

**MANX HERITAGE FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT  
ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPT**

**‘TIME TO REMEMBER’**

**Interviewee:** Mr Phil Gawne MHK

**Date of birth:**

**Place of birth:**

**Interviewer:** Roger Rawcliffe and Charles Guard

**Recorded by:** Charles Guard

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**Topic(s):** *Fo Halloo*  
The Finance Sector  
Local politicians  
Imprisonment for arson  
Traditional industries and heritage  
The *Liberal Vannin* Party  
Farming and Manx Gaelic  
Nationalism and public opinion  
Finance Sector jobs  
Tourist industry  
Tynwald and the Council of Ministers  
Richard Corkhill  
*Mec Vannin*  
Chris Simpson’s housing estates  
*The Highwayman* pub and Dan Tynan

Phil Gawne - Mr G  
Roger Rawcliffe - RR  
Charles Guard - CC

**RR** .... publication like that ...

**Mr G** Right.

**RR** ... as you know, I think, I was asked to write – to capture, if you like – the history of the finance sector before everybody had vanished off the scene ...

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** And I was a party to it for quite a lot of the time ...

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** ... and other people we've spoken to were there from 1960 – people like John Curry, Martin Wall, W Bolton and so on ...

**Mr G** Yea.

**RR** ... people who *Fo Halloo* got, if you like, in their sights at the time.

**Mr G** Yes, yes, hmmm.

**RR** So when I'm doing this, I have a particular brief to get all sides and also to get the funny bits, if you like – the entertaining pieces, so that it's not going to be a Mark Solly type history of the finance sector with all the where's and why-for's – whys and wherefores.

**Mr G** Yes.

**RR** It's going to try to capture a lot of that and capture some of the stories that were there. And of course some of the great stories are the people who didn't like it.

**Mr G** Yes, yes.

**RR** And we've got *Fo Halloo*, obviously in quite a big way, in the seventies; and then we've got the sort of resurgence which you had some involvement with in the eighties.

**Mr G** Yea.

**RR** Where you mixed up with *Fo Halloo* at all in the ...?

**Mr G** No, no.

**RR** That was before your time – you were too young, were you?

**Mr G** I was hardly even born. (*laughter*)

**RR** You weren't sticking posters up or gluing, no? (*laughter*)

**Mr G** No, no. I was blissfully unaware of all of that until, probably the mid-eighties, you know, and I was reading back-copies of it and thought, 'Oh yes, this is very interesting.' But I suppose my – the great drawback I suppose for me in terms of my relationship with the finance industry was that I went away to college to train as a bio chemist, I went to the careers advice people and said, you know, 'What do you suggest for me to do, I would be very keen to go back to the Isle of Man, I'm not that keen on staying in England, the Isle of Man is my home, it's, you know, where all my family are and friends are?' And they said, 'Oh, you should train to be a chartered accountant.' So I thought, well, I'm not quite sure how that fits in with bio chemistry, but if that's what these highly paid careers advisors are telling me, well, maybe I ought to try it on.

**RR** I held a degree in classics and became a chartered accountant – many do.

**Mr G** Yea. So anyway, I did that, I came back and started work with – I think they were Peat Marwick McLintock at the time ...

**RR** Hmmm, hmmm.

**Mr G** ... and they became KPMG, I think, while I was still there.

**RR** They changed their name, yes.

**Mr G** And I was probably there for about sixteen months. And one of the first jobs that I was put to was assisting in the liquidation of the SIB [Savings & Investment Bank], and I thought, well, if this is what's going on, this is

dreadful, I don't want to be part of this, this is appalling. I mean, there was other issues, anyway, that I had with regards to the finance industry which I wasn't entirely comfortable with. I felt that this wasn't part of the Isle of Man that I grew up in. The people, on the whole, seemed to have different values to my values. They didn't – I mean, there was very few Manx people in the offices that I was working in ...

**RR** If you'd have been at Pannells you'd have found it nearly all Manx! *(laughter)*

**Mr G** Well, yes, yes, maybe things would have been different, then. *(laughter)*

**RR** 'Cos Pannells were mostly Manx.

**Mr G** Yea, yea. So I felt very much as though I was a stranger in me own country.

**RR** Hmmm.

**Mr G** I felt very much that – it all seemed wrong to me, and I remember talking about what they – their ambitions, which were to get a slightly bigger house and get a big car and be a member of the golf club and all these sorts of things, and I thought, 'I'm not interested in any of this,' and I was really alarmed at the thought that this was going to be my future. *(laughter)* Ummm, and it didn't suit me at all and, as I say, I was looking at some of the things that were going on and I felt very much that politically the finance industry seemed very much to be in control of the government – government did whatever the finance industry asked it to do. Now I can understand why government might have been very keen to do as much as it could to support the finance industry but, certainly, as I say, the experience, which was limited, it must be said, of the liquidation of the SIB was enough for me to think that this wasn't right, there was corruption, there was things going on here that shouldn't have been going on. And I just felt it was wholly inappropriate.

**RR** There certainly had been in the seventies.

**Mr G** Yes.

**RR** The SIB was a collapse of that era ...

**Mr G** Yea, yea.

**RR** ... 'cos I, with all our firm, went in the day the licence was withdrawn, into the SIB, to try and sort out what had really happened ...

**Mr G** Yea, yea.

**RR** ... and whether it was really lost – and it was.

**Mr G** Hmmm, oh aye.

**RR** So we advised the government ...

**Mr G** Yea, hmmm.

**RR** ... and it was – you know, that was fascinating. But that was – Peats is a different thing – now Peats is a London City firm, they are – Stephen Harris would feel much at home in Peats.

**Mr G** Yes.

**RR** I was articled in London with Price Waterhouse who always regarded themselves at that time as the gents, and Peats were next to us and they never regarded themselves as gents. So there was always a hardness about Peats, and when they expanded their office here, thanks to the collapse of the SIB, that all came in. And it's still there, they are much more clear minded and much more – and that's not all bad, because, I mean ...

**Mr G** Yea, oh aye.

**RR** Having them here brings us into wider knowledge elsewhere. Umm, Pannells was the old Manx firm, been here since 1886, and when – they kept saying to me, 'When the wind blows the other way, Pannells firm, which is owned here, not by Pannells anywhere else, will still be here.'

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** If the wind blows the other way, Peats will still close it. And so we've got that,

but Peats is all straight forward, and in my opinion, unlikely to be involved in any hokey pokey.

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** But there were people in the seventies who were not scrupulous, and there's people who said it's a bit like cowboy world.

**Mr G** Hmmm, hmmm.

**RR** Now in the *Fo Halloo* magazine, which you've seen ...

**Mr G** Yes.

**RR** ... sort of make much of that. And they sort of target people like John Bolton – the people who were the architects of it – Clifford Irving, when Clifford Irving wasn't on the other side of the fence which he was quite frequently.

