Archbishop Tait's School.

*Ah, ha.*

We moved to Lambeth when I was two.

*Yes.*

And I went to Archbishop Tait's School in Lambeth High Street when I was three years old until I was seven.

*Yes.*

And from there I went to Archbishop Tenison's School, also in Lambeth High Street

*Ah, ha.*

And, mm...[Pause]

*And did...?*

I left there when I, I was fourteen.

*Yes.*

Although I had a very good education there.

*Ah, ha.*

And better, and I hate to say it, that what most kids get these days.

*Yes. What, did you have any ambitions to be anything particular?*

Yes. I wanted to be a dress designer.

*Ah, ha.*

I passed polytechnic trade school with trade scholarship, but my father was out of work when I was seven years old.

*Yes.*

And my mum, they couldn't afford to send me because the wages were only seven and six a week. So a friend of mine came round one night so she said 'Oh', she said 'we want some, we want somebody to work in the film laboratory', she said 'would you care to come'? So my father says 'How much money is it a week'? So she said 'Twelve and six'. So I said 'Oh yes', I said 'I'll have it', you know. So in those days

ten shillings for my mum, two and six for me and buy your own clothes et cetera.[Laughter] And...

*Which lab was that?*

Pathé lab.

*At Pathé?*

Yes, that was in October 1938, no '34 once when I left school.

*I say. And what were you doing, what did, what was your first job there then?*

Well, my first job at Pathé's was stripping cans. [Laughter] You know, I had to start at the bottom and I worked in, then I went to work with next to an old lady, she was an old lady, I always remember she had a big bun on her hair and I had to make double hole pin joints to, double hole perforation joint, and you stick this pin in the middle, and you had to do it properly because that fed the developing machines.

*Yes. That was for the development?*

Yes, yes.

*In the dark then?*

Yes. And if that film, and if that pin join broke God help you. [Laughter]

*Yes. [Laughter]*

*They were the Lawley clips weren't they?*

No, no, we didn't have Lawley clips in those days.

*No?*

It was a hand pin join.

*Really?*

Yes, and then I was promoted to pos joining.

*Yes.*

I thought that was terrific, you know, looking at all the film. But even those we had to make these hand one perforation joins, and you daren't have a bit of acetate sticking over either side. I mean they were very precise.

*Yes. What, what kind of joiner was that did you have then?*

Hand joining at first.

*Hand, yes.*

And then we went on to a, one of these old brass press joins.

*Yes, yes, yes.*

Yes, and you...

*And you don't remember what sort of hand join, whose make it was?*

[Laughter] Our make. No, our mechanics in...

*Oh you made them, you made them yourself in the...?*

The mechanics, the mechanics in Wardour Street they used to make them.

*Ah, ha. And then the...*

Charlie Chart, he was the mechanic there.

*Charlie Chart.*

And Leslie Duncan, Albert Richardson.

*And the, can you remember the name of the woman you were under when you first started?*

Yes, Blanche Harborough, I kept in touch with her long after she retired.

*Oh really? Yes, yes.*

Oh gosh she must be dead by now, yes.

*Yes, yes, yes, yes.*

Oh yes, Blanche Harborough.

*And then after...*

I can remember all their names that I first worked with.

*Yes, really?*

There was Connie Hammond, Amy Austin, Miss Budge, she was a very old lady. And [Pause] Clara Chamberlain, Doreen Mount, Sue Barry, Rene Power, I can remember them all. Well, Rene Power married Frank Baker.

*Ah, ha.*

Name of interviewee DRAFT.  
Tape 1 Side A

Yes. Then I got my sister, she came to work with me after a while. And then I got put, but Miss Harborough she was a, we used to call them poor ladies in those days, [Laughter] but she was really very good, she was strict but she was thorough.

[05:07]

*Yes, yes.*

And I owe her a lot really, she was very kind to me. And of course, my dad being out of work as well, but he got a job soon after I started work and it seemed though, you know, he was on top of the world.

*Yes, all working?*

I mean, yes.

*Right. Who was in charge of the lab at that time, was that Phillips then?*

Oh no. Mr Tislowe [ph 05:26] was in charge of the labs.

*Tislowe? [ph 05:28]*

He was the Frenchman, and then when he retired Phil Phillips took over from him.

*Yes, ah, ha.*

Yes. And typical French. Well, it was Pathé Freres then, it was Pathé Gazette in those days it wasn't Pathé News. And you saw them, we used to do, as I say, we used to have The Pathé Gazette and all sections had to be joined by hand.

*Yes, yes.*

And I can always remember the neg films they used to clean it all down in this bin, emulsion one side and the...

*Yes. Pulling down in to bins, yes, right?*

Oh yes, yes, and you had to keep...

*So that was, that was hand cleaning then?*

All hand cleaning, oh yes.

*Yes, yes.*

And if any film had water marks on it you had to clean that all by hand, all done by hand.

*Well, you cleaned it through a velvet did you?*

No.

*When you pulled the...*

No, we used a soft, soft chamois leather we used to clean.

*Oh a soft chamois leather?*

Yes, and a...

*I see.*

Oh yes, yes. And all the newsreels used to come in and the negative sections all had to be cleaned.

*Were the sections all printed separately and then joined up?*

Yes, yes, [Laughter] that's what I'm saying.

*And then...*

But after a while, you know, they, yes.

*So that ultimately they used to clean them there, yes.*

Because when I first went there the neg developing room was right in the basement and so was the neg joint and the cutting room, and the printing room right in the basement and I always remember poor old Bill Sharpe and Frank Fuller they used to work in pitch dark.

*Yes.*

It was literally pitch dark. And you used to have to play blind, blind man's bluff to get through there.

*[Laughter]*

*Well, one neg developing point did, did they use to develop on drums?*

Yes, yes, it was on drums.

*Drum developing?*

Big drums, yes.

*That's right.*

I remember that, yes. Poor old Bill Sharpe and, you know, I worked and made to feel, you know, the conditions.

*Did, do you know how long that was before you went from drums to you had developing drums there didn't you?*

Well, as I say, when it was the, yes debris. But about 1948 the labs all moved to...

*Elstree?*

Elstree.

*Yes.*

Well, I didn't go because I had a son and couldn't leave with him. But I felt so miserable, didn't know where to settle, you know, so I went to work for Sidney Wake's. I went there as a neg cutter. And then when Pathé come back they were crying out for staff then, [Laughter] you know, anybody could walk in.

*Yes.*

And I went back to Pathé.

*And you went to Wake's labs then?*

Oh yes, I went to Sidney Wake's labs, yes.

*Yes, yes, yes, yes. Was there much, what was the difference in, in, in environment?*

Very dirty, you know.

*Was it?*

Yes. Well, because with labs, you know, in the Pathé labs you had to be scrupulously clean.

*Yes, yes.*

But even though, you know, the conditions were not what they are now, you know.

*No, no. What were you, what were you earning when, when Pathé moved up to Elstree, can you remember?*

About three pound.

*Really?*

About three pound a week.

*Ah, ha, and....*

And that was a good wage, you know.



*Yes. And when you went to Wake's it was the same, same money was it?*

Yes. Because, you know, it was more or less...

*It was under, under the agreement?*

Agreement, yes.

*Ah, ha. Ah, ha.*

*Where was Wake's lab then?*

It was over the Chinese, over the Chop Suey just past The Fox pub.

*Oh yes, yes.*

It's on the same side as the old fashioned building.

*Yes, yes. Just past The Intrepid Fox?*

Yes, yes. It was a Chinese restaurant there, it used to be Layons [ph 1A 08:53] and it was over there.

*Yes, that's right.*

If we used to do a little job for Layons [ph 1A 08:56] he'd want a bit of sixteen joined up... [Laughter]

*[Laughter]*

Because we didn't have any, it was seventeen, well seventeen point five was the favourite in Pathé. But if you wanted a bit of sixteen joined up he used to say 'Oh, come downstairs to have a meal', but we used to all pop in there [Laughter] in the back, you know, 'No thank you', you know. 'Oh well you'll be well looked after'.

