

[00:00:00] **Jarek Zaba:** Okay.

[00:00:01] **Angela Hilton:** This is where the phone will ring, you know?

[00:00:03] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, typically. Typically, yeah. Um, this is Jarek Zaba, we are on the 7th of November. Um, I am with Angela Hilton. Is that right? Yeah. At her home in Worcester Park. Um, Angela, could you just confirm your name, your full name, and your place and date of birth for the tape, please?

[00:00:27] **Angela Hilton:** Okay. I'm Angela Hilton. I was born on the 7th of October, 1948 at Kingston Hospital.

[00:00:34] **Jarek Zaba:** There you go. Well, that . Leads nicely into my first question because my first question was gonna be about your relationship to this area.

[00:00:40] **Angela Hilton:** Mm-hmm.

[00:00:41] **Jarek Zaba:** So always been in the Kingston borough or?

[00:00:43] **Angela Hilton:** Absolutely.

[00:00:43] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:00:44] **Angela Hilton:** Yeah. I, um, I grew up in Tolworth.

[00:00:47] **Angela Hilton:** Um, I went to Our Lady Immaculate School the very day it opened, which is a great joy to my children. My grandchildren because they're there now. It's quite funny really when you look at how things change [00:01:00] and yet how much stays the same.

[00:01:01] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. You were in the first batch.

[00:01:03] **Angela Hilton:** First batch at OLI, and it wasn't called OLI in those days.

[00:01:06] **Angela Hilton:** Everybody called it Our Lady Immaculate, which always embarrassed me a bit cause it was such a long name for a school

[00:01:14] **Angela Hilton:** Yeah.

[00:01:15] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. So, um, I mean, what are your early memories of the, of, of, of the area? Um, are you, have you always been fond of living around here?

[00:01:22] **Angela Hilton:** Oh, gosh, yes. Which is one of the only reasons why I've got involved with, um, the anti-development process on the Broadway at the moment. Um, when I went to OLI in those days, the Broadway was built in bits and pieces. So where the tower now stood, where there was Tolworth Odeon, behind the tower was an open field where the circuses, the fairs, and the bonfire night used to be every year. And then across the other side, again, there were shops down the end. Um, the church wasn't there, of course, that was, uh, very new.

[00:01:53] **Angela Hilton:** The ch the shops down the end. Then there was more fields and then some shops up this end. Um, and again, so we used to cut [00:02:00] across the fields as a shortcut. To go and see my sister's godparents who lived in Cranborne Avenue.

[00:02:05] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Yeah. I mean, we are very interested in this project and in, in Community Brain's wider work as well. Uh, we're very interested in this sort of south side of the, of the borough Tolworth, Chessington, Hook, I mean, how would you describe the character of those places when you were growing up? And have they changed much over the years?

[00:02:23] **Angela Hilton:** Um, I honestly feel that sometimes they've been a bit neglected. They, uh, it was always, um, a happy environment.

[00:02:31] **Angela Hilton:** There were never any issues as such. Um, no crime or seemingly se seemed that there was no crime. That m could have just been my ignorance, but, um, it was just, you just went about your business. You grew up, there was stuff to do. Nobody was wandering around bored. My dad. Oh, my dad. When the, when the bowling alley opened, that was the den of iniquity.

[00:02:55] **Jarek Zaba:** Right.

[00:02:56] **Angela Hilton:** That was so funny because of course it was in the era of mods and rockers. [00:03:00] Um, and the mods all used to hang out there, whereas the rockers all used to hang out at in Ewell. You know, or Chessington. Uh, and what, so that was, there was, uh, I mean obviously I expect there were issues, but it never involved me because, um, uh, I just used to go there, you know, because it was the fun place to be.

[00:03:19] **Jarek Zaba:** Mm-hmm.

[00:03:20] **Angela Hilton:** Um, with all the gang. Yeah.

[00:03:22] **Jarek Zaba:** Do you have any memories of like the Toby Jug and places like this?

[00:03:25] **Angela Hilton:** Yep. When I first met, um, my, my, the man that became my husband, um, we were chatting away there and then we went into the pub. Because I was, I was used to a pub environment but not going in like that.

[00:03:40] **Angela Hilton:** Anyway, we went actually in the public bar and I had a pint of brown and mild. I dunno if they even sell that anymore, but some, some, one of my husband's work colleagues said, 'Cor, if my missus drank brown and mild, I'd walk away.' [00:04:00]

[00:04:01] **Jarek Zaba:** Oh funny.

[00:04:02] **Angela Hilton:** Ridiculous. Really? It's funny though, isn't it?

[00:04:04] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Do you remember any music there? Did you, do you, did you ever frequent the, the, the, the venue?

[00:04:10] **Angela Hilton:** Not when it was a happening place. Um, I didn't even know John Lennon's dad worked there until fairly recently, and I'd known for some years.

