

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

‘TIME TO REMEMBER’

Interviewee: Mr John David Wilson ‘Jack’ Kirkpatrick
Mrs Wendy Mary Kirkpatrick

Date of birth: Mr John David Wilson ‘Jack’ Kirkpatrick: 13th January 1919
Mrs Wendy Mary Kirkpatrick: September 1933

Place of birth:

Interviewer: David Callister

Recorded by: David Callister

Date recorded: 2002

Topic(s): *Mr Kirkpatrick:*
Father’s Irish timber business
Early school days
Working for Manx Petroleums
Farming as a hobby
Driving and riding horses
First *Ferguson* tractor
Playing golf
Diversification in farming
Mrs Kirkpatrick:
Keeping horses
Ballawilleykilley farm

Jack Kirkpatrick - Mr K
Mary Kirkpatrick - Mrs K
David Callister - DC

- DC** You've got three initials, you've got, what J. D. ...
- Mr K** J. D. W., John David Wilson.
- DC** John David Wilson Kirkpatrick, born 1919.
- Mr K** That's right.
- DC** What date?
- Mr K** 13th January 1919.
- DC** And then your good lady here.
- Mrs K** Wendy Mary Kirkpatrick, now, I was born in 1933, September 1933.
- DC** Okay, well, let's start with Jack and your sort of first memories of the Isle of Man, I suppose and how you arrived here.
- Mr K** We came here, after leaving Ireland we went to, we had a rented house in Southport, and Mother and Father didn't like it very much there and they were invited to the Isle of Man for a weekend by an Irish friend, who had invited Mum and Dad and the three children and we fell in love with the place and after one weekend and we decided to come and live here, and that is 78 years ago.
- DC** Right, you father actually came and retired here, virtually.
- Mr K** That's right, he was retired and came here.
- DC** What was he doing, your father, in Ireland then?
- Mr K** He was in the timber business in Killarney, cutting down the trees round the lakes of Killarney, for four years, and he used to cut down the timber and he employed pretty well every able-bodied man in Killarney. There was about 60 horses hauling timber, and they were putting it on the trains and sending it to Cork, and they were getting it shipped across to England and that went on, even after I was born, until I was born.

DC So you'd be, what, four, when you came here?

Mr K I was four when I left Ireland and ...

DC Which school did you go to first here?

Mr K The first school I went to was Mrs Garrett's, which was up in Westmorland Road, and after that I went to the Collegiate School and I won't say, painless, but one of my best abilities was able to run, and I'm not able to run very far now, but I was quite athletic and I was there for a few years and then I went to King William's College and I was there for only a couple of years and I'm afraid I wasn't a very good student, because, my father, knowing that my father was, when it came to exam time and results and the exams used to come up and Father used to say I couldn't pass a horse and cart.

DC It hasn't really mattered to you, I don't think, has it? But your father acquired some control of Manx Petroleums, didn't he, in fact.

Mr K Yes, this is 25 years later though.

DC Oh yes, of course, after you'd been educated.

Mr K Yes, and we, that was in March 1937 he acquired control of Manx Petroleums and then I was told to come back from Liverpool, Skerries College, where I was going to go and be a vet.

DC Oh, you were going to be a vet?

Mr K Yes, I was within a day of going to Edinburgh University and Dad sent me word, sent me a telegram and told me come home and do some work, so I was in – so I had a job and my brother had a job in Manx Petroleums and we've been doing that ever since.

DC How many competitors did Manx Petroleums have at that time then?

Mr K Well, they had three competitors, and they weren't the smallest oil companies in the world, one was Shell, the other one was Esso and the other one was BP.

DC So you'd all be fighting for the business then.

Mr K Oh, fighting for the bit of business there was and the amount of business there was would just about fill two wagons today.

DC Really, yes, yes.

