Australians at War Film Archive

Charles Morgan - Transcript of interview

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Tape 1

00:41 **Can you give us a summary of your life?**

I was born 15th of the 9th 1928 at Waverley Sydney. My parents, my father was a fitter and turner at the time. My grandfather was a master tradesman

01:00 he was a toolmaker. They were Welsh, my father was born in Wales and my grandfather of course was Welsh. They were pertinent to perhaps later events as they were in between the gaps of war, too old, too young, for the wars that followed. So that each would have sort of missed out, I as the oncoming generation felt that.

01:30 My father progressed from being a tradesman, he became a sort of floor manager, and then he went into marketing and sales with another company. He then was appointed general manger of a company called Masonite Corporation at Raymond Terrace, in '38. We moved to the country, Raymond Terrace was then a country town surrounded by ferries and there was no direct communication.

02:00 I lived there on and off, until about 1949. I went to school at the local public school at Raymond Terrace and I then was sent to Sydney to Trinity Grammar School as a boarder. I didn't do very well there and I didn't like it particularly and they brought me back. Then went to Newcastle Boys high. While I was at Newcastle Boys High I became interested

02:30 in the air war at the time. My maths teacher was a man named Plum Warner. And through his interest we formed a volunteer air corps observation [VAOC] at Raymond Terrace. I then went to Sydney Church of England Grammar School in Sydney. Another boarding school. But I wanted to continue my VAOC

03:00 work so I got my sister to sign my leave passes and every weekend I had a weekend off, I would work at Capital City Control, the observer corps which was in the tunnel underneath, from Circular Quay to Museum station, which hadn't been built then, there was a rail line but the tunnel hadn't been built. And I worked there, I would have, well after school I had

03:30 problems with the headmaster I had been in the ATC [Air Training Corps] and at the very end of the war in 1948, 1945, my father got me the chance of going on a ship called the Iron Duke going from Newcastle to Whyalla. Which was very exciting for a kid. And my headmaster wouldn't agree with me going. So I then

04:00 told him that I was going to go anyway and he wanted me to finish my air training corps camp. Which I didn't mind doing but I had something better to do as far as I was concerned. So I left in some sort of a, he didn't like me leaving, and I did go to Whyalla, and it was exciting, the mine channels hadn't been swept, the skipper got drunk, and all sorts of marvellous thing happened that taught me things.

04:30 So I came back, went to university, doing science at Sydney University. And towards the end of November, I was home for study leave and I had a hunting accident and shot myself through the hand and shoulder. They offered me an amanuensis [a skilled transcriber] but I wasn't able, or I couldn't visualise calculus with somebody writing down my squiggles or the chemical formula. So I deferred

05:00 in the period I deferred I went to work for George Patterson Pty Ltd, advertising agency. And I very quickly became a copywriter and did PR [Public Relations] and I put up the first smoke sign over Sydney, advertising sign with a man named Fred Hoinville. We had to climb up in a Tiger Moth and had to get to 12,000 feet without oxygen

05:30 which was a bit exciting. But unfortunately I wasn't very happy, my motion sickness was bad and Fred was a great aero bat and after we put the sign up, or a trail sign, he put it into a falling dive and everything would happen to me, but I would have to clean the aircraft afterwards. That was exciting times and I did all sorts of things. My parents wouldn't let me go overseas, I wanted to go overseas

06:00 I wanted to fly and the RAAF [Royal Australian Air Force] weren't taking any air crew at the time. But the RAF [Royal Air Force] was recruiting because the Berlin air lift was on and the Korean War had

started, so they were recruiting. So I went to England when I turned 21. And I joined the RAF and I was went through the RAF training, initial training in the UK

06:30 particularly on the Isle of Man which was interesting. And then I was sent to Rhodesia and I spent some time in Rhodesia in the midlands there. I was a course leader, and I was also a pain in the neck as far as the air force was concerned, as far as discipline was concerned. I didn't respond well to discipline at all. Essentially I didn't believe in rifle drills and things

07:00 like that, if people were going to fly airplanes and the drill instructors didn't quite see eye to eye on that. And also there was a little but if, I guess carrying the flag, the Aussie flag with the… they used to ride horses and post in the English way which was short stirrup and up and down, up and down. And I thought this is so crazy, so I get

07:30 on this nag, bareback ride and pull them by the side, and yippy around the yard, and of course they weren't impressed by this at all, that wasn't the way you rode horses. So it was good, but I had a marvellous trip while I was there. I went right up into the top end of Rhodesia. We were going to hunt elephants with 303 guns and ridiculous things like that. But it was a marvellous experience. And it

08:00 changed me because I realised that the war I was looking for hadn't come, but the Berlin air lift had stopped, peace was being talked along. And I really didn't like flying and dropping bombs because it was so detached, it was not the manner that I'd been looking for in my fantasies. So I decided I'd leave the air force I had the option

08:30 in my…. I was on 4 contract which had been converted to a… I was preselected for a commission which gave me the option to get out. So I decided I'd get out and wouldn't complete my training because it was pretty obnoxious thing to do, you know, for them to spend all that money and then, so I said that I would leave. And they didn't like that at all. And they gave me a hard time

09:00 particularly, in my current affairs course I had done a study on Malaya. And there was trouble there and that was the war I was looking for and I decided I'd go there. They offered me a permanent commission in the air force. They offered me general duties intelligence branch work, so I didn't fly, and because of my air sickness. And I said no I was going to go to Malaya, so I went to Malaya

09:30 I applied to one company and they didn't have a vacancy at the time, when I got back to England so I applied to another, no I didn't, they found me because the first one had sent me on. I ended up going to Malaya and I went there and I worked as a planter in the northern part of Johore. Which is a fairly bad area at the time, there was an emergency on. And

10:00 I took, adopted a pose that said I had to take a role; you could either go out heavily escorted, lots of escorts. Or you didn't go out very much at all in the rubber. We forgot about the enemy and just went about it like an ordinary human being and as I decided, if they were hunting me I'd hunt them, so I became a hunter. And I adopted the policy

10:30 of who travels the fastest who travels alone. So I would take them, one poor little Malay special constable with me and never walked on tracks, we always did things that nobody would ever expect you to do. Because I figured if you had a routine they'd catch me. So I never did anything like that. So I didn't do anything by routine and I became a hunter. In the sense a hunter of men, while I was a civilian.

11:00 In the course of that I became a member of special branch or agent for special branch, unpaid. And started feeding information through and planning operations on the information I had got. I went to Singapore once a month, I had a girlfriend then, and we only ever went to bed for the purpose of recreation, not for sleep. And

11:30 we played up and I had to come back to the plantation to recover. But on this occasion, when I got back I couldn't find the hire car man whose car I had hired, so I went back to them, there was an army unit stationed there was communing[?] rifles so I went and saw them, my mates. In the mess there, and this fellow said, "Would you like to go back to Singapore, my girlfriend is playing up with a Ghurkha officer and I want to see her." So back we went, we went to Singapore again

12:00 I had driven up from Singapore about 130 miles. So back to Singapore we went and he saw his girlfriend. We didn't leave until fairly late at night, about 11 o'clock, we got ambushed on the way back. Left for dead, both of us, both of us survived. I then came back to Australia.

12:30 I got ambushed again, 3 months later I got married. So that that was that, I think my mother set me up for that, that was one of those things that was a set up job. Anyhow I went through the normal course of married life and had 3 children. And one of the children, my oldest son was unfortunately brain damaged and he was held in various

13:00 institutions until he escaped and he finally died in a house fire in Adelaide. He was about 24, 25. It was a blessing in a sense because he could have killed somebody I was just as relieved in a sense that we didn't have to go through the trauma. My experiences have changed me quite a lot and in ways I hadn't realised. I had the usual mid life crisis and I left my wife

13:30 for another lady. And then I decided that I'd do other things. So I then became sort of a…. I was a miner,

I was a tobacco auctioneer, I was a fruit picker, a hop picker and all sorts of things. And in the course of this I ended up doing a course in cooking in William Angliss College in Melbourne.

14:00 And as a result of that I decided since there was no textbook on Australian sea foods, that I'd write a textbook. So I saw Richard Walsh of Angus and Robertson [publishers] and he agreed that there was room for a textbook of that sort . So I then came here to Townsville to James Cook [University]. In the meantime

14:30 as that had gone on, my companion in the ambush in Malaya had come out to Australia. And we had some good times together, then I saw him again after many years, I went back, I went to Hong Kong on an export selling mission, trying to export eels from Townsville into the Chinese market. They have two markets the summer and winter

15:00 in winter they want a fatty eel, in summer they want a light eel. These were eels from the Ross River Dam, we had the licence and so I went there to see if I could set that up. And Tedford was then, my other companions, he sort of had seasonal work; he was the start of the Hong Kong racing club which is a huge huge enterprise. And he was of course in his job there he was very much trusted because there is a huge amount of money gambled.

15:30 And he had a beautiful suite on the Happy Valley race track and so we met again, he wasn't doing well. His leg where he had been hurt, injured in the gun fight was playing up and it looked like he might lose a leg, later, I haven't heard from him since then. So that I've continued on and I now live here, in the seafood business, I spent 20 years going broke in the seafood business

16:00 and I write letters to the papers and I use my computer and I surf the net. And I came in touch with a man who is running one of the major news week, the NewsWeek magazine he's one of the bureau I was commenting on, because I was anti the Iraq war, I was commenting that Americans had to learn to live from other people's experience. So

16:30 I had a nice letter back from him and we have a correspondence. And in the end it turned out that Chin Peng [leader of the Malayan Communist Party] who lived in my opposition was alive. And had been in Australia at least 200 days so knew, by correspondence with NewsWeek said they'd be fascinated, and I worked out a way to do that. So I worked on getting an interview with Chin Peng

17:00 to see on the basis of reconciliation. Sort of all the things that were wrong, I don't know, and things that were right I have only just learnt. So that I don't have any rancour about what happened to me. But I do think that I may be useful

17:30 for Chin Peng to be able to return to his home land. He is barred from there and banished from Malaysia. So that currently I am working on a scheme, a devious scheme to get Chin Peng back to his homeland, he wants to see his ancestors' graves. Before he dies. He's slightly older than I am. So far I haven't been able to make contact with him despite my different manoeuvres I've still more

18:00 shots to fire. So that brings me up to speed now.

Can you tell me about your very earliest memory?

Earliest memory was in Randwick in Sydney. We lived in flats, no at Coogee we were living in flats there and my father ran over my scooter. So that was boyhood tragedy. I went to

18:30 Randwick Public School, Mr Latter was the headmaster, and he, in those days, discipline was administered with a cane and he was pretty good with it, good in a sense he didn't spare the rod to spoil the child. But he got some good work out of me. While I was there a young fellow,

19:00 sexually got at my sister and that was my first experience of homosexuality at that stage. I was very young. So that was that, I don't remember a great deal more than that. Until I went o Raymond Terrace in 1938. So that memory, oh I remember going every Saturday afternoon going to a film, because they had

19:30 serials in the films. So you couldn't miss a Saturday afternoon or you'd miss the serial. And they had a pianist in the front who played, did all those sort of things. So I remember those kinds of things, I was in the boy scouts.

Was that at the Randwick Ritz?

No that was out at Earlwood, we had moved out to Earlwood.

20:00 There I was, and I was a scout there. And I think we had a scouts' camp and I got bitten by a tick on the scalp and they thought I had got scrub meningitis or typhoid or something, but it wasn't it was just a tick bite. So there was those early memories, I remember Christmas time and Boys Own Annual and the traditional gift from grandmas and aunties and uncles and so on.

20:30 I have a sister and I gained a younger brother in 1939 but my sister was 18 months older than I.

Where was the family living? Waverley Randwick or?

We moved, we moved a lot my grandparents lived at Maroubra or Coogee Maroubra near the cemetery.

21:00 And my parents at one stage had a house near there, they moved down into Coogee Bay, then later on they moved to punchbowl and Earlwood. They were fairly much moving people. My maternal parents were very poor. My mother's parents were very poor and they lived in Ruthven Street at Bondi, near the tram terminus there. And they were the sort of people

21:30 I can remember they had the smell of aged people and they I can remember fried bread, bubble and squeak [leftovers] and things like that which were the norm for the diet. But they were nice; I had very fond memories of my maternal grandmother. She had a club foot. So that as a cripple she had not been able to work

22:00 particularly because of this club foot. My mother had worked in factories as bookbinding and things like that before she met my father. My mother was the stronger of the two, my father was the roaring bore, she was the driver of the partnership. And oh, he was ambitious and clever and

22:30 very, you know, upright man, very good standard. He didn't believe in sparing the rod and spoiling the child either and a release came when I found that I could jump the fence and he couldn't And so that it was a sort of you know, I never really had a close relationship with my father or my mother.

23:00 I never, I've never had close relationships. I don't have friends, I've got lots of acquaintances but I don't have friends. Mostly because I suppose, going from school to school, you are always the new boy and that is hard yakka [work]. It's a hard doing, because in boarding schools, in particular,

23:30 the juniors are old boys and if you go in as a 4th year, the brats are telling you what to do, so the punishment for that because you don't really do it when you are that age, the punishment is they give you a run through. And a run through is when they have knotted towels and belts and things like that and they

24:00 make you run through, run the gauntlet. And of course you can't fight the big fellows, but I found the way to cure that was that on my way through I would smash the hell out of the little fellows, they didn't complain any more, they never ever complained about my behaviour because they knew that I'd get them on the way through. So that would sort of put me on my own and

24:30 so I became a loner, maybe I was born a loner but I'd done most of my life, I have been on my own. And I enjoy my own company; nobody else does so I may as well have the benefit. But I've always from that childhood as I say with the serials and Boys Own Annual I've been almost not a Walter Mitty [a fantasising character in a novel by James Thurber] fantasy but something like that in

25:00 the sense that I dream things in a fantasy way to do things. And I am quite innovative in my work. When I was in an executive world I was very good, I was very, imaginative and so on. And I lead from in front. But I'm not a

25:30 good team man, I was a course leader and all those things, always thrived on my own. The formative years, or the ones that impress, both what Raymond Terrace, when I went there the war had just started.

Firstly, can I ask you about the eastern suburbs beaches

26:00 **What were the beaches like back then?**

They were, they were, the flats were for working class people, semi detached houses. The cottages were fairly small. The one we lived at Benning Street, Maroubra was brick on a corner and it had, in 1928 curved style of architecture

26:30 arches and that sort of thing, red brick. At that stage there were things like bakelite and so on hadn't been introduced, so everything was porcelain and ashtrays and things like that were like that. And values, the values there

27:00 the cultural values, run on Saturday afternoon, run in the car, cars had dickey seats, a dickey seat was, it was a two seat car with a where the boot is, that would open up with a flap and the kids sat there in the dickey seat.

27:30 And you'd go for a run or a picnic. That was the kind of things you would do on a Sunday. Because the Saturdays were dedicated to that movie thing later on. Playing cards, card games were, 500, but we weren't a gambling family, but my

28:00 father always had a car. I think maybe for his job I think he was working at Malleys at the time, so living at in the Eastern Suburbs he had to travel and because he was a tradesman his hours were tradesman's hours so he had to get there early. So he had a car for that, he always did have a car.

28:30 So I became used to having a car and having that mobility of a car. My mother, the cooking was pretty prosaic, it was roast beef and Yorkshire pudding and all those sorts of things, no adventure in cooking. The

29:00 satisfaction was the quantity rather than the style, but I didn't....

You were telling us about your mum's cooking?

So that was that. My grandmother, my paternal grandmother she was English, and she was a very weak lady in the sense that she was always sick and complaining

29:30 and so on. My father had a sister, she was quite vivaciously strong. My mother had sisters, sisters, sisters. And so they had stronger knit family on the maternal side than

30:00 on the paternal side. They were sort of not much social ability in our family life. We didn't really have much social visitations with my family. They recounted of course on my mother's side we were

30:30 related to David Livingstone the Scottish missionary at Flora. And I think there was a man named Eales, Arthur Eales who was a squatter and grazier of some note on the Murrumbidgee. But that had long since gone, my maternal grandfather was a shoe maker and leather worker. And they

31:00 lived out at Penrith, out that way. But, after he died my grandmother moved into the city and we'd go around for a visit and it was a very narrow little house, it was a semi detached. Whole rows of tenements, so the privy [toilet] was out the back and there was a long narrow corridor to the lounge room and then mixed that with the kitchen. It was all very

31:30 very small.

Where was that?

Bondi Junction. There was a tram depot there alongside Centennial Park. And their house was next to the tram depot or their row of tenements was next to that and ran up to Bondi Junction Road. So that

32:00 I don't remember the schools other than Randwick Public.

The grandmother that had the club foot, how did that affect her life?

Well it meant that she couldn't work as a provider. So that her children, after her husband, my grandfather died

32:30 the children had to become providers at a very early age. Which they did but it was all manual work. None of them were, their education was very limited, their hand writing and calligraphy was very limited, a letter was pretty much a hard day's yakka. And

33:00 so that on the other hand, on my father's side they were much more literate, because of the trade background and my maternal grandmother, she was not, not somebody I could respect, but certainly educated and she was a Pommy.

33:30 Not that I have any dislike of the English people but just at that time she was a Pommy. The houses, there was not many flowers or things like that. Gardens and horticulture didn't seem to take much, and nature wasn't that, swimming, yes,

34:00 we swam and we used to got to, my dad used to take me to Wiley's Baths at Coogee. And it was a male baths at the time in the club; everybody swam in the raw [nude] sort of thing. That was at the north end of the baths I'm talking about. And there was another palace we went to, yes we swam quite

34:30 a bit, in surf, body surf, not and with Lilo type rubber mattress, that type of surfing.

Did you pay admission at Wiley's Baths to get in?

I didn't but Dad did, Dad had to, I was pretty young at the time and I think I went in as a child. The time, just around the corner from there the aquarium, where the shark

35:00 was regurgitated.

Can you tell us that story?

Well a man was murdered and his body was thrown into the ocean. And the shark had eaten, and the shark was taken and put into this aquarium as a public exhibit. And it regurgitated the arm and the arm was identified because of the tattoos.

35:30 And so it was called 'the shark arm murder', it became quite notorious as to how the villains, or the villainy was uncovered. Very strange events. Yeah, my father liked fishing and we used to go fishing quite a bit. I don't know, it wasn't very successful then but, a beach or rock fisherman, but later on he loved fishing, and

36:00 he followed that out as his main amusement almost.

Who taught you to swim?

I think Dad, I think my father did, but I learnt at a very young age. I was never ever frightened of the water.

36:30 I can’t recall being frightened of the water, I’ve had some sort of fairly hairy experiences but I had never been frightened of the water, nor of animal life, sharks and life. But I could swim and I could swim well. I wasn’t a racing

37:00 swimmer I was just a surf swimmer, I was more rugged in the sense of going out the back, the big one out the bag, sort of wave type of stuff, you’ll be looking for that big one. No, that was I think that may have been one of the reasons why we had, earlier had lived where we did, so my father could be close to the water and to the

37:30 fishing.

When you were at the beach with your dad, was your sister going to the beach as well?

Ah, yes, there were family occasions and there were men occasions. I don't think my sister went fishing with us very much. That was sort of a

38:00 prerogative of the boys. My sister was older than I she was 18 months older and she was very bright. And she became a nurse, and quite a matron sort of level of nursing. When we went on picnics of course we all went and with the dickey seat and all. Cars in those days had running boards

38:30 and so if you didn’t necessarily take a picnic table or anything like that you could sit on the running board of the car. And set your picnic up that way. They were all gate change gears, literally gate changed, the

39:00 gear box aperture was all exposed so that te you had to go from one and move the gear so that is was, and there was a starter handle. Whenever, you had a magneto, a spark adjustment and you had a choke, and then if that didn’t work you went out the front and you crank and wound her up.

39:30 **Was that dad’s job on family outings?**

Oh it was Dad’s. On family outings I was still only, when we left there I was 10 so I was, so he wouldn’t have trusted me, because you have to hold your thumb and if you hold your hand around the handle like that and it kicks back it breaks your thumb so you’d have to know what to do and how to handle it. So it was, no that was a man’s job, and when you lift the bonnet,

40:00 oh that was real man’s job.

Tell me about the Boys Own Annual?

Every year the Boys’ Own Annual used to come out, very thick volume, it would weigh 2 kilos. Always had art line drawings. And it was about

40:30 adventures in Afghanistan and in Mesopotamia and all the characters would be, of the time, there was also Coles Funny Book. Which was had a rainbow cover and it was all little limericks and jokes and every year they were different, a Coles Funny Book came out. So we used to look, at Christmas time we knew what was coming, but that didn’t spoil it because we’d wait all year for the next one. So Christmas time bonbons, and of course Christmas puddings, and of course filled with halfpennies and so on. And a brandy sauce, we all as kids thought that was pretty heavy stuff. My father used to drink beer.

Tape 2

00:31 **You were telling us about your dad’s beer?**

Yes, he used to drink beer. But the kids weren’t allowed to sip on the beer. But later on my father got a job as a, he was sales manager for Horlick’s Malted Milks company, we had bloody malted milk till it was coming out of our ears. And then

01:00 Penfold’s Wines and that’s where I think we started sipping from the dregs of the bottles, you know, sort of having our little temptress, but it wasn’t a drinking family. My mother kept a very, very strong leash on my father, he would have gone of the rails any time and at parties or anything else later on

01:30 my mother would give him the beady eye and sort of, hint, she’d rein him in. My father had a very good singing voice, being Welsh, I’ve got a good voice, and I did have one. So that later on in life he got a little ukulele and we used to sing songs

02:00 and we had friends who played guitar and there were other things that went on, that’s right, the upright piano and the pianola and the songs on the pianola, they were quite a facet of life.

What songs were you singing back then?

Swannie River, you know,

02:30 all the minstrel songs, Annie Laurie, all the early Scottish and Irish songs, Cockles and Mussels, and we

didn’t sing parts wasn’t as sophisticated as that, we all sang out of tune. Or sang the best we could, but he yes,

03:00 and we had a gramophone and we had a radio with a one of those trumpet speakers, that you see on His Masters Voice [a gramophone company], that sort of thing. I’ve forgotten, I think that they were actually the frames[?] of the radio were good, oh that started me thinking. We had crystal

03:30 radios. And we used to have a cat whisker [a type of radio] and on this crystal we’d try and find a station on the crystal radio, which again brings up another memory, decorating houses with glasses, inverted bowls with cauliflowers in it. And on they’d grow with chemicals they’d grow these different coloured

04:00 effluences on the cauliflower, and that would be a lounge room decoration. Where you’d have wax flowers and paper flowers now, these were the sort of the go then. That was interesting doing that. We used to make ginger beer. And ginger beer was on a hot day, and it would be served from a cold stone jug which was, I think it had been

04:30 kept cold in ice. There was ice boxes and of course see, the iceman would come around and he’d have a pair of scissor type tongs and bring the ice in and reload your ice box. There were no refrigerators then.

05:00 And of course milk and bread and vegies were all delivered, there were no supermarkets, there was a corner store. But all those, the milkman delivered the milk into a billy that you put out the front I think, he’d fill the billy. And the baker would deliver the bread and if you wanted half a loaf, he’d tear the loaf, high tin loafs. And the

05:30 big fight was for the trouser slice, which was the one he brushed on his pants to get the crumbs off it. The tear off slice was always the one that the kids liked. And then marmite, and marmalade. And at one stage I think it was later on

06:00 French toast came into being, but I think that came later. But the dripping was quite often used instead of butter. It was for economy reasons. I had the I had no great aversions in food, food aversions, I didn’t like chokos or pumpkin

06:30 like that, but on the other hand I was made to eat them, so I guess I grew up all right. I didn’t die as a result of it, but it was a fairly plain food regime and entertainment regime. In that there was no, we didn’t do things, oh if there was a parade we’d go to a parade and wave a flag.

What sort of parades would there be?

07:00 They’d be Anzac Day type of parades. The ones I remember. I can’t remember any Royal visits particularly, I can’t remember any Royal visits.

What do you recall of Anzac Day parades?

Oh

07:30 mostly the frustration of being small and not being able to see much. To you know be in behind people and so on. As I said, I didn’t really, I liked the puppets and the music, I liked that and there was an excitement a contagious excitement, you could feel people’s

08:00 pride and it was herd instinct as in we were all caught up in it. The patriotic motivation of kids, they knew that this was something good and because everybody became excited and became emotional and involved.

Was there a school participation?

08:30 Um, not that I can recall in the marches, I know that we commemorated Anzac Day but not, no marches at, in the Sydney end of my life. Later on was different but.

As a young boy at Randwick school, what were they teaching you about the various wars?

Oh it

09:00 was all, English orientation and Australian Gallipoli participation. We didn’t have very close knowledge of the events of the First World War, , it took me many years to find out how valuable a man Monash was

09:30 as a general and his, I think that we were taught the English view that, from that perspective. And so that it was biased in a sense that we felt that we had to, we gained the impression that they had won the war, whereas I’ve since changed my mind on that

10:00 to other things.

The school at Randwick was that mixed?

Boys. Just boys, yes they were all, at that stage they were segregated and all the pictures I have of boys in the class. Yes it was all segregated.

Did you enjoy that school?

It was school

10:30 no I didn’t, I was just, I really wasn’t flying in the sense of flying, existing, and soaring and away. I was going with the tide; I was just going along with the little that was expected of me. I didn’t form up till; oh a few years after until I was about 12.

Were there uniforms?

11:00 Tie I think, and you were supposed to wear, supposed to have a suitcase but I don't think we ever did. And mum was always patching everything up, you know, things were, you had to make do with patching socks and so on. And darning and so we weren't taught to darn until I got in the air force.

What subjects were you learning at school?

11:30 History, English, Arithmetic, a bit of Geometry. There was a school reader which came in a binder and the school reader was a, the education department publication and it covered

12:00 nature and things like that, our history, had pictures of Captain Cook and the aborigines with the spear and hanging the aborigine that speared the man and all the stereotype things. They were very much common in the school reader. The maths at that stage was pretty rudimentary as far as kids were concerned.

12:30 But it wasn’t until I got to high school that I really understood what it was all about, it was sort of like an evolution.

What was the incident with your sister and a man that approached you?

Somehow this guy got us, and he took us up into the scrub just at the back of the cemetery there, I think at Maroubra and masturbated.

