

Interviewee(s): David Macdonald (DM)	Interviewer(s): Janis Macdonald JM)
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TITLE	<i>Janis Macdonald interviews David Macdonald.</i>
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COUNTY	<i>East Lothian</i>
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DATE OF INTERVIEW	<i>16/10/2018</i>
INTERVIEWER	<i>Janis Macdonald</i>
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SUMMARY	<i>Janis Macdonald interviews her husband David Macdonald. David grew up in Haddington, before he moved to Nigeria with his family from the ages of four to seven. After that, he moved back to Haddington and lived with his grandparents until the age of fourteen. David took part in the Boys' Brigade, and played a lot of golf and football. They also talk about the toys that children played with when he was growing up, such as Swoppets, Meccano, and train sets. David also talks about the comics that he liked to read as a boy.</i>

Keywords: Earliest Memories; Move to Nigeria; School; Golf; Boys' Brigade; Toys.

Earliest Memories – 0h 00m 00s

JM: It's the 16th of October, and this is Janis Macdonald and I'm sitting at home in [REDACTED], talking with my husband, David Macdonald. And we're going to talk about early memories, and toys and games. So, David, I'm wondering first of all could you tell us your earliest memory?

DM: Well, my earliest memory was sitting in my toy pedal cart with my teddy in the back as a passenger, and the teddy bear bit me on the shoulder. Now, I suspect it was probably my father demonstrating the sort of humour that is still prevalent in the family today. But I do have a- quite a-

JM: So, the teddy bear bit you? Where were you at the time?

DM: I was at home. We stayed in the flats above my father's business in the High Street in Haddington.

JM: And do you want to tell us anything about your father's business? Did you see a lot of him during the working day?

DM: I suspect we probably did. My paternal grandfather came down from the Isle of Mull, and he set up all his six sons in business. My father and his brother had a grocer's shop in Haddington. The eldest brother had a grocer's shop in Duns. Two of the brothers had a grocer's shop in Greenlaw, in Berwickshire. And the last one had a grocer's shop in Kelso.

JM: And your father was in business with your uncle Stewart? In the High Street in Haddington? But you and your family moved from there, didn't you? Can you tell us where you went to?

DM: Well, both my father and his brother had young growing families and my father decided that there wasn't really enough business for two families to be had from the grocer's shop. So, he got a job out in Nigeria, working for the United Africa company, which was a division of Unilever.

JM: And what age were you when you went out there?

DM: I was four.

JM: Can you remember anything about the journey?

Move to Nigeria – 0h 02m 02s

DM: Well, I remember we left from London. And my grandparents travelled down with us. These are my maternal grandparents, and we later found out that they didn't ever expect to see us again. But we got a flight from- we went from- I'm not exactly sure where we went from but we went from London, I think, to Frankfurt, Frankfurt then to Rome, and Rome to Tripoli in Libya. And I remember getting off the plane in Tripoli, and when the door opened it was like an oven, and this black person tried to help me off the plane and I'd never seen a black person before, and I just shrugged my shoulder away because I'd never seen a black person before.

JM: But living in Africa that would change very quickly?

DM: Yeah, well, the journey must've taken a long, long time – I'm not sure exactly how long – but when we latterly went out to Nigeria, the flight was a direct six hours from London Heathrow.

JM: And how often did you come back to Haddington? Sorry, we'll have to pause this just now.

[pause in recording]

Resuming the interview, the conversation with David Macdonald. And we were just talking just now about how often David and his family came back home to Haddington from Nigeria to visit his maternal grandparents. How often did you come home?

DM: I think, eh, we came home on leave once a year, for a period of, I don't know, mebbe a month?

JM: And you stayed with your grandparents at Briary Bank?

DM: Yeah.

JM: In Haddington.

DM: Yep.

JM: And, at one point though, things changed and you came back to school here. Why- can you explain why this happened?

DM: I think it was just really from an education point of view. I came back when I was seven and I stayed with my grandparents, went to school in Haddington.

JM: But your sister came back too? The eldest of your four sisters?

DM: Eh, latterly she did, a few years later. She came back but she went to boarding school in Edinburgh.