Mr K But they dropped out, BP used to be on the Tongue, and they had amalgamated with Shell during that time, and they dropped out of the Isle of Man, there wasn't enough business here, and then Esso were having problems with getting fuel in because they were in – they could only get a tanker in when the tide was in and the tanker could only discharge when it was floating, but we had the advantage – Shell were the same – but we had the depot down at the Battery Pier where the tanker could come in and could discharge when it got there and be gone again within a few hours because it was in deep water all the time.

DC Now, we're talking here about the 1930s, there'd hardly be many cars around the Island, would there?

Mr K No, you could go from here to Douglas in five minutes, because it was a nice clear run right through, yes, but not now. And they didn't dig the roads up as much in those days.

DC Did you, what sort of vehicles did you have to deliver the stuff, how was it actually delivered?

Mr K We had four *Bedfords* and then we bought a very nice smart new *Dodge* from the Mayor of Douglas, Fletcher Quayle, who was the mayor of Douglas at the time.

DC Were these container lorries then?

Mr K Yes, but little tanks, bolted onto the floorboards, and the smallest one was 250 gallons and the biggest one was 500 gallons, but now it's very different, it's, how many gallons, an awful lot more anyway.

DC Thousands of gallons.

- Mr K** The whole fleet wouldn't fill one wagon today.
- DC** The pumps, I mean you must have had pumps to deliver this stuff, did you?
- Mr K** Yes, we delivered it to pumps and we put pumps up, we had ...
- DC** Who would have put the pumps in position?
- Mr K** Well, I had a year of punishment, we'll call it, if you like, I'd had a little bit of a 'whoopsie' on Douglas Promenade with a horse tram and I lost my licence for twelve months, so I dug holes with a pick and shovel for twelve months, I could dig through solid rock in one case, at Santon Smithy, I remember it very well, the blacksmith was there helping me, and a fellow called Billy White, who was a wonderful chap, and we hit solid rock 9 inches down, and we had to go 7 foot to put the tank in. But I had some muscles in my arms in those days, and the blacksmith used to give us some hand, all he did was sharpen the picks.
- DC** So you went through the rock just with picks, in those days, did you?
- Mr K** That's right, and there was no compressors and there was no hydraulics.
- DC** How much would one of those tanks hold in those old pumps then?
- Mr K** Well, the big one was 500 gallons.
- DC** Well, that would last them quite a long time in fact before it needed refills.
- Mr K** Yes, we had to put two in there and it took some digging, I can tell you, but we put a few others round the Island at various places and we put some at pubs, which didn't turn out to be a success for the simple reason that the publican, we should have seen this before, I know, but the publican couldn't leave the bar to go and serve the petrol, so it was, those pumps were a waste of time. We put quite a few in the various places, Sulby and Laxey and Crosby pub had pumps.
- DC** Can you remember how much you'd have paid for a gallon of petrol at a pump when you first started, then?
- Mr K** Yes, it was 1/6d. That was considered very dear, too, at that time. But when you

consider that ninepence of it was tax.

DC Oh, yes, there was tax at that stage as well.

Mr K Tax on the fuel in those days, it was ninepence a gallon, I think. And it was 1/6d when I sold – we used to fill a lot of tins, and the opposition didn't do tins but we did a lot of tins of petrol. We used to fill a few hundred tins every morning, with a little machine, where you pulled a plunger and you filled two tins, put two gallons in, you lifted the plunger up and put another two gallons in and then you had to screw the caps on, and we did hundreds of these tins every day, and it was big business for us at the time. And the little lorries that had the paraffin tanks on them had space round about them on floorboards, on the lathes, and they used to go out with 20 or 30 tins on them and sell paraffin and petrol all round the Island, north, south, east and west.

DC What happened when you got a very big order, for instance, what would happen then?

