

George Jordan	Interviewed by Jeanette Payne 11 th Nov 2014
	<p>Born 1935 in Castle Bar, County Mayo. Galway University 1952-55. Came to Manchester 1958. Met wife in Manchester. Then to London in 1961 to complete Chartered qualification and transferred to Leeds 1964 during the building of some multi-storey flats.. To Oakwell Mount in 1968. Stayed 10 years then moved to North Park Ave in 1978, near the tennis courts and Canal Gardens.</p> <p>Interested in Co-op site in Oakwood.</p> <p>4.00 1970 – planning app submitted by Henry Lax to convert old Co-op into supermarket for Safeways. George collected money to protest about development. Met old man during collection who told George about his experiences building in China – ‘go-downs’ on the Yangtse flood plains.</p> <p>6.00 Safeways development proceeded and I was involved in the building ‘somewhat to my embarrassment’. Quarries in Oakwell Mount and Fitzroy Drive – put reinforced concrete piles under houses.</p> <p>Late 70s/early 80s – vacant piece of land at the end of Thorn Lane and Fitzroy Drive. Thin raft reinforced concrete foundations. Detached houses built on these foundations. Within 5 years two houses had to be demolished so it looks as though foundations were not secure enough. Since rebuilt on piled foundations like we’d built.</p> <p>9.15 Safeways – superstructure propped and ground floor demolished to open it up into a big space. Satisfactory job. It opened mid 1970s at a guess.</p> <p>10.15 Henry Lax moved in over Safeways with his offices.</p> <p>On south east side, opposite to Safeways, the old grocers shop was killed off by supermarkets. Old man wore aprons down to his ankles on bacon counter – marvellous.</p> <p>12.30 Off licence, old pharmacy. Two garages, one was next door to fish and chip shop. Next door to the Co-op was a brick built telephone exchange, where the bank is now. Next to that was a car sales place.</p> <p>New Morrisons – Henry Lax was the developer and we were the Consulting Engineers on that one. A cheap one. Slates always blowing off.</p> <p>17.00 Sainsburys used some on their roof and have the same problem.</p> <p>Oakwell Mount and Gipton pub, that strip had been vacant, built around 1980s. Where Blackburn factory is – we were involved in demolition. Henry Lax was developer. Factory then used as wholesale warehouses. Asbestos sheeting was camouflaged from the war years.</p> <p>Hillards had the Tescos built for them. Homebase was first developed as a DIY warehouse for Texas. Was a water course there. All culverted now.</p> <p>21.30 Across road from Tesco, Gipton Wood, looks like backfill of a water course. Shops built by Henry Lax’s father I would guess after First World War. East side looks Edwardian, where fish and chip shop is. But other side was built by Henry’s father.</p> <p>Oakwood clock – so pleased it’s being restored.</p> <p>26.15 His 6 children went to Gledhow Primary School. Wife was secretary of PTA for 14 years. 3 went to Mount St Mary’s school, one boy to St Michael’s and next girl to Leeds Girls, and last boy to Cardinal Heenan. Excellent bus service from Oakwood.</p> <p>27.45 Roundhay Park – we walked from clock to the Mansion for our beers because</p>

31.30	<p>drink/driving penalties had just been introduced. Children went to park during a storm and the Gledhow school blazers leaked red dye down their arms. Used park for sledging. We walked round park a lot when they were children. Couldn't get children into local tennis club sadly.</p>
33.15	<p>At no 2, Mr Davey had a chauffeur and tennis courts in his grounds. Our semi has a billiards room at the top of the house and our garage was a horses' stable. Across road, on the south side of North Park Avenue, were big houses.</p>
39.30	<p>Sir Edwin Airey lived on south side – a well known builder and developer. Mrs Sharman, old woman in bungalow, was Sir Edwin's daughter. Were sheep in the field to the south of her garden, down to Lidgett Park, in the early 1990s. Follows a description of the OS map of 1933. Curling rink adjoining West Avenue. Clock is shown as a traffic island. Princes Avenue described as The Tramway. Cobble Hall – made from cobbles recovered from an area of glacial deposit.</p>