13:00 it was pretty just nothing, it didn’t imprint itself on me as horror shock, not at that time I don’t think we told our mother about it until later. It was some time after that it came out but no I was pretty

13:30 at that stage I was maybe 6 or 5 and, so that it didn’t really, I was thought all people were good people and so it just, it didn’t worry me, of course later on I started to think what a bastard he was, what I would do if I met him now but, that’s different.

Who was the man?

Don’t know

14:00 must have been, I think it was the chemist’s son or something like that in Randwick but I’m not sure whether, I didn’t have it put together. So I think it was somebody, it wasn’t a stranger, he wasn’t a man he was 17, 18. He wasn’t an old man, dirty old man.

14:30 **Did you have any concept of what was going on?**

No, not in the slightest. Had no knowledge, no idea of sexuality. Only that women were different to men and they wore different clothing and they had different apparatus. But no, I had no idea of the complexity of sex.

So that incident you didn’t discuss it with your parents?

15:00 Not straight away. I don’t know whether it was, I think it may have been, probably a sense of shame of some sort, I think we might have been told not to say anything by the man.

Do you remember when you did finally tell your parents?

No, no. Haven’t even got the slightest memory of that. Not that I am trying to hide it, or I don't think I am trying to hide it there was no

15:30 if there had been outrage and so on, I don’t know, I’d have remembered that, but no there was nothing.

How did you learn about sexuality?

I was seduced when I was 12 by a housemaid. She taught me the gross animal facts of life. And that combined with my observational

16:00 experience and so on brought me out having said that school was just a passing phase and I was heading somewhere else. And all the kids used to talk about, oh, and at boarding school they had a score card and from 1 to 10 and if you got a knock back it was odd numbers, if you managed to make a 2

16:30 you’d got a bit of a feel or something like that. I used to, in my, having sort of been there all the way, and I thought it was fairly juvenile and I didn’t tell them, I didn’t say that I was, I

17:00 don’t resent the girl in question, I don’t resent her in seducing me, it takes two to tango. And I think Doctor Johnson said, “When Adam delved and Eve spanned, who was the gentleman?” I was just as willing as she was and I don’t resent her, she was rather a country girl and she was pretty much

17:30 feeling her oats, the war was on then and she was having her way with the army guys so that she was very sexually active. So sex was on a high plateau, for her, the question of romantic love and sex and those kind of things weren’t mixed together, it was a physical

18:00 performance and so that, I went through that stage and I learnt pretty quick I’m glad to say and cause I was always a romantic and so that I always, no matter what, whenever I loved a lady it was always a lady of respect, I so that I, I was always looked back fondly on my relationships

18:30 I don’t know that they look back so fondly on me, but I look on relationships with fond memories.

Can you tell me about the housemaid, how did that come bout?

The house was a elevated house on the banks of the Hunter River, and my father was working and I don’t know where my mother was. I don’t know but

19:00 the lass and I were there and she was knitting or crocheting or one of those things. And she had on a open blouse, showing quite a bit of décolletage, showing quite a bit of her breasts, and I think I said, ”That’s very, very interesting.” or something like that and

19:30 one thing lead to another in the sense that I think I made the first move but it didn’t take long to reciprocate and so that, and she brought me into the ways of the world in the sense that, I learnt about periods, monthly periods and it wasn’t a one off occasion. We went at it as often as I could. So that I was a fairly, my testosterone was fairly much up there, and I was either masturbating or

20:00 having sex, so that yes she was fairly, well she was no intellectual conquest. So then I think she didn’t bath as often as she could have. But that didn’t seem to make much difference, I think there is a saying,

20:30 “If you throw a bag over their heads they are all the same.” but I don’t know that but it was good because it conditioned me for later things in my life. And there was a girl, 3 girls and one of them was a telephonist

21:00 at the exchange, because I was at the AOC, I was talking to her when we called air flash to go through to control. So we became friendly and she fell in love with me and we used to, she was an auburn haired girl and we’d ride the pushbikes out to Wattle and all this sort of thing and she was really in love with me, so much so

21:30 that she broke into my bedroom one night. So that was a bit of a shock to the system, I didn’t quite know how to handle all that. I mean because I was in romantic love, I wasn’t quite ready for this assault on my body. But no, she was a nice lady.

22:00 **The housemaid was she much older than you?**

Yes, at that time I was about 12 or 13 and she was 19, 20, or thereabouts, but it was very much older as far as I was concerned.

Do you think your parents had any idea?

No, no, they would have sent her packing very quickly, very, very quickly. But we had some near escapes. I can remember I had a bedroom that was near the back door. And my auntie and uncle were staying up with us.

22:30 And they were out so we were hard at it on the bed there, and over the lady’s shoulder, I saw, whoops, auntie and uncle coming through the back door. So coitus interruptus, no my parents would not have thought highly of, they were prudish.

23:00 My father’s idea of giving me a sex education was to give me a book which quite literally talked about the birds and the bees. And he was very embarrassed by it, having to talk to me about that. So that my sex education was self taught, and it was

23:30 university of much pleasure, not many hard knocks.

So not having much on an education, do you remember what you thought the first time?

The orgasm, the orgasmic excitement and the post orgasmic, almost

24:00 not shame, but the revelation of the animal side of things. By that time I had become much more aware of the intellectual side and seeing that I could now see the yin yang, the both sides of myself, I think I felt I had let myself down in that way.

What did either of you know about contraception?

They had condoms in those days, recyclable condoms.

24:30 **How does that work?**

Undo the knot and wash it out.

And they are designed to do that?

I couldn’t go in and buy condoms at the age of 12. So needs must what the devil drives.

Was there not sort of any evidence that the two of you had been?

No

25:00 not that I know of. No I don't think so. No, unless, the smell of sex hangs around, but I don't think that there was a, no I don't think so.

25:30 I never knew of it and my parents never mentioned it to me later in life. You know, young gadabout and going out with girls the whole time, so they never mentioned it that first encounter, I never mentioned it to them either. I didn’t say to them, I never told them that I had been seduced. At that early age.

Were you close to your sister?

No she was at boarding school most of the time

26:00 so that no I was never very close other than we had horses, she had a horse called Paint which was a Palomino style and I had a quarter draft black pony and we used to ride together sometimes and

26:30 go for rides. But we didn’t have a great deal in common, I was into trapping rabbits and at that stage and hunting and doing all sorts of things like that. Riding cars and that, looking for brumbies and she wasn’t into that. We would steal fruit from the orchard and all these sorts of things, boys, just normal boys.

27:00 But no I didn’t have great deal to do with her. She was fairly, again, she was fairly strait-laced, and I was pretty wild. I was the wild one of the family.

What were you aware of as a child with the family connection with Livingstone?

27:30 Oh, just that it had been handed down by, handed down by oral history. Very, it was very distant, my second cousins, aunt’s brother, first uncle, brother, type of thing. Genealogy wasn’t a strong point but

28:00 and that’s I copped it as my middle name. So that’s how I know about it, it was a curse to me, because when I went to school and people found out my middle name. I then became known as dead wood, living stone, dead wood, golly listen to that, but fights and things like that could be caused. But then it’s come back now and it’s useful to me, the name and

28:30 only in the sense that when I am using my codes in my computer and so on I now have things I can play with, and only I would make the connection.

Do you think knowing that is part of your family tradition, do you think instils an adventurous spirit in you?

No, no. I was, no I think, that spirit started when they started a thing called the volunteer defence corps in Raymond Terrace.

29:00 The VDC [Volunteer Defence Corps] and I was the mascot for the VDC and I used to wear the feathered slouch hat, the leggings, the whole army dress. And lead the parade to Newcastle and so on, when I was about 13. And it then, the war was very serious, we learnt camouflage and

29:30 and we learnt that the way you can you tell a man is camouflaged, a German, is you can see his black boots in the grass and etc, etc. We had, we used to take all the stock, livestock from the Hunter Valley and take them up to Barrington Tops and that was the scorched earth policy that was going to occur if the invasion was going to come in that area, it was going to come to Nelson’s Bay

30:00 Port Stephens and so that they couldn’t hold the fort, but they had put tank traps and the fighting line was on the sand spit between Salamander Bay and Anna Bay and that was where the fighting line would be. They couldn’t hold the actual entrance to Port Stephens. In the meantime, when that happened we were to withdraw,

30:30 muster the stock and take the stock to Barrington Tops. Barrington Tops is beyond Scone, and it’s a high plateau with a river, the Gummi River, and we could hold there. And beyond that again is Illisnay[?] and there were, country there that was remote where you could

31:00 put a lot of stock and hold it there for some time. So that was the game plan for the VDC and that was when I first became, if you think of it I wasn’t born in a family of warriors but I wasn’t a warrior made. I sort of grew into it. It was part of a patriotic thing, and a very real thing to a boy that an invasion was, that was quite a serious

31:30 thing. So with the, the observer corps. was the same and I became quite proficient at that. I was very good on my self recognition and it was, so I became, to me I was an adult, just marking time. I was sexed up, I was doing a war job, and I was just marking time

32:00 to an age when I could get to do something.

How did that come about that the family ended up in Raymond Terrace?

My father was appointed general manager to build the factory. A new factory, a hardboard, hardboard for new clips that hadn't been done before. It was masonite, which is named after the mason who invented it, the process which puts the chipped

32:30 wood under enormous pressure which builds up the pressure inside the vessels of the wood, and then its suddenly released so that it splits and defibrates the wood. And it bursts, because the external pressure has been suddenly released and the internal pressure can't get out, so it bursts out. That's the basics of the mason gun process. So this factory was built in 1938, '39. And it just came at a time when the war was, and

33:00 there was a huge demand then for camps and housing for troops. So that it became, automatically it became a, there was corrugated iron, barbed wire and masonite for the main items of the requisition, you couldn't buy it off the shelf, they never launched it as a civilian product. So that my father built this factory, I mean he

33:30 was general manager and he ran that factory through the war years. He went to America twice. On Swedish ships, neutral ships, went to America twice on, on commercial matters. It was a major source, it was a huge thing for the town, the little town it was then, so he was a very important man and he became president of the shire council and he was

34:00 a public citizen in Rotary and all the service clubs. He did a lot of voluntary work on raising funds during the war. The manpower situation was such that it was very difficult to get men, because of the manpower, the demands that we had of a franchise that virtually, we would be supplied with men to keep the factory

34:30 going. We relied on local timber from north area, north of Raymond Terrace. And over the years the company acquired some 60,000 acres of hardwood down there which they then regenerated and built a system of timber stand improvement to make it into a healthy forest. They had been timber cut out for mining timber poles and piles and so on.

35:00 And saw logs so that it was just a mess. So we went in and virtually made a new forest out of this old forest, when I hear of the problems in Tasmania I am sort of familiar with that, that sort of situation. My recollections of that, there was at that stage of the war, petrol rationing was very severe. So

35:30 the gas burners put on cars, charcoal burners were fitted on cars and the factory, instead of having tractors to pull timber loads around in the yards, we had horses. We had 4 big draft horses called Nugget, Punch, Prince and Boxer. And one of the joys of my life was I could

36:00 talk to the horses, and if they got out I would have to bring them back. So on my pushbike I would bring them back. and one time I was bringing them back and we were going over Windermere Creek just about oh, quarter of a mile from the factory. They had just been grazing along the road; they weren't wild horses or anything like that. And I loved the horses very much so I came up and went g'day, and he kicked me, and kicked me over the bridge and

36:30 into the creek. He didn't like being patted on the rump. Yes so I learnt to drive there on an old Ford. Tip truck, with an outside brake on the running board. I learnt to drive when I was about 13 or 14 and I started work in the school holidays. And I was a

37:00 blue tongue, what they call a blue tongue which is an offsider on the tractor. We had a Alice Charmers[?] tractor and my job was to drag the chains out to the log, hook the chains on and then the tractor would take it away, but of course pulling the chains was sometimes a hazardous occupation because bull ants, you'd' go through a bull ants' nest when you were pulling the chain and

37:30 up would come the bull ants and all of a sudden you got 'em. So that was, I learnt in that way about working. And about working men. I was a bit of a chameleon in the sense that I know, we were middle class, lower middle class

38:00 family. But upwardly mobile at the time, but talking with working class men, bushman who couldn't write or read or, I would adjust to that and I was smart enough not to try and show how clever I was. I would rather learn from them than the other way around. So that I tried to associate and

38:30 that's been all my life I have been like that. I can, in the fishing business, my semantics change, my language changes, even my attitudes change as I adopt and merge into so that I can achieve, a relationship that is not an outsider in. Inside the relationship.

39:00 and that, wherever I have been, when I was working with fruit pickers or hop picking or whatever it was, you have to adjust to that and become part of that society if you are going to be an outsider. It was

important to me to be an insider, I didn't need that.

Tell us about your Dad?

He was short,

39:30 about 5 foot 6 5 foot 7, he was an amateur wrestler, he had a middle weight title as an amateur wrestler. He wore a little moustache, bald, when he went to America they got him to grow his hair long and then thatch it across, he came back with this thatch of hair, oh didn't it go, he got a lot of trouble about that. He didn't take long to get back to the old haircut. He had a good sense of humour and told a

40:00 good story. He was pretty naive commercially he wasn't interested in the cut and thrust of the executive life. And I later on the time came when I had to make a choice between my father and my mother. And I decided that he had made his own choices, he was a big boy.

40:30 And so he made his own choice I believe, I didn't begrudge him making the choice, but I wouldn't on the other hand assist him with his choice.

Was he strict?

Very, yes he used to be, physically and never hurt me. And I think that's another lesson that those times taught you. There is a threshold

41:00 of pain and once you have been through the threshold of pain your assailant can't do much with you. You are not frightened of the pain anymore. You are not frightened so he can't do any more. So, I think that it was good for me because it conditioned me to be without fear.

41:30 I deserve what I got and I got what I deserved. So that I thought it was a pretty fair system, so I never thought the worse of my father for that. My mother didn't really remonstrate that much about it with him; she thought I deserved it so I got it that was it.

Tape 3

00:31 Yes he was a compassionate man and in the sense that having come from within the working floor of the factory he didn't have the, well he'd sense the antagonisms that were built in between union and management

01:00 so he set out to break that chain. And develop relationships with people who worked for him, so that he put in amenities and things like that which were well ahead of their time. Swimming pools and bowling greens, and we had an annual picnic was a real event and so on and he set out to foster industrial relations and he formed with

01:30 some of the trade union leaders, he formed, tried to get a thing going called the silver circle where they would meet without rank and they would meet, not socially but informally and just work their way, talk their way through problems. Unfortunately this at the time there was great problems in the industrial world and a man wrote, sorry

02:00 somebody wrote a letter under a different man's signature, vilifying that the boss had subverted the unions. But of course that was very hurtful because that wasn't the case. He was a freemason, he loved his Masonic life. He did a lot of fund raising

02:30 I think I might have mentioned it, for the war time activities. He got into a ring as a wrestler, even though he was manager of the factory. He was that sort of man; he didn't mind showing his other side. He loved fishing and he got himself a boat at Nelson's Bay and as time went on, went outside fishing. So he loved that life.

03:00 In fact his dream, one of his nightmares was that he would drown at sea. He told me once that's how he thought he would end up. But it never happened. There's not much else to say about him. That I can think of at that stage but it will come back to me.

What do you remember of the war starting?

Ah,

03:30 I can remember the headlines, 'War breaks out.' I can remember the immediate reactions of rationing. The call up of troops, I can remember all those things. I can remember thrilling in seeing the camouflage vehicles, at back of the factory at Raymond Terrace,

04:00 they put in a camp and I remember seeing the guys were there. Then took over the park at Raymond Terrace and another unit was there. So gradually it became a hub of training, a training hub. We had engineers and signallers were basically the people who were near us. But there were some Bren gun carriers and

04:30 some 25 pound artilleries there. But the air force presence wasn't felt until the Americans entered the war. When Williamtown air base became the major air base and the swamps at Meadowie and Ferodale became a bombing range. And that was when we started seeing a lot of air force activity and

05:00 they used to beat up the town when they used to come through the planes like the Air Cobra and so on and I have seen them, below the treetop level over our house. We had Norfolk pines they were pretty tall trees but they were pretty low. But you know it was, that was very exciting. And I liked that

05:30 I'd grown up into this thing and I was half adult and sexually and I was now doing this war work. And I felt I was part of it, I felt that, I read everything I could. And when, later on the war the British started, the RAF started bombing, some aerial photographs started appearing and

06:00 in games and board games and so on. And I used to study them meticulously and I became a good reader of aerial photographs, interpreting aerial photographs. The rationing was onerous in the sense that butter and things like that weren't often available

06:30 and when I was at school if you were a new boy, what happens is that the difficult situation at the table, there is two chunks of butter had to be divided each into 6. So that the prefect takes one, he just keeps it on the line so the next fellow is just a bit worse off, so when it gets down at the end, the little bloke at the bottom didn't get much.

07:00 So that I found that pretty onerous, but being in the observer corps at the time, particularly in Sydney, I managed to get myself some supplies of butter out of air force stores. So I was alright thank you. But I remember seeing the Queen Mary and the Queen Elizabeth in the harbour. And the night that the Japanese came and

07:30 torpedoed the ferry, that was with the USS Chicago. I was at Raymond Terrace when the sea plane flew over Newcastle and there was some bombing there. So the reality of war was coming closer and I was becoming more impatient.

How did the volunteer defence corps happen for you?

08:00 The factory, some of the factory people were involved. And they wanted a mascot and I was the boss' son so I think they thought that would be a pretty tactful thing to do. I wanted to. So I was really proud of that and you know, it, for a 13 year old to ride on, because the horses

08:30 they were a light horse unit. And the horses they know a parade and they dance and prance and they, you know, you'd plod along on the way in but when you get to the parade and the music starts, away they go. And it was you know I think we got to let them, a bit of an urge on so there were ooh and aahs when the light horse came along, I loved that.

09:00 And the company of men and again learning adult conversation as opposed to schoolboy conversations, there was different levels of communication. So that I was learning whilst I was learning camouflage and all sorts of things, like those things, and learning how to shoot with an army weapon.

09:30 I was also learning other aspects of war.

It was a light horse unit?

Yes. It was because we were a rural area and our designated task was slash burn and scorched earth. We were to move out and take the stock. So that we weren't really a fighting unit we were

10:00 weren't supposed to be in the front line point of view we were making it difficult for the enemy in another way. We had to be able to defend, but our role wasn't a fighting role, like an urban fighting role or that aspect of things.

What did you enjoy the most?

Oh, I think,

10:30 in retrospect the learning, learning the arts of camouflage and things like that. But there were arts of deception that were good, they were a challenge. But because I had been a hunter and hunting, I'd grown up a little bit with it. But I was now getting finesse and learning the technical of disguise and so on

11:00 So that that really was good. Banging away with guns is alright but I was used to guns and they were no big deal. But the opening up of the camouflage world was good for me.

What were your first forays into hunting?

My father had an associate who had two sons and they had

11:30 dairy farms. One was on one side of the river and the other one was near our house. So I used to go out there and we would go duck hunting or trap rabbits, trap birds. And they taught me how to trap finches and all those sort of things. So that our weekends were always, virtually I'd grab the horse and

12:00 away we'd go. One of the cousins, a butcher's son from Newcastle, and we'd gallop everywhere and we'd romp through the trees and, it's a hard life. We used to hunt with beagle hounds and hunt wallabies.

12:30 And Bob Bates the farmer had an old beagle that was too old. So he asked me to shoot it for him. I said, "No worries." so I took the old beagle down to the bit of sand cratered at the back of the orchard, and then I had to shoot it. And I didn't like that at all. I didn't like it at all. In fact I lost all respect for Bob. That he put that on me

13:00 at that age. But I shot it, I gave up hunting a long time ago. I went, in the end, later on became a fisherman and a fly fisherman. In fact my greatest joy was being there, not necessarily catching fish. But at this stage I was one of the group. We

13:30 used to go duck hunting. And they'd give me an old single barrelled Belgian shotgun and my job was to go up and hunt up the ducks. They'd all be hiding in duck punts in what we call tots. And they'd have claws, floating models of ducks, skinned ducks on cork. And they'd whistle up the ducks and they'd go 'quack quack'

14:00 and so on but my job was to go up the other end of the swamp, circumnavigate the swamp so that the ducks back down to them. And I would take this shotgun. And one day I remember it must have been 25 or 30 yards from this mob of ducks, so I up with the gun and 'pow', and I went in after them, and we

14:30 battled through the reeds and swamp and oh dear oh dear, I caught the duck I got. And then I couldn't kill it, I didn't know how to kill it. So I started twisting its neck around and around and oh, its skin broke. I had twisted it, oh it was very worry. Much of a learning process. But I learnt from that. I remember

15:00 getting into a punt once with a fellow by the name of Bill Wilson and when I got in, very fragile boats. And when I got in, it went over because it filled up. And he looked at me with a sort of one of these pensive looks on his face and he said, "Were you born clumsy or did you just grow into being clumsy?" So, I learnt not to be clumsy.

15:30 **Social attitudes have changed to hunting since then. Was it more of a necessity or a sport back then?**

It was a sport, a killing sport, a blood sport. A man shooting a wallaby or a kangaroo is just not hunting, it's just sort of slaughter. We'd have dogs around and wallabies run in a circle and roos run straight. So if the dogs get onto a roo it would take a while to get

16:00 the dogs back. But where we used to hunt was wallaby country so you'd stand on a track along the line of tree and you'd hear the thump, thump, thump, and the wallaby would come out and you'd go bang, bang. That was hunting, but it wasn't hunting. There was no skill, to me it was

16:30 just a blood sport. Trapping rabbits and ferreting for rabbits, I don't know whether you know about ferreting. But a ferret is a long rat like creature that hunts in tunnels. And so you take the ferret out, it has a muzzle on it and you undo the muzzle and turn him loose. Because they become ferocious animals. So they go down the burrow and rabbits are terrified and come bolting out. And

17:00 you'd have a net set over all the exits and catch rabbits. And those rabbits, they were for tucker, and ducks were for tucker. But we didn't with roos and wallabies, bit of kangaroo tail soup but they weren't for the pot really, whereas the birds, the ducks and the rabbits were for the pot. Hares, hares were actually better hunting.

17:30 It's a curious animal, hops around and then you'll see his ears above the grass, he's eating, and you go, sssw, sssw, and he looks up, ssw, sssw, and he looks up again, and he looks right up, and that's it. So that, we did that, as a kid it was a great life because you had a full life trapping finches. And

18:00 you know, it really, I don't think there was much homework.

What would you do with the finches?

Oh in aviaries and give them to people for their aviaries and so on. We would always have a caller, and most of the time people would have aviaries and they'd have finches and cockatiels and things like that

18:30 I never caught a cockatiel, only went for finches. When, later on when I got married I had children of my own. I realised I was in a fast vanishing world it was all changing. So I took them and I taught them all I knew. And I took them and taught them that, even though I said, you know, you won't do it. I want to show you the old crafts and show you what its like. So I tried to pass on to the next generation what the old life was like.

19:00 And so that was how it was, because some rich young men I felt that they had taken the care to do that, I thought I would pass that on, even though as I say, nobody traps finches these days.

What was in you that changed when you went off the hunting thing?

I think I grew up. I think it was maturity, I think

19:30 I realised that there was nothing in it. There was nothing in it for me. There was no great satisfaction. The satisfaction of catching a trout on a fly line is an old manner thing. It's a competition where you are working at it. Whereas shooting at a

20:00 wallaby was nothing. No thrill in that. So that I think when I started fishing I gave up hunting very quickly. I also did, as part of this life we lead we were prospecting for gold and fossils. And things like that so it was quite an education in itself, where you learned about your

20:30 environment and its constituencies. We hunted brumbies and caught brumbies that was exciting, and that was really good stuff and I can remember years later. One time we were mustering cattle on this place but we had to get across this swamp, muster these cattle. They

21:00 hadn't been mustered for years and there were 4 year old bulls there that had been there since they were born and they were wild. Herefords, they had long horns and they never were dehorned and they were mad. So we had to get there early. While they were camped up. So when we went across the swamp and came to the swamp and onto the narrow strip that was leading to where we were heading, we heard a drumming of hooves

21:30 and down in front of us came this magnificent stallion. And on this property were basically Arab stock. And he came down and he stood there and he defied us. He went right up on his hind legs and he clawed and clawed, in the nostrils of the stallion, they have what they call marbles and he snorts and rolls his marbles at you, and he stood there and defied us to come on. And in

22:00 the background I could hear the mares and the foals while he was holding us back. So the brumbies were great and we used to catch them, my father had a property by that time. The timber men when they entered onto this property if there were any brumbies in here at the dam, they put the rails up and we'd come up in the truck and we'd round them up and take them up to the yard and

22:30 Pat Cox who was the stockman at the time. We were pretty brutal, we'd just tie the horse up overnight and then work on it a little bit, but that was pretty rough stuff. If I ever rode a brumby I would take it down to the ploughed paddock so that if I fell off, I fell off onto the soft ground. I never liked falling on hard ground, that was stupid. And the

23:00 brumbies couldn't buck much in the soft ground. So they were, I had a bit of an advantage if one of them was a bit sly. But Pat used to take them over to Maitland sales and he'd say, he'd get up on the block and say, "Now this horse, this is Mr Morgan's own personal horse." And I'd sneak out the back, I'd go somewhere and get lost because the bloody thing was hardly broken. So that was the life in the bush at the time.

23:30 **Can you tell me about going to Newcastle Boys High [School]?**

Yeah when I came back from having been at Trinity I was enrolled in Newcastle Boys High. Norman Moon was the principal. And we had to travel there by bus and then by train. And then walk. So when we went by bus we had to cross on a ferry at Hexham. So it was the delight of our lives to

24:00 see that we had missed the train because we'd miss at least one period or maybe two. So, Johnny Powell, it was the service car first and then the bus. We'd stick a spud up the…. one would distract Johnny and stick a spud up the exhaust pipe. And he'd try and start the thing, and the ferry would be there and the ferry master would be waiting for him, and he'd be

24:30 revving over, poking it up, and of course we were just sort of, "We are going o miss the train." light hearted that we were going to miss the train. So they knew we were the ones and one time I had fallen out of a tree, I was climbing a tree and I hurt my foot. So I was on crutches I couldn't walk as fast as everybody else. But when we were in the class we had this horrible,

25:00 the deputy head was our boss. He was our first lecturer. And the school was very old, and when we entered the class, there was a rat in the corner, so we killed it with my crutches, then they stupidly had these up and down blackboards, that went up and down. And the first thing he would do in the morning would be to clean the blackboard, throw that up there and then clean the next blackboard. So we tied the rat on, and of course up she went and up went the rat

25:30 and of course oh, there was, I got a smack on the bum for that. But it was a, I was a villain, Plum Warner was my maths teacher and he was very good and he taught me a lot about aircraft and aircraft recognition.