Mr K Yes, we once got very big order, an important one, to us anyway, it was for up to 3000 gallons of oil to be put into a ship, a German ship, in Peel and we said, the order was we could send down up to 3000 gallons so long as we got it there before the tide changed, because they had to get the tank dried. But I got into a bit of trouble over this because I – we had just taken delivery of a lovely new wagon, from Fletcher Quayle, of the Brown Bobby, and I don't think all the paper work was quite complete, I certainly didn't have a heavy goods licence, but I took the wagon out and I started running fuel at the rate of 550 gallons a time, down to Peel, and I'm going through Crosby and I looked in my mirror and I thought I saw a police car. And the police had just got one little car, a little *Ford*, and you can imagine how it – it took it all it could do to carry the two big policemen that was in it, but anyway I looked in my mirror when I got past *The Highlander* and I didn't see it again, so I said, 'Oh, it mustn't have been the police car at all.' So I get to Peel and I'm connected up to the ship and lo and behold a little black car come tootling down the quay, with two big policemen in it and they said, what was I doing and how fast did I think I was going when I was doing – I said, 'I'm in an awful hurry, you know, excuse me, I must get on with the job,' and I was – carried on, kept talking to them, and they found out that I hadn't got a heavy goods licence and I don't think the lorry was insured, but they let me finish the job and I went back to Douglas and got another load.

That was in the good old days, things are very different today. ‘You were going quite fast,’ they said, ‘because we were coming through Crosby at 60 and you were getting away from us.’ So that was another thing, I got a summons about a fortnight later, and I think there was thirteen things on that summons that I had to answer, and I had to – got notice to appear in court in front of Mr Roy Eason, who most of you will remember, a wonderful little man, and I had to appear before him on a Friday. But a very exciting thing happened on the Wednesday, the Territorials got called up and I was in the advance party of the Territorials and I was gone on the Wednesday and I couldn’t be here to attend the court on the Friday, so that was one thing in my life that I have got away with.

DC Did you ever talk to Roy Eason about it later?

Mr K Yes, after the war I told him all about it and he said, ‘By gum, Jack,’ he said, ‘if I’d have got you I’d have put you in gaol for that,’ he said.

DC Well, let’s bring Mrs Kirkpatrick in here now, and I gather you married Jack in what, 1954.

Mrs K Yes.

DC And you were going – did you know then you were going to be a farmer’s wife?

Mrs K Oh, no, not at all, not at all, but I was always interested in the country, you know, I kept horses even then and I’d always helped on farms. We used to help Robert Moore at Port-e-chee, you know, because we kept the horses down there and we were always working on his farm, helping with the harvest and that sort of thing, you know.

DC Well, we’re talking about *Ballawilleykilley*, aren’t we, here, a strange name, really, isn’t it?

Mrs K Yes, it is ... there are different things ... if you look in Kneen’s Place Names, the book, they give two sort of versions of it, because *Ballakilley* can be the old farm, but it could also be the home of Willie Killey because there was a Willie Killey and Philip Killey, you know, so we think really – it used to be called *Ballayemmey* [sp ???] *Beg*, before it was *Ballawilleykilley*, and Eyreton, next door, was *Ballayemmey*, you know, where Bobby Fargher was.

DC Oh, yes, *Ballayemmey*, really.

Mrs K And this was *Ballayemmey Beg*, so we think it was renamed *Ballawilleykilley* when the Killeys were in it.

DC You showed me some photographs, in fact, of the farm house, but that house has now gone, the old house.

Mrs K Yes, it has, unfortunately. We struggled with it for years, we had a super chap called Bill Clague, who worked for us, reared all his family here, and they lived in it and we spent a lot of money on it, you know, keeping the damp out, blocking off chimneys and putting air vents in and that sort of thing, you know, but when John was getting married, our eldest boy, we thought, oh, we've struggled with it long enough, you know, and it was not modern in any way, you know, so we knocked it down and built a more modern house.

DC Right, well, we've jumped ahead a little bit there, but Jack, what made you decide to buy a farm and become a farmer then?

