

Maybe just tell me a bit in your words about your diary keeping and what you do and what it is to you?

Well I started off in my mid 20's, as I said earlier, because someone said I keep a 5 year diary, with an entry every day. And I thought I'll try that, and I did it for 5 years, and it's upstairs in the loft somewhere, goodness knows where. Then I let it go for a while after that, and then when I started teaching, the school diaries came out, I thought well(...) and then there were other small ones, bridge ones and whatever, and I thought well I could try and take a few notes down, and normally it was to do with work, this sort of things, and then a few years personal things crept in afterwards, things I was going to, things I was doing, just normal ordinary stuff, some days were blank, some days had entries. It wasn't sort of a systematic diary keeping at that stage.

As you get older I don't know what it is (...) but I threw more and more things in. And in my 30's I took up jogging after a fashion, I was quite keen to go on trekking holidays, high altitude, and I thought can you do it, are you fit enough? So I started jogging and I ended up doing marathons, I'm a bit tubbier now, this was a long while ago! This was in my 30's and 40's. And I started marathons, I did London twice, Dundee twice, done about 50 half marathons, and I started putting my training schedules in, that was the reason for putting it down, how many miles per week, times, so on and so on. And then later on of course, family came along... (tea comes in)... little bits and bobs, as you get older you get more forgetful, so you tend to put little reminders in as well. And latterly, I found several things in... I mentioned Munroes... I started quite late in my 50's doing hillwalking and I started logging all the Munroes, we're about half way there roughly, and things went right and wrong, and we've had a few complications in the last few years in the family, one or two wee crises and they were in as well, and just more reasons to put things in.

And now I'm 68, and my memory's not what it is, nothing like it. So erm, it's helped in that way, check things, my wife said 'what happened last year, when did the children come back?' etc. etc. and I hadn't a clue. I had to go and check the diary, she hadn't a clue either, she's 10 years younger, I had to go and check it all, so the diary for the last 5/6 years has been quite useful, for checking things that have happened, because we can't put dates to them. And just now as a routine I keep it going. It's pretty boring, but I just keep it going, keep it going you know,

So you've been keeping a diary for 40 odd years? Off and on, off and on, but erm some years very little, some years a lot. It's not been a systematic diary, but it's been going on for quite a while (?). I went through a funny phase... I went through a pagan phase, you'll like that, I won't give too much detail on that one, yeh that was quite interesting.

I retired quite early from work, basically I was one of those staff who never said no, more and more work 'I could do it, I could do it'. It was a small department, I developed everything, from S1 to S6 it was just me. And once you've started doing that, and a full teaching schedule as well, and new courses for the school, new exams coming in... all of that me me me.

(Talking about teaching career).

I quite enjoyed doing it, also marked for exam board...

I got to my early to mid-50's, and I went to the well once too often, and the well was dry. And just briefly (...) part of my willpower was so strong, I was quite, inverted commas "charismatic in the classroom" - my nickname was psycho by the way.

But you think you're invincible and you're not. You know. And it ended up I was walking out to the car one morning, going to work, I ended up collapsing on the driveway, throwing up, no advance at all. And this happened several times. Doctor etc. etc. no reason whatsoever, I was fine in the classroom, teaching was fine, no problem, just getting from the front door to the car was difficult. I kept dropping and being violently sick. Stress, anxiety, burnout call it what you want. My subconscious was telling me 'you've had enough, get the hell out'. So eventually I saw the medical psychologist, I came out on medical grounds, and I've never looked back since, I'm fine now. But the name of that game is never give too much to any one job, No matter how good you think you are, just don't do it. The staff who survived longer than I did were the lazy ones! Or perhaps the more sensible ones. All my friends, they've all gone for similar reasons, every last one's out on medical grounds.

So you're still keeping a diary... Oh yes, oh yes. **And can you tell me just a bit about...** Chris Elsdon, you're in there! **Ha! Good! Can you tell me a bit about the practicalities first, how often you write, and where do you write and when you do it? These sort of things...**

Well last few years, I write everyday.. everyday gets a different entry, I don't miss any now, I tend to have some (...) at the top. Pocket money (...) at the top. It's everyday I write, I switched there because the year switched (academic diary...) (...) the previous one where are we... ah here we are. I don't miss any days, it looks blank but it's not, because when I switched, and there we go, it's everyday. I was still doing a lot of walking then and that's stuff on the.. **And the colours...** that's exercise bike, how many k on the bike. Roughly about 25k,30k most days. Oh that's my weight there as well, I went through that for a long spell...

