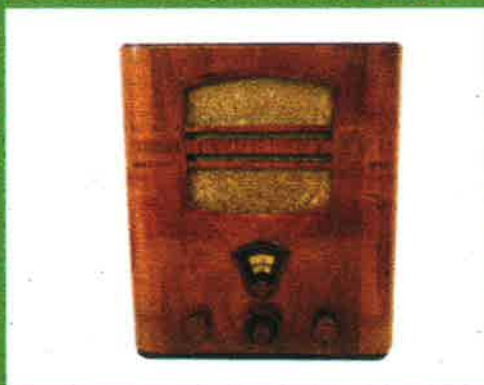


Housing the city

Tai yn y ddinas



Object Stories

Storïau'r gwrthrychau

Toasting fork



Magi Roberts lived in Cathays in the 1940s:

"This toasting fork belonged to the old lady we used to live with. I called her Nana Senior. As a treat, if we were good and quiet, we were allowed to sit by the fire, toast and look for the fairies. That's what I remember the most, looking for the fairies in the fire!"



Nana Senior on her 100th birthday.



Carpet beater

Ira Mills Calford grew up in the 1950s:

"I remember when we lived in Manor Street that we would take the rugs (large rugs, no fitted carpets then) and put them on the washing line outside and beat them to get the dust out. Once a month we would do the stairs carpet. My father would have to take off the brass rods. And I would help my mother take the carpet out and put it on the line."

Barbara Jones was born in 1927:

"I did not know anyone then who had carpets or who owned a vacuum-cleaner. To clean a room the mats or rugs would be taken up and placed over the clothes line and whacked with a carpet beater or the back of a shovel. They would then be brushed down ready to be replaced after the room had been cleaned."

Box iron



Barbara Jones remembers:

"We used flat irons that would be heated on the fire. The irons would often fall into the fire as the coals shifted and it was very hot to your face and arms trying to get them out. Coal dust had to be wiped from them before use and the iron rubbed over a bar of soap to help it glide over the fabric.

[Then] Dada bought an electric iron. The big difference between the old and new iron was that the flat iron got colder as it was used but the electric one got hotter and hotter and one had to be very careful not to scorch things."



Candle box

Phyllis Anderson remembers:

"So, each night at bedtime, we kiddies would carry our candles wedged firmly in their enamel holders and Mam's voice would follow up the stairs 'Mind that grease, now! And blow it out the minute you're in bed.' For candles cost money and woe betide any one of us who wasted one inch. The threat of having to ascend those winding stairs in darkness filled our timid hearts with terror..."

From: *Cardiff Voices*, Brian Lee

Butter pats



Valerie James remembers growing up in the 1940s:

“Sometimes I went shopping with my Nanna Jones to the shops in Tudor Street which we always referred to as Tudor Road. The grocery store was called Gordon Williams’. Goods were on display on shelves with assistants waiting to serve you behind the counters dressed in white coats. There were large containers of different biscuits on display in glass jars in front of the counters. The biscuits of your choice were weighed by pound or half pound and put in paper bags. A bargain buy was a bag of broken biscuits at reduced cost. They would cut the size of the piece of cheese you wanted with a wire on a large wooden board, and the butter was also cut from a large block and pressed with butter pats into a square before being wrapped in greaseproof paper...”



Candle snuffers

Joan Lake remembers:

"We used candle snuffers in the air raid shelter, because we had candles in there. No door, just a curtain over the entrance, so when we heard the planes coming, we would snuff it out, to stop the light escaping. Or we would hear the air raid wardens shout 'put that light out!' The pointy bit on the end is to poke the clean wick out of the wax to relight it again."

Snuff box



Victoria Rogers, one of Cardiff Story Museum's curators explains:

"In Victorian times Cardiff was overcrowded and many lived in appalling conditions. Drinking water came from the Glamorganshire Canal or the River Taff, where the town's sewage was also dumped. Cardiff suffered several cholera outbreaks in the 19th century, the worst was in 1849 when over 350 people died."