Mr K I'd always been interested in farming and I'd spent so many years in the Isle of Man going round the farms, I knew every farm in the Isle of Man, I can claim, there might have one or two I couldn't find, but I knew pretty well every farmer in the Isle of Man and I always enjoyed going to them to sell them oil and maybe get paid for it, and one thing and another, and ...

Mrs K You went to the mart every week, if you could, in those days.

Mr K I went to the mart every week and collected orders there, and then the farm came up for sale. We lived next to the church down on the main road and the farm came up for sale and I had talked to my very good friend, Mike Godfrey, who was farming *Ellerslie*, he was a very good farmer and I thought I couldn't do better than ask his advice, and I'd wanted to have a farm as a hobby and luckily I was in the position to be able to have it as a hobby, and Mike Godfrey said, 'Yes, go ahead and buy it,' he said, 'you won't make any mistakes, you'll be all right,' he said, 'I'll help you out if you get into any – do anything wrong,' and I remember I bought it and I rang my mother in Douglas and told her I'd bought it and she said, 'well, I'm not a bit surprised because you've wanted that for as long as I can remember,' she said.

DC Did you have any misgivings at all?

Mrs K Oh, no, not at all, no, I was delighted, you know, as I say I was in the 'Jane Crookall' at the time, just having had our second child, Jack came in in great excitement. But Jack used to buy cattle, before we owned the farm, when he used to go to the mart regularly, he used to buy cattle and then put them on rented land, usually up in Ballaugh Glen, funnily enough, Billy Keenan, his name was, and he – so he was buying and selling cattle and he developed quite a good eye for buying cattle, you know.

DC Oh, right, right. What stock was on the farm when you bought it, did it come with stock?

Mrs K No, it didn't come with stock, no.

DC So you had to start from scratch really.

Mrs K We started from scratch, with a small dairy herd.

DC What did you get first, a few hens, was it?

Mrs K Yes, yes, we had a few barn door fowlers, they said, and you know when I hear of people saying about free range eggs, when I used to see what these hens ate, you know, I don't think I wanted free range eggs, you know.

DC So what did you go for first, Jack, cattle was it?

Mr K Yes, I bought, went to Johnny Cleland, who was a very famous dairy farmer, most people know of Johnny Cleland, he and I went away and we took a few trips over to England and bought a couple here and a couple there, and I built up what is now a very small herd of 25 Friesian cows, which I was very proud of and they were beautiful animals, they were very different in shape to the present day Friesian but to me they were nicer animals.

DC Were these dairy cows?

Mr K Dairy cattle.

- DC** So who did the milking in those days?
- Mr K** Bill did the milking, we built a little milking parlour and three cows at a time came in and walked through and walked out again and that was all, very modern. There was a few milking parlours about but not many.
- Mrs K** This was Bill Clague, which Jack mentioned, came to work for us and lived in the farmhouse and ran the place, he was a brilliant man, wonderful stockman. And this parlour that Jack was talking about, we do laugh, we had what they called in those days, in-churn cooling. So we had water running down over the outside of the cans, you know, and everything revolving ...
- DC** I remember that.
- Mrs K** And when you think back now it took an hour and a half to milk these twenty odd cows, you know.
- DC** Who took the milk then?
- Mrs K** Oh, we used to put it down to the road in cans, 10 gallon cans.
- DC** Oh, yes, so it got to the dairy then.
- Mrs K** And we had a milk stand, we ran it down to the main road and then the dairy lorry picked it up. But it was all handled in cans then there was no bulk delivery or anything, you know.
- DC** You never saw any Foot and Mouth or anything like that in your time, did you?
- Mr K** Yes, I did.
- Mrs K** Brucellosis, we did, didn't we?
- Mr K** Yes, and we had a very, what was it, where we had to fly – we were bringing Charolais in, I got into the Charolais business with Lord Rosehill and myself, yes, and we brought Charolais to the Isle of Man and it was to the disgust of one or two people, we flew some in from the ...

Mrs K Quarantine station.