What was his background?

I have no idea, I think a hobbyist, I think he made models, he was a model maker

26:00 in fact I'm sure he was. But he knew a great deal about military aircraft. And he got us interested in the VAOC and from there we started our own unit. There were 3 or 4 of us started it. The doctor's two sons was Harley and Kevin Alexander, myself, and Albert Everingham I think. We used

26:30 to run shifts there and run, man the station. And we'd if we missed school, that's where we'd be.

Where you in the VDC before this happened?

The VDC was before the VOAC.

So you went straight from one to the other?

Yeah, yes, I'd abandoned the VDC when I went to….

27:00 I'd abandoned the VDC when I went to Newcastle Boys' High. And it was a maturity. Whereas once I was a little boy aping men, I was now doing a man's job, so I thought it was worthwhile so we did that. And it was we'd see the Vultee Vengeances peeling off to dive on Williamstown swamp and sometimes

27:30 you'd see a big plume of smoke, and you'd hear later on that one went in and didn't come out. You didn't know that at the time. So we were living that and I and I suppose the excitement that our communications were of such high priority that we had instant access to control room, to report the movements of aircraft.

What communications did you have?

28:00 Telephone, winding phone, through an exchange. And then, they would then link you through, straight through to either capital city control or the nearest control was Newcastle. Capital city control was the key reporting point.

So what exactly was your job?

It was spotting and identifying aircraft, logging them in on time. Direction, estimating height, area of, direction of travel. Colour, camouflaged or not camouflaged, anything significant, reporting that through on a form basis. To and then reporting it directly as a message, not as a conversation

28:30 so you were only communicating the essential points.

29:00 **And how did you learn aircraft identification?**

Just came, there were books about, handbooks and strip maps, strip charts. Oh it was just so easy, but I guess it all comes from the hunter's eye. The discrimination between small factors that enable you to identify.

29:30 So that just as you can tell a buck from a doe, the distance, the posture, the way a stallion and a mare, you get that feel. So that that translates into identification. And that process that mental process that you have grown up with of recognising species of birds

30:00 or snakes or anything is friend or foe, that sort of thing. You have that eye, so we learnt, we'd run tests on enemy aircraft identification, Japanese aircraft. And we were very, very keen, and very good at it, we were very good. I had no doubt in my mind, that if you had taken

30:30 a group of kids like us and put us up against mature age people, 35 through 50 we would have run rings around them. We were red hot, mostly because our minds weren't cluttered, we didn't have families to think about, that was what we were doing, we were focussed.

31:00 **How do you judge altitude from the ground?**

Well by relative to what you can see. If you can see for example, let's say you had a DC3 passenger aircraft and you can't see the windows on the side, you can't distinguish them, that's one thing, besides the silhouette or were they were relative to cloud heights.

31:30 And also we'd we would get check backs that the aircraft we had identified, let's say it was an aircraft called a black wood they were in transit to Newcastle from Brisbane, just say, and we'd put it at 5,000 feet. We'd have check back and they'd say, "No they were travelling at 8,000 feet." So you'd have some sort of a feedback system to help you on that. It

32:00 wasn't really the most important aspect, height or speed or, the direction of travel was and the kind of aircraft were important factors. So that if that aircraft disappeared then they knew that that, when it was logged in it was there, it gave them, the search area was much diminished as a result of that sighting.

32:30 **How specific was the determination of direction? Did you have any apparatus?**

No I guess it was, to give us bearing, we'd take a bearing on it at such and such 090 or whatever it was. But we had no height, no and or speed, but we knew the difference between a Tiger Moth and a Wirraway and a

33:00 Lightning, Lockheed Lightning. We could tell the difference. And transport speed, Catalinas and so on. We knew from the books the ID [identification] books we knew that the aircraft had this speed, so they don't travel in first gear, normally they are travelling at cruising speed. So we would

33:30 know from our reference books what they were doing.

Must have got to the point were just from the report of the aircraft you knew what it was?

Sound was also very important. Even now I react to multi combustion engine take off from here I know, I hear it as apposed to a jet. I still listen and I hear that and it takes me back. Yes you tune in on that and also

34:00 some of the aircraft had characteristic sounds so that the Air Cobra, the Vultee engine was different again. But they had characteristic sounds, the Boomerang and the Wirraway were the Australian aircraft. And they were made from an American model but they had a characteristic sound.

34:30 **Did you have a favourite aircraft?**

No we were always looking for new aircraft, see I really wanted to see a Mosquito bomber, the plywood bomber that the British had built. But I had seen a Spitfire but I hadn't seen a Mosquito. So you were looking for these, you were looking for something rather than focussing on something. Focussing on, it was odd, by exception,

35:00 the interest was in the exception rather than the rule. So if you could score a new aircraft that was very good.

How often would you do this?

Oh as often a, flight demanded, we manned it after school, before school, weekends, holidays, sick days, missed bus days

35:30 truancy days. We manned it as often as we could.

And this was all at Raymond Terrace?

Yes, this was initially, but then when I went to Sydney, well I was working underground then, I was plotting on plotting tables. So I only went weekends then, I went off on Fridays from the school and had to be back by Sunday afternoon.

36:00 **You didn't do it at night time?**

No we didn't'. We didn't have the facility to do it at night. The tower wasn't lit. And we had to do it with torches; no I can't recall doing that. We worked all night at the capital city control. But that was on the tables, on the plotting tables.

36:30 **Besides doing this, how much of an impact was the war having on your life?**

Well yes I mean it was everywhere, the war had an impact on almost everything that you did. I told you about rationing, clothes rationing and there were signs up everywhere, "Loose lips sink ships. "and that sort of thing.

37:00 The keeping your eye out for people who were unusual, who were looking at things they shouldn't be looking at, like foreigners and people with accents and so on. You were very, not paranoid but you were well aware there was a chance of sabotage or espionage occurring. Everywhere there were troops, and again, the Americans started

37:30 coming through, the American uniforms started appearing . We didn't see many in that area, we were mostly army and air force personnel. But in Sydney I saw sailors then, and French sailors with pompoms on their caps and so forth. On their hats. But at Raymond Terrace it was a land based station.

Were there blackouts in Sydney as well?

Yes,

38:00 there were blackout curtains everywhere and we had blackouts on the windows and the cars had blackout lights on them, shadowed lights, gave you a bit of a view of the road but not much. The black out curtains were fairly primitive they were more blinds than anything else. We didn't have the English standard of blackout, we had a

38:30 civil guard, people who went around supposedly tightening up, but if you look at Sydney, if you looked at Sydney at night where I was at school, I was at the north shore we were looking over the Harbour Bridge across to main Sydney, there was plenty of lights there, and the reflected light was there to show you this was a major

39:00 urban area, you couldn't miss it even if you were Japanese and cross eyed. The train service was delayed by troop trains going through. Trains services were curtailed. So that

39:30 there were all sorts of restriction that were occurring that weren't obvious. I think there was a shortage of paper for printing. Newspapers were much shorter and abbreviated than they are now.

So was the VAOC part of the VDC?

No VAOC was a

40:00 separate identity altogether, it came under RAAF, the VDC was army, VAOC was air force. My commanding officer at Capital City control was Dick Richardson who was a flight lieutenant, he was a cricketer, state cricketer of note at the time. And we had, it was manned by women's royal air force and some LAC [leading aircraftsmen], ground staff.

40:30 But basically it was manned by the Women's Royal Air Force on the plotting tables and on the phones.

Tape 4

00:33 **Did you wear a uniform?**

No, I had a badge for observer corps; I had a badge, numbered badge which had an RAAF roundel and gold eagle and Volunteer Air Observer Corps and a number down the bottom.

Do you still have that?

No I, as a matter of fact I have had a letter

01:00 from a man who is writing the history of the VAOC and I'll give you the information because it may be of interest to you. But he sent me a whole screed of stuff, unfortunately he is not computer literate and he hasn't got a computer so it's all manual stuff and these forms, manually, whereas I'm used to a computer or a typewriter, so I find it much more difficult filling out a form. But

01:30 , it was a fairly informal arrangement. When I was in the VDC I had a mock up uniform they had made up for me as a mascot but that wasn't a real uniform. And we didn't use, that's right, we didn't use army saddles, we used stock saddles. Army saddles are

02:00 totally different style of saddle. And we carried our armament in the VDC in a scabbard pouch down here. But the army saddles were not comfortable like a stock saddle. Ours were for mustering and so on. They had a different kind of

02:30 function. But we just used our own saddles. In the VDC. In the observer corps when talking about uniform, they kitted the tower out with binoculars. And things like that to enable us to carry out the job better. Don't think they gave us a clock, I don't think they did. Though it was important we used to have to synchronise our

03:00 watches with capital, with control. But I don't think they, that's interesting again, when you think about that again, watches in those days were a different thing, they wore fob watches, wrist watches I think. At that time. And they weren't as

03:30 waterproof as they are now. Nowadays people have showers with their watch on. I just can't go into the surf or have a shower with a watch on. I just can't, I have to turn back and say aah. I've done something wrong. So that's the change of times, but we did have to have a good sense of time, lapsed time for observer corps work.

04:00 **How did you go in VAOC when it was a terrible rainy weather day?**

We'd be there. Because that was the time when people got into trouble. They'd come down to get a bearing but radar was pretty low level or non existent. So they would have to break cloud to get a bearing. And at that stage if we could, we could send a flash through that we had seen this aircraft break cloud at that height and

04:30 this direction they could radio him, you're at such and such, because he'd be circling for Williamtown or something like that .. So it was important to man the station during bad weather. That was probably just as important as either non combat situation, when you are trailing aircraft everywhere, but there is no combat on, then it's aircraft

05:00 identification in case of emergency. But that was the key to the functional, or our value of the function.

Where was the next nearest reservist to you at Raymond Terrace?

There was one at Merewether, there was a station at Merewether. And I don't really know, no I don't know. And I've been at the one at Merewether, it was

05:30 where I was recruited virtually. I didn't have anything to do with any of the others. I have seen on plotting maps that calculated to control but I can't recall, I know other ones, Gosford and that sort of thing, but I don't really have much of a fix on how widespread it was.

You then went to boarding school in Sydney?

Yes I went to Sydney Church of England Grammar

06:00 as a boarder in for my final two years of school. And that's when I, my sister would sign my leave passes ahead and I went off pretending I was going to see my sister and went, and it was very good. But we'd come out in the morning after a night shift and I'd be still in my school uniform. The tunnel was fairly constant temperature it was a (UNCLEAR) temperature.

06:30 **Can you explain how you went to VAOC in the tunnels to do the plotting?**

Oh well as soon as I went to Sydney I had called the VAOC to offer my services. As an observer, they sort of suggest I go into capital control. And that was how I went there; it suited me down to the ground because

07:00 the essential part was that if I had gone onto an observer, a physical observer I would have to have accommodation of some sort. Whereas I could stay in the accommodation in the camp virtually in the tunnel. And I could eat and live there. So it was it suited and I was

07:30 pretty, I was a pretty smart kid, I could pick it up fairly quickly. And on the other hand I was perceived to be safe as far as the young management was concerned. And because they treated me very well and I never had any sexual encounters when I was on air force there. But nevertheless mud sticks sort of thing. We'd go out

08:00 after a night shift and you have to climb up the stairs, it was an air raid shelter, it was outside Mitchell Library where the statue of I think it was Shakespeare or whatever it was. And we'd come up out of that in the early hours of the morning about 7 o'clock or 8 o'clock going oh, and the old ladies would look at us, and this young boy with these girls, women's air force oh the things they must have thought about that must have given them an awful

08:30 lot to talk about. No we had no dramas, at the bottom where we were set up the tunnel was fenced off with barbed wire and a full fascia of timber or masonite and there was a guard there, and if there wasn't a guard there was a bell and you'd have to ring the bell. And the same at the other end, at the Circular Quay end. So that we

09:00 had a fairly, it was very quiet, it had to be quite because we needed to have our hearing so we could hear on the phone. When you are talking to somebody who is excited or who's got a Scottish accent or something like that you've got to try and pick up what he is saying. So there wasn't an exciting life in the

09:30 sense, the extent of being a gentlemen, but it was an exciting achievement.

So what exactly would you do?

Well there were two functions I was involved in. One was the phone receiving messages from the stations, in other words, the same message sequence that I had sent off, would come in from the station and I would take that down on a pad read it back to make sure that I had it right

10:00 and I would pass the slip over to the head plotter and she would pickup which aircraft it was on the plot. The aircraft was on a map on a horizontal table a big one about, oh, 20 foot by 10 foot the area we were looking at. And on that there were L shaped

10:30 markers with numbers on them which identified which particular aircraft it was. Aircraft number 364 or whatever it was, now once it was identified, possibly number 364, she would move 364 with a pusher to the new position, so we plotted the aircraft through on its course. It don't think there was a track kept of it, but track record was kept on

11:00 the log which, I'd taken down about 364. But the observer corps station didn't report the number, they didn't have an ID number on it, a serial number, we'd place that on them. So that was one function taking the phone calls and passing the message. The other one was receiving the message

11:30 and plotting on the table and moving, so if there was more than one aircraft active, there had to be more than one person on the table working the table. So that you would take over a section of the table. And move the aircraft according to your discretion, if you thought there was a problem you'd then get the chief plotters' discretion on it. They'd decide

12:00 whether to create a new number or if was dodgy or an old number.

Was there any rhyme or reason as to how busy it got?

Oh yes, there was a rhythm, there were rhythms and patterns, but they were to do with aircraft movements and since basically the long distance aircraft like Sunderlands going out

12:30 of Rose Bay they would go out on patrol. So there was always a rhythm to their patrol. There was a rhythm to long distance aircraft on transport duties like Liberators and Fortresses which were rather carrying personnel or carrying cargo, and DC3s and DC4s. And of course there were lots of other aircraft as well,

13:00 so that that rhythm was to do with the movement time, how the, their ETA [Estimated Time of Arrival] at their destination, so the ETD [Estimated Time of Departure] would be calculated to give them the

optimum passage both to navigate and for comfort and safety. So that that did fall into rhythms and cycles. And I don't think, I can't recall when we

13:30 upgraded the manning levels at the time or not, I can't recall that. We had sensed, whether the system had a sensing of movement in it or not, but we just had to cope with it. Or we'd call in somebody. People slept there so you, if you are inundated with work, they'd call somebody up from sleep. And they would then come on and pick up, a phone station or on the

14:00 table.

What sort of shift were you working there?

Oh, about a 10 hour shift I suppose it was, about a 10 hour shift. But it was fairly much an elastic situation which, if things were dead quiet you'd go and have a snooze. You know in the middle of the night and there was nothing happening, you'd go and have a snooze. Or you wouldn't do it so, "I'm off." they'd say. "Well you

14:30 better stand down and you have a spell for the next couple of hours and we will see what it's like then." Yes it was elastic there was no fixed set up for it. And meal times were elastic too, anything, and meals were pretty basic, bacon and eggs and toast and things like that, baked beans.

Did it have an impact on your boarding school life?

15:00 Oh only in so far as it made me feel, I was, because I was secret, I was isolated, as I told you, I had this prediction of being a loner, so it sort of fortified that because everyone would come back from their weekends and talk about this and talk about that and I had really little to say about what I had been doing.

15:30 So it tended to set me apart, and in my choice of sports and things like that that I went in 4s rowing and things like that. As opposed to cricket, you know, but I didn't particularly like it. It didn't worry me, it just,

16:00 I liked tennis but the facility wasn't there. So that yeah, I get a lot of interest in current affairs because, and I was very interested in current affairs and so I suppose preparing myself for, what I felt I would be doing.

What reward were you getting personally out of air observing?

16:30 Nothing. It was all volunteer, you got no pats on the backs and no stories in the papers or anything like that, you were just doing your job. And every now and then I'd score some butter or something like that, but it was nothing serious, I don't even think

17:00 they paid my tram fair back, that was my way. So no, I think the essence of volunteer that you volunteer without a reward and once you start looking for a reward for being a volunteer you are no longer a volunteer.

But normally you get some sort of personal satisfaction?

Oh yes, of course the fact that I was a child amongst men

17:30 or a youth amongst men, that I was being treated like an adult at a fairly young age. That gave me a great deal of satisfaction; I felt I was making it. You see one of the things in growing up in that sort of environment, its like the running of the bulls at Pamplona, you don't know what, whether you will or you won't, whether you will be able to pass that test. So

18:00 that exposing yourself to the test and being able to pass that test amongst your peers or seniors was a source of satisfaction because it was half way to being, running of the bulls of Pamplona in the street on the day. And you are half way there because you have started the journey by doing this which has taken you out of the mould and put you into

18:30 a different mould. And so yeah, that satisfaction but it was a secret satisfaction. It was not something that you could boast about, brag about, this or that, it was a different thing, it was held within you, and I found it at the time, I think I

19:00 enjoyed the secrecy of it. It gave me a sense of one upmanship but on the other hand it also gave me this facility, this chameleon that I could mix in with two different societies fluently without being obvious to either who I was. So I was, yes it was worthwhile for that reason.

Did you have any sporting heroes or literary heroes?

19:30 No Biggles and, I think I, no I can't, I think at some stage I think I had started to become exposed to Rudyard Kipling and if, part of his jingoistic sort of approach, I'd adopted in, but everywhere you went on mantle shelves,

20:00 "If" in copper plate [formal handwriting], printed, there was this "If". But no I didn't have any, I wasn't a literary character I wasn't a good scholar, because I wouldn't pay attention, but I could pass

examinations, so my last year I changed three subjects and got three As and two Bs and I

20:30 went through with flying colours. But I could cram and pick things up very quickly, so I dropped the things I was bored with and went with something I could do and that was it.

Do you know where your interest in current affairs was born from?

No I, only from the war, in wanting to know, analyse, I have an analytical mind and so the

21:00 analyst is always looking for the reasons why and where and wherefore and how and so on, and what's next. So the prediction and predictability was what was to come, just as I do now. I'm very much interested in predictability and managing change, and recognising change coming so that we can adjust ourselves and our society to meet the

21:30 pending change, not waiting until it hits us. So that's why, as an analyst that analytical side of my mind I kept at it and as far as, I'm fairly well clued as to, I wasn't very good on political analysis, but I was more on historical and geographical, that kind of

22:00 information, not much on economics either. But that interest came to the fore when I went into the air force the RAAF and it was sort of led me, I was well aware of where I was and what it was about. And in fact I was much more so than the other fellows who I had on my course. I was

22:30 more clued into what Winston Churchill's speech at Fulton was about than they were, they just heard the 'iron curtain' and that was that. But I was more fitted to lead the course than the other contenders even though I was a chameleon.

23:00 **How did you quench your thirst for current affairs?**

Oh in the library and in the newspapers. And books, I read a lot, I'm a fast reader, I scan read and then I'll go back and read it again, but I might read two or three books at a time when I say that I read two or three different topics

23:30 one novel, two of this and two of that. So and now surfing the net I do more net surfing. And I read on the net. And the only thing with it is that I don't bookmark, I'm not fluent enough to bookmark what interests me and I find something that I read that I want to find out again, I have a job getting back to it. But I've got a very retentive memory and

24:00 despite my age, my intellectual faculties haven't gone. And that was one of the fears of aging is that the memories I've got and the faculties will go. I will not be able to do what I have. Whereas my body is cracking up and falling down around me but I've retained them which is as good as any benefit you can get from growing older. All else fails but.

24:30 **Did you feel like you were in that respect ahead of your peers?**

Yes. Oh I wasn't in marks, in measurable standards, but I was in my capacities, I knew that I was years on later on I found out I have a relatively high I

25:00 **But I had sensed that and I had sensed that I was playing chess then I had sensed in my ability at chess we gave, my father and mother gave it to me for Christmas. I think I was in Sydney and we were in Centennial Park. And the chess that they gave me had, was a little book by George Kazinsky. And after two to three games I just beat the hide off my dad**

25:30 **and he gave it up. I knew that I had this capability of analysis. And situational analysis that I could use.**

Did you ever feel that a teacher or mentor recognise that ability that you had?

Oh yes and it frustrated them, they said I had a slippery brain and I was frittering my time away I should be doing this and doing that

26:00 they were peeved at me because I was a dilettante. I wouldn't do the things they wanted; I did the things I wanted. And I was very good at doing the things I wanted, that didn't come in with the discipline of schooling and education. So I guess that yes I knew that, they were angry, they were angry at me because of my neglect of what

26:30 I had, they thought I was neglecting.

Can you recall seeing newsreels?

Yes, at Wynyard station there was a newsreel there. I can remember that but I don't remember many because I don't think I had enough money. School pocket money was pretty limited but I remember going to them, and this was war time. Yes I can remember that indeed. And

27:00 there was a brownout then I think, there was a brownout, but I used to relish the newsreels, the fact that it was very much propaganda I didn't see that. And the deep timbred voices and the rolling of drums and all that sort of thing, I was thrilled at, I didn't realise I was being manipulated.

27:30 There was something at work on my mind basically, an active computer, I didn't realise they were hacking into my mind. So I relished them

What do you recall of Darwin being attacked?

Don't recall it

28:00 I don't recall, now lets see when, I remember the story and I remember reading about the first of the defenders that was found 150 miles south on the highway a few hours later, the I remember that we started getting Spitfires in then, because the Spitfire was better aircraft than the

28:30 in the tropic conditions, it was more than a match for the Japanese aircraft. We were fairly much Anglocentric in that we didn't look on the American effort as being half as important as the English effort so

29:00 that I'm sure that the Americans had, and the RAAF were there, but I don't recall hearing very much about the American effort in Darwin. At the time. I remember seeing the pictures of the ships, sunk at wharves. I think in the back of my, there some, sense of like a military Pearl Harbor, that we were caught

29:30 unprepared, we were taking it pretty easy, we were safe, so there was that feeling of here we go again, the next one. I didn't feel the same when the mini subs [submarines] came into Sydney. I didn't feel that because they were raiders and the sense of the attack on Darwin was to my mind a prelude to invasion.

30:00 That they were softening us up and destroying out supply, our force supply base. And I had that feeling but I couldn't articulate it them, I couldn't articulate it but I had that feeling. We had just been through Singapore losses of British battleships there. We'd realised that the guns at Singapore were facing the wrong direction

30:30 we realised all of that but not learnt one lesson from it. So we were vulnerable and I sort of sense that our high command hadn't got its situational analysis, that government contingencies of Japanese riding pushbikes through jungles sort of things, they didn't expect that, they expected them to drive off the road. So that I had been

31:00 and was fairly contemptuous of our leadership, military leadership.

So when the Japan entered the war by attacking Pearl Harbor what sort of affect did have on Australia in the feeling of war?

Well I was pretty young then, so that, it was a terrible, we saw it as a

31:30 terrible blow, a grievous blow, we weren't aware of the American power so we didn't know how much of a blow it was to us with our mini navy, it was humungous it was, it would have been just the end of the world, but we didn't couldn't put it into scope, we couldn't scale it, to see how much it affected the Americans.

32:00 I think we had started after that fairly quickly, with ships, we saw what the Americans were capable of but we started realising that Britain was no longer able to be our line of defence and the Americans, we'd have to rely on them one way or another, and go with them up or down. So that we accepted that, and I think Curtin was the Prime Minister at the time.

32:30 **So were you very much aligned with Great Britain?**

Yes. Australia up to, up to World War II was Anglo, it was very much anglophile and England was our home country, and going home was, even if you were born here, going home was going to England.

And was that instilled in you?

Oh I think, both, in,

33:00 school I think, see there, pretty nationalistic. But not Eureka Stockade type nationalism, we were part of an empire, we believed in an empire and we were an integral part of an empire. We hadn't come to

33:30 wanting a Queen of Australia, the Queen of empire, King and Queen of empire. I can remember when royal events occurred how much went through our society, we were very well aware of royal happenings. So the Duke of Windsor and his shenanigans

34:00 shook a little bit because we had a god with feet of clay. We felt that the Queen's shit didn't smell and no one had thought that sort of thing, they were above that kind of thing. So when we found that Windsor was prepared to chuck his throne in that was a bit of a let down.

34:30 **Can you tell me what you remember of the raids on Sydney?**

Searchlights, trying to catch an aircraft and we believed that we, we didn't know how coordinated they were, crossing, whether they had audio, sound protectors, we knew they used to roam across the sky.

35:00 We knew that when we heard the gunfire, we saw the reflection of anti aircraft fire, a lot of that was prophylactic stuff, in case there somebody up there. The sirens of course we heard the sirens and knew the sirens were there. We knew that everything stopped and the whole city stopped.

Where were you on that night?

School.

35:30 And I don't, when the [HMAS] Kuttabul was sunk I don't know that I even heard the explosion of the torpedo but we were all thrilled when they found the submarine nested in the anti sub net. See people, ooh turn us on, it was like

36:00 even the sinking, we didn't realise that the Chicago was the target, when they sank the old Manly ferry, it was sort of, even though some people had lost there lives, they were poor shots, you know, that was a random shot we didn't see it as a real attack aiming at a particular vessel, which it was. But the buzz and excitement that went through and the rumours

36:30 the rumour mills they were very worked overtime. You could find it at flats at Point Piper and government house you could have bought real cheap that day. A lot of people leaving their house and people did move out. And there was a bit of contempt for that

37:00 the people who moved their families out and away, I think we had been inculcated with the British, Britain can take it and the Blitz on London and we felt that, we soon got the feeling that we should have stayed, and not left at the first shot. I think that was, I know the school that I was at was exposed as far as that was concerned and it didn't worry us particularly.

37:30 Might have worried the headmaster but not us.

Did you ever go down to see the damage that had been done?

No. I don't think you could, I think it was, it was, all that part of the harbour was off bounds. At Woolloomooloo and all through there they were all bases. So that I don't think you could have got there, anywhere near, and I don't think private boats were

38:00 allowed on the harbour or anything like that. Like you wouldn't have people going out there on a motor cruiser or something like that just having a decko [a look], I think that was really off limits.

