

Interviewer

Interviewer 2

Interviewee 1

Interviewee 2

There it is, very nice

Number one son [laughs]

Number two son gets very fed up when she says that [laughs]

[Laughs] Oh I can imagine

I've got a number one and a number two

I have got a daughter as well

Yeah she gets even more fed up!

[Laughs]

So shall I start and get this going, and then, or do you want to-

Yeah you can- if you wanna do a bit of the introduction because you know what- and then I'll

So Joy has very kindly joined us

Yeah

Because Joy actually went to the um- is that close enough- so Joy went to the first- she went to the 1948 games in London, which is very exciting, so maybe you can tell us a bit more about that experience

It was just bef-

And Howard... Howard

Yeah

That's my son

Could you- you can ask her a few questions as well

[Laughs]

He wasn't there, of course. It was just before my husband and I got married in 1948. And um my parents bought us the tickets, they went one day and we went the other. And they had

more rain than we did but it was a rainy time really. But one I remember mostly was Emil Zatopek, he was-

Czech

Czech

And he was running round and round the track and he was- it was pouring with rain and everybody was clapping him. I remember that and I remember Fanny Blankers-Koen. She was

Dutch

Dutch

Dutch

But she was-

Was she a runner as well?

She was a runner, very well known

She took part in the sprints, a hundred yards as it was then. A hundred metres, two hundred yards. And I think she actually did the four hundred yards but I'll have to check. So I'm uncertain about that

There was so much to see as well

What was the name of the stadium?

Um, the Olympic Stadium [laughs]

[Laughs]

I told you this round there. It was White City. And where did Dad work?

Oh he worked [laughs] near there

Yeah he worked at Shepherd's Bush

Yes that's right

So it was quite easy. Mum worked at the bank of England so she would've travelled on the tube down to Shepherd's Bush and all he'd have to do was meet you and then take you to White City because it was very close to work

Was it all day or just an afternoon?

Oh we took a- yes, it was all day, you know, it was such a lovely time to see everything. Wish I could remember more but I do remember some things about it, all the events that were going on.

Are there any events that went on in 1948 that don't happen anymore or that are different to how it happens today?

The mile race is now the 1500 metre race 'cause everything changed from the sort of imperial measurements to metric measurements, but that wasn't the question you were asking

[Laughs] No it's interesting I never even thought about that

The thing is my mum and dad went to the athletics part of the Olympics and I have no knowledge whatsoever of what happened in the rest of the Olympics at that time. It was put on in London because London volunteered to stage it, after the war yea- war. And being one of the few places that was prepared to go and do it, and quite often Britain's come to the rescue of other sporting tournaments and things like this, when nobody else will be prepared to do it, they'll do it when they're wealthy, and Britain wasn't wealthy then it was all part of the austerity period. More so than the austerity we've been going through since 2010 but er

Do you think kind of there was a sense that people wanted to enjoy themselves after the war, in the Olympics?

Oh absolutely. And my husband was in the war actually and he was a parachutist and he dropped on D-Day

Oh wow that's amazing

Yes and we still keep an association with an area he dropped in which was um

Normandy

Normandy

That's amazing

We still go there

Really?

Yes my husband obviously died a few years ago but

I know this is digressing but we planted a tree in his memory in the Pegasus Memorial Museum which is right next to where he landed

Oh that's lovely, that's really lovely

Yeah

Yeah

It's nice that you can- you have that association with the place as well

You're gonna edit all this bit out aren't you?

Yeah [laughs] it's really interesting though

I was going to say on our honeymoon we went to France, which was most unusual, you know, because it was after the war, and we did go to, you know- oh what was her name in the place we went to

The Gondree café

No

The XXXX

Where we went on our honeymoon

Yeah

It wasn't XXXX. It was... oh, I can't remember it now. Trouville

Trouville and Deauville

Trouville and Deauville which was on the coast, seaside if you like. But in the back of my husband's mind, there was probably, he'd like to go to Normandy where he dropped on D-Day.

Yeah

And we did!

Oh really aww

We went by coach to the actual Gondree café or nearby, what was the name of the place? It was a-

Benouville

Yes Benouville, and um then we borrowed a couple of bikes that they lent us from the café to go to the cemetery, and I took photographs of my husband and we've still got them

Yes, yes. We've gone right off the subject

That's very naughty

I digressed of course

That's okay!

[Laughs] Um I was just wondering you said your parents went on a different day, did they see- to the Olympics sorry- did they see-

They did see the Olympics, yes, they brought- I think my sister was about at the time and they took her, and they bought my husband and I two tickets to go, just as a treat if you like, which was wonderful

Do you know how much the tickets were?