Do you carry this around with you or do you... No no it just sits up in the house. *Surgeon reckons not promising.* That's doesn't look too good. What's that, *Queen Margaret's....* We've had a lot of bother in the last few years, last year Alison was diagnosed with cancer and that was quite scary, they caught it in time, we've had a fair few problems... I had to go in for an operation about 6

years ago, I got the Queens surgeon, I got him purely by chance!

(describing health problems and mental problems with youngest son)

But that (the health and son's problems) goes in there as well, quite stressful the last few years.

It's normally written at home though, the diary is not carried about, no it's written at home.

Before you go to bed or in the evening? Anytime.

It seems like there's a real mix of more mundane things like how far you walk, and then maybe more bigger personal...

You always get a line in here. It's all they get, if I think it's important, I want to see it again, I'll do it in red or yellow, yeh.

Do you only write, or are there other things you keep like newspaper clippings or photographs?

I've got one or two, but, just one or two, of people I thought were important when I was young. University lecturers or professors or class mates who had died recently.

(List of people died).

Interesting because in your mind they're young men, or youngish men, but of course they're not any more.

And do you think anyone else could make any sense of it, or is it very referential, or just enough of a note, that you understand it, but maybe not anyone else?

A lot of it would be easily recognisable if you could read my writing, by anyone. But any bit I think is a bit tricky or possibly embarrassing goes into a code, into german or something! Take no chances!

And you never sort of miss a day?

Not now... years and years ago I used to.

What's the sort of oldest one?

The oldest one is a 5-year one, but I can't show it to you. The oldest one that's more recent...

And you say you don't tend to look back at them?

No I don't at all, unless I've got a reason to, and my wife asks me what happened. No I don't no. I don't know why, (searching for diaries) the (...) blank but not much in them, that'll be a lot of school, so not much in that one. Does it go further back than that.. 88, 84. Let's try 84, you might find very little in them. Not so much... you can't call that a diary.

It's more of an agenda..

A long time ago...

And do these mean anything to you now? You say you don't look back at them...

Well I might now that you've come along and stirred things up! I might well do... it's just running, it's basically running. **But that kind of kept you in the habit...** Well it did, it just gave you how many hours each week, it's blank otherwise. Just miles, times, half-marathons.

Where as what you write now is a bit more reflective?

Oh now, now is tons of stuff yeh. I've got one thing here it's not really a diary.. noticed it the other day there. It's just the start, had a little poem, poems are always there (? but it was quite interesting...) Mother's death. It's 9.44. George took mother to (...)

Dear old John Wayne bit the dust here, not sure why I did that, but that's why I've got this poem here because.. (mumbling, very hard to make out...)

When you say you don't really back at them so much, why do you keep them or why do you look back at them?

(mumbling) I never actually thought I would go back and go through it all and work it out, but I just sort of the last 4 or 5 years I've written so many things, maybe I should go back and look at it. And I've got great detail on things, not diaries as such, on certain holidays, combined effort of my wife and I, we had a holiday in France when the children were quite young , so we've got photographs, and that's all written up in great detail. And I've got one when we first met, her first holiday abroad - South America, Peru - we met climbing in the Andes. Standard joke that I bore the whole world with - she calls it love at first site, I call it altitude sickness. But we met in the andes... (chatting about andes). We've got that in great detail as well, but it's not one of these, it's a big thing. **So it's what, photographs...** Photographs or (mumble).. it's all written up in great detail.

So things that are more important... Well they were important, a lot of fantastic holidays, a month. And of course the France thing is hilarious because that was the year of the ban, and you weren't sure if they'd let you off the ship. (story about strike and blockade on French family holiday). So that was an important holiday, that was fun.