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** Ummm – Percy Radcliffe, another one. And then for different reasons, Charlie Kerruish ...

**Mr G** Yes.

**RR** ... who'd been flogging all his land ...

**Mr G** Yes.

**RR** ... to Judah Binstock, and Judah Binstock was a threat to the Island.

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** And we see that sort of threat still, because there are people like Judah about the place who are getting too many of the assets of the Island for us to be comfortable with.

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** And that, to me, is an anxiety.

**Mr G** Yes, yes .

**RR** So we've got those ...

**Mr G** And I think that's really what it was about for us in the eighties. I mean, in the end, I ended up leaving KPMG for various reasons – I mean, I wasn't particularly well for a period of the time, probably a lot of the illness was brought on by the fact that I just felt completely out of – well, you know, out of my natural environment ...

**RR** Hmmm, hmmm.

**Mr G** ... but I'm sure that, had I not been ill, I would have probably left anyway, because it just wasn't for me. And then I was – I did a variety of things – I started building stone walls and being a bookkeeper for the Celtic Jewellery shop in Peel. And doing nice fun things rather than (*laughter*) hard work, which was – well, that's not to say that building stone walls isn't hard work, but it's very pleasant sort of hard work. So we did a bit of that, but I could see – or I felt, anyway, and this was certainly the view that was shared by Greg Joughin and Chris Sheard, that the Isle of Man seemed to be going into the hands of other people – it was no longer belonging to Manx people. The government seemed to be more interested in what big business had to say than what the Manx people had to say. And we just felt this was wrong and it was inappropriate for us to just sit back and complain about it and moan about it – we actually had to go out and do something about it. And I think it was – yes, it must have been my birthday – when would that have been? Twenty-second birthday, possibly, or maybe – yea – it must have been my twenty-second birthday, we had a big party – had probably far more to drink than we should have done. And said, 'Right, well, we'll have to do something – we'll make a stand!' So I was deemed to be the least drunk of the three (*laughter*) which – so we took Gregory's car, which was a – one of these Renault cars, which had the gear change on the column ...

**RR** Oh, I remember them!

**Mr G** ... which I'd never driven a car like that before and I found it quite interesting,

to say the least! (*laughter*)

**RR** Particularly if you were ‘three parts gone’! (*laughter*)

**Mr G** Well, yes! There was a tin of paint in the back of the car, and we headed off to South Barrule where there had been some kind of *Fo Halloo* protest in the seventies with ‘Tax Dodgers Go Home,’ and we thought we would go up there and we would re-paint that slogan back on the road – ‘cos you could still see it to a lesser extent. So I drove the car, the boys got out, they painted the slogan on the road and then we realised that we were the wrong side of the slogan to get back to Foxdale, (*laughter*) so we had to drive all the way down to Ballakillowey, along through Colby, back up to get back to Foxdale. Which, bearing in mind that I didn’t have a clue how to drive this car, it was quite something. And we did that and nothing happened – nobody reported it, nobody said anything about it, we sobered up and we thought, ‘Well, you know, this is all well and good, but if you’re really serious about this we’ve got to do something a little bit more about it.’ There was a big concern at the time about Cowley Groves, whether they’d been doing a big PR thing at the time, I don’t know, but they seemed to be the people who were selling our Island ...

**RR** Cowley Groves went to Guernsey to recruit ...

**Mr G** Right.

**RR** ... people to move to here in the spring of 1987.

**Mr G** Yea – well, that was the – we felt Cowley Groves were doing quite a lot of damage. So we targeted their ‘For Sale’ boards and we were going round basically cutting down the ‘For Sale’ boards – that worked – well, worked for us, but I don’t know whether it really made that much of a difference. Then I had the idea that perhaps we should take one of the ‘For Sale’ boards and stick it on top of Tynwald Hill, (*laughter*) because that seemed to be the view that we had that this was – any price – you just give us a bit of money, we’ll happily accept it. And that was, you know, a further extension of what we were doing. By that time, I think, we also got into the idea of daubing the SFSO slogan around the place, and ...

**RR** And that’s what SFSO stands for, is it? (*laughter*)



**Mr G** Oh well, that would be saying! I don't know whether anyone has been allowed to say that, so I'd rather keep quiet.

**RR** What sort of actual – I'm not asking what it is – it actually meant something, did it – it stood for something?

**Mr G** Yes, yes.

**RR** Because all sorts of people have speculated what it means.

**Mr G** Yes, but – and what – that was one of the things about having the letters rather than actually spelling it out in words – it's allowed people to think about what it might mean. (*laughter*)

**RR** That's quite clever, that ...

**Mr G** Yes, yes.

**RR** ... as it happens.

**Mr G** So, anyway, we were doing a lot of that and then, obviously, with Gregory, anyway, and Christopher being landscape gardeners as well as stone wallers and all the other things they were doing, having sprayers in the back of the car with weed killer, the view was that maybe we could do something a little bit more spectacular than just daubing slogans around the place, so, for Tynwald Day, we went and did – or weed killed – various places that was up on the Beary Mountain and round Tynwald Hill, just again to try to get the message over that this was not, you know – we wanted to make some kind of protest. I remember, as well, that we had read – and I probably ought not to be saying all this, because, there's the risk of treason and all these sorts of things, (*laughter*) but we were reading through some of the policy documents of Isle of Man Government which were basically saying that stability was the key – you know – we have a stable government, we have people compliant with our wishes and everyone was happy, and we thought that what we had to do was make it clear to government at the very least and ideally to an outside audience that, no, we weren't happy with what was going on and if we could destabilise the system to some extent we would also put off the people that we didn't really want to be coming buying – coming to our Island buying up all our properties and making

decisions on our behalf. So that was at the back of our minds, that – and obviously, going round painting a few letters on a few roadsides, bridges, whatever, wasn't really going to achieve that. So the 'For Sale' sign on Tynwald Hill, and the weed killer around Tynwald Hill helped. And certainly did bring us to the attention of the media. But then again, you know, you have to keep going with things. It wasn't really sufficient. People hadn't decided overnight, 'Well, yes, let's change our policies.' Had I, or any of us, had any sort of political experience I'm sure we could have done things quite differently and done things far more effective, but we were effectively a group of ... not even 'gifted' amateurs, but amateurs just thinking well, how ...

**RR** A handful of amateurs.

**Mr G** ... yea – there were the three of us. How were we going to sort this out and ... you see, I suppose for people who didn't have any understanding of how politics works, or how governments work, we were reasonably effective in that the obvious thing you need to do, if the system that you despise, relies wholly on stable government, and a general public that supports the government and, you know, stability is the key, the best thing you can possibly do is raise the temperature and show that there is unrest. And that was what we were trying to do. So we did the slogan daubing thing, then I actually went away to Brittany on a Celtic festival – inter Celtic festival down there, and had a really nice time, and got back to find that Gregory and Christopher had expanded the range of activities to include burning houses down. So, I think they had – had they gone – they'd got one house, was there?

