

LLEISIAU O LAWR Y FFATRI / VOICES FROM THE FACTORY FLOOR

B. S. Bacon Toys, Llanrwst (c 1948-58)

Interviewee: VN024 Margaret Jones

Date: 29: 04: 2014

Interviewer: Kate Sullivan on behalf of Women's Archive Wales

Margaret chose not to do a full interview but was willing to give some information on tape. She was born on 16th October 1926. Her parents were from Llanrwst, her father worked in the slaughter house. Her mother was at home and Margaret had four brothers. She went to school in Llanrwst. All her brothers are dead now. She left school at 14 and was quite happy to leave. **Her first job was in the kitchen in the school canteen, washing up and helping with the dinners, for which she thinks she earned the equivalent of 50p.** She was there for about two years. **She went to the toy factory in 1948 and she thinks she went down to the factory in person to ask for job. She must have had an interview but can't remember. She was happy to have a job because you had to have a job in those days, she said.**

She had a few friends already working there. **She worked on building the houses, putting the pieces of wood together. The houses then went on to be painted by other female workers in the painting room.** The wood was cut by men downstairs. The houses were 'alright' she says but she can't remember how much they cost. She remained on the houses the whole time she was there, working with another girl, Megan, who is dead now. The factory was alright to work in, but there was no messing about, you had to concentrate on the job, she said. The owner, Mr Bacon, was always there, in and out of the office.

She thinks she worked from 8am to 5pm, but didn't have to work weekends. They had breaks but there was no canteen. The workers went to MacLean's (?) Cafe in a street nearby where they bought their teas and coffees and something to eat. She can't remember how much she earned or getting any bonuses at Christmas. She can't remember what the holidays were and thinks if anyone was off sick they'd get basic sick pay.

It was a friendly place to work, all girls except for the men who cut out the wood. Apart from dolls houses, they made farms too. The work was pretty much the same all year round. She never remembers going away during the holidays and was living at home with her parents at the time. She doesn't think there was a union there. **There was no uniform but the girls used to buy aprons to wear over their clothes.** She cannot remember any accidents or a time when she hit her finger with a hammer while knocking the nails in. The completed houses were sent all over the country.

She cannot remember if she clocked in and out. Outside of work, she didn't socialize with the other girls and can't remember what she did at weekends.

She was there for about ten years, until 1958 or thereabouts and **she left because she was offered another job in a shop, serving on the counter. She says this was a 'change and more money probably.'** In a way, she was sorry to leave the toy factory, because it was a friendly place to work. Mr Bacon was nice to work for, she says. She doesn't remember when the factory closes but thinks it was in the 1960s. She walked to work as the factory was nearby, in Watling Street.

Duration: 12 minutes