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DATE OF INTERVIEW - Unknown

INTERVIEWER:	David Mair
RESIDENT:	Tom Allan

INTERVIEWER: This is David Mair, having a chat with Tom Allan, a long-term resident of Lochmaben.

Hi Tom, Good morning.

MR ALLAN: Good morning.

INTERVIEWER: I believe you came to Lochmaben when you were a boy.

MR ALLAN: That's correct, yes. I was nine-year old when I came to Lochmaben on the back of a flitting from Borland and the first time I jumped off the back of the wagon and walloped my head on a metal lamp post, which was a big introduction. I lived at the sanatorium. My dad was gardener, head gardener there and we lived in Inkbottle, which was the wooden house as you go in the gate to the hospital.

INTERVIEWER: That's all gone now.

MR ALLAN: It's all gone. The gates are away.

INTERVIEWER: And how did it get the name Inkbottle?

MR ALLAN: Because it just did. The chimney, the four chimneys were in the middle of the roof and it just looked like somebody was dipping in ink, for ink, you know, with a pen in it.

INTERVIEWER: And you went to Lochmaben School from there?

MR ALLAN: Oh aye. I remember it was a big step. I came from a small country school where the teacher taught from the infants' right up to finishing, you know, coming here to a school, where they went right on till they were 14. It was a big school and I kind of felt a bit frightened. A wee bit apprehensive. But, ah, once I got in to know people and, you're an incomer, of course, I was nine and I wasn't born and bred in Lochmaben.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember any of the teachers?

MR ALLAN: Oh aye. Mr Freer did assembly every morning. I remember he did. Everybody had to learn a bit piece of the Bible, you know, a particular symbol and all that and everybody used to stand petrified in case he pointed

to them. You know, maybe they hadn't learned it. He was a big hefty man with a quiff, you know, for the lassies. He was Provost as well locally.

INTERVIEWER: Oh that's the same man?

MR ALLAN: Aye. There was Miss Carmichael, of course, everybody went through her class and she was a great teacher. I liked her. And Mrs Richardson. And there was a piano chappie taught music, and Papa Ingles who came from Lockerbie. I liked singing and music. I liked music. Then the dinners were made up the stairs in Lochmaben Old School where it's a big house now where Mr Thorburn converted it. There was woodwork at window side and the girls did cookery in there. But the dinners were made there as well by Mrs Fraser and a Mrs Trotter.

INTERVIEWER: They were local ladies, were they?

MR ALLAN: Local ladies. They made the dinners. And a pattie on a Friday was a great thing. It was great to be sent for the boys. If you were, kind of, ending your time at Lochmaben, you went for the boys with the basket. And Baggie Broon, the butcher, used to put the pastry that was left, was baked, and you always got a bit of this pastry.

INTERVIEWER: A treat, eh, a treat?

MR ALLAN: Aye. I used to enjoy it.

INTERVIEWER: And did you get milk at that time?

MR ALLAN: Yeah, a third of a pint.

INTERVIEWER: A third of a pint of milk?

MR ALLAN: That's right. Everybody. I've seen it sitting with the ice coming out the top, when the bottle tops were removed.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have heating in the classrooms then?

MR ALLAN: There was heating. There was a boiler's room underneath and, as I say, it was coke, fired by coke and in the classroom above the stoke hole, the fumes used to come through the fire, ye ken. When you opened up, the filthy column of fumes came up through the floorboards.

INTERVIEWER: It wouldn't be allowed these days.

MR ALLAN: No. Health and safety would be up in arms. But I enjoyed my school at Lochmaben. I did, immensely.

INTERVIEWER: And you left there when you were?

MR ALLAN: Aye well, I'd be coming 11 plus, you know, and went to Lockerbie.

INTERVIEWER: And then you went to Lockerbie.

MR ALLAN: But again, you know, you are starting to move from class to class then.

INTERVIEWER: And you'd meet a lot of different people there?

MR ALLAN: Oh aye. I've still got friends out there I made when I was there.

INTERVIEWER: That's good.

MR ALLAN: Aye.

INTERVIEWER: And then when you left school?

MR ALLAN: I left school and the first thing you did was get a job. The first job I had was as a chimney sweep. We had a fireside, fireplace company in the Main Street in Lockerbie and when I got there in the morning, all rigged up with a boiler suit and what have you, and a piece bag, the foreman and the yard man came out and said: 'Look son, the gentleman you were meant to be working with'. They didn't call him a gentleman, but, they said he was off ill so I'd work in the yard for that day.

