

Romany Theatre Company

Atching Tan Project

Reminiscence Interview – Transcription of Edited Interview

Date of Interview 2009		Interviewer DL	Interviewee WL	Age Range of Interviewee 30-40	Duration of Edited Recording 13:40
Key timing	Initial of person speaking	Transcription of Interview			
00:00	WL	Well I ain't got no memories of travelling around. When I was young and growing up we always lived in a bungalow in Sutton, down Sutton Court . There weren't no other travellers down there, not near us anyway. The only place we used to get to was Paston Ridings and that was to see my Granny and Grandad, but as to really visit anybody apart from them; we never used to see any cousins not really not unless we was in the 'tata season when we used to work over at Bedford that was the only time we used to see any cousins or anything like that but apart from that we only used to visit granny and granddad. So as to seeing anybody else my own age no really no.			
00:54		Almost down Sutton Court you was accepted, but not completely accepted. You always knew that people classed you different. You always know that people said, well, oh "they're travellers, they're not 'oh that's such and such that, like David what lives there or what ever", they're travelling people what live there and you always used to get that and now its almost like normal that mark that's Paul that's David there's no segregation like your all one and everybody knows each other. I suppose I got on with each group the same it's the surroundings what I have been in when I was younger, you make friends and it's the surroundings your in now you make friends. I suppose all in all you are more accepted where I am now rather than where I was when I was younger even though I had friends, but not as many.			
01:54		Well, I suppose when I was at school it weren't a bad time to be a traveller at school, because I don't know a lot of people wanted to be like travellers really, I am not going to say like the real posh ones, but the ones what was if you are going to say it a bit lower in class they sort of wanted to be like travellers and they really did accept you and I never really had any bother off anybody not because I was a traveller I never got hit or beat up or anything because I was a traveller, it just being me they didn't really care in that aspect.			
02:32		For a start off with work was a lot easier without trying to sound racist my self. There wasn't quite so many foreign workers in the country and they do the work that we used to do and like with different things what's been on the telly like now that wasn't on the telly before that's made it harder for the door knocking and for people to trust you round the doors because of the few people that go round and don't do the work right and that's not just travellers that's gorgia people as well. Then it's just made work very, very hard. Like travelling people now they don't stop on the side of the road or nothing like that now almost everybody has got ground or what's passed or they just pull on places what's trying to get the grounds passed and all you see in the newspapers and on the telly is these peoples trying to get their places passed and people in the villages complaining, just complaining all the time, that they don't want the travellers around them. Like why are people trying to make home here they should be out somewhere else they always trying to pass everybody off an that's al you see about travellers now, you don't see, you don't see travellers on the telly stopping on the sides of the road and getting moved on you see them on their own places trying to get them passed, but get moved on anyway.			
04:21		Its just like there's good and bad travellers there's good and bad gorgia people as well they shouldn't, they should class everyone the same all the way through. Sad for both sides, Travellers just want a place to live they're not going to get kicked off and they're gong to have somewhere to call their own and gorgia people think that having travellers around is going to devalue their place and if they want to sell it they're going to have			