**RR** There was one at Johnny Watterson's Lane ...

**Mr G** Well, we got - the two at Johnny Watterson's Lane was the last one – ummm, we were probably a little bit ambitious to do two. (*laughter*) Anyway, there was one done while I was away.

**CG** That was prior to the Johnny Watterson's one, was it?

**Mr G** Yes, yea – Vicarage Road, but that one didn't take as well as it might have done. So then, they'd done that, and well, we would go out and we would do another one, at Johnny Watterson's. Unfortunately the boys got a little bit – greedy, perhaps you could call it, or, I don't know what you would want to say,

but, rather than doing the one house, and getting away quickly, they decided they would do two houses. So, of course, these things were all well planned with the exception of my car, which was the get-away car, which was a bright yellow and gold Chevrolet. *(laughter)*

**RR** A bit conspicuous, was it? *(laughter)*

**Mr G** There were only two on the Isle of Man, and the other one was a more of a brown colour than a gold, *(laughter)* so, I mean, yes – I mean, you have to, don't you?!

**RR** You do, and how – it's lovely in Manx.

**Mr G** So, anyway, we'd done a variety of dry runs, checked it out to see what would happen. But of course, with doing the two houses, by the time the boys had got back to the car, the houses were well ablaze, and there was a very helpful person – some neighbour who'd watched – had come out to see what was going on, *(laughter)* saw the car and saw us disappearing off. And then, as they say, the rest is history, so ...

**RR** That was the end of the movement, was it?

**Mr G** Well, effectively, that was the finish of that, because we were caught and ended up doing – I was sent for sixteen months and Gregory and Christopher got two years, primarily, I think, because I was away for the first of the fires.

**RR** They admitted guilt?

**Mr G** Yes. Well, there was no point in – I mean, the whole – one of the whole points in doing this was to explain to people that we were angry and we didn't like what was going on, so, if you actually are caught, it seems a bit silly not to.

**RR** When that happened, and you burnt the houses, what length of time was it since when you started?

**Mr G** It was all within a period of about nine months.

**RR** You did achieve the aim, in a sense that in a nine month period, everybody

knew about it.

**Mr G** Yes, oh absolutely, yes.

**RR** I would have thought there were a lot more people involved, and for a much longer period.

**Mr G** Yea – no, there were only the three of us – well, there may have been others in the early stages doing bits and pieces, but we weren't aware of any – put it that way. All the major things that were reported in the newspapers were things that the three of us had done. Obviously being caught it then gave us the opportunity to say our piece, write in the newspapers the concerns that we had. And, probably for the first time – and certainly we had plenty of time – we were able to sit and think, you know, what was behind this, how does it all work. Chris had spent a lot of time studying 'green' politics, so he was aware of that. I was more interested in the sort of cultural politics, and I think Gregory just liked the thrill of setting fire to houses. (*laughter*) I don't know. But anyway, no, that was the – our opportunity then. Chris wrote most of our public statement but we all chipped in and honed it down to what we felt was appropriate.

**CG** Had you had an opportunity before the arson attacks to formally say anything, even anonymously?

**Mr G** I don't think we did – I think we felt ...

**CG** So people were supposed to pick up from ...

**Mr G** ... well, we were – I think anybody who commits acts which are likely to result in imprisonment doesn't want to be caught ...

**CG** Hmm.

**Mr G** ... and the last thing we wanted to do was to send anything to anybody that you might see ...

**CG** Identify ...

**Mr G** ... yea, that might be traced back. So basically we were keeping as quiet as we

possibly could do. And that was where we went wrong, by my mind. I think we could have been a lot – we could have gained a lot more in terms of publicity had we been able to use the system a bit better. But we weren't able to do that, or we felt unable to do that

**RR** When you look back at *Fo Halloo*, which obviously, when you were doing your thing, people were looking back at *Fo Halloo*, saying this is the same sort of thing ...

**Mr G** Yes, hmmm.

**RR** ... which was partly true ...

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** ... that was a lot of people involved in that, from what I gather ...

**Mr G** Yea.

**RR** ... and of course it produced plenty of stuff that they wrote with criticisms of the policies. I mean there was the knocking of John Bolton and all these other people, but there was also a statement – I mean, exactly what you are doing now, in a way ...

**Mr G** Yea, yea.

**RR** ... that there was a neglect of agriculture, fishing, etc. There was a neglect of tourism and the money should not be spent on encouraging people to come in – which I don't think it was, particularly ...

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** ... but rather than let people come in and have new residents, they should boost the traditional Isle of Man enterprises.

**Mr G** Yea – which of course is easy to say, but ...

**RR** (*laughter*) Yep – well, you're in an absolutely wonderful position now to ...

**Mr G** Yes, absolutely, yes.

**RR** ... to assess whether that would be realistic.

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** My feeling has always been that it couldn't be realistic in the sense that it wouldn't ...

**Mr G** It's realistic in that we could do an awful lot more with our traditional industries ...

**RR** Oh, I don't disagree with that ...

**Mr G** ... but, it's not going to result in what we've been able to achieve in terms of the education system, in terms of our heritage system, health system – all these sorts of wonderful things ...

**RR** You couldn't have paid for half ...

**Mr G** You couldn't do it anywhere near the level that we've got at the moment.

**RR** No.

**Mr G** But then, that's the – basically a lifestyle choice that I don't believe that the people of the Isle of Man have ever been given. And I still don't believe that we're giving them that opportunity. Nobody, with the one exception of John Rimington, nobody went to the polls last time round saying, 'We're going to have to severely cut your services, and you're going to have to pay more tax.' Nobody did that. John, I felt, was probably quite honest to do that, because he could see a time coming whereby we're not going to have the huge levels of income that we've had in the past to be able, in many cases, to squander on poorly managed projects.

**RR** Hmmm, hmmm.

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** But we shouldn't be doing that anyway!

**Mr G** No, we shouldn't, no, but then there's – I don't believe – this is the great weakness of the Manx political system, and I believe there are loads of strengths, but the weakness of having a consensus style of politics is that you don't get any alternative. You hope everyone comes together in the consensus and you don't get the opportunity to have an alternative prospective. You know, the *Liberal Vannin*, for all their – Peter [Karran] might want it to be something really fantastic, it's ever only going to be a, 'Let's knock existing policy party,' rather than, 'let's think of a completely new direction.'

**RR** Well, he doesn't construct, does he, he ...

**Mr G** No, no, exactly.

**RR** ... he won't do the work to sit there and work out things – he won't attend the meetings – he complains he isn't informed but he hasn't bothered to turn up.  
(laughter)

**Mr G** Well, on the whole, that's the case, yea, yea, yea.

**RR** So that makes it very difficult to ...

**Mr G** It's very frustrating, yea, yea. And what we – I would love to see a system develop where we do have some real alternatives, but I don't think we're – well, I can't see how it's going to happen, because ...

