INTERVIEW WITH JOSLIN EATTS
3 June 2000
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Timecode refers to tape 07_BC_DV
Topics in Bold

So this is Camera Tape 7, it's 3 June, we're with Joslin Eatts in her home in Leo Street in Mt Isa, and this is part way through DAT Tape 3.

TC from Tape 07_BC_DV

R Alice Duncan Kemp. No, better not. The family might sue me. They wouldn't believe that but I'm sure.

I Well, what I imagined that this documentary is going to end up doing is having different versions of history and putting them next to each other and, have you ever seen a film called Rashomon It's a Japanese film, 30 years, 40 years old now.

R No, I don't think so. I've heard of it though.

I In Rashomon you get all these different views of history, or of a story, and you never really know precisely which one …

R Which is the right one, yeah.

I … which is the right one.

R Yeah, that's good. We need a little mystery.

I So your grandfather was Harry McCabe.

R No, my father was Harry McCabe.

I Your father, I beg your pardon.

R His name was Henry actually, Henry McCabe but, of course, everyone called him Harry.

I And you spoke about, then, your great-grandfather who was the Irish shearer?

R **Race Relations – Inter sex**

00:03:21:03 Yeah. Ah, well my grandfather was Mick McCabe and my great-grandfather was the Irishman Jack McCabe. And he, of course, had a wife and she was an Aboriginal lady. She was a Kurrawalli and her name was Dangri but he called her Jenny Lyn, which was a pure Irish name. They had five children and my grandfather was one of them. The rest, I can't tell you too much of their lives, I only know bits of their lives because grandfather never told us much at all and my Dad never told us much of the back history either. Most of Dad's stories from … was culture stuff, and where the old people were buried, he always told us that so we could find them and look after them, which is what I'm doing now.

00:04:17:12 But old Jack McCabe, I've found out quite a bit about him actually and, as I said, when he went to join the Shearers' Strike, he left her at a station on the Diamantina and she worked there while he went and did his thing with the shearers and he, as I said before, he went to war with an option of fighting in the front and he survived that and came back. When he came back, she was gone. The Native Affairs had taken her to a Mission called Taroom and she died there. So I've never been able to go up to Taroom and have a look for her grave but I've got some documented evidence so nothing much I can do there.

I Where is Taroom?

R 00:05:09:10 And Jack McCabe, apparently when he came back from Diamantina Gates, after he found out she was gone, he died along the side of the road and his grave is still out there, which I'm looking for. I found it years ago and took a photo of it but the photo must be misplaced but the grave is there because my father and I used to often visit it. So he's there somewhere, but I will find him, and that's part of their life, I guess, and they just stayed in the area. They never left it until mid-forties after the Kidman birthday party in Adelaide which my grandfather participated. He's also in the Kidman Collection in Longreach in the Stockman Hall of Fame. There's one big photograph, my grandad on a horse there, and that's it. He died in

Winton. He was about 70 and so he lived, he's buried not far from Alice Duncan Kemp actually. So they were friends at one time.

I So you grew up knowing much more about the Aboriginal side of your family than about the Irish one?

R Yes. Yeah. We knew he was there but my Dad never spoke much about him, probably because he didn't know him. He would have died about, I'm just trying to think of the date on that tombstone. It was in the twenties, I think, 1920, because he came back from the war in 1915.

I When one reads a bit of the history, clearly, like sexual relationships between Aboriginal women and white men were going on all over Western Queensland.

R **Race Relations – Inter sex**

Yeah, that's right, they were. Well at the time when I did research on him, I just naturally assumed he was just one of those that just raped the women or lived with a woman and had their children and just took off. But he didn't. They had five children and anyone with five kids with two nationalities, it's for a reason. There had to be a deep affection there anyway. So it wasn't just one of those things. Not like the rest of them. They were out there for what they could get because there was only, in the early days there was no white women at all.

I I think there was something like one white woman for every nine white men.

R Mmmm. That's right, yeah. That's right.

I Have you ever read Tom Coles'

R Yes, I have.

I Well you know somewhere in there there's like a sentence that says 'We liked some station or other because the lubras were easy'.

R That's right.

I And it's like a sentence like that has a whole …

R 00:08:07:16 Yes, well he's got Aboriginal descendants also. I mean, just about every one of them have. Costello has too. I'm not sure about Durack. I don't think so but I think one of his sons was involved with raping the women out there. So Dad reckons, and he would have known because he would have got the stories from the old people see, and that's how Aboriginal stories survive because they were passed down. But then there's nothing written so it's our word against theirs, but I believe him.

I Do you think that Aboriginal people, like your name being McCabe, that it was mostly, and I'm thinking, say, of Ruby De Satge, that mostly took the name of the white father only when there was a kind of a relationship of substance as opposed to one …?