05:49	<p>trouble that way abouts, but everybody needs a place to live don't they. I mean even amongst gorgia people when I was growing they still have values they still didn't want the children getting up to too much, but now I don't know I think not just gorgias, but travellers as well, both sides the values have dropped in both side travellers as well as gorgias going up and down now doing things that they wouldn't have been doing even when I was growing up 20 year ago they wouldn't have been doing it. Both side have got values, but both standards are dropping. I mean it is not just travellers its gorgias as well I suppose to use a gorgias words its society in general its just times, a changing times I suppose. I mean it will probably go around full circle again and in another 20 year and I don't know more respect again I suppose.</p> <p>I think the Romanesk that we talk, some Romanesk that we talk now a days, its just like, its not even Romanesk I think its more slang than anything and like when you go up the even when you go up the town you can hear like you ;can be sitting down anywhere and you can hear the gorgias, the gorgias start talking the same sort of slang what they've picked up off the travellers as well and there's more and more people talking it and so I mean the Romanesk that we're talking now, more gorgias understand that just as many gorgias understand that as what we do. I mean, I can remember 1988, yeah, 1988, we went over to the French convention and the French Travellers over there. We went after water and we tried to ask people where we could get some water from, yeah, we got it across what we wanted, when they started talking in Romanesk to us we couldn't talk back, we couldn't understand what they was, odd things, but not to talk fluently like they could. So I suppose, yeah, to learn it and to be able to talk to your breed of people all the way across the world then, yeah, it would be good definitely, for the children as well, definitely. Without being racist, felt like gorgias amongst, err, the French and the Spanish and the other Travellers what was there, we didn't know nothing compared to what they knew. I mean, I wasn't that Old I was only 10 year old at the time, but it just showed you that , how little that we knew than what we think we know, ya know. Like we call ourselves travellers, we should know the language that we're supposed to know, ya know, the language that we, ya know, that elders and grandfathers and great grandfathers knew. It should be passed on so we knew what they knew, right. My opinion to this is, if it'd been taught by travellers, yeah, travellers'd go and you would get a decent few people go, but if it was taught by gorgias, the travellers wouldn't have no respect. They would say what does the old gorgia boy know, what does the old gorgia girl know. They don't, we've got them teaching us our language, ya know what, and there wouldn't' be so many peoplego.</p>
08:12	<p>I mean travellers are very, well used to be, very very musical, I know that there's music in the traveller's churches and that there, but not just that, like when they used ... nobody sits outside with fires any more and I remember old men sitting down with a paina accordion, I can remember sitting outside with a fire, baking 'tatas and people sitting there with the paina accordion. I can remember that, I mean nobody does that now, I mean nobody even ... I shouldn't think knows what a paina accordion is let alone hear one.</p>
08:49	<p>I always remember like the 'tata picking and that when we used to go over to jersey, I wasn't old enough to pick anything up, I used to sit around, they probably sit me on the tractor just to steer the tractor or something whilst they loaded the trailer, but I wouldn't a been no older than seven year old. But over this side we used, like, the same thing, 'tata picking again, I mean we did the 'tata picking in Bedford for a few more year after finishing over in Jersey and I did start, only just start to do the 'tata picking. I can remember the St Ives, the plum picking and the strawberry picking at Wisbech, but after that it was just like carting scrap and I suppose more recently its, like, the tree work and stuff like that, but like going with everything all the works faded, the only thing what's kept going is the scrap, but even that's harder to get. That's the only thing what's gone through time though, that's the only thing what's lasted.</p>
10:07	<p>What defines me as a travellers, first off the way of life is trying to be round your own people, I know that's a sort of like an awkward answer but being a traveller you see other travellers every day that a lot of them wont pass you by without saying hello or putting their hand up. You know when you go and par of people and say oh yeah I can</p>

10:59		<p>see there travellers, you know you stand out from the crowd, but I suppose deep down we want to, we want to stand out , we want to be ourselves, we want to be our own people, we don't want to be the same as everybody else, its what we've growed up with and we don't want that to change now.</p> <p>I just want to live comfortable, not to worry I want to see my children grow up and be happy, I want to see my wife happy, just to live comfortable and be happy. That's not a lot to ask</p> <p>I think travelling people always survive whatever, pretty much whatever's thrown at them, they'll just adapt to get around what ever there is to get around. I mean, its (not without sounding silly) what's in your heart is in your heart and if being a travellers in your heart then its ... they cant take that away from you. It is always going to be there. Its going to be in my children, its going to be in my children's children, as long as they're allowed to be, as long as they want to be, it will be in 'em and they can change whatever they (<i>the gorgias</i>) want, but its not going to change that so, in that case they'll get round it someway or another, they'll survive it.</p>
12:12	DL	<p>So will you a point, in life are you making a point to point your children in a certain direction then, like to at least give them some notice of what they are and how to live as a gypsy person?</p>
12:34	WL	Well, to the best of my ability anyway, yeah
	DL	So for yourselves (this is the last question, just trying to think what it is). For yourself, right, do you worry about the future?
	WL	Yeah I worry about the future 'cos its like I said to your earlier on, its hard enough now and it will get harder, but travelling people and my children, they'll adapt to whatever change needs to be made and even though how hard its going to get, I know they'll find a way round it. Perhaps they wont live the greatest of life and the greatest of comforts, but I know they'll get by and they'll do whatever needs to be done so, yeah, fearful for them, but they'll get on with it.
13.34	DL	Alright Wayne, thank you very much for this interview and maybe well talk again another time.
13.40		

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