



Talking Tees Valley Activity Pack

Middlesbrough in the 1970s

**Tees Valley
Museums**



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Welcome to another edition of the Talking Tees Valley Activity Pack

Each month we use objects and photos from our museums in the Tees Valley to take a closer look at the lives and stories from people in our area.

This month we look back at Middlesbrough in the 1970s. The Cleveland Centre had just been built and the centre of town was the place to shop! We'll also look into the fashions and hairstyles of the time, and how we entertained ourselves with the latest technology.



This pack uses objects from Dorman Museum's 1970s Reminiscence Handling pack, and photos from Teesside Archives.

Shopping in Middlesbrough



From the 1970s shops in the centre of Middlesbrough had undergone a spectacular change. Six streets had been knocked down to make way for the Cleveland Centre.



Dubbed as **"The High Street off the High Street"** by Brian Morrison, its first Manager, the Cleveland Centre was home to Wycherly's Record Shop, Timpson's Shoe Repairs, Forshaw's Tobacconists and many household names.

While many shops have disappeared from the Centre, some like H Samuel and Boots have stayed.

Away from the Cleveland Centre were other shops including Binns, Chelsea Girl, and the Newhouse Corner, named after the family who had owned it since 1909.

While it had been sold to Debenhams in 1960, the Newhouse Corner had kept its name well into the 1970s.



Here are some throw backs to popular products!



'Fairy' came in soap bars. The jingle used to go: "Now hands that do dishes can feel as soft as your face with mild green Fairy Liquid".



'Brooke Bond Dividend Tea' was sold with collectable stamps. You needed 60 stamps to exchange for 25p worth of groceries.

'Bird's Instant Whip' was like Angel Delight. You only needed milk and 5 minutes' whisking to make.



The centre of Middlesbrough was also a great place for hosting events – the Teesside International Eistedfodd, or Intertie, was a colourful song and dance festival founded by a community of Welsh workers who had come to work at ICI.

And there was the Royal Silver Wedding Anniversary in 1972. Silver painted buses were brought in to ferry people to the town on concessionary tickets that allowed free travel.



Fashion and Hairstyles

The 1970s was a dynamic time for fashion, marked by new styles that included disco, soul and punk, and new fabrics that made a whole new wardrobe cheaper to buy.

Teesside was no exception for these new trends as the younger generation embraced clothes that were brightly coloured and allowed them to express themselves.

The 1970s were also known as the 'Polyester Decade' due to the widespread use of synthetic fabrics. Clothes made from polyester were affordable, easy to care for, and available in vibrant colours and patterns, dominating both casual and formal wear.



The Sew-It-Yourself (SIY) Movement

The 1970s also saw a resurgence in people making their own clothes. Sewists eagerly collected sewing patterns such as these 'Simplicity' and 'Butterick' packs which were sold at most shops. Patterns came in vintage-inspired designs, bohemian prints, and geometric shapes, and makers chose corduroy, denim and floral fabrics. The variety in these packs allowed endless creativity.



Dateline curlers and the Ronson Escort 2000

The 1970s was a decade of bold fashion and even bolder hair. Women fully embraced their natural curls, creating voluminous and striking looks. Hair scarves and rollers were regular sights round town as they aimed for those big, glamorous curls.

What was your favourite outfit and how did your parents react?



Home Entertainment

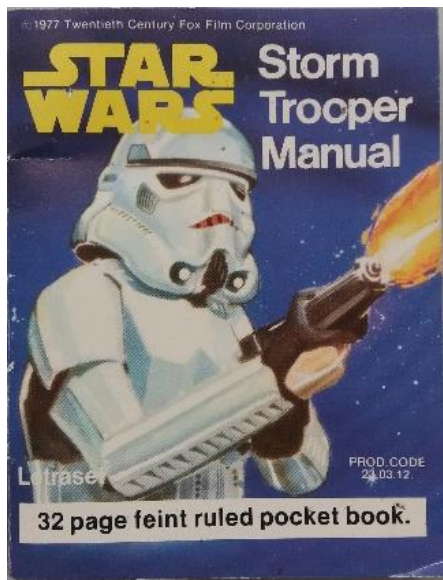
1970's Video Games

In the 1970s, video game consoles allowed people to play games on a TV at home. Before consoles, people would have played games mainly in arcades. Early home video games such as the '**Tele-match 4**' had simple graphics and were limited to games that were preloaded on the console.



This '**Tele-Match 4**' console came with five games, including 'tennis' a pong like game.

What games did you enjoy playing?



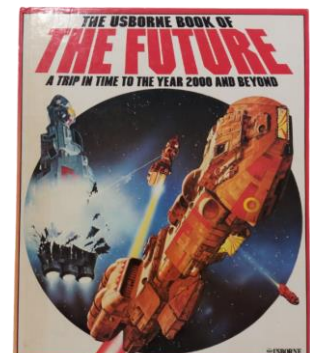
Science Fiction

During the 1970s, blockbuster science fiction films began to make their appearance. These movies reached a much larger audience than previously.

In 1977 the original '**Star Wars**' movie was released in cinemas in the UK. The film quickly became a blockbuster hit and the movie's success quickly led to more movies and merchandise like this pocket book being produced.



In 1979 The '**Usborne book of the future**' was published. The book predicted what some people in 1979 thought life would be like in the future.



At the time many people dreamed of a future filled with wonder and amazing new technology.

To colour in.



All images used in this pack are courtesy of Dorman Museum and Teesside Archives.

If you would like to share your stories or contact us about the packs please e-mail teesvalleymuseums@stockton.gov.uk

You can find all our Talking Tees Valley packs through the Tees Valley Museums website under 'Latest News' or here: <https://teesvalleymuseums.org/news/>