Of your memories of being in Sydney during World War II, what one memory stands out for you?

Oh the observer corps experience was the main experience. There was no doubt about that, it was the

38:30 highlight for me. And when I left school, the war had finished. So that it was not a sense of relief that it was all over, it was, a bit of rage in the sense that I had missed out. This war I had been waiting for

39:00 having been born in this cycle between wars I was the warrior son, it slipped through my grasp so that I was then making up my plans to go and find a war.

So in your last year of school what were you thinking about what you'd do?

I wanted to get into the air force; we had the heroes of Paddy Finnegan and Cobber Cain, and people

39:30 like that who were, we knew all about them and their life histories. We knew about the when they bombed the Eden and River dams we knew all about that. So that was part of the, of life for me. It was where I was heading. I didn't know that I would suffer as acutely as I did from motion sickness

40:00 in fact, I'd rationalised myself that until I learnt to drive a car that I was car sick. And I felt that if I ever learnt to fly an aircraft or drive a boat I would change, but I hadn't ,that hasn't happened. But I still went on thinking it would, I would get

40:30 accustomed to seasickness or air sickness. When I went to England on a ship I never missed I meal but I never kept a meal, you know. That's the way, I didn't learn much from that.

Tape 5

00:32 **During the time you were at shore you had a knowledge of the war, but what were the teachers, how was it being handled from an education perspective?**

Fairly neutral, in fact it wasn't war orientated, it was more academic orientated. There was no focus on the war

01:00 itself by our teachers. It was more, in the housemasters; at the house level where we lived there was more focus there because we had blackout curtains and the like. But in the actual dialogue between teacher and student there was very little reference as far as I can recall.

So how do you think the mother boys were getting their knowledge?

Through parents.

01:30 through parents and relatives. And I think that they a lot of the people were country people. So there, they were patriotic to the extreme and essentially they were, their parents were keeping them posted as to all that side of news through letters. There was mostly communication was by mail, not by telephone. Telephonic communication

02:00 at that time was pretty poor, country people had shared party lines, and everybody listened so that there was no privacy. And the second thing was that it was expensive and also the lines were reserved for emergency work, use. So that people

02:30 were discouraged from phoning, it was by mail.

What communication were you having with your parents?

Mail. And I could have gone home for long weekends. It's not that far by rail at that stage. But I was involved and I had other things and they had other things and

03:00 so that it was a bit of a bind. Sort of a problem organisationally to do that. So that suited them and it suited me to stay in Sydney and I'd go home for the holidays of course, but I used to write. But I must have written quite a lot because

03:30 years later when I was in Africa I went on a trip and I wrote them 23 pages of typing about my trip. So I was fairly descriptive. But I never talked to them about my observer corps experiences or anything like that. I didn't do that. Wasn't being stoical or secretive it was just that it didn't come into their lives, it was not part of their life

04:00 on a need to know basis, as they say, they didn't need to know.

Did they know that you were doing it?

Yes, because my sister was signing leave passes was a conduit and they did learn from that. But it didn't worry them; they thought it was a worthwhile thing. I wasn't being secretive about it in that way, like I wanted to hide it from them

04:30 but I just was doing, what I thought was the appropriate thing for somebody who had skills or training, that could do that.

How did the work you were doing or the mood change after the raid on Sydney?

I don't think it changed at all, because we were always

05:00 thinking it was there. Always thinking it was there, it would come. We knew that there were Japanese submarines; we knew that ships had been torpedoed off the coast. We hadn't envisaged the attack by midget submarines but we knew that there were float planes being launched by submarine off the Sydney coast

05:30 of New South Wales. So we as apart from the observer corps at Raymond Terrace where we were watching training exercises. We knew that at capital city control that we were aware it was going to happen. So change from being a training exercise to being actually a

06:00 little situation and being ready for it. So it was quite…. we were quite uptight and sensitive all the time. I don't think there was much slackness there and I don't think it changed perceptively after the raids.

You were at school when the war ended, how did you get news of the war ending?

Bell ringing

06:30 and hooters going and yelling and shouting and screaming and radios blaring, and people dancing jumping up and down in parades and young ladies throwing themselves at young men and visa versa. In the street, it the central city, Martin Place and so on. There was big fusion of happiness and so on, because it meant that separations and

07:00 risk had gone and so it was you could feel the a sense of relief and joy. And I guess the way the war had ended, not the way we expected it, it came suddenly. We hadn't expected the atomic bombs or anything like that. We knew the Americans had fire stormed Japan and

07:30 inflicted huge casualties on the civilian population of their wooden houses. But we didn't realise that potential of what the atomic bomb would do and then, after Hiroshima and Nagasaki was just sort of, the mind couldn't cope with it, it was mind boggling you

08:00 couldn't believe that this could happen in the blink of an eye. So that we weren't like in an armistice situation where it all grinds to a halt and people started backwards and forwards and backwards and forwards, and then it ends. This was sudden - it happened, and it was that sudden I think made it so,

much more emotional.

08:30 you didn’t have time to prepare yourself. You weren't ready for it, it just happened. And there it was it was all over. And you thought oh it’s gone, just like that.

Can you talk more about the mixed feelings you said you had at the end of the war?

Oh, well at the end of the war, when the war was over I had this opportunity to go by ship to Whyalla and the ship’s officers dressed me up in a uniform and we went ashore in Melbourne and

09:00 I was an adult by then, as far as they were concerned. And I went through and when we got through to the back stairs passage the ships didn’t have radar, the minefield s hadn’t been swept. And there was fog for 3 days. So we steamed in circles for 3 days.

09:30 And the skipper retired, his name was MacKay and the ship was the Iron Duke.

How did it come about that you had this opportunity?

My father, with his political influence with BHP [Broken Hill Proprietary Ltd]who owned the ships arranged that for me. At the time people travelled between Sydney and Newcastle on coal ships. And so rather than go by train. So he arranged this as a lark for a boy. And

10:00 so when I went to see my headmaster Mr Robinson, he was very upset and was very strong about it. And he said I wouldn’t be leaving with his blessing. And I said, “Well I am going to go.” and he said, “Well get, pay your bills and bring the receipts to me before you walk out of that gate.”

10:30 So I left with some sort of a feeling I was doing the wrong thing, but I didn’t think I was, he did. But when we, in the back stairs passage and this skipper started drinking, and the stress was so great. We were on the bridge and we could smell the liquor coming out of his cabin because he was ranting and he’d stand in front of the mirror

11:00 and he’d relive a time when he was on a sailing ship and a man fell from the top galleys and crashed on the deck and died. And he relived this whole thing, and you would hear him screaming at that, while he was in this state. So it was fairly unnerving, and then on the third day the fog hadn’t lifted. And he came out from his cabin, spruced up well shaven, in command. “Right

11:30 heading C40.” whatever it was, and we went, and it was a marvellous thing to see, he’d regained his control. And it was very good, we went on to Whyalla and beer was very short, beer was rationed. So I brought a whole sack full of beer and I started smoking so I retuned home and I wasn’t very well received, lumbered in with a sack of beer and smoking. But

12:00 anyhow, it was a good experience. I felt that the mixed feeling was that, the war had gone; I thought I was going to go to a war. So apparently I regrouped and said, “Well I’ll go and find another war.” So I was going to go to England. But my parents wouldn’t let me go, I had to go

12:30 to university and did things there. And then when I turned 21 I went to England. And joined the air force then.

Can you describe the Iron Duke for us?

Oh yes, the ship was no longer blacked out, we were on full running lights. It was a routine trip carrying coal from Newcastle to the

13:00 smelter at Whyalla and pick up vinyl from Whyalla. Whyalla had just had the first rain for many years and it was in bloom so it was beautiful, it was really something to see. But the standing off the Wilson’s Prom and was good seeing that and recognising where I was.

13:30 Watching navigation at work, ships’ navigation. I’d been signed on as the supernumerary purser. Which was legally and technically you have to be signed on as crew. So when I left the ship I got a seaman’s discharge of very good, very good, very good. For all my work and so on. The crew, the officers’ crew were very good to me. I didn’t associate with the working crew.

14:00 there was a line drawn between the two. I didn’t have free run of the bridge but I was allowed onto the bridge so I could see the ship at work. And how a ship was navigated and controlled. And the loading and unloading of course was, when you are loading both coal or ore, its filthy business, dust and dirt

14:30 it’s pretty horrible. I had no liking for going to sea on a merchant ship afterwards. I felt it’s just a boring job going backwards and forwards, from tedium to boredom, backwards and forwards the only time they get to live is when they get to ports where they can play up. And they taught me how to play up the sailors’ way in Melbourne. And I

15:00 was only just turned 17 I think, so that I was, bristling a bit of a beard and moustache and trying to make it grow longer. I enjoyed that, I wasn’t very much into calligraphy and Morse code I wasn’t good on that, I didn’t have any thing to do with the wireless room.

15:30 I went down the boiler room on a few occasions and had a look at the hiss and the steam and I think

there were stokers there at that time. I don't think they were fired boilers. Then I was seasick, I hated that not only because

16:00 of just the actual vomit and so on but how depleting it is and how tiring it is, how enervating it is the process of being sick . So I didn't like that. I had taken calm pills and all sorts of things but that didn't help me. We went through drills, I watched them very carefully, life saving drills. It's mandatory to

16:30 do it and I was taught how to get my life belt on so I didn't break my neck sort of thing and so on. And it was very interesting in that way. It was not that long a period it was about 10 days all that from whoa to go, is in my mind. As about the

17:00 time lapse of the trip. But it certainly made me, my independence, came out and I knew that what I had done, Robson was right, and of course there's a what goes around comes back, you know, and

17:30 I'll just digress. I was in London and I had been accepted at the air force and I was waiting on my call up. So I had to get a job of some sort because I was starving, so I got a job as a sandwich board man in Piccadilly Circus carrying a thing called a railway lost property. And I would march up and down there thousands and thousands of people, and I am marching up and down there outside Swan and Edgar

18:00 and through this crowd came Glen Robinson. And he recognised me, this dero [derelict], "Oh Morgan how are you doing these days?" you know I've got this thing on, I couldn't, I am normally not speechless but on this occasion I didn't have a good answer for him, but he got his revenge on me anyhow. So that was the story of my trip on the Iron Duke.

18:30 **At the time you had left school, you hadn't officially graduated?**

No you didn't get the exam results out until months later and when I matriculated so that I was then, I then went to university. And I came back to Sydney. And I boarded with a Baptist minister and his wife, Mr and Mrs Phillips, and their daughters Dulcie and Gracie and their son Don. And

19:00 I think when I first lived with them they were at Earlwood I think it was. But of course going into the catharsis of a university, moving between a Baptist minister and the university was pretty much sort of a wild swing. And I started to hit the grog [alcohol] a bit and

19:30 we were in the peace mood and the university parade I remember a fellow Ian Scott and I had a big earth float with atom bombs going off here and there and peace for ever and that sort of stuff. And then we decided we'd do a psychological test, I was doing psych as one of my subjects. And on the effect of alcohol.

20:00 So we got a train out to Villawood and we got a terrible bottle of port and Villawood then was scrub, total scrub, no factories nothing. So we went to the scrub and we had forms and IQ tests and we were testing one another. And having drunk this bloody wine, it ended up that we said, "Look this is no good we haven't got enough wine, we are still sober." So we went back to town and we suddenly realised we weren't

20:30 sober. And I had to go back and face the Phillips with all this horrible plonk on my breath. So I ate a raw onion, and I ate another raw onion and they knew. But they were too good. But they were lovely people and they recognised my voice and we used to sing around the piano, 'Shall we go to the river' and all those lovely songs. 'Somewhere the sun is shining'. And they wanted me

21:00 to have my voice trained so I made an appointment and I went to see a bass baritone at the Sydney Conservatorium. And I had my music with me and I think I was going to sing, 'There is a lady sweet and kind'. And I sang, "There is a lady" and he was listening very patiently and said,

21:30 "Yes, yes, Mr Morgan you will sign well at suburban weddings." I went, "Oh, well at suburban weddings!" so I thought no I'm not going to be a singer by qualification. So I then became a bathroom singer and I perform in my bath and in my shower, I don't sing very much for people, he ruined me.

22:00 The Phillips were nice and they accepted me for what I was.

Before you went to university, was there a thought for you that you would try and.... ?

Yes, I wanted to go immediately. And I wanted to join an armed service, and Canada was the first one and Canada had their air training course and they had plenty of staff, plenty of air crew. But Britain

22:30 was gearing up, and I wanted to go to England. My parents, at that stage you had to be 21, you couldn't go overseas without your parents' permission. And they wouldn't give it to me so that I said alright. So I went to uni, but I was only marking time. I then, I shot myself at Raymond Terrace with a 22

23:00 bullet through the hand and the arm. And going through a fence sort of pulled the rifle and snagged a wire, it was a single shot and it snapped the bolt back, the spring bolt back as I pulled it through, it went off and pow. And so I got back home

23:30 bleeding but not badly. And hurt but not badly. I have got a good tolerance for pain and so I didn't hurt me very much. And I couldn't write so I couldn't do my exams. So I had to do something so I went to, I

got a job with George Patterson's the advertising agency. They

24:00 were in Margaret Street Sydney and on the corner of George Street and some other Street, the Hordern building.

What was it that you enrolled to study in university?

Science. I was doing science I was doing maths,

24:30 physics, chemistry and psych or something, I did an arts subject as well.

At that time you were waiting to go overseas had you had conversations with your grandfather and father about being born in that low cycle of war?

No, no, that never came out, I worked that out they didn't. I think my father had

25:00 carried it like a cross, that he knew that he, that when he talked with ex serviceman he felt a sense of inferiority. That he was not one of them, one of that sort of person. So I know that he, I could tell that but we never articulated that. That never came up, my grandfather, no, he was dead by then.

25:30 So that I never talked very much with my grandfather, because I was a very little boy at the time and he talked grandfather stuff to little boys and not adult stuff at all.

What reason did your parents give you for not allowing you to go?

Because it was mad and stupid, that simple, they didn't trust me, my maturity, I was immature. And they felt that I would put myself in harm's way.

26:00 which I did.

Did you try and persuade them?

No, I said, "Alright, I can't do it, I will, but I'll have to wait." So I did that and I went to Patterson's and I had some marvellous times at Patterson's, and I was

26:30 awful again. All ex servicemen there, not all ex servicemen but George, Lionel Farnsworth, he was the CEO [Chief Executive Officer]. He was ex navy, there was Mitch Black and Bob Samson I worked with him. They were all ex servicemen. And they actually some of them were quite

27:00 traumatised, Bob became an alcoholic, he was my boss I became a copywriter and he taught me on an old Underwood typewriter, and he taught me how to do that. And he was very good, and I got all the little fun jobs. At the time they were talking about nationalising the life insurance business in Australia so the life officers had a campaign running, a PR [public relations] campaign, and one of the focus points was in Reader's Digest stories

27:30 sort of, I'd write the story and sort of twist it into life insurance at the end. I used to have to go to the library all the time and research on Thomas North Barney, the man who never died, Busby's Ball. All these things were avenues to twist into life insurance. How good the funds were and they invested their funds

28:00 in good things for Australia. That they were not greedy capitalists they were actually investing in Australia so that I had a marvellous time doing that, in the meantime, marvellous, really good job. I used to write Colgate Palmolive close shave things and then they got a new boss out and, Ralph Hart, and he wanted

28:30 to have smoke writing, and I hadn't done smoke writing in Australia for 30 years. So he said to George Patterson, "I want smoke writing when we launch Halo shampoo." George said to Lionel, "Get smoke writing." Which came right down to the office boy, that was me, so I had to go and get smoke writing. So I found a man who was Fred Hoineville who was a champion board rider.

29:00 Aerobat and smoke writer. But he had punctured his eardrums so he wasn't commercial. Anyway I got onto Fred, and he had a Tiger Moth called Brolga 3. So yes, I bought a flying suit, a big boots and ugg boots, all on the expense account. And my job in the aircraft was

29:30 fly up to get to smooth air between 10 and 12,000 feet. So Fred had put a special prop on her, and while we were planning this, and I said, "Why Brolga 3?" "Pranged the others." he said. So my job, I sat in the front cockpit and we had a tank there of motor car oil, and my job was to pump up the air into the tank,

30:00 and when Fred tapped me on the shoulder I was to turn the tap on, but it sprayed oil, flushing oil onto the exhaust of the engine of the aircraft, and we got a smoke came from that, and when he tapped me again, I had to stop it. And said now, "You just remember, if you see a flame jump because I'll be gone long before that."

30:30 So we came down, we put a sign up, because you can't see your sign because you are on the same plane, so you fly one minute this way then cut her off, one minute this way, then cut it off, then go up half way and then. And then Fred said, "Let's have a look at that" and he put this thing in a forward leaf, "What do you think of that?" oooh, it was terrible. Any rate after a long time we had the thing just about

perfected

31:00 and Hunt wanted us to put a teaser sign up over Sydney Harbour Bridge. So we were flying out of Penrith and we had the Cinesound newsreel there and all the crew and the papers. And he is lying back on his yacht waiting for us to come. So we clawed our way up

31:30 and hour and half it took us to get there. Put a sign up, flipped her over and down we came. And of course it was a terrible thing, there was a dust storm below 10,000 feet and you couldn't see a thing, they saw nothing of our efforts. We are on the phone, you know, "What was it like?" And they canned the project. So Fred went to work again

32:00 he was going to have coloured smoke this time. That was going through, irrespective. So I went out to a factory at Mascot one time and it was a paint factory, and I go in there and all the men in the white coats, "Ready for it?', "Yes, ready, ready." Right so got on a hot plate in the middle of this thing, put the stuff on, up goes blue smoke

32:30 and pull the lid down very quickly. "What was that for?" Its' poison gas, these clowns will have us flying through poison gas with our oxygen masks on. So that was the end of my time. Hoineville died sadly, he was delivering a German power glider from Sydney to Melbourne and he got as far as

33:00 Albury and ran out of fuel. So he called into Albury and got fuelled her up, he was loaded with fuel, he was worried because a power glider has huge wing span, but it's like a U2, it flies in thin air. But it's not very good on takes offs, it's a huge take off. He was so worried he walked the length of the air field

33:30 to measure it, so he got down the end and revved up this power unit took off and he missed it by about a foot, and the fence got him and decapitated him. At the end of Albury runway. So it was sad when I learned about it. I had lovely jobs I had to find the Toni [shampoo] twins, I had to find two girls, good looking straight hair, willing to be models, oh ho, I could roam Australia on that job.

34:00 I really had fun. I found two sets of twins, and I found one set at, I was living at Pymble and the Phillips had moved to Pymble and I found the Patients twins there I came home one night I was half, I just couldn't find another set of twins I only had one. And they wanted three

34:30 so I said to the railway guard, "You haven't seen two good looking girls that look exactly the same, straight hair?" and he said, "Yeah, the Patient twins they live down near the golf club" So I took I got them and they were mixers, they were really funny ladies and I tried to date them but then I couldn't pick which one was which, and I got into so much trouble. But I got this far with you

35:00 I realised at the end, so anyhow, that was that. I had those sort of jobs and we used to, I used to drink Rhinegold, and I have it in the bottle in my filing cabinet, filed under R for refreshments. In the evenings sometimes I would just get stuck into the Rhinegold and pull my self up in a rug and stayed there the night. I was fairly wild.

The experience you had in the Tiger Moth

35:30 **with the air sickness, did that cool your fervour?**

No I felt that if I could fly, if I could have a stick, like the car I'd be right. But no I enjoyed it.

What do you recall of all the men coming back from the war?

36:00 Well very strong hatred of Japanese, anything Japanese. When I was a kid, we used to have Japanese pop pop boats with little candles in them, that you'd put in the bath. And Japanese toys, tin Japanese toys and they were an anathema, a lot of the men hated that. But then at university they were more

36:30 air crew types. They were fairly wild, didn't take to discipline didn't take much to university. They were there on a commonwealth grant, but they couldn't settle down. I travelled all through Newcastle with one and he had a motorbike and he would go at nothing less than about 100 mile an hour. And we'd roar

37:00 and one time we up and bank and down, he was just like that, he had a death wish. He thought he could make it. No they were….the rank and file fellows just came back and they didn't really want to talk about it, just wanted to get back to where they were, get on with life, as it had been. As I say

37:30 they were embittered against the Japanese. I didn't meet any women ex-servicemen, so I don't know what the women felt like. Because they were Women's Land Army and Red Cross and so on but I didn't know any of them.

You said most of the guys at university didn't want to discuss their war experience. Was that the same with the guys you were working with at George Patterson's?

38:00 No they wouldn't talk about it either. I knew that Bob had, Samson, by anecdotal evidence who knew that he had a fair battering somewhere but, no they didn't want to talk about war. And I really didn't want to pump them about it at that stage.

38:30 I wasn't looking for reflected glory I was really thinking about what I was going to do. So I went on my own way. But I respected them. Mitch Black and George Dunlop they ran into accounts, they all had

different accounts, and I think that they just wanted to get back on with their careers

39:00 they were a bit twitchy, there was a bit of twitchiness in them, a little bit not quite relaxed. They weren't at peace with the world; they were not quite over it. This was, I am now talking about 1946

39:30 '47 so that, I think that they were…. still hadn't settled down.

Were there big welcome home parades for them?

Yes, oh yes, big, big welcome home. But as I told you the war ended so suddenly that the organisation wasn't there. And the troops weren't back so that when the troops came home, the big parades started. And that was sort of the ticker tape type parades and so on. That was mass hysteria where everybody went and it was just right full on emotion. Of recognition of what we had through they had done

40:00 and letting them know that we were proud of what they had done, so whatever they had done, putting value into it was what it was all about. I don't know whether that was the fact but it seemed like it to me.

Do you know how they felt about the welcome home?

I think they felt pretty good about it. Pretty sure that they got as drunk as skunks and

40:30 nobody worried, nobody cared, nobody, no policeman there to say, "Hey, you're drunk." everybody was in there, involved. So they would let their heads go in a way that they had never been able to unfettered, they were free.

Tape 6

00:31 **When you were working in advertising at the end of the war, was the war still being reflected in advertising?**

No I think there was a carryover but there was a reversion, in fact a deliberate going away from it. There was a feeling that the semantics and the copywriting

01:00 had to change from the wartime to a new era. We were well aware that after the atomic bomb and after plastics and so on had come into our lives. There was a whole new world we were entering, and we had to change. And advertising, post war advertising, yes.

01:30 But then I had said to you we had forgotten about the music, so we can bring it in in two ways. So that the mood was for innovating, for change, not replication of the wartime years. It was fashion and style or public appeal; let your head go spin, that kind of thing. Rather than

02:00 conserve, save for good causes and so on. Although I was only in advertising a short time, nevertheless we were changing styles. And that was evident in the copy we wrote and the style of the illustrations that were coming. But in that there was also another change, this is the

02:30 sense of the music, during the war we had war songs. These war songs were World War I, "Long Way to Tipperary", but then we had "Hang out the Washing on the Siegfried Line", "Coming In On A Wing and A Prayer", and all sorts of songs, "Bluebirds over the white cliffs of Dover",

03:00 and they were part of a the atmosphere of the war. But at the end of the war it was changing and we were going into the American jitterbug and the American influence. So the actual music themes were changing and accommodating to a popular change in music. Away from the cloying sentimental side of war songs to something which was

03:30 brittle and effervescent. So that there were all those changes of mood, of colour, that had to be incorporated in your thinking. Not that we had seminars or anything like that, I think we just had to sort of learn, that things on the pulse of the public, what worked and what didn't work. What would go, what went well

04:00 with change. And we had to change.

Was there a reflection in the copy or product that it had been an allied victory?

Yes, that it was, meaning, when you are saying that, we are talking about the Anglo-American and Australia allied, yes, yes. I think we were,

04:30 the pride in the Kokoda Track and our battles in New Guinea was very strong. The horrific things Americans had when they took Iwo Jima and the Saipan, the terrible losses, they were very vivid. So that there

05:00 was a blood linkage there that we, despite the fact that there was much disparagement about the Americans, 'oversexed, overpaid and over here'. There was a knowing there had been a lot of sacrifices,

blood sacrifices on all parts. And the tremendous casualties that the Americans suffered in the aerial bombardment of Germany.

05:30 And the D Day landings and so on. The British seemed to have bored the brunt of Anzio coming up to Italy, but the Americans certainly were very, their sacrifices were well known and well appreciated. So despite the jealousy, but our lack of understanding of the American materialism. How their

06:00 values senses were different to our, their values were not the same as ours. So when we talked about what was good and what was bad, Australians talked one language and they talked another language. And the English talked another language again. But allowing that there was still a sense of having common allies in war.

06:30 **Was there a sense of, say a major event like World War II or even September 11, were there products or services that took advantages of that?**

None that I…. I can't recall. I don't think that was relevant, I don't think at the time

07:00 I was there; I remember I was there for a year in advertising. No, we didn't…. in fact early advertising I was associated with was away from war,

07:30 the close shave region was Gillette, with hunting experiences and this sort of experience, outside, they weren't wartime experiences. I once had experiences of bringing in such radical things; this was mind boggling things, like the first kiwi exported from New Zealand for years

08:00 and I had to mastermind this through a press conference, and he didn't turn up. So I borrowed an emu egg from a museum and painted it. So you sort of, you weren't thinking about writing on the back of the wall, you were thinking about sort of

08:30 a totally different concept. You were focussed very much on the products. And the people and the thing you were doing, not on the line of the post war environment or the euphoria of success or tragedy. We were just, I think very much focussed on product at the time.

The war time songs, were they songs that were on the radio or sung in homes?

09:00 Radio, and homes, they had the little Boomerang Songster, the little Boomerang Songster was a book about yay big, I'm unreformed, about 3 inches by 4 inches. Anyhow, they had all the words of the songs. So if you were at a sing-along in the bush

09:30 somebody would strike up the song, and you would pick up with it, like the hymnal at church and so on. And the piano, the pianos were all for singing, but not in harmony, just for singing around the piano.

10:00 The mixture of songs that were sung were war time songs and folk songs. And traditional songs. So that Annie Laurie was just as popular as "Bluebirds over the white cliffs of Dover". Because they were, both of them were designed to be emotive for somebody who wasn't there

10:30 or somebody that was away, so that music was reflecting an emotional loss or an emotional gap in a war torn society. It was just a very different thing. So that there was this mix, it wasn't one or the other it was sort of there, but it was radio was the prime source. We did have cinemas, we did have movies but

11:00 they weren't, they didn't refect as much as what I am talking about. The wartime ones were, the Brits had a lot of wartime naval sagas and the like. But they were all fairly trite, and somehow or another the poor old Germans kept losing.

