

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
10-8-10	Rory	Trevor	70-75	16:51

Key timing	Initial of person speaking	Transcription of Interview
00:00	Trevor	Trevor Buckley, I live at Sandy Acres, Skelton Drove, Beck Row. I've been married 40 year in March this year. My wife is one of the Aires. Old Ginger Son as they used to call her father was well known about this end of the country, more so from Romford in London. We bought this piece of ground and developed it to where it is today. We have 2 sons they run the business that I gave them 10 year ago, which is Beck Row yard Auto Dismantlers. I got the yard passed and through so it's a fully licensed breakers yard. We live near Mildenhall, 200 yards from the big Mildenhall Air-base.
00:43		Myself, I was born with a silver spoon, now a gold spoon in my mouth. So I was one of the lucky ones. My father who could not read and write was a very clever man with cars and car dealing so from the day I was born I was stepped into a family that was prosperous, doing well. He was a very good car dealer. He started Bury St Edmunds Car Auction. He went there one day and they told him if you don't move your there Fred, 'coz it was only a chicken and machinery auction, and they said to him if you don't move your car Fred Buckley we'll sell it! Well go and do so I got a yard full of car and in those days, early days, just not long after the war you couldn't buy motors. My father was buying all the cars, which came. Second hand cars what was taken in by W H Johnson and Managen's of Kings Lyn my father was the main buyer for them so we had a yard full of motors when other gypsies were still in benders some of them.
02:22		When I was born in 1937, I was born into a family that had plenty of pennies anyway so I had a very good life. We had a good yard. Plenty of money, chickens and pigs and cattle and horses; all through the wartime so we never went short of anything. Apart from having lorries on the runways, At Brenham, Scunthorpe and so forth, tipper lorries, so he got plenty of petrol coupons so he could hand out the other gypsies as they come to his yard which was a regular stream and he never used to charge 'coz he was that sort of man he was just pleased to help other poorer travellers out.
02:57		We had lived opposite the school I only had to cross the road and that's where the primary school was. I stayed there until it was time for me to go up to the bigger school. I went for my 11plus but being too clever, I was already too clever, I was already a class higher than I should have been I was in there with some London evacuees so my brain was good enough but It was I was too clever for my own good so I never passed my 11 plus. So I went to a very good secondary school called West Wold and I stayed there for a little while until we went on the road from then on.
		At 13 year old I left school and I went then to join the family and earning a living. We did all sorts. By this time we had a little new lorry, Bedford lorry. We went down to Epsom races. Dad bought a little two three ton Bedford lorry and we fitted all the chrome bits and the big his masters voice radio. I was the bee's knee. Chrome cabs. Bought that and a new, what they call, scaravan and went straight down to Epsom down.
		That was in 1951. Lester Piggott won in his first derby on I Never Say Die. 'Coz I'm the same age as Lester Piggott. And I was walking about there with a little boater hat on a new suit and a big dickey tie. So, you know, I was the bee's knees as far as I was concerned. It was fun and then we came back and started to do the bag buying again. Although Dad was still car dealing I was doing the bag buying. Bag buying is buying empty sacks from the farms and from market gardeners all around Bedfordshire and also umm the Koshie Toshers which is the big Pauls, BOCMs and so forth right up there. Some was flour bags, some were corn bags which we used to turn inside shake and wrap up into twenties and sell back to the Potato Merchants in those days we was making 2/6

