

Our Century and Us

Fall in and follow me
Fall in and follow me
Never mind a bit about the weather
All together, stand by me, boys
I know the way to go
I'll take you on a spree
You do as I do
And you'll do right
Fall in and follow me

A ROW FROM THE OLDEST TO THE YOUNGEST. ALL CLAP TOGETHER. THE BABIES CRY TOGETHER. EACH STANDS IN TURN PROCLAIMING HER/HIS ARRIVAL, GIVING FULL MAIDEN NAME WITH YEAR OF BIRTH. FOLLOWED BY A CHEER FOR EACH BABY AS IT ARRIVES.

The earliest childhood reminiscence telling and acting

Olive at school: sees a rocking horse. Likes to ride on the little seat on one side of it.

Kitty: sitting on the knee of her father every evening; her sister sits on the other knee. The father feeds her lots. Very happy reminiscence.

Margaret standing on a chair, in a beautiful new dress/coat. She is sick down the front of it. The dress is dirty and father's hand coming from the side to slap her, she is weeping.

Anne: I liked to help my grandfather give water to the horses in the stables. He had a big bucket and I have a small bucket. I had to hurry to keep up with him. By the time I reached the horse there was hardly any water left.

Joyce in the big bed at her grandmother's house, standing and turning the metal balls on the top of the iron bars of the bed-end: her hands smell of the metal.

Lil: Her dress is dirty, the teacher washes the dress and dries it over the fire, Lil is standing ashamed in her underwear in front of the class.

Barbara in school in the orchestra, should be playing the triangle. She is looking for her mother in the audience, holding the triangle without playing. When she sees her mother she is happy and starts to play.

Hilda: has a rest on the bed at nursery school and wets her knickers.

Joan: gets her head stuck between bars on little bed and has to be rescued by her dad.

Eileen: Moves house on a wheelbarrow aged 3.

Ralph: in the garden of their house with the father looking at the airship, Graf Zeppelin.

SCHOOL BELL rung by Hilda, marching music by Olive, and everyone goes to back of stage and march in 2s up to front, going to both sides.

ALL: Good morning Miss Roberts.

Barbara: When we were little boys and girls at school, this is what we wanted to be when we grew up.

Joan: I played with my dolls and bandaged them up. I wanted to be a nurse

Barbara: I played with dolls and put them to bed. I wanted to be a mother.

Anne: I liked to scrub the wooden floors for my Mum and sometimes she gave me tuppence. I wanted to be a housewife and a mum.

Margaret: I wanted to dress up and be an actress.

Lil: I used to pretend I lived in a big castle with beautiful furniture and thick carpets.

Kitty: I wanted to be a dancer and go on the stage.

Hilda: I wanted to go in the films and be Shirley Temple.

Eileen: I wanted to work in a flower shop and arrange all the flowers.

Joyce: I wanted to be a teacher so I could smack all the children's bottoms.

PIANO RIPPLE FROM OLIVE.

Joyce: The school photo. 1928.

Kitty: To 1948

EVERYONE GETS INTO POSITION FOR SCHOOL PHOTO. OLIVE GIVES FLOURISH AND EVERYONE FREEZES WITH SILLY FACES AS PHOTO IS TAKEN.

ICE SKATING WALTZ not loud and rather halting and tentative. Everybody is on the ice learning to skate all together. Trying to stand up, being nervous/anxious or courageous, some alone, some together very pre-occupied with staying upright, looking at their feet.

Music grows loud. Skaters change into young people on the ice. Moving more confidently and smoothly, flirting, conscious of what you can do, wanting to see and be seen.

SCENES ABOUT FIRST JOBS.

Olive plays "Over my shoulder..."

Kitty gets a job in Peek Freans and her first bra!