JM: How did you feel when you were left behind with your grandparents?

DM: I don't recall having any particular bad feelings about it. No, I think I was quite happy.

JM: But you were obviously- you were very, very close to them throughout your childhood, weren't you?

DM: Yeah.

JM: And what sort of things did you do with them? Do you think you had a different upbringing with your grandparents? Um, were they more involved in activities, as you are with our grandchildren?

DM: Possibly not so much with activities but I know my grandfather always helped me with schoolwork. My grandfather was a retired police inspector, and he worked for a lawyer's in Haddington. So, he had a fulltime job. And my grandmother was just a typical stay at home granny.

JM: Tell me something you remember about her.

DM: I remember she was a particularly kind woman. She was a very good cook, a very good baker.

JM: And there was a pudding that she made that you particularly liked, wasn't there? One that other people might have called bread and butter pudding but your granny didn't call it that. What did she call it?

DM: I think I was always a slightly suspicious eater, and on one occasion I was given this pudding, which my grandmother described as 'Friday Pudding' because it was made on a Friday. I think it was bread and butter pudding, which I really liked, but had it been- had I known it was bread and butter pudding I probably wouldn't even have tried it. *[laughter]*.

JM: So, you obviously- when you grew up you were really, really close with your grandparents, and it's a lovely situation for you and for them. But when it came down to things at school, what did you particularly like at school? You said your grandfather helped you with your homework, but what did you particularly like about school?

School – 0h 06m 10s

DM: I don't know what I particularly liked. I liked things like spelling and arithmetic, and my grandfather always seemed to- I would do homework that would keep me ahead of the class. So, when it came round to actually doing the work in class, I always seemed to have a head start on them.

JM: So, do you think that was your grandfather, just sort of wanting that best for you and wanting you to be the best?

DM: Probably.

JM: A lovely situation. He was obviously very fond of you, as well. What, em- you've also told me in the past that you used to go out walking with your grandparents, and it was obviously a bit of a family tradition. Can you explain that to us?

DM: Well, I think my grandfather and my grandmother were church goers, and I used to go to Sunday school on a Sunday, and on the Sunday afternoon we always went out on a walk. Maybe a couple mile walk. Just a tradition, I think.

JM: And did you wear Sunday best for it or was it a casual walk? Did many people do that type of thing?

DM: Can't really remember.

JM: No? Ok. Right. You've been an outdoor person all your life, but which outdoor activities appealed to you most as a child?

DM: Well, my grandfather used to play golf, and he took me across to the golf course with him. As a result of which, me and two friends, when we were about ten or eleven years old, we started playing golf at Haddington Golf Club. We possibly had one or two clubs between three of us and some balls which we'd been given.

JM: How do the clubs compare with the clubs you play with now?

DM: Well, there's no comparison whatsoever. They probably had hickory shafts and... We used to go rolling around the golf course trying to find balls, and we used to get in trouble with the greenkeeper for always looking for balls. And we didn't actually play on the actual golf course, we just played on the practice grounds, certainly in the first instance. I think after a period of time we all became junior members of the golf club. And we all still play golf today, which is a testament to... And we're still friends today, the three of us.

0h 08m 28s

JM: Yeah, that's really good, isn't it?

DM: But in the summertime we, after school, and after we had dinner at night, we always went down to the park. There was always a game of football. So, we played football nearly every night of the week. And we sometimes used to play cricket. And we took up tennis. So, we're all very sporty, and always very, you know, outdoor activities. I think we cycled just about everywhere. I cycled down to school when we got to high school.

JM: And did you cycle to primary school and home for your lunch?

DM: I'm not sure about that. I can't remember actually cycling to primary school, but I know that I always came home for my lunch. So, I always probably walked home for lunch and walked back down again. And I think most people did that.

JM: And that's quite a change from packed lunches that our grandchildren take to school today.

DM: Yeah.

JM: So, you would go home and what type of lunch would you expect to have on the table for you?

DM: I think at lunchtime we usually had homemade soup, and then we had a main course, and probably a dessert as well. I think that was probably the main meal of the day, cause my grandfather used to come back from his work and have a sort of three course lunch as well.