**RR** So what you are actually saying in that way, is similar to those all over the world, really.

**Mr G** Yea.

**RR** Just look at the British government – they've got exactly similar things ...

**Mr G** Well, absolutely – it's moving very ...

**RR** ... even when you change governments – the in-coming party's going to do all these things ...

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** ... no one achieves all these things.

**Mr G** No, no.

**RR** And that's the – even if you did have another way of going – if you have a different, a different Member of the House of Keys who formed a government who had a different view point, what would, in fact, they be able to do?

**Mr G** Hmmm, hmmm.

**RR** Because you are stuck with people wanting education, wanting health etc.

**Mr G** Yea.

**RR** I mean, there are things you can do, 'cos you can use ...

**Mr G** There are, yea, and we are able to achieve quite a lot of subtle and small things which in twenty years will be seen to be quite natural. But, if you expected anyone to think, 'Oh yes, this is a normal thing to do nowadays,' they'd say, 'oh no, no, we can't do that.' But we can make things happen now that will radically change things over the period of twenty years. But a radical change over twenty years is not seen as radical, (*laughter*) you know, and that's what we're doing in agriculture at the moment, and it breaks my heart, as, you know, somebody who comes from a family who's been farming in the Isle of Man for as many years as you could care to remember, certainly back to the fourteen hundreds, anyway, that we can't carry on doing what we've been doing pretty much for the last six-seven hundred years.

**RR** That's because of external factors, is it?

**Mr G** Yea, well, it's just the way in which the economy of the world is going. You can't protect your industry – you can't just throw lots of money at farmers and allow them to live the lifestyle they've always lived. There's two choices, to me as Agriculture Minister, I either get the farmers to radically change the way that they farm so that they are much more focused on profit and making a decent living, or we wave goodbye to the agriculture industry. There isn't a middle



ground, unfortunately. And that's awful for me, because I'd love to see a situation where they had old grey *fergies* and a two furrow plough, and a – even better – a pair of horses ...

**RR** Hmmm.

**Mr G** ... farming fifty or sixty acres, and all speaking Manx, and you know, all that kind of thing. It would be marvellous – well, it wouldn't be marvellous, but in my sort of weak moments, I think fondly of the system that Eamon de Valera tried to create in Ireland and it failed dramatically with a ...

**RR** He tried to sort it out by slipping money to the ...

**Mr G** Well, yes, yea, yea, so, yea. Having ideals is one thing, but, you know ...

**RR** They were slipping the money to him, mostly ...

**Mr G** I think that – yes, I could see lots of similarities between our Charlie and ... yea, yea ...

**RR** You're right – I've always said so ...

**Mr G** Yea.

**RR** ... very similar in many ways.

**Mr G** Absolutely, yes, yes.

**CG** What do you think your legacy was – do you think – I mean, obviously there was a ground-swell of sympathy ...

**Mr G** There was, yes.

**CG** You hit a cord with many people who weren't expressing anything like that, so, but what do you think, if anything, focusing this discontent, achieved?

**Mr G** Well, 1990 – I think it was 1990 – certainly 1991, a Working Group was established to get the Department of Education persuaded to introduce Manx

Gaelic into the schools.

**RR** Hmmm.

**Mr G** 1992 it happened. We had the 1990 Gallop Survey – ‘Quality of Life’ survey which showed that 36%, I think it was – sure I’m getting rusty – I’m out of the job too long! 36% of parents wanted their children to learn Manx, which was a massive vote of support ...

**RR** It’s a lot more than you think, isn’t it?

**Mr G** ... and then when it was actually introduced into the schools in 1992 there was an even bigger take-up than the 36% which they had anticipated. So I don’t know – I mean, it’s always difficult, particularly from a position like I’m in, where you’re asking me, ‘Did I achieve something’ – it’s not for me to say so, but certainly, shortly afterwards, we managed to win the victory of getting Manx into the schools, also Bernard Moffatt reckons – this is when he’s being nice to me (*laughter*) – that had we not done what we had done, Stephen Harrison would have found it considerably more difficult to achieve what he has achieved with heritage in the Isle of Man, because it was basically, what we were saying was, you go on ahead with all this economy stuff, and you’re leaving the people behind, and you need to bring the people along with you. You need to have things done for the native people of the Isle of Man as well as the general, ‘This is what governments do.’

**RR** Yea, yea.

**Mr G** We have to have our national identity protected in some way.

**RR** One of the things that seems to have come out of this story is that the national identity has become much more focused ...

**Mr G** Yes, hmmm.

**RR** ... even early on. Even I, as a non-Manx person, but married to a Manx person, have become much more conscious of Manxness since that time ...

**Mr G** Yea, yea.

**RR** ... and it comes out in language and dancing and singing and all sorts of things. But it also comes out in a consciousness of the Isle of Man not just being an island of Britain ...

**Mr G** Hmmm, hmmm.

**RR** ... but it is also an island of Britain in the sense that Ireland is an island of Britain.

**Mr G** Yea. Certainly, I was amazed when I got elected to Tynwald at the way in which Tynwald Members think of themselves now. And I'm sure that wouldn't have been the case twenty years ago, you know – well, maybe it would in some instances, but there's a very, very strong nationalist streak in Tynwald. You know, many of the significant and senior politicians are very strongly of a view, you know, that we should be doing far more independently, we should be running the place ourselves, we shouldn't be cow-towing to the United Kingdom all the time.

**RR** Or the EU!

**Mr G** Yea – although, to be fair, we tend to have more positive dealings with the EU than we have with the UK. What tends to go wrong with our dealings with the EU is when the UK gets involved, because the UK takes everything literally which is not what's intended by the EU.

**RR** No, they intend it to be passed and then to take no bloody notice of it!  
*(laughter)*

**Mr G** Well, yea, yea – it's a loose – a far looser requirement for mainland EU countries.

**RR** No, I think the British – and I suspect the Germans – will be a bit more literal.

**Mr G** Yea, yea. So that's certainly been my experience. The other thing, of course, that did happen, but I suspect it was more to do with the SIB, was that we actually started to take our international duties much more responsibly in terms of looking after our finance industry and looking after the interests of those who wished to invest in our finance industry.

**RR** There was a huge change ...

**Mr G** There was.

**RR** ... as a consequence of the SIB, I mean it was just completely different. I mean the impression when I came here to work full time in 1979 was that there was a lot of cowboys about ...

**Mr G** Yea.

**RR** ... and although, I mean, Pannells was thought of as being a bit 'stuffy' and they wouldn't do these things ...

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** ... and some of the firms had the reputation of being able to do anything and their successive firms are the same ...

**Mr G** Yea, yea.

**RR** ... and lawyers are the same – there are lawyers who, out there, some of these lawyers have got as much money as everyone.