[00:04:18] **Angela Hilton:** But, um, I didn't know that he, he was one of the bar staff in there at that time. Um, so we're talking about late sixties, um, there, and, um, the re the rest of it, no, I had, um, I tended to travel more, um, out, out of the area for bands and stuff. Yeah. So it wa it wasn't Tolworth that I frequented, although I knew by then that the Toby Jug was getting a bit of a reputation as a venue.

[00:04:46] **Angela Hilton:** But you know how sometimes you diss the ones that are closest to you because they are, you know, it's more the thing to go elsewhere.

[00:04:54] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. I know that well, I've, I've spent most of my time slagging off the, uh, the, the place I was brought [00:05:00] up in. And then when I go back now I'm like, oh, it's not so bad.

[00:05:02] **Angela Hilton:** Absolutely. Yeah.

[00:05:04] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, just out of interest, what, what, what, what was your, what, what sort of taste did you have, uh, musically at the, at the time,

[00:05:10] **Angela Hilton:** Um.

[00:05:10] **Jarek Zaba:** Growing up?

[00:05:11] **Angela Hilton:** Yeah. It's, it's interesting how it's evolved actually, but I was very, well it's, it's really a contradiction in terms. The first record I ever bought before I even had a record player was Bobby Vee, Night Has A Thousand Eyes.

[00:05:26] **Angela Hilton:** Um, but then I really loved rock and roll. Really loved it, but obviously didn't have an awful lot of money. So, um, you know, I didn't buy an awful lot of of music, but I loved rock and roll. Until of course The Beatles came out.

[00:05:40] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:05:40] **Angela Hilton:** And then it was a different ballgame, you know, and rock and roll really took, I still love it, but you know, it was The Beatles for me, and now, crazily enough, it's reggae.

[00:05:51] **Jarek Zaba:** Okay. Right.

[00:05:52] **Angela Hilton:** Completely different. Yeah.

[00:05:53] **Jarek Zaba:** Oh, interesting.

[00:05:54] **Angela Hilton:** I've always liked the blues, obviously, cuz they're rock and roll is based on that, but I, I [00:06:00] graduated into the blues and now into reggae.

[00:06:02] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Yeah. And, uh, did your, did your taste, uh, align with your parents at all or were they very disapproving?

[00:06:09] **Angela Hilton:** Mum was, dad was quite, you know, 'pop rubbish', you know, and what that sort of thing.

[00:06:15] **Angela Hilton:** But mum liked what she called goey tunes.

[00:06:17] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Yeah.

[00:06:19] **Angela Hilton:** Her and her goey tunes. She liked that.

[00:06:21] **Jarek Zaba:** And, uh, yeah, we we're interested in the whole pop culture and the, and the fashion of the time as well. How were your, do do, do you recall your fashion tastes?

[00:06:28] **Angela Hilton:** Oh God yes.

[00:06:29] **Jarek Zaba:** As a, as a young girl.

[00:06:30] **Angela Hilton:** Yes. I, I recall causing quite a stir at Surbiton Assembly Rooms cos my dad used to run the Irish football team, um, for the area.

[00:06:41] **Angela Hilton:** And they used to have their dos at Surbiton Assembly Rooms. So of course I was the first one that rocked up at the Assembly Rooms in a miniskirt. Caused quite a stir with the ladies who said to uh, one lady. It got back to me. One lady said to the other, did you see Mr. Sullivan's daughter in that skirt? [00:07:00] And the other one said Yes. And hasn't she got the legs for it? So that shot her down in flames.

[00:07:06] **Jarek Zaba:** Vindicated.

[00:07:06] **Angela Hilton:** Absolutely.

[00:07:07] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:07:07] **Angela Hilton:** I got a picture of that too. Funnily enough.

[00:07:10] **Jarek Zaba:** I mean, the Assembly Rooms is another one that we've been looking at. Um, I mean, do, do, do, is that somewhere you often went um, for family things or was it, uh, a venue that you recall as

[00:07:20] **Angela Hilton:** Venue.

[00:07:21] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:07:21] **Angela Hilton:** Absolutely. I've done everything there from, as I say, rocking up in me miniskirt to being there when there was an awful fight. Um, and to dancing there myself, um, in shows later on when I got older.

[00:07:33] **Jarek Zaba:** Oh, really? Yeah. What, what kind of shows? What,

[00:07:35] **Angela Hilton:** Um, usually summer shows, um, there was, there, I was in a local dance school for a long time and, um, we would, I would always put on a show there, Christmas pantomimes.

[00:07:45] **Angela Hilton:** All that sort of stuff. Yeah.

[00:07:47] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Huh? Yeah. Yeah. Interesting.

[00:07:49] **Angela Hilton:** It was. It's a, it was a, a nice, a nice venue to work at, you know, and, and it was easy for people to get to and to park in those days. Of course you can't now, but, yeah.

[00:07:59] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:07:59] **Angela Hilton:** It [00:08:00] was cool.