*When, when you say seventeen point five was the thing with Pathé?*

I used to do a newsreel, a newsreel for the train programme on seventeen point five when I worked at Pathé.

*For which programme?*

For the, well for the railway. We used to have the King's Cross for the, we used to...

*Yes, the LNER, the LNER cinema train.*

Yes ours, we used to do that.

*Cinema carriage.*

*Oh I see, yes.*

Yes.

*I see what you mean.*

Yes, yes, yes.

Yes.

*Seventeen point five?*

Yes, on seventeen point five.

*Was it shot on seventeen point five?*

Oh yes, yes.

*And, and you produced prints on seventeen point five?*

Mm, yes.

*Oh.*

Well, they used to do it on like thirty-five but we used to have a slitting machine.

*Split it down the middle.*

I always remember Mr Phillips he got his, [Laughter] because he had great big fat fingers [Laughter] he got his fingers caught in the slitting machine. I can always remember that, yes.

*And Pathé, and then when Pathé came back?*

[10:00]

Oh I went back.

*You went back, yes, yes.*

They asked me to go back.

Yes, yes, yes.

And poached a few, well poached one of the girls from Sidney Wake's.

Yes, yes.

And I went to work under Bill Sharpe. He was in the pos examination room.

*Yes, ah, ha.*

No, I didn't mind where I worked so long as I was with Pathé's because it was like home to me. And I went to work with Bill Sharpe, went in the cutting, well, Bill was in bad health.

*Yes.*

And I used to do quite a bit for him. And then when he eventually died I took over from him and...

*How did you examine the positive in those days then?*

By hand, eyesight.

*What, over a light box?*

Oh yes. No, over a table. You had a light bulb under the table. But if it was anything important it used to go up to... Oh then when I was at the labs before I used to go and work up in the theatre. They put, they promoted me to viewer and I was up there when all the rushes used to come from, from the war front, I used to deal with the rushes. And then, you know, old Joe Hobert [ph A1 11:00] I don't know if you ever, did you know Joe Hobert [ph A1 11:04?

*Yes, yes, yes.*

Well, he was the cartoonist, e was a great friend of mine.

*Yes, yes.*

And he used to come and he used to call me his little Linda Darnell. [Laughter]

*[Laughter]*

And he asked me to go up in the studios, because we had studios at the top of Pathé, and do a film for him. And that was a night out, a box of chocolates, a bunch of flowers and a trip to the Harringay speedway.

*[Laughter]*

And he often, he, when I wrote an article about Frank Fuller he chased me to The War Museum old Joe did and he said 'Always remember you', he said 'you sat in that motor and you was bowing like the queen'. [Laughter] And I thought 'Well I felt like the Queen I'd never been in a car before. [Laughter] But, but they were such a nice crowd and the cameramen all friendly.

*Yes, but well, because I can remember Joe. He, he used to just chew cigarettes wasn't it?*

Pardon?

*But he, he didn't smoke cigarettes he chewed them.*

Yes, old Joe, yes. And he was quite, as I say, he often used to come and sit and talk to me in the theatre and if he had a very sharp pointer and his brother George, did you know George?

*Yes, yes, yes.*

Well, Joe come up the museum to see me one day he said 'I've been trying to trace you', he said and he'd rung head office so he'd found where I was working. And, you know, we had a drink and a conversation then he went home. And I had some books of his and I said to Ron, that was one of the chaps that worked here, I said 'Would you mind dropping these off at Joe's place?' and he'd died.

*Oh.*

But he was so nice old Joe was.

*Yes.*

And he used to live, Joe used to live in Kennington Road.

*When did Brian Bayliss join Pathé?*

Well, Brian Bayliss I think he...

*Was he there during the war or was he...?*

No, no, he wasn't there during the war.

*Oh he wasn't, so that was after the war?*

*Yes.*

*We haven't got that far yet have we?*

No, no.

*We're still talking about the war years at the moment.*

Oh yes. Well, the war years I was married, you know, and used to work during the air raids. And there was one big raid, that's when the bomb fell in Berwick Street and one of the ladies who used to do the cleaning for the labs she was killed in it, Mrs Vasey her name was. And then, you know, we used to, we used to get the sirens to come and you were sitting at your bench all of a sudden crash.

*Yes, yes.*

And, you know, sometimes you just dived underneath a bench and... [Pause]

*Because let's locate that old Pathé building, we've got part of it haven't we?*

*Well, it's the, used to have sort of, it was a great big arch wasn't it?*

Oh yes, oh it was really nice.

*Yes.*

And as you went in the front entrance, not that we used the front entrance....

No.

Always used the side, [Laughter] it had the big cockerel on it.

*Yes, yes.*

You know that *Pathé Gazette*.

*Yes, yes.*

It was called Pathé, well Pathé Freres as it was called.

*Yes, yes.*

*It was opposite the cinema offices?*

That's it, opposite British Lion.

*Yes.*

*Who were the cameramen in during the war years for Pathé?*

Oscar Bovill.

*Yes.*

Jock Gemmell, Terry Ashwood. [Pause] Frank Bassill.

*Ken Gordon?*

Ken, Ken Gordon, oh yes, old Ken, a friend of mine, yes.

*Yes. [Laughter]*

These were all good union men. And Ken Gordon and, oh, there was quite a few of them. And then we had Bob Walker, Danvers Walker, he was a commentator.

*Yes.*

But before him it was Roy de Groot, I always remember Roy de Groot. And, mm....

Yes.

*I think Terry Ashwood is still alive because he worked on telephone number.*

Terence. Yes but you can't get much, but you can't get much information from Terry Ashwood, we tried several times at the museum.

*Wouldn't he talk?*

Well, he would talk but at a price. [Laughter]

*Oh I see. [Laughter]*

Yes, we tried to contact him. And of course, when I went to Reed's I went....

*Oh, when, oh.*

Oh, this was after Pathé's closed down.

Yes, yes, yes.

And but...

*Oh, this is, this is, when, where are we now in time?*

Yes. Well, you're, you're...

*War years, war years.*

[15:00]

*Oh no it's not war years, it's well after the war surely when Pathé's closed?*

Oh yes. Oh what, Pathé's closed... Oh I've got the dates here...

*About 1960...*

Sixty-seven.

*Sixty-seven?*

Twenty-seventh of September 1967.

*1967. Ah, ha.*

And, oh we was devastated, we were really devastated.

Yes.

*Did they ever use that, that printing machine that I think you've got about five or six copies from one part of the negative?*

Oh the quad machine, oh yes.

*The quad machine.*

Yes, they had two of those, two quad machines.

*That's right.*

Yes.

*Yes, were you ever...?*

Arthur Lawrence used to be in charge of the printing on them.

*Mm. When the, when Pathé closed everything went up for sale.*

Yes.

*So we bought them?*

Yes, Henderson's, and Henderson's had some as well.

*We bought the whole lot. Yes, well, they belonged to us as well Henderson's. In fact the developers, the Ari developer, mm, sorry the pre developers that were at Pathé.*

Mm, mm.

*We didn't keep. Denham, Rank had, theirs was all redevelopers.*

Yes.

*And they were wearing out so I gave them all those Pathé's developers to keep those going?*

Yes. But...

*But it was a great shame wasn't it?*

Oh...

*The problem was it was only black and white, it never went to colour did it?*

Never went to colour, we used to get sections from Technicolor.

*That's right.*

To join sections and so on.

*Did you get redundancy money at all when it closed?*

Oh yes.

*You did?*

We got, well I think we was the only people at the time that got redundancy.

*Yes, I see.*

Yes.

*Yes, yes.*

Yes, we got redundancy money. It wasn't, well, it was a lot to us.