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** There was that question, that, in other things too – we've got Judah Binstock and all his property deals, farmers selling out, I mean, Charlie selling – doing property deals all over the place ...

**Mr G** Yes.

**RR** ... and I didn't know, anyway, because I'd only just arrived, really at the end of it. The SIB was the catalyst that changed everything, so that when you were doing your efforts of hope stuff, the change had already – was in progress.

**Mr G** Yes, it was starting to.

**RR** I mean, there is a perfectly good point which you and *Fo Halloo* were making in

that, 'We don't like it, we don't want it!' but there's the other side of the thing that is that we can't actually do without something.

**Mr G** Yes, you've got to have something ...

**RR** And it happens to be the finance industry – it might be – we might have had some smoke-stack industry and it wouldn't have been any better. (*laughter*)

**Mr G** Yes, yea, yea.

**RR** So, you know ...

**CG** If nothing else, it's produced – your campaign produced the awareness of culture and that sort of thing.

**RR** It certainly did.

**Mr G** Well, that's what I would like to think.

**CG** I know when you – either you were just in prison or you were just coming out – I used to interview Miles Walker quite regularly for 'Mandate,' and I was alone in the Chief Minister's room, and I don't know what we'd been talking about, but he was a bit down in the dumps, you know, and I was telling him that there really was a considerable feeling of discontent out among the nation. And this seemed to be a complete surprise to him ...

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**CG** ... and he said, 'Well, you know, what should I do about it? What should we be doing about it?' and I said, 'well, one thing you could be doing is finding out what the people actually think. You know, have some sort of a consultation with them,' ...

**Mr G** Hmmm, yea.

**CG** ... so the first thing they did was invite people to write in to the Council of Ministers with their views. Well, within a fortnight they were deluged with letters and Tim Craine was in the office at that time and they couldn't cope with

it – they simply didn't have time to read it all – it was all hand written stuff, you know ...

**Mr G** Yea, yea ...

**CG** ... so that's when they hit on the idea of the *Gallop* or the *Moray* poll or whatever it was. And it was formally structured and off they went. But, I mean, the interesting thing was, that Miles had become, it seems to me, completely dislocated from – it was dealing with people like Brian Christley and the others, you see, who were telling him this that and the other ...

**Mr G** Yea.

**CG** ... but what was actually going on in the fields was, you know, a shock to him.

**Mr G** And this is always the problem with politicians, quite frankly, that, you know, we spend our lives talking to movers and shakers or to each other ...

**RR** Yes, yes, yes.

**Mr G** ... and we neglect the public.

**RR** It's inevitable that it can happen.

**Mr G** Yea – I mean, I was just talking upstairs to one of my Ministerial colleagues and said this morning, 'I've had my third half day since I was re-elected doing constituency work' – now I should be doing a half day every week, but I can barely manage half a day a month. And he said, 'Well, I haven't had any, (*laughter*) so I haven't done any constituency work at all!' And, you know, this is a big problem, we – particularly for Ministers.

**RR** This is the thing, if you are a Minister and you are in charge of a department, so when I was one of the government auditors, I used to see it from here, as I came in ...

**Mr G** Yea.

**RR** ... you would think the civil servants would do all the leg-work, and you should

be able to make sure they were doing what the policy was.

**Mr G** Yea.

**RR** You devise the policy and therefore that, in terms of time commitment, you have a bit of elbow room, and it's really ... I can see how ...

**Mr G** Yea, it's down to – it depends on the Minister and the way in which they do things. I have been trying – actually for two or three months before the election and since the election – to, once I've made the decision to leave it and hope that someone will get on and do it, but at the same time, particularly in DAFF [Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry] at the moment, we've got lots of big political changes going on, and I also believe that part of my role is to convince the farmers and the fishermen that the policy is the right policy ...

**RR** Hmmm, hmmm.

**Mr G** ... so I've got – I've been spending a lot of time doing that – which I think is the right thing to do, and we ought to have politicians leading on this sort of thing – they should be out there presenting to ...

**RR** Yes, I think that is part of your work ... getting involved, very much.

**Mr G** ... and all too often, it's been senior civil servants doing that and that's been one of the problems then, in that politically you do – or as politicians you gain certain skills and you'd like to think, anyway, you learn how to deal with people and how to convince them and coax them to do the sorts of things you want.

**RR** But on the sort of Manx – we're not talking about the language and the cultural things so much, but, I go out with my wife and they are all people she's known for ever on the Island ...

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** ... and it's a whole different world from going out with a whole lot of people who have come here to live or are working here. You know, we've said, 'Well, that was a good Manx evening.' (*laughter*)

**Mr G** Yes, yes.

**RR** And there are almost two separate lots, even now.

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** I mean, they do talk to each other, there's not anything like that, they don't mean to. It's just is that there is a feeling sometimes that, you know, you're dealing with Manx people.

**Mr G** Yes, I mean, we had the opportunity on Friday night, Annie and myself, to go out to a dinner party with people that I knew through work, and they were all from off the Island, and two of them had tenuous links with the Island, but most of them, you know, they had all been brought and lived most of their lives off the Island, and, afterwards, we both said this is really quite strange, isn't it, I mean, this is just something completely different, it's not, it's not us, really.

**RR** Although a lot of people have come to live here, when you get down to it, their families and their children seem to be assimilating.

**Mr G** Yes, yes. And the greatest thing – I mean if nothing else – if I've achieved nothing else, and I believe this is one of the things that I've been pretty strong on, if not the main person, it was getting Manx history, language and culture into the 2001 Education Act. Everybody from Mona Douglas right back to A W Moore had been trying to get culture and language and history taught in the schools. And everyone had failed. But the 2001 Act we actually finally got in a clause that required, as part of our curriculum, for these things to be taught ...

**RR** Quite right, too.

**Mr G** ... and it's brilliant! You know, we – children will be leaving school in ten years' time knowing everything about – well, considerably more than they do at the moment about their own history, and their own culture and their language. And we're also trying to draw in the – well, you know, about all this sort of scientists we've had from the Isle of Man and – basically, so that everybody is aware of what has gone on in the Isle of Man and in fact there are some quite famous and important people that have come out of the Isle of Man and in fact we've ...



**RR** Oh yea – some very important academics, have come ...

**Mr G** ... we've got something to be proud of with the Isle of Man, because, certainly when I was at school, most people, most of the children took the view that, well, you know, we are second best, our country is a small, tiny country which has never done anything significant, we should all go off to the United Kingdom, any of us that can, should go away to college, go away to university and never come back, because that's where it's all happening – it's not happening in the Isle of Man, the Isle of Man is a backwater. And I think that we are now teaching our children that in fact, no, it's not a backwater – it's different. It may not be quite so lively, there maybe not quite so much vibrancy in the Isle of Man but there are still very valid things happening here. You are quite capable of reaching the top of whatever field you wish to go into by being ...