R 00:09:01:04 Mostly, yes. Throughout the history that I've researched, I've found that that's quite true. That that was Aboriginal principle. They had very deep morals and principles, even though they were used and abused but that was something that they hung onto and I think spiritually, I think it was a way of telling their story too, on the other side of the tracks. Like the European side or the Irish, or whatever they were. Scottish or whatever. It was a way of leaving something behind, was a name. And, of course, the white people today don't pick that up. I mean, there's stacks and stacks of names around and you've only got to look at them. It's like Watson out there and Currawilla, you know, and Moses. He's throughout Alice Duncan Kemp's books. He was her leading man. Well, and Mary Ann. Watson was her father. He was a white bloke and he had the connections with Costello. But Moses was a full-blood and they sort of looked after him. He was respected but he was a different sort of a man, I guess, and there was conflict and Dad didn't know … yeah, I think Dad did know Moses because he didn't die till 1952. Moses was a very old man when he passed on. I haven't been able to find his grave, but I will.

And we were never told much about the white side. Mostly the black side. At that time you didn't. They didn't. The same as we weren't taught

language either, because we could have been sent to missions too. So I probably spoke it when I was a little kid but that's about it.

I So going back, then, to your story, Joslin. So you were born in Winton.

R In Winton, yeah.

I But your parents, do you know exactly … you said you got put into the saddle bag as a tiny baby …

R Oh, yeah, then we went back to the Channel Country.

I Where abouts in the Channel Country?

R 00:11:12:20 Oh, anywhere. Dad used to just, you know, there was camps all over the place and there's still yards out there today, still called McCabe Yards, that my grandfather and my Dad and my uncles all built.

I Where are McCabe Yards?

R Ah, they're all over the country out there. We've got McCabe Bores, McCabe Yards, Springvale, lots of areas. Monkira we've got McCabe Bore down there. So there's, you know, looking at a map today … I'm not sure if they're still there but I think they are. Maybe not the yards but most of the older people, even the white people from around that area, they all knew about the McCabe family, so we're all pretty well known.

I So Joslin, your Dad was a fencer, was his …

R Well, when he …

I … was his skill, but he sold?

R 00:12:00:20 No. When they got out from under the Act in 1927, they were free to do what they wanted to do so they went into contract work. Contract mustering, contract fixing up yards and oh, all sorts of different odd pieces of work that they did, as well as working on the station too. But they had their freedom and the whole three of them, all my uncles and my grandfather, were all given exemptions in 1927, which means they were free.

I And you got exemptions under the Act …

R Under the Act, yeah.

I … if your labour was defined as being vital to whites?

R **Race Relations – Kidman**

00:12:42:20 Yes. Yes. Yes. So they stayed there and I think they were paid a small wage but Milson and the rest of them out there still didn't give them what they should have got. So even though … the Milson family is mostly the people that my family grew up with on Springvale Station and Dad always spoke highly of them. So if there was anything bad happened, he never ever said so. But it must have been very rare if something didn't happen. And the rest of them, like the Shaws on Diamantina Gates and, of course, Kidman. Well, he was Number One out there because he did pay the Aboriginal people. The only one that ever paid them.

I Oh really?

R Yes. He didn't care whether they were under the Act or not. Mmmm, the only one. And that's probably why he was, today still …

I He was hated by the white fellas.

R 00:13:39:00 Oh, hated by them, yes. Definitely. And Laura Duncan, too, Alice's mother, was the same too. They were slightly outcasted too because of the same thing. They protected the Aboriginal people around the late 1800s when the Welfare Act came down and it was slapped on every one of them regardless, and then, of course, Meston went out there and did his first report. But they protected them. There was a few stations out there that did protect them. They kept their … Milson was one of them, probably for work, my guess is, but then again, he may have had a heart too.

I Now as I understand the system, and it's complicated, so I don't understand it fully, but as I understand it, yeah, from the late nineteenth century

Aboriginal people were supposed to get some payment but most of it went to the Protectors and lots of it never got through.

R Yeah. That's right. Never got through because they used it for clothing. So if a dark person went in there and they wanted a dress for the women or boots or a hat or something for the children or something for the men, you know, stockman clothes and stuff like that, that was all put down as …

I Against their wages.

R 00:14:58:00Yeah, against their wages, so by the time payday came there weren't much around. Much left. And, of course, during the fifties all the books seemed to have disappeared. Round about the fifties. And, of course, Boulia was the main protective office. That's where Ross was the very first one – Dr Roth – and then the next one was George Woods and it was sort of run by the pastoralists really.

I George Woods was the one that took all the …

R He was the photographer.

I Photographer. And we're going to see his photos?