[00:08:00] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. And just before we sort of move on to the Gala side of things, I mean, um, another place that we've been looking at is the, is the Polytechnic, um, as a place for music.

[00:08:09] **Jarek Zaba:** And do you, did you ever recall going, going there?

[00:08:11] **Angela Hilton:** I never did, no. That was kind of when I had small children and what have you. So, um, that, you know, it was. I had other things on my mind. Music I, I can't even remember what was top of the pops in those days. It's funny, you know, when things, certain things come on and I think, what was I, our children, because you know, at a certain time, kids, small kids take up all your time.

[00:08:31] **Angela Hilton:** I haven't got, you couldn't even think about going to gigs or anything. And they didn't call it gigs in those days anyway, but you know, you just didn't do it.

[00:08:39] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:08:39] **Angela Hilton:** Yeah.

[00:08:41] **Jarek Zaba:** So when were you first aware of the, um, the industrial estate or, or activity going on in, in Cox Lane in that, in that part of the world?

[00:08:50] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, what, what, what, what, when, when was the first time that you became aware of that?

[00:08:54] **Angela Hilton:** Um, I think probably when my dad started working there, because, um, we didn't [00:09:00] have a car and, um, it was, so I know he used to work in Teddington and then this job came. I remember hearing about it at home, but I was so young.

[00:09:09] **Angela Hilton:** Didn't really register, but yeah, dad started working there, whether it was, um, my brother might know more, whether it was introduced to him by, uh, somebody in the pub, I don't know. But Dad got a job there and that was how it became, you know, Gala Cosmetics, uh, was the thing. And of course they were the, the five product, Gala, Miner, Outdoor Girl.

[00:09:31] **Angela Hilton:** And then eventually Mary Quant, there was, you know, four, four product lines running there. And, uh, yeah, it was, uh, the start of an era, I guess, you know, because Mary Quant was the buzzword of the time, wasn't it? You know, much more so than even Gala, I don't think. Cos Gala was the priciest end of the market and Miners was the cheapest.

[00:09:54] **Angela Hilton:** And Outdoor, Outdoor Girl came somewhere in between.

[00:09:57] **Jarek Zaba:** What age would you have been? What year would it have been when your [00:10:00] dad,

[00:10:00] **Angela Hilton:** Just trying to think,

[00:10:00] **Jarek Zaba:** Started working there?

[00:10:02] **Angela Hilton:** I was a primary school. Yeah. So I'm guessing, eightish, nineish, something like that. Mm-hmm. Yeah, because, um, yeah, I left, um, OLI as, as one as you still do now at 11.

[00:10:20] **Angela Hilton:** Um, so yeah, it would've been.

[00:10:22] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. What, what, what year, what year would that have been? Do you

[00:10:26] **Angela Hilton:** I can't, trying to think these, what if I were, say I was 10 in '58.

[00:10:30] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:10:30] **Angela Hilton:** So, you know, you, you're looking at the, the mid to late fifties.

[00:10:33] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Yeah, yeah. Yep, yep. And what was your dad's work there? What was his role?

[00:10:37] **Angela Hilton:** Stores manager or assistant. It might have even started as assistant stores manager, I believe. Um, and that's, you know, where he stayed until he retired, basically. I can't remember if he got promoted or anything, but, um, he had. Yeah, he, he was there and of course, um, you know, it was eventually we, we did get a [00:11:00] car, off to work in the morning and, and of course, and then it would into the Toby at night, you know, and that sort of thing.

[00:11:06] **Angela Hilton:** Um, so yeah, he was, um, he was very local and as I said, part of the furthest they traveled mom and dad was to, you know, to see the football team play.

[00:11:16] **Jarek Zaba:** Which football team?

[00:11:17] **Angela Hilton:** Which, what were they called? The John Mitchell's. John Mitchell's Football Club.

[00:11:21] **Jarek Zaba:** Okay.

[00:11:21] **Angela Hilton:** Um, obviously, and the Irish, obviously they need different pitches and so we used to have to go over to Hayes.

[00:11:28] **Angela Hilton:** Oh my word, you know, get a coach to Hayes to go and watch the guys play football

[00:11:33] **Jarek Zaba:** Other side of the world.

[00:11:34] **Angela Hilton:** Absolutely. In those days. Yeah.

[00:11:36] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah,

[00:11:37] **Angela Hilton:** Absolutely. We used to leave from the Red Lion Yeah. And go up and go to Hayes. Yeah.

[00:11:42] **Jarek Zaba:** And did you get a, a sense of whether your, your dad enjoyed that work at Gala or whether he was happy there?

[00:11:48] **Angela Hilton:** Um, I think he was because, um, you know, you, you do, it's like most places you do feel you need to belong. Sometimes some people are tough enough [00:12:00] to, 'I don't care', but I think dad was one of those to, he wanted to belong. .

[00:12:04] **Jarek Zaba:** Mm-hmm.