Mr K ... from the quarantine station in England and we put them in a lorry to take them to the airport and that lorry had never – was brand new, it had never had an animal of any sort in it, and put them out of that lorry into an aeroplane and flew them over the foot and mouth and landed them at Ronaldsway. We had the permit to do it but there was a few people very cross that we got the permit. Anyway everything went off well and we started off in Charolais business and that created a lot of fun for Wendy and myself. We went away many a year to the Charolais convention in New Zealand, we sent bulls to New Zealand and went to Canada, there were some of our heifers in Canada, and I sold an animal to Texas and when I did that I reckoned I'd reached the top.

DC Tell me about that, how did that happen?

Mr K Well, I sold – this man came from America, came over and bought this heifer of mine and I'll tell a little story about selling it to him. At that time prices were very different to what they are today, but I sold that heifer to Mr Gill and he had to ship it back to Texas.

DC How did they get it to Texas then?

Mr K He got it there by boat, I would think.

DC That would be a lengthy journey, wouldn't it?

Mrs K I'm not sure.

Mr K It was, and it would be expensive. And I made the headlines by getting £7000 for that animal.

DC What was so good about this heifer then?

Mr K Oh, it was a bonny heifer, because we went out to have a look at his cattle and it was the best one in his herd, and that's a boast, if you like.

Mrs K Their value, really, was in their rarity, at that time, because there were very few allowed into the country and they were not allowed to import into America from

France, so they had to be born in England if they were going to buy them, so, you know, in Britain.

DC So this was a Charolais heifer, would he have a Charolais bull in America?

Mr K They had Charolais bulls out there, but the good story that I tell about it was my good friend, and neighbour, Henry Quayle, said to me after it had made the headlines, that I'd sold it for £7000, Henry stopped me and, 'Jack,' he said, 'how did you arrive at a figure of £7000?' So I told Henry what I'd paid for them in the first place, I said, 'I'd bought six calves and it cost me £1000 each, so that was £6000, so I wanted to show a profit on the job, so I sold that one for £7000.'

DC Did you find any snags with farming life then?

Mrs K Well, we were very fortunate that we weren't doing the farming physically, very much, I mean we helped, obviously when there were busy times, and we helped, you know, hay, harvest, all these sort of things ...

DC Oh, so you did a bit cropping as well.

Mrs K Oh, yes, yes, in those days everybody did mixed farming. We had a small flock of Clun Forest sheep and we had the small dairy herd and we had these suckler cows, the Charolais suckler cows.

DC But farming is, no matter what scale it's on, it's a full time job, isn't it?

Mrs K Oh, yes, and very much so and I mean talking about Bill being such a stockman, if we had a cow, for instance, due to calve, he would never take his clothes off until that cow had calved. He'd lie on the sofa in front of the fire, and he'd get up every couple of hours in the night and go out and have a look at the cow, you know, and that's just the way good stockmen work, you know.

DC But your favourite would be the horses, would it?

Mrs K Oh, yes, yes, in those days I was just riding, but now I drive all the time, you know. I used to drive then but riding more.

DC When I drive up past *Ballawilleykilley*, go up the lane here, where there's a lot of new development over on the far side, but here, as you come up to the farm lane, there's a little, what I take to have been an old mill, and I thought that had been converted into a dwelling, but it isn't, in fact, is it?

Mrs K No, it isn't, it's my stables, but funnily enough when you were saying about it looking like a dwelling, we did have the electricity board fellow came here one day and sort of said, 'Who lives in the house down the road?' you know.

DC Only the horses.

Mrs K Only the horses, yes.

DC And they don't use much electricity.

Mrs K That's right. No, when we bought the place, that mill was gutted, you know, I mean the walls were ...

DC Was there a wheel there still?

Mrs K The roof was on it, no, the wheel wasn't there, unfortunately. Alec Quayle, who used to paint, as you remember, he did a little pen and ink sketch of the place, with the wheel on it, in imagination, you know, and it must have been beautiful and we keep looking out, if we found a wheel the right size, we'd try and put one back on it again, just for fun, you know, to have it going round, not doing anything, yes.