Kitty: My first job was at Peak Freans, the biscuit factory. I earned 32/2 a week and I gave it to my auntie (cos I was living with her at the time) and she gave me back But the first week she let me keep it all to buy my first bra ... a Berlei underlift bra, that was the best there was. I was a messenger at Peak Freans, going all around all the different floors. I loved it there. I went from one department to another and they let me have a go on all the jobs. (OTHERS MAKE THE PRODUCTION LINE AND DO THE ACTIONS.) There was creaming room, where you added the cream to the custard cream biscuits. (KITTY RUNS ROUND AND JOINS LINE IN ANOTHER PLACE AND THEY CHANGE THE ACTIONS) Then there was the pudding room

where the puddings were made and the smell of rum ... well it made you feel drunk. (MOVE AGAIN AS BEFORE AND CHANGE ACTIONS) And then there was the biscuit packing department. Once we were packing biscuits to send out for the soldiers. And we all put little notes in with our names and addresses. (THEY ALL SCRIBBLE) Of course we never did get a reply, but it was fun. Then one day we all had a chance to stir the mixture for Princess Elizabeth's wedding cake and have a wish. (ALL STIR AND WISH) It was the biggest most beautiful thing you'd ever seen.

PIANO "MAIDEN'S PRAYER"

Margaret: When I was 14 and left school, I got a job in domestic service. I worked for 2 ladies and I had to do everything. It was very hard work.

MARGARET RUNS AROUND FOLLOWING BARBARA AND EILEEN'S COMMANDS

Mrs J: Up at six o'clock every morning. Clear the grates. Lay and light the fires by 6.30.

Old Mrs. J: My early morning tea in bed at 7

Mrs. J: Lay the breakfast. Serve the breakfast.

Old Mrs. J: Clear the breakfast things away. Wash up.

Mrs.J: Check which windows need cleaning and do one lot every day.

Old Mrs. J: Keep the boiler going so there's hot water.

Mrs. J: Sweep the drawing room and dust.

Old Mrs J: Sweep two flights of stairs and on Tuesdays polish the brass stair rods.

Mrs J: Scrub the front steps and polish the front door handle.

Old Mrs J: Then take the dogs for a walk.

Mrs. J: Prepare all the vegetables when you come back.

Old Mrs J: Serve and clear the lunch and wash up after.

Mrs. J: You get an hour off in the afternoons.

Old Mrs.J: Except on Friday when you polish the silver.

Mrs.J: Then there's the ironing to do and the daily hand washing.

Old Mrs. J: Then supper to see to and clear and wash up.

Mrs.J: Then you can do what you like in your own room.

(MUSIC SLOWS DOWN AS SHE SLUMPS)

Margaret: I was very unhappy there and I had no-one to talk to. I couldn't wait for Mum to come and visit me. And when she came, she told me to pack my things and she took me home. (SHE LEAVES)

Joyce: (AS THEY WATCH HER GO) Well I never. What a liberty!

Barbara: Would you believe it!

Reminiscence of Joyce: dance in the 30s.

During the whole dance sequence Ralph plays an imaginary double bass "accompanying"

Olive on piano.

Joyce: The 1930s were my dancing years, grand dance halls, big bands, and elegant dance dresses. For seven years I went dancing every evening, twice on Sundays, each night to a different place.

Choreography: to foxtrot "I'm in the mood for love" broken into single phrases. One bar intro then start in the middle of the song:

Always stop with music at an interesting stage/position:

3 dressing movements, 2 hair, 1 make-up, opening the door looking great to go out, arriving at dance hall, finding a partner:

Then everyone sings "I'm in the mood...." and dances with imaginary partner

Joyce: It was important to have a good dancer as a partner. It did not matter what they looked like, just as long as they could dance.

Tango with piano music "Jealousy" (couples): one couple begins, the next continues while first freezes, then short burst from 3rd and 4th. Finally the 1st and 2nd again.

- Couple 1: Kitty - Lil,
- Couple 2: Joyce - Barbara,
- Couple 3: Hilda - Ann,
- Couple 4: Margaret - Joan

Joyce: When the war came, the dance halls closed and everything changed, music, dances, dresses. My life changed too as I had children and responsibilities. But if I am unable to sleep at night, I often think of a ballroom on a summer evening at the end of the pier, all the windows open to the sea, with the band playing, me dancing with a wonderful partner... and I can go to sleep peacefully.

Waltz: Everybody dances with an imaginary partner: "Who's taking you home tonight?" (remembering reverie - dance)

The dance ends abruptly on a broken dischord on piano and everyone freezes

Ralph comes forward and delivers speech by Chamberlain about declaration of war. He may carry a wireless from the time as he speaks.