06:01	<p>and 3/6 each in those days and we was turning them over by the thousand. We used to have a big seven and a half ton Ford Thames lorry and we'd have 3 and 4 thousand bags a time on that. And I wouldn't come back unless I had that tail board down changed and that was loaded right onto the mud guards and I used to go every day Id go up there 5 days a week id travel out with that and I used to leave at 5 or 6 o'clock every morning to be into Bedfordshire. And of course you used to send your cards out so we knew places to pick. So you already nearly got half a load before you start then it was matter of calling and buying as you go. Being a good dart player too I could reckon up quick. So I was always good for numbers when I was at school I was always good at numbers I was fairly good at English better at history and then everything 1066 and all that I could do all that sort of thing. You know I wasn't clever enough to settle my mind down to get really academic like.</p> <p>We came across here in 1951 after we come from the Derby we came down here we put lorries to work on Lakenheath and Mildenhall aerodrome. We worked for WC French, William and Charlie French. We worked for. So we had 12 lorries running on here of which I was a driving. So I was driving tipper lorries when I was 14 year old on this aerodrome and I was helping me brother who was 5 year older than me to the repairs and mending punctures and changing engines and everything after night time. I used to have 2 cushions under me and an old trilby hat on my head.</p> <p>The cold calling and things have been stopped. Times have changed they need education today so we need the stopping place we need these places schooling for the children every child every site should have some sort of cabin a place where if the children can't get to school or they are backwards they can come in and they can have a private tutor to come in and teach them; for farming, policeman or anything.</p> <p>We wouldn't starve. We don't go on the benefits. Never in my life. I've always worked, all my life. So has my wife. We've never ever had to... I suppose we've been lucky but it in't all luck. You've got to get out there an' get it. Go out and work like what we have seven days a week. What we've got, we've worked for every penny. So the difference between us and the settled people, we've got proud; we're pride. We've got pride. We're proud of what we are. We're proud. When we go into meetings and places, and my wife does talks all over you know whether its Nottingham or Midlands down or where ever. We let them know straight away who we are. We're proud to be who we are. We're proud to be gypsies.</p>
07:13	<p>Trouble is there are not enough sites. They are spending so much money trying to evict people. If there were enough sites and people are frightening each other and what helping them? The media!</p>
07:20	<p>Everybody knows me as a dog man. My father was into dogs. He used to breed track dogs all his life. I was leading greyhounds out when I was 5 year old. I'm now nearly 73 so I've had like 68 year at it. I've had one or two won me out. He was always the lucky man and I'm.. I was always lucky and I've always had good dogs. People say the old saying is you only have one good thing in your lifetime. It's Very foolish. I've just one and she was the best there was in the country for years and if anything ever happens one always turns up the next year or the following year. So I've had lots of really good dogs. I mean outstanding. In lurchers and in greyhounds, so I'm a lucky bastard you know. People say to me, my wife says well it's only the way you train them and do 'em. It isn't that, It may be a little bit to do with it. I've... I suppose after all these years I'm entitled to have a little bit of experience. I had one running last week-end in Abbeydorney I got another one running this weekend in Charleville and the following weekend I've got my bitch running in Lincoln. Its... unfortunately its getting a bit expensive.</p> <p>So I follow the breedings through from the grandfathers and granddad and I follow that bloodline through when I buy a puppy. Its got to be near enough, there's no excuses. If you've got a good bitch and a good dog you've still got to have 75 % luck and I mean that. But you still got to have good animals breeding. You cant just grab hold of a thing and say I'm going to win Tom Mel with him there's six thousand puppies, five to six thousand puppies born every year in Ireland. Thoroughbred dogs and there's only sixty four dog puppies and sixty four bitch puppies qualify to run in Tom Mel and if you win</p>

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the Oaks or you win the Derby, you know, you can give anything from three to five thousand pound a piece for puppies as soon as they're dropped out.