DC And it's just, really there's only a sort of fairly shallow stream running through it, isn't it?

Mrs K Oh, well, the mill, this, if you look in our garden here, you'll see a little stream, that was the mill stream, that was the mill race, and that's what fed the water wheel and in a field, up above the farm, there is a sort of dam, it's all sort of got willow bushes and things in it now but that's where that stream came from.

DC So there was a dam to give it more, to give it a decent race.

Mrs K Yes, it fed the wheel, that's right, yes.

- DC** So what have you got there now, you've got some horses, have you?
- Mrs K** Yes, we've got Norwegian Fiord ponies.
- DC** Oh, what are they?
- Mrs K** The Viking ponies.
- DC** Oh right.
- Mrs K** The Viking ponies and I've had those since 1975, we used to keep our own stallion and the ones I'm driving now are ones that we've bred and I sometimes wonder when the Vikings came here if they ever brought the ponies with them, because they used to, they used to carry them in their boats, they used to truss their legs together and roll them onto the boat, you know, and then when they got to where they were going they rolled them off again and – yes.
- DC** Oh, so there won't be many people driving with ponies round this area now, will there?
- Mrs K** Well, it's surprising, it's taking up, actually, we've got more ...
- DC** Is it?
- Mrs K** Yes, our driving club has more members than it did.
- DC** Do you go up country or do you go down on the main road?
- Mrs K** Oh, well, we have to use the main road to get anywhere really, touch wood, my ponies are very good in traffic, but we try not to use the main road more than we have to because it causes a bit of chaos with the traffic, you know.
- DC** Right. Do you go riding as well, Jack?
- Mr K** No, I used to ride, I was a bit of a cowboy, but I used to enjoy riding.
- DC** So you'd go round the farm on horseback, would you?

- Mr K** No, no, but when we got married I had a horse, at that time, didn't I?
- Mrs K** Yes, you used to ride. That's, I suppose, how we met really, before we were married, you know, we used to ride together.
- DC** While you were doing this farming and selling cows to Texas and all that, were you still running the business as well?
- Mr K** Yes, I was still in Manx Petroleums.
- DC** So you were a gentleman farmer, were you?
- Mr K** Yes, that's right, a hobby farmer, that's what they call me, I think, yes. But I enjoyed every minute of it and Bill Clague was with me for 25 years and I think it's a lovely claim to make, we never had a cross word in 25 years.
- DC** No, no. It's surprising in a way that there haven't been people trying to develop around this side of the village.
- Mr K** Oh, well, I've stopped that.
- DC** Have you?
- Mr K** They've got to come to me first.
- DC** Oh, right.
- Mrs K** I think everybody knows that we wouldn't want development on this side, you know, and we're very fortunate that we've got a big band of very big trees on the east side of here, between us and where they have developed.
- DC** There's a great deal of development down there.
- Mrs K** So we really don't see anything, yes.
- DC** Well, now you're settled in sort of happy retirement here in your own purpose built home, I should think this, is it?

Mrs K Yes, yes, in 1961.

Mr K Yes, George McCormick built it for us, how many, 40 years ago?

Mrs K 1961, yes, 1961 it was.

Mr K 1961, George McCormick, I remember there was hardly a house getting built in the Isle of Man at the time, and we got an estimate, estimates from five different builders and three of those estimates were within £25, and George McCormick got the job. I think he was £10 cheaper than the next one.

Mrs K By the time we finished building it the boom had started, that was just about when the building started here, and I think, if we'd have started a year later we'd probably have had a job to find a builder to do it.

DC Right, yes, yes, so what year was that you say?

Mrs K 1961.

DC '61, right, yes.

Mrs K Yes, and that's when, you know, the builders were really at their lowest ebb, if you like, they were all looking for work.