"I am speaking to you from the Cabinet Room of 10 Downing Street. This morning the British ambassador in Berlin handed the German government a final note stating that unless we heard from them by 11 o'clock that they were prepared at once to withdraw their troops from Poland, a state of war would exist between us. I have to tell you now that no such undertaking has been received and that consequently this country is at war with Germany."

EVERYONE SLOWLY LOWERS THEIR ARMS AND FACES FRONT DURING THIS SPEECH AS THOUGH LISTENING IN ALARM.

GENERAL CONSTERNATION ...THREE BLASTS ON THE WHISTLE... EVERYBODY HURRIES TO THE SHELTER.

EVERYBODY TELLS IMPORTANT MOMENTS OF THE WAR YEARS:

Margaret: When the radio announcement came through, I was outside. I didn't know anything about it. I was just twelve years old. I was skipping with my girlfriend in the street.

RALPH COMES ALONG AS A WARDEN AND USHERS HER INTO THE SHELTER.
SHE LOOKS AROUND SCARED INSIDE THE SHELTER.

Anne: The week before war was declared I was on holiday with the family at the seaside. Even before the announcement of war came, my uncle started to paint the window panes

with black paint so the light wouldn't show through.

ANNE MOVES ACROSS THE SCENE PAINTING THE WINDOWS.

Eileen: takes the dog for a walk and then hears the siren and her dad is calling to her from the front step.

Olive joins up and gets her first pay. Salutes and marches off.

Barbara: Only 16 years old, she takes on a class of pupils in church hall as there were no trained teachers available. Through the window, her future husband is flirting and distracting her. She waves and then sends him away.

Lil: comes out of the shelter and sees that her box factory is on fire. She wonders if she still has a job.

Kitty's story of the bomber overhead. They are picking blackberries. First they wave. Then they are fired at and take cover. They get up covered in thorns and tearful and run home.

Joyce's story of the wedding and all the rushing about. She agrees to marry, organises her dress, bridesmaids' dresses, flowers, cake and veil, then vicar says no, she's too young. Phones relatives, they arrive, they sign for vicar, wedding goes ahead. Music is "I'm getting married in the morniong" going into "Here comes the bride" for the procession. Freeze for photo. Waves off new husband as he leaves for navy and 3 years away.

THREE WHISTLE BLASTS

Ralph: Take cover.

EVERYONE GOES TO SHELTER EXCEPT OLIVE AND HILDA WHO ARE ON HORSE AND CART.

Hilda's story of the horse and cart in the bombing raid. Ralph stops her and 'Dad' and makes them go in the shelter, leaving the horse outside. When everyone comes out, the horse is still there and Olive and Hoilda greet him and drive hom home.

Song "All me life I wanted to be a barrow boy".

Ralph's story about delivering the messages about casualties and then handling the hose trying to quench a fire (boyhood to manhood) He tells everyone to take cover. the building is going to blow. Others watch blaze and cower.

Church bells on piano.

Street party to end the war "Happy days are here again" (once only) singing, dancing. Hilda says: All the mums were dancing in the streets "Knees up Mother Brown" (everyone dances)

Joan wheels out the gramophone, winds it up and plays a record. She says they were all influenced by American ways and music. Olive plays a bit of St Louis Blues while everyone chews, holds nylons and smokes. Kitty can try a bit of tap dance here (or is it jive?)

Joan says she danced all night with a sailor from over the road and everyone enjoys dancing to "In the mood", jitterbugging, etc.

Wedding Day

RALPH AS A BRIDE GROOM.

ALL THE WOMEN REMEMBER THEIR WEDDING DAY, MARRYING RALPH ONE AT A TIME:

“I was married in 19.. to (name of husband)...”, situation and feeling.

JOYCE THROWS CONFETTI ON EACH AND OTHERS HELP HER AFTER THEIR MOMENT.