'Oh we'll find you a wee job son. You're John Allan's boy, aren't you?'

I said 'aye'.

'Oh, I ken your father fine.'

I said 'oh'. He belonged to cattle home, seemingly, my father belonged to. Anyway, they'd get you a job.

'Now, see all those bricks across there? These facing bricks?'

'The facing bricks, yes.'

'Now I want you to build them in straw.'

'Right.' So when I got home at night my mother said: 'Well son, how did you get on with your first day at your work.'

I said; 'Oh it was alright but I'm not very happy about it.'

I'd no hands left. These bricks were rough. Facing bricks that tore the skin from off my fingers. Anyway, I started on the chimney sweeping and it was vacuum and brush. A big vacuum on the back of this lorry, you know, and you cart all the hoses up. I had some fun with that, let me tell you, ye ken. The Swinton big house, Station Hotel, Dumfries, up on the top, dropping stones down the chimney to see that we've got the right one. I remember there was a Dr McLoughlin at Lockerbie. It's a home now for the elderly if you're going into Lockerbie and turn at the bridge.

INTERVIEWER: Aye, drive home.

MR ALLAN: Aye. Dryfemount.

INTERVIEWER: Dryfemount , Dryfemount?

MR ALLAN: Aye. We're in there and we're to sweep this chimney. Well, it's all rigged up and there was a Persian carpet on the floor. A white Persian carpet, you know. Put their sheets down, put the cover in front of the fireplace, connected up the hose for the suction, opened the wee window and put the brushes in. Jim gets them to the top.

'Go outside and see if it's out,' he goes. So I looks and goes back and said, 'It's out. It's out, Jim.'

So they get it down through. You've to get a really good heave at it. Well Jim took a great heave at it, of course, it caught the underside of this big fireplace and the whole fireplace came off the wall. Of course, all the soot went flying up in the air. Well, as I boy, I saw the funny side but he didn't see the funny side.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, the Persian carpet.

MR ALLAN: Oh, oh, oh. Aw, that was one experience.

INTERVIEWER: But you didn't spend too long there, did you?

MR ALLAN: No. I had to have an apprenticeship, I was told. You always did as you were told.

INTERVIEWER: Who told you? Who was it who told you?

MR ALLAN: Well, your parents.

INTERVIEWER: Your parents, right, your dad was telling you? You've got to have an apprenticeship.

MR ALLAN: So I got the job as apprentice mechanic at McCall Wells, who had a wee garage of their own. That was doing some work as well.

INTERVIEWER: In Lockerbie was it?

MR ALLAN: In Lochmaben.

INTERVIEWER: In Lochmaben?

MR ALLAN: It was just behind the Railway Inn.

INTERVIEWER: Behind the Railway Inn?

MR ALLAN: Aye.

INTERVIEWER: Oh right, aye.

MR ALLAN: Up through 28 Barras entrance, there was a wee garage just in there.

INTERVIEWER: Right. Aye, aye.

MR ALLAN: Aye. I wasn't terribly keen on being a mechanic really.

INTERVIEWER: No?

MR ALLAN: Anyway. I had a lot of experiences there. I got gassed. I was doing a petrol engine on a four-cylinder Albion engine. It had been decoked and it was a hard, hard frost. We were tightening the head down, you know. Started it up and warmed it up and was tightening the head down and this fellow, who drove the lorry said to me: 'I don't feel too well.'

I said: 'Oh, what's wrong Sam?'

He said: 'I don't know. Maybe it was something I ate with my breakfast?'

Just with that, he fell down between the lorry and the bench. The mechanic, he was outside at another lorry. I went to pick this fellow up but, oh, I felt funny as well. I just let him go and, oh, I flattened his nose on the floor. Next off, I was outside and this doctor was there, sitting on a cuddy. Do you ken what a cuddy is?

INTERVIEWER: Aye.

MR ALLAN: For all the sticks. I was sitting on a cuddy and he was sounding my chest. So I got the rest of the day off for being unwell. But, as I say, it was a very, very hard frost and I remember there must have been about 50 odd rinks curling on the loch that day. Mr Boyer and Mr Nottman had been marking out the rinks on the ice and it was covered with people. It froze for about seven weeks, I think.

INTERVIEWER: Is that right?

MR ALLAN: Aye. There was ice on it for about seven weeks. But that was an experience.

INTERVIEWER: And you also had something to do with the celebrations for the Coronation?

