

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
		Sinead	Rodney B Part 1		12:13
Key timing	Initial of person speaking	Transcription of Interview			
00:00	Rodney	<p>It wasn't very nice if the truth were with ya because we all had to work Pull together as I would call it the family ya know what I mean to earn money for our mums and dads. We didn't get a lot of money but we was clothed and we was fed. I had to do a lot of hours out in the field working with them that was very hard And as it goes on its gradually got better and better Thank the Lord.</p>			
00:32		<p>Work. Well we used to do Tata picking up at that time of day you used to get roughly 6 weeks potato picking up. You'd do sugar beeting chopping out and saving one there when you chop it out 8 or 9 inches apart and you had to pull all the other beet out and leave one on its own so your finger nails was bleeding where you was pulling them out of the dirt. You're at that all day long in the sun where you find when you get up your head was twice as big as it was where it swelled and after you finished the sugar beeting you went on to pea picking and at a later date you went what they call down Wisbech strawberry picking We done the potatoes and just before the 'tatas we used to do what they call plum picking ya know picking the plums and that. That was another hard job carting all the boxes out from the middle way of the orchard on to the outside so the tractors could pick 'em up. We all had to do our share there. So there was work all the time and when the work was over as I say we got to go to school and when we went to school you see the point was as I say to the others what was there and which you cannot blame them they got maybe six or seven months ahead of us and nobody didn't want to sit down 'cos its only a small schools and even in the school where it was so small you had sort of like some here wasn't too sharp there was me then there was a little bit better then there was a little bit better. So she sort of like teach three different groups so she couldn't really, the lady couldn't, Mrs Clubber, couldn't put her time in on me 'cos there was nobody like to help out. So that's how I lost out on education. As long as I was good enough to bend over a bucket I have to work. We had to work, we was bought up that way about 'cos I'm a born again Christian.</p> <p>I should say I was anything from 7 to about 9 to be on the wide side very small, barely big enough to pick as you would call it a bucket up and get a bucket full and who ever I was working with my mum or dad they would empty it out for me you see and I would start again. So I was quite young when I went out in the field if there was some younger they had to come out in the field as well didn't matter if they was young or not in prams or whatever it was 'cos mum we all worked there was not one sat at home Mum and dad was out there working mum worked as good as dad ya know what I mean dad was picking up stronger things know what I mean but picking 'tatas up mum was just as good. That's the reason I suppose I'm full of the days I am arthritis but still I remember I was 19 year old and I got 5 shillings which is 25p and Id come back some days earning £200 but I got that on a Friday half ounce of 'bacca, some cigarette papers and a box of matches and that would last me to the next Friday, so I really had a hard life. I never had no ease in 'em I had to work hard And they told me is to learn how to save. But, anyway, when I got married I had like my own money and as you do I suppose you're silly, you go and do silly things. Had the money spent some of it could have been better off I suppose than I was but still praise the Lord we got here where we're at now. We had six children between us; 3, 6, 4, 4 girls get it right in a minute Rodney, and 2 boys.</p>			
03:58		<p>And now the government has made places for us to stay on like this travellers site. Wifey wanted to take a house ya see, but I wouldn't like a house. I like me freedom see. When you're in a trailer like this you got so many windows round you looking when you get</p>			

