

Romany Theatre Company

Atching Tan Project

Reminiscence Interview – Transcription of Edited Interview

Date of Interview		Interviewer	Interviewee	Age Range of Interviewee	Duration of Edited Recording
17-3-10		Sinead	Sandra D		12:50
Key timing	Initial of person speaking	Transcription of Interview			
00:00	Sandra	<p>My name is Sandra Day and I was born in 1966 23rd of May. Life for me when I was growing up was 'ard, but it was good and it was fun. I really enjoyed it.</p>			
00:11		<p>What kind of work did I do when I was a growing up as a child? Well, since I can remember about 6 or 7 year old, we used to have leaflets printed up and we used to drop them and it was for like scrap iron, rags, furniture and all sorts and we used to go out and collect all the junk in and buy it at the scrap yards and we used to have a little stall outside the caravan and people used to come and buy and we used to go to markets. And we used to mainly do, like move all around England to different counties and different places different months of the year to do all the fieldwork. We all used to chip in and help out and look after our brothers and sisters. Help mum and dad and sort of did all sorts of work really, anything. I've always lived in caravans, trailers. We mainly travelled parts of England where all the crops and fruit would grow. We used to go Kent for the 'ops, Kent for Fruit picking, Wisbech for strawberries and plum picking and apple picking back up to Lavenham and Bury St Edmunds and Cambridge and that more for potato picking, down to Braintree way for the pea picking. Where ever the crops were growing.</p>			
01:21		<p>Technologies a good thing but its done away with a hell of a lot of the fieldwork, farm work and that. Now with the new laws you've got to have a hawkers licence, this licence that licence and things and that. It's changed a hell of a lot. The field work in't there no more and your always getting muv on. Scrap and that in't there no more. Field work in't there no more. Myself now, especially this last 10 to 15 year, and my children are more staying in one place and looking for permanent work.</p> <p>From my own personal point of view, and I speak for meself, I think when they started to do this student exchange they'd come over and do the field work for the farmers and that, they started to take them on. And I think when the redundancies started to, really started to, hit England and that, more and more people that live in houses have gone more into doing door knocking and scrap carting and things an' that. I just think the traveller's way of life is just getting very hard. Its like the law and the councils and that any way possible they can git them they're getting them.</p> <p>The biggest change for me is not being able to travel around like I used to. I miss that the most. In the winter not so much, but in the summer I used to really look forward to travelling around and that, but a lot of the stopping places have been all bull nosed up, concreted up, done away with, built on or done something. The biggest change is the law being so strict and not letting me to move around and that. So I don't meet my family, I don't see my relatives. I think one change they've done has bin for the better Is, though they've stopped the travellers from moving up and down so much, they have decided this last four to five year to erm... build more trailer sites and places for the</p>			

03:37	<p>travellers but no where near enough that is wanted or needed. So I think its good that they've recognised that and they're doing something there. You know? I know we can git houses and things and that, but there's nothing else out there really that's a benefit to the travellers to keep their way of life going. The law has not really been there for the travellers at all live in a house and get on with society with everybody else or be prepared to be evicted and moved on and that's basically it.</p> <p>We did face racism pretty bad when we was growing up. Though some places and some villages were quite nice erm but I found with the children in the schools that when I did go to school the children were fine they just saw us a children and played together. I always found it was always the grown ups that said come away from them don't go all funny with them you'll catch diseases, you'll catch head lice (laughs). They did that to you.</p> <p>I'd say this last 15 year or so racism is hardly ever there. Peoples attitudes and what ever towards travellers are so much better and I think that's only because now that if there are racism and that, there's people there to back it up and deal with it whereas before they never used to get away with it. So err that's a good thing but when I was growing up yeah racism was pretty bad.</p>
04:30	<p>Education when I was growing up. When I used to go to school When my mum and dad used to put us into school, which was mainly through the winter months. They didn't know what to do with us, do you know what I mean? We just used to get left to the side, put in a corner with a colouring book and a pencil, umm put somewhere, d'ya know what I mean? The teachers didn't really want to bother with us. I can remember going to school one time at erm Colchester and there was a big group of us travellers stopping there. I think there must have been 9, 10 of us, maybe more, put us in this school at Colchester and they had this big Port-o-cabin delivered and put right down the back of the playground; right down the back of the school and we were all put in there with one teacher and we must have ranged from 5 year old to 13, 14 year old. And we come out to play when the children weren't playing in the playground. We were allowed to go in and have our school dinners when all the children had had th... We were totally isolated. It weren't the children. It was the... coz we used to meet up with the children in the parks and that and they used to say 'Why you's in there for? Why this?' It was more the grown ups that isolated it because they were afraid of us d'ya know what I mean? Schools on the whole for us when I was a child personally growing up and that, just tret us like we come from space. Just tret us like we come from space, but today if you've got... because we never went to school much, we had so much catching up to do. Today they'd put you in a classroom with a teacher that would work with you and help you catching up and that. In those days you just got stuck in a classroom and if you couldn't do it, they just stuck you in a corner with a pencil and book. They just didn't bother with you. These days coz everything's computer technology and stuff and I think education is a very, very good thing. Very good thing. Highly recommend it.</p> <p>My 2 children, Pamela and Diana, I used to take them to mother and toddlers groups, nursery school. They used to go to school right the way through until they were 13, 14 year old and then they just didn't want to go. I had a few battles with them so... I did try but then they quit. That was my regret in life, I wish I learnt to read and write but in those days it was a lot more travelling than what it is today. And now they both can travel, they can read and write and they do say mum 'I'm glad that you've made us go to</p>