[00:12:05] **Angela Hilton:** Yeah. Um, he came over here from Ireland to fight to join the RAF back in the wartime. Met my mum at one of the local venues, which were the three.

[00:12:15] **Angela Hilton:** There was, uh, Surbiton Assembly Rooms, Coronation Hall, and Tolworth Catholic Hall.

[00:12:20] **Angela Hilton:** They were the, and or, um, also the Claremont Hall, four venues. Those were the four main dance venues in the area. And, uh, they, you could be assured of having a good night out because those four venues, um, and that was, he met Mum at one of those venues. And it was instant. Um, yeah.

[00:12:41] **Jarek Zaba:** What, what, what kind of dancing do you think they would've

[00:12:43] **Angela Hilton:** Ballroom dancing, .

[00:12:43] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, yeah.

[00:12:44] **Angela Hilton:** Yeah. They were, um, and they both used to love it.

[00:12:47] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:12:48] **Angela Hilton:** Um, back in the day. And even though both of them got quite rotund towards the end of their lives, they could still shake a leg around the floor, you know, it was. Yeah.

[00:12:59] **Jarek Zaba:** And, and [00:13:00] the, uh, the love of dancing was passed on to you then.

[00:13:02] **Angela Hilton:** Mm-hmm. Yes. Yeah. Yeah, it was, um, I just, we, we started very, when I was very, well, I dunno, about eight or something. Eight, yeah. Started to learn Irish dancing at one of the local, uh, church halls. But that didn't last very long. And to be perfectly honest, um, Mum couldn't afford for us all to go to all the other things that kids do. Um, so I took it all up when I was much older. Like, when I've had this baby, I'm going to learn to tap dance . And so I did. Um, and it just went on from there.

[00:13:35] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. So you would've been in that generation that that was first termed as teenagers, is that right?

[00:13:41] **Angela Hilton:** Oh God yes.

[00:13:42] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:13:42] **Angela Hilton:** Oh, because I'll never forget this.

[00:13:45] **Angela Hilton:** We were coming home on a train, I think we'd been on for a day at the seaside, and we were coming home and I was sitting with my sister as we were coming up towards Surbiton or whatever. And it must have been September, because I said to my [00:14:00] sister, and I can remember it very well. I'm going to be a teenager next month.

[00:14:05] **Angela Hilton:** And my dad said, you'll be no such thing.

[00:14:08] **Jarek Zaba:** Ha. I mean, what was that? What was that perception of the teenager? What was, what was the connotation?

[00:14:16] **Angela Hilton:** Oh wicked. Yes, ev you know, trouble.

[00:14:19] **Jarek Zaba:** Right?

[00:14:19] **Angela Hilton:** Every, they didn't do anything. They were lazy. They were wicked. They were, you know, 'you'll be no such thing'. I thought, I will. There ain't nothing you can do about that. I will

[00:14:31] **Jarek Zaba:** And was that idea also linked to one's fashion taste and was it, denim was becoming big around then as well?

[00:14:37] **Angela Hilton:** Absolutely. Yes. Yeah, absolutely. It was, uh, it was funny. It took me years and years to get my husband into denims, and then once I got him into denims, he, he never took them off.

[00:14:55] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, and this is, you just mentioned, uh, Tolworth Catholic Hall. Uh, where was that?

[00:14:59] **Angela Hilton:** That's [00:15:00] behind the church. You know, the big church on the Broadway?

[00:15:02] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:15:03] **Angela Hilton:** Well, back in the day that's all there was. There was the church, the, the ch the Catholic Hall behind it, and the little chapel at the side, which is still there. And eventually, obviously the church got built. The school got built. Um, and, but the, the, the Sunday mass was held in the, in the, because there were so many Catholics. Um, the Sunday mass was held in the church hall. Um, ceremonies, um, baptisms and all that kind of thing would be held in the, the little chapel.

[00:15:31] **Angela Hilton:** Um, and then they accommodated some of the stuff from the little chapel into the main big church when it was built because it was so pretty. Even I remember that. But church, mass on a Sunday was on little kneeling pads on the floor. You know, nothing like your pews and all that. It was chairs and pads on the floor.

[00:15:50] **Angela Hilton:** Um, and obviously it was a great venue. Um, for the, for the, the young as it was then, the young people that liked to come and, and dance, which was all ballroom [00:16:00] dancing. I dunno if there might have been a bit of jitterbug or some of that in there, but, um, yeah, for, for the, those were the four main venues for. For the area.

[00:16:09] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Um, and so then you did become a teenager.

[00:16:13] **Angela Hilton:** I did.

[00:16:14] **Jarek Zaba:** Despite what your father may have wished. Um, and then you, you ended up, uh, working at Gala as well?

[00:16:20] **Angela Hilton:** Yes.

[00:16:20] **Jarek Zaba:** So to talk us through that journey.