*Yes, yes.*

But I mean now it's peanuts, you know.

*Yes, peanuts now, yes. Mm, and so then you went to Reeds?*

Well, when they, no, when they closed down, because different people come to interview us, you know.

*Yes.*

Try to place us. Well, my husband's worked at Humphries and they asked me, you know, they come to interviewed us and they asked me to go and work for Humphries, which I did. I went to Humphries but it seemed such a shambles to me. But he gave me a fine grain and asked me to... Well, first of all there was a Roger Moore film, I shall never forget it. They wanted, they wanted a dup neg and they gave me the fine grain to put it straight and marked it all up then they suddenly realised they'd made a mistake, they wanted, they wanted [Laughter] the fine grain so it meant I had to get the original negs to get the fine grain off of it. So...

*Who, who, who was actually running the lab at that point in, at Humphries?*

Oh dear. [Pause]

*I suppose Bob was was he, Bob, mm...*

*Bob Ellis?*

*Bob Ellis.*

Bob Ellis, yes and...



*Or was it...?*

Oh the person that used to come to see me.

*Or was it Howard?*

May, it was, not Maisie. Well, she was in charge of the office there. Because my husband he worked there and he died with cancer and they were very good to me Humphries were, but I just couldn't work there it seemed so...

*Mm, mm, it was a shambles wasn't it, yes.*

Upheaval, upheaval. I mean we did have a system at Pathé's and when I come here I created a system here.

*Yes, yes.*

I do like things methodical. Well, my home is regimented. [Laughter] and...

*Yes.*

*What, what did your husband do there then Queenie?*

Well, he went there because he used to work at Woolwich Arsenal during the war, and he did work really hard, you know, was injured as well. And it was after the war he went to work for, oh, Fairbrother's. Do you remember, remember him Fairbrother in Wardour Street in Despatch?

*No, who, who's Despatch?*

I'm just trying to think the name of it.

*Not Film Despatch? There was a company called Film Despatch wasn't there?*

Mm, Film Despatch, so pay...

*Oh what the people that used to...?*

*Yes.*

*Everything.*

Yes, used to do everything.

*Yes.*

*Do everything.*

Yes, he worked there and then eventually he went to Humphries.

*I see.*

And from Humphries well, as I say, he died there. He worked, he worked in the Despatch at Humphries.

*Oh I see.*

And then he went in the neg room, you know, working at his [Laughter] tapes.

*Yes.*

He went in to the neg room.

*Did you know John Lucas?*

Yes I knew, and I also knew his brother Jack, because Jack Lucas worked at Pathé House.

*Oh did he?*

And he, yes he used to work on documentaries.

*Oh.*

And then he worked on, and then the commercials started coming in for television. So Jack used to say 'Queenie, can you get my commercials through quick'? because being in charge there he used to say 'Well, put this one first', and so I said 'Yes, alright', and he knew I loved Coty's 1110 Perfume and he always used to send me a bottle of perfume. [Laughter] More bribe than anything but he was such a character, you know, he was....

*Right, yes, yes, yes, yes.*

Yes. And I always used to say to him 'Oh don't give me all that old toffee', you know, real Cockney like. [Laughter]

[20:00]

*And how long did you stay at Humphries then, not very long?*

Oh about two weeks. [Laughter]

*Really, yes.*

Yes, and from there I went to, I went to Humphries. From there I went to Pearl and Dean.

*Oh yes.*

Yes.

*Tell us about Pearl and Dean then?*

Well, Pearl and Dean's was a shambles. [Laughter]

*That again a shambles?*

Yes. Well, you see there's nothing organised there and at Pearl...

*That was run by Bob Green in those days wasn't it?*

I can't, I can't even remember his name, yes.

*Yes, he was managing director Bob Green?*

Yes, I can't even remember his name. It's, everything was on a conveyor belt, you know, and you had to take the section off and mark, mark all the sections up for the cinema.

*That's right.*

And make them all up to the section. But, oh, I just couldn't stick that. And from there I went to ICI in their film library.

*Oh yes.*

*Yes.*

And it was while I was working at ICI...

*Where was that Queenie?*

In Dean Street, off of Millbank.

*Off Millbank?*

*Yes.*

*Yes.*

*Millbank.*

*Off Millbank?*

*Millbank.*

*Yes.*

And there's a things there.

*Yes.*

And I worked there and that was alright but I had a phone call there one day, well, used to get phone call from George Stanley sending in the labs and he asked me to go and work back at Pathé House. But I thought well, felt betrayed, you know, [Laughter] packing up the labs and taking over there. So I had a call from one of the boys because I got quite a few chaps in sort of film industry, in Pathé's and it's just like a family and I can talk to them as I like.

*Yes.*

And as for joining the union, [Laughter] oh, everybody said 'Look, you've got to join the union'. But I didn't have any complaints, never had a refusals so they must have been very persuasive. 'You know, it's all for your own good', I used to say to them. I mean I, when I joined the union I was just nearly, well nearly eighteen and it, it was a crime you know.

*Yes, absolutely.*

And Bill Sharpe and Frank Fuller and Frank Baker used to stand in the corner.

*Yes.*

Having their little meetings. I thought 'Well, this looks intriguing', it was before, you know, new Pathé opened. So I, he used to say 'Well, we're trying to get a little branch up here', I said 'Well it sounds interesting', then Bunny Garner he came along...

*Yes.*

And, you know, it was only youngsters and they all come and have a coffee, you know, and this is alright so I go and have a coffee with Bunny. Used to go back to the, the old ACT office that was in, mm, Wardour Street over a, Frank's the barber shop.

*Yes, yes.*

There used to be a barber's shop.

*Yes.*

And there used to be George Elvin there, Bunny Garner and Miss Pearson.

*Yes, Winifred Pearson, yes.*

That was, that was the staff.

*That was it, yes, that's it.*

Then of course, Bunny, a friend of mine she used to come out and Bunny used to fetch his friend, Bernard, he was a nice chap but he got killed though in Crete. And, you know, a few little get togethers. So we thought why don't we get a little union set

up, you know, we were like the sausage and mash party, you know, [Laughter] and it was well, well a night out for us and that's how we got involved with the union. And of course, Kitty and I were the first two women to join, you know, and nearly got the sack but...

*Kitty?*

Kitty Jackson. Palmer her name is now.

*Yes, yes, yes.*

And, you know, we, anyway she left Pathé, I stayed on. [Laughter]

*Because the, **the** boss of Pathé's was Watts wasn't it?*

He was in charge of the documentaries and the newsreel.

*Oh was he? I thought he...*

Freddie Watts.

*Yes, Freddie Watts, yes, yes.*

Yes, Freddie Watts.

*Yes. He had no jurisdiction over you ?*

Not in the labs, no, no.

*No, right.*

No, no. The managing director, his office there was Frank Gell at the time.

*Yes, yes, yes.*

You know Frank Gell. Then went onto latterly, latterly.

*Yes.*

The managing director when we packed up.

*You called him Frank Gell, not William Gell? Because he'd come from the Bush?*

Oh.

*[Laughter]*

No, I'm sure his name was William Gell.

*Anyway, anyway...*

*Did, you go back to Pathé from Millbank from ICI or did you...?*

Well, Pathé's were closed weren't they?

*Oh that's when, oh...*

That's when made redundant.

*Oh I see.*

No, I had this phone call from one of the boys, one of my trainees, I had loads of trainee boys, they always used to call me 'Mum' all the boys did, [Laughter] and said 'Would you like to come and work at Reed's'? You know Reeds, it was in the same labs as what used to be Wake's before Wake died, and Alec Tozer took over.

*Alec, yes, yes, yes.*

Alec Tozer used to be a cameraman during the war.