**RR** But that, I think, is much better than it was forty years ago. Because forty years ago, people went off and never came back again.

**Mr G** Absolutely.

**RR** Because there was nothing.

**Mr G** That's right.

**RR** A few lawyers, a few accountants, a few doctors ...

**Mr G** Yea.

**RR** ... a few nurses, a few teachers ...

**Mr G** Hmm.

**RR** ... and that was it!

**Mr G** Yea, yea.

**RR** And that's one of the things – one of the things *Fo Halloo* were saying, of course, the Manx children were not getting a look in – they *were* getting a look

in. Tom Webster produced a statistic to say that 70% of the finance sector jobs – at whatever time he did it – we’ve got it in here, somewhere [rustling of paper] where actually being supplied by people in the Isle of Man.

**Mr G** Yea, yea.

**RR** So it was already happening – they weren’t getting the top jobs because they weren’t experienced enough ...

**Mr G** Yea.

**RR** ... but they are getting them now ...

**Mr G** Hmmm, hmmm.

**RR** ... and that’s – from the point of view of losing the heritage in the sense of the people, that’s been a huge improvement.

**Mr G** Yea, yea.

**RR** And even when you go back to the prosperity of the tourist industry, the tourist industry was not ...

**Mr G** Well, that’s it, I mean, the tourist industry tended to be people from outside of the Isle of Man coming in buying up the properties and making lots of money out of tourism. And the farmers were delighted to be able to sell their products to them, but ...

**RR** Well that’s right.

**Mr G** ... but effectively it was a ‘them and us’ situation.

**RR** A lot of new people were from Lancashire, Scotland and Ireland, I think.

**Mr G** Yes.

**RR** Your parents, presumably, or your grandparents came from ...

- CG** My grandparents came from here; my father was from the Wirral.
- RR** ... hmmm – came and let – if you look at the name of the boarding house owners, people you still know ...
- Mr G** Yes, yes.
- RR** ... whose family you still think of as Manx ...
- Mr G** Hmmm, hmmm.
- RR** ... actually came – or their grandfathers came and set up a boarding house.
- Mr G** Yes, yes ... I blame it all on the Steam Packet! (*laughter*)
- CG** But it's always been happening – the smuggling was the same. The smuggling was run by UK businessmen.
- Mr G** Hmmm.
- RR** Not entirely – 'cos ...
- CG** No, not entirely, but then the tourist wasn't entirely, but, you know ...
- RR** No, no.
- CG** People see an opportunity as they have done today with the finance ...
- RR** Yes.
- Mr G** Yes.
- CG** ... and provided we can relieve them of as much money as possible – well, that's the thing!
- Mr G** That's the answer, isn't it?
- RR** What I don't know about – I mean, you say that about smuggling – what I don't

know, what is difficult to – well, Sue didn't give me the information – is how many. I know there was some outsiders, and I know there was some Manx, but I – the proportions, I suspect, were more Manx than outsiders.

**Mr G** Hmmm.

**RR** But I don't know, because I don't think we have the information.

**CG** No, Frances Wilkinson will tell you.

**RR** Well, she might.

**Mr G** Is there a presentation or something?

**CG** She's launching a – some ...

**Mr G** Next Friday ...?

**CG** No – that's slave trading.

**Mr G** Slave trading – yes, I see, yea.

**CG** So what about the future, then, and ...

**Mr G** Future? Whew! (*laughter*) If I would have been asking myself that question back in the summer, and I would have looked and thought I haven't actually done anything that nobody else – you know, would have done anyway, then I don't think I would have stood again. I'd like to think not, anyway.

**RR** Hmmm, yes – the reason why people stand is always interesting.

**Mr G** Yes.

**RR** And also, from an outside point of view. I get the impression that there are a few people who stand for their own glory as much as they ask and the fusses they make are not because the fusses should be made, but because that's what they do, and that's how they like to present themselves.

**Mr G** Yes.

**RR** And that, in a way – questions can be useful, but they can also be destructive ...

**Mr G** Hmmm, hmmm.

**RR** ... and I get the impression – not so much this – this Tynwald seems somehow to be slightly better balanced. In the last Tynwald we seemed to have rather a lot of that.

**Mr G** Yes, yea – I mean, a lot depends on how you choose to lead. I mean, I think Tony [Brown] is endeavouring to be as inclusive as he possibly can.

**RR** Hmmm.

**Mr G** That's not to say that Donald [Gelling] wouldn't have been, but I think he inherited a lot.

**RR** It was a bit awkward, he was ...

**Mr G** He just had to go with what he had.

**RR** Hmmm. He didn't want to, I don't think, to upset his ...

**Mr G** No.

**RR** ... team, because ...

**Mr G** No, no.

**RR** ... he'd only got two and a half years, or whatever it was ...

**Mr G** And people had already worked themselves up, anyway, on a whole range of disastrous issues that we failed to properly manage. I feel that, in the two months, three months that we've been sitting round the Council of Minister's table with Tony, I've felt hugely more encouraged and confident than I ever did with Donald there.

- RR** You weren't one with Richard Corkill, were you?
- Mr G** No, no. Donald gave me the 'AG' [Minister of Agriculture] job in July 2005. When did Richard go – was it just before that he went?
- CG** I can't remember.
- Mr G** No, no, it was – it was the year before that Richard Corkill ...
- RR** I think, yes, because he – Donald inherited whoever it was – Houghton, was it?
- Mr G** Bill Henderson, yea.
- CG** Oh, Bill Henderson, that's right, yes.
- Mr G** And Bill, openly, was going round before he got the job, saying he was going for a vote of 'No Confidence' in Richard Corkill, and then low and behold, he was made Agriculture Minister ...
- CG** Yea.
- Mr G** ... and you think, 'That's just appalling!'
- CG** So Tony's got a firm hand on the tiller, then?
- Mr G** Yes, yes.
- RR** Excellent!
- Mr G** The worry that I've always had with Tony is that he's got too strong a – you know, you can't get his hand away from the tiller (*laughter*) at all.
- RR** But he – I remember when he was in – as I've said before to people in the Department of Local Government – he was their [unclear], which is really not what he should do.
- Mr G** Yea.

**RR** As you quite rightly say – that’s not the point of government.

**Mr G** Absolutely, and it’s difficult, sometimes, to get the balance right, but ...

**RR** Yea – he’s patently not getting on with what he should do ...

**Mr G** Yea, yea.

**RR** ... or you’re attempting to do.

**Mr G** ‘Cos there’s so many broader picture things that we should be doing as politicians that we don’t tend to do. That we have to start doing, otherwise, you know, if you just focusing in on minutia and specifics in your department rather than looking a little bit – even just looking, for example, in DAFFs point of view – looking out to DOLGE [Department of Local Government and Environment] and the DOT [Department of Transport], and finding out what they are doing and how we could be working more co-operatively – even just that level of politics, it only happens if the Ministers are being pushed for it to happen. And sometimes we get carried away with what’s going on in the department rather thinking, ‘Well, actually, let’s just pick up the phone and talk to them.’

