

KINGSLAND ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewer: Jackie Markham

Interviewee: Alec Lowe

Age: 70

DOB: 25.12.1948

Date of interview: 24.7.19

SUMMARY PARAGRAPH: Alec is the only child of George and Eileen Lowe and lived in Kingsland with his parents and maternal grandparents, first at Sunnyside and then at Glendour (now called Martindale and the Horse Boutique). He spent time with his aunt and uncle and older cousins, the Markham family, at Markham's garage and when older with Tom Davies of Shirlheath, Arthur Morgan of The Showers farm and Bill Bengry. He went to Kingsland School then Leominster Grammar school before emigrating with his parents to Australia in 1964, returning to work in Kingsland for one year when he was first married. His father ran a business installing water pumps and Alec was interested in wildlife and all things mechanical. The conversation includes memories of The Corners and Serge Preece's bicycle shop, the shop and bakery, the early days of Markham's garage and Maurice Markham, Kingsland school, singing in Kingsland church choir, farming activities and machinery at Showers farm, the family's chicken business at Glendour, his father water divining, hunting and fishing activities in the village, Captain Hamlyn Williams, as a child buying and racing old vehicles with his friends and hitching a rides to Hereford sitting on the top of the cider apples being taken to Bulmer's.

TIME CODED SUMMARY

TIME CODE	CONTENT
00.00	Lived at Sunnyside next to PO where lived until 6/7. Recalls riding his tricycle up and down the street. Grandparents lived with the family there. Father ran a business doing water skins for farms. Father a sheet metal worker who spent a lot of time in Egypt in the war.
01.51	Memories of going with his father to work in Burley Gate and other areas and work his father was doing. Memories of farms with old tractors and machinery and him tinkering with machinery at an early age
02.36	Moved to Glendour [now Martindale and the Horse Boutique] past The Monument pub when a bit older. Memories of his grandfather walking to the pub every day. Memories of his mum playing the organ at the church and himself joining the choir as a soprano and memories of singing solos at Christmas.
03.40	Description of his father's business working from home, his lorry and the photo in the garage showing it. Memories of his childhood fishing and hunting. Memories of Serge Preece's shop repairing bicycles in the shed next to The Corners. Memories of finding a cannonball in a field towards Mortimer's Cross.
05.24	Memories of talking to George Griffiths the mechanic who worked for his uncle Maurice Markham and his memories of Maurice and old cars he played in. Story about Uncle Maurice letting him drive the Austin 16 down the street. Memories of the workshop and watching George at work and old cars. Memories of George metal detecting in the fields and what he found.
06.59	Memories of driving tractors when he was old enough. Description of his friend Arthur Morgan on his farm [The Showers farm] and driving a tractor and baler. Memories of an old McCormick baler and what he did when it lost its belt.
09.23	Memories of going out in the landrover to feed the sheep and how he fed them. Description of the grain dryer at Arthur Morgan's and how it worked and was used. Feed going to Alfred to feed his pigs and a description of Alfred who was German who was here during WW2 and stayed on at Arthur's farm. Description of making feed and using straw for Arthur's piggery.
11.33	Kaarlson farming a field opposite their house called Glendour. Memories of Andrew Owens who farmed a couple of houses up the road. Description of Andrew singing in the choir and a story of what he did because he was very short and making the choirboys giggle. What Charlie Jones the headmaster did when that happened.