*Yes.*

He took over the labs and, you know, it was quite a nice little lab, you know, quite enjoyed ourselves there and made... But unfortunately it's when my husband contracted this lung cancer. And I stayed at home and he used to say 'Well, don't let me go back in to hospital', I said 'No, I'll stay at home and nurse you', and I did.

*Yes.*

And, you know, it was so tragic because I lost my husband, he died in the September. My father died in, he collapsed, because of my dad more or less... No my dad died the following year and then my little grandson died six weeks after.

[25:13]

*Yes.*

So I had it all, you know, and it seemed that everything was on top of me and my dad said to me before he died he said 'Look', he said 'there's a job that'd suit you', because I had to give up Reed's.

*Yes.*

Because of looking after my husband. I said 'Well, I don't expect you to pay me', but it's a bit of an upheaval so, oh, rather than. I just walked out. And my father said 'Here's a job that'd suit you', he said 'The Imperial War Museum', he said 'you'll get a pension'. " [Laughter]

*[Laughter]*

So I said 'Oh alright'. And he only lived across the road in Kennington, back in Kennington Road.

Yes.

He was a good old stick. Mind you my father was very, very strict but you appreciated him. And anyway he said 'Well, you go and apply for this job', and which I did do, I came here.

*And before we, before we come on to The Imperial War Museum. At ICI was that thirty-five mill or was that sixteen?*

Thirty-five.

*Is that, right, right.*

And, and there was some six, mostly sixteen but there was some thirty-five as well.

Ah, ha. Ah, ha.

And Miss Sankey was in charge there but I think that's all disbanded now.

Yes, yes.

*Because they had their own film unit as well didn't they?*

Yes, yes.

*And that's another film unit?*

Yes, yes, yes, yes. Oh it was nice, but, as I say, I just couldn't settle because there again you see the work went on the conveyor belt, you had to take it off and you like to, you know, you get so used to reading the cans and taking exactly what you want.

Yes, yes.

But then, as I say, one of the boys rang me up and said 'Come to Reed's', so I went to Reed's in the labs.

*What were you doing actually at Reed's, still...?*

Well, neg work, pos work, you know, whatever.

*Really make up?*

Mm.

*That was quite a happy lab then in those days wasn't it before Buckton took it over, yes?*

Oh yes, mm, and Jack London worked there.

*That's right. He had a rough old deal.*

Yes.

*London when, when Buckton took over he came out with almost nothing.*

Mm, yes. Well, I wasn't there when Buckton took over.

*No, no, I realise that.*

No, [Laughter] good job.

*He was a smashing bloke Jack London wasn't he?*

Oh Jack London, yes, yes.

*So, so, so and now when do you come, come here to The Imperial War Museum?*

In 1973 I come here, Seventy-four, 1974.

*And you were working a lot on old negs and things like that weren't you?*

I did nothing else. [Laughter]

*[Laughter]*

I did it. All these old nitrates and, oh, it was all, it was all so filthy to me and it seemed all slap dash but, you know, you gradually got them to your way of thinking. And then when they asked me to take over as the librarian I used to make suggestions, you know, subtle suggestions and it all fell in to being. But it used to be awful, there were all these old nitrate films.

*Yes, yes. Because I mean it must have been an enormous collection of stuff?*

There is and they've transferred it on to, most of it was transferred it on to acetate.

*Acetate, yes.*

*There's still an awful lot of nitrate though.*

Oh but...

*You see the problem is they keep get it, getting it given to them and...*

Yes but I mean I've got a piece of, only a small piece of nitrate and I was doing an article for Roger. Joe Nobard [ph 1A 28:26] as I say, used to come up and he used to take film with me now and again, he used to ask me to go up the studio. And when I



Name of interviewee DRAFT.  
Tape 1 Side A

was, when, you know, when they used to get the lavender and used to do like the fine grain in he come down and he used to always give me a snipping of it. And I've got that lavender and I wrapped it up in a piece of brown paper and that was nitrate and that's as perfect as anything, there's not a stain or a mark on it.

*Really?*

Mm, and I still maintain that keeping film nitrate in cans, you get sweat it.

*Yes.*

And I still say that...

*You think air should get to it?*

Yes, yes. And I still say that the whole it gets sweated and that's what makes it all go powdery. That's my feeling.

*[Laughter] Yes.*

I mean when I worked at Pathé's I mean we used to work on nitrate at the time and sometimes we used to put film in cardboard boxes.

*Yes, yes.*

*On wooden centres?*

Mm, oh yes. *[Laughter]*

*Yes, wooden centres.*

Nostalgia.

*Yes, yes.*

Oh yes, it was all wooden centres.

*Yes.*

Mechanics used to make the wooden centres.

*Yes, that's right. Going, going back to Pathé. Apart from Pathé News and Pathé Pictorial...*

Pictorial, yes.

*What other things did... Did they ever go in to mixed reel or features?*

Oh feature, no we did feature work as well.

*You did?*

Oh yes, oh yes we did feature work.

*Did you do any well known ones that, you know, that we can think of?*

Well, we did yes, the ABC. Pathé used to do quite a few. You know *Carry On Sergeant* we, I think we did that one at Pathé's. And, oh, and, you know, *Ice Cold In Alex*. We did quite a, processed quite a few pictures also.

[30:10]

*What was that, sorry release prints?*

Yes, yes.

*Well, you probably printed it as well I imagine?*

Oh yes, we printed it.

*Yes. Cut the neg and print it?*

Yes.

Oh yes, oh yes, we printed it there, yes.

*And then did the rest, the whole thing as a lab would, yes.*

Yes, because we used to have it all Part One there, Part Twos but we always used to ask us to keep us to keep us near enough a copy. Because, you know, we do get the odd mishap, you know, the bad light or sort of stopped in the developing machine or....

*Were you doing that when you, when you originally went to Pathé in the, in the '30s was...?*

They, as far as I remember they did have some features. I always remember one film and here they called it *I Passed for White*. It was about a coloured girl and, you know, she more like fair skinned than those people. Because we didn't have coloured, didn't have any black people round then you know.

No.

But I always remember that film. And I always remember a film of, I can't think of the name of it but Jackie Collins was in it, and Joan Collins's sister and Paul Carpenter, I wish I can remember the name of it. And in the film, because I had to work in the, in a theatre, I was running in theatre then. And she falls down in the film and Paul Carpenter said 'Oh are you alright Jackie'? He didn't say her name which she's supposed to be in the film but he called her by her real name. Of course, I used

to make notes and report it all. But, as I say, I know it was only a third rate film anyway. But you had to look out for all that kind of thing.

*[Laughter] Now, you know, you've, you had a long span in the business and when actually did you retire?*

I retired when I was sixty-five, because normal retirement is sixty now.

Yes.

They asked me to stay on.

Yes, yes.

So I stayed on till I was sixty-five.

Ah, ha.

And that was, oh, eight years ago. [Laughter] Eighty-five, 1985 I retired.

*Yes. Now over, over that, you know, there's a, there's quite a span isn't it? [Laughter]*

Mm, fifty years. I've got...

*Fifty, fifty odd, fifty-one years. Mm, you've seen what was, what's the biggest change that you've seen?*

Biggest change is when the films went on to tape. And I tell you another thing I hated making...

*What you mean videos?*

Mm.

Yes.

I hated tape joins as well.

Yes.

There was no craft in it, you know.

No.

There's nothing craft, there's no craft in any of the film work now.

No, no.

And I hate tapes.

Yes.

I'd sooner see, I mean I sit back of an afternoon and I see some of these old black and white films and some of them are old.

Yes.

Older than me.

Yes.

But my God the quality of them.

Yes.

The definition, you look at an old black and white film and see the definition in it.

*Yes. And, and from the, from the point of view of, you know, your own work what have the changes been, the, the...?*

Well, to me there were a lot of whizz kids come in, [Laughter] you know.

