



John Bashford, Birmingham

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Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings, Bromsgrove

Interview with John Bashford

Interview by Elisabeth Blanchet

Transcribed by Solange Gulizzi

EB: So, John, can you tell me a bit more about the prefab, your prefab?

JB: Yeah, I was born in 1957 and I was taken home to the prefab. That is where I lived with my mum and my dad and my gran. That was our first home until we moved out. But then I used to go every weekend with my dad 'cause he used to tend to the garden and I used to help, and I had a little plot with some tools; so I have very happy memories of the prefab.

EB: Where was your prefab?

JB: It was in Weoley Castle, in Birmingham, on the square, number 14.

EB: And where did your parents get a prefab?

JB: Well, they have to live... they lived with my gran. It was a prefab really. And they got married but they couldn't get a home at the time, so they have the back bedroom of the prefab.

EB: And you lived with them in that bedroom?

JB: In that bedroom, yeah. There were the three of us in the bedroom. That was a bit crowded.

EB: And your gran was eh... why did she get the prefab?

JB: Well, I think she got it from another house she'd been re-homed. She hadn't been bombed. I think she just exchanged to the prefab.

EB: And did she like it?

JB: She liked the prefab, yeah. She was happy there.



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John Bashford, Birmingham

EB: Do you remember what she liked about it?

JB: I think she just liked being on one floor, no stairs, so it was easy to clean.

EB: So, you stayed until you were how old were you?

JB: Well, I was probably about three, something like that, when my mum and dad managed to get a little terraced house, so we moved out there and my gran just lived there on her own then.

EB: Till when did she live in the prefab?

JB: Eh...well she died when she was 86. She actually fell down, there. But she didn't die there, she died in hospital.

EB: So she stayed a long time there...

JB: She stayed a long time, yeah.

EB: And what happened to the prefab after?

JB: Well, I think it might have been let once more, until it was time for them to be demolished.

EB: So that might have been in the 80s?

JB: I think it probably might have been the 70s, more or less.

EB: 70s?

JB: Yeah

EB: All right, ok. And what did your parents think about the prefab?

JB: I think my dad liked the prefab, but my mum didn't. She said that they were hot in the summer and cold in the winter, and they were damp, and she didn't like them at all.

EB: Maybe she didn't like the fact that she had to live with her mother-in-law?

JB: I think it was living with her mother-in-law, yeah. They didn't get on [laughs], no.

EB: Ok, yeah. So they were in such a small space. So you remember your prefab being a bit different from this one?

JB: It was different to this. It was a like rough cast in the outside, and the living-room was at the front. But I think the rooms were about the same size.

EB: And you had a living-room and from the living-room you had a door to the kitchen?



John Bashford, Birmingham

JB: The kitchen was at the back. A door through to the kitchen. And then there was a central hallway with the two bedrooms and a bathroom, and a separate toilet.

EB: So that must have been a Tarran.

JB: Yeah

EB: Yes, and you had a...there was a gas, there was a fridge....

JB: There was a gas fridge and a gas cooker that was built in.

EB: And you had constant hot water...

JB: Yeah, it was an immersion heater.

EB: And when you went back with you dad to do a bit of the garden, are those happy memories to you or...

JB: Yeah, they are happy memories to me, yeah. I really enjoyed going there. I used to stop at about six o'clock and then come home.

EB: And all day you would spend in the garden...

JB: Yeah. All day in the garden. We used to come a bit later and watch some telly with her. She had a very old television set [laughs].

EB: And you Sandra, do you have any family that lived in prefabs?

woman in the background: none at all, so I don't remember any of this.

EB: What do you think of them? Do you like them, or...

woman: Yeah, they seem very homely. I probably would have liked to live there, yeah.

EB: Even nowadays?

JB: I think so, yeah, buy one of those. I know that probably it has to be bricks in the outside now and brought up to standard a bit. But yeah, I think they are really nice.

EB: You would buy one?

JB: Yeah, I would [laughs].

EB: Oh, right. Well, thank you.



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JB: Thank you very much.

EB: No thank you, John, thank you very much.

John Bashford, Birmingham