



City of Port Phillip Living Heritage Project  
Edited transcript – Leonard “Dugga” Beazley  
Interviewees: Leonard “Dugga” Beazley [DB] and Frances Beazley [FB]  
Interviewer: Cathy Dodson [CD]  
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## Poverty and hospitality

### 0.17.25

**CD:** What was it like when you were a kid?

**DB:** Along here, next to where I live now, it was all single fronted houses all the way up to the marine engineers which was up the street a little bit. You know, it might have been half a dozen houses there and there was a double fronted place, there was a fisherman there, his name was Bill Hutchinson. But there was about four, five little houses. There was another one this side that was the Lovell’s. This side of the thing there, the marine engineers, all these little houses along there ... I used to come ‘round from Bay St, ‘round to my grandparents next door, you know, all the time. And you’d be coming along there, especially of a nice day, and all the women would be out the front nagging over the fence, talking to one another and that. No one shut their doors. Nothing would be locked, you know?

**CD:** So you felt like you knew most of the people in the street?

### 0.18.33

**DB:** Oh, everybody knew everybody else. Nobody went without. All these people in the street here were poor. Especially these little houses along here. This house here, where we live, the lady who lived in here was affluent, she had a bit of money. This house was the only one here that was kind of in good condition, the other ones were dumps, you know, they were very run down. The people in them had nothing, you know? But they never went without. There’d always be you know, someone - Anyone in Port Melbourne who was doing it bad, never went without because they’d find out about it and they’d go out the front and there’d be a bag of spuds there, or something. Someone would give them something, you know? Like the house that, next to this one, not the next one, but the one after that, there was a women in there named Nita Thomas and she had a daughter, a teenage daughter. And I never ever seen a man there, she must have been a single mother. Or more likely, the husband’s pissed off, you know? But she used to always to be coming botting a cup of sugar or a cup of tea, a cup of tea leaves, not tea, tea leaves off my grandmother. But she always give it to her. Never let anyone go without, you know?

### 0.20.09

My mother, her father died just after World War One, he died of the ‘flu that swept the world, you know, that killed a lot of people.

**CD:** The Spanish Flu.

**DB:** And he was a wharfie, a big strong bloke, you know, and he caught it. But he left her [*maternal grandmother*] with four or five kids, you know? And my mother had absolutely bugger all when

she grew up. When she first started work she was working at Hoadleys, up in South Melbourne. And she used to go to work of a day time without any lunch, and she had nothing to buy lunch with. All the girls up there used to go up the park and have their lunch and they'd ask her to go and she wouldn't go because she was ashamed because she never had any. She used to go for a walk around the block until it was time to go back to work, you know? She used to get 17/6 pence a week and she used to take it home and give it all to her mother.

#### 0.21.15

My family, my grandparents, they got through the Depression alright because he had a job in the Port Melbourne Council. He was a foreman in the Council so he had a good job. Also he used to clip horses for Harpers over the road, so you know, they always had a bit of money. They used to always have a roast of a Sunday. Big leg of lamb. I can remember it. It was a big thing. But anyway, when my old man brought my mother over here, one Sunday, it was the first time she'd ever had a leg of lamb. She must have been what, [*To Frances:*] over 21, 22 or something wasn't she?

**CD:** So she'd really had had a tough upbringing?

**DB:** My old man, he lived out in a humpy, out in the back yard, because there was two girls and they had the only room in there. And his brother, there was two humpies and his brother lived in one, and he had another brother and the two of them lived in the other one. You know, and it was pretty basic. But he told me when he got married it was the first time he'd slept between sheets.

**CD:** Really?

**DB:** Yes, all he had in the thing was a blanket.