MR ALLAN: Aye. I was set to work cutting this conduit into lengths and then grooving out the ends so they fitted in, you know, and they were welded up. It covered from one side of the Town Hall, right to the statue and right across the street. They were laid over to where the dentist is now, from there, right across back to the centre and back across. Double decker buses could pass underneath it now and we decorated them on the corners. It was great.

INTERVIEWER: I believe there's a photo of that too, somebody has?

MR ALLAN: Aye. I hadn't seen it for about 60 years, isn't it, really? Mrs Milligan brought it up and let me see it. It was taken in the dark but you can see it's fine. No, that was a marvellous thing for Lochmaben at that point. And the celebrations were great as well up on top of the golf course, the big bonfire and everything. Aye. Mr Bell led Lochmaben Pipe Band that was piping there and Jock Bell. There were two men holding him up when he was still piping.

INTERVIEWER: Oh right. Well that's dedication, as they say.

MR ALLAN: Of course, two or three years after that, the Queen asked me to join her company.

INTERVIEWER: The Army?

MR ALLAN: So I went to the Army. I went when I was 18 because I didn't want to go another three years and then go. I wanted to get it over with, get it past and

INTERVIEWER: So you were away from Lochmaben for how many years?

MR ALLAN: Well, I was away for 18 months because, as I say, I did my training on Berwick-on-Tweed, went to Ireland, a place called Ballykimber, sailed from Belfast on a troop ship, The Devonshire, and went to Malaya. We did internal security. There was a wee bit of trouble in Singapore itself so we stationed at Selarang, which is next to Changi Jail, Selarang Barracks. We did internal security there and then I went up to the FTC, the Federation Training Centre. They were training for jungle warfare. Then I went back down country into Johor and then distributed to compounds, you know.

INTERVIEWER: Different places?

MR ALLAN: Aye. Every company, C Company or whatever, went different places. But I'd had a problem, medical problem, with my neck and, eventually I landed in hospital in Singapore, the BMH. To try and recuperate me they sent me to the Cayman Islands which is in the north, more or less up at, I forget the name of the place but I came back down to Singapore and had a medical there and they said: 'This man is not fit for any further duties in this theatre of the world.'

INTERVIEWER: Oh right. OK.

MR ALLAN: So, I was despatched home by ambulance plane and I landed at Lyneham and into Aldershot Hospital for an operation there.

INTERVIEWER: Ah right Tom, so that finished your visit to Malaysia, let's call it. And you came back to Lyneham, did you?

MR ALLAN: I came back to Lyneham and was in hospital in Aldershot and, of course, out and in the hospitals from there on until I was demobbed in the March '57. Of course, after earning 15 shillings a week, of course you allowed your mother 10 shillings. Fifteen shillings a week. You had to get a job because you hadn't saved very much. So I saw this job advertised on the railway. There was one at Lockerbie and one at Castlemilk, so I applied and I got the job. I went for an interview at Lockerbie Station and the man went away to the end of the platform and he waved a red flag and he shouted: 'What colour is that?'

I said: 'red'.

He said: 'You'll do. You're in.'

So I had to go into Motherwell for a medical and came back and, as I say, I cycled from Lochmaben to Castlemilk Sidings which would be about seven miles, night and morning. Then I got a chance of a job on the Lochmaben line. I was a wee bit swithered whether to take it or not but I thought aw well, so I worked in there for a while at Lochmaben. I enjoyed it. It was grand. Aye, working the length of Lochmaben to Marehead at Lockerbie and back up the other side to the Blind lochs at the top and back down the other side again, with your hammer across your shoulder and your key in your bag, knocking the blocks in as you went along.

INTERVIEWER: Maintaining the line, is that maintaining the line?

MR ALLAN: Maintenance, aye. Well, these blocks got rumbled out, you ken. Then they weren't screwed down, they were knocked in again.

INTERVIEWER: You said you had weeding to do as well, eh?

MR ALLAN: Well, you had to start at one end and weed as much as you possibly could. Of course, you had to maintain the level of the tracks, site boards and what. A general tidy to keep the weeds at bay. Scything was, eh, with the swathe to cut either side of Lockerbie to the Blind Lochs and back down the other side. You were either standing with one leg up in the air or the other way.

INTERVIEWER: You needed one shorter than the other?

MR ALLAN: Aye. Like a mountain goat.

INTERVIEWER: How many trains would come through there every day?

