

Explosive Times - Interview with David Thomas

Track 1 Duration of track - 43:16

[00:32] Dave Thomas [DT] introduces himself and explains when and where he was born. [1:00] Talks about growing up in the area and how it was paradise. Explains that the area was a diverse playground for children to play with different landscapes. Describes picking nuts, roach fishing. Explains that he dad was a coal miner and his mum was born in the village and was a seamstress which meant lots of people coming to the house to get clothes altered. Mentions how living in the village was unique. [4:20] Explains how he played as a child and how they they shot rabbits. Describes how he learnt to swim in the river and how he swam in various pools in the area and how he swam in the river Mellte below the weirs in the Powder Works [PW]. Comments on the tourism and the Waterfall walks. Explains that as a child he knew right from wrong and how important this was. [9:30] Explains how community life shaped him and how much he thought of the community. Comments on his work in the community and how this shaped him. [12:10] Describes a school pal, Roy, who lived near the PW and visiting him, playing conkers and fishing in the roach pond and picking nuts. [14:20] Comments on climbing trees and visiting his school pal Roy at PW. Comments that they would spot buzzards and play hide and seek in the PW. Comments that he had total freedom as a child but didn't appreciate it because he was living it. Comments that he was proud to be born and bred in the area. [17:08] Comments on how the PW was used in 50s and 60s. [19:10] Explains how he emigrated to Australia and ended up working in research in the rocket fuel industry. Comments that he followed in the footsteps of his grandfather. [22:13] Comments that his grandfather worked for forty years in explosives in the PW and that he worked for thirty years in explosives. [23:08] Describes his memories of the his grandfather and how his grandfather used to take him for walks in his pushchair. [24:42] Describes why he loved the roach pond in the PW and how he wanted his dad to buy him a fishing rod. Comments on how all the kids in the village collected frog spawn and how their parents probably flushed the spawn down the toilet when the kids weren't looking. [26:18] Comments again on the games they played and how those days as a child were memorable and that he was blessed to grow up in a safe environment. [28:30] Explains how Tom Pritchard who worked in the PW tried to preserve the history of the PW. Comments that the book Tom wrote about the PW taught him about the PW. Explains how the book helped him to discover more about the PW. [31:30] Comments that he knew Lewis Moses who managed the PW.

Explains how someone used to catch fresh salmon for Lewis Moses. Comments on how he knew other people connected to PW including other relatives of Lewis Moses. [36:20] Comments on a photograph and how he knew Wyndham and Lewis Moses. Comments on the photograph of Rose Cottage in the PW taken in 1880. Comments that Lewis Moses gave him a work reference to take to Australia. Describes how Rose Cottage has changed and that Tom's family still live in the cottage. [41:05] Comments how the PW was important to the community and how hard it must have been when it closed. Comments that the PW was a great institution for the area and the work put bread on the table for families.