Ralph married the girl he'd been writing to from his army service in Germany

Eileen married Bill in uniform because he hasn't got a civvy suit

Olive got married in uniform and ate bangers and mash afterwards

Anne met her husband doing war work

Barbara's was late for the wedding and she was in a state

Margaret had a nice reception at the Trocadero with salmon

Lil and Hilda married on Christmas day (one on each side of Ralph) Lil was cold, Hilda's dad walked her up the wrong aisle

Joan married when her husband was 21 and they had 4 bridesmaids

Kitty married her childhood sweetheart

Coronation Day

ALL TOGETHER ON THE STREET, IT'S RAINING AND COLD, WAITING FOR THE QUEEN. ALL TOGETHER IN A ROW, WAITING. MARGARET WITH A REAL UMBRELLA ON THE END OF THE ROW, ACTING (COLDNESS, RAIN, LOOKING AT THE QUEEN) AND DESCRIBING THE SITUATION.

Margaret: I remember going to the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. It was in 1953. We were all waiting to see her go by in her carriage. It was very cold and it was raining. Some of us had been waiting all night. There was a terrific atmosphere. We were very excited. (GENERAL EXCITEMENT AND MARCH ON PIANO) Here she comes!! (CHEERS AND WAVES AS SHE PASSES ALONG THE ROW. CROWD SEE PRINCES AND PRINCESS AS WELL.)

Lil: continues the story:

“But most people watched this big event on TV. For most of us it was the first time we had watched TV. Usually there was one person in the street who had one, and we all squashed in to watch.

The old TV will be brought on the stage on a rolling table.

About five chairs, and others standing or sitting on the floor looking at the TV.

Then Lil and Margaret come in stepping over the children to reach the free seats. They disturb the others because the others cannot look at the TV: Big reactions to what is on the screen.

Kitty comes in, pregnant, some one gets up to offer her a seat. Everybody looking at TV and commenting.

The moment of the coronation:

Joyce talks them through it. Everybody puts a crown on their heads while looking at the TV.

Everyone: God Save the Queen. God save the Queen.

Everybody up with the crown and walking and commenting how the queen is nervous and how heavy the crown is, the whole time looking at the TV. FANFARE as she walks down the aisle. On the TV the church door opens. All make a big reaction. A peel of bells. They sing the national anthem, looking at the TV.

Hilda: Let's all go down the pub and have a drink or two.

Hilda's scene in the pub

Everyone sings "My old man said follow the van"

Hilda: I was 7 months pregnant and feeling sick. I had to sit on a little wooden chair and hold everyone's coats. They were all wet because it had been raining. I wasn't enjoying myself.

Hilda: My old man was very merry. He'd been in the pub all day and he was having a great time. He was singing at the mike with this blonde in a silly hat. He never even asked me if I was all right or if I wanted a drink.

Everyone sings, "There's an old mill by the stream > Dean"

Hilda: I was so fed up I dropped all the coats on the floor and walked out. He never followed me. I went home and cried.

"End of Nelly Dean" and Ralph staggers home and slumps in chair.

Hilda: How could you do that to me? When I've had this baby I'm leaving you." I didn't speak to him for a week. (Ralph picks up chair and slopes off). So I remember Coronation Day and I'll never forget it. A lot of us were having our babies around that time. It was the baby boom years.

Mothers and babies: a scene where everyone is totally preoccupied with bringing up children, feeding, washing, playing, etc

Barbara, Kitty and Margaret take their children to school and say goodbye to them at the gate.

Everyone slumps in chair with tea and fags, etc.

Kitty: Let's see what's on the wireless. (EVERYONE TURNS WIRELESS ON)

Ralph: Good morning housewives!

"HOUSEWIVES CHOICE" MUSIC AND EVERYONE GETS UP, PUTS ON APRON AND DOES HOUSEWORK. WHEN MUSIC STOPS:

Joyce: Ooh I wish I could go out to work, get a bit of money and have a holiday.

Eileen: I'd like to buy a dolly's pram for my Christine which I've seen in the catalogue.

Barbara: I'd like to buy myself a nice new blouse and skirt.

Lil: I'd like to be able to afford a vacuum cleaner.

Margaret: I'd like to buy something for my little girl, Pat. A loveley dress with a frilly skirt. I've seen one in the catalogue. half a crown a week.

Hilda: I'd like to buy a staircarpet, all lovely and new.

Kit: I'd like to be able to afford fresh fruit for the children.