One of my favourite moments. I've got an exceptional lady as a wife. I must be the luckiest man alive to have found her. There is never another 2 in the world like her. She must be the best gold brick ever was made. When I first met them, met her. I suppose I was in a pub the West End at Feltwell. I was in there one night. Me younger sister an' all the young travelling people were in there and I stood against the bar talking I knew her, but umm we'd never been out or anything like that. Gloria was sitting along the back where all the young women were laughing and talking amongst their selves and it was Easter time funnily enough. And behind this bar of this pub was a great big giant Easter egg and I mean one the biggest giant eggs you ever seen and it was there to be raffled off you know. So umm I said to the landlord I'll buy that. No he said you can't buy it, its got to be raffled. So I said how much's it got to come to. He told me. Well, at the time, there used to be what we called the red half a quids, which was the 10 bob note. So there was 8 or 9 of us, more standing against the bar so my brother stands and says lets chuck a half a quid a piece in he said and well shake a dice for it. Coz they was all doing it, I'm not a good gambling man, I said right. So we chucked 10 bob a piece in, these red half a quids as well called them, 10 of us. I suppose chucked them in. £5 I suppose in those days was a lot of money for an Easter egg wan't it? Anyways shook the dice up and down and as luck would happen, I won. So give the man the money for this egg. So you know they're all.. you know, you... just imagine the noise in this the music going, they're all hollering and a looping and all these royal girls sitting around the bar. So I picked this big Easter egg up and I turned round and I walked straight across the room and they was all stood watching me. The place had gone quiet. I walked straight across and I sit it down in front of Gloria like that and I said I'll pick you up on Saturday night. Now her 3 brothers, all fighting men, standing behind me and she blushed 'coz she's red headed anyway and me sister and them sit there, me younger sister and the others and they was all sitting there and me sister, big smile, she thought I was going to give it to her. I said I'm going to pick you up Saturday night and I looked round. All right she said. So Saturday night, away I went. At the time I was working on the M2 Faversham in Kent. I just bought a brand new Zodiac. it came out St Albans garage. Stood in the showroom. Me and me father walked in there a little while before and the man wadn't home. The garage had just been sold and the car stood in there and we bought it paid him for it for the tax and the spot lights to be put on there and the seat covers and we was to pick it up on the Friday. We backed it out and home we come.

And then as I say, won this Easter egg, give it to Gloria, that Saturday night went down there and umm picked her up. I was working in Kent at the time. Umm... Faversham in Kent and there was a little pub there. He used to have the biggest boxes of chocolates, know like chests of drawers? That's how big. 5 layers, the best, used to buy them and I never used to come down any weekend that I didn't have her one of those boxes of chocolates. The other girls used to go raving mad and that Easter it caused murders so that Easter eggs coz when she got back the other travelling boys couldn't afford half of them couldn't afford so coming back with little Easter eggs caused murders, caused absolute murders amongst them. When they was all stopping on this site at Littleport there. We well Littleport southern around where they all used to meet. We went out together for a long time actually and then we split up and I went away with my lorries to Hathem in Leicestershire to go on the Kegwoth Bypass and I worked down there. I worked away for 3 year. We split for 3 year and I came back and I knew where all the travellers used to meet there. At the Station Hotel in March on Saturday night so I went back in there and I didn't know whether she'd met somebody else and got him or what and I thought well I will find out. So and I went in and she said... so she looked for a few seconds then she ignored me. So I thought oh dear its going to be difficult. So anyway I waited until the people finished, the pub went to close and I walked over and I said I'm taking you home. So she looked at her brothers and they never said nothing. So anyway she... I was driving a new mini cooper at the time and err she got in it and home we come. Before we got home, we pulled into a little lane near where she was at in 'coz I left her for a length of time. She give me the mother and father of all dressing downs.

16:51		<p>Never ever in my life, I've never had anybody tell me the facts of life like she did and never will do and she didn't repeat herself once. So she raved on maybe quarter of an hour maybe 20 minutes. So then I said right. So I got out, went round the motor, opened the door, let her get out, shut the door, walked round, got in my motor. I see you finished? You're finished. She said yeah. Right, well I said I'll go down there and get your brothers to come back and pick you up. Now we're at least a mile down the road from where she lived. She looked at me. I said I shan't come back no more. I said what you've said tonight every word is true and I was entitled to that but I said I don't mind if that's the clean out, Ill take that. But I said I'm not going to have that continue throughout. I said. I come from a family where they're always having a row and you're family's the same, but I said that won't be for me and you. She came down got back in the motor and I driv her home. Opened the door and she got out and she said pick me up Saturday night. That was it, we got back together again. That was the best days work I ever done in my life and the hardest 'coz believe me she tore me off something, unbelievable! Do you know we wouldn't have that many high words in 40 years? We wouldn't have had not 5 times in 40 years that you could look back and say that's how good a marriage we've had and if it weren't for her I wouldn't have been nothing.</p>
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