So are those things you regularly get out as a family and... we do. We do yes, the kids in particular, they loved the France one, Daddy's hair wasn't this colour in those days, daddy wasn't as fat in those days, that's right yeh.

On a day to day way, how do you decide what to write about? Is it just whatever comes to mind, or do you have something in particular you want to try and write about?

Well some days it's difficult finding stuff because nothing exciting has happened, but I feel I should write something anyway, even if it's just a normal routine. It's

normally what has happened that day, which might be very boring to the rest of mankind, or perhaps something (...) or perhaps some niggles I've got possibly. The bridge gets mentioned. You know, if we're doing something, it's basically recording just now the events of each day such as they are, and as we're both retired it's not that fantastic anymore, but I don't miss a day though.

And you said then you feel like you should write something? Well I just got into the routine, that's what I do.

And if you did miss a day, how do you think you would feel about it?

Well I have missed a day, occasionally but I write up the next day. I have missed a day actually writing up that particular day, but it gets written up the next day before I forget. I've never missed a single day .

And where do you think that motivation comes from, for writing and to keep recording things?

Crass stupidity? I don't know what I've done or what it is. I don't know, I've never thought about it,. I've no intention of letting the children see it. I said to the wife I'll burn it! I don't know, I've just a strange personality, one time I was a bit bored, so I thought I'd write a book, but then again that's something else. So I ended up doing that for quite a while. Getting 150 pages done and then I got fed up with it. But I don't know.. I think I like writing. I've got a facility with words, and I'm one of the worlds worst letter-writers, and I postpone postpone postpone. But when I do write, I like to play around with it. Maybe it's having quite an interesting play around with the words, I'll check what I've written, I don't like that, so I'll change it. So I'll end up writing something that's meant to be funny. **So keeping your hand in with writing as well..** . Basically.

Maybe give me a flavour of a few of the different diaries and pick out some interesting examples... anything that sticks out to you as being sort of relevant and you might look back on and find interesting, to give me a flavour of what's in there and what detail.

Might want to look further back... what would I find interesting. Trouble is it's incredibly boring...

I mean when you're looking at it is that period of life coming back? Oh yeh. (...) that was a bridge tournament.

Hahaha! *Garden gate falls off!* Big black iron gate falls down, had to get it fixed, that cost a few bob.

What's the colour coding?

I regard it as some sort of (...help?) that I'm using.

Alison 9.40, d-day 12:30 operation. (long pause). Yeh that was the hysterectomy (tapping page). That's a big one.

And is that why it's in yellow?

Yes I guess so I'd know it was there. (long pause)

I think that's chatting to the surgeon (mumble) a Lebanese surgeon, very intelligent. (mumble) They didn't know if the cancer had spread or not.

That's just sort of beforehand, various surgeons in there, (...) St Andrews. They thought it was early cancer initially.

I was on crutches for 6 (weeks?). I took a tumble and er and ripped (...) right up here. That was fun! (...)

But I was terrified before you came that you'd find it all incredibly boring...

No, no, one of the things that's really interesting is there's a lot of new technologies which make it easier to record these mundanities, and part of what I'm trying to do, is really figure out why the mundane is important to people. And why do we record these things and why they're important to us. Or is it just the big events in life we record.

No... not with me. Unless it affects me personal. I did a lot of erm.. A couple of years ago my daughter got married and I had to try and get into my kilt so I went insane with my weight factor, trying to get it down. This is 13, 11st - I'm much heavier these days.

And you're really are just recording the details like how far you walked and calories all within...

That's basically it, there's nothing enormously exciting really. Yes with sporting stuff yeh.

And as you're looking through that-

- Oh yes misplaced wedding ring! That was a laugh! I went to a shop down there, couldn't find where my wedding ring was, went insane for about a day trying to find it, my wife wasn't too pleased. That was a good laugh. (Weigh in?...) when was that?

Statues arrived? Oh yes, building the statues up there (?).

Looking back now, you've recorded all this stuff, what are the important now, what are the things you would be sad to lose...

Well, I've lost... I used to do a lot of running, a lot of heavy walking. It's good stuff. (long pause, looking at diary)

Ah that's Alison's yeh (...)