**CG** What I found really interesting in this – talking to Jim Noakes about this – is what really was going on behind the scenes in all this period, and how the broader picture was in the minds of – certainly some of the civil servants – and the whole way the finance sector was being structured and being formed. The general public have no idea about this. They are only interested in double yellow lines ...

**Mr G** Yea.

**CG** ... and minutia ...

**Mr G** Absolutely.

**CG** ... whereas you are – you’re dealing with very big issues that affect generations to come. And I just wonder sometimes, whether it might not be helpful to try and explain some of this to the public. It’s very ...

**Mr G** It would be great if we could, and that's the big challenge of the next five years is how we actually do that, because again, I mean, I had a political surgery down at Ballabeg on Saturday and I had one person in talking about a planning issue, and another person in talking about the housing list, and somebody else in – fairly minor issues that, if they pick up the phone and talk to the civil servant they could have sorted out for themselves. And at the same time I was going through the Rumania and Bulgaria Accessions Act, which I've been asked to put through the House of Keys. And you know, that's – sadly, I'm quite excited by that sort of stuff, and trying to work out what was the principle behind the 1973 agreement, and how it all works and – but you know that's so different to most of what you're asked for. Most of the votes that you get are sorting out people's planning and housing issues.

**RR** Housing must be one of the biggest topics.

**Mr G** Yes – you're never going to get votes for – particularly agreeing to take through a Bill which allows us to recognise the Treaty of Accession of Bulgaria and Rumania, because most people will look at that and say, 'Oh, we don't want any more bloody eastern Europeans coming into the Isle of Man – we've got enough already!' Missing the point that we have a legal obligation to do this regardless of treaty or ...

**CG** In general, too, I suppose it is your job just to get on and do that and ...

**Mr G** It is, yes.

**CG** ... and people will just carry on worrying about a care home near them, or parking in Port Erin.

**Mr G** Yea.

**CG** It's a pity, though, because I've found this extremely interesting – now I've realised what strategies were being developed and, you know, how we were playing off the UK and the Channel Islands, and the real thought that was going into it, which has brought us to where we are today.

**Mr G** Yea, yea.



**CG** It's been really interesting, and I didn't really know any of this at the time, 'cos it was obscure, difficult legislation, and it was, quite frankly, boring!

**Mr G** Yes.

**CG** But it's not boring, actually, it was very interesting.

**RR** It's not at all. And I've actually known most of what people have told us. But it isn't boring, it is fascinating.

**Mr G** No, it is, I mean, it's ...

**RR** But the point that illustrates the voting, and other excuses is ...

**Mr G** And you've gone back to what we started with. As far as I was concerned, I didn't care how government raised money ...

**RR** No.

**Mr G** ... all I was bothered about was – it appeared to me that government was basically abrogating its responsibility for looking after the native community on the Isle of Man and was in fact ignoring us. And it seemed that if the finance sector said, 'Jump!' the government would say, 'How high?' And whereas that may well be something that the government should have been doing, but what they were failing to do, and this was to get the communication right, and this is why, you know ...

**RR** And do you think – I mean, the real question now is, do you think some people might pop up and start putting daubs up, and ... I mean, where have we got to?

**Mr G** I don't know, really, because – I mean, one of the things I find most frustrating is that some of the people who, who ummm ... if I ... this tape is on so I won't say [unclear], I won't say [unclear] no, you're alright ... I mean the likes of Mark Kermode who is now the Chairman of *Mec Vannin*, he never asked whether he could come out and – I mean, most people involved in the nationalist community knew that it was Greg, Chris and myself that were doing this, but nobody ever came to us and said, 'Do you fancy a hand, I could do this,' or, 'I could do the other,' and so on, 'ah well, you seem very busy, don't

want to ...' you know – job ...

**CG** Yea.

**Mr G** ... and yet, now, Mark is always criticising – he doesn't criticise any of the other Ministers, but he always criticises me in his nationalist rant in the paper Carn. He reported a drunken conversation we had at a party – a Christmas party – at which I said, 'Well, I'm not entirely sure that we're doing quite the right thing by the fishermen at the moment, but I feel that I'm being thwarted by ...' whatever the issue was. And he chose to report that in Carn. And I thought, 'Well, that bloody prat!' And, likewise, he had an attack about agriculture in the last papers emm ... that came out in January, and I just think that this is just nonsense.

**RR** He's still forty years ago, I think ...

**Mr G** Well, he's ...

**RR** ... I mean, I had him up on Manx Radio on some interview programme – I may have been a member of the panel or I may have been the chairman of it – and he was coming out with all this stuff, and he was saying how it was the fault of the finance sector – it's always the finance sector that there's so many houses, there were so many cars. I said, 'Now, now Martin, how did you get here today?' 'Well, in my car,' he said, 'but if you had your way, you wouldn't have had a car to come up here in.'

**Mr G** Hmmm, hmmm.

**RR** And it's not just new people coming in, it's not just the finance sector, it's that Manx people are more prosperous, they want better houses, the families are split up so they need more houses ...

**Mr G** It's a relative ...

**RR** ... as well as the others coming in.

**Mr G** ... western world – people are not prepared to live in their father and mother's house any more.

- RR** Look at Italy where they can't get rid of their sons! (*laughter*)
- Mr G** Yea.
- RR** Wasn't Greg, at the time, doing gardening, though, for quite wealthy people, like ...
- Mr G** Yea, he was ... yea, yea.
- CG** Yea. But, I always felt – he said, 'You're kind of obsessed by this, aren't you?' And I said, 'Well, I am, actually, Greg, you know, I'm just trying to get behind your mind, you know – how you are objecting to all this and burning the houses down, when you were still earning your living from the very people that you said shouldn't be here.' Has anybody got an answer to that? Or I mean, was that something you ever discussed?
- Mr G** Well, yea, yea.
- RR** It would be very nice to self-indulge and say we'd love to be our old community and yet have our hospital and all these other things ...
- Mr G** Oh yes, yea. I mean, we're doing anything ...
- RR** ... but it doesn't work, so what do you give up on – how do you reconcile it?
- Mr G** Yea, yea – but the thing I was going to go on and say about Mark, is, he is the biggest critic of what we are doing with the Manx language at the moment. And it's appalling, the criticism he's got. You know, he's basically, in a way, it's the same criticism that he has about the way in which government is trying to tackle all the other issues in that he's got this very purist view as to what he wants the Isle of Man to be, and anything that's even slightly off from that is wholly relevant.
- RR** He actually did say to me on that programme that he would like to go back to spuds and herrings.
- Mr G** Yea, yea.

**CG** Don't you think he's just jealous of the fact that you are hugely successful in all these things you've done – you've got the Manx school, you've done all that (*laughter*) – you have! And he has done bugger all.