This snuff box was given in thanks by the people who lived by the Sea Lock to their doctor. The inscription reads:

"Presented by the Inhabitants of the Old Sea Lock to J R Reece Esq Surgeon for his attention and skill during the prevalence of the Cholera Cardiff 1849."



Rag rug

Bernice Maynard was born in 1937:

"Yes, I certainly remember our rag rugs! ...to bring just a bit of cheer to the room (certainly throughout the war years) we always had a fairly large rug just in front of the fireplace made out of rags... It was mainly my father that used to make these rugs, but we all used to cut up the strips of cloth and have a go at trying to thread a few of the strips of cloth into the hessian backing. I remember I used to find it quite difficult to do as my wrists were not really strong enough to use the tool you needed. It was about the size of an apple corer...and the top of it had to be prodded through the hessian... Dad used to sometimes try and draw a pattern onto the hessian first, but in the main he just made it up as he went along.

When the rugs were first made they looked quite nice and cheerful, but as time went by they became dusty."

Coal bucket



Valerie James grew up in the 1940s:

"Mr Lewis the coalman always delivered to us with a horse and cart laden with sacks of coal. His face was always as black as his clothes and he had to hump the ...sacks of coal through the house to the coalhouse out at the back...

When smoke started belching from the fireplace we would have to call in the local chimney sweep. Everything in the room would have to be covered with old sheets or curtains while he cleaned the chimney with his brushes, and this usually necessitated and inspired a bit of a spring clean."



Fly trap

Bethan Parry, one of Cardiff Story Museum's curators explains:

"It wasn't until the 1960s that fridges became common in houses. Before that you tried to keep food as cool as you possibly could, and you had to use things like this fly trap or covering food with cloth to protect it from insects!"

Geoff Bray remembers:

"Each street had a corner shop and children were frequently called from play to go to the shop. Houses, of course, did not have refrigerators only larders and cold slabs, so purchases were made daily."

From: *Cardiff Voices*, Brian Lee

Chamber pot



Jane Hancock remembers:

"Every house had 'guzunders' (chamber pots), at least every house in Grangetown, no one had an inside loo. They were in the garden. You had to go out in all weather. I remember when I was six or seven it was decreed that it was my job to empty the gazunders for the whole house in the morning. At the time I didn't think anything of it because others your age were doing the same thing. You had to go down the stairs very carefully so you didn't spill it!"



Gas street lighting equipment

Mr Petty recalls:

"I remember the lamplighters coming along in the evening. The lamp was right outside our house. I was around eight then. We used to use the lamp post as a swing, with the arms, we'd put a piece of rope over. When the chap (lamp lighter) used to come around, if the rope was still there he would give us stick! However, as soon as he was gone, we'd be back out there."



Gas street lamp lighters outside their Womanby Street depot.

Water filter



Graham Penn recalls:

"I remember this filter in the kitchen of 20 Thomas Street, my grandfather's house. In those days the water wasn't like it is now, if you could, you'd try and make it cleaner before you drank it. The house had a toilet down the bottom of the garden and a big iron black range in the kitchen. If you wanted hot water, there was a tap at the side of the fire."



Wireless

Eric Fletcher remembers:

"This wireless belonged to my grandfather and I remember it in their back room. I remember being sent into the garden so they could listen to it! My grandfather used to run the aerial down the garden on the washing line. He used to listen to the news and to the boxing, war news...in the evenings I used to listen to 'Children's Hour' and especially 'Dick Barton Special Agent'!"

Sugar cutters



Victoria Rogers, one of Cardiff Story Museum's curators explains:

"Whereas today we buy sugar that's been 'granulated' or made into grains, sugar in the past would have been poured into large moulds and left to set, making a sugar 'cone' or 'loaf'. These sugar cutters would be used to cut the sugar into lumps to use in people's homes."