

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
14-2-10		Damian	Synet W		12:50
Key timing	Initial of person speaking	Transcription of Interview			
00:00		<p>Hello, I'm Synet Winter. I was borne 1968. Life weren't too bad, you know. You had your ups and your downs and your mum and dad you know you was always round them, well picking up things half the time; (laughs) all the time really. And I had my two sisters and me little brother I did.</p>			
00:24		<p>Well my dad used to do general things, you know. He, like, he used to do a bit of scrap. And in the summer time we used to do a bit of picking, you know? Fruit picking and that. Well anything, really, come to hand really, but me mums biggest; used to be me mums main thing was looking after us, you know? Like cleaning up, feed us, making sure everything was right around the place and that and everything, we was alright and that.</p>			
00:50		<p>Always travelled all over the place. From one end of the country to the other. You see different things, which is nice coz, ya know, peoples goes abroad and that they don't realise how pretty this country is. And you go right the way up into Scotland. Up in... or... and look when you pull up onto the side. Like to have myself a cup a tea what-hever, right because you've been moving for hours and you're, like, up onto a hill and you get out and you give your legs a nice stretch and you look over and all the hills and all that and it near enough looks like the clouds is near enough all into one. You've never seen a prettier thing in your life.</p> <p>It's a lot better now than when I was a child and me mam says it to me; used to say it us and we would say 'Oh well why cant we stop her anywhere?' 'You've got it a lot better than what we had it'. It's through the years it has got better, but it's very, very slow. Its speeded up now more this time since, I think, about the 1980's, you know? Its come more... things have started to progress you know? Catch up. For the better. Childrens get more education. We get more sites built which is good we have some more. Umm things are getting better. You getting a lot more, you had to cope the best you could which was ordinary and it would be strange for anybody else, but it wouldn't be for us. You know like for washing and for things like that. For when you was doing your laundry, right, you had to go and... Well it used to be me older sister used to 'go and get me some wood because I wanted to do me washing in the morning'. And that was either Monday or Tuesday right and you walk across this field, where was that? We was all over the place. It used to be the easiest, was at Melton Mowbray and you used to walk down, get the wood but it used to be dry wood what come off, you know? It was fellen wood on the floor. Bring it back, Me dad used to break it up and we used to put it under a big sheet to keep it dry for when we were having to do the washing and laundry. Make the fire and put... we used to have a big caste iron step to put on the top so you could put the washbowl, the tub, on top to boil up, to clean... wash... the get the water washed up, to wash your clothes and it used to be a whole days job (laughs).</p> <p>Mobile phones are handy, but they can be the biggest nuisance out, right, and you can start off, right, and say I've had this interview with you, right, by the time it gets down that country; tell somebody by phone and it will be with national television, you know (laughs).</p> <p>And like you get the hinternet and all that, what the children's into now, but there's still... nobody is who they say they are. I've always said that they can show a photo on the screen to ya. I've said to me nieces if anybody turns round and says to you well can I meet you 'ere you never do. You say 'no, we'll go to a public place' cos children's got</p>			