[00:16:22] **Angela Hilton:** Yeah. That was, um, um, dad's, I can remember him, sort of, it is a bit misty, but I can remember him sort of broaching it.

[00:16:30] **Angela Hilton:** Would I be interested in the school holidays? You know, the, like the, the summer holidays and like most youngsters, you want some money, you know? And I thought, yeah, I'll, I'll give that a go. And so I started, I was trying to think since I first spoke to you. I think the name of the lady in charge of the belt that I was on was Maureen.

[00:16:51] **Angela Hilton:** Dark haired lady. I remember her. She was very nice. And um, we would either be doing, um, [00:17:00] shampoo. Or aftershave. It was a glass bottle belt and I got quite good at it that if the belt got stuck or the bottle I was, I was quite, I can sort this, you know, and I felt as if I was achieving something while the other ladies were getting on.

[00:17:16] **Angela Hilton:** So sometimes you were doing, loading the bottles onto the belt or other times you were packing the bottles in boxes? Um, quite mundane, but there was a good atmosphere there.

[00:17:26] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Yeah. I mean, what, what would the branding of the shampoo have been? Would that have been

[00:17:31] **Angela Hilton:** Miners.

[00:17:32] **Jarek Zaba:** Right, that's Miners.

[00:17:32] **Angela Hilton:** Generally Miners. Yeah. Um, obviously it would change, depends, you know, Maureen would get her instructions from her. So the drums were loaded up with all, whichever, whether it's aftershave or, or, um, nail varnish removal was another one, shampoo. Um, and I can see them now in my mind's eye, all the bottles jiggling along the belt and then going round into the circular drum where the stuff comes like they do with milk bottles.

[00:17:56] **Angela Hilton:** The stuff comes pumped in, goes to the next bit, the bottle lids gets screwed [00:18:00] on, out the end. Put in boxes and onto the, yeah, onto the pallets.

[00:18:04] **Jarek Zaba:** I understood at the time there were, two Gala sites. There was a Hook Rise one and a Cox Lane one. Do you, do you know which one you were on?

[00:18:11] **Angela Hilton:** No, I was at Hook Rise. Yeah.

[00:18:13] **Jarek Zaba:** Right. Yeah. Yeah. So that's, so the lady I interviewed this morning just described, that's Factory One, and then there was Factory Two where she worked.

[00:18:19] **Angela Hilton:** Yeah, I'd forgotten that.

[00:18:20] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:18:20] **Angela Hilton:** Yes, yes. Up. Yeah, that's right. Yeah. I was on on Hook Rise. Yeah.

[00:18:25] **Jarek Zaba:** And I wonder if you can paint me a picture of what it looked like, uh, in, in inside the, inside the factory.

[00:18:31] **Jarek Zaba:** I mean, were, were, how many people would've been working there? What, what, how, how did it, was it, was it hot conditions? Was it, you know, was it tough working conditions?

[00:18:41] **Angela Hilton:** Um, I would say apart from one afternoon in my stint, a couple of stints there, but in one afternoon it was happy. I, I guess I, I, the, the, what's the word?

[00:18:53] **Angela Hilton:** The, the combination of temperaments on that particular belt was good. Everybody got on. Um, [00:19:00] and um, one day something had happened. There was obviously a delay in getting stuff. I dunno whether it was the bottles or the, the, um, raw material. I dunno. But we were, we were split up and put on another belt for the afternoon.

[00:19:14] **Angela Hilton:** Didn't like that at all. It was thin lipsticks, which I dunno, don't know if they still do them now. But very thin lipsticks and you had to put them in their tube and tap them to make sure, and they weren't very

friendly on that belt at all. So yeah, I was really glad to get back to Maureen and, and the, the aftershave or whatever it was that we were filling.

[00:19:35] **Jarek Zaba:** I mean, were you, uh, using any Gala products yourself at this time? And would it have been, uh, an, an exciting thing to be working with them?

[00:19:44] **Angela Hilton:** I probably was because, um, I, I know we, I, well, I was very much like Dusty Springfield back in those days, you know, with the black eyes out here and what have you. So I was very pleased if any of those turned up in the shilling bags, which I think I mentioned [00:20:00] before.

[00:20:00] **Angela Hilton:** Uh, you know, so that you've got all of this stuff. Um, for a shilling, which was brilliant to somebody, you know, when you think your wages were probably less than six pounds a week, something like that. So yeah, it was, uh, I was quite happy with that. And then one, I know one time we got Mary Quant selection boxes, if you like, that came in a white plastic thing with the Quant daisy on the front, and then there would be a mirror in there and blusher and eyes sha a couple of eyeshadows and that was the bee's knees. Yeah.

[00:20:32] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:20:32] **Angela Hilton:** I had that for years.

[00:20:35] **Jarek Zaba:** I mean, it's, it's remarkable. Every, almost every single person we've spoken to who used to work for Gala mentions the the bags, the, yeah.