*What sort, what about George Standish [ph 1A 33:18] what was he like?*

Well, we had a strike over George Stamp, [ph 1A 33:22] we nearly had a strike. He went to sack one of the boys in our room and the shop steward come through and said 'All out'. [Laughter]

*[Inaudible A1 33:27]*

All out, oh dear.

*But you went, you went from hand joining what to, to Bell & Howell's?*

Yes, and then we had...

*Hot plate, Bell...?*

Then we had the, then we had the clip joiners.

Yes.

That the mechanics used to make.

Yes, yes, yes.

Oh that was lovely scraping.

Yes.

But now I think it's such a sloppy way to make joins, these tape joins. It may be quick but here's no art in it.

*No, no.*

I do like film, I mean we had to train for this job, I mean I had trainees.

*Yes.*

I love to look up the ACT's book to see how many people I've recommended in that union. [Laughter]

*Well, I mean You, you, you're saying tape joins but the only, only tape joins I know that they make at the moment are ones where, where they're using....*

Sellotape

*Plastic.*

*Yes.*

*Oh what do you call the plastic film? ESTAR.*

*Yes.*

*ESTAR Base film.*

They do Selo..., they do Sellotape joins here, but I think there's... Oh yes.

*Oh really?*

*Yes, yes. It's an Italian joiner.*

Yes, and...

*Oh yes.*

But they do it because it's easy.

*Yes, yes.*

And I don't think it's easy, I think it's sloppy.

*Well, the studio film has, it's a Cotopsa [ph A1 34:39] joiner, they're, I mean in fact studio film labs have the franchise.*

*Yes, yes, yes.*

*In this country but I didn't realise they used them at these sort of places, you know, I thought they did proper joins.*

No no.

*No, yes.*

No, they have got film joiners here.

*Yes.*

But then no, it's, because it's easy a tape join

*Yes.*

It's not...

*Do you have to use it on, on these various ESTAR Base films.*

*Yes.*

*Because you, you can't join them.*

Yes, yes.

*But...*

[35:00]

As I say with modern technology I always refer back to the old fashioned things.

Yes, yes, yes.

Well, it's like cooking isn't it.

*Well, there was nothing really.*

I mean you make, you make a good bread pudding now it's nothing like your mum used to make, you know, use all the old ingredients in.

*Yes, yes.*

*That's right. Well, there's nothing like the Bell & Howell foot joiner is there?*

No, no, no. [Laughter]

*Yes.*

I don't know how they used to use that, they used to use that at Humphries, I had a Bell & Howell foot joiner.

*Yes, they were gorgeous those.*

*Yes, lovely things. Yes, a real joy, yes, yes.*

Oh yes, it was lovely old joining and scrape it, pull it down, pull it down.

*That's right, yes. That's the sort I know.*

Yes.

*[Laughter]*

Yes, we used to have these little brass presses, there was a 'B' on the hinge.

Yes.

And you used to have a scraper and straight edge, I don't know what they call it now, this and scrape for bow perforation. And you had to do it perfectly, you had to look at it and make sure it didn't get a line coming down with a big space in it.

*Yes, yes, good idea with it.*

But it was art. I mean I thought I was really learning something here, but you put me one of those spacers, oh, well it's so boring now.

*Yes, yes, yes.*

*Well, what else did your engineers used to make? They made the splicers, did...?*

They used to make most of our printing machine, all the rollers.

*Oh they did?*

Yes.

*They made that big multi machine did they?*

Yes, yes, a quad machine we used to call it, yes.

*Yes, mm.*

Oh it was marvellous that was.

Yes.

I mean when we'd do the newsreels four at a time.

*That's right, there were two of them I know.*

Yes.

*And there was another....*

A and B Quad we used to call them.

*Sorry?*

We used to call them A and B Quad.

*A and B Quad, yes.*

*There was another thing that when, when we bought up all that stuff there was a thing that intrigued me which it, it looked as though it was a sort of magazine where you put a thousand feet in it in loop form and it used to go round and round and round in a loop within the magazine and there was a sort of slot where presumably you could put it on to a printer?*

Oh yes, oh yes, the printers used to, used to like... I always remember fellows on the, on the end of the printing room they worked in stock control, they used to do that and they used to bring in this like box like kind of like the camera thing.

*Mm, magazine.*

And put it in there and they used to thread up on the printing machine below.

*It came out from the centre?*

Yes.

*Yes, yes.*

And then they had a Bell & Howell.

*Centre feed, yes.*

They used to have the Bell & Howell machines there.

*Oh yes, yes, they had those, yes, model B's?*

Yes.

*Yes.*

There's something else that's just questioned...

*But I've never seen thirty-five millimetre feeding out of the centre, going back on to the outside of the roll and just going round and round and round and round.*

Yes.

*Yes, yes.*



And I'll tell you another thing used to intrigue me because our grading the cards.

*Yes.*

Did you ever see those?

*No, no.*

The grading cards?

*No.*

Well, the grader used to grade the negative and he used to put the grading lights in and you had this card and you had to, you know, it was a big card like that, all these little holes.

*Oh you'd punch it?*

Yes, and you used to have to mark it on the card and punch the holes.

*Yes, yes.*

Oh I used to think that was intriguing, I thought 'Oh wait till I use one of those', you know.

*[Laughter]*

You know, I'm talking about when I was sixteen, 'Oh I could never could get used to one of those. [Laughter]

*[Laughter]*

And then it come out and we used to get the tapes, and that didn't seem at all interesting to me, you know.

*Now you, you say you, you joined the union quite early didn't you?*

*Yes.*

*What, about?*

*1938.*

Thirty-eight you joined the union?

*Yes.*

*And did you, did you, did you rise in the union, did you become a shop steward or a...?*

I was the only woman deputy shop steward at that time. [Laughter]

*Really, really? Yes, yes.*

And I was always on the committee.

Yes.

And, mm, I used to be the treasurer there.

Yes, yes.

Until I get married.

*And you were the second lady to join the union anyway as a union member?*

There was only two of us there, the two of us joined.

*Oh, two of you joined together?*

Yes.

Yes, yes.

Yes.

*Did you, did you serve on the general councils ever at all?*

No, I didn't serve on the general council as such but I used to, you know, have a say.

Yes, yes.

You know Bill Sharpe.

Yes.

And Frank Fuller.

Yes.

*You know, and Bill Goodwin and I kept in touch with them right till they died so...*

Yes, yes.

There's some beautiful letters from them at home.

*Yes. And can you, can you talk a little bit about Frank because nobody really has?*

Who, Frank Fuller?

*Yes. Nobody's really talked about Frank.*

Oh Frank Fuller when I first went there he worked in neg developing.

*Yes, ah ha.*

As I say they worked right in the pitch black.

*Yes, yes.*

In like down a coal mine it was, you know, on these drums.

*Yes, yes.*

But Frank he, he used to, he used to have a catch phrase 'let's face it'.

*[Laughter]*

He always used to say to you 'now let's face it', and he used to really meet it. And I wrote in his obituary about Frank's famous words 'let's face it', and he did face up to life.

[40:04]

*Yes, yes.*

But him and Bill Sharpe were real good friends and good buddies.

*And he was, and he was a good kind of leader was he?*

Who, Frank Fuller?

*Yes.*

He was terrific.

*Yes.*

Well, that's why we joined the union.

*Yes, yes.*

It was through the efforts of Frank Fuller and Bill Sharpe.

*Yes, yes, yes.*

Oh yes, it was through him. Oh he was a very fair man, his wife used to work at Pathé.

*Oh.*

She used to work upstairs in documentary. He used to go before I was there.  
[Laughter]

*But when, when, when it closed quite a number of the people came down to us at Technicolor didn't they, did...?*

Yes, Eric Austin went to see you didn't he?

*Bill who?*

Eric Austin.

*Oh yes, yes, he was one.*

Yes.

*I'm trying to remember who they were. Do you remember the others?*

Oh I can't think off...

