

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
2010		Damian Le Bas	S.L	60-65	05:26
Key timing	Initial of person speaking	Transcription of Interview			
0.00	S.L	<p>I was born in Orton in Hampshire, at 5 Riverview Cottages. April 2nd 1947.</p> <p>For a short while I lived in the cottage where I was born. There was someone that befriended my mum cos she was expecting me, but was actually living in a tent in a farm just outside Orton. It was either a bender tent or a square tent, I know that my granny used to live in one of those quite a lot of the time. And then, mum was still living at home with granny and grand dad. They didn't travel very far, cos obviously there was a lot of them. Yeah, mainly in the Orton area, and Orton, Basingstoke, all around that area. There was 12 or 13 of them, and they only had a horse and cart and a tent so they could only travel the miles a horse can do, the average miles a horse can do, it wouldn't have been very far pulling all that load. By the time I was young, mum was married and settled and we were, first off living with dads parents cos they lived in houses in Sussex. And then we lived in a cottage, so I actually physically didn't do anything then cos mum was working, dad was working, and I was one of the first generation to be going to school on a regular basis. And then when I was about 9 mum and dad moved out of living with his parents and bought their own first little cottage. A 2 up 2 down cottage, and I went to Downs brook Junior school in Broad Water in Worthing.</p> <p>And then from there I went to Davidson Church School, and then left school at 15.</p>			
1.35		<p>A lot of prejudices, you didn't realise just how nasty people could be. If you were a bit more successful, and I was pretty good at school, and probably if I'd have tried a bit harder I would have achieved even more than I did. But Yeah, I learnt things, I took a great interest in History, and the English language. And realised that if you learnt English the proper way and learn the meaning of words that when people called you names or argued with you, you could bombard them back with exactly the same thing and know what the words meant.</p>			
2.44		<p>We had quite a bit of problems with my children. And recently it erupted with a couple of my grand children. But because now that we've got a better understanding of what the English language means you can argue with them the point, but it seems the only acceptable form of racism. If we were coloured they'd probably do more about it but they dismissive of it and say that it doesn't happen but it does. Its awful when you know your children are unhappy, and by law now they've got to go to school. Whereas before you could keep them off school, they wouldn't say anything, but now you have to go to school.</p>			
3.25		<p>In future generations of travelling children, because they're getting an education, and like my grand son going to university, there's something inspiring and realising education is the way to go. Not to be afraid of education which is what used to happen, you'd go to school in my generation and then when they got to senior think 'get them out of school' it's a bad thing, they've got to go to work and earn a living. People are beginning to realise that if their children get educated it opens doors that before would have been slammed in their faces. Which is a good thing. You know that they realise now that if they are educated there's all sorts of avenues open to them.</p>			
		<p>In my life I worked in an accounts office, which I found thoroughly boring. I worked in a small factory with half a dozen people making hand made lampshades for Harrods. I've</p>			

5.26		<p>run my own business as a florist. My husband was a builder and I used to do his paperwork again which wasn't very interesting, the VAT and so forth. And more recently, well, for 25 years I worked on open markets doing flowers as well as growing them on our own property. Doing flowers with my mum and dad. And then after packing that up for 5 years I did nothing and realised being a lady of luxury didn't suit me, getting up every day wondering what I was going to do with me day so I've now gone back to work and actually physically to house cleaning, which I know is something I can do to perfection. And I thoroughly enjoy. Well, its meeting people and going into peoples homes and 3 people that I do clean for, one of them are very wealthy, one couple are very wealthy and I now realise even though with all their money they have exactly the same problems as I do within the family, for all their wealth. Their problems are the same as I have, only just because they are more cocooned in their wealth it doesn't make it any easier behind the doors, I find they suffer exactly the same as what I do if they cut themselves they bleed the same as I do. And then the other people that I work for work within the education system. They know my background, and they car accepting of it and very understanding and they're not very tolerant of people who have got racial prejudices of any kind, even against the Romanies. And the other people that I work for are both people that suffer with ill health and have go no one but each other. And they rely on me to go into them every week which is nice because I know they need me and I feel I'm putting something back. For what I've taken out of life, I'm putting something back and I feel useful because I'm doing that .</p>
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Key Timing Index	
Time	Topic
0.00	Accommodation
1.35	Education and Racism
2.44	Employment
5.26	End