JM: So, do you think your grandmother's life really revolved around looking after you and your grandfather and catering for you?

DM: Definitely. *[laughter]*. Yeah.

JM: And I know you've said before that she was an exceptionally good cook and baker, so you must've really benefitted from that, and enjoyed it.

Golf – 0h 10m 04s

DM: Yeah, it was certainly very good.

JM: Yes. And you've also mentioned, when you started golf, well, there wouldn't be a pro shop at Haddington so where did you go to for your golf equipment? The stuff that your grandfather didn't get for you.

DM: Well, Main's, the saddler's, used to sell golf clubs and I remember the first new club, individual club, that I ever bought I bought from Main's, the saddler's in Haddington.

JM: And was it a putter or a driver or-?

DM: No, it was an iron, I think.

JM: Right.

DM: Maybe a seven or eight iron, something like that.

JM: Yes, and you've had many, many different clubs since then.

DM: I should know I have, yes.

JM: Yes. *[laughter]*. Very many different clubs. And you wouldn't, um- you wouldn't be able to take your golf clubs across on a trolley. So, how did you get- how did you manage the equipment?

DM: I used to cycle with the golf clubs round my shoulders.

JM: And did you have the rest of the equipment? Those sort of- the golf gloves, and the shoes, and the trolley and...?

DM: I didn't have any trolley, probably had shoes, didn't play with gloves I don't think.

JM: Oh? And what about your first golf competition? Can you remember that?

DM: Em, not really. Nah. It was the first of many.

JM: Yeah, there've been so many, haven't there? So many. So, apart from all these sporting activities, what other hobbies did you have? I believe once you were a member of the BBs? The Boys' Brigade?

DM: Yes, I was in the BBs, and the Life Boys initially, which was like the junior section of the BBs.

JM: And did they have a uniform?

DM: Em, I think the Life Boys had... Yeah, I think they did have a uniform. We had these round hats.

JM: Was this a church-based organisation?

DM: I think it was. I think it was loosely based at the West Church in Haddington.

JM: And did it have a big turnout? Or can you not remember?

DM: I think there was quite a lot of us. I think it was more or less expected in those days, that you did something like that. Some joined and went into the Cubs and Scouts, and people probably went to the West Church intending to associate with the BBs.

JM: And how long do you think you were in the BBs for?

DM: I was probably in the BBs until mebbe... Second year at school, something like that.

JM: Can you remember anything that you did with them? That sticks in your mind.

DM: Well, there was quite a military background to it. I know we had a drill squad and one of the leaders that we had was very keen on this drilling. And we had- BBs used to have these drilling competitions, you know the other BB brigades in the county, we had these competitions. And I remember we were quite successful at that.

JM: At marching?

DM: Yeah.

JM: But how many BBs would be taking part from your group?

DM: Mm, maybe thirty?

JM: Right, so it's quite a significant number to keep in step.

DM: Yeah.

JM: And did you practise this drilling every week?

DM: Yeah. *[laughter]*.

JM: What other activities did the BBs do? Were they an outdoor organisation?

DM: Well, we had our meetings, I think, on a Friday night and it was always indoors. Everything we did was indoors.

JM: Because a lot of the things you do with Cubs and Scouts are a lot more outdoors.

DM: Yeah.

JM: So, BBs have had a lot more of a driven focus on indoor activities.

DM: I would say so, but all our drilling competitions were generally outside, I think.

JM: And did you play games at BBs?

DM: Probably played football.

JM: Inside?

DM: Inside, yeah.

JM: And what about, um, group activities? I mean I remember in Guides and Brownies you used to get into little groups and have activities to do, and then people- you'd get together at the end of the evening, was it like that?

DM: Probably. I think I vaguely recall some *[wayfarer?]* badges and things like that, and we used to do...

JM: Right. But not any great number of badges?

DM: No. I didn't have any particular love for the BBs, it was just something I was expected to go to.

JM: Right. Was there anything else you went to?

DM: Um, no I don't think so.

JM: No?

DM: Well, we went to things like- well, when we got to secondary school we went to things like the chess club and debating clubs and things like that.

