

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
14-4-10	Sinead	Patricia	60-70	00:06:48

Key timing	Initial of person speaking	Transcription of Interview
00:00	Patricia	<p>I'm hoping change is coming about. That they get more respect. Getting good and bad everywhere, you know. Its like got a mark on you. You might as well have a black mark right down one side of your face and that is why a lot of the travellers have gone indoors. And a lot of them you don't know they is travellers because they're afraid of this prejudice. Not just afraid for themselves, afraid for their kids. You don't want to put your kids through that stuff and it does hold you back you know. Coz you think you want the best for your child and really the place they get it is in the traveller culture, which you can learn more there. And especially about the old ways. Learn more there than you ever will at school. I'm not against school. But I think it is happening now, but its going into the school... but we're still getting it in the schools, we're still getting it in the playground; 'dirty old gypsy', were still getting that. I'm telling you that I've heard that just recently 'dirty old gypsy' and that's not on. It's not on. But then again, I've heard a gypsy say 'go on you old gorgia'. I'm hoping that now they're intermingling in society and Id like to see them... You see, I'm already separating them and I don't mean to because its... I don't mean them. I mean people, all people, and it's going to take a long time, you know. Its like a habit. You cant just get it over night, you know, its like the travellers, the Jews, you know, persecuted and they were persecuted. And I think it does have a knock on effect over the years and years and years when you're persecuted you sort of grow up. Not everybody, coz I think they're blessed, you know, and I think when I was young I felt as if I was persecuted and I felt as if I may have had a little chip on my shoulder but I don't now. I've got over that. But I've had to do that myself. And for people to assume things about ya rather than bother to find out who you are as a person is wrong. But I don't think you're going to change that over night. I'd like to see it. Travellers are being asked to bring more skills of the Romanies into schools to show and then they'll get their respect, so they should do. So hopefully that will work.</p> <p>We used to go down to the Kent hop gardens and we'd go to old Ma Batchelor's as we'd call her and we'd prepare this, weeks previous. And it was always in the September you see. There's a certain smell about the air, you know, in September and that to me is getting back to my roots more than anything. It was getting out those... getting out to the hop fields, you know. And we'd take all the stuff from home and wed take it on an old pushchair and we'd have pots and pans and they'd be falling off on the way. All the way down, there would be singing, you know. We always sung, me sisters, there was five of us. Generally on our own, the five of us, we were walking along. We used to go through the Bluebell Woods, through Boxley and it was really lovely and we'd walk right down, through Luton we used to go as well. Before it was all built up and along Princes Park; they used to call it... well they call it now anyway. All over there and all the bits and pieces would be falling off. You'd have an old chair stuck up there for hopping and that would be falling off. We'd tie it all back on, pots and pans and everything else. We'd go all the way down through Luton, right out to Batchelor's Hop fields / Hop Gardens round there. And right opposite that wagon at Oare. I loved that wagon at Oare. I don't know why, but I used to love getting round that wagon at Oare. That was the last bit we used to do. What we did, took all this stuff down before we started work and we used to hide it under the hedges. So we'd hide all the stuff, push it all under the hedges and it would be all up the hedges you see all our stuff. You'd have to know where you hid it</p>

		<p>though, so you got to, you know, mark it with something. Get a rag or something tied round a tree, so you knew where you'd hid your stuff, you see. So hid it all under there. And then when the time came for the hopping... Nan always used to go as well, obviously shed been going since she was a baby and she still going, you know, when she was quite old, you know, until they wasn't picking any more anyway. We'd meet all our uncles and aunties out there you know like a big reunion really. I got closer to nature than anything out there and I just, used to love it you know. I can remember my mum saying because ... we all picked none of us just sat about playing You don't go out there to play, you go out there to pick. You know, as soon as your old enough to pick in that Bushel basket you pick. I can remember my mum saying to her mum, she was picking in the basket and she was singing Golden Slumbers I don't know if you've ever heard that it's a children's lullaby I still sing it to my kids (sings) "Golden Slumbers feast you eyes". My Nan said 'Oi, you want to sing something a bit faster, you'll be asleep in a minute'. She picked up a clod of earth and hit her round the ear hole but she didn't hit her, she hit her mate (laughs). I loved it. And we used to have the cuckoo come round and we'd ... at a certain part of the day you'd hear 'cuckoo, cuckoo', you know, up the hop fields there and you'd think who the bloomin' hells that and it was the greengrocer. And they used to come round and you'd get your bits, you know, if you wanted anything to take home with you for the night time and I loved it. You couldn't find that any more. You can search where you like. You can't find it its gone. I remember going out years later with Aunt Liza and me mum, just sitting where it used to be I think they've now made it into a nature reserve all over that way, when they built on it. I just loved it. And walking through the bluebell woods. We used to go for walks. I just loved being in touch with nature. We used to have a few potatoes what the farmer kindly donated. Build a little fire, always careful. I mean, your not allowed to have a fire anywhere nowadays are you. You can't do that. I mean, we took a little barbeque on the beach for the kids the other day – No barbeques! – just to show them, you know, but your not allowed to do it now. That's what it was like but I always wished, to be honest with you, I always wished for more and I've always wished I was down there with Faithy Butler, to be truthful, because once we got in the house there was rows and fights. Me mum she couldn't help it but she always wanted to be out as well, you know. I don't mean out gallivanting, I mean out, you know, out in the air. Your suffocated, you see. And I think this is what a lot of what the trouble is. People are suffocated in the houses. If they'd been used to open air life, it just goes on and on and I mean we'd go out to the bluebell woods and spend all day there because it was part of our culture. To go back and do things umm when it was mothers day and when it was Easter we'd go out there and we'd find bits of wood and we'd make crosses. Pick all the primroses and tie on, you know, to make these cro... it was just lovely and we was allowed to do that.</p>
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00:00	Changing Times