Of the war time songs can you remember any?

11:30 Oh yeah.

Can you sing a couple for us?

\n[Verse follows]\n'Coming in on a wing and prayer, coming in on a wing and a prayer,\n With our full crew aboard we can trust in the lord,\n Coming in on a wing and a prayer.'\n

Ah now let me think.

\n[Verse follows]\n'We are going to hang out the washing on the Siegfried line,\n Any dirty washing mother dear?'\n

I've forgotten the words that go on from that, but.

12:00 \n[Verse follows]\n 'There'll be bluebirds over\n

The white cliffs of Dover\n Tomorrow just you wait and see.'\n

flap, flap flap. No but that, I told you I'm a bathroom singer and you have now forced me into the limelight and as you can hear my voice is cracking.

12:30 **We can turn the shower on for you?**

Ha ha. Later on when in the air force we had mess songs. And another, oh climate again of what you sing in messes as apart from what you sing in homes. So we used to sing:

\n[Verse follows]\n

13:00 “Oh we’re leaving cotton by the light of the moon,\n

We are flying by night and by day,\n We pass Cattery and there’s nothing to eat and we’ve thrown all our rations away,\n So shar, shar, someone said, shar the skipper looks on with pride,\n He’d have a blue fit if he saw any grit,\n On the side of the Somerset shire.\n

Very good.

13:30 There were sing songs like that, mess songs, air force mess songs. They were generally derogatory, but we had mess games like that. So that it’s a different world when you are in a service world that when you are in a civilian world, in a returned world. It’s a closed world, it’s a closed society.

14:00 **We’ve had a couple of navy guys singing some of their derogatory songs; can you regale us with some of the air force ones?**

No I don't think I, I don't think so. The quartermaster song,

\n[Verse follows]\n ‘There was beer, beer, beer you couldn’t get any in the store, in the store….’\n

and that goes on into a lot of rival stuff but I never really got into that

14:30 I’ve never been much of a man for pornography or, I tell some naughty jokes sometimes but, I’ve got about 3 and once I have run through my repertoire that’s, I don’t focus on that, I wait myself out a bit when people are in that sort of mode, I

15:00 suppose, you see the mind is a sponge and it can absorb so much. If you are taught trivia that’s what your mind is about, if you are focussed on thinking, an intellectual approach to life then you tend to shut that off there and shut that off there and so, it will become a bit boring. With

15:30 you know you get around the bush and so on, and the bush is really singing the same sort of songs as the sailor sings, the bush you sing more sad songs and things like that and when I was overseas in Malaya I don't think I can recall much singing much at all.

16:00 Even in civilian parties you never had a sing along or sing song. It was again a different atmosphere, I think, in the sailors’case, sailors’ ditties and so on

16:30 traditional thing that goes down with their trade. Sailors and horn pipes and so on have been around for a long, long time. Whereas the army type of song it doesn’t strike me in the same way.

17:00 **How did your time at George Patterson’s come to an end?**

I got a girl pregnant, I got a nurse I knew at Newcastle, Liz Hill, she married Peter Cabban who was the, I think it was Liz, who was the guy who was involved in the [HMAS] Melbourne/Voyager. He

17:30 was the whistle blower on the Melbourne/Voyager thing. But anyway she became pregnant to me and so I fronted, I had to go up, went up there and fronted up to the parents. And the father was alright, but the mother, boy didn’t she dislike me. Oh, and Liz was a little bit older than I was. And they lived on a hill in Newcastle which is

18:00 like Yarrawonga Heights here and Point Piper and so on, she was very much of a snob and she just couldn’t hack that. I I wanted to marry her, but the lady didn’t want to marry, the mother didn’t want her to marry, so. The daughter left the hospital, Prince Alfred hospital where she was working. And moved back to Newcastle so I went back to Raymond Terrace

18:30 I became an assistant forester of Masonite and was an assistant forester for another year or so until I turned 21. The reason I left there was, in a nutshell, that we’d been having sex for some time. For some reason or another I didn’t, the pill wasn’t about then, and I just don’t know whether it was the wrong time of the month or what it was

19:00 but whatever it was, and I was sorry. I saw her later on and I kept seeing her after I went overseas, she was in London and I tried to get back together. She was nursing again

19:30 and we were in Kangaroo Valley where all the Australians were. She was and so I went around there and she was on night shift, all the gang in the house, they were in a 4 storey, all the gang. Said let’s go out, so we go out and have a few beers, and we are going down the stairs to this basement bar and this girl gave me the real rub, came right up to me, and laid it on me . So

20:00 we went back to the, when Liz came home in the morning I was in bed with her best friend. So that sort of ended the affair.

So how did that situation end with the pregnancy?

She had it terminated, I don't know how. I was very resentful of it. Not

20:30 that I am moralistic in the sense that the, a life sort of thing, but more about the relationship between a man and a woman is 50/50 and I thought I had an equal right in our progeny. And if a decision was to be made it should have been by consensus.

21:00 Not by deprivation. So I was fairly aggro [aggressive] about it, in my head I was aggro about that, I didn't like it one bit.

So they didn't involve you in that decision making process at all?

No. No. If they had I would have fought it bitterly. And I would have been wrong because the marriage wouldn't have worked anyway. But they were the conventions of the time.

21:30 **Do you think that circumstance had any effect on you wanting to get out of there?**

No I was committed, I knew where I was going, it was just the confluence of events that it turned out that way. No I didn't, I had been wanting to go since I was 18. So I

22:00 had no particular reason. I certainly I was still moving towards the career in the air force I had been making enquiries here and knew that they were hiring. And I knew that my health at the time was very good. The only thing that I had against me was my bullet wound in my hand and that was it, that was the only thing that I had, which could have mitigated against that.

22:30 **At the time you turned 21 did you try for the RAAF?**

I had already discovered, I couldn't join the RAAF here when I was 18. But there were no vacancies so that I knew they were hiring in England and by that time, the Berlin air lift was in full swing and the

23:00 Korean War was on. So that it was all full on and so I had this theory, I developed a theory in my head that if you train well, if you are fully trained, you don't get killed, the less fully trained people get killed and the cannon fodder, people come in in army planes and go out, and therefore

23:30 I saw it that service was a protective thing in that you went into harm's way if you were trained. You had much more chance of survival even though the random events of anti aircraft fire or whatever you like are still likely to get you but in the circumstances of emergency and survival, I had that theory

24:00 I worked on that, so I was quite anxious to get in on the grounds that if it was a full blown war I would be trained and I would in a situation, at that stage the air force strategies were concerned, English Air Force strategies were concerned, pathfinders and master bombers and that kind of thing where a bombing

24:30 stream was directed by the best of the best navigators and pilots. So that I was heading towards that, if she blew, World War three.

Was the atmosphere building that it had the potential to turn into World War Three?

No here, but there, there in Britain it was, yes it was. Not that they were rearming very heavily, but they were making do with what they had. Britain was very near broke at the time

25:00 When I arrived there they were still on full rationing and they were eating horse meat and whale meat and all sorts of thing, sugar was rationed, milk. When I say milk, condensed milk and so on. So that Britain

25:30 hadn't made a great profit out of the war. So that its resources weren't there. Whereas the Americans had a depth of manufacturing that gave them a much greater resource base. Where they could be producing new aircraft and new models of aircraft well ahead of the Brits. The Brits had got in fairly early with on the jet scene. But to capitalise on that

26:00 they went over to the…..

So once you were 21 you no longer needed your parents' permission?

No, the day I turned 21 I bought the ticket got to London. My father got me what was called commonwealth and state credentials. Which is a, if you remember the parchment you used to get in those days, a lovely big parchment document saying that you are

26:30 a respected citizen of Australia and got a big red seal on the bottom, it goes great when you are up against some customs officer or something like that. So he got me those, I had a letter of introduction to the Lord Mayor of London from the Lord Mayor of Newcastle. And off I went. I was on a ship called the Orcades, returned voyage from a maiden voyage. And

27:00 it was a good ship, but they recognised me and oh yeah. In return for eating at the captain's table I became chairman of the sports and entertainments committee. I had to run up and down decks and organise people for deck tennis and all sorts of things of which was pain in the neck but I played chess

27:30 and the captain played chess. So one day he saw me and said, “Hey, young fellow, game of chess.” so I said, “Right, Sir, right, Sir.” So we sat down and, “Steward, drinks.” I played him and beat him easily, you know it was pathetic almost and “Steward.” he said, “Listen young fellow you have just beaten the man who beat Capablanca.” Capablanca had been world champion

28:00 his name is in all the chess books. And I looked at the captain and I though, my God he had gone down hill. And I thought, and he said, “I’ll tell you how it was.” he said, “I was 4th mate on the Kamamali going across the Atlantic and Capablanca came on going for the world champion, he played 50 of us simultaneously in the lounge and he walked from

28:30 table to table to table, well he was fantastic, on the twelfth move he had me in a really terrible situation, the ship rolled and I just adjusted the board back again, and I left a little bit in my way and the game went on, and about the twenty seventh move, the ship rolled again, and then Capablanca resigned, and then in front of everybody

29:00 he said, ‘Capablanca said, ‘Young man you are brilliant.’ and I beamed and he said, ‘Yes on the ninth move you changed the board from this to that, and on your twenty third move now that was a real good one.’” The captain looked at me and said, “Now when my back was turned getting the steward for the drink, what did you do?” That’s a true story. Anyhow I had a lot of fun. Went ashore in

29:30 Alexandria and that was about the only call we made.

Had you been able to start the enlistment process to the RAF before you left?

No, I got on with a girl called Elizabeth Cornwell on the ship and her father and mother and young brother were there, and I managed to she and I managed to, I was on H deck which was down just next to the propeller going through to the stern,

30:00 and I got friendly with her and we had an affair. I had three Christmas dinners when I got to London. That was about it, the trip was alright and then I paraded up to the enlistment officer and they booked me into a place called Hornchurch which is where the testing goes on.

30:30 And gave me a travel voucher and some money and I went down there and I did a copious testing. The testing was a bit biased in the sense that some of the things were driving little motor cars around bends and like a, you know,

31:00 bizarre sort of thing, fun fair. And that was okay for the English guys because they were used to it, but I was a boy from the bush and I had never seen one of those things before. So I didn’t do very well on that and I think in the end, they said I was A1V1 but I was a navigator. I had a good think about that and I really wasn’t, a navigator, in the air force the navigator bomb aimer was the….

31:30 navigator does the bomb aiming, and I was not really happy about it, but I was there I had come that far. So I thought I could possibly transfer and get to a hands on as a pilot, later. So I went in as a navigator and they called me up a couple of months later. And I got my uniform and I ended up at Cardington in Bedfordshire

32:00 I went in to get my uniform. And I was then posted all over England, I went to Sheffield in Yorkshire, I went to Digby in Lincolnshire. Went to the Isle of Man, Jurbey, Hullavington in Wiltshire. And then was posted to Rhodesia with RAT Group, Royal Air Training Group.

32:30 **At the time you enlisted in the RAF was that quite a common occurrence that Australians could enlist?**

No but there were two things, one was because I was of British heritage and British parentage I could, or it was in my parentage, I think that counted. There was another Australian from Melbourne was on my course. So that there were 2 out of about 60 Australians

33:00 no Canadians or South Africans. No colours.

Were the requirements different to join the RAF as opposed to the RAAF?

I didn’t get involved with the RAAF, I didn’t get that far because they weren't taking air crew enlistments at the time. So I didn’t bother going into see what it was like I just said, “Okay this is it.”

What period did you enlist for?

8 and 4, 8 years. Regular and 4. After

33:30 I had done my thing at Hornchurch, I was preselected for a commission and when you are preselected for a commission you have the option of getting out, doing with the training period. So at the time I was sort of an acolyte and I then was made course leader, so I did my course. So

34:00 that I, it I was looking at it and testing it as a career as well as a looking for a war. So that I did have an eye on the permanency. When I finally decided to leave the air force I used my prerogative. They offered me a permanent commission which means I was no longer on a contract,

34:30 that I was in the air force as a career, and offered to put me into intelligence as general duties branch. I'd get flying, conditions of flying but I didn't have to fly in intelligence fleet. But I had already committed myself in my head to go to that war I was looking for so I was going to Malaya.

35:00 **Can you tell us about the training process with the RAF?**

Oh yes. The recruit training, initial training and advanced training. Three levels, recruit training is getting you into the rituals of looking after your kit, hygiene, looking after your accommodation, you didn't have a batman or anything like that.

35:30 You were a cadet navigator you wore a distinctive uniform and at that time the emblem was a laurel leaf on there. And as you progressed at that particular time you got stars there as you went up etc, etc, they changed all that. But I disliked it intensely, the disciplinary indoctrination of having to….

36:00 well its fairly, you had to have in your locker, you had to have your singlets all numbered, all squared up, all absolutely square, all up there, all up there, the back of your cap badge had to be polished, the soles of your boots had to be polished. I

36:30 thought that was bullshit, I didn't like it at all, I did not like that. I thought square bashing [marching] was just a waste of time. Waste of time. So I turned out that my nerves in my hand there just wouldn't handle a 303 rifle. In the drill position. So I got a medical certificate that I said I wasn't fit for rifle drill. So I would stand on the side line and I would cheer them on.

37:00 I'd smile, and whatever they had to, more drill because they hated me, that was really, but we…. So it went on, initial training and went to Driffield which is a big war time fighter base in Yorkshire.

The experience you had had with VDC and VAOR?

37:30 Didn't mean anything, no they weren't, disciplinary stuff, this was straight mould stuff, moulding you, imprinting you. You had to respond to an order, if they said jump you jumped. And that was true that was right, but I wasn't ready for that sort of discipline.

38:00 **How did you compare yourself with other guys you were training with?**

They jumped, they took it, they accepted it as part of the score, what it was all about. No I didn't do anything to demoralise, I did the things that were necessary and polished the back of my cap badge and all that but I

38:30 resented it, because I knew it was, not to humiliate me but to break my spirit, like they were breaking a horse. And there are two ways of doing that, you can break it rough or you can be gentle. And there is more than one way of achieving an objective, you should know people better than try and mould everybody the same, anyway. I

At the time you weren't enjoying the recruit training?

Didn't worry me

39:00 I was, if you had been through school and boarding school, and there is not much they can do to you, you still resent it but it was all.

Didn't make you have any second thoughts about?

Oh no. There was an end to it and I could see the end very soon but I didn't have to enjoy it. And I

39:30 didn't have to simulate that I enjoyed it. And I probably let…. my commanding officer knew that I didn't enjoy it either. But I later on got into trouble with a flying officer who was in charge of the RAF regiment who was, they drilled people and I didn't see eye to eye at all.

40:00 His name was Bangay. And he knew me and he knew what I was like and he wanted my blood. So they, in the end they flew a surgeon over to the Isle of Man and put me in hospital and Douglas operated on my hand, fixed my hand and put me on the square and the whole course stood there and cheered me as I had to learn how to do this rifle drill.

40:30 So I had, Bangay followed us out to Rhodesia, and I was always in trouble, and I hated drill, and we had a drill muster one day, I had to cut from my rank, my lines where we were living, over to drill, and I cut through the back of married quarters. And there was a hole in the ground and there was this big snake, wow, I didn't like snakes at all. So grabbed a stick and pinned

41:00 the snake then I realised if I stood there I'd miss drill. So stood there, and I missed drill and after drill was over I got somebody, somebody caught a snake so they put me on a charge. Dereliction of duty or some bloody thing. And they marched me through, it's pretty much a thing, you know, left right left right, caps on, not allowed to have your cap off because you can throw it at the CO, caps off in you go, on charge. So, "What have you got to say for yourself?" so I said, "Sir, you have thrown me for initiative" that's what you say, you were doing. I said "I was in the married quarters, there are kids there, there was a snake, now what am I going to do walk away and get a fire bucket and give it somebody in the crew?" I said, "No, it was necessary, on the spot"

Tape 7

00:31 **So they were trying to charge you?**

Well they did charge me, anyway Bill here my commanding officer said, charge is best and bring me to attention, said “Just leave us” so sent them all out. And he let out a sigh, and he said, “It won’t work anymore, that’s the last

01:00 no more snakes, no more hands, nothing, just do the drill.” So no it wasn’t…. I wasn’t very good on discipline.

Sounds like he had some experience with Australians before?

Yes, in wartime he had. But I had been fairly obnoxious. One time I was transferred, our course went to Hullavington for a Bank Holiday weekend, and I had nothing to do so I arrived there

01:30 for the weekend, and I went to the bar and there was a South African fellow there, another cadet. And he was drinking Pimm’s and he was as drunk as a skunk, and sprinkled lighter fluid on top of it. He said, “That really gives it something” We had a few drinks and it was boring, very boring. Oh

02:00 so we’d thought we’d wake the place up, got up and the dormitories were upstairs, and we threw all the beds out the windows and they made a terrible racket, this terrible crash, and beds falling out, and along came the whistles and the white caps coming, so we ran, bolted. And of course I was absolutely certain that the corridor ran that way

02:30 but it didn’t it run that way, and I ran straight into it and broke my nose, and I was flat, and Jonesy jumped off a balcony, he thought that he was on the lower level, he was on the upper level. And he did his ankles in, so we both ended up in hospital. They didn’t charge us, a youthful prank. But we were pretty much I suppose looking ahead,

03:00 the definitive moment, or the causative moments of life changing came in Rhodesia and I got a 3 weeks leave and most of the blokes were going off to Johannesburg or Durban or the bright lights. And three of us decided we’d go hunting up into Portuguese East Africa. So that

03:30 we set out, we borrowed some 303 from the armoury and took some parachutes for tents, and survival kits. And we set off from where we were in the midlands and we had to go to Salisbury. Which was the capital, a town called Harare but to get a visa to go to Portuguese East Africa. But unfortunately

04:00 I was the only one that had a passport; they only had air force identification. So we went to see the consul and I sent him my commonwealth credentials and he thought this was a very important man, and of course we were very scruffy. And we’d been on the train all night and half boozed and so finally he decided he’d put the three visas on my passport. So he wrote the whole page of visas. And we

04:30 went out and off we went, we got to the border and it was a Sunday and there was no bus where we were heading, we were heading to a place called Inyanga. So just walking up, packs on the back, the bloke stopped and said, “Hey, like a cup of tea? Or Beer?” we said, “Yeah” and his name was Perkins. So Perky took us up to the club and

05:00 he was marvellous he was a really marvellous guy and I wrote a lot of stories about him. But in there and he took us out to the Rezende gold mine and we were going to have a party there and but he stopped the car on the road and said to the bloke, “Are you going there?” the bloke said, “Yeah.” and he said, “Well I’ve got a couple of blokes that want to go with you” and he gave us a lift and so we went to Iyanga. And in the morning the car pulled up, a land rover pulled up for us and it was the health inspector

05:30 and he was going 100 miles up out beyond civilisation and he said, “Do you want to come up with me? Bit of a shooting trip, all around.” So we piled in and he took us right up in there, and we went into the reserve and got up the Gairezi River and we couldn’t cross it because the ferryman had been eaten by a croc [crocodile] so we just couldn’t get over in Portuguese Africa. But

06:00 we stayed there and we hunted, and I killed a beautiful animal, a buck on the way up and the natives loved it, they ate everything, the lot, it wasn’t wasteful at all. And then they killed a kudu, a kudu is like a horse, it’s got a donkey size

06:30 stripe across it, two horns, said to be the origin of the unicorn. It was so heavy that they put one half of it up the tree and they could only carry half of it back, , this group who went out shooting. We had split the party up so they brought that in the morning and we haggled with the natives and they’d bring in WAS DOUBLE QUOTE CHOOK s [chickens] and we’d give them a lump of steak for a WAS DOUBLE QUOTE CHOOK and it was marvellous.

07:00 And it was, went that evening looking for crocs on the river, and over the river on the other side there was a native there. There was just a field of corn and a native hut and he was beating a drum, just

beating it. Not sending messages, just boom, boom, boom, and I was, all of a sudden I realised that I was in Africa that really I wasn't on an air force base coming out looking like

07:30 a tourist I was there. And I started looking at it very closely and I looked at the colonial system there. And I was very critical of the white police and I made myself know to, I had a girlfriend there and her brother in law was in the CIB [Criminal Investigation Bureau] Special Branch. And I made myself, my feelings, that trouble was coming and that

08:00 unless they adjusted their attitudes that there would be a real problem. And their reaction was, "If that's the way you feel the sooner you get out of Rhodesia the better." And that was just as bald as that. I had been working on as part of my course, as officer cadet, current affairs and public affairs,

08:30 you have to do a project, and my project had been Malaya. So I read about the situation in Malaya and I had studied it as part of training. And I read about the emergency and the planters were targeted, that tin miners and planters were being targeted by insurgents and everybody was taking, the crew was taking their retirement early

09:00 and there was shortage and I thought about it after flying and I thought, we used to bomb, practice bomb in a place called Kabanga. And it was bombing was fun, you know, was Sperry Norton bomb sights which is a gyroscopically stabilised plate with a white light beam with a crest across and you navigated down by left, left right, steady, steady, down

09:30 till you crossed over, pressed the tip and dropped your bombs. And then you had to lean out and see where the bombs hit as they do. And that was fun, you know, but I realised that it wasn't war the way I had wanted it, I had fantasies about war. It was remote control, it was remote, We were flying up high and the enemy were bombing, I never saw him, we just dropped bombs on him and that was it.

10:00 And that was very satisfying for me because I was looking more for the Pamplona running of the bulls [excitement], I wanted to prove myself, not drop bombs on somebody I couldn't see. So I decided that I would get out and fairly soon after I went to see the CO and I told him, and he was upset. And I had to go and see the group captain and he was more upset. And they started getting a bit heavy

10:30 and they ridiculed me, "You'd give up a career to go to Malaya to be a planter?" and I said, "Yep." I couldn't articulate it really but so I then had to see an air vice marshal or somebody there and he put it on me that you never see Australians being quitters back in World War II, you know, in bomber command and I said,

11:00 "Well I am going to a war not going away from a war" and he didn't like that either. So they sent me back to England and I got back to England and I then was drafted out. And I immediately applied for a position with the Anglo-American rubber company.

11:30 **Earlier you said that air sickness was a problem for you, how did that go?**

Oh it was terrible. Because you see you are flying Anson 20s which is a terrible aircraft, but at least this model the Anson 20 you didn't have to pump up the undercarriage. But we were flying and Rhodesia was very good, because the flying weather was very good. Clear weather for navigation, for visual navigation

12:00 but in the tropics, the plateau, the mesas or kopjes as they call them, and they reflect heat. So when you hit one, pow, and as you are taking a sight, you end up pressed up against there and then, down on the floor. So it was, I was a good navigator, the courses results were very good. But a trip was, a 3 hour tour, our trip was

12:30 a day's work, I was buggered, you know, I could, by the end, and I felt that if I ever spend my life doing that, it was not on, that wasn't any good for me. So that was part and parcel of the decision as well as being the fact that I was remote. So I think the fact that the trip up north to Inanga

13:00 enlightened me as to a colonial situation, politically a colonial situation. And I was totally anti communist but I could see that there was a case to be made for tolerance and giving rather than waiting for them, going into two camps.

13:30 That the Malayan situation had gotten itself into opposition with insurgency, I was fairly well convinced from my readings that there was a real colonial problem. And so what had happened was that, in the immediate post war years.

14:00 With the declaration of the Untied Nations and the declarations of hope were made. And many of the natives of third world countries believed what they had, and they believed in this freedom and equality of man, and they wanted it. So that all of a sudden, nationalist outbreaks occurred in Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam

14:30 Kenya, all over, these people were asking for and wanting freedom. In Malaya it occurred that a man called Chin Peng was leader, was the secretary of the main communist party and he had led the British spearhead, he was illegal before the war, when the war came he was the only opposition underground. The

15:00 British took him on and he went into the jungle with the Malayan people, anti Japanese army. And they were the backbone of the resistance against the Japanese, mostly because they were nearly all Chinese and the Japs and the Chinese had been fighting wars for a long time. Chin Peng was honoured as a result of his war time, and he was supposed to have lead the

15:30 victory parade in London, I think they recommended him for the St. George Cross or something. But he was a communist first and foremost, what had happened was that the Brits and the Americans had come up with a theory after the Calcutta Comintern meeting of 1948. But what they call the domino theory, that they would, the coms [communists] would drop down this one, dominos, then the next one and then take over.

16:00 Sort of thing that the wars that started were in the name of domino theory. Chin Peng came back from Calcutta to find that Lo Kok who was the mastermind of the communist party had absconded with all the party's funds. He was a British agent who had been sent there, got there from Vietnam

16:30 and he absconded with all the funds, they left Chin Peng with nothing in the kitty. Chin Peng had been tutored by Ho Chi Minh, Ho Chi Minh was in Singapore and tutored him as a Comintern agent and then he went up to Saigon and to Hanoi. Chin Peng had decided then that the revolution would have to come

17:00 but it was a nationalist revolution, , in my mind, it wasn't a part of a conspiracy, but the Brits, it suited them to call it part of the domino theory. They didn't call it a war because in a war there are two things that happen, insurance goes bust and they won't insure you against war but

17:30 strife and civil emergency your insurance stays on. The second thing was that you can hang somebody for carrying a grenade but you can't if its a war, he's a prisoner of war. So the Brits kept it as an emergency. It started when Chin Peng, out of sequence, it was all supposed to happen as a meeting in Betong. And they all met and the dates were set and these bastards down south got it wrong and so they went off too fast and they killed 4 planters

18:00 in early '49 I think it was, long before I got there. And war broke loose and it had all started. And of course the planters were furious and frightened because the obvious, they had soon developed that the targets they were going to, break the economy by attacking the basic economy,

18:30 creates a structure of employment by breaking that, etc. And then they would clear an area and make a cleared area and gradually like an ink stain, moving out, open up the country, gradually taking over a city here or there. That was the theory that Chin Peng had developed for the Malaysian insurgency.

