**Childhood Tour**

Combined tour conducted by Skylee-Storm Hogan and Sean Campbell

**Stories Profiled**

* Carol Mason-Taylor: Law of the Streets
* Stan Garside: “Boars in England.”
* Dave Moczulski: The St. John Strap

**Stops**

* Stop #1: 32 Carol Mason-Taylor
* Stop #2: 31 Stan Garside
* Stop #3: 22-2 Dave Moczulski

**Script**

**Introduction**

This tour will focus on the theme of childhood here in SOHO that made the neighbourhood a unique experience for those who grew up in it. Our stops today are not the only stories of childhood we have found and we encourage you to look at the others the next time you’re in SOHO.

**Some questions to keep in mind**

1. What did childhood look like in your lifetime?
2. How has the childhood experience changed? Not only here but in your neighborhood
3. Is there anything lost with the technology in childhood?
4. Are neighbors close where you live?
5. How do children play now on the streets of SoHo? Did you see any as we walked?

**Stop #1: 32 Carol Mason-Taylor**

Our first stop is the site of the former Governor Simcoe Public School, the school is no longer here but many of the children of SOHO passed through its doors. Like other schools in the area there was a mix of different classes and cultures here. Sometimes school didn’t go smoothly and this spot was where kids would meet at 4 o’clock to fight it out after class. Our story comes from a former student and life-long SOHO resident, Carol Mason-Taylor of South Street.

**Stop #2: 31 Stan Garside**

On this corner children used to play in the street, Stan Garside’s story was taken from the London Public Library Oral History Collection. He used to play here with a group of kids in the early 1920’s. This isn’t the only story of dangerous play that we have heard while investigating childhood life in SOHO, on halloween kids would prank their neighbours, switch costumes to get more candy, thow eggs off the incinerator tower at old Vic. We invite you now to listen to Stan’s story about dodging cars playing Boars in England.

**Stop #3: 22-2 Dave Moczulski**

There is a noticeable diversity in the people that have lived in Soho. Various landmarks show the different communities that occupy this distinct area of the neighbourhood. At this stop, you see Our Lady of Czestochowa Church built in 1954. It has since remained a focal point for the Polish community in the neighbourhood. Many of the children of this Polish community belonged to the church, serving as altar boys but also attended the adjacent St. John’s School. Dave Moczulski, a former altar boy and student of St. John’s, recounts an event from his youth that highlights school discipline in the 1950’s-1960’s. We invite you to listen to his story about the St. John Strap.

**Walking Back to GW**

On our way back though the neighbourhood you will notice how close these houses are to each other. When we spoke to our narrators about what it was like growing up here we were told that, like Stan Garside the kids were out on the streets until dark. On halloween kids would get candy apples and switch their costumes to get more, we were told that in the 40s and 50s that kids would have to come inside and sing for their candy- something that would be a little more dangerous now. There would be pranksters and games every halloween. During the rest of the year, you could find kids out until the streetlights came on. They would yell from the street to get their friends to come outside, no phones or messaging. Certain families also had ice rinks in their yards every year, if you wanted to come back and listen to more stories you will hear about some of this on South Street.

**Conclusion**

Thank-you for walking with us this afternoon to talk about childhood history in SOHO. We didn’t expect to find this theme, we were originally looking for stories of cultural difference but childhood kept coming out of every person we interviewed. Stories of culture were woven in, but this was a neighborhood of working class families who were trying their best to provide for their kids. Those who were immigrants wanted teach them what they needed to succeed in Canada, that was their focus. The people we spoke to who were children in this time didn’t fully see the cultural differences that are so apparent to us now. They had stories of play or fun things they did with their friends, everyone we spoke to told us those differences didn’t matter and that they didn’t see them as children. This childhood perspective gave us so much context as to how this community used to be, we hope you take the time to check out the other tours today and come back to listen to more of the stops this summer. Please remember to stick around for the basket draw at 4pm at Goodwill Industries.

**Tour Map**