I suppose it's loss in many ways, things I used to do without thinking about it, for example with the munros, we'd get up at 5.30/6 in the morning, pitch dark in the winter time, really bad weather, (...) land rover and we'd get in that thing and drive for 3 hours up to the Munros, and we're actually changed there in a howling gale, stripped to the waist, get all the gear on, and it's barely daylight and we start walking, and we'd spend 8 or 10 or occasionally 11 hours in the hills. and drive 3 hours back again, getting back here about half 11 to midnight. Now that's

gone, forever. Too old and not fit anymore. It's nice knowing what we did in detail. That was exciting. And we had one or two really hairy escapes there. I took a mad tumble in (crannagh clachash moor?) 5 miles out from the car, and up the hill, went flying down the hill, and had to hobble for 5 miles to get out.

Another time we had to come down from (crannagh...?) at 9 at night, pitch black apart from the moon, and we came down the wrong side of a raging burn! Or a small river! Had to wade it, it was about this deep, it's hammering past, you get to the car, that was exciting you know?

The fact that these are recorded, obviously these are things that you remember quite well as well, what more do you get, what more is recorded in a diary if that makes sense?

You forget certain details, and of course you don't know the time factor at all, when it actually happened. I can't put things into months, sometimes not even into years. So I can locate where it was, when it was, and I couldn't do that without a diary you know. And my memory now, my recall was ok about 40/50 years ago, but it goes away as you get older, my recall the last, 1 or 2, the last 3 or 4 or 5 years is not good. It's getting worse all the time.

That's why I said to your mother - I took to bridge very late, self taught, a DVD and a book... (describing bridge) I came to it quite late, and I'm a bit annoyed about that. I used to play a lot of chess when I was younger, and I was quite good. (...) and again, my memory is not as good as it should be. I see [people playing bridge] and that, and they've got great memories.

And so it's those sort of details then that you would maybe hope you get...

Well if I don't put them down, I've no chance of keeping them at all, and I realise that I (get in to that?). But it's just (basically easier...?) to go back and check things.

So what are the sort of things you would go back and check?

Children when they were young, things we did, I'd forgotten half the things I did with my kids when they were very very young... just out for walks here, kids here, walking with kids strapped to my chest, up west lomond in a blizzard. Just family things, normal things, ordinary things, nothing too important. It's probably boring as hell the diary, but it things we did that I would tend to forget.

And what's it like to remember them?

Oh It's basically a good feeling. It's not all my imagination, they actually did happen, because the strange thing about life is, your young you ok, it goes past very fast! It's really scary! I mean I did 30 years in the classroom, and in the blink of an eye it's gone. If you've got a busy routine, and you're good at it, and you do it on autopilot half the time and you're still good, you know. Time goes past fast, because you're so busy. And I can't believe I've been married for over 30 years. It's just ridiculous. I got married late, in my mid-30's, I just can't believe it. It

seems like maybe 5-10 years ago, and it's 30. Time plays tricks, and the diary gives you a bit more of a notion of reality, because time does play tricks.

And do you ever have moments when you look back at things, or you doubt it or do you know the diary's right?

Oh I know the diary's right. Yeh, yeh. But I look in the mirror and see an old man (..) who's that! (laughter) It's true though because you don't age much in here. You know, and the body's getting older and older and the hair's falling out, and the wrinkles are coming, you know, you're getting tubby. But you're still the same in here. It's strange. It's good, it's a reality check. I don't check it that often but it's a reality check.

You said before, Alison was asking you something, and you decided to look back at it. But that motivation to check something, is that more someone else who says something, and you think 'oh actually, I'm able to look that up'?

It's more that than myself going back to be honest. What I'll go back is for - 'what did I do? What was my running pattern like?' I can be boastful at times, so I'll say what did you do with your running pattern 'oh I did 50 miles a week!' - well... some weeks! So I'd go back and check it, I'd go back and check see what exactly happened and good weeks and bad weeks. And someone would ask how did you manage in that marathon, what was it like, well I can't say offhand so I have to go back and check it.

Do you feel like you've got enough details - and those are really small entries, sort of crammed in - have you ever been inclined to write more or have a bigger book? Or...