19:00 The Brits responded fairly vigorously. And they brought in a lot of Palestinian police who had after Palestine had gained independence these fellows were out of a job so they brought these fellows back as police lieutenants or as police sergeants. They were pretty vigorous but it took time and in the meantime the MRLA was the Malaya Racial Liaison Army had well organised. They had a supply team called a minion and they were civilians who

19:30 in the villages who supplied them with their wants. And the ALC which was the Armed Labour Corps, they call out the job if they had more men than they had, the jungle. So they started off, they were killing planters and taking plantations, intimidating workers burning buses and doing all sorts of mayhem and nonsense. The Brits brought in food rationing

20:00 and then a man called Briggs came in, and Briggs' plan was aimed at taking away the Chinese squatters who were retreated from the Japanese to the end of the jungle and lived in there were they couldn't be found by the Chinese, and were growing their own paddies of rice, Briggs said, "Right, we'll bring those people out they are supplying the jungle

20:30 guerrillas, we will bring them out and we'll put them into resettlement camps and give them land and so on and so forth." So he started the plan, the basic plan, and he was, he was pretty good. He came under the big man was the commissioner for South East Asia but he was, had a lot of

21:00 other interests, but there was no supremo in Malaya, there was a fellow called Gurney and he was killed in an ambush, stupid man, very brave, unarmoured car and was shot, stepped out of the car and said they can shoot him and not his wife. And so Sir General Templer came and Templer was a very different man, he was an intelligence officer

21:30 and all his work had always been intelligence as well as general army, he was an Irishman. And he wasn't Sir General Templer then he was a major general but he was a good one and he was enough to start them off properly. And he was a ruthless, ruthless man and he would

22:00 for example, in Kuala Lumpur there was a fellow there, whose job was as warden for nuclear attack and he was defence system for, and Templer said to him, "What's the chances of being in a nuclear attack?" and he said, "None, and he said, "Well you're fired" And that was, I mean, he got the bloke another job but he demolished the whole place and he turned things around and he changed the rules.

22:30 And they had to be changed because I had encountered it when I first got there. The estate I was on was at the end of Johore a place called Segamat, or Tenang which was about 10 miles, the north side of Segamat and I arrived and got off the train and the bus met em and we ran up to the house.

23:00 Gave him my passport and on the night, I had a new passport because my old passport had been stuffed up in Africa and so on, and I called myself assistant manager and he blew his top he said, “You are not an assistant manager you’re a bloody creeper.” and I had enough of the new boy stuff for a long time and I didn’t want any more of that so I

23:30 said, “Well I am here and my name is Morgan and I am the assistant manager on Roll estate, now if you don’t want me, send me back.” And Sam Nias was a pretty tough guy he’d been there pre war and then when the war came and everybody else was chucked into Changi [prisoner of war camp], he took a rowboat and 60 of them rowed to Sri Lanka.

24:00 And only about 20 of them survived the trip he was tough man, very tough, and a good one. So we settled down but it went on, when I went in to be sworn in, they swear you in and on the inspector of police and they give you a gun and so on. And they gave me an American M1 carbine. And everybody said, “Oh shit, a carbine.”

24:30 they are all carrying 303s and Lewis, Sten guns, and oh, they looked at this carbine which is an American World War II carbine but it was very lightweight weapon, 0.30 calibre. Took a 10 shot magazine and you get 15, 20 shot magazine for it. And they said, “Look we’ll swap you, you take this and we’ll take that.” and I said, "No

25:00 that’s issue, that’s mine, if you go in and see them and tell them that you want to take my gun away from me you go ahead and do it but I am not going to do it.” So we sort of went through this hiatus of the new boy stuff and we got over that fairly quickly. And it was a whole new world, and I had to learn very quickly.

25:30 And you have to learn very quickly because you are on the line. There are different sorts of people and different ways they approach this threat. Some went with, and they’d take an escort if they wanted to go out into the rubber, 10 or 15 men, armed soldiers and away they’d go and, and there were those that wouldn’t go out much at all. Then there were those that ignored it and said, “Look

26:00 I’m a planter I am not a fighter.” and they just went on and pretended there was nothing going on. And then there was me, because I said that if they are hunting me, I’ll hunt them, I will become a hunter and so I’ve developed the art of becoming the hunter, and I reckoned, as with Kipling, “He travels the fastest who travels alone.” So I had to have one, my poor old SC [Special Constable] came with me cross country

26:30 we never walked the track, we never did anything anybody ever expected us, we did stupid things. It terrified him, but it became an exercise of learning, a learning exercise. You go out in the morning at dawn, at muster and you know that’s a focal point, a funnel point. You know that somewhere you have got to go out through a gate

27:00 and somebody can know that there is only 3 gates. So you know that they will get you one day. So you know that, so you change the rules, and you set out to do things to change the rules so they are thinking along this, inside the 9 knots and you are right out there different. You wear camouflage gear; carry two grenades, phosphorous grenade and a military grenade, two spare magazines for

27:30 every gun, a Lewis gun, somebody gave me a Lewis gun. Like it’s cowboy tied down there, because if you travelled in a land rover like they issued you with, the land rovers had 4 plates of steel, armour plating, but the engine wasn’t armour plated and the roof wasn’t armour plated, so that anybody that shot at you from a cutting

28:00 you’d be ding, ding ding, the ricochets would go around, you knew that. You knew that if they shot the engine out you’d have to get out real quick. So that you had to be ready for whatever happens to you whenever it happens. So I armed myself for a gun that I could shoot, bang, like a cowboy. I had grenades I could throw and then get out. Because I knew what was happening so you worked on contingency planning,

28:30 well I did. Sometimes I’d get on, there was a contractor going out on his motor bike, and I’d get on the back of the motor bike with him, put the Lewis gun in his ribs, put the SC behind me, 3 of us on the bike, say, “We are going to field 33 or field 62.” “Oh no we are not going there.” and I know there was something going on in field 16 that was he knew about that I didn’t. So I then started

29:00 using that information and I started using it on him. So I started developing techniques and I did these things that people never ever did. So it became a learning thing, you’d go into the rubber, and you’d hear the monkeys screaming and all of a sudden they’d stop.

29:30 What’s something’s moving, something happened. You’d come across these horrible yellow webs of bird catching spiders, huge horrible, oh ghastly things, but they had been broken; somebody had been there before you. You’d find the buttress logs of a tree, an old jungle tree which they had built the plantation, plant the rubbers around and

30:00 there was a shooting slot cut out of the buttress root. Sometimes you’d go over a ridge, down there and you would see that overlooking the ridge that bipod of a Bren gun, now somebody had a Bren gun over the track, was it our side or their side? You didn’t know. So it became a challenge and I was bad, I did stupid things, and I had a dog and the fellow I was taking over from

30:30 was a ex catholic priest, a priest, Kelly was his name, he'd been in the Congo. And the sins of the flesh were starting to get at him and he was getting toey about that and a fellow was exploring on a geological survey, Jock Scott, came and they had scotches together and Scott wrote to him and said, "You ought to come out to Malaya." he was down in the police out there.

31:00 So he got a papal dispensation and then become a planter, and he used to, he was lovely man but a mad Irishman. And he had a Sten gun and it had that much dirt up the spout that it was awful and he'd lose it, he'd put it down somewhere when he was doing some work in the rubber and he'd have to go around looking for his gun. So he was a really funny man. And we

31:30 got on very well. He was going up to a place called Tanjong Malim And he was due there to leave on February the 11th. I got there in November, my father had met me on the ship going over to, I went on a ship called the Caulfield. A P&O boat that stopped in Algiers, Aden, Bombay, Penang and then Singapore and my father met me at Bombay.

32:00 And he of course wanted to dissuade me from going there and I was not to be dissuaded. So I went up to the plantation ahead and then he came up and spent a few days with me. And saw what the plantation life was like. He went back, in January we had floods. I had started to learn Malay and I was a very quick learner, I am very good on languages

32:30 and so I was talking fluently enough to be able to make myself understood. And I wouldn't speak English to anyone I had to speak Malay, I made it a rule that I wouldn't speak, if they were English speaking Malays I wouldn't speak to them unless they spoke to me in Malay. So I learnt that and

33:00 so this flood, the flood came, the monsoon floods. We were cut off, my house was cut here, the causeway there and the ladies' quarters were over there. And then the water rose and you couldn't get through. So I said, "Well I am not going to leave them there on their own." So I put the luger in a biscuit, one of those Arnott's biscuit tins, and I could swim, mad dogs and Indians, in my jocks and off I went.

33:30 And they are standing on the banks shouting at me and cheering me and I am thinking, "God it's lovely to be loved." you know, good old, they can appreciate me. Wasn't until I got there that it was the bloody snakes all the kraits and the cobras were up in the, had come up out of the swamp and were hanging on the telephone wires, and they were trying to warm me to go back. "You silly bastard." It was, we had really, with the Tamils I had a good relationship and a good relationship with the Malays

34:00 the Chinese are much more taciturn and they are much more under the thumb because the main rebellion was Chinese because the main people who were being exploited were the Chinese.

So how did this anti-European feeling that was supposed to be there translate?

Well they felt that the

34:30 people didn't want the communists, they didn't want them because the communists were essentially a two percent minority. Who were dictating to the 98 percent? They didn't like it but they had to do it because it was a terror war. And a terror war is an awful war. The man who I came up against who got me in the end was a man called Goh Peng Tuan. Goh Peng Tuan ran a thing called, he was in charge of

35:00 the 7th Independent Platoon of the 5th Regiment of the Malayan Racial Liberation army. And he was, right from the beginning of the war he operated Segamat where I was and right down to further south. And he was a bad man and he, for example, on Voules estate one of the overseers, named Dorey, when the Chinese overseer, he said to

35:30 him, "You have to collect the taxes for the party, I'll come back next call I want 30 dollars from you." and he said, "I can't do it, I can't do it, no way in the world, I can't do it I am too far away anyway." And he goes, "Oh you can't do it hey?" and he cut off his arms. Tied him to a tree and

36:00 he got his money. There was a woman there who they thought was informing, they stabbed in the neck with a necklace just enough till she bled and bled and bled. They disembowelled people, they were mad. And this was a very deliberate thing, it wasn't because they were animals, they were aiming to terrorise and the native population who are unarmed

36:30 and couldn't protect themselves. So they needed us, they wanted us to stop them. So it was an untapped well of information, all you had to do was get their confidence and you had it. And you had to do bad things. You became coarse, you showed your true colours mainly. They caught a thief one time and I was honorary magistrate

37:00 so they brought this fellow in on charge, sent him in, in a jail sort of thing, and I said, he had stolen a camera or something he was only a kid. I said to him, "Okay you are outside I want to talk, I'll give him a good lecture." So I said to him, "Now I want information from you, I want you to tell me what's going on." He said,

37:30 "I can't they will kill me." "I want it." "No, no, no I can't. Sir I love you I love everything about you but I can't do it." "Okay when we get out of here and every time I see you I am going to put my arm around you and say thank you for helping me, oh you are such a nice man, and they will all know that you've

helped me, you wont have helped me but they will all kill you because I let them know. Either help me and you will get some money out of (UNCLEAR) money

38:00 or you will be dead, one or the other." So I blackmailed people, it worked because either voluntary one way or another, because I was in the survival business, I got people to help me. And I first fed the information through to the army and my division where I was. There was a company of the group, Scottish Cameronian Rifles

38:30 they had a captain Bill Boddington, and Ian Tedford was the sub-lieutenant and a fellow called Grey I think was his name. They were a lot of conscripts, Cameronian Rifleman are lowlanders, they came from Glasgow a lot of them from the Gorbals which are a really rough part of Glasgow. And they didn't but they weren't good soldiers but they were there. But I fed the information to them but they

39:00 led me on, led me on, and then I, to Special Branch because they just channel it through. They didn't, they were consolidating information rather than having army information here and police information there. But Special Branch and the army, police worked in what they call police circles which were regional structures. And there was an OCPC [Officer Commanding Police Circle] who was in charge of the police circle officer manning the police department

39:30 and the OSSP who was the officer supervising Special Branch, his name was Paul Barnes and Jock Scott who met Dermott Kelly in Africa. And so I worked with Paul Barnes and when you went into their offices, particularly Barnes' office, the walls were all order of battle of all the enemy. Who we knew of. And they had photos of 80 percent of them already, they knew who they were, they'd get school photographs and

40:00 all sorts of things, but they had them. So I started feeding information we started getting contact until we started identifying, we had one man out there who son of one of our foreman whose name was Ramasamy I really wanted to get him in he was the last Indian man in the area. There was one or two Malays and I wanted to get him out because

40:30 his father was a lovely man and I didn't want to kill him, but I wanted to get him out, captured or get him to surrender. The British were very tough with surrenders, when Special Branch was merged and anybody came in they would send them straight back out, in again, in the jungle. They wanted him back in his unit so

41:00 he could get defectors and get more out. So they kept on doing this and rewards, huge rewards, relatively. They were, that side was good. But the other side was bad; many of the army hierarchy were still back in the World War II days.

Tape 8

00:30 **Do you remember where you were up to?**

Yeah I was talking about, an operation, about the Iraqi who didn't change, adjust to the situation. They put on useless operations, which are, Operation Periander in '52 and they decided that there was some enemy, deep in the jungle and they put in what they called a box, and they put in an artillery box and they started

01:00 moving artillery and they were going to compress it and compress it and force the bastards out. And this went on day and night and they had 25 pounders opposite my bungalow and I couldn't sleep at night because the rattle over the top and planes bombing and they killed two. One of them was stupid, was outside and walked into the barrage

01:30 so yeah, they put all this effort and days and days, you know, plans and so on. The best results came from the deep jungle and from the tiger squads, the Malay police tiger squads, they were good. The SAS [Special Air Services] were good. They had sooner or later they had to come out of the jungle edge, which was their vulnerable spot because

02:00 in the jungle the jungle is very hard, it's very you know, it's a needle in the haystack job, but they had to come out. So once you became aware of that that was the real place for killing. We never got big kills, by the time I got there; at one stage I heard 100 men moving in the unit somewhere

02:30 but they were in dribs and drabs only, small parties. It was very difficult in the deep jungle, I was talking about the Scottish Cameronian Rifles, now the troops in the field don't have cooks, the batman becomes the cook for the officers' mess and so on. The particular fellow I am thinking about his name was

03:00 Mazzetti. He's a Scotsman, as broad as Scottish as you can think, but his name was Mazzetti. A bandit had been killed in the jungle and in the process of killing, when they kill a bandit in the jungle they don't carry him out, they bring his head out and his hands. Finger prints and photographs. It's an anthema to the Chinese, the Chinese believe the spirit and the body, with the head, it's very bad but

03:30 nevertheless it saved an awful lot of carrying and of dead bodies. So they'd killed this bloke and buried him and about 3 weeks later, 4 weeks later, a bandit surrendered. He said, "Did you get all that money off the fellow you killed?" and he went, "What?, What money?" he said, "He was a courier, he was getting all the tax money."

04:00 So after a little while there was a very quick reaction, rapid reaction stuff, mess funds, boy oh boy see what we can do for the mess funds. They mounted a patrol and in they went, they were going to the recovered, they knew where they buried him. It's only by compass reading; they didn't have maps or anything like that.

04:30 They knew where he was. As they are going in the whole tribe, the whole mob, and there was about 15 in the patrol. Dog as well and they had only one man didn't smoke and it was Mazzetti. So they are going on their way and they are going through the swamp and Mazzetti could smell smoke, "Hey, hey!"

05:00 So put the dog out, the dog doesn't do anything, suss [look] around, no, so they go in and dig out the fellow, which is an awful job because its putrid by this time. And there is no money there. So they were pretty peed off about that and they weren't really happy about the whole thing. So they are on their way back, plod, plod, plod. And when they get back this

05:30 bamboo thicket in this swamp one shot, it's Mazzetti, it's a wooden bullet, short of ammo, the bullet went in under his clavicle in his shoulder, in his arm, splintered, and he was mortally wounded, they carried him out, I had heard the shot, somehow or another I knew and I always, he was saying "I want to shoot, I want to shoot." he was just in terrible agony

06:00 and terrible pain, and he died. Which was sad, shows you what a smoker, he might have lived longer. Mazetti was a terrible cook. Every Saturday we used to have curried tiffin [dinner], and if the pan was around we'd have take it in turns, and when the army's turn came we had to

06:30 go to the Cameronian mess and Mazzetti wanted to make us a chilli con carne, and he used the little birds' eye chillies which are ferocious there. And it was impossible for us to eat it, you know, we were trying to be polite, all going red faced, trying to pretend we could eat it, oh it was awful. But that was Mazzetti. But I suppose the next, they tried to burn a truck going up to C Division even.

What's your relationship with military that are there?

07:00 Good, very good.

Because you are still working, are you working Special Branch at this stage?

No I'm a planter there, an agent for Special Branch, the information feeds from me to them, either this way or that. There was no inter-service rivalry, and no secrets

07:30 no sorry, need to know basis, they didn't tell me what they were doing, but I told them what I knew. If it went the other way it would be bad. No it had to work that way. We….

So when an op [operation] was on, would you know something was on?

No

You would find afterwards?

I'd only find out afterwards unless I was part of the planning, for example

08:00 I'll give you one. In the south west corner of the C division, might have been B division, was a right angled corner, barbed wire. And this was the tappers' line or houses, communal areas were here, the army was up there on the hill. But there was a swamp here and there was a track along there.

08:30 And I got information that there was a man coming, coming on the second day after the moon, something like that, after the full moon. And they would throw a bag of money over and some food for him. So I went to see the army and I said, "Listen why don't we have a go at this, why don't we see if we can catch him, I know he is coming?" So Tedford who was the

09:00 subaltern and I set up this scheme. We had to reconnoitre, we had to be very careful, we can't show any interest in that site. So we had to reconnoitre it very discreetly. But what it was, a tree hanging over the rubber tree, hanging and there was a branch over the track about 10-15 feet back from the corner. And the swamp was just about 210 foot alongside that

09:30 sort of thing the basic plan was that I was either going to net him from up the tree with a net, an animal net, because we used to catch deers and things like that on the plantation. Or alternatively I'd club him with a riot club. We hadn't worked out the weaponry. Tedford was going to be lying in the swamp with an Owen gun, that was the weapon, it was better than the Sten or any others, he was going to give me the cover

10:00 while there was standby platoon up the top waiting with a real razzmatazz and then they'd come on down like the cavalry coming to the rescue. So then I needed, so we had to first pass the, so we went into special branch, no we went to see Jock and Tedford was with me. Walked in

10:30 and what I wanted to borrow was a Liffey club which is a riot club, nice handle on it. And I was going to lie and then pow, if there was more than one I'd hit the last one. If there was only one I'd hit the one, if I hit the last one, Tedford would spray the ones in front. And you know, etcetera, etcetera, this was the scheme.

11:00 So we go in there we were full of bullshit and full of all you know, march we were going to get this guy. Sit down in front of Jock and my two grenades went, pop. Jumped out of my belt on the floor and everybody knew that everything I had was loaded, fused ready to go. We all sat there and looked at one another, "Sorry." I says, "No worries."

11:30 next time I got in there, they search me, they take everything off me. They got their revenge because we were all nearly, shit. But so this is the level of planning we were at, we were actually involved in that sort of operation where I would initiate an…. on the other hand

How did that one go by the way?

It never happened

12:00 we got ambushed and while it was, before the moon, we got knocked off on the main highway. And left for dead. But it was just one of those things. It had about a 25 percent chance of success. No more.

12:30 There were several things, if the moonlight was too high, my camouflage had to be very good, I had to be very quick with that hit and accurate. If he saw me I was dead, so that it was fairly hairy sort of operation. But we were

13:00 after this man, Ramasamy we really wanted him. I got information he would be in C division one morning, and they feared for Ramasamy that he would defect. That he'd surrender. So he always had a Chinese escort too, so out of the lead patrol of the army went over this hill and down there over up this hill. And on the next hill there was Ramasamy and there is his

13:30 escort, pants down having a shit. Lead man, pow, misses. Leaves trail behind him like that, over the top of the hill and they disappeared. But that's how close in the going, it was really very close. In the end, after I had gone, Tedford told me that there was a another really good tip,

14:00 and the informer went down to them, and Ramasamy was coming out at this place and he had the stuff all around Ramasamy and he'd give it to Ramasamy and then they'd shoot him. They'd kill all the others and capture Ramasamy. In the morning half light, they shot the informer and Ramasamy and everybody else got away.

14:30 Them's the breaks, but it's a, any rate on December the 5th, no February the 5th of 1952, I wrote to my parents or my father. And I said that Dermott Kelly was leaving for Tanjong Malim and there was going to be a, we were going to have a big night out on the tents.

15:00 Blah, blah, blah. On the morning of the 11th, David Harrison, who was the manager of C division was ambushed and killed by a Min Yuem squad that came in with a Malay with gold teeth, who was carrying a Tommy gun.

15:30 Harrison had been due to go on leave, and his replacement hadn't arrived. So they sent his wife off by sea and he was to join her by air. But Pam was on her way over and David was due to meet her there. They had never been pre war, in rubber; he'd been in Changi, good mate, really good mate. But he'd been warned, he only had a

16:00 little Morris Minor car, not a Morris Minor, little Ford Prefect, square looking thing and he'd been told not to use it, he didn't take any notice. He and his conductor and 2SC in the car there's been trouble over the Chinese New Year payment. And the union on the plantation had said that he was stealing from them.

16:30 And he said, "No there is the gazette, this is what we are paying." They said, "You are stealing!" he said, "No we are not." They said, okay passed the word to him that they were going to kill him, everybody knew but us. 'Cause it was a terrible, that was real terror. Harrison goes out from the lines, they open the gate for him, machine gun posts at the gate, closes the gate, goes up the hill

17:00 and they are all waving to him, at the top, they are waiting. All the people there knew. I was in the rubber about a mile or two away, I heard the ambush, I started to run back to the, pretty early and I knew something was wrong, and I started to run back to my division, the headquarters, and I ran into an Indian conductor whose name was Niar, a Goanese Indian.

17:30 A conductor is the, you know, he's the supervisor, he's next to, number two to me sort of thing. But he's, "They've killed Mr Harrison!" didn't dawn on me, you know, I kept running and then back, yeah they got him and there was no doubt. And then I realised that Niar knew as well.

18:00 Harrison had gone up on this estate with a man named Lee Fatt Swee and Lee Fatt Swee was a Chinese conductor, a really good man too. And I said to Fatt Swee, "Why didn't you tell me, why didn't you just let me know?" Cause he was in tears, he said, "You give me a gun and I can do it, while I have to walk there without a gun, I can't, I've got a wife." So Harrison was dead.

18:30 And Kelly was going to he had to go to Tanjong Malim So Niar and Kelly went to the funeral, in Muar which is down the track towards the coast. And they left and Chris Morris, Chris who was a New Zealander

19:00 another division Russel Division, cracked up. The army rang me and said, there is fire going on, Russell, Jesus, okay, they said, he'd gone bonkers, he's cracked. So I got hold of Nile, he said, "Send him down to the hospital put him in a taxi and send him to hospital" So okay, so yes I get him and I said,

19:30 "Morris you have got to go to hospital, I am sending you, the first aid attendant, they call the dresser, I'm sending the dresser with you, its boss' orders." Didn't like it but I was pretty strong, put him in a taxi sent him off, gave him his gun. Two hours later he was back.

20:00 He put the gun to the head of the taxi driver and told him he'd shoot him if he didn't bring him back. So I took the gun off him then. Unloaded the gun, put him back in the bloody taxi and said, "Now, you bloody well go." Put Basher in the back with him, slipped the base, the rounds for the gun, and chucked the gun at Chris, I sent there. And I said, "Don't you come back." And he went.

20:30 But that's how it was, you know, here was I was 3 months in the country or 2 months in the country, and I'm right involved in mayhem and nonsense and people breaking down and so on. In terms of my self realisation, what you find in yourself, a depth that you never knew. I had always been one with a theory that

21:00 a man's reach is just beyond his grasp that you stretch yourself, because you will then extend yourself and until you can put yourself into those situations, if you can stay away from them, you will never know what you are. So I came back and Chris was okay and he came back on the plantation.

21:30 Harrison's replacement was a man named Bogle, he was British Navy, had been in Malaya, wife 3 children, firm catholic, 3 lovely kids. His wife's name was Renee Shilling and her maiden name, and she, her parents owned coconut plantations in New Guinea. So when the emergency started, Harrison and family moved to New Guinea.

22:00 But he couldn't hack it because he found that he couldn't work in New Guinea, they were so sick and so, he couldn't communicate and he was a short tempered man. So he came back. So when they arrived with all, we all fell in love with Renee she was a beautiful woman. You know, being on this plantation for 30 days and oh, it was terrific. And that, he was a real mug [a fool]

22:30 and he spoke perfect Malay, Malays were ashamed to speak to him because he spoke what they call Raja Malay, whereas we used to speak bazaar Malay which is the local dialect stuff, but he spoke perfectly. But he was stupid as they come anyhow.

23:00 one night, there was a shooting, Up at C Division being me, stupid, jump in the car, race up there. Now the first thing, lesson you should have learned was that the enemy if they were attacking there will delay by putting in a secondary ambush and ambush. So that the relief force gets ambushed. Basic stuff, not me.

23:30 Straight up there, they wouldn't let me in the gate with SC ,special constables, wouldn't let me in the gate. So I had to get out of the car, I was on my own, crawled under the wire, you know, raced to the house, Renee was in the bathroom with the kids, the best defensive protection was. Bogle was there and I said, "What's happening, where is the shooting?" and he said, "Jungle lights, they are shooting from over here

24:00 police quarters were and down there." So I said, "Right I will go". So I ran across to there and I got my first war wound, I got ran into the clothesline full ball, and down I went. Oh half strangulated, oh God. Oh, anyway I get over there and everything seemed alright. There was a police lieutenant somewhere and I couldn't find him. I said, well I have got to go to the bottom, down the hill into

24:30 the tappers lines, there was no defences down there. So down I got and it's pretty hairy stuff, it's scary, it's like the old west, you know, when you are stalking the street on your own and the villains are all around you. So I get down there and I am starting the quarter, the line leaving from one hut line to another, very slowly and very carefully.

25:00 And somebody sprays me with a Sten gun. And I just realised it was the police lieutenant and he has seen me. He's not a good shot, so I said suitable words of welcome to him and that was that. And what it was, the whole thing was, they were testing out to see whether the guards were on duty

25:30 or asleep. Now they were, there were fire flies and they were jungle lights. These fellows used to sneak up behind a log and put a torch up. And wait to see if they could get a reaction, looking for the weak spots in their defence. So we worked it out that that's probably what happened. They were testing the defences there was no attack, all the shooting was over, from our side it was relative stuff.