you look out the back doors on the patio or the front window cant see nowhere else unless you go upstairs Well this is my life used to being outside. Travelling people used to wash outside everything there was, see? Well you wouldn't be allowed to wash inside Now if, when I was home I remember me dad saying to me I used to have a wash outside and I come inside combing my hair in a glass He used to say to me All be it specially get out there combing your hair I don't want hair all in me food. He wouldn't even comb his hair in the house see And you have to wash When you get up in the morning No touching the cups or the food without having a wash. He was a funny chap. It's because when you lay down of a night your hands go in funny places having a scratch so have a wash. And that's what we had to do we had to wash if you didn't have a wash you wasn't allowed to touch the cups and things, but as we went on again as I say and I got married and we got one of these places which is lovely we've had no trouble with the police which they only got their job to do to move us on People stay here we got electric water baths toilets everything. Its like paradise to what it was. You see years ago when you was moving around with the farmers doing the work You knew when you was working you'd come out the field 5 o'clock that night you was dead beat working hard down peas no good going a long steady 'cos it's a waste of time going out in the field You had to work like a slave really as hard as you could go. And he'd say here's ya money I suppose you'll be moving on and Id say mate I ain't had a wash, I ain't had a cup of tea yet. I hope you're going I don't want you heres. There's no money for me now. Give it till tomorrow morning else Ill pack up If there's any rubbish laying around I shouldn't worry about that When you went around doing your work say like you come to if you like say Ipswich for pea picking. All the people in this town used to see it was a working holiday I mean you'd see them all have a good laugh and that used to go an have a pint of beer you know what I mean. It was lovely then you moved from here down to Wisbech you'd be strawberry picking you'd see another gang down there and you'd have a lovely time And night times you go and have a pint of beer sometimes you was knocked up you didn't want to get a pint. Then you'd come back for the potatoes and you'd do the same thing again. So you get like a working holiday from potatoes sugar beet, pea picking strawberry picking like that you know what I mean and if you was lucky enough to find a farmer which I found one which was a very good I call him a gentleman he give me a job and when I finished he found another little job for me what I really didn't know what I mean he didn't want done. He was a good man to me and I was good to him. I even went in over Christmas down to Dunmow to pick up some like seed 'tatas and we put three trays one bag of 'tatas into them and stood them all up in a shed turned the heating on so they chitted all up then we used to set them in the ground then I used to come back there after a while spin them round pick them up weigh them stack then on the trailer and when the lorry drive come I load him up 10 ton and if I have to if nobody around Id find a paper for I'm 'cos that's about all I could do and he was a good man to me and he looked after me. He give me work when he really didn't want it done as I say jumping backwards and forwards things is a lot better now 'cos then you never got what I call dole down the social security as you call it now if you like you ain't got a nowt to do and you cant get nowt to do you can get social security. But as it be now I'm a pensioner and you see its better now you sit here and it don't matter who pulls up at the gate now this is not mine I don't own it but it is like mine. Policeman come Yes if I don't wrong he's in his rights to come or ask me questions, but he cant tow me off. So I thank the council for what they done here for me. They done marvellous things for me. I'm permanently been round Ipswich now ooof It must be 30 odd year since I been married on and off and I moved away and coming back. And I'm always down the bottom site there where the football field is they asked us do we want a site and we said yes and they said will you stop on it and we said yes and I tell you we stopped on it the winter and it was lovely. In the summer time all the others were packing up and going to the farms where they had to work. I think I was down don't know if I had one or two daughters left and it was the worst time ever and oh dear it was that terrible to stop here when the sun was a shining I couldn't move, but now I wouldn't give you a thank you for moving. I quite happy thinking to me own as I say lovely. I've got me doctor, which I've got to go to the opticians, even though I've got so

09:31		<p>many to go to the dentist to lord In me old age as I say yes its good for me. Never be on the road.</p> <p>If you called me a gypsy then being young I didn't understand, but that's what I am a gipsy. You can't call niggers, people say travellers, but I ain't a traveller because I'm not one. You're a traveller 'cos you travel around doing your work ya see But if a traveller says to the other one yeah I see some travellers over there he used the word traveller but deep down he's not a traveller he's a gipsy. He's seen there's a lot of difference. You get with some of them they'll talk to you and if you say so they wont give the mush on them. They look at ya they don't know what your saying. That's best leave them on the grand children what's here. I said to them 'What's the chirus?' They said what are you talking about grandfather. What's the chirus; What is the time? Ya see they ain't brought up to it. They been brought up went to school at the Whitehouse here Diane and Pamela and they can read and write, not the best of them, but they're pretty good. You see they ain't interested in the travelling life. When you say to them what you done they say grandfather that was years ago. They'll write in that bit of sense but the way that some of the young ones is god love 'em they get in these bad habits what's taking over. They're all at it really. Not all ill take that back the majority of young people is getting drugs and that. Well when I was growing up I had a pint or two of beer, several of them, but I never got like that and there's no respect. My dad had brought me up even if the person was older than me and there was nothing to do with me all ways call them uncle and aunt. Even my mother in law and father in law never called them by name. Not even if I was talking to them for years names Moseley and my mother-in laws names Tulley. I'd say Aunt Tulley and Uncle Moseley they were my father and mother in law. See we was brought up that way and if anybody give you anything just say thank you, please and that. You don't have to read and write to do that and you don't have to be somebody special to have manners. That's all you got to do. There's nothing to it. I would say some of them, they're not all alike as you know wherever you have you find some you can talk to Some will blow up over nothing and its no good in this day and age you find out we all got live together.</p>
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Key Timing Index	
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09:31	Identity
12:31	End