DC That's right. What about farm machinery, what did you have, did you go in for tractors and so on?

Mr K Yes, I remember, my mother bought me my first tractor, after I'd told her I'd bought the farm, she bought me my first *Ferguson* tractor ...

DC A little grey *Ferguson*, was it?

Mrs K A little grey *Fergy*.

Mr K ... as a present and ...

DC Have you still got it?

Mr K No, I'm afraid we haven't, but we've had a few tractors since and my son, John, got, oh, they're bigger things today, but I did, I bought machinery. I remember getting a baler, a hay baler from Mike Godfrey, a Welger baler with a big heavy machine, and I don't know, I don't think there was many people made hay in 24 hours, and one year we had the weather and we made a field of hay up on the tops in 24 hours, we made it one day and we baled it the next evening.

DC Really?

Mr K And I drove this *Fergy* tractor with this big heavy baler on the back, down this slope on the tops and Bill Clague told me, he said, 'I don't think you'd better do any more, boss,' he says. Every time I came down the hill the baler passed me and spun me round like a top.

DC Really?

Mr K But I tried it three times but I had to give up in the end, but we made hay in 24 hours, that was the only time it's ever happened.

DC What's the land quality like here, soil quality?

Mr K We haven't got the best land in the Isle of Man by any means, it's heavy and its stony, but it was in the position, why I bought it was, it was – I lived on the main road down here in a bungalow, and it was round me, in fact my bungalow was built on the land from this farm, and it was, we didn't have to move the house after buying the farm. It was only when the third child started to arrive we thought that we'd better have a house instead of a bungalow, so we built the house we're in today.

DC Now you also found time to play golf, I know your brother was famous as a golfer, but you played a bit yourself, didn't you?

Mr K Yes, I, yes, I don't know why, I never won the Manx Championship, I was in the final once, in the semi-final twice, and I never seemed to just have the luck to win it. The best I did was when I was beaten by Harold Cain up at *Howstrake*, and I did play golf, but I found after buying the farm and I had a wife and three children, not that I was very good with the children, but I didn't have a lot of spare time, because I had to sell oil in between times.

DC Well, if you were taking a round of golf today, which course would you prefer to play on?

Mr K I would prefer Castletown, I think, yes, but we used to enjoy, we used to have some wonderful competitions down at Ramsey, I've had my name on a few of the cups down there and had some wonderful days out down in Ramsey.

DC Well, farming has changed a great deal now, I mean farming isn't anything like what it was when you started, was it?

Mrs K No, it isn't. I mean I suppose we reminisce because of the age we are, you know, but some things have improved, I mean conditions have improved a great deal for farm workers, but it's still a seven day week, you know, if you've got stock you're working seven days a week, yes. And our son, unfortunately, has back problems, and he does mostly contracting now. He grows corn and we've got sheep on the place, and grazing, you know.

DC Well the kennels are up there still, are they?

Mrs K Yes, the kennels are going strong, yes.

DC So what about the Christmas trees, are they still growing?

Mrs K Yes, yes, doing very well.

DC Diversification?

Mrs K Well, this is what they keep telling us to do, isn't it, yes. The Christmas trees, and they're lovely to see on the place too, you know.

DC Yes, that's right.

Mrs K We have to keep planting up, they re-plant every couple of years, they plant another patch, you know, so that they, its on-going. The first lot that we grew, now that was cleared this year and has been re-planted, so we're now back to the beginning.

DC Yes, so you're not short of a Christmas tree, you're not short of a bit of petrol

either then.

Mr K No.

DC Would you change anything if you were starting again?

Mr K No, I wouldn't change anything, I think I've just had my 83rd birthday and 48 years of marriage, and we've just been celebrating, I'm sorry, it's a pity I wasn't in a bit better health to celebrate, but I have to celebrate rather quietly now, but I wouldn't change anything, I think I've had 83 wonderful years.

END OF INTERVIEW