[00:20:41] **Angela Hilton:** Do they? Yeah. Yeah. Oh, good. It, it's so funny you saying shilling bags. Nobody knows what a shilling is anymore. You know? So, but that's what they were. Yeah.

[00:20:49] **Jarek Zaba:** And that was for every employee presumably?

[00:20:52] **Angela Hilton:** Absolutely. Yeah. Cuz you got your pay. And um, then at a certain time I, well, before you went home, I think, and then you would go and queue [00:21:00] up and obviously it was first come, first served, so you would, you know, you would pay your shilling and, and take a bag full of, of goodies.

[00:21:07] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Um, so just one thing, uh, if you just avoid, uh, hitting the table when it took Yeah, it's, it's fine. It's fine. It's like, it's, it's usually easy enough to edit out, but it's just these mics pick up the bumps.

[00:21:18] **Angela Hilton:** Of course they would. Yeah.

[00:21:19] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, But, um, yes, the, yeah, the, the, the goody bags come up a lot. Um, one lady, uh, who I spoke to this morning was also, uh, very keen on, um, some of the food they were served. Do you remember much about the canteen or,

[00:21:33] **Angela Hilton:** I do, because I used to have my lunch with two or three of the boys from the stores. Um, p obviously they knew I was my dad's daughter and I had, you know, they were friendly.

[00:21:51] **Angela Hilton:** Now obviously people. get impressions from that, you know, which is, um, and I was just so innocent and, [00:22:00] and naive. Um, it never occurred to me. These were people I knew that I could sit and talk to. Um, and I was trying to think of the names. Um, when it's gone now, but I remember, oh, Roger, Roger was one of them.

[00:22:13] **Angela Hilton:** He was very, um, studious with thick glasses and he drew me a picture of Ringo Starr. He was a bit of an artist and he drew me a picture of Ringo Starr that I had on my bedroom wall for years. In fact, you know, I, it was only because he did it because I preferred John Lennon. But you know, I had that, um, there was another taller guy with dark hair.

[00:22:35] **Angela Hilton:** And the third one, I don't remember so well, but I did used to have my lunch with those guys. Yeah. Because it was comfortable.

[00:22:41] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:22:42] **Angela Hilton:** You know, but other people make their own, make their own opinions.

[00:22:46] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. It was, it was the food specifically this lady remembered which was something called a pizza roll. Did they, do you, do you remember anything about that

[00:22:54] **Angela Hilton:** Oh no.

[00:22:54] **Jarek Zaba:** Maybe that was only on Factory Two and not Factory One.

[00:22:57] **Angela Hilton:** Maybe it was, yeah. Because pizza wasn't the thing.

[00:22:59] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Well [00:23:00] she, she described it

[00:23:00] **Angela Hilton:** in those days,

[00:23:01] **Jarek Zaba:** Essentially. Yeah. Um, Cheese, onions, tomatoes, sort of grilled into a, into a, into a bread roll.

[00:23:08] **Angela Hilton:** This sounds rather, Hmm.

[00:23:09] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, it does. I said, I said it sounds quite good actually. .

[00:23:12] **Angela Hilton:** It does. Yeah. But no, I don't remember that.

[00:23:16] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, when you talk about the stores

[00:23:17] **Angela Hilton:** mm-hmm. ,

[00:23:18] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, is that like storerooms or,

[00:23:20] **Angela Hilton:** Yeah,

[00:23:20] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:23:21] **Angela Hilton:** Yeah. Where all the finished product, um, I would imagine where a, the finished products are kept before dispatch and also where the raw material will be stored before it goes to the belts.

[00:23:31] **Angela Hilton:** I would, I would guess, I don't ever recall going down there.

[00:23:35] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. So you had within the, the site, you had the factory with the, with the lines, and then you had storerooms, and then you had offices presumably as well?

[00:23:43] **Angela Hilton:** Yes, yes. Yeah, yeah.

[00:23:45] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, I mean, would you ever see the, the leadership of Gar, because I know Stanley Picker was involved.

[00:23:51] **Angela Hilton:** Mm, yes.

[00:23:51] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, would you ever see Stanley Picker or

[00:23:53] **Angela Hilton:** I might have done, yeah. I don't honestly remember. Um, I do remember dad talking about him. Um, [00:24:00] and obviously as you well know, he subsequently, he subsequently became a benefactor, a philanthropist guy, um, and, um, created that, uh, gallery in Kingston. Um, but yeah, I do remember him.

[00:24:11] **Angela Hilton:** And there was another man, I think he was on a par with Dad, no, I don't think he was dad's boss called Mr. Percy Harrison, I think his name was. Um, and there's another guy. Oh, and then it was, yeah, a guy called Jimmy who looked very much like my dad. Um, yeah, it's funny the more you eventually when you relax a bit, the more comes in, doesn't, it comes out of the, the mist.

[00:24:40] **Angela Hilton:** But Picker is the main one because, uh, he was American, I believe.

[00:24:45] **Jarek Zaba:** Mm-hmm.