**Mr G** Apart from whinge and moan.

**CG** Apart from whinge. And it puts him in a sort of superior position in his own mind that he can look down on your achievements when he himself has done nothing.

**Mr G** Yea. Well, I don't know, but all I know is that it's very, very difficult when you've got people like that who really – you know – they could do so much. I mean, *Mec Vannin* – I'm convinced that we need some kind of political movement – nationalist political movement in the Isle of Man that would help government actually go in ...

**RR** To focus government!

**CG** Focus government, yes, yes.

**Mr G** Yes, to go in a much stronger direction in terms of international dealings. Even if we didn't follow the hard line that perhaps that nationalist party would come up with, it would be so much easier to go to Whitehall or wherever it was you were going to have your discussions, saying, 'Well, look, we've got this huge political party on the Isle of Man which is saying we should be going for greater independence; we should have stronger positions on all these different issues, and it's going to be very difficult for us; and if you force us to sign up to this really hopeless deal which gives you everything and us nothing, the next thing you know, we're going to have a nationalist government which is going to move completely away from ...' but we haven't got that, all we've got is a handful of people who go down to The White House [public house in Peel] once a week, have a rant, get drunk and then write some silly nonsense in the papers. (*laughter*) And – you know ...

**CG** Reading Kit Gordon's thesis on 1765 and the Home Rule and the fall in the nineteenth century, that is exactly what they did have in their pocket when they went down there. They had the threat of a total reversal of the current situation on the Isle of Man if Whitehall didn't accede to, at that time, allowing the

customs money to come back into the Isle of Man to be spent on the harbours and stuff. Unless they did that, Tynwald would not reform itself with the Keys into a publically elected house. And you're saying the same, in a sense, that if you could show you have now 'call' on the Island ...

**Mr G** Absolutely. You desperately need a – well, I always feel, anyway, you need those sorts of issues. I mean, we – this is one of the things that we felt with FSFO, that by us being on the extreme, we could, we could give *Mec Vannin* a more main stream voice. But, of course, they blew it by, shortly after we got caught, they went into a more extreme position than we were in. (*laughter*)

**RR** That's characteristic of a nationalist party, unfortunately.

**Mr G** Well, sadly, yea, yea, yea. But, anyway, it's ...

**CG** Urban myth has it that you were actually thinning hawthorn hedges along Groudle Road and up across to the Chris Simpson estates being built there, and that was the final straw for you. Is that right? You Chris and Greg – or stone-walling ...?

**RR** That, I think, was already there, wasn't it?

**CG** Well, it was being built with its terrible mock Georgian plastic pillars and that ...

**RR** Oh, they were awful – but I think it was there before those ones that were burnt down.

**Mr G** Yea ... it could have been.

**RR** Those little – Chris's were the worst houses.

**CG** Yes, I know, but you saw those being built – all that area along Groudle Road.

**RR** Then it was going up the hill.

**Mr G** Yea, yea.

- CG** You can't remember, in any case ...
- RR** I remember – I was doing his audit at the time.
- Mr G** Yes.
- CG** I remember him being there and looking across ...
- Mr G** I know we did do some work there with the Manx Conservation Volunteers on – what's his name – Campbell's hedge ...
- CG** Yes.
- Mr G** ... so we could well have been looking across there and seeing that sort of thing ...
- RR** Chris's – I couldn't persuade him that they were awful.
- Mr G** Hmmm.
- RR** I think Kelly [unclear] was a far, far worse one.
- Mr G** Then again, he's distant ... this should be a planning thing though, shouldn't it, really?
- CG** Absolutely.
- RR** Yea.
- Mr G** How on earth we're letting some of these ...
- CG** There's no reason why not – you just need a planning permission clause, that's all.
- RR** If you go back forty years – you look at Ballooshass [sp ???], how the hell would anyone get permission?
- Mr G** Yea, yes.

- RR** But forty years ago, nobody knew.
- Mr G** Hmmm.
- RR** Hadn't got a clue. We've got another danger point – or dilemma point, is the houses that these guys were having the £100,000 cap on – where are they going to go and live? 'Cos there aren't any houses.
- Mr G** Hmmm, hmmm, yes. I can understand the Treasury Minister's reasons behind the policy ...
- RR** Yes – I can't understand it, I don't think it ...
- Mr G** ... it doesn't mean I'm actually supportive of it.
- RR** ... I don't think – I actually don't think it's a good policy, although – Chris Simpson raised it with me and I raised it with the income tax people [???] fifteen years ago – twenty years ago ...
- Mr G** Hmmm, hmmm.
- RR** ... not ... as a question, not because I thought it was a great idea, because I don't think it's a great idea. And if you are going to have it, you put it in a darn sight higher!
- Mr G** The idea, obviously is, that you need to have people that are actually owning and in charge of making real decisions about businesses living on the Isle of Man.
- RR** They'd have to come to do, but these are – a lot of these are people who are going to see people who are wealthy, conducting their businesses elsewhere.
- Mr G** Exactly – I mean, this is exactly what seems to be happening, is very wealthy retired people are looking to come to do that – and no use whatsoever to the ...
- RR** Yea, that's what I was saying – people getting on a bit, looking at death duties and things like that.

**Mr G** And it couldn't have come at a worse time for agriculture, because I'm trying to convince farmers that there is a profitable future if they'll just hang on a little bit longer, and they're seeing all this doubt and uncertainty over the next two or three years and then someone comes along with two or three million pound cheque and ...

**CG** I'm sure they'll take it, as well.

**Mr G** Yes, yea.

**CG** You'd be amused in Peel, now, *The Highwayman*, the pub which upset everyone because of its name – not being Manx, Roger, who's closely associated with the brewery tell me ...

**RR** I'm a director of the brewery – 'cos my wife's grandfather was Brearley of Heron & Brearley!

**Mr G** Right – oh, right.

**RR** I'm on the Board.

**CG** It's virtually named in honour of Dan Tynan. (*laughter*)

**Mr G** Right, well that makes a lot of sense, doesn't it?

**RR** Well, I said, 'That's a terrible name,' and John Cowley said, 'it's a dreadful name!' And they said, 'Well, it's ...' And I said, Well, if you're going to name it to Dan Tynan, make sure that on the board, there is clearly a portrait of him!

**Mr G** Yes, yes, yea.

**CG** That has a different resonance now. (*laughter*)

**Mr G** Yea, well I can see that now – yea, that works.

**RR** You can tell all your mates ...

**Mr G** Yes. No, I did wonder about that.



**RR** It's a terrible name, an appalling name ...

**Mr G** Yea, yea, indeed.

**RR** ... but pub names, you know.

**Mr G** Yea.

**CG** Anything else Roger?

**RR** No, no, that's been most helpful.

**CG** It's been very helpful.

**END OF INTERVIEW**