26:00 We went back and I kept getting more information from Harrison's area, and then he hit a man, he was very short tempered, in anger. And I heard that they were coming for him. So by that time Nile had gone on leave and Sam Turner was the boss and Tuner was a weakling and scared, scared man, very frightened man.

26:30 But he was an older man; he was about 50, 55. Waiting out for his pension. So he didn't do much at all. But I went to see him and I said, "Listen they are going to kill Harrison, I'll tell you why, I'll be reporting to Special Branch." but I said, "They'll get him." With Harrison being killed

27:00 over a pay dispute and this was the cell that was there, and Bogle being stupid and hitting the man. He said, "Right, what we'll do keep Bogle on the premises, he is not to go out, put perimeter lights all the way around, I am going to light the perimeter of C division so that it

27:30 is totally lit at night, so you have to go through light to attack the, generator and all, and Bogle will not leave there until…." So that was pretty good and I thought, that's pretty smart. Tedford and I had tried to train Bogle in small arms use. And he was a clown, we tried to show him how to throw a grenade, stiff arm

28:00 throw, stiff arm throw, with a rock. "Right we are going to throw one now, when you throw the grenade drop down, get below the cutting. Right." We throw a grenade, we all drop down, boom off she goes, great, "Now your turn Ray, now ready!" and he rolls it underarm. And the thing goes, and we tried to find an antipode that we can get under. And

28:30 Bogle starts running for tree in his whites, running, all of a sudden his feet go in front of him and down he goes in the mud and the thing goes off, boom. Alright. But he was that sort of bloke, he was absolutely hopeless. So any rate I had left Malaya…..

The training that you received

29:00 **was it self taught?**

Yeah, that's what, you have to learn. It's a quick learning process you go through. He moved down, they moved into another estate. Down south. One morning he came out with his wife and he was driving into town, and they were waiting for him, and they shot the engine out of the car. He got it out of the ditch on a starter more and ran back into the other ditch. And they had him

29:30 It was a Ford car he was driving, he got out of the car walked to the front of the car, and said to the men that were there, "I surrender, look after my wife, do not kill her, my wife or children." They shot him through the head then and there. And then they came for her, she locked the door of the car and they were about to try and blow the window, when these armoured cars started coming through, they'd ambushed it, but it got through.

30:00 So she got out with the kids, so I saw her when she came to me when Tedford came down to Special Force, and when he left, she and I went to bed together. So it was a sort of, it was the sort of thing that was happening at the time. So we were in this worst of war. You knew when you were in trouble.

30:30 And yet the Brits are so stupid, in some cases, they had a golf course at Pyalang. Now if ever there is ever predictable, you've got a 9 hole golf course, is that you are going to be going from hole to hole, tee to tee. You don't have to be smart to realise. But these Brits would do that and I was, I have my gun here, my carbine there, and I'd have

31:00 where the ball bag was I'd have a couple of grenades there. And I was petrified playing golf there. I had to count trees. The rubber system was changing, and the seedling rubber, which are the old trees starting to lose their yield. And the other rubber was graft rubber which twice 3 times the yield can be tapped, sometimes twice daily, whereas the

31:30 seedling rubber, every second or third day. So I had to count the trees which are yielding. Those that aren't yielding, of course the percentage means that it's become un, beyond the economic level. So fine, random here, random there, but sooner or later you are getting down to the last field of rubber trees

32:00 you've counted all the others. And anybody who was tailing you will know that you are going to be in the field that day. I got jittery about that. So I got the army to put a sweep in and I said, "Look, yeah, just do it." Not that there is somebody out there waiting for me but, he got away, or they got away but

32:30 that's how your intuitions and your sense of things, you know, you really have to tune yourself to, I was walking in the rubber, stupid as, mad as a snake, right on the jungle edge, there is the jungle, right there, no further than that, in the gully. Got a cocker spaniel dog with me, stupid

33:00 and up in the bush a man stands up and goes, "Down, down." The army have got an ambush there and I walked into their ambush. And I was right there and of course I am wearing jungle greens, but my dog saves me because what's, only mad bloody silly me would have a dog with him. But you know, the job was I had to go there to the rubber

33:30 there was no place, no-go zones, I was going to be all the way through there. And I was fearless in the sense that, one day I was driving along and I heard something, and I knew that field wasn't being tapped, and I heard something. Stopped the car, they were breaking the porcelain cups to prevent the tapping the next day. So

34:00 ran in there, charged in after them, now, they normally, A would have had a sentry posted and B there'd be more than one. But no I came across, they run through the mud of the creek, and the water was still

coming into it and I knew I was on them, but they got away. But I wasn't frightened in that sense, I thought I, I felt that I was alright, I could do it. So that

34:30 I had sometimes problems, we were 30 days and we'd go 4 days Singapore. And when you are, at the start of the month, the shutters of your windows were opened at night. And you'd sit there have your dinner and didn't care, there's the rubber. Because the rubber came right down to your, next to your house, didn't care.

35:00 Ten days, oh, started getting a bit twitchy didn't I? 20 days you had to have the window shut, you couldn't stand the pressure because you thought one day a man is going to come down and put a bullet through the window. Because you were sitting there with all the lights on, you can't see him, but he can see you. So it was that sort of stress, we had, part of my job was I had to weigh the rubber

35:30 as it came in, and they would cheat, they would put water in the rubber. They'd come through a paddy and put water in to dilute the rubber. Cause they get paid on dry rubber content. And you use a hydrometer to give you a specific gravity of the rubber. So you are aware of this, so you have a foreman there and he stirs it. But when his friends come in there he stirs it this way. And

36:00 so you make him stir it the other way, and you do all, its all the time, your life is, you are watching people and you are aware of people. When we issued rations it was chaos day. Because the rice comes in 5 different grades in big bags. And then there is a great ceremony, open the bags up and mix the bags, mix the bags, mix them so that everybody gets the same grade. But

36:30 the old man knows the, he'd, when he's just, so all the right stuff is there. so you have to, you know, you learn it was a learning curve all the time, because you didn't believe anything unless it was, unless you could prove it.

This must play on you when you can't fully trust the people you were with?

No, never worried me, I was

37:00 never enough to me, that way. In the sense that I knew that this was a jest, the stealing of latex in, or cheating is just part of life, that's not real, that's not nasty stuff. It's when you are going to get killed by somebody, that's when you start to get worried.

So if you got word that

37:30 **Mr X is going to get knocked off tonight, did you have a set procedure what you had to do the minute you received information like that?**

A, could I let him know, and B I would let the army know. And in that order because they were the proximity for response. Then I'd let the, the police Special Branch know. But sometimes you didn't tell people things,

38:00 you wouldn't tell somebody because you felt that they weren't the best receptacle for the information. So in Bogle's case I never told Bogle that they were going to kill him. I didn't tell him that. I didn't tell him he was an idiot, as a man, that wasn't my place

38:30 I felt my role was to do the best I could to protect him from himself. And that wasn't the worry, but some things, some people, there was a man named John Brakes who was Dunlop's brother, and John Brakes was a nice man, as mad as a snake and he had an assistant with him and

39:00 one day I had been in town with an informer and I was just coming back on my own in the armoured land rover on the main road. And as I came to Brakes' place there was a timber jig on, turning, with a big log, turning into the railway that way as I was coming around the corner this way. So as I closed the corner, the log twisted into my path. So I knew I had to hit it. So

39:30 you know, a real snapshot when I said, right, bang along side of him and knock him square off, I'll go along him. And I will hit the rubber tyres at the end, which I did Tipped the land rover and over I went, right as I rolled and rolled and into through the barbed wire fence of Brakes' place. The vehicle ended up on top of me with my leg jammed in the between the

40:00 armour plate door and there. My grenades were up here around my ears, and there were men running round trying to get me out, and I started yelling at them, "There is petrol, no fire, for Christ sake, and my leg is bent!" So they get me out and as I get out, I am cut about a bit and this bastard said to me, "You spoiled our bloody garden, look what you have done to my bloody garden."

40:30 I was astonished, speechless. It was, I guess later on I found at truce and but Brakes' was part of a camp, they were going and they were caught with two Malay men, and I don't know what happened to them but Brakes played the piano beautifully he was a very sensitive man. He had written off two cars in a month that I knew of. So that it wasn't he, it was this twitchy man of his, native, but that was the sort of thing that went on. It was a pretty, you know, you had to understand that if we scored a hit on an enemy, and he was wounded, they had a thing what they called pie dogs, which are mongrel things, but they starved and they kept them fed on rice and stale blood from the blood bank.

Tape 9

00:30 **Putting yourself in the line of fire, were you being paid well?**

No. No we were, no when we went there, when I went there it was, there was a rubber bonus, the price of rubber was very high and there was a bonus being paid. But by the time

01:00 I had sort of settled in there it had vanished. Mostly by the impact of synthetic rubber. So that the wages were, I spent it all I didn't have any money. When I went to Singapore I lived, I never gambled, I'm not a gambler, and I don't, I've never taken recreational drugs or anything like that, so that I

01:30 spent it on booze and women. But I always I had a partner, she worked for Malcolm McDonald's office she was a starter clerk. So when I was coming down for my long weekends, she would take leave and we, I stayed at a hotel called the Europa which was known as the cockpit, it was the Dutch hotel for KLM a Dutch airline]. And we just went on and on

02:00 and you know we'd drink a lot of booze and do all silly things. The ritual was that I drove down in a hire car, an illegal hire car, they weren't Avis or anything like that, these were, and I'd pretend I was Chinese I'd wear a red checked shirt and part my hair in the middle and dark glasses and drive erratically trying to

02:30 pretend I was Chinese and not European because I was on my own. And when we got to Johore there was a bar there called the High Swan and the planters used to meet there and when they were coming in or out, the local fellows. And you go in there and have a good couple of gimlets, gin and lime, and a stinger or two. Then you had to hand your weaponry in, you couldn't take guns

03:00 into Singapore. So we'd hand them in and then off we'd go, so that was the recreation we had so that, it costs, the company paid for the accommodation. I don't think they, and basic food, but I don't think they paid for the kind of food, and all my friends. But it

03:30 didn't mean very much to us, or to me. It wasn't eat drink and be merry sort of stuff, it was just that I was living it to the full. I was making each day count, it was, they were valuable to me, so that I sort of, I lived for the day. The money has never been an object in life with me. And I never

04:00 had any recompense from the Special Branch or anything like that.

Do you recall what you were being paid?

No, not a clue, really that was, went into the bank account and out of the bank account. It was like that I had, I'd run up bills at the bar and in Secarement [?]. And I would go to the policeman's club there at weekends sometimes and we

04:30 had the curry tiffins, we would all take some booze and, so it was fairly busy, the climate, both the climate climatically was in favour of fairly heavy drinking. It wasn't beer drinking, beer drinking is not conducive to tropical health, they sort of go against that they had

05:00 a whisky stinger which was a half whisky and a long soda water or something like that where you, lots of intake of fluids without getting bloated. And also the pressure on your blood if you drink too much beer, lot of pressure. That's another thing that comes; I made so many mistakes with people.

05:30 I had this dog, he was a cocker spaniel and he'd been maltreated and he was cringing wimp of a thing, and I wanted to bring him back so I would build up his confidence and he would come with me into the rubber and he would attack a cobra and hob nail a cobra for me and

06:00 he was pretty good. But the Malays and Islamists don't like dogs and particularly whip dogs. So on occasions if I had a special constable who was Malay he would object to the dog, the whip dog being in the front with me. With us. And I'd say to him, "Look you sit in the back if you want to. No armour, it's your choice

06:30 not mine." And so, that was wrong, I wasn't sympathetic to what he was about, I really shouldn't have been like that, I could have tied the dog up in the back. But so I know now that I wouldn't have done that because it was the wrong thing to do. I wasn't paying respect to his religion. And I should have. But on the other hand you did a lot of things that were fun things.

07:00 I got invited to a Chinese wedding, and I was the boss man you see. It's, being boss man, being Tuan Kechil was my name which is little boss, Kechil being little and Tuan meaning Mr. Was a little mister Tuan Besar is the big fellow. Anyhow so I roll up this afternoon for this Chinese wedding and the ritual

07:30 is that we are all sitting out on the veranda of the lines, the lines are 6 cubicles, two room cubicles where each family, the bride is in one, and we are outside, and all the guests at tables along there. And everything has to happen in a ritual way that I was the guest of honour. So before we had anything, before we started eating,

08:00 she'd come out with a great bottle of brandy, in your glass and fill it right up. Then they'd put a bit of

orange on top like that. And then the ritual is around the table they say Yam Sing, Yam Sing, down the hatch. And you've got to toss it off, then you Yam Sing the next one, and by this time you are all half mollered [drunk] anyway. So

08:30 then she comes out and she starts to serve you and she is shy and the first delicacy I got was an ox's eyeball. And I looked at this thing and I thought, "What do I do with it, do I put it straw in it?" But you know it's fun in a sense that you have to cope and you know it's sort of, part of the life. The Indians were magnificent, they are Tamils, they are indentured, they come on contract. And

09:00 they tell everything, this is Samantha's first period, she is having her first period, and you'd go on, and it was really good for you. Unfortunately you had to be rough in that I had to search the lines, I'd have to go in gun in hand and do the storm trooper bit. Because anybody who was in there and shouldn't have been in there would have killed me.

09:30 So I had to, when I went in I had to go in ready. So they had to understand and if you were sincere, and if you were as frightened as they were but you weren't going to stop doing what you had to do. And that was what it was all about, was holding the line, not

10:00 giving in. Doing what had to be done, so I found it, I use the term self realisation because there was a man named Richard Hillary, he wrote a book, he was a fighter pilot, and he called it 'the last enemy'. And Hillary was one of the Battle of Britain boys, and he got burnt badly.

10:30 And he, after he had been very badly burnt, he went back into action and was killed, but in between time he had written this book called, Self Realisation. Or called The Last Enemy, and that was a quotation, the last enemy is just itself. And in understanding what he was talking about was self realisation, you had to go through, no pain no gain, you had to go through the fear to get your own self respect. And that's what

11:00 it is about when you are on your own, I mean I when you are in a unit situation, or a crew situation you are part of a team, and yourself, you are interdependent on the team. Each one, the tail gunner, etc, etc. In army patrols there is the point and so on, but when you are on your own it's you. And you're the man that makes the decisions, and you have to work it

11:30 out for yourself, what you are going to do and what sort of man you are going to be tomorrow or the next day or when you go home or whatever. So you, it's very much a, not a philosophical process, but it's a matter of sitting in, and getting a mindset that says I can do anything. I'm not, you know, there is nothing will stop me.

In a situation like that, when friends like Harrison are being killed and you are a target,

12:00 **as opposed to a conventional war like World War II, do you ever take it personally?**

No. I knew, I didn't hate my enemy, I didn't hate them at all. I saw the bodies coming, they were strapped on the back of scout cars and I didn't hate them like that, the fact that

12:30 there were atrocities, there were also atrocities on our side. There was a planter further south of us, he cracked and he had, I knew he had a man who knew something and he put bamboo slithers under his nails. And there was a Scottish Regiment that slaughtered a village of men, like My Lai in Vietnam, so that, you know,

13:00 it's a, not one sided it's terror and fear, can be by bad Europeans as easily as by bad Malays or Chinese. But no I never took it personally, I took it as, I was part of, something that was much bigger than me and something

13:30 a bigger thing. I had realised or since then, I have realised that it was very much a local war of independence. We never found, or never heard of any Chinese or, imported supplies, never heard of any foreign fighters, never heard of one, possibly European renegade, Russian Army observer,

14:00 only heard of one being killed. So I had thought it was part of the domino theory but I've come to realise it wasn't and these people were quite genuine. Nationalists. Wrong politically but wrong message but they were looking for something for Malaysia not, or Malaya, not for

14:30 a doctrine, Chin Peng the man who was the leader is came to Australia in 1999, and lectured at ANU [Australian National University]. This lecture was an interesting one because it came under, I think a chapel house rule which says that

15:00 nothing that was said there, it was off the record and could be reported, other than by one of those who was there. And one thing did come out, that Chin Peng had taken great solace and comfort from a man called Lance Sharkey who was head of the ship, the marine unit here, union. And he took a lot of comfort from that, and he said that he received no other

15:30 support. When I tried to find the, and get the, brief or any information on the ANU meeting, I got nothing. Chin Peng then wrote his autobiography, it's called Alias Chin Peng My Side of History. And he had an alias because

16:00 collective punishment was the rule for the Japanese if they knew it was Charles Morgan was in jail, they'd kill Charles Morgan's relatives in the town. Or they hold him hostage, so you always had an alias. And his real name was Ing Mong Pah, but he is now, I tired to contact him

16:30 because I believe that it is time to write off old enemies and I think that, we should put closure on it, and he should go back to Malaya and see his ancestors' grave and do his active dive or whatever he is going to do. But he said it's in his book, I'm waiting on getting a copy of it, but it's

17:00 strange that a man that has given all his life for his country is not allowed to return to die. And that's interesting because it's a perspective. I wanted him to go back for another reason; the northern states of Malaya and the southern states of Thailand were once a separate kingdom. And they were divided up by Britain, and Siam under the French pressure.

17:30 Sort of thing they left the 5 Muslim states in the south and 5 stayed in Thailand, and 5 northern Malay ones went to the Federation of Malaya. What's happening is that Islam has got in there and there is now Jihad. And the mudjahideen are in there is barracks being burned, police being killed, in southern Thailand, and there is a lot of nonsense going on. What it means then politically is the buffer

18:00 of the Chinese presence has been taken away or a strong Chinese presence, so that a resurgence of Chinese influence would be an offset to the Al Qaeda and the JI [Jamai Islamia – Muslim terrorist group] people. So that I have a second reason why I think it would be good for Chin Peng to go back because I think it would

18:30 keep Malaya a free country. But what's happened since then, the start of that is that elections were held in Malaya yesterday or the day before, and low and behold the moderates romped in and knocked hell out of the radical Islamists and Muslims. So that the immediate threat of a succession has gone away in the light of moderate Muslim leader

19:00 Muhatir [Prime Minister of Malaysia] wasn't like that but the current Prime Minister of Malay is good. So that, I had reasons for wanting to have a reprisement, which was not government reasons not anything but my own personal thinking

19:30 and also change, perhaps change history a little. So that's the ramblings of an old man.

Can you tell us about the ambush that you were involved in just before you came home?

Yeah it was on the 9th, I came back to the plantation on the night of the 6th, the 6th of July of 1952. I got back at about 2 or 3 in the afternoon, and I couldn't find

20:00 the hire car man so I was moaning and groaning because I knew that he'd charge me for an extra day. But he wasn't where he said he would be. Went back up to see Tedford and he said his girlfriend, Jocelyn Gardner, was having it on with a Ghurkha, or Ghurkha officer and he wanted to straighten it out with her, would I

20:30 go back to Singapore. So I said yes, so we, illegally, he was in charge of, he was officer in command of his unit, because his CO [Commanding Officer] was off station. so he handed over to his subordinate. And he and I fuelled up and left, drove through to Singapore. Tedford stayed, naturally I talked with her mother, Mrs Gardner and she had a cocker spaniel too so we had cocker spaniel talk and

21:00 I had a few drinks. And then, at about 11 o'clock I think it was we started to move ahead for home. And we started on the morning on the 7th of the 7th. The 7th of the 7th was the day of the celebratory day I think it was the formation of the

21:30 Kuomintang republic, but it's a day of military celebration so. I didn't know that. We set off and we had to drive at night. Now we were in an unarmed vehicle unarmoured which was not allowed under law. He was off station and I was off station. As we arrived at the town, we had to get out of the car walk into the lights, hands up and identified us and get back in the car

22:00 and away we go again. When we got a place called Yong Peng the police said the telephone lines have been cut between here and Cha'ar. Now I'd been in a situation like that before on my own and I had gone through the cut telephone lines, zigzagged through the lines and there was no trouble, it was just bastardry, it wasn't an ambush.

22:30 So Tedford and I had a little natter and we'd said we'd go, Singapore Strait Times [news]paper was ahead of us and we would be swapping places, jumping over, and he was smart he said, he's not going, so we went. And we went through the ambush, through the telephone lines, but the lines weren't down they had

23:00 just been snipped. And then we were taking turns in driving. At this stage we were on Benzedrine because I had been going fairly well constantly, 24 hours or more and Tedford needed to be awake. I'd had booze, scotch whisky, I had a carbine and a luger, I had a dog. We were driving a Morris Oxford.

23:30 Going, went over a hill, going just over the top of the hill, going through the cutting and at the top of the hill there was a log over the road, Tedford driving, skids and swerves into the right, and the car stops. A man jumps up on the bank on the other side and says, "Surrender, surrender!" I fire at him with the

luger, he disappeared, and I didn't hit him I'm sure. And they

24:00 let loose with everything and the car sort of filled to bits with the windscreen being shot out, and the bullets, I was shot through the leg, it was once in once out once back in again. In the knee, I got a bit

24:30 of shrapnel. Tedford jumped out, the plan was we wouldn't get caught in the car. Because unarmoured you couldn't fight from there. So he jumped out and as he jumped he was shot just below the knee, a bullet went right through both legs. He fell and as he fell a man was on top of him and grabbed his carbine gun like that. So that's how close it was, they were

25:00 attacking us. I had gotten out my side, shooting as I went, the wound wasn't crippling. And they charged, I could see them charging up the road, from the bottom of the cutting, we were at the top of the cutting, coming up at me. The luger jammed and I threw the luger like a grenade and I ran around through the lights of the car, he had left the lights on

25:30 silly bugger, and dived into what they called lulong, which is long grass. And then climbed up the embankment to get into the jungle. But as I was half way up the embankment I found there was a machine gun close up at the top that was zeroed in on the car. So I stopped and laid there. Now I was in a white sharkskin shirt with a blue polka dot scarf. Elastic sided cowboy boots and grey

26:00 flannel pants. De rigueur for a planter on the town sort of stuff. But what it meant was that when they came looking for me they found me very easily, first of all because my dog had got out of the car and was sitting there, tongue out, and then when they shone the torch and saw the dog they found me. With my white shirt I was gone. So they tried to drag me out

26:30 by my boots, and my boot came off in a man's hand and I thought I had kicked him, and I heard the machine gun cock, and I waited and he said no it was the boot, so they pulled me up well they have got Tedford's lanyard and put it around my belt and dragged me out. They had, of course taken my watch my wallet, then they started kicking me around the face, and that was a pretty futile thing in the sense that I had

27:00 when you are being kicked by rubber boots, it doesn't hurt very much. When you are in shock it doesn't hurt at all, when you are being carried and you have been through the pain business you know the pain, there is nothing in it. So I wasn't really, but I was just trying to pretend that I was in shock. Because I had a white shirt on and no blood on me. So I heard them talking about Tedford and they shone a torch on him and

27:30 touched down, and they put a carbine down and touched his eyeball and he didn't blink. And I heard them say, "He is definitely dead. That was Goh Peng Tuan [?]." So they stuffed his body back underneath the car, punctured the petrol tank with a bayonet and put a fuse to it. Having ransacked the car and got a bottle of scotch and the carbine that I wouldn't get out from underneath the seat.

28:00 The car brewed up and went, boom. But he rolled out, and into the lanning, in the grass. Meanwhile on both sides they dragged me out I was, they left one man there and he put a bayonet on a long bayonet on an old 303 rifle. Came across the road he was dressed in blue overalls, black overalls

28:30 blue overalls I think at the time, and he started to bayonet me. This was all become slow motion because it's you are literally, we were a second guess, it's very slow motion stuff, every second is what you watch and what you get. Is life because I was watching him and seeing what he was doing.

29:00 And he was just out of school just about, and he was not a bad kid in the sense that he didn't know how to kill a man. So he was stabbed me through the arm, came right through the arm, twice in the arm pit, once down through the chest, sliding down, all the time I was rolling with him and just as he would come down on me, I'd just move and take a glancing blow. So he got me a fairly deep one

29:30 on the left shoulder. But that turned down on my back, then he came down through my back and punctured my lung and came out through my left side. So I was down, there was a lot of blood and I was bleeding through the back. And breathing through my back through the lung. He stopped and went over the other side of the road and cleaned his bayonet off, and I thought the bastard was going to shoot me. So I got up and ran

30:00 down the road and jumped into the grass about 30 metres down the road. Now he must have looked around and seen I had disappeared. And he knew that I was dead, or dying. And he thought if he confessed to Goh Peng, they would shoot him for not killing me. So he didn't say a word, he told them he had killed me. So when

30:30 the next time they picked up a courier, two days later or, the courier said, "We killed two white running dogs, on the road at Cha'ar." So I lay there in the grass. And then I started to get a bit, thinking that I was going to get germs in my wound. So I crawled out which I thought that nice green tarmac is a lot more hygienic than where I was.

31:00 And I sat there and of course I had started to weaken and I was losing a lot of blood. And the dog came back. And that dog was a hungry dog and I said, "You bastard if you eat me, eat my blood I will kill you." I liked dogs I was only sort of teasing him in a way. But then I got more tired I had to lie back on my

elbow

31:30 and then I got tired again and I had to lie on my back. Then I heard somebody coming and I yelled out to Ted that I didn't know what happened to him, you see. I heard that he was definitely dead, they had said, but I knew there was somebody there and so I yelled out, and the next thing a hand was over my mouth and it was Tedford. And he'd survived and he was hobbling off with his wounds to go to get assistance for us.