Not... I did once. But I didn't get very far. They act as a trigger. Trigger memory. If I take my time with one day, it's something semi-important, and I think about it, more things come back.

As you're writing it, I don't know, are you thinking about the future when you're writing it or are you just writing it from the day?

Just the day. Future nah, I don't think about that at all because I don't know how many years I've got, months or days or anything. No, I stopped that a while ago. When I was told, (...) once you're told you've got a blocked artery you see things a bit differently. Once you go for an angiogram, you see things a different. (.... describing heart operation...)

But you get the idea of mortality, so I don't think too far ahead no. I might have 20 years, might have 20 months, might have 20 minutes (laughter).

Everyone thinks they're going to live forever when they're young, you know, it takes something to shock you. I realised early on it didn't work that way. I lost my father when I was 1st year university and I had just turned 18. Sudden heart attack, boot, gone. It dawns on you life's a bit more tenuous. Makes you more

interested in doing things, not sitting around doing nothing the whole time.

What are the things looking back now, even just looking back there, what are the things you think that are most interesting in your diary? What kind of details are the ones that have sort of retained meaning and been important.

I think I have to say in all honesty, apart from the family and children obviously and the holidays too, and other things as well, it would be the keep fit stuff, the hill walking and the running. I came to it quite late, mid 30's, 40's. My last marathon, I was 47 my last marathon, that's a while back now. The hill-walkign I started in 2002, I came to it late. So it basically my 50's. We've been up 14 munros ... mind you, having said which, we got one last August, number 14. So still did one there, an easy one. I think I miss that because we've had one or two hiccups. Damaged this knee last christmas, damaged disc in the summer, my wife had the operation for cancer, so all the keep fit stuff, (the getting old?), hence the weight. So we're quite keen this spring to try again to see what we can do. And just gradually build up the Lomonds first of all, and (more hills). So I'm keen to have one last try.

Because eh... The one thing I haven't forgotten is the day I managed to get across (...) up at Glencoe, that's a grade 3 scramble, with a 3000ft. (describing dangerous walk). You're right on the edge, no protection at all... and that's fun.

The keep fit stuff... you've just got some of that in the diaries but you've got other records of that as well would you say? And would you say you look back at that more then than the diaries?

I wouldn't say so no. But if it's one particular mountain, one particular day, or some detail we've forgotten.

When you say the keep fit, what sort of detail is it, like just how far you've gone or the times?

Oh I'm a bit of a nutter with times. The first one's always ok, you're lazy, you weren't awake, you're as slow as you want.(...) The second time is different - 'gotta beat that time, gotta beat that time' - I'm very time conscious. Wife gets fed up.

One of the things, as I say there's lots of people who have a little band or something, or something on the phone, where they track all their cycling and sort of running... and when we came to this project actually, was you know, people are recording these things because they want to motivate themselves or keep fit or whatever.

That's right. Well that was one of the reasons, for doing that as well, what did I get last time? Try and beat that, beat that.

And it's interesting over time that meaning changes, and now for you it's a way of looking back at things.

Well I know I did that. Yes.

Are there things that are missing, are there things that you wish you'd recorded that you haven't?

Well we can all say that yeh, we can all say that. I wish we'd taken more photographs, I was bad with the camera. Wife's pretty good. Shots of the children growing up, we can all say that. We've got a lot of photographs but..I never got into singing at all, some of my family did, I wish maybe I'd done that.

But in terms of the diaries...

I could have written a lot more about certain things. It's difficult because erm... if there's someone close to you who's died, I would just tend to go for a walk myself, and just think things out rather than keep that in a diary. It's in the diary, but very very briefly (...) that would become too morbid. I've tended to be stupidly Scottish in that one. This happened, I was here, they were there. And what I think in here get's out for the walk by myself.

But reading the diary brings back. Just a wee bit brings it back. I'm there again.

And that detail is just enough... oh yes, triggers every time. There's a photograph, one of my father in his RAF uniform, and he just looks so pretty and handsome, and whoosh, I'm away back there again.

And what you've got written in there, how does it compare to important photographs or to these other sort of books or family mementos and things?

