

2019_esch_PFVP_01

Interviewer

Interviewee 1

Interviewee 2

Other background speakers

Okay could you just tell me your name please?

Pat Marriot

Okay that's great. And what are your first experiences of the Olympic Games?

Of the Olympics? Well I went to school at Stratford, it was called West Ham Secondary School but by the time I got there and left, it was Stratford Grammar School. Well our head girl was Jean- Jean Deforges, and she represented England out in Australia, in the Olympics out there in the long jump

Wow

And she used to practise in the corridors, yeah.

It's very noisy

She used to have a couple of men come from the Olympic team

Sorry love

And they used to do it as well. And that's why I always say, they're always grumbling about they haven't got room to do this and do that, and yet she only practised in the corridor of the school

In the corridor [laughs]

And represented England

What year was that the-

Well I was about 11 or 12, about 19- in the '40s

In the '40s

Yeah

I'll have to have a look when the Olympics were then [laughs]

No 'cause I left that school on '33- I went to that school when I was 11, '33 would've been '44, so it was during that next five years

Yeah, 'cause it was '44 and '48, wasn't it, I think?

That's right, '44 and '48

And it's every four years

So it must've been the '44 one

'44 one

Jean DeForges, I don't think she died that long ago, 'cause I remember seeing her sign an autograph in the paper and um, but as I say, she was about four or five years older than I was.

Yeah. Did she carry on her career then for a while?

Oh yeah I think she still did because her husband in the- when they grew up, he was a PE teacher after he'd left our school. Yeah he became a PE teacher

Oh nice, that's really interesting

Oh it was, yeah

Do you know if your parents or grandparents had any stories of the Olympics?

No I don't think so. Although Dad and I, we'd get up in the middle of the night and put the radio on to listen to, when it was abroad, you know.

So it was still broadcast even though it's-

Oh yeah, in the night, at night, yeah

No telly, it wasn't then

No tellies then, no telly. No but my dad was always interested

So when the Olympics were in Stratford in 2012, did you have any involvement with that?

I went- I only went once, we went with the Any Old Irons, didn't we? We saw the men's- didn't we see when people were in-

But we didn't start until 2015 did we? And the Olympics were over then.

Yeah

We'd been to the Olympic Park several times since

We did go see something there

What was that?

It was the men...

Got me there.

Yeah 'cause I've got pictures, there's pictures of us

Have a think, it'll come to ya [laughs]

Was it hard to get tickets for it?

No, 'cause we got them through the Any Old Irons

'Cause the Olympics were 2012, we didn't start 'til 2015, I can't remember what was the-

Did you have a group before the Any Old Irons?

There was a group

Oh you're thinking of the athletics meeting, it wasn't Olympics was it?

Oh wasn't it?

I know what you mean, they got us tickets to see an athletics meeting there

Oh right

It wasn't the Olympics, I know what you mean

Oh

That's alright! Do you think the area was different when the Olympics were on? Obviously loads of people. How was that? 'Cause I didn't live here when the Olympics were on, so what was it like?

Well I've lived in Stratford from the time I was born.

Wow [laughs]

I was born in Stratford

You saw it all change then

Oh that's right. The other week we went to the film there, didn't we? And you're up high and it's open air.

In the stadium?

Yeah

No, there's a place called Roof East, which is above the car park

Oh yeah I know it

We went there and watched a film

Only three of us weren't there?

Aww

Watched this film, well I was more interested in looking at the view

At the view! She was going, look at the trains!

[Laughs]

Oh it was marvellous. The planes were going over weren't there?

That was a good evening yeah

That sounds really nice

It was lovely yeah

So do you think that would never have happened without the Olympics, stuff like that?

Oh no

What I was telling Anna before was I actually worked on the Olympics in 2012

Yeah I was gonna ask if you had any involvement?

It was amazing because I'd only just been made redundant in 2012, I'm 80 now. So in 2012, I got made redundant from a clinic in Canary Wharf. It closed down. And I thought, ooh what am I gonna do now? And I thought, oh I'll try to get in as a volunteer. But they were all full up. Fortunately Balfour Beatty were running the Orbit, so they had loads of interviews, one at the ExCel Centre, one here, I went to three interviews, and I thought I'll never get it at my age, but I did, and I had marvellous experience working as a guide, on the- up at the top of the Orbit, pointing out all the sights around.

That's amazing. So did you have to- how did you get into that?

An application form, three interviews

So it's like a job

It was a job. But what happened, Balfour Beatty didn't tell us until we got the job that we were paid. So we had volunteers uniforms, everyone going, oh you wonderful volunteers, and we were getting paid but they told us shut up don't tell anyone

Oh my god I didn't know that

No nobody knew that. But I worked with a team of really young people, all ethnicities, all Cockneys and Londoners, and it was amazing, we had such fun, they all called me grandma

Aww

That it was brilliant. So I was up on the top, when people came up you could see all around, and I was pointing out where Big Ben was, where this was, where that was.