[00:24:45] **Angela Hilton:** Um, so that was a bit unusual for Tolworth to have an American boss.

[00:24:50] **Jarek Zaba:** And we know that Mary Quant herself visited the site on on occasion. Did you, did you ever witness her or?

[00:24:55] **Angela Hilton:** I think I was probably, I'd probably left by then and was probably doing a, a job in Kingston [00:25:00] or, yeah.

[00:25:00] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:25:01] **Angela Hilton:** Mm-hmm.

[00:25:01] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Sure. Um, yeah, and you know, just in terms of that, um, workplace culture.

[00:25:08] **Angela Hilton:** Mm-hmm.

[00:25:09] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, I mean it was, it sounds like it was quite a relaxed place to work. It wasn't like everyone was watching over their shoulder, or, or do you think it depended on which bit you were in?

[00:25:17] **Angela Hilton:** Very much that one. Yeah, I was lucky. I think I got, um, you know, that there was a good vibe on our belt, um, which there wasn't that afternoon that I got moved. Um, it was very different, very different atmosphere. But overall, I felt there was a good atmosphere there. Um, obviously then once I left school and did work myself, um, I have, I have no idea because you, you tend to move away from your parents.

[00:25:47] **Angela Hilton:** You don't tend to have the same social life. Whereas we had interacted all the time. I was virtually growing up, um, then you start doing things on your own or going out with your boyfriend or, or whatever.
[00:26:00] So, um, yeah, I wasn't quite so much aware of, of what was happening.

[00:26:05] **Jarek Zaba:** And in terms of your colleagues, your, your, your, your sort of fellow factory workers, would they have been a similar profile to you, other teenage girls?

[00:26:11] **Angela Hilton:** Especially in the holidays? Yes. They, that's when they, you know, they bumped up the staff with, with all the youngsters who needed holiday jobs. So yeah, that was, uh, that was really useful.

[00:26:22] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:26:23] **Angela Hilton:** Yeah.

[00:26:24] **Jarek Zaba:** And in terms of your time there, when did, when did that come to an end? What was it? Was it just because it was simply just for the summer?

[00:26:31] **Angela Hilton:** Exactly, exactly that. Um, the, obviously I'd pro, I was trying to think, I did it probably from when I was, um, 15, 16? Yeah. Because by the time I left school, um, which I did, I didn't go, didn't go into the sixth form, so I probably did it for those two summers and um, then I started working in Kingston, so, yeah.

[00:26:57] **Jarek Zaba:** And how about your dad? When did he move on?

[00:26:58] **Angela Hilton:** He stayed there,

[00:26:59] **Jarek Zaba:** Right. [00:27:00]

[00:27:00] **Angela Hilton:** He stayed there until he retired.

[00:27:01] **Jarek Zaba:** Oh, until till he retired, right? I was gonna say cos it's one of two options until he retired or until the factory closed.

[00:27:06] **Angela Hilton:** Yeah, absolutely. Yes.

[00:27:08] **Jarek Zaba:** Um,

[00:27:08] **Angela Hilton:** And it kind of, I remember that factory coming down and I was quite sad and I didn't know really why, I suppose cos it represented a part of my past.

[00:27:18] **Angela Hilton:** Although my, my actual involvement was limited, but it was kind of, it's always been there, you know, that kind of feeling that people have. And of course Andre went and Siebe Gormans and you know, the whole lot went. And just recently, well a few months back, I was back there on that site again because a company that have moved in there are running the Mayor's project, taking in mobile phones and all of that stuff to, for repurposing or whatever they're doing.

[00:27:47] **Jarek Zaba:** E-waste. Yes.

[00:27:48] **Angela Hilton:** That's it.

[00:27:48] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:27:48] **Angela Hilton:** So I drove up there and, um, handed them a sackful of electronic stuff, you know, and they went, oh great, blah, blah, blah. And I said, I can't believe I'm here again. You know, this is where [00:28:00] my father used to work and so on. Um, because yeah, it was kind of, when you go back, you have, your brain kind of does a double take when you know you've been there and yet what you're looking at bears no relation to when you were there.

[00:28:12] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:28:13] **Angela Hilton:** And how you imagine it.

[00:28:14] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Yeah. Do you, do you, do you have any sense of why the Gala site was closed down?

[00:28:19] **Angela Hilton:** Excuse, excuse me. No idea.

[00:28:22] **Jarek Zaba:** Mm-hmm.

[00:28:24] **Angela Hilton:** I don't know what happened to the products. Um, were they not selling? I don't know. I never, I never followed that through.

[00:28:32] **Jarek Zaba:** Because Gala certainly continued as, as a company, didn't it?

[00:28:36] **Angela Hilton:** Mm-hmm.

[00:28:36] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, but it was just that site was, was closed, so. Yeah. Yeah. It's an interesting one. I, I think, you know, as I interview more people, I'm hoping to get to the, the bottom of

[00:28:44] **Angela Hilton:** That might come out. Yeah.