I think the photographs probably have a more dramatic (...) but there's so much in there that I haven't got recorded elsewhere. So I mean if it weren't there, I'd never know a thing about it.

So where do you - you said you had been digging them out - but where are they kept?

They're just through in the dining room bureau, they're altogether in there, yeh. Apart from the 5 year old one which must be up in the loft someplace, I thought it was in the bedroom in an old trunk but it wasn't . I'm sorry I can't show it to you - just as well perhaps. I was younger than I thought in those days. (...)

Do you have a recollection of what you've recorded? When you open them up, there really could be anything in there or is it...

Oh no no, I think once I start... once I know a year (...) I've got a vague idea of what happened that year.

It starts coming back... It wouldn't come back without the diaries. It wouldn't come back without.

SO it seems by the way you're talking, that this gives you a sort of bit of a purchase on things.. Very much so, very much so. Can you imagine how you might feel without that?

If i've got them... I can imagine... I'm glad I've got them, no I can imagine, I'm glad I've got them and they're nice. I'm pleased there there, I'd feel even more

'really old man' without them. I'm glad they're there. Because it's terrifying.. it's very erm... it's not even unsettling...it's just annoying how much you forget, and how much you jumble up in confusion. No I'm glad they're there.

Does your wife keep any sort of diary?

Not as far as I've (....) (laughter).

And then what does she think about you keeping a diary? Do you talk about it?

No... I think, bless her, as far as I know, she's never tried to read any. As far as I know! She couldn't read (...) because any bit that's really not for her to read is in German! (laughter)

Do you ever talk about in conversation, or is it very very private, personal....

I'm not private about them at all... I don't feel that way at all about them, I think they're probably boring. No one else would be interested. I'm amazed anyone's even remotely interested! **Yeh I've heard that before!** (laughter).

It's true though, it's boring! It's very mundane. But... they mean something to me as far as it goes. And my daughter thinks I'm mad writing a diary you know. And I don't do much story telling either, I was actually nervous about you coming merely from the one point of view, I'm wasting your time! That's basically it! Where you're going next could be interesting because Ruth is a.... Ruth Mathers is a very sort of a ('fierce genie?") in a way, she's very methodical, you might get real diaries! (Laughter)

As I said before, it's evident that... when I came to this I thought journal keeping was a sort of, a certain thing, whereas seems as there's so many different ways of doing it. It's very ad hoc. Yeh, I don't think there's a particularly right way to keep a diary. Well I think, famous people, have a page entry, down they go everyday, a whole, you know.. and perhaps it might not be the whole page, but they've got a page in case they need it. You know to me is a real diary.

And so have you never been inclined to keep a 'real diary'?

I thought about it, but I thought if I start doing that I won't keep it up. You know. And I just thought that now you're retired, let's be honest, it's too bloody boring. If I tried to fill a whole page, now that would be boring. That would bore the pants of you never mind anyone else! I could do it, but what's the point... no I'd rather... back to my fantasy novel - Shards of the Sorcerer! Good stuff! (laughter). My daughter's read the first three chapters, she really likes it. But no I'd rather go back to that and have my elves and goblins trolls and that sort of thing!

An entry like that, how long does it take you to write?

I'd say, it's only about, yeh about 5 minutes. It depends, the writing does take a couple of minutes, it's 'what am I going to write' - that's the longer. It doesn't have very much import most days, it's just what happened that's all.

Is it something you look forward to, or is it a chore at the end of the day for you to do?

It varies. Some days (...?). But chore? I wouldn't say it's chore no but, I say 'oh, mustn't forget to write it'. No, but I wouldn't say I look forward to it everyday, no that would be a lie. That would be a lie.

Are there sometimes though where you kind of, where it is something you look forward to?

Well if it's something unusual, yes yes. If I've done something, up West, home in a certain time, this sort of thing, or if we've been out some place, up on one of the hills, and lenticular clouds, beautiful day, big image in my mind and I've forgotten my camera. SO you know, yeh. Some days I really look forward to writing it, and some days I just write it. But I don't really see it as a... Chore's too strong a word. Maybe some days 'oh diary, you know I better go and do that' but that's (...)

And have you got any... you said actually me coming in today might make you think more about them, but have you got any plans for the future with them? Or just something you're gonna keep?