MR ALLAN: Two or three. A couple of trains at night. There was the fish train and the milk train would come through at night. Then you'd get a couple of goods through the day bringing coal in and shunt it into Lochmaben. There were three coalmen. Eventually, there were only two working in the goods yard in Lochmaben.

INTERVIEWER: And if the coal, say, if the coal was offloaded from the train and then the coal merchants would come and pick it up there, would they?

MR ALLAN: They either bagged there on site. Of course, they had to get it done quick because there was the murrige to pay if you waited there for too long. And, of course, then there were potatoes and things going away as well. All these sorts of things went away on wagons.

INTERVIEWER: So yes, the railway was used quite a lot then?

MR ALLAN: Aye. Then it was and as I say there was a holiday coach sat in the goods shed, right up to the area towards the back of the station.

INTERVIEWER: And that was where the Barras is now, is that where the Barras is?

MR ALLAN: Aye. The houses are now where the station yard was.

INTERVIEWER: That's the station yard, aye.

MR ALLAN: It was quite a big yard.

INTERVIEWER: Was it?

MR ALLAN: Aye.

INTERVIEWER: And there would be the wagons with coal on?

MR ALLAN: There were three spurs. One went through the goods shed and then there were another three after that, spurs, that wagons could be shunted in. And there was a crane. There was a crane as well.

INTERVIEWER: And was there a wee shunting pug or something?

MR ALLAN: No, just the one that brought the stuff, used to knock it on the track.

INTERVIEWER: And the local coalmen, say, would go in and just offload the stuff from the wagons?

MR ALLAN: That's right.

INTERVIEWER: Is that how they did it?

MR ALLAN: And bag it up. They'd just reverse the wagon in, open the door and then just bag it up and so on.

INTERVIEWER: So it was wagons they were using too, it wasn't horse and cart?

MR ALLAN: No, it was wagons.

INTERVIEWER: Aye, aye.

MR ALLAN: It was oh, Austins and Fortesons.

INTERVIEWER: So it would be quite a busy place at that time?

MR ALLAN: Aye, quite busy.

INTERVIEWER: With the goods yard and, eh, and the station?

MR ALLAN: Aye. As I say, lorries came since contractors became more common and, of course, the railway lost all these contracts because the lorries could go as far as Glasgow and all these places then.

INTERVIEWER: That's been the problem, hasn't it, as you say it was more convenient.

MR ALLAN: Aye.

INTERVIEWER: To load it up on a lorry then?

MR ALLAN: Well, to put it on a lorry, you took it to the destination. When they get it on the railway, to take it from the distributor to the railway, from the railway to the next station, to the station worker and transport it again. You know.

INTERVIEWER: That's right. So you were handling it two or three times rather than once. Aye, aye.

MR ALLAN: So, as I say, I got married and was hunting for a house, of course, but I got one in Princes Street in Lochmaben, 67 Princes Street. It used the cold water tap, a sway, the fire, the kettle on it. But we were happy enough.

INTERVIEWER: Aye

MR ALLAN: Aye. My daughter was born in 67 Princes Street. I had to shift the job because I needed a wee bit more money when I had a family so I shifted for another 10 shillings which wage for me was seven pound a week then. I was bagging coal for Willie Noble. Two or three tonne of coal a day. You were tired at night.

INTERVIEWER: Oh I'm sure, aye. Back-breaking stuff, eh? Aye, they've got machines to do it now, of course.

MR ALLAN: Aye. Of course, as I say, there were different grades of coals and oh, it was interesting but, as I say, it was hard work. I left. I had a disagreement with the chap I was working with and I left and I got a job on the dual carriageway at Lockerbie, building it with Carmichael.

INTERVIEWER: Ah right.

MR ALLAN: That was good money but if you got bad weather you could get paid off. So I was going to the doctor's one day. Dr Wilson worked in Bruce Street then, at Lake House, that was the surgery there. As I was going by, Mr Noble came out and he said: 'Do you fancy working on the petrol?'

'Aye', I said. 'Well we could discuss terms and what have you, if you are happy enough about me coming back.'

'Aw, aye, it'll be fine,' he said.

I said: 'As long as you don't put me on the coal again.'

'Aye, right then.'

So I started on the petrol and there were four grades then: Esso, Esso Mixture, Esso Plus, Esso Extra and then there was Esso Golden as well. You could get Golden, Esso Golden, which was 101 octane.

INTERVIEWER: So what were your duties there then?

MR ALLAN: Just general. Going out, serving the petrol, blowing tyres up and just generally helping the public.

INTERVIEWER: And you were there for quite a while?

