

## Offprint 6

# Excerpt from interview with Reg Martin (b. 1935)

Interviewed by Wendy Rickard

And I was put onto the Social Services. It was fine, except for the Home Helps. I could never understand a Home Help who was coming to clean who could come in and say, Now what do you want me to clean (laughs). I could never understand a Home Help asking such a question because if you have a home you do what's mostly, the bathroom, the living room, the bedroom. If it needs doing, you do it, you shouldn't need to ask. But they insisted and I couldn't cope with this. And it was all so different. So I had to keep on thinking of what did I say to the last one because their were things they could do and things they couldn't do. And I wasn't feeling well, to have to sort of argue. And then there was the food. I used to buy as I required but now I had to buy in advance eh things. But I didn't know what I wanted. I didn't know whether I felt, you see (indistinct) it was very difficult to buy with the Home Helps. And after about six of them (laughs) I decided that this was a bad no go. It was definitely a no go time. And I was thinking, Oh I must be happy, just to let go, forget about it. But then they sent one around, Glenda. She never introduced herself as the Home Help, because we had an entry phone to come up, she just said, Glenda, Glenda from the Social Service Department. And she came up the stairs I opened the door and there was a great big smile. She said (indistinct) she said I'm Glenda, I'm the Home Help, I've come to do some shopping. I said, Oh, well I, you're a bit early, I haven't written out the list. Oh, it's all right she said you know. And we sat down and I was getting sort of tied up with this list. Eh I wasn't sure and. And then she, Shall I have a look at it? And she had a look. And she said, Don't you need this. Don't you need that? And...And she was suggesting things. Well, god what a difference in a person. And she went off and she left her bag here, in the flat and she had an umbrella she didn't want to take with her so she left that there, you know. Off she, off she went and and end of half an hour she was back with a few things you know. And she sat and chatted, you know. And I spoke to her and asked her lots of questions and eh she laughed. And she was always having a laugh. She'd a great big grin. It was so nice. It really was. And, so she came again on the Monday, I was expecting somebody else. But she came and this time she went and took the laundry down and while it was washing she came back and sat and chatted again and...I'm thinking I like this, I like this one. And I made up my mind when she finished, it was either this Glenda or nobody at all. So I rang Janine at the Home Care and I told her I said, The situation is this, I've got this girl called Glenda. I said, Well I want her. If I can't have her then I, just forget it. Oh, she says, I don't know whether, she said it's possible to immediately give you Glenda, because she's got other clients. But as it turned out, Glenda had, a couple of clients, unfortunately, had died and it seems as though it was eh, shall I say, a partnership made in heaven really because it was at the right time. These people had died and she had the space for me to fit into. And that's, was fine. It was lovely. She came and we chatted and sometimes I wasn't feeling so good and so she wouldn't do, she would do very little. She would just sit, and chat, or if she thought you were really down, you just wanted to be quiet, she would just quietly go round and do things. You didn't have to tell her, you didn't have to tell her at all. You didn't have to tell her the bathroom needs cleaning, the kitchen needs cleaning you know, the bedroom, you know. She just did it as she would her own, her own home. That was nice. Shopping she got to know that I didn't know what I fancied or not, you know, because was losing, because I wasn't eating properly, I was losing, I was losing much more (coughs). And I hated the stuff they were still trying to give me, it was awful, it was like poison and Glenda, she used to find things, little pots of things, you know all sort

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of tasty and I used to have a fridge sort of full of little pots of things that she'd found. And it was just on the shopping day, which was so nice. She'd be shopping for somebody else, on another day, and see something and she'd buy it and she'd bring it in, you know, on her way past. And, I saw this, I thought you might like this. And I'd pay her for it. And off she goes. Just a matter of seconds that she'd be in. And it was so nice to think eh she was thinking about you. She obviously does it to others as well you know. I'm not saying I'm so special but it makes you feel eh happy and confident with, with her, and trusting. Which you, you have to trust people when they are coming into your home. You must feel happy, you must have a rapport, a compatibility, between you and I had it with her and I had it with Janina also and I had it with Jai. It all went very well indeed.

*(This was as accurate as I could get it. He speaks very softly in a slightly Welsh accent and often runs words together).*