JM: You would enjoy a debating club because you- you always, uh- you're quite good at getting your point across and putting other people off course when you're trying to do that.

DM: I don't know what you mean.

JM: You don't know what I mean? You do so know what I mean. When I try and say one thing, you're quite good at steering it off course round to your way of thinking. You do that.

DM: I remember playing football for the school team. This was in primary school. When we were in primary seven, we had a game against Prestonpans Primary School, and one of the Prestonpans pupils was Alfie Conn, who went on to play for Rangers. And I remember we played them at Haddington, at Haddington Athletic Ground and they beat us 18-0.

JM: *[laughter]*. And did you have strips?

DM: Yeah, we did have strips.

JM: And what about support? Did the likes of your grandfather go along to support it, or was it during schooltime?

DM: It was during schooltime, but I remember when my father used to come home on leave, he used to- one week he would take me, during the season, he would take me to see Hearts, and the next week he would take me to see Hibs. And I always had a close affinity to Hearts, and one Christmas I remember getting a Hearts shirt.

JM: Do ye? You've never told me that before.

DM: Mm.

JM: Wow, I hadn't realised that you were also- that you also went to Hibs games. You've also told me about a night picture. Would you like to explain this, because I'm not totally sure of the activity?

0h 16m 09s

DM: I think it was something called passe-partout, whereby it was basically sheets of coloured sticky paper and you used to draw- or draw out a shape, and then add another shape. I remember doing horse, and then probably a saddle, then a knight to go on top of the saddle, and lances and...

JM: So, you built up the picture from coloured sticky paper?

DM: Yeah.

JM: Right, ok.

DM: And I remember entering a competition and winning some prize with this passe-partout figure.

JM: And this was a school-based competition?

DM: I don't think so, I think it was just a home-based thing.

JM: Ok. I wonder how you came in contact with that?

DM: I dunno. *[laughter]*.

JM: Yeah. Interesting. Thinking back to schooldays and you said about your grandfather always liking to keep you slightly up to date, if not ahead of things that you were likely to experience at school, and you mentioned spelling – what did you particularly like about spelling?

DM: I remember when we were in primary six and primary seven, we had this fantastic teacher called Miss Cardinal and she used to- in the middle of a lesson she would go off and start telling the story of some of her foreign travels. And she travelled extensively, and the whole class was enthralled by this teacher's stories, but she used to have these spelling bees. I think at that time there was possibly forty-four or forty-six people in the class, and we'd all stand round and she would come round everybody, and as soon as you misspelt a word you would sit down. And there would be a few men standing at the end or a few people standing at the end.

JM: And were you ever the last man standing?

School – 0h 18m 01s

DM: Yeah. Sometimes. *[laughter]*.

JM: That's pretty good, actually. I wonder if the children who sat down quite quickly though got quite disheartened by it? Cause they maybe didn't get the same home support that you got from your grandfather.

DM: Possibly.

JM: And they wouldn't've been disruptive I suppose, as well, the way that children maybe are now.

DM: I can never recall there being any disruptive behaviour whatsoever in any of the primary classes I was in.

JM: So, did any of the teachers use, em, the belt for example?

DM: Em, I cannot recall any of the female primary teachers that I had from primary four up to primary seven ever using the belt.

JM: And this is Haddington Public School?

DM: Yeah.

JM: Yes. Gosh. So, you were in a class of about forty-four children?

DM: I think the maximum number we had, I'm sure there was forty-eight on one occasion.

JM: And can you describe how your classroom would be arranged? Because it's quite different nowadays.

DM: Yeah, it was just arranged in single desks. In rows up and down.

JM: Were you arranged in any way according to academic ability?

DM: I think we probably were. I think the far back of the class was the ones that were more academically gifted.

JM: Right. So, and of course when you went on to Knox Academy, that would continue particularly in the Latin classes?

DM: Well, we sat the eleven-plus in primary school.

JM: Explain the eleven-plus. Can you remember it at all? Because it's something people just know now as an exam, without actually knowing what you were asked in it.

DM: I think it was an exam that- I can't remember what you were- exactly you were asked in it but it determined what- at what level you entered secondary school and you were graded into classes. There was an A class, a B class, there was a T class, which was a technical class and there was a C class and a D class.