Joan: I'd like to buy a polished wooden dining table and six chairs to go all around it.

Ralph: That's all right. I don't mind you getting a little job. But you must have the children's meal on the table when they come home for dinner. And my tea ready for me when I come home from work.

Everyone: All right. TAKE OFF APRONS AND TRAVEL TO WORK WITH "MUSIC WHILE YOU WORK". EVERYONE ARRIVES AND STARTS JOBS. SERVING PEOPLE IN SHOPS/PUBS, WAITRESSING, OFFICE WORK, WORK WITH KIDS, ETC. WHEN VERSE ENDS:

Everyone: Better get home and do the children's lunch.

"HOUSEWIVES CHOICE" MUSIC. EVERYONE RUSHES HOME, PUTS ON APRONS,

MAKES LUNCH FOR KIDS, FEEDS THEM IN A HURRY AND PACKS THEM BACK TO SCHOOL. LOOK AT WATCHES. TAKE OFF APRONS. DASH BACK TO WORK WITH "MUSIC WHILE YOU WORK MUSIC" AND START WORK AGAIN TILL VERSE ENDS.

Everyone: Better get home and get the dinner ready. (? SHOPPING ON THE WAY??)
"HOUSEWIVES CHOICE" WHILE EVERYONE GETS APRONS ON, COOKS AND FINALLY SLAPS PLATE ON TABLE FOR RALPH (CENTRE STAGE) AS MUSIC ENDS.

Ralph: I've had a very busy day. Is my dinner ready?

EVERYONE GROANS, TAKES OFF PINNIES AND TURNS BACK ON RALPH.

Ralph: I don't know.... Women!!!

JOYCE'S SCENE

Joyce: In the late 50s, we lived on a large council estate. We had a great social life there with lots of friends. (EVERYONE TURNS ROUND) We knew everybody and everyone knew us.

Barbara: Hello Joyce. Would you like me to look after the kids after school today?

Joyce: Barbara was great. She'd have the kids whenever I needed a bit of help. They loved going round there.

Margaret: I've just put the kettle on. Do you want to pop in and have a coffee Joyce and we'll have a natter.

Joyce: Margaret was always ready for a chat and she was good company.

Anne: I've got that new catalogue Joyce. Do you want to come over. I can't decide what to order.

Joyce: Anne knew I liked looking through the catalogues and I helped her choose what would look good.

Hilda: Brrr. Brr (ringing her up and looking round side of net curtain to wave)

Joyce: Hilda lived opposite and she and I had telephones put in around the same time. Hello Hilda. (THEY WAVE AT EACH OTHER AND LAUGH)

Hilda: Jim says he wants me to cook a curry. I've never done that before. What do you do?

Joyce: I'll come over later and give you a hand. And then I enjoyed going down the shops. You always met your friends and had a chat.

Joan: Hello Joyce. Nice to see you. How are the family.

Joyce: Fine, everyone's fine.

Kitty: Are you going to the club tonight? It was good last time wasn't it?

Joyce: Yes, I'll be along. Looking forward to it.

Kitty: We'll have a jive... See you later.

Joyce: Then in 1961, my husband left me and our marriage was over. Everything changed.

When I met people at the shops..... JOAN AND KITTY SAY A MINIMAL HELLO AND GO OFF WHISPERING ABOUT HER) Hello Hilda, shall I pop in later? (HILDA CLOSES NET CURTAINS AND LOOKS AWAY)

Hello Anne. Has that catalogue come in? (ANNE SHAKES HEAD AND CLOSES WINDOW, TURNS AWAY) Hello Margaret. Got time for a coffee.

Margaret: Not today I haven't.

Joyce: Hello Barbara. I'll send the children over later.

Barbara: I can't have them today I'm afraid. I'm going out.

Joyce: Hello Joan. (SHE TURNS AWAY) Hello Kit.

Kit: I'm just going over to my mum's. (TURNS BACK ON JOYCE)

to the customers.(SHE DOES THIS)

Kitty: Congratulations on your retirement and here's a tea set with love from all the girls.

Barbara: I had shops in Blackheath for over 50 years...pram shop... sale...queues, etc

Ralph: Congratulations from Blackheath Society, etc

Anne: I started a part-time job working 2 days a week as assistant, serving drinks and helping with the cooking in a big insurance company. (SHE DOES THIS) I ended up working there for 35 years as head cook to the Board of Directors.