06:44		<p>school. We've learnt to read and write now', because its so much better for them.</p> <p>A lot of the time when I say I'm a traveller and I'm a gypsy they automatically think back about 60 to 100 years ago when they wore these big earrings, crystal balls, you know, wagons and you know put a curse on you, and gypsies are outcasts and thieves and stuff over there. And I say to them 'No. Over the years you've come forward and developed in time, technology and that. We have as well!'. There are some travellers that still live the old fashion way and there are some people who live in houses still the old fashioned way. Peoples lack of education in the way people live, but we've always been shunned and put away in a corner and people when you say gypsies, they just look they'll rob ya, steal ya, but of course, you know things like that. No, were not like that! Not at all not really. I do have a television, I have a microwave, electric kettle and I have a mobile phone an' the like. I get that even today with some people though it is getting better. I must admit It is getting better</p> <p>If I lived in a house would I stop being a traveller? No I don't think I would. I think I'd do the house up just like a caravan. But I've always found with travellers though if they live in houses, up and down the roads or what ever. It doesn't matter what nationality people are, what colour they skin, if you go to a traveller and you've broke down or you ain't got not money or your hungry, they'll always open the door and let you in. Be very friendly towards you an' that and I think if I lived in a house I'd still be the same. I think that if people found out that they've got gypsies living next door to them, I'm quite sure somebody somewhere wouldn't like it and I would just say hang on a minute get to know me as a person before you judge me.</p> <p>Several people have asked me if I'm proud to be a traveller. I'm proud to be me. I don't look at myself as a traveller; I don't look at myself as a gypsy. I look at myself as a person, as a woman. This is the life I was born into. This is the life I've grown up in. So I'm just thankful that I've got my health and strength and I'm Sandra and this is me and this is how I live. I'm not proud to be a traveller. I wouldn't be proud to be a person who lived in a house. I wouldn't be proud to be a Spanish person or anything else. I'm just pleased to be me; that I'm just me.</p>
08:59		<p>My life has been just one big 'oliday. When I look back on my life and that, I just look at it as though... its bin, its bin 'ard but I've always had my family there. I've always had my brothers and sisters there. I've always had aunts and uncles there. And all the way through my life I've had my ups and downs as well as the rest. Its been fun. I've thoroughly enjoyed it. I just take each day as it comes and get on with life. I'm one of those very out going people I'll have a go at anything. Do most things I suppose. In a way I think I'm blessed at times that I've had the opportunity to be brought up like that. So free, got to know so many wonderful people, go to many wonderful places and I've learnt to do loads of different trades and I'll have a go at anything. That's hard to explain to people but I love my life, absolutely love my life, the way it is. If I can help people and do things and that what more can I say? That my life is just a big 'oliday life. If I want to go somewhere and I want to do something I'm the sort of person, I'll just go an do it. As long as I'm not 'urting no body else or getting in nobodies way and that, I think 'Yeah Ill do that there'. What's the problem? I'm just laid back. Take it as it comes. That's what I say.</p>
10:01		

Key Timing Index

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