*There were, oh, five or six, seven of them all came down there.*

Georgie Duff, did he go to there?

*No, I don't know that name.*

He used to be a printer.

*I don't remember that name.*

Georgie Duff. And Eric Austin went there, so many of them. Did Len Denton go there?

*Yes.*

Yes. Is he still alive - Len Denton?

*Sorry?*

Len Denton.

*I don't know, no, I don't know.*

Oh he, he was...

*I'm just trying to remember the names because, you know....*

Name of interviewee DRAFT.  
Tape 1 Side A

He was a character, he worked in the printing room. Because you used to have a trap between them as you come out the light into the dark all of a sudden and he was always the one that used to be standing behind with the cover over your head if you weren't careful, you know. Oh Len Denton, yes.

*I know we, we felt sorry, you know, that the lab closed down.*

Oh.

*And said, you know, 'We can, we can take so many people if anyone wants to come and...'*

Yes. Well, I know, I know but in those days everybody wanted, I mean it's not like now everybody you've got to practically...

*Yes.*

Crawl round looking for a job, but in those days they wanted any, you know, anybody. And, as I say, the number of trainees I had pass through my hands.

*Mm.*

*I'm going to stop you for a moment.*

[End of Tape 1 Side A 00:42:13]

Queenie Turner DRAFT  
Tape 1 Side B

NB: The time codes given here are estimates based on readings from the original cassette recording.

Tape 1 Side B.

*Queenie Turner, Side Two. Mm, talk a little bit more about the position of ACT and yourself?*

Well, as I say, when we joined the ACT it was through the efforts of Bill Sharpe and Frank Fuller.

*Yes.*

And Frank Baker.

*Yes, mm, mm.*

Because in, in those days the men used to, used to have what we called the coal hole, a boiler room.

*Yes, yes, yes.*

That used to do all the heating for the building and that's where they used to have most of their meetings. I'll have to cough. [Coughs] Excuse me, and it's where they used to have their little secret meetings, and we used to walk round attending this coal hole. [Laughter] But it was, as I say, through them that I joined the ACT, fighting for better conditions and...

*In, and what, you know, in what, in what, in what, what way were they, were they, what kind of conditions were they looking to improve?*

Well, tea breaks. [Laughter]

*Yes.*

That was a, you know, they always start with sweetener things.

*Yes.*

Tea breaks and extra money and then grading jobs, you know, so that if you worked on one job you got money and then the trainees have so many years they...

*Yes.*

Earned a sort of month to get the rates made up.

Queenie Turner DRAFT  
Tape 1 Side B

*What, what, what about the holidays, what did they do about in the holidays?*

Oh, when I first went there we only had two weeks holiday.

*Two weeks holiday, yes?*

Yes.

*And sick, what about sick leave, can you remember?*

Oh sick leave. [Laughter] Well, there wasn't any restrictions as far as sick leave, if you was sick you was sick and, you know, get back as soon as possible like I think.

*And so they were reas..., reasonable about sick leave?*

What, before the union, no.

*Yes, no, no.*

Well, used, in those days you just couldn't afford to be ill. [Laughter]

*No, yes, I see, yes.*

But, but I've got some of the early agreements here so they can...

*Yes, yes. There was much more of a social life wasn't there with ACT in those days?*

Oh yes, there was.

*Yes.*

I mean we used, and well we used to meet all the other shop stewards.

*Yes.*

And we used to have like a social evening in Soho Square but I don't know anybody round there now.

*No.*

I mean I knew Brian Shemeys [ph 1B 02:13] because he was one of my boys at Pathé's.

*Yes.*

*Does he start with you?*

Yes.

*Oh did he?*

Yes.

*I didn't realise that.*

Yes.

*A whole load/*

Yes, and it was only through Frank, you know, going back to Frank Fuller.

*Yes.*

Frank Fuller's efforts that he went round to Surrey Square.

*Really?*

[Laughter] Mm, I'm thinking about home, Soho Square.

*Yes.*

And it's only through, as I say, through Frank and he said to me well, I said 'Go on', I said 'you'll do alright down there', you know.

*Yes.*

Because old Brian used to be a boxer and there were supposed to be all his boxing matches. [Laughter]

*[Laughter] Yes.*

*Yes.*

*Yes.*

Oh yes, he was one of my boys, you know.

*I mean...*

Went to their weddings and....

*Because there used to be an annual, annual dance, dinner and dance?*

Used to, yes, at Russell Square Hotel.

*Yes, yes.*

Oh definitely. But, you know, and when I get the mags, the magazines are not the same. Ours, I still prefer those, I still prefer the old name ACTT, I would obviously.



*This is open. [Laughter]*

I mean this, this is out of this world. Well, to me it's like all the finance whizz kids in it now and there's nothing what I call technical.

*Yes, it's like the rest of Britain it's all run by money people.*

Well that's it. I mean I never knew of Tony Hearn or Tudor Gates, I mean I never heard of him.

*Yes, no, no. [Laughter]*

I mean I like, like the salt of the earth like Alf Cooper.

*Yes.*

And Bert Hyatt, do you remember Bert Hyatt from Humphries? I mean those was all down to earth people but, you know, the crowd you've seen there you've got, you know, I suppose it's as though you've got to pay to look at them.

*[Laughter]*

*Was, was Pathé lab involved in the lock out in 1954?*

Oh yes, yes, the trouble is I've got the photos of the strike there, [Laughter] the men on one side the women on the other side. [Laughter]

*Well, it wasn't a strike, it was a lock out actually.*

It was a lock out, yes.

*The management locked, locked the doors.*

Yes, yes.

*Yes, I didn't know whether Pathé was involved or not.*

Oh yes.

*I knew the other labs were.*

Oh yes, we were involved. And we had our own little strike, I'm trying to think what it was about. [Pause] But I still wish it was called the ACTT or the old one the ACT.

*Why not ACT? [Laughter]*

ACT, yes.

Yes.

I've still got my husband's little badge, you know, ACT.

*I've still got my little badge.*

*Do you know I've lost mine.*

Have you?

*[Laughter]*

No, but it's the, it's all so fairy airy now, you know. I mean I used to, when I worked here used to get the researchers come in.

*Right.*

And they didn't know any, you know, they used to run the film.

Yes.

But they didn't know anything about film.

Yes.

I mean there was once one instance we had Lord Alexander, you know, from the First World War, he was in Tunisia. And there was another section of him when he was in the First World War in the trenches and I was trying to say to this researcher 'Look at the definition there of that old piece of nitrate to this'.

[05:20]

Yes.

And they used to say 'Oh, you know a lot about film don't you?' I said 'Well, yes, what do you want to know', you know.

*Yes. [Laughter]*

But you see a piece of nitrate film, I mean this old piece, I can always remember that off a roll of nitrate of him in the trenches and the roll in Tunisia, but when he was in the trenches it was as good as it was taken out yesterday. [Laughter]

*Well I think, I think the, in fact it would have been nitrate anyway still in, when he was in Tunisia.*

Oh yes. Well, it was nitrate when during the war.

Yes, yes, yes.

*It was until 1952?*

In, yes.

*Yes, indeed.*

But yes, oh yes, it came under safety.

*But it was a, but it may have been, it may have been one of the, one of the greenhorn cameramen [Laughter] who took the pictures for The BBC?*

No, but, as I say, the nitrate film I mean.

*Yes, yes.*

We've got some nitrate stuff here, it's really good.

*Yes, yes, oh yes, yes, yes.*

I mean when they started, you know, making dups off of it and blowing it up and all that business it's taking all the definition out.

*Yes, yes, yes.*

But one amazing thing I did find out when I come here. We had a lady come here one day and she had, she came to film, sixteen millimetre film. So Mr Cortez was here at the time and he said would I go in there with her, you know, because she had this film running through. Her name was Rosie Newman, heard of her?