Margaret: We're all going to miss your wonderful cooking Anne. Here is a cheque with our thanks and we'd like you to cut this cake. (ANNE CUTS CAKE WITH MARGARET. THEY FREEZE FRONT ON SMILE)

Lil: I was working in the offices of a big factory, typing letters and doing figure work. (SHE DOES THIS) After 25 years.....

Hilda: Congratulations on your excellent work and your long service. Please accept this gold watch. SHE GETS A GOLD WATCH FROM HILDA AND READS OUT THE INSCRIPTION.

Kitty: I worked in a school kitchen and served the little children their school dinners. (SHE DOES THIS AND CHATS TO THE CHILDREN) When I retired I got loads of presents from everyone: 8 bouquets, 3 baskets, a television. (EVERYONE SINGS 'FOR SHE'S A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW', CHANGING IT TO 'FOR WE ARE JOLLY GOOD FELLOWS'.

MAKE CLOCK AND RALPH TICKS.

Joyce: When you retire, time hangs heavy on your hands. You wonder what to do with all those long hours. (PAUSE FOR 4 TOCKS, THE ALL START MOVING CLOCKWISE)

I was frightened of being lonely and bored. So I took on lots of voluntary work. Too much.

Barbara: felt I had no spine, lost confidence. I had to be very brave to join Age Exchange and meet new people.

Anne: I had to retire to look after my mum. She was very sick and for her last 9 years I had to do everything for her. I got very cut off.

Kitty: When I retired I felt free. I had the house to myself and could do what I liked. I went shopping every day. I loved it.

Olive: I was terrified of retirement. I felt I was losing my identity and cracking up. And I thought my brain would pack up so I joined lots of classes: recorder, speedwriting, crochet, anything to keep my brain working.

Hilda: My husband got on my nerves. he was indoors all the time. I had to get out of the house so I took a part-time job.

Joan: My husband retired and took over the kitchen. I had to get out, so I volunteered for everything.

Lil: I had time for myself at last. I wanted to learn new skills, maths, computers.

Margaret: It took me a while to regain my confidence. I volunteered to work with people older than myself.

Eileen: For the first time, my husband and I had time together. We spent hours walking round London and enjoying each other's company.

Bereavement sequence:

Lil: My husband became very ill and I went to see the doctor about him. (SCENE WHERE LIL VISITS DOCTOR (Hilda) AND HERS ABOUT HUSBAND'S CANCER. EVERYONE ELSE STANDS BACK TO BACK AND SINGS 'SEPTEMBER SONG'

Joyce: Nobody wanted to know me. I think they partly just didn't know what to say. They were embarrassed. And they were probably scared of a divorced woman. I didn't know who to turn to for help. I felt very isolated and very rejected. For years after that the children and I had a struggle both financially and emotionally. I was very lonely.

SONG: (SUNG BY KITTY WITH JOYCE)

Am I wasting my time in thinking you're mine
And dreaming the way that I do?
Have I wasted the years and cried all those tears
Believing that your love was true?
Will I lose in the end and just be a friend
Please tell me, it's time that I knew
Are you going away? Will you come back some day?
Am I wasting my time on you?

Joyce: I just had to pick myself up, move on and start a completely new life.

Lil: I had a very tiny kitchen. You could hardly turn round in it. There was the gas cooker and you were squashed up against it and in the corner was the sink. You could hardly move in there. (SHE MIMES TURNING ON GAS AND WASHING UP IN CRAMPED KITCHEN). Then we moved to another place with electricity and a great big kitchen. And the first thing I did was buy a twin-tub washing machine. (TO THE CLOG DANCE TUNE, EVERYONE HEAVES WET WASHING OUT WITH TONGS AND DUMPS IT IN SPINNER, WATCHES IT GO ROUND AND HANGS UP TWO BITS OF WASHING WITH 4 PEGS) Then the automatic washing machines came in and the machine did the washing all by itself. (EVERYONE POINTS AND WATCHES WASHING GO ROUND) It was magic and I felt so free! (MORE WATCHING OF WASHING WHILE KIT DOES 'FREE AS A BIRD' DANCING TO CLOG DANCE TUNE!!!)