32:00 So he headed off, hobbling away, and fairly soon I heard the sound of an armoured personnel carrier company, and when they come, they come at full bore, then they hosed down in apocalyptic fire, all on the, all the jungle, everywhere, the prophylactic fire to get the enemy heads down or get them moving. And I yelled out to them

32:30 that Tedford was just down the road, he had to jump into a swamp. Because the bullets were tracers were going right at him. So we got him back and they put me in the car in the armoured car. And the police lieutenant in charge of the men called Shakers McNab and his hand was shaking and a real nerve case. And he couldn't give me the morphine, so Tedford gave me morphine. And I laid there on the car and we set back to go to

33:00 Kluang where there was an army hospital. And not Kluang I went to Yong Ping . But it was, I was still under the influence of the Benzedrine, and then, they had the morphine and then I had alcohol. So I was uppers and downers I was half hallucinating, I was conscious I couldn't go off. The

33:30 policeman who was standing over us was farting in my face and it was obnoxious and I was trying to tell him and every time we went over a bump it hurt me badly. Because they are springed for heavy work and they are not sprung for, and they were trying to get speed to get me back. When we got back to the hospital

34:00 a big hospital orderly, picked me up and he said, "This poor bastard's had it." and I am going, "Whoa, whoa." you know, I'm trying to say, "You've got the wrong man." But so they took me in and I was pretty healthy at the time apart from wounds my body was healthy. They had just received aureomyocin there I was the first one to have aureomyocin in the east,

34:30 they decided that instead of fixing my lung by taking a rib out and inflating it and doing all sorts of horrible things, they'd just sew me up and stich me up, fill me up with antibiotics and drain my lung, and the lymph was going through it. And let's see how it went. So they did this and I was watching all the time while they did the stitching up and mucking about with me. In the reflectors in the operating theatre.

35:00 So they took us back put us in the ward, in the end I started to go to sleep, and then I started to get pain, really heavy pain. And this kind of pain you talk about, nowadays they talk about on a scale of 1 to 10, what's the worst pain you've had and I have had a hemorrhoidectomy and in Malaya and when you have

35:30 your first bowel motion after you have had a haemorrhoid out it's like a woman having a baby, it hurt like hell. So I said, this was 10 out of ten, the last one was 9 out of 10 but this was, I was in real pain. And I thought they had missed something I thought that I had a bullet whole and shot in my gut. And what it was was nerves and stress. There was nothing wrong with me, just reaction stuff.

36:00 So they sedated me and I was alright. But my recovery was very quick. And within two days I was clambering my way down to the loo [toilet]. Within a week I was getting a taxi down into the town and I was getting booze and Chinese food and making a nuisance of myself. About 10 days later, after 10 days I was back at the plantation.

36:30 **And what happened to Tedford?**

Well Tedford, he'd chipped a bone, a bullet wound had chipped a bone so he was in terrible trouble. He had to stay in hospital. And he also did this stupid, you know, we had massive injections and he'd decided to have all his injections in one place. And of course that, he got really sore, whereas I'd have them on the bum on my arm and

37:00 on the legs and everywhere and I didn't have any of the problems that he had. When I got back to the plantation of course they were very worried that the enemy would lose face, that the Chinese would lose face. Lost respect because they had said they had killed me and they hadn't. And they thought that I would be a prime target then, a real prime target. And people came from everywhere and gave me guns and out of,

37:30 you beaut 303 carbine and somebody else had a 38 browning pistol he had since he was in the army or air force. And wherever I went I had to go in a ferret scout car and I was pursued by the owner of the hire car. Because I had it burned, when I was out illegally, but then on the other hand as I said to the gentlemen, "Its an illegal hire car, so you are just

38:00 as illegal as I am. If it was legal you would have been insured." So he was trying to get me to, so a writ was being issued to try and detain me. To go to court, so Sam Turner is a bloke as I told you is a bit of a wimp of a manger, he turned up trumps and when the train came to take me off to Singapore

38:30 he surrounded me with a troop of very friendly Malay police and he said, “That man over there.” meaning the lawyer, “Is a bad man, he is not nice to try and get you, keep him away.” So they kept him away with rifle butts like that, kept him away. And as the train went out of Sedang I waved to him, said goodbye. And I never saw him again, and I never paid for the car.

39:00 So that’s the story of my encounter.

Do you think that ambush was designed specifically for you?

No, no, they were trying to get the paper truck, it was a gesture, it was a, you know an idiot thing, we just rolled people wrong time, wrong place. Nobody could be as stupid as we, that’s what they thought, they just wanted the paper truck so the British couldn’t read the newspapers in the morning. So it just didn’t they just

39:30 nobody knew it was us. I’m sure when I fired a shot at them; the first shot that was as much a surprise to them as the ambush had been to us. No it was a, they weren't after me.

When you said you can see everything in slow motion, are you aware of the sensations? Like of a bayonet?

No because you

40:00 are in shock, once, when you are hit with a bullet, any calibre bullet you go into shock. And you don’t feel pain. The last one that went through my lung hurt me. But mostly I was, it was not on, it was no, it wasn’t any scale of pain that would be a worry. I was

40:30 and the kicking me in the face, those shoes, it was just stupidity and if they were going to do it they would have bashed me with rifle butts. They were just, it was just stupid stuff. Which seemed to me that they weren’t trained soldiers, they weren’t murderers and sadists. They were killers but they didn’t know how to kill. So that was the story there. I think that if I’d have stayed on I would have been a target. If I had of stayed there but I didn’t.

Tape 10

00:31 **Can I ask about Ian Tedford?**

Ian Tedford after the incident, I was persuade by the law, Tedford was court martialled on direct orders from General Templer, for dereliction of duty of being absent while on active service.

01:00 The British have a very quaint way of dealing with problems like that. For young soldiers because they depend on young soldiers and young soldiers with a bit of spirit in them, so that they have got to find a way of doing it. So what they did was the court martial found him guilty, and they imposed a penalty on him of reducing his seniority for a set period. And the period they set was just one day sooner than

01:30 expected to him. So he didn’t lose any seniority at all. So Tedford went on and became a major of course and got his majority and then he was invited to join the Ghurkhas. You don’t transfer to the Ghurkhas Rifles you are only invited. And he became a Ghurkha and he retired from the Ghurkhas a lieutenant colonel. He

02:00 had a business as a manager of a golf course in Scotland. He was into horses, he had Irish horses and into racing horses and he was the chief staff of Hong Kong Jockey Club. So that he travelled well. But his health, his leg had gone against him, the last I saw him in Hong Kong he was under threat of the knife to amputate his leg.

02:30 **Prior to the ambush, how would you describe you relationship?**

Oh mate, oh yes, he was as close a mate as I have. I didn’t respect Chris and there was no way I could be friendly with my boss or the assistant manager Harrison. Because they were

03:00 different vintage to me. So Tedford and I were much closer, although he was very much the English gentlemen. Funny man, at one stage he had a bout of scrub meningitis or typhus and he used to pass out. One morning he woke up in the rest house, government rest house, stark naked on the

03:30 lawn there. He just passed out and wandered out on the lawn. but the worst thing that ever happened to him, when he was in the Cameronians, he went home, the colonel of the regiment had a castle you see, so Tedford was invited, as a young officer was invited to spend the weekend with a girl and this lady. So Tedford had a bout of his meningitis or whatever it was.

04:00 And he woke up in the morning ensconced in bed with the colonel’s lady with the colonel saying, he was on the other side of the bed, saying, “How do you like your tea?” Cause the colonel knew it what had happened to him and the symptoms, so he got in there because he was cold, for a cuddle. So he, no he was a good man. And a very brave man.

So you said from the beginning you were looking for your war,

04:30 **you found it?**

Yeah, I found it and it found me. But I have no regrets about that. The injuries I suffered have gone against me in later life a little bit. But I'm 76 so I can't complain. I did get was an incurable thing which unfortunately I liked danger, I started to relish the adrenaline flow. So I started taking risks, I became a risk

05:00 taker. And that was not good. I still remain a loner and I did many things that were different and wrong. But I for example in 1956, there were floods in the Hunter Valley and people over the other side of the river, we could see them on roof tops.

05:30 Stranded. And they only had one or two helicopters those days, so Vince Collins the police sergeant's son and I commandeered a boat, it had a motor in it but they had taken the motor out but there was still a propeller there, but a boat. Grabbed some oars and we rowed up river,

06:00 we dragged the boat up river to the Williams which was at, joins the Hunter at Raymond Terrace. Williams wasn't in flood the same way as the Hunter so we crossed the Williams and rowed in on the Hunter and shot the Hunter across to Millers Forest getting across as if you were shooting a wave, getting ourselves across. And rowed across and started pulling people off

06:30 roof tops. With this wretched boat with its propeller underneath, getting snagged and things. We rowed across to a place called Hinton which is the nearest highland on the other side and dumped them off. And it was you know, it was one of those things, one fellow wanted to take his pig with him and you know here were are desperate in a boat and in harm's way. So it was, that sort of thing I did. We had to get back so we had to shoot the river again

07:00 to get home but my wife was a bit cranky at me, she thought I had been a bit foolish. But another time I had a girlfriend who was, this is back in the early 70s I think. Who was a skier she was fairly wealthy, and I was broke so I used to go trout fishing when she went skiing. So it started raining and the river muddied up

07:30 and this is up at northern Victoria. So I thought I'll go to the other side of the range and I'll fish there on the Omeo side, Mount Hotham was in between. So I got a lift, I stayed at a very hard camp, very cold and I got a lift up and when we got half way up the road was blocked and they said, "No, no, no. You can't get through with the car." So I

08:00 had a pack and I had a leather jacket and I had boots and a balaclava and I had mitts. And I thought I am going to walk through. So I set out to walk through, so I had never been in a blizzard before and this blizzard was terrible. The wind howled and came up from the side of the gorge in a way that it spewed over the top, the road was very narrow. And you had to almost feel your way and the wind

08:30 howled and roared, and the mitts only covered part of my hands, when I fell down, my jeans, I fell on ice, and slipped on ice, and my jeans, I started to bleed, and my jeans started to stick to my skin. And I ploughed on and I kept going. And I

09:00 sort of sensed that I couldn't stop. And then I heard a noise behind me and it was a snow plough coming through and when this snow plough comes through, its ploughs everything to the side, and I could see myself ploughed into the side and being found in spring time. So I thought this is not good, so I was a bit scared then and I finally I got his attention before he acted, was onto me. And I walked into

09:30 I got around behind him and I couldn't get in the cab but I walked in behind like a calf behind a whale, you know. And within minutes almost it seemed we were into Hotham and there were people skiing and playing and then my eyes were gummed together with snow, I was a wreck. So I went down I had some friends at a lodge down there and I had a couple of stout rums and they took me to eat. And then I went onto

10:00 Omeo, I got a lift down to Omeo and there was a man who got lost on Mount Wills and so I thought I can't do any fishing. So I went on the search for this man, and I stayed in the area for another 6 months or more and I went back in the spring because I thought his body would have thawed by then. So I stayed at a lookout tower, bush look out tower and I stayed there for a month

10:30 on top of Mount Wills on my own and this was September I think. And I did my own search pattern for where I thought he was. And I was on my own and I was doing things, it was fairly dangerous in the sense that I was roping myself in and out of gorges where I thought he had gone. But it, when you've got the silver bullet mentality and you say

11:00 that its, I've had 9 lives of war, its going to take a silver bullet to kill me, you don't look at the risk you look at the object, what your objective is and so you go.

After that incident where you were bayoneted, did you think, I would be dead?

No, no. When I was laying on the road, I had said my goodbyes to my mother

11:30 I was watching the clouds scattering over the moon and I thought I was dying then, but after that I

didn’t think I was going to die, no.

And then surviving that do you start to believe you are indestructible?

Well that sort of thing, you, well, you realise that you can do more that whole reach beyond the grasp thing. There’s a lot more to living than there is to dying, it’s easy to die.

12:00 You could live if you want to.

The whole part of looking for your war was to prove yourself and test yourself? At what stage did you think okay I have done what I set out to achieve?

Never, that’s what I say, once you have got he taste for adrenalin, the thrill, you do it. I’d skin dive and I would go out in winter only with a

12:30 polo neck jumper on, this was before wet suits were in. And I’d go out just after dawn, and seas wouldn’t worry me, and I’d dive and get abalone and cray[fish], and a rip would come and I’d swim into the centre and surf in. But you know it was you just did it, you were, thought that you were indestructible you thought that you could do things. And you did them,

13:00 and I am here.

What do you think of your time as an Australian in that Malayan emergency, quite apart from the military involvement, you were a rubber planter?

I wasn’t a mercenary.

The involvement you had there was so unique?

13:30 Well I, that’s why I’m here, is because I believe there is a fundamental part of the Australian character that is an independent ethos that we have. Which is we don’t we become too self reliant to social justice inclined, we think we are those living, whereas in fact the opposite is the case, we can make our own world and we can make our own life. So that I think I was a very lucky man to have that experience and

14:00 I think I should pass, or say something to a future generation and say, this is what it’s like this is real stuff, not the stuff of the welfare state. That’s how I see it.

So given this opportunity, this time capsule, what would you say to future generations?

Well I found it burdensome in the sense that the obligation and the responsibility of this interview

14:30 was not a thing that I was just doing for my grandkids, it was for other people, that I would want to do as something better, to make a better life, better attitudes. I don’t like the personal attitudes; I’m against this current war so I am very much against this Iraqi war. But I believe we have the right to choose. I believe we should be able to say, yes I don’t like that

15:00 or I do like it. But I think we should try, not go with the herd, we should consider our own position, stand proud, pretty proud and do what you want. That’s it, its just pretty easy philosophy.

15:30 **You suffered physical wounds, what about psychologically?**

Oh I think its, it’s damaged me in the sense that I have the precarious pleasure of, is something you can’t share so I’ve gone more away. I lead a very solitary life, I’ve married but my wife works so I enjoy the fact of my solitude and

16:00 I but I think that I have no regrets about them, if I had my time again, I’d do some things better, but I wouldn’t change the basic things that I’ve done. I had too much fun.

Given that what you did in Malaya, if you would have gone under a baggy green [in the Australian Army], you would have been

16:30 **entitled to certain things and you are not because you were there under your own volition working for a company. How does that make you feel?**

it doesn’t worry me. ‘This above all things, to thyself be true.’ If you know it, if you know what you have done, you don’t have to have to wear a medal, you don’t have to do that. Because you have reached your fulfilment, you know with the bulls at Pamplona you can meet them, you can meet them full on. So that

17:00 I’m, I think, that need for recognition is more a sign of weakness in people that they can’t stand alone.

Part apart from recognition, the support you would get on a health level?

I’ve got all I need, I’ve got all I need. I’ve got no money and I don’t pay for anything, I get good treatment, I’ve got a good doctor

17:30 and I, and oh you’re here again, and I have to go to hospital . So they give me a hard time, but I, I’ve got no big need. I’ve got a computer there I can surf and I can I write letters to papers and make a nuisance of myself sometimes that way. I’m

18:00 probably the bloke at a local government election who's an independent, because I, with words, I wrote his brochures for him and so on. Made him look pretty good, but no it's that sort of thing. I take the dogs for a walk in the morning and the dogs are my mates and there is no. We look at the bird life, we've got a lovely lot of bird life here and

18:30 so we watch everything that is going on. We don't watch our neighbours very much, I live without them, I don't associate with neighbours. Not that there is anything wrong with them, but I just don't', not my bag.

How often do you think about what you did in Malaya?

Until recently, not very often at all. Not very often, I've spent the last 12 years or so writing a book on sociology of the prejudice,

19:00 the origins of racial prejudice against aborigines. And I became deeply involved in that, researching that, so that I immersed myself in those things. So that I have never thought about that until recently, when I became involved in with the Newsweek people and the concept of an interview with Chin Peng and

19:30 possibly bringing him back to Malaya. But Malaysia now, sorry. Just like Zimbabwe was Rhodesia, terrible.

When you returned from Malaya did you have a thought of what you were going to do next?

I was very ashamed of myself when I came back from Malaya. Because I had lost my guns, and I lost my weaponry and people wanted to talk about heroes and things like that and I was not into that

20:00 I thought that through my own bloody stupidity I'd given them weaponry that they could hurt others with. So I didn't really want to do very much, my mother connived me into marriage. To a beautiful lady and on the 10th of October of that year I married. And I married in haste and I regretted it because

20:30 I shouldn't have married. I wasn't mature enough for the responsibility of marriage. I played around and that was that, I don't regret that I regret the damage I did in that sense. But 3 children, I had 3 children. And I've got 2 surviving, both in, got liver problems, one's got Hep C [Hepatitis C] caused by dirty needles and the other's got Hep C

21:00 and cirrhosis of the liver by a blood transfusion. So both in part health condition. I've got grandchildren, I don't see much of, they all live away. But I've lived a really full life and I've got that 60 seconds worth of distance run out of the

21:30 whole thing. So that I suppose if I had my way over again, I wouldn't have hurt as many ladies that I have. But I realised, I looked for what I wanted rather than catching the wave, I've waited for the semi flow.

Do you ever wonder what would have happened if you stayed in RAF?

22:00 I'd have been very bad man for the RAF, no, I was, once I made that decision, I couldn't have gone back. No once, it's an absolutism, that you, you cut your traces and that's it. I don't look back over my shoulder and I wouldn't, if I had decided and changed my mind to stay

22:30 I had made up my mind to go, I wouldn't be the man that I am, and I wouldn't be sitting here.

Was there any thought when you returned to Australia to join the armed forces again?

No, no, no. I was, well within 3 months I was career bound and I had a family to look after so that I was, but I could, yeah, I'd

23:00 the because I'm not disciplined in the sense of physical discipline I don't think I would like to join an armed service. And report to somebody I am too independent, I want to make my own decisions and I don't want to have those decisions made, forced upon me.

23:30 **Had you ever thought about going deeper into the Special Branch side of things?**

Yes I, on two occasions I, once during the confrontation with Sukarno. I volunteered for interpreter on the interception of signals and I did a course, I did a training thing at North Head. But I don't think my language skills were good

24:00 but I don't think I was the right man, they didn't choose me. And then when the Zimbabwe thing came up I was tempted with the idea of going back because my experience going there on security. I made contact with a man who was South African. I wasn't impressed with him and I said no, after I heard what, I said no. Because their

24:30 approach was, their problem was different, their approach was different. And the saloon scouts and those people were fairly rough people and, what I read and learned about them I thought no, I think that they were wrong, just as they were wrong when I was there. They don't need help, I can't help them, so I said no, I wouldn't do it.

25:00 **If I can jump back, when you decided you wanted to become a planter, how did you actually go about getting that job?**

I waited until I got back to the Brits and I just looked the papers up. And just picked them out of the paper, just like that, bang, bang. And very simple stuff, straight in, and got a, you know, it was laid down as there, they needed people and the first bloke who, he didn't need anybody

25:30 but he knew somebody else, so he passed me onto somebody else. So it was just, slam bam thank you ma'am, it was no trouble at all. It was real quick stuff that one.

Did they require a certain amount of experience in that job?

Oh, if you met me, if you met me then, you would know I could do it. Because they were taking people, anybody, when I look at Crispin, Morris Crispin and those people, see they, Morris was a man who strutted and gloried in the, and you know he

26:00 they were puffing themselves up, so that, I know that I was a lot better than that.

In the time you were there did you have any interactions with other Australians?

Meet any? No, oh Bogle was an Australian, he was, as I say, I met he and his

26:30 wife and family. But I, you didn't really socialise. Because the people you socialised with were people of your peer group. Your own age and same problems, same thing. it was a fairly mad world. I remember one time a bloke was at Crisp's for curried tiffin and this bloke

27:00 was going back across the causeway and they flipped their car and it ended up on it bonnet in the swamp with the doors jammed, they had to sit there all night. And all they wanted when they were found was a drink. You know, they were dying of thirst, so it was, no I, we lived in that sort of world where it wasn't a real world. We

27:30 knew that we were at risk and as I said each of us handled it differently. On the plantation where I was two Europeans were killed, an Indian conductor was killed. Bogle was killed, chased off and killed, he was ambushed. So the ratio, survival ratio of

28:00 people when you have a staff of four, was pretty, you know pretty high risk stuff. So when you played, you played very hard and oh I've done stupid things. Drunk as a skunk at night going through the rubber could hardly see a tree and seeing bandits running across the lights, you know, you do that sort of

28:30 thing, and you survive.

Apart from being a hunter when you were there, how did you enjoy the work as a rubber plantation manager?

Oh, the interface with workers was great. The work was, would have been tedious after a while, would have been bored. And it, because it was

29:00 I had a clerk who did the wages, wages day was terrible for me, because you, under the circumstances there you are allowed to fine your day labour if they didn't do their job properly, you could take a bit of their wages. Oh and dear oh dear, the fights. Not fights but the oh dear, and the same with taking the wages of their, their food rations out of their wages, you've done, you've got mine, that, all this goes on.

29:30 Yeah because of the, that particular time, there was a lot more excitement. I played badminton with some of the, the Malayalam Indians, they're from the Malayalam clerks from the rubber factory. And they were nice guys and I used to play a bit of badminton with them. They were good, and I found,

30:00 you got to like it in the sense that, across from where I lived there was a set of lines, the police lines. And there was a scream and they came, "Oh dear there's a cobra." so I went, and in the loo that's over this cistern, there is this horrible king brown cobra, she was sitting on the loo it came up between her legs. She flipped out; they had snared this king cobra that was about an 8 foot cobra

30:30 huge thing and it was covered with shit because it had been down in the cistern. And they wanted, I had to shoot it for them and kill it, which I wanted to, because they were dependent on me. So that sense of responsibility and being wanted and so on was very gratifying even though I was too young to realise just how much they were looking to me as a role

31:00 model for the old protectionist type of planter. The new sort of planters weren't quite that way so they were looking for that shelter, that sort of a cover.

Given that you were there for an ulterior motive, what do you think was going through the minds of the others were wanted to be planters there?

Oh I don't know, I think they were disillusioned, pretty frightened.

31:30 I don't think they were, I don't think they were like me, I don't think that they, that came to their minds. They weren't there for the money, found that it was pretty hairy, and there was no money. They were

disillusioned and they couldn't get out of it, they were on the treadmill. I think that was basically it. Yeah, they weren't high calibre

32:00 people, if you choosing for calibre, you wouldn't promote them very high.

Did you ever have any dalliances with the Malay women?

Tried, but the thing was that with Malay, because of their religion, if you were caught in flagrante delicto with a Malay lady you must marry her or leave the station within 24 hours.

32:30 That's it, there was an Indian lady called Ponimah, she was a rubber tapper and she had a very, very well built and she was a flirt and I used to see her and wanted to go back to my bungalow. And of course she would think it was, she'd might have been diseased anyway; I think their hygiene is not so good. But she left and went somewhere else and then I got this plaintive letter that she wanted to come back.

33:00 So I said, yes, but. I said no, you are very welcome, no I wouldn't have done that to her.

Do you know if any of the British soldiers were involved with women?

No, people, men, Europeans on Chinese estates living with Chinese women, wife, husband and wife situation

33:30 but they were pretty suss, because they weren't under protection like we were. They, they were suss that they were supporting and sustaining the opposition. They had, their plantations were fairly decrepit, they were fairly small. And we knew that they were paying off, paying off at least, if not supplying with

34:00 but you, they were poor riches, they were in assort of a honey trap, in a situation where they could hardly, couldn't get out, what they were in unless they just scarpered off and left heir wife and kids. The relationships, the people there were

34:30 quite moral, quite moral, not the promiscuity that you would think. There was lots happened that I haven't told you. The army on Hogmanay [Scottish New Year], the Scottish regiment, it's the big thing, not Christmas day, Hogmanay. And they have, when you are on active service, you start drinking, have a drink in the officers' mess, then you go to the sergeants' mess

35:00 and you have to see the New Year in with the troops. And somewhere in between somebody slipped me a Mickey Finn [a drink to knock you out] and I was pretty well out to it. But I managed to say that one Australian was worth at least 10 Scotsmen. And I used to get this out fairly loud and clear, and they used to, decided to test me on that. So the next thing I woke up with a whole box of New Years Day, stretched out, covered with

35:30 mud, we fought out in a tropical downfall, where I had fallen in the gutter. The first man that got me, and they had taken me home and stripped me and left me there, there was David Harrison over the top of me saying, "Happy new year Charles, Happy new year." Ah so no there were lots of things, lots of vignettes that made it enjoying and excitable and

36:00 ah, I wouldn't, I'd have to say now I would be dead for quids, I wouldn't have changed, certainly.

When you think about your time in Malaya do you think about the good times rather than the bad times?

I don't think about the bad times because they are really only such a passing thing that I wouldn't, the excitement and the thrill. The chill in your spine wasn't the bad times. The only bad time was when I got hurt

36:30 the rest of it, that was grist to the mill, that was the good stuff, that's what I was there for. And we worked, it satisfied me. I had had enough when I left Malaya. I would have gone back, I had enough, you know, I had run the bull, and

37:00 I knew what the face of it was like. I think, I have a saying that I have sort of concocted and I always tell people, "Mother says better to be born lucky than to be good looking." and I say, "Well I didn't get one but I certainly got the other." It's self evident what I got. So, no.

37:30 **Have you spoken of your experiences before?**

Whenever I can get somebody to sit with me for 6 or 7 hours. No, I've been, I am going to write me story, and if given the chance I will write it. and what I am going, the way I phrase the story is that I will

38:00 I've told you about the interview with Chin Peng, well I am going to tell my life story, and then have a fantasy interview with Chin Peng to finish the story. So it was to be a fictional story, so whatever I say as fiction, then you have to make your own choice whether I tell the truth.

Do you have any thing you'd like to say for the Archive?

No I don't think so, just look after the Archive, it's a

38:30 I hope that those who read and listen, understand what we are about, what we were about, and perhaps its may guide future behaviour, that's the key for me. Don't do as I do, do as I say. That's all I have to say.

39:00 **On Anzac day where do your thoughts go?**

I am a member of the RSL [Returned and Services League] so if I want to be. But we had a fellow who used to (UNCLEAR) in the garden, and we used to go to the gun smoke breakfast up here, I never march or do any of that stuff. But we used to go up to the gun smoke breakfast in the sink of rum and milk and so on.

39:30 And I never got boozed or pissed, I don't do that. I'm a drinker, I'm quite close to alcoholic, I'm alcohol dependent. But I prefer going into my own dreamtime and sort of, letting my mind wander. So I sit and drink champagne and write, and then I

40:00 come back the next day and just get it out, half of it or more.

Any final thoughts?

I didn't mention I may as well mention that I have held onto my Malay language fairly well so that its, and my memory of names and places it pretty good. So that what I have said to you, and the language that I have used is the language as I recall it.

40:30 It's not good Malay but I can get by. Even with a young lady.

Can you give us a demonstration of Malay?

[Phonetically] Sicky sicky, labajan, prejar so co susu. Satus tan, ala jam, owang jahat, sia susa. Casi alugn cali stape, susa sing . . .

What does that mean?

You've got to learn it. You've got to learn Malay I'm not going to tell you.