*Rosie?*

*Rosie Newman.*

Well, we should, you should have heard of her by now, she had all colour film taken in the war.

*Really?*

All done on Kodak stock. And she had this, they've got some of it here now and she had, oh, thousands of reels of it and she, she took it all herself because I said to her 'Well, you're the only lady cameraman I know'.

*Really, yes.*

But she must have been in high places because she had access to the warships and she's taken films on warships.

*Good heavens..*

She took all the blitz, well, most of the blitz in colour.

*Good Lord.*

And the, the museum have just released the years previously that *World at War* series. And of course, this would have been a Godsend for them.

*Yes.*

*Yes. Well, about how long ago was that do you remember?*

Oh dear.

*It was quite a while but it may have been...*

It must have been about fifteen, sixteen, seventeen years ago.

*Yes.*

About fifteen years ago.

*I seem to remember Andy Fleming telling me all about, about it.*

Yes, it was really terrific material.

*Yes, that's right.*

Yes. And I always remember, and I went and said to her 'Would you like a cup of tea?' and she had this Parkinson's Disease, you know, disease.

*I think we've duplicated some of this with the film group didn't we?*

Oh yes, but it wasn't the same, it wasn't the same though.

*Well, no it wouldn't be but...*

No, but I mean see I saw the actual original stuff was, I was there, I couldn't believe...

*Nothing comes out better than Kodachrome, [Laughter] it's the brand.*

I could not believe. Wilson Glenn [ph 1B 08:38] must have bought it, she had pots of money because she lived in The Dorchester Hotel till the Arabs took over and she moved out. [Laughter] She, it was really...

*I don't, I don't know the background to it but what we pulled...*

Who, Rosie Newman?

*Mm.*

Queenie Turner DRAFT  
Tape 1 Side B

I don't know if she's still alive, she was an old lady and her chauffeur used to come up and pick, but we always had to get her permission before anybody printed anything.

*Yes, that's, mm, mm.*

But it was terrific material.

*Good Lord.*

All the blitz, it was really terrific. It was really an eye opener because, you know, you didn't see colour film during the war.

*Yes.*

I mean you see the odd Rita Hayworth one from the States and that but...

*Yes, yes, yes.*

In the war.

*And this, this was, and this was Kodachrome was it or was it...?*

Yes, I'm, I'm sure it was on Kodachrome, yes.

*Because Kodachrome not Ektachrome?*

Ekta..., no Kodachrome.

*Because really speaking Ektachrome's come out since the war.*

*Oh has it, I didn't know that.*

Yes, Kodachrome.

*No Kodachrome was the first thing.*

Yes.

*Yes.*

Yes.

*Well, what we called Monopack was the first thing.*

*Yes, yes, yes.*

*And then Kodachrome.*

*Yes, yes, yes.*

Monogram. [Laughter]

Yes.

There's another thing, I mean if you talk to, talk to these youngsters now about these so called wide boys about the different tracks, RCA and...

*Yes, yes. Western, yes there was a lot.*

Western, and variable area we used to call it. [Laughter]

Yes, yes.

They wouldn't know what you were talking about.

*Look, looking back over it Queenie, if you could start again would you...?*

I'd do it all over again.

*Would you?*

Yes, I would.

[10:00]

*You wouldn't rather than done something else?*

No, no, no.

*Really?*

No, no, I wouldn't change my life for anything.

*Really?*

No, you see.

*What's the, what's the, what's the highlight for you?*

Well, I think it was companionship mostly.

*Really? Yes.*

You know, and, and here the highlight was meeting all the researchers and making them join the union.

*[Laughter]*

Yes.

*[Laughter]*

Yes, yes. All the, I've actually, I made some good friends with the researchers here.

*Do, are Paul and Jane members or are they...?*

Paul is.

*Paul is is he?*

And, and David Downing I, you know, got him in.

*What Anne's...?*

Yes, David Downing and of course, Bob Bruce and, oh, there's quite a few of them, and I say 'Union'? And they say 'Why not', but a lot of them then wanted to get in because it was a good opening for them.

Yes.

Wasn't it?

Yes, yes.

Yes, we used to have people ring up 'Oh Queenie could you put your name on my card', Ros Bentley, I got her in but she's a nice girl she worked at BBC, got her in. Well, so, but I love to check all through those records to see.

*Yes. Well, they're, they're at The National Film Archive all the old...*

Are they?

Yes, yes.

Yes, I'd love to see them especially the Pathé ones, you know, all the newcomers and that.

Yes, yes.

*You know, we used to say 'Well, join the union', because I said 'look' I said 'it's no good complaining if you want something done for you join'.*

Yes, yes.

*That, you, you've wrote out an awful lot about your life there. What, what haven't you told us that you wrote on that paper?*

*I'll just pause while you look at it.*

Yes.

*Say, say that again.*

Well, you know, it's...

Yes.

I used, used to take my son to the ACT socials.

Yes.

Because my husband used to go but he said 'Well, take Richard'. And we used to go up head office that's in Soho Square and Richard always used to talk to Ken Gordon and Anthony Asquith, he used to, he used to speak to us, and he used to... And anyway he got very interested in trade unions and he wouldn't go in the film business my son wouldn't, he wanted to go into printing. Didn't do him a lot of good, he was in this *Mirror* escapade.

*Oh dear.*

And anyway he's a good trade unionist even though I say so. I think he's a better one than I am because he went to every meeting at Wapping. He's still, you know, he still fights.

Yes.

And he belongs to, he belonged to the SOGAT, SOGAT but now he belongs to the Graphic, Media and Print Union now.

*Yes. Which is the amalgamation, yes.*

Yes, yes. And I mean he's fifty-one this year and he's, he's really a good unionist and he's a good, we used to have our own little conflicts, you know.

*[Laughter] What other things had you written down that you haven't talked, talked to us about?*

Well, I was made a fully paid up member of the ACT in 1975.

*Oh well done.*

And... [Pause] No, as I say, when I came here is what I didn't tell you they were very kind to me because my husband just died and then my dad died while I was here and my little grandson and they were so kind to me. And I didn't like it when I first came here but I really put my heart and soul in to it.

*Why, why was it you didn't like it when you first came?*

I didn't like all the dirt and all this nasty old...



*Oh I see, yes.*

But they really improved on it, you know.

*Well, yes.*

Except these blooming tape joins.

*[Laughter]*

*Did you ever go down to Hayes Queenie?*

No, I wouldn't go down to Hayes. No, I would not go down to Hayes because...

*It's all nitrate there?*

Yes, I know it is. No, I know they was going to, oh, shut the cutting room down or something to do some repairs and you can all go down to Hayes or somebody in charge at the time, go down to Hayes and, you know, get there at such and such a time. I thought 'No, I work here, I work here'. I mean they've got to make some arrangements, I mean it was their fault if they're going to have it painted up.

*Yes, yes.*

I mean what happens at Hayes wasn't it and I wouldn't go down there on principle. See I'm a good union member. I thought 'No, no way'.

*[Laughter] And anyway it's a, it's quite a journey?*

Yes, it was.

*Yes.*

I mean, but no it's just the principle of it.

*Yes.*

I thought 'Well, why should I go down there, if I want a job down there I could have applied and go down there'.

[15:00]

*Yes.*

But I preferred to stay. I asked to come here, I even rung Brian Shemmey [ph 1B 15:06] and says 'I'm not going to move Brian', because I used to go off and have a drink with Brian, yes.

*Do you know Terry Watson?*

Oh yes, I know Terry Watson.

*And David?*

Yes, but yes, they're nice fellows but they're not my type kind of thing. [Laughter]

*[Laughter]*

I like down to earth people, you know, I don't like people that blind you with science, you know, there was...

*This is the people down at Hayes? [Laughter]*

Well, not only them but there's, there's quite a few of these ACT blokes you get now.

*Oh, I see what you mean, yes.*

I mean try to blind you with science and I think 'Oh...'