Oh I wish I did.

[Laughs] A lot cheaper than in 2012, I guess

And how did it-

And we had good seats

Oh you had good seats, that's wonderful. And how did it feel after the war, going to a games like that?

Um

Because obviously the war had finished, Second World War

I was telling this young lady here

Oh sorry

[Laughs]

About my husband, was a parachutist in the war

Oh wow

How did it feel for you to actually go to that event?

Well, exciting.

Yeah exciting

Because there weren't many events at all

No no

I mean you know I was about ten or eleven when the war started, and it- it was a bit miserable time, I was evacuated but I won't go into that

You still had rationing

We had rationing

At that time there was still rationing

And even when my second son was born I still had ration books for him you know. And his- well how old is he?

He was born in '52.

So the athletes at that time would've been on rations? Or would they- do you think they would've had a different diet?

I wonder, I wonder, I have no idea how they managed. I mean the rationing wasn't bad at all, when I went to work, you know, I worked in the Bank of England and of course, the women didn't have to pay for their food, they had lovely restaurants and things like that. Well they thought, the idea was they might skip their meals but the many wouldn't

[Laughs]

[Laughs]

As I say my husband dropped on D-Day, and he was only 20. I didn't know him of course, you know, I was still at school

Wow, wow, that's amazing

And he's always kept up the association so we- he used to go back to Normandy, and then

Wow

And when Howard was about, we used to take him as well, you know- it's this is his wheelchair. He used this wheelchair a lot, didn't he Dad?

No point throwing it away

Yeah [laughs]

So Howard, do you um remember any stories that your parents told to you? Have you got an interest in Olympics, Paralympics? Have you carried on watching them or?

Oh yeah

You went to the last one, did you?

The 2012 was so difficult to get tickets um, we- I'd lived in Lancashire at that time, and obviously the event was on here, I couldn't get tickets. I got- I put my name down and I got tickets for a football.

[Laughs]

But I see football all the time. And um I couldn't get tickets for any of the other events and when they started to release them of an evening, my mum and dad didn't have the internet

Ah

And that was the only way to get them so I missed out on watching the Olympics, except on television. Television coverage was fantastic but being so close- we could've easily got there and seen things. But my dad-

He'd been in **XXXX**

Died in early in 2017, but we saw the Brazil Olympics in 2016

Okay

And he and I watched a lot together, and um, he was really interested in seeing it all and so keen on supporting the British athlete, rower, whatever the sport

Yeah

Of course he was a West Ham supporter

Yeah yeah

Our first date was at West Ham would you believe? [laughs]

[Laughs]

'Cause I was busy otherwise

Yeah, of course!

Do you think it's nice how sport can bring people together, like you and your dad?

Well the Any Old Irons group here has been really successful in terms of bringing people. Because we live- I live over at Dartford in Kent and er, but I'm a West Ham supporter, heard about it, come over here, but I've made so many new friends, although most of them say like, we're not friends with you.

[Laughs]

But like you know you just got a reason to come over here, we meet once or twice a month and er it's just really good for people. One of the things that happen as you get older is because of mobility you're less likely to get out, and that's part of the reason I brought my mum over as well and she's been really pleased because everybody makes a fuss of her.

[Laughs]

Comes up and has a talk with her. But most of those people in there for one reason or another are looking for things to do.

Yeah

I belong to one or two clubs and they're all struggling now, numbers going to take part in things. Like East London Family History Society, the numbers attending that have dropped

I'd go to that again

People don't go to these things anymore, you know why? Everybody's having to work too hard.

Yeah for sure

Long hours, they work until they're- you know, long hours, and they get to 65, and then they get the grandchildren to look after them

[Laughs]

That's what happened to me actually

Yeah I know

[Laughs]

So I'm gonna pull you back again

[Laughs]

What back to the Olympics?

Back down memory lane. So do you know of any athletes, any of your friends or people at that time that might've been training, anybody that got to go as an athlete? Or even as a- someone who might've helped out at the games, you know like a flagbearer or?

Oh I know, **Nadia** in particular volunteered, but they wanted volunteers all the time for those games, didn't they?

So going back to 1948 do you remember?

No

Anybody who participated in anything like that?

No no

There wasn't anyone local that you can think of?

No no not really. Too busy dancing and going out and enjoying themselves

[Laughs]

Why not?

Would you like to share some stories with us?

Right I think that's everything I'm gonna-

Right you'll have to edit all that out, and just stitch it,

No it's interesting

All the digression

I'll just stop the recording

[End]