Well in some ways, it's a bit of a nuisance you came, because I now feel obliged to go and look through them! (pause) It's all your fault! (laughter) **Terribly sorry for that!** Because this would never have happened otherwise! (...I'll have to look through them?...) I might have missed something. See, you should never have come!

It's funny though, there's this assumption, a lot of the technologies and products which try and encourage you to keep a diary, are about how wonderful the past is, and it's this very...

Well if no one writes about it at all... my life's been pretty ordinary... but I mean erm, If you don't write about it at all it's lost. I was thinking of something much more important, like the Great War, the Second World War, the Holocaust. This sort of stuff. Someone's got to remember that stuff! You can't forget it all. I mean, the past has to be kept on record. It has to be. You lose so much.

It's very interesting. Obviously in this way it's very much in your own words... Well that's a real (...) but man's times past has gotta be kept alive.

So for us one of the big questions is yes - increasingly that record-keeping has been done by machines. Very much so. it's record keeping of what you've been searching for, where have you been walking today, where does your activity band say where you are. So yeh.. how do we keep a human voice within that, I guess is the... Well with a dictaphone onto a computer. Quite possibly. (...)

But you've never been inclined to keep a digital diary -

But I've never thought! It never crossed my mind! You shouldn't have come!

(laughter).

Concurrently I'm doing interviews with people who use digital diaries on apps... You can also have all your photographs as well... and maybe it tells you where you've been. So it's trying to bring in lots of different..

The only problem with that is, I say a lot of things like this in my old age, I like hard copy, I would have to have 3 or 4 back ups, I'd be worried about losing them all. I'd always get interrupted. I like hard copy. I'd probably go and print it all off. It's old fashioned!

That hypothetical question, the house burns down, what are are things you take out? Would these be something you would reach for which would be important to hold on to?

I wouldn't like to lose them as long as I'm still being.

Do you care what happens to them afterwards?

No. No... Just bung them in the coffin! (laughter)

(Explaining interviewing younger people not knowing what to record)

Well I wish I had done more detail back in the past. Recently, there's a lot of rubbish mind you, but there's nothing missed, there's always something in there.... (looking at diaries again). It's just nonsense basically,

I mean... Ha, you say I'm a nuisance coming here, but do you feel as you're getting older you're looking at them more, they're more important than they were?

Well.. I'm going to blame you again, I feel I should back and read them now.

Do you think that will be enjoyable? Or do you think that will be...

Oh I think it will be quite interesting? It won't be negative, not at all. No no. It will be positive. I'll just go through and have a browse and see what I can find. And I'll see if I can find some (...) here or there.

I meet a lot of people who say, when I talk to them about these things, oh 'I'm not a very nostalgic person'. Would you say you were nostalgic at all? Or do you get nostalgic looking at something like this?

Well... yes. Because they will say or say again 'it's a great pity that youth is wasted on the young.' I wouldn't mind to have my time again with the knowledge I've got just now but we can all say that can;t we? **I could say that about last year!**

Yes, I think we all would have done things very differently. For example I was keen to be a lawyer early on. And I went to university, and I thought I'd do an MA and go and do a law degree afterwards. But my father died in 1st year, and we were very poor. We had a widow's pension. Which in old money was 27 shillings, that's less than £1.50. It should be 30 shillings, but we had 3 years in Australia so take one shilling off for each year. So that was our weekly income, 27 shillings, roughly £1.30 odd pence. Luckily I got a job working in Diageo then called DCL, 12 hours shifts, 7 days a week, but I couldn't afford to go on for year

after year and do a (some degree). So I did the degree (German then went into teaching.) But if I had my time again, yeh I don't know. But we could all say that. But life's been very good to me in many ways, if I have no real complaints

But you wouldn't say you were an especially nostalgic person?

Wel I've a lot good memories, and I suppose I am nostalgic to some extent, but I tend to live in the present. I think at my age it's quite sensible. But I do go back into it, yeh sure. But I tend to be aware of the present very much, for the simple reason that I've no idea how many years I've got, so I enjoy the present. **Yeh, absolutely.**

Any more questions?