*[Laughter]*

Who are they kidding? They're not kidding me.

*Yes, yes.*

I mean I'm seventy-three and my God...

*[Laughter]*

Sorry, I'm so glum.

*[Laughter] Yes.*

Of course, I was at Pathé's when the war broke out.

*Yes.*

Had a... [Pause]

*You didn't do any night work did you when you were at, during the war at Pathé's?*

No, I didn't do any night work, no.

*No, no.*

No, there was some night work but some, some nights we had to stay there.

*Yes.*

In the building itself because it was too...

*Yes.*

Too heavy coming.

*Yes.*

I mean I'll talk about bombs now because we worked through all that and...

*Yes.*

Oh yes, if it was too bad we used to spend the night in the shelter.

*Yes.*

*We, we recently interviewed Norman Roper, do you remember Norman?*

Oh I've got a photograph of him. Oh I must show you. Mm, well at the...

*What, this, this is...?*

At Pathé's.

*A Pathé outing?*

Yes. And they, we, they gave us the Monday off, they took us on the river, went on to the river. We had, oh, smoked salmon on board, I'd never had smoked salmon before, [Laughter] and we were...

*Was this before or after the war?*

After the war, yes.

*After the war?*

And then from there we, when we came back we went to Café Royal. Had dinner there and from there we went on to The London Palladium see.

*All on Pathé?*

All on Pathé, yes, yes.

*I say, good Lord.*

Just shows what profit they made.

*[Laughter] Yes.*

Queenie Turner DRAFT  
Tape 1 Side B

Supposed to be out of ice-creams. Oh that's a shot when they was on strike, did you, there's an N Denton there.

*Oh yes. [Laughter]*

And here's some of the...

*Yes.*

That was our mechanics' shop.

*And usually wet.*

*Yes, I remember, yes, yes.*

That was Pathé's new labs, it was all nice and clean in there.

*Yes.*

Yes, that's...

*Yes, labs were kept clean in those days but Humphries was never very clean was it?  
[Laughter]*

Oh no, that's why [Laughter] I didn't want to hurt your feelings but...

*Oh you don't, you're not hurting mine, I wasn't there.*

No, but...

*I mean I know what it was like.*

Oh filthy. That's what I say you got, that's why I couldn't adjust myself.

*Yes.*

And when I came here it was worse still. Oh...

*You never went to Kay's. [Laughter]*

*I've, I've never been in Kay's, you know.*

No, I never been in Kay's.

*I've been in all the others but never Kay's.*

I've worked with, I've worked with some of the Kay's blokes, Sid Mills and Gordon, Gordon Butler.

Queenie Turner DRAFT  
Tape 1 Side B

*I don't, I don't know. No, I was, I was thinking Roy, I mean Alf was there for a time at Kay's.*

*Alf who?*

*Cooper.*

Did you see those mechanics, there's what Brian Bayliss...?

*I've seen him there, what with Brian Bayliss?*

Yes.

Brian Bayliss is there.

Yes, yes,, yes.

*Oh there's old Brian.*

Yes.

*Now when did he join you then?*

Well, he was the shop steward, Brian, it was soon after...

*Must have been soon after the war was it?*

Yes.

*That's a man worth talking to there, he unfortunately died just a few years ago.*

Because he went to Henderson. Yes, ah, ha. And I sent a Christmas card to his wife and . . .

*Yes, yes, we're still in touch with her.*

Yes, I keep in touch.

*Yes, and faces I recognise, yes.*

Yes.

*Yes.*

Every time I look at these and I thought 'Oh I get rid of some of them', although I've been told... [Laughter]

*Well, don't, I think what I'll do is I'll ask The BFI to get in touch with you and have a look and see what they would like to copy. Not to, you know...*

But Norman Roper he was in the News Department.

Yes.

*He was the editor.*

Yes. He was nice, I liked Norman.

Yes.

But they was all nice.

*The dog's coming.*

It's alright.

*Old Norman's still going strong actually. He, he's seventy, seventy-nine this year.*

Is he really? Yes.

*Mm, and he's still, he's...*

Do you still see him?

*Oh frequently.*

Oh remember me to him.

*Yes, we're family friends, we have been for many, many years.*

Oh good, oh good.

*And, you know, even at that age he's a wonderful photographer, you know, with, with...*

Yes. *Mm, mm.*

Yes.

*And he almost makes a living, he loves doing photography and he still does it for all sorts of societies and goodness knows what.*

[20:06]

Yes.

*He still makes quite a handsome little profit out of it.*

Yes.

Yes.

*Yes.*

I brought these up to show, I brought these up to show, you know, this is my son, his, his wife.

*Oh yes, yes.*

And that's my grandson.

*Yes.*

He took me to The Hilton last year. I don't make a habit of it of going there.  
[Laughter]

*[Laughter]*

And that's my grandson.

*Because that's a lovely sort of...*

Because... [Laughter]

*Is the Old Age Pensioners Association round here, is it this part of the world?*

Where I live, yes. Well, it's a little Monday club.

*Yes.*

We go up to.

*I see, yes.*

And, you know, you get in touch with people. And we're writing down the...

*Yes, yes.*

I'm trying to get hold of Jack Jones and Bert...

*Yes.*

Because, and Simon Hughes our MP.

*Ah, ha.*

So it's all, I don't know if we can get Simon Hughes I said 'We'll always go to the top'. They said 'Well, how about the Prime Minister'? I said 'No'. [Laughter]

*No, never had him.*

Queenie Turner DRAFT  
Tape 1 Side B

I said, they said 'What about the Queen'? I said 'Well, she's got problems of her own'. [Laughter]

*[Laughter] Yes.*

Yes, just try to help them out with their...

*Yes, yes.*

Grants and filling in forms. I mean some of these old age pension forms you want the GSE. I mean kids of today honestly they couldn't even fill a form in their life but they've never known some, some of these poor old dears they sit there crying so I thought oh some of them are younger than me but...

*You sound, I was going to say you sound like my mother.*

[Laughter]

*She, she was way in to her eighties she used to talk about these poor old dears she helped and, you know, you go and you say 'these poor old dears' and they're about sixty-five.*

Yes, well, you say that. I mean this poor old lady, well poor old lady she fell over and she fell over and blacked her eyes, I said and she thought it was the pavement. 'Well, show me the pavement', I made a note and whose concern it was, you know, got in touch with the police and the police they're getting in touch with the town hall, you know. So I said 'Poor Ruby'. [Laughter] Well, she's younger than you. [Laughter]

*[Laughter]*

Must be young at heart that's what it is.

*Well, that's it, yes, it is, yes, yes. Right, I think well, thank you dear very much.*

[End of Tape 1 Side B 00:22:17]



**Queenie Turner DRAFT  
Tape 1 Side B**

**Transcript Queries – Queenie Turner**

<b>Page/Time</b>	<b>Query</b>
<b>Tape 1 Side A</b>	
5 05:26	Mr 'Tislowe'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Pathé colleague.
5 05:28	Mr 'Tislowe'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Pathé colleague.
8 08:53	'Layons'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Soho Chinese Restaurant.
8 08:56	'Layons'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Soho Chinese Restaurant.
10 11:00	Joe 'Hobert'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Pathé colleague.
10 11:04	Joe 'Hobert'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Pathé colleague.
24 28:26	Joe 'Nobard'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Pathé colleague –same as the two above?
27 33:18	George 'Standish'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Pathé colleague.
27 33:22	George 'Stamp'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Pathé colleague – same as above entry..
27 33:27	Inaudible question.
29 34:29	'Catopsa'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Lab equipment.
<b>Tape 1 Side B</b>	
38 02:13	Brian'Shemeys'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – trainee of Queenie's.
43 08:38	Wilson 'Glenn'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – rich lady resident at Dorchester.
48 15:06	Brian'Shemeys'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – trainee of Queenie's.