0h 20m 02s

JM: So, you went into the A class?

DM: Yeah.

JM: And so, you would have a different timetable from the technical class for example?

DM: Yeah. Although I do recall we did have one period of technical drawing every week. Another school recollection, I was in first year, I was sitting in this technical drawing class, obviously not paying any attention and the next thing I know, a blackboard duster hit me on the head – thrown by the teacher. Can you imagine that sort of thing happening nowadays? Would you ever do that to any of your pupils?

JM: I would've been sacked. You'd get quite a fright, then. But did you learn a lesson from it and pay attention in the future?

DM: Presumably. It didn't happen again.

JM: Oh, that's good. Any other school recollections or stories that- things that perhaps wouldn't happen nowadays?

DM: They wouldn't happen.

JM: I mean did you ever perhaps break a window anywhere?

DM: Yeah, I remember breaking a window when I was in primary school playing football. And, being the goody two shoes that I was, as soon as I went in after the break, I went and explained to the teacher what I'd done. *[laughter]*.

JM: And what was your punishment, if there was one?

DM: I don't think there really was one.

JM: No?

DM: Probably had to pay for the window.

JM: Now, at that time, Haddington Public School also used some of the building that was then Knox Institute.

DM: Yeah.

JM: And part of that building was almost derelict when I went to school there a few years later. Was it similar when you were there? Was that building in use at all?

DM: Yes, we were there for primary six and primary seven.

JM: Were you actually in the main building, or were you in some bits just at the side of it?

DM: We were upstairs in the main building. It was only two classes... Miss Cardinal, who we had for two years, and I think Doris Young was the teacher on the other side.

JM: And of course, Doris Young went on to be a French teacher at Knox Academy in her later years.

0h 22m 04s

DM: She did, yeah, yeah.

JM: But did you feel that building was unsafe at any time?

DM: No.

JM: No?

DM: No, it would never occur to us that it would be unsafe. It was an old, old building in old- we always had to walk up the old stone steps to the upstairs.

JM: Ah. I seem to remember it as being quite a spooky building, with black polythene on some broken windows. And I couldn't ever imagine being upstairs in it at all.

DM: Yeah, that's where we were.

JM: Yes.

DM: I think there was a third primary seven class, that was Miss [Hazard?], but they were around in the other part of the school.

JM: Right.

DM: So, there was three classes all together.

JM: But Haddington Public School at that time, it wasn't just the Victorian building that we're left with now, there were also other buildings that were attached to it, and then later a dinner hall. And of course, that's not used now anymore. So, is there anything else that you would like to add to our conversation today? That you- any memories that you feel are relevant to our conversation?

DM: Oh, I don't know if there are any memories but nowadays kids have so much to do with the phones, and iPads and computers, laptops, but we had none of that. So, basically all our leisure time was spent outside.

JM: That would be good. And of course, there was a wood- a wood area to the east of Haddington called the Planting at that time, which is just across the road from the Jet Garage on the A1, and you can't go up all of that now, but you have a story linked to that, don't you?

DM: Well, one summer holidays, me and some friends went up there, and I actually got shot.

JM: Explain.

DM: I think somebody shot me with an air gun or something.

JM: And where did you get hit?

DM: Only across the chest.

JM: And was there any repercussion for the person who did this, or-?

DM: I don't think so.

JM: -were you taken to hospital or were you just-?

Toys – 0h 24m 01s

DM: No, no, no. It wasn't- it wasn't a serious injury.

JM: No?

DM: No.

JM: But it's interesting as well that you would be allowed to roam on your bikes up the Planting, or wherever, without the need of a mobile phone to keep you in touch with your grandparents, isn't it?

DM: I remember we used to cycle down to North Berwick on occasion and out on what are probably main roads, well they weren't nearly as busy as they are now.

JM: No. Well, you sound as though you've had a lot of fun. But we'll stop this interview for just now and we will perhaps carry on with a different focus on our next interview. Thank you very much.

DM: Thank you.