MR ALLAN: I was there for 38 years and to see the price of petrol when I started off at about 4 and 5 pence a gallon, which was about 22 pence, so that worked out at about what? Four-and-a-half-pence a litre to what it is now.

INTERVIEWER: Changed days, eh? Changed days.

MR ALLAN: Aye. So, as I say. My wife wasn't well so I retired two years early to help at home because, as I say, I have a handicapped daughter and Annie wasn't feeling just too great for a while. So, as I say, I took early retirement. I had a couple of wee pensions of my own.

INTERVIEWER: Tom, thanks very much for your information so far. Is there anything you would like to say about how Lochmaben has changed in all the time you have known it?

MR ALLAN: From when I was a boy, when I arrived here, the shops in Lochmaben were Wrexcoals, Roxburghs, Mr John Dickson was the chappie behind the counter. A very thorough man John. Eh Paul Roxburgh would tell you. He used to say: 'Plain, pan, cut anew?' when you went for a loaf. I remember Ecky McClean saying that him and his brother had a penny to spend going to school and one didn't want to spend his halfpenny. So they thought, as they had no change, they said: 'Mr Dickson, could I have two halfpennies for a penny, please?'

'Run along, sonny, this is not a bank.'

INTERVIEWER: This is not a bank, hah.

MR ALLAN: That was John Dickson.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of shop was that?

MR ALLAN: It was general groceries, you know. Of course, coupons and rationing was still on the go then, you know. You didn't get much cheese or butter or anything then. So

INTERVIEWER: And most people would shop in Lochmaben and they didn't go anywhere?

MR ALLAN: Aye. Aye. Everybody shopped in Lochmaben. They did a big trade in eggs at Roxborough at one point, you know. They'd go out to the country and bring the eggs in and exchange, like a barter system, I presume with their customers.

INTERVIEWER: Because they had a mobile shop, hadn't they? They had a mobile shop?

MR ALLAN: They had a mobile. Paul drove the van.

INTERVIEWER: Dinky. Dinky. Uncle Dinky drove the van in the beginning.

MR ALLAN: Aye. Aye. McWilliam, Dinky McWilliam, who would be Mrs Roxburgh's brother. Then there were three cloggers and woodmakers in Lochmaben. There was Scott.

INTERVIEWER: Tweedie, was Tweedie one of them?

MR ALLAN: Johnny Tweedie. Then there was Easton, Easton the Clogger. It was just at the end of Welldale Place, opposite the coalyard office, ye ken. Easton, Mrs Easton.

INTERVIEWER: So was everybody wearing clogs then?

MR ALLAN: I wore clogs. Everybody wore clogs when I was on the railway even. Aye. Clogs were a common thing then. You would need clogs.

INTERVIEWER: Was there a blacksmith? Was Tweedie something to do with the blacksmiths?

MR ALLAN: No. Irvine was the blacksmith, Mob Irvine was, and his dad. I used to go down there when I was on the railway and get picks sharpened, ye ken. The old man was still on the go well in his nineties.

INTERVIEWER: And were there still horses coming into be shod?

MR ALLAN: Aye well, there were more of the Hunter type. By that time they were starting to go and out and do them then or when trailers brought them. I've seen horse boxes stopped on the Queen Street and horses going up the Vennel to the blacksmiths' shop.

INTERVIEWER: Aye. And what about services. I mean you mentioned Dr Wilson in Bruce Street?

MR ALLAN: Dr Wilson. He was in Bruce Street in Lake House. Dr Campbell had his surgery down lochs at the Victory Park.

INTERVIEWER: Oh aye, down there. So that was a doctor's surgery at one time?

MR ALLAN: Aye, Dr Campbell. He was the Provost as well. Then before that there had been Dr Gilchrist which was where Dr Frost stays now. There were surgeries in there.

INTERVIEWER: And if people needed to go the hospital, I mean, what happened? Did they get picked up by ambulance or what?

MR ALLAN: Ambulance usually picked them up, aye. I remember my mother taking appendicitis. I had to run in my bare feet down to Dr Gilchrist's and she wasn't a happy woman.

INTERVIEWER: No, no.

MR ALLAN: She wasn't talking to me. Gave me a row for disturbing him.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, and your mother had appendicitis?

