

## Lia Lesser's Memories of Moseley

I came to Moseley in 1956, I think. There were nice little shops. There was a big delicatessen, opposite Smiths, Shufflebothams. I came to Birmingham to nurse because one of my adoptive aunts was a nurse and a health visitor and she had been a patient at the QE which she thought was a good hospital. I wasn't old enough to nurse and the local school did not have A levels so I left school at 16 with the equivalent of O levels and I went and did my nursery nurse's training in Warwickshire. The nearest I got to Birmingham was Marshall Lake Road, which is now a men's club, but was then a day nursery. When I passed my exams, by that time I was 19, and I did my training at the QE. Then I did midwife's and then I went back to the General. I lived at the nurses' home in Birmingham, I eventually ended up in St Agnes Road in one of the maisonettes.

At the Sorrento I can remember Matron Hill. At Sunday lunch she actually carved the meat in the dining room. I thought what a funny thing for a matron to be doing. It was a lovely homely place. And it was so old fashioned but it had got a wonderful prem unit. There was a Dr Cross there and it was one of the foremost prem units in the country. But the lying-in ward, when you had been delivered you went from one building to the recovery ward and you were on a stretcher – if it was raining you had a tarpaulin over you plus the baby. When you got there, there wasn't a lift. They were on canvas stretchers and we had to carry them upstairs and it couldn't have been very comfortable. They had different buildings you know for different things. The lying-in ward was for people who weren't well – they had toxemia or high blood pressure or something and they had to have bed rest so we had a ward for that. You had the ante-natal which was in Anderton Park Road and the nurses' home was also in the same road. The home was on the right-hand side and Treeford Lodge was on the left hand side and there was a little passage that we used to walk from the nurses' home outside Treeford Lodge and go to the main hospital. The delivery wards were in the main hospital. The uniforms were dreadful. The QE uniforms were quite smart in those days but because you only did midwifery for six months. You know what a Magyar style is? Well it's like a nightdress with a peter pan collar and the sleeves come to here (halfway down arm). And it comes out to here so it fits you if you are big or little and you have a belt to pull you in. We put these dresses on and stood on the bed (as kids do) and we just roared with laughter because we looked so terrible. There was still rationing and we had butter and sugar in our jars every week, that must have been 1954- 55.