[pause in recording]

JM: Um, this is Janis Macdonald again, resuming the interview with David Macdonald at [REDACTED]. We omitted to talk about toys, which was to be a major focus of this, and the real toy that we wanted to hear about in this interview, or talk about, was Swoppets. Describe Swoppets.

DM: Swoppets were these plastic figures, probably about four to five inches long. Mostly they were horses- mostly they were cowboy related. Cowboy and Indians. And you got a horse, and you got a cowboy with a saddle, and the cowboy would have a holster with little guns in it and they would have a hat. And, em... You would probably enact battle scenes, but I latterly became quite interested in horse racing and I used to set up these horse racing tracks, and I used to race my Swoppets all on the horse track.

JM: And did your other- did your friends have Swoppets, as well?

DM: Probably. I think they were very popular at the time. We used to buy them in a shop in Haddington called 'The Gift Shop', which was a toy shop in the centre of Haddington.

JM: It was quite an unusual shop, not one that you'd find nowadays, is it?

DM: No, they used to have external windows which contained-

0h 26m 04s

JM: They were kind of bolted on to the outside of the building, weren't they?

DM: I think so, yeah.

JM: Yes. What other toys- well, let's think about the Swoppets. Did they have hats and were they- were they- were their legs shaped to fit over the horse?

DM: Yes. Yep. But you got self-standing figures as well, Indians and what-not.

JM: So, you could swap their hats from one figure to another?

DM: Yeah.

JM: So, you could actually make little groups that would be dressed similarly?

DM: I've never actually googled it but I wonder if you google swap it, whether it would actually come up as a product.

JM: That's an interesting thing to do. You could do that tonight.

DM: Yeah.

JM: Yes. What other toys did you like?

DM: Well, we had things like- I remember we had a train set, a Hornby Dublo train set.

JM: And was that set up permanently on a board, or did you have to set it up all the time?

DM: I think it was set up permanently on a board. And I had things like Meccano sets. And I started reading novels at quite an early age, I think.

JM: Can we go back to the train set? Can you think of what size of board would you need for this train set?

DM: It was quite a big board. It was probably about six to seven foot long. It'd be four foot- five foot wide.

JM: And where did you keep it?

DM: I can't remember.

JM: You don't?

DM: Don't really recall, no.

JM: And the tracks were fastened on? But were they just fastened in an oval or were there different ways that the trains could go?

DM: I'm sure there was probably different ways that the trains would go. Another thing that I had was – and most boys in those days did have them – was, eh, a stamp collection.

JM: And where did you source your stamps from?

DM: A lot of my stamps were sourced from my parents in Nigeria, because when they- they used to write to me every week but because they knew I had an interest in collecting stamps, they used to get stamps from all the various offices that my father dealt with. And they kept the stamps, and I got quite an interesting collection of African stamps.

0h 28m 18s

JM: Right, and you still have that of course, don't you?

DM: Still got them, yeah.

JM: Yes, and it's something that you should show our grandchildren and perhaps let them see, because stamps aren't something that children are that aware of now, really.

DM: Not really.

JM: Because we don't write letters, no. And-

DM: And I've got twelve penny blacks, are they worth anything?

JM: You have not! [*laughter*]. And what about your trains, did you have several trains? Was it a collection that you built up over the years?

DM: I think so. I'm not very clear about that, but I know it was a Hornby Dublo, which was probably the only make at that time, and it was an electric train set.

JM: Right. My brother had one that had- it had something that clicked when the train went past. But he had his on a board under the bed that came out and he played with it that way.

DM: Another thing that I was very interested in one of the model aircraft kits, and I used to buy those and assemble them.

JM: And did you have many of them?

DM: I think I had quite a lot, yeah. We also used to, in those days, we used to get comics. Comics like *the Hotspur* and *the Dandy* and *the Beano*. And we always looked at the Sunday Post on a Sunday, saw *Oor Wullie*.

JM: What types of stories did they have in *the Victor* and *the Hotspur*? Can you describe one of the comics to us?

DM: Well, we also used to buy these war books, which were almost like a weekly or a monthly thing. And we got those in- used to buy those in [Orr's?]. And I think there was a lot of- some of these comics would have cowboys and sort of army type stories.