12.44	Description of hunting and fishing with his friend Tom Davies who he went to school with. Memories of what they did together. Memory of walking to Kingsland school and going in the bakery and Jack the baker with one eye who was also a bellringer who'd let him take a piece of dough which Jack would cook for him and he'd pick it up at lunchtime or on the way home.
14.22	Descriptions of the village shop and what they bought there.
15.13	Description of aged 13 knowing Bill Bengry in Leominster and pumped petrol after school in their garage in Bargates until after 10pm. Description of serving customers then getting a lift home from Fanny Bengry after work. Description of working in their workshop at weekends. Story about working on a Rolls Royce belonging to Mr. Hamlyn Williams.
17.41	Description of Mr Hamlyn Williams always being short of cash. Story about when he was small having tea at Aunty Muriel's at Markham's garage and Hamlyn Williams asking for a 'gallon of cheap'. Memories of getting petrol and where the office was in Markham's garage.
18.52	Description of his mother being Maurice Markham's sister. Not knowing much about his father's family, his parents dying young and being born in Africa. Came to UK when he was about 5 with his brother Arthur.
19.59	Description of going into the office at Markham's garage after serving petrol. Description of the old cash register that is still in the garage. How they used it and trying to work out the change.
20.24	When they moved to Glendour his father built a big shed at the back which was a deep litter house. Description of building it and what it was made of. Chickens kept there with wood hoppers. Descriptions of customers buying eggs and rest going to market. Locals coming in for 'half a dozen cracks'/cracked eggs for a few pence.
22.10	Description of chickens being debeaked. And chickens killing each other. Descriptions of a plague of mice and what they did about it.
23.26	Description of playing with old engines in the shed. Description of his grandfather Laurence Markham's garden shed and him making clocks there.
24.18	Description of his grandparents passing and his parents deciding to emigrate to Australia in 1964 because they had a sponsor and were looking for tradespeople. Had friends there who were bricklayers in Brisbane. Description of staying with them in Brisbane at first then his father buying a block of land in Brisbane and building a house.
25.59	Description of him coming back with his wife for a year when they got married and helping Bryan in Markham's garage. Discussion of Kingsland still feeling like home, his roots.
27.09	Description of Markham's garage as it was when he was a child. Greycoat was a black and white cottage where his aunt, Muriel lived. Description of what the office was like and the lean to containing oil containers for sale because people bought petrol and oil. Further descriptions of the office and him being electrocuted by an electric socket. Further description of the current waiting area having 2 metal cages full of straw containing a big glass container of sulphuric acid for the batteries and a battery charger on the wall and description of accumulators being charged. Description of the smell there.
30.21	Left side in the current office was a very small room with the till on a bench and 2 chairs. Description of Reg Hamer who drove the bus and the workers. Description of the petrol pumps and a big barn at the front with the buses in. 2 buses that didn't work and a description of the Guy Vixen bus they used to play in as children.
32.54	Description of the pit and the next barn division with a pit where George worked. Description of a thunderbox toilet at the end. Description of lock up shed at the end containing a green 1928 Rover 12 that Bryan Markham drove.
33.50	Description of him buying a 1948 Rover 14 Sportsman's Coupe from his uncle for £6 when he was 11. Descriptions of it and racing it round the field at Glendour. Kids from the village bringing petrol for it. Story about attaching corrugated iron to the back and kids hanging onto it.
35.25	Story about Tom Davies and himself buying a Morris 8 and a J2 Morris bread van and taking them to the disused Shobdon airfield and racing them round there.
36.04	Description of 2 green lock ups at Markham's garage. The green Rover 12 was in one of them. At the back [where bungalow now is] were Maurice Markham's 'treasures'; description of all the vintage cars

	up there. Memory of playing in them. Description of a brick pigsty being in Aunt Muriel's garden [Greycoat]
37.35	Memories and description of Kingsland school. Milk being delivered and it being frozen if cold. Description of the 2 classrooms, Charlie Jones the headmaster, Harry Welson teaching in the other building. Description of Charlie Jones giving pupils 'the stick'. Description of them doing marquetry and the other teacher Mrs Morgan. 15-20 in a class. List of other pupils there.
42.10	Going home for lunch from school. Memories of dinners in hot boxes at Grammar school in Leominster. Passing the 11 plus and going there.
43.46	Description of cycling to Leominster Grammar school or using the Primrose Motors bus. Bus stop at Di Marcos. Reg Hamer being one of the drivers. Description of bitterly cold winters and waiting for the bus. Diesel freezing in the bus tank and late buses. Heating his wellies on the rayburn.
45.32	Description of his friend Tom in Shirleath having ferrets. Story about catching rats in a shed and description of how they got them out and trying to catch them. Description of netting rabbit holes and putting the ferrets in. Description of badgering with terriers. Description of otter hunting down the river with hounds.
49.26	Description of fishing on the Pinsley brook from the bridge and at Arthur Morgan's farm. Description of catching trout and how they did it. Describing fishing on the Arrow for a huge trout.
51.27	Description of holidays going to Cornwall in his dad's Austin 16 and a caravan. Going on Maurice Markham day trips to Aberystwyth and other places. Description of going to the Three Counties Show. His father's business becoming George and Lowe with his business partner Bill George.
53.32	Description of his father being a water diviner and description of him doing it.
54.47	Description of his father's business doing bore holes and their big boring machine, putting in hydraulic rams to pump water and how the latter worked.
57.00	Description of his father having a stand at Three Counties Show.
57.48	Description of their pet cat called Bongo who slept with him.
58.28	Description of what his mum did.
59.23	Description of the times and manual versus intense farming. On Andrew Owens's farm [Kingsfield farm] making their own butter, milked a cow, dairy at the side. Description of churning butter.
60.57	What he learnt from living that life as a child. Wholesome food, people growing own vegetables; seasonal vegetables. Description of scrumping apples from the orchard next to Glendour [now new houses being built on it/opposite Luctonians]; description of the trees, apples and old apple varieties.
63.01	Memories of cider apples. Description of collecting cider apples off the ground at Roger Jenkins farm and putting them in the trailer which went to Bulmer's and hitching a ride into Hereford sitting on top of the apples in the truck. Mortimer's Cross ending pressing cider around when they left for Australia.
65.05	Description of what meals they had at home as children and what they had at each meal. Description of Sunday lunch. Never had pizza until he was 18. Olive oil was medicinal. Memory of going to the Buttermarket in Hereford and there being a fishmonger, butchers.
68.30	His mum driving lorries in the war for the ATS. Also drove staff cars like Humbers. Description of where his mother and Maurice Markham were born. His mum driving his father's lorry full of gravel or bricks. Description of going with his father to get sand and gravel from the quarry in Aymestrey, over the Lugg bridge on the right.
71.05	Description of the timber yard in Bargates before the garage run by Charlie Norgrove. A gas engine driving the saw. Wood being sawn to size. Description of Charlie sawing the timber.
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