Work and Retirement Sequence:

Starts with first 4 lines of 'WHEN I'M 64'

When I get older losing my hair
Many years from now
Will you still be sending me a Valentine

Ralph: (CONDUCTS TRAFFIC) For 15 years I was a police constable in the London Special Police. For that I received a medal and a certificate. (HE SALUTES)

Lil: Good morning Constable Gooding. I would like to present you with this medal.

Congratulations. (RALPH PINS IT ON AND SALUTES)

Joan: (DRESSES WINDOW AND CHECKS HOW IT LOOKS) I worked for years for a charity called SCOPE. I used to dress the windows, make them look good.

Barbara: Here is a certificate from the head office to thank you and congratulate you on your valuable work for the charity. SHE GIVES JOAN THE CERTIFICATE.

Hilda: TEACHES LITTLE GIRL TO BLOW BUBBLES AND GETS AWARD FROM JOYCE

Margaret: I did a first aid training. SHE GIVES ARTIFICIAL RESPIRATION

Anne: Congratulations on passing your First Aid test. (M. GETS CERTIFICATE)

Joyce: I worked for the Electricity Supply industry fitting fuses in plugs and showing cookers

WALKING VERY SLOWLY AWAY FROM PARTNER AND LOOKING BACK)

SONG: Oh it's a long, long while from May to December
And the days grow short when you reach September
And the autumn weather turns the leaves to flame
And I haven't got time for the waiting game
For the days dwindle down to a precious few
September --- November ----
And these few precious days I'd spend with you
These golden days I'd spend with you.

Hilda: But soon our children were having their children and you had to get on with helping them. There was work for grandmothers to do.

(REPEAT BABY-BOOM SEQUENCE, ENDING WITH EVERYONE WAVING KIDS OFF TO SCHOOL. THIS TIME HAVE DIFFICULTY STRAIGHTENING UP. LOTS OF ACHES AND PAINS ARE MOANED ABOUT. EVERYONE TAKES PAIN KILLERS AND FEELS SORRY FOR THEMSELVES.)

Sciatica, stomache, arthritis. hearing, knees, arm ache, teeth, shoulders, vision, etc.

Margaret: What can you do?

Lil: Pick yourself up

Joyce: Dust yourself down

ALL: And start all over again

EVERYONE STRAIGHTENS UP AND SINGS:

Nothing's impossible I have found
That when my chin is on the ground
I pick myself up, dust myself down
and start all over again

Don't lose your confidence
If you slip
Be grateful for a pleasant trip
Just pick yourself up
Dust yourself down
And start all over again

THEY MEET ON THE SECOND CHORUS AND FORM A SHOW-BIZZ LINE AND BECOME THE GOOD COMPANIONS.

Hilda: SHE TALKS ABOUT JOINING THE GOOD COMPANIONS
BRIEF BURST OF 'THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS'

Joyce: We've had a lot of fun with the Good Companions. We've become good friends and we've travelled all over the country. We've been abroad too, flying to other countries.

Joan and Anne: Some of us for the first time.

EVERYBODY FLIES AROUND LIKE PLANES)

Joyce: It has certainly broadened our outlook and made us feel very positive about the future. We've all been thinking about our hopes and fears for the new century. I'd

like to see my grandchildren happily married.

Hilda: I want to win the lottery.

MORE AEROPLANE ACTION BETWEEN EACH PAIR

Barbara: I think I'd like to fly in Concorde

Kitty: I want to go on the Oreint Express.

Lil: I want to stay healthy.

Maragaret: I want to remain active and involved.

Joan: I'd like to have a circle of friends and to know they're going to be there for me.

Eileen: I'd like to do a bunjie jump.

Ralph: I'd like to see the Graf Zeppelin fly again

Anne: I want my grandchildren to grow up in a peaceful world.

Joyce: Well that was our century. Thank you for travelling this long journey with us.

Good luck for the New Millennium.

ALL SING AULD LANG SYNE AND WISH EACH OTHER AND THE AUDIENCE
THE BEST FOR THE NEW CENTURY!!