04:41	<p>more freedom now and that, than what I had. Yeah and you've got to watch the children, you have coz there's been children from... I don't care if your traveller who ever you are. There's been children been took. There has, and gone off the face of this earth never to be foun' again. Some poor people wondering where their children are now. And I wouldn't like to think... I've got no children or anybody, my friend's children happening to 'em like that or me families' children.</p> <p>The old days. Well it was more... I don't know, it was more simpler. It wasn't so complicated because you know it was just normal to us. We used to have, coz sometimes we have had lectric and there was a black and white... we had a telly but the telly was never hon. It was only when we got to somewhere where we got a bit of lectric and me dad got this television and you plugged the wire in and you had 2 wire leads that went onto this battery and when me dad used to come back, he used to lift bonnet up off his motor and put the battery leads on and watch that but beings half the time it used to be the wireless. We used to sit down and listen to it and me mam could read a bit. If we never had the wireless; there was nothing on the wireless and me mam used to sit down and read the book to us. Ya know like, sort of stories or tell us stories from what her mother told her, you know. And you do miss things like that.</p>
05:42	<p>Oh you used to have a horrible time especially when you went to school and you used to have the school board man come straight down, like. Pull into a place and next day he'd be there, like 'Children's got to go to school him or her.' Right? I'm saying to you. Mum said 'Right then, I was planning to do. But with them being travelling children' she said 'they get bullied.' 'No, No, No, No, No, don't be... nonsense' and they used to pull ya hair, kick ya, call you heverything underneath the sun and teachers used to see them do it and never opened their mouth. But when you hit back at them, you used to get into trouble. Straight up to the headmaster. 'They've hit such a person' and then me mam and dads had more words with more head-teachers than on off.</p> <p>And then when you was pulled anywhere, you made sure you never pulled anywhere where a main road was coz half the time they used to have a bottle or something and throw it at the trailer. Or if they possibly... if you was out, throw it at you. That was in certain parts of the country. They're more tolerant of travellers and used to them up the north and around here they're lovely people. Around here; around this part of the country, you know the South East. Around here, but the worstest part used to be in the midlands around Coventry Birmingham and around Tamworth and Rugeley. You have to stop with somebody else either a relation to you or something but somewhere safe. Or try and get yourself behind a farm, ask a farmer, you know, a farmers field because if you were stopped anywhere else, god help ya! They would be there in two minutes. I've told the police about 'em, its like talking to yourself. 'Well have you got hevidence?' 'Well really you shouldn't be there.' But it was us way of life, it is, the same as anybody else. They've got way of life, but they never took any notice of ya.</p> <p>Went to school when I was about 6 that I remember. That was my first time I went to school. That was at Nottingham. They weren't too bad there, Teachers. But there used to be we used to get a lot of taunting of 'gypsy this' and 'gypsy that', 'dirty gypsy'. Well they used to have the... I don't know if you ever heard of them call it before, 'Nitty Norah the nit explorer', right? She used to come round and the woman'd, I used to have real long hair, undo the plat. We used to have 2 plats and they used to sit there having a giggle to ourself. We used to be stood at the back. There be the children with the little note and the little bottle that they've had head lice (laughs) and them the very ones that's been calling you a dirty gypsy, you've got nits and all that business you know. Well we went nowhere to have anything like that and we always used to either be as brother... well like sisters we was like the three of us and me brother was the little... we always used to play together, we did coz we was brought up close, like. Normal, years ago all travelling people was brought up close coz was no stopping by theirselves, no ... half the time.</p>
09:00	<p>What's bred in ya. There's some what turns round and says traveller go gorgia. Well</p>

		<p>gorgia is what we call people like... you maybe heard it before and Irish Travellers call people who lives in houses country people. Well gorgia means the same thing but its in Romany ya know? And its not that. They try to fit in. Well what-hever they try to do, how-hever they try to dress, talk you can always tell one. You can always tell a traveller. You can turn round, try walking down the... trying to look like Jordan what-hever right. Well peoples half does these days, I don't know why but (laughs) but you can always tell a Traveller. Try and talk plain as much as they can, you know and or try and talk like they got a marble in their mouth and you'll get 'Well you're a Traveller ain't ya?' Well 'Yes I am but how did you know?' They tell in two minutes flat. You can always tell a traveller. I don't care where you are. When you're walking down the street and walk passed some of them and you look like 'They're travellers they are.'</p>
10:11		<p>What do I want in life? Well, I want peace and quiet like I've got coz this is a quiet site. You have your children that play. The children comes back from school. Every child plays, right? Wouldn't be normal if they never played. Boys play football. Girls goes up and down. Sometimes the girls joins in playing football and that. About half five, six o'clock time they're picked up, took in for school for the next morning. It's a very quiet site and they're nice people what's on 'ere to us. We don't go in and out of everybodies' homes every 5 minutes. If we see anybody you say 'Oh well how are you?' 'How's this?' 'Oh the weathers nice' and all that. No different than anywhere else really.</p>
10:53		<p>It's like anybody who-hever it is they're proud to be who they are. What-hever nationality your proud. You are. We are a proud people, ya know. Some goes over the board with it, ya know. I'm whole Romany when it comes back to than not (laughs), but out there everybodies proud, they are. My family, on both sides of me family. Me heritage, ya know. Though I am a Traveller, ya know and Ill never be anybody else, who-hever I can try to look like or whatever (laughs).</p>
11:31		<p>Coz when we was children we used to go apple picking. Me sister Hooked up onto her Jumper up at the top of the tree and we left her up there (laughs). It got hooked on, ya know, it was apple picking. We was done, the tea for some of us and she got hooked up. Me mam told her not to wear her jumper on. It had like little holes in it. Well somehow she got entangled up it, right? And me and me sister, Rachel. You get me, of course, she had one of her moods on her. She was being older, she thought she was being more bossy, ya know. When we ran more around, to make herself like 'Oh I'm the holdest!' And she got herself hooked up with this jumper and tangled, you know, to the small apple trees, like. All tangled up. So we picked ourselves up. 'I cant... get yourselves up here now and get me untangled from out of here.' So well I said 'There's one word that you've missed right'. 'What!'. 'There's one word' I said 'I think' 'What!' 'Right' I said 'you've been brought up different than that'. So, err she's 'Get up here now when I tell yers'. So me an' Rach picked oursel' up, picked our bag up, right? Walked back down the lane. Went back down and me mam said 'Where's Edna?' I said 'She's stuck up the apple tree me dad'll have to go and get her' (laughs).</p>
12.50		

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