MR ALLAN: Anyway, wee Tommy Gilchrist came and 'ah,' he said, 'Mattie, I think you've appendicitis. You'll have to go the infirmary. I'll go and phone for an ambulance.' So my dad was bowling on the green up at the top of the hospital so I had to run up the field and tell him, you see. I said: 'My mum's going to hospital, dad.' He said: 'Aye, I'll be there in a minute. I'll just finish this end.' Aw man.

INTERVIEWER: Dear, dear.

MR ALLAN: Aye.

INTERVIEWER: And was there a shop where you could buy medicine or was there a chemist or what?

MR ALLAN: That was Mr Bissett. He was he where the chemist is now. And there was Johnny Bell, which is next to eh. Johnny Bell the Chemist and his daughter were next to the Indian shop, you know, behind the Town Hall? That was two shops then.

INTERVIEWER: Aw right. That's where Kennedy's is, is it?

MR ALLAN: No, that was Maxwell and Hare which was a tailor. So across the road was A.Y Johnson where the hairdressers, Lock Of Hair, is now. That was A Y Johnson.

INTERVIEWER: And what did he do?

MR ALLAN: Tailor. Tailors and drapers.

INTERVIEWER: So there was a whole row of shops round there then?

MR ALLAN: Oh aye. It was busy place. Aye. And wee Johnny Bell, the chemist, some day he came out of there and his trouser zip was open , or his buttons were open and somebody said: 'Johnny, your shop door's open.'

'Is that right,' he said, 'Bessie's in.' This was his daughter, she was behind the counter.

INTERVIEWER: Aye. Good.

MR ALLAN: Then there was Chippie Joe, Joe Crolla was next to the ice cream shop, Tony, who was his brother.

INTERVIEWER: So where the chip shop is now, it's always been a chip shop, has it?

MR ALLAN: Aye. Joe had the chip shop plus he had ,up Laird Loch's Vennel, he had a games room with a billiard hall and he had accommodation for fishermen and what have you. He was a worthy, Joe.

INTERVIEWER: And that's the brother of Lou?

MR ALLAN: Uncle Lou.

INTERVIEWER: Lou's uncle?

MR ALLAN: Aye. Joe. Aye. Now there's a man that could tell you a few tales, Lou.

INTERVIEWER: Aye, we're going to be talking to him, I think.

MR ALLAN: Actually, Lou was in Malaya along with me

INTERVIEWER: Was he?

MR ALLAN: Aye. Aye. He was after me a bit but.

INTERVIEWER: You mentioned tea rooms, was there a tea room still in Lochmaben?

MR ALLAN: Not then.

INTERVIEWER: Not then?

MR ALLAN: No.

INTERVIEWER: So it was Crolla, was the ice cream shop. But if somebody wanted a cup of tea or something, what then, was there nowhere like that?

MR ALLAN: That was the only, about the only place you could go.

INTERVIEWER: And what about pubs, how many pubs were there then?

MR ALLAN: Well, there was The Crown, which was a busy place, The Commercial which is The Bruce now. It was called The Commercial then. The Kings Arms and the Railway Inn, of course. Ball Castle was still a house then.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, it was a house then. So it was a house and then a hotel and then a petrol station?

MR ALLAN: Aye. A hotel then there was a petrol station in it as well at one point.

INTERVIEWER: A petrol station?

MR ALLAN: Aye. What happened was the petrol station was in Castle Street in the beginning, ye ken, you could get petrol at the garage in Castle Street. Then when I came back from the Army, the petrol station was built in Bruce Street, which was Esso. So the contract with Esso was that they wouldn't build another station, another Esso station in the area. So what they did was they had another subsidiary firm and they put it in Ball Castle. So Willie Noble said right, we'll sort that. So he built a petrol station beside the yacht club although the yacht club wasn't there then. For weeks and weeks and weeks, months, Paul called his big house and put it in there as a base.

INTERVIEWER: Aye. Bill Carrick, his place, aye?

MR ALLAN: Bill Carrick, aye. So there was a Shell Station there so it cut the one in the middle out.

INTERVIEWER: Aye. It's never recovered really, has it?

MR ALLAN: No. So, it's a shame really that the Shell Station went. There are no petrol stations left now. You could come from as far away as Castle Douglas and come down that road, and come through this way, and you won't get a petrol station.

INTERVIEWER: That's right. Aye, you're right.

MR ALLAN: There used to be one every 10 miles where you'd have got your petrol. Different days altogether now.

INTERVIEWER: Different days, aye. Well Tom, I just want to say thanks very much for your time and

MR ALLAN: I've enjoyed your company.

INTERVIEWER: Good. So we'll see how that turns out.

End of Interview