Can you see it from up the top?

Alexandra Palace, Wembley, Wembley arch

Oh yeah

Everything

That's why I was more interested in looking than at the film

They could see it from the top of the Orbit, I'd point it out, then that was for the Olympics and Paralympics, and then after that they had to close the park down so they could resurrect it for the park opening but they were doing bus tours around then, other parts that weren't being rebuilt, so I went on the buses-

See ya

Ooh!

Bye

Bye! See ya, see ya later. We were going round on the buses I was a guide on the buses, taking people around

Oh wow

And when they started to rebuild, they started to do boats on the River Lea. So they put me on the boats to be a guide because I know the area, I was born and bred. So I went on there as a guide, all around up until about three years ago.

Oh wow

They're still going, the guides, the tours are still going but because it was sort of five tours a day, six days a week, I thought I could lose my voice

That's a lot

Yeah, they said- I had to go and see someone about it, they said, is anything wrong? There was nothing wrong, it was just um as you get older-

Bye!

Bye, bye! Your voice- your vocal chords thicken if they're overused so I gave it up then but it's all still going.

Yeah that's so good

Yeah so I loved the Olympics, it was absolutely fabulous

You must know some interesting facts about the park

Yeah

What's the most interesting fact that you know?

Oh, I suppose the mega fact for everyone is the stadium, because it changed from just Olympics to football, and although I preferred Upton Park, the Olympics- the stadium is the biggest part really

Yeah

So the stadium and then all the statistics about it, you know, how much it cost and all that

How much did it cost?

Oh crikey I can't remember now

[Laughs]

Way beyond my sort of knowledge of what money is, millions.

Yeah

But West Ham got a good deal on it and now we've got sixty thousand people, no, yeah, sixty thousand people can go in, and more to come

Yeah 'cause they're changing it aren't they? They're moving- are they moving the seats closer to the pitch or something?

Well they're supposed to be retractable seats but that's not true because retractable means they fold back and fold out but they're not all scaffolding ?, so when they shut it down for athletics, they actually have to come in, manhandle them and take them away so I don't see how they can take them any closer, they say they will but I'll believe it when I see it.

[Laughs] Yeah

But no it was really good. The only way I- I think Anna was saying what did I remember about when I was a kid, I think she said it to you up there

Yeah yeah I was gonna ask you about that

Because when the war finished, we had no TV, we were lucky if we had a radio, we did have a radio. But I used to go to the cinema, I was 8, and I used to be allowed to go on my own. And used to see a film, they always had the Pathe news, remember when they had the Pathe news with the cockerel on, you won't remember

Yeah

Bye! And the news used to come on, in between one film- they had an A film and a B film didn't they?

Really?

So you'd get two films because they were short and black and white.

Yeah, yeah

So you'd see the B film and then you'd have a newsreel then you'd do the A film. And the newsreel always used to say about the Olympics are coming along. So when I used to go-

Bye bye

Bye. I used to go and watch the newsreel so that's how you knew who was running, and then you'd get someone else. I remember the name Fanny Blankers-Koen

Oh yeah

Fanny Blankers-Koen, what did she do? She was a runner wasn't she?

Runner, yeah

Zola Budd, mind you that was after that time. I used to- I didn't collect any memorabilia, I didn't do that then

Really.

I didn't really remember all of it, it didn't seem important at that time. It did! But not important enough to memorise. You're only 8, it goes in one ear and out the other

Yeah [laughs]

I remember seeing it all-

Where was the- sorry.

Sorry

Where was the stadium in 1948? Can you remember?

No. [laughs]

It would be interesting to find out

The stadium? What, where West Ham played?

In '48. No in the Olympics

In the Olympics, do you know where it was?

Oh Wembley, Wembley.

Was it? Oh take the words from me I can't remember

But I mean if it was in England, it was at Wembley

At Wembley

Oh when it was in England

Yeah yeah

Yeah it was at Wembley

Okay

But the newsreels covered every country didn't they?

Oh yeah

That's why I was thinking, well what year?

Oh sorry! [Laughs]

No in England it was always Wembley

Always Wembley, yeah yeah. But the newsreel covered every country you know, so it was always- oh it was amazing to watch it. Anna asked me if I had any memorabilia from then, no, no. Have you got any from this present one, I said yes.

What do you have?

I got lots of stuff.

Sorry to interrupt, very rude, this lovely lady here was in the 1948 games, we would love to interview her, did we catch lots of lovely things?

Yeah

Yeah

Yeah, I think we've got enough

We'll abandon

Thanks so much!]

Too much to tell

Lovely to have met you though

Okay, okay. Nice to have met you

[End]