0h 30m 03s

JM: Right. And competitions and letters and that type of thing? Or do you just remember the stories?

DM: I just remember the stories, really.

JM: And were the comic in colour?

DM: Think so.

JM: Or just the cover?

DM: Possibly just the cover.

JM: And what year would this be?

DM: Oh, 1960 ish?

JM: Right, and you got these comics every week?

DM: Think so, yeah.

JM: Yes.

DM: There was another one called *the Eagle*. I used to get *the Eagle*, and there was *the Victor* and *the Hotspur*. They were sort o like sister publications.

JM: So, they're adventure comics for boys?

DM: Yeah.

JM: Yes. So, instead of perhaps video games and things like that-

DM: I remember also I used to get a magazine called *Look and Learn*.

JM: Right, yes.

DM: Do you remember that?

JM: That was a colour publication though, wasn't it?

DM: Yeah.

JM: It was yellow.

DM: Yeah.

JM: Yes. What, eh- you must've spent an awful lot of time reading comics and *Look and Learns*.

DM: Mm, possibly.

JM: Can you remember anything that *Look and Learn* featured?

DM: Nah.

JM: No? [*laughter*]. Obviously learned a lot from it, then didn't you?

DM: Yeah.

JM: Yes. No, and you also mentioned- you mentioned your train set, and you mentioned reading novels, but was there not another toy you mentioned? Um...

DM: Meccano.

JM: Meccano, yes.

DM: But you still get that today, I think.

JM: I don't know if you get it to quite the same level. Did you buy it in kits? You know, today you buy things, such as Lego, in a kit to make a particular model. When you had Meccano, did you just buy it as bits, and it was your imagination that built-?

DM: That was it, yeah. There was no- we weren't building to any particular plan, or anything.

JM: What sorts of things did you like to build?

DM: Just probably buildings of some description.

JM: Right. Not vehicles?

DM: No.

JM: No?

DM: No.

JM: And what about board games? Did you like board games?

0h 32m 02s

DM: Em, we had the usual Monopoly, and probably snakes and ladders. I used to quite like Monopoly.

JM: Who did you play these with?

DM: Probably played it with my grandparents and cousins.

JM: Right. Were you very competitive?

DM: Yeah, I was. I've always been very competitive at everything. Even playing my sons at sport, I was never one to let them win.

JM: No, you weren't. And card games, did you play card games like snap?

DM: Uhhh....

JM: Because I know you like card games, but who introduced you to a lot of them?

DM: Probably my grandparents.

JM: Grandparents had a huge impact on your upbringing.

DM: Yeah.

JM: And, yes...

DM: Well, I stayed with them from when I was seven, until when I was fourteen, when I was fourteen my parents came back permanently from Nigeria. And my father and my mother, they bought a hotel down in Langholm, in Dumfriesshire and when I was in the middle of third year I moved down to Langholm. But I didn't actually go to Langholm Academy because, at that time, Langholm Academy only went up to fourth year. So, there was a bus load of us from Langholm went through to Lockerbie Academy every day. So, I just went and joined the third year at Lockerbie, prior to the fourth, fifth and sixth year at Lockerbie Academy.

JM: That's where you were head boy?

DM: When I was head boy, yeah.

JM: Yes, and then of course you came back up to Haddington. The whole family ended up back in East Lothian.

DM: That's right. When my father sold the hotel, he bought a business in Haddington called Leslie and Leslie, which was an auctioneer's, valuer's and estate agent's, and he bought a house in Dunbar. And when I left school I went to Edinburgh University, which I stayed for one year, where I stayed for one year.

JM: But your father was also a sheriff officer. Can you explain what that job involved?

0h 34m 08s

DM: Basically, it was like a debt collector. I think people that were owed money used to take out a writ, so that was served by sheriff officers, giving people a certain time period to pay a particular debt. And then if that wasn't paid, I think they went back and did poindings and things like that.

JM: Right. And then of course they had auctions. But we will stop there because there are lots of other things we can talk about on the next time, such as the setting up of the sport shop.

DM: Ok.

JM: Ok. Thank you very much, David.

DM: Thank you.