[00:28:46] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Yeah. It's, um, it's an interesting one.

[00:28:48] **Angela Hilton:** Yeah.

[00:28:48] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, and you mentioned a couple of the other, uh, names on the estate there. Um, I'm just curious, while you were at Gala, was there any interaction between the different companies or were you [00:29:00] just all very much in your own bubbles?

[00:29:03] **Angela Hilton:** I would, I would say in your own bubble, I would think. Uh, because when Mum worked at Andre, I was never aware of her interacting with anyone outside of Andre, even though Dad was only just up the road in, in Gala.

[00:29:19] **Angela Hilton:** So, um, that would be my feeling. I could be wrong, but that would be my feeling that, um, you just hung with your crew regardless.

[00:29:29] **Jarek Zaba:** Sure, sure. And in, in terms of your, your mum at Andre, um, I mean, what was she doing there? How long was she there?

[00:29:35] **Angela Hilton:** Good few years actually. Um, and I can't remember why she left, but um, she had been working in Kingston.

[00:29:46] **Angela Hilton:** Then she went there and it was admin and you know, she was in the offices there.

[00:29:51] **Jarek Zaba:** Mm-hmm.

[00:29:51] **Angela Hilton:** Um, and she got on, she got on very well there. You know, there were like, everywhere there is people that you don't always get on with, and so [00:30:00] various stories would come home, but she was, she was a good natured person and very likable.

[00:30:05] **Angela Hilton:** So she got on very well there. Yeah.

[00:30:08] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. I mean, did you have any sense of what they did there? The, the, the, the products they,

[00:30:12] **Angela Hilton:** Extrusions is a word that I learnt. Mm extrusions, whatever they might be. .

[00:30:21] **Jarek Zaba:** So that's a no a no, basically.

[00:30:23] **Angela Hilton:** I know.

[00:30:23] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Um, yeah. And just, and just finally, um, having, you know, recalled your memories at Gala, having, um, spoken about your parents both being employed, um, on the industrial estate. How, how do you sort of reflect on the Cox Lane industrial estate, uh, specifically, but also industrial estates more, more broadly, um, as you have such a, a connection to them?

[00:30:46] **Angela Hilton:** Mm-hmm. Um, quite interesting really cos when you are in it, especially when you're so young, your brain is full of other stuff. You, your, it's expedient to earn money.

[00:30:56] **Angela Hilton:** You want money, you earn money, then you can go and spend it, that kind of [00:31:00] thing. Oh. Um, but, um, with hindsight and

the beauty of it, you realise how important they are to an area, um, how much of an identity it gives the area and how much of an identity it gives to people that they belong. And that's quite important for a lot of people.

[00:31:20] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:31:21] **Angela Hilton:** Um, and that was part of that area. So it, I suppose, the, any sadness that I felt when I saw Gala being pulled down was just that, that's the end of an era, because what's going to replace it now? Things always do, but these days the replacements never seem to quite have the um, the ethos of us amongst the, about them. They, you know, they, um,

[00:31:55] **Jarek Zaba:** Do you think, you mean, you mean they're less locally focused?

[00:31:57] **Angela Hilton:** Yeah. Yes. Um, [00:32:00] I think, I think it's possibly, um, just the general area now, everything is so spread out. Everything is also kind of so individual, unless you're at school, possibly even at college. But unless you're at school, you don't get that us feeling.

[00:32:16] **Angela Hilton:** Um, it's all a, it seems to me it's all a bit divisive. I think the only other place you might still get it is possibly in the NHS. Um, you get that feeling of you're working towards the same goal.

[00:32:28] **Jarek Zaba:** Mm-hmm.

[00:32:29] **Angela Hilton:** Um, there may, it may still be existing in certain smaller companies, maybe departmentally in, but I, I don't, I didn't get that feeling anywhere else. I don't know if that's just my personal impression or, or whether other people feel the same, but a sense of identity is gone. I think.

[00:32:51] **Jarek Zaba:** On that note, I think that's a, that's a lovely place to end the interview unless there's anything that you think you haven't mentioned that you think is relevant either to the industrial estate stuff [00:33:00] or if you wanna talk about the, the pop fashion in Kingston stuff. Um, music or fashion or any of that stuff.

[00:33:08] **Angela Hilton:** Um, I think, I think we've more or less covered everything. I, I feel, um, yeah, the fashion was, was great. Um, it just amazes me how just a sort of a little backwater, like Tolworth managed to get itself into, into fashion and for it to be a centre of the music industry.

[00:33:24] **Angela Hilton:** It's just amazing. I'm quite blown away by that. But then I, I had focus on other things at the time. Um, so yeah. It's, I think we, we've covered everything.

[00:33:34] **Jarek Zaba:** Good stuff. Thank you so much for your time.

[00:33:35] **Angela Hilton:** Pleasure.