R 00:15:29:20 Yeah, yeah. Well I've got every one of them because they're all my ancestors. And he did probably, he wasn't much of a man either. He was just like the rest of them but only one thing that stands him out above them all, in my eyes, is he took those photographs. He left us something unbeknown, you know. I haven't heard anything much good about him anyway and a lot of the old people just say 'Oh, he was alright', you know. He used to ride around on a camel. He wasn't odd, I don't think, but anyway he married and he stayed in Boulia most of his life.

I By odd do you mean homosexual?

R 00:16:09:08 Ah, no he wasn't a homo. No. He had a wife and I think, in Boulia, so he spent most of his life there, and he died there and is still buried there. But, as I said, I haven't heard nothing. He wasn't a cruel man, Dad

said, but he did take all those photos and he only took the photos of the Channel Country and Boulia. And they're all my people. And that's the best thing that that man could have left me. It's more than a million dollars. Because he's left me something. He's left us something, our families. And one of the photos, my Dad's in one of them. And that's just absolutely wonderful. And, of course, Bogey, Alice Duncan Kemp writes about him also, well he left a couple of them and I've got another one and Dad took photos. When he was a young boy he was mad on photography.

I Your father?

R 00:17:09:08 Oh yeah. He loved it. And Milson bought him this camera and he used to take all these photos of Aboriginal people. Now when my father died, I looked everywhere for them. I couldn't find those photos and I knew he had them. So I took a run down to Sydney to chase the family up and he had them down there.

I Who did?

R One of the Milsons.

R 00:17:58:05 Yeah. Springvale Station is between Boulia and Winton. Or Boulia and the Diamantina.

I So near Diamantina Lake?

R 00:18:05:10 Yes, it's about 20-odd k's away anyway. Well they were the two stations, they're the two major stations in that particular area. The Springvale where all my family were born there, on my Dad's side, except my great-grandmother's. They were born down below Murrubri. That's all their country down there. And that's the Kurrawalli lot. And Diamantina Lakes, well I've got a lot of family there too, but it was a government-owned station in the early times, after the Shaws had it for over 20 years, and McCartney, of course, had a share in it and they were very wealthy people. McIlwraith was involved with a lot of it too.

I Janet Holmes à Court

R 00:18:49:12 Oh, they bought that after the Milsons sold out, yeah, they bought it round about the eighties, I think. And then, of course, it was gazetted into a National Park and so is Springvale Station now, and then I lodged a Land Claim over the lot of it so we can get some of our, well get it all back, not some.

I So I want to talk about the Land Claim stuff. Can we come …?

R Yep.

I So just talking a bit more about your childhood.

R Oh, my childhood. Yes, okay, well, as I said, my Mum and Dad busted up and Mum took my other …

I How old were you?

R 00:19:28:10 I was about, Janet was a baby. I'll just try and think. About 1945-46 I think Mum and Dad busted up and she took the other children and I stayed with Dad and they were always fighting over us for quite a number of years. Dad would come and pick the kids up and we'd all be together for only briefly, then Mum would come and take the others back and I was always left with Dad and I used to often wonder why, you know, maybe they didn't want me or maybe I was a rotten kid, or maybe, I don't know what it was. But anyway …

I Was it maybe that you and your Dad were especially close?

R **Father/Daugher**

00:20:12:09 I think so. Probably because I think I've spent just about my entire life with him, up until he died. And probably, even after I got married, it still was the same. Probably why I divorced my husband. Because I wouldn't leave my father. So that's probably it. But anyway, Mum ended up in Ingham, up that way with the children, the other two brothers and a sister, and she came and got me. I remember I was about 11, yeah about 11. She came and got me and took me up there and I didn't want to go. I didn't want to stay there and my Dad bought me a birthday gift, a pushbike – the

first pushbike in my whole life, and I loved it. So I decides not to go to school this day. I packed my schoolbag, my sandshoes, and some food, and I was going to ride my pushbike from Ingham back home. I got as far as Townsville. It took me two weeks to ride my bike from Ingham to Townsville and I was lost then. So I hid in the cemetery in Townsville for about another three more weeks, just lived on Burdekin plums and chunky(?) apples, and I was 12 by then, so I had to get a job, so I went and put my age up, got a job and I worked there for 12 months and caught the first train home to Dad. And I never seen Mum for a while after that then.

I So this would all have been well, we're talking the fifties here, so …

R Yeah, about the fifties, early fifties it was, yeah.

I So the Act would have been in force and you would have been under the Act, would you?

R No. No, I was … we were lucky. As I said, Mum was exempted in 1938. My Dad, uncle, grandfather and two uncles and grandfather were exempted in 1927.

I And what would you …

R 00:22:16:00 So that means Mum was still under the Act in '38 and I was about a year old, so that'll give you an idea of how old I am but don't you dare put that down there. So I was only briefly under the Act for just a little while because my parents by that time, then, were exempted. So we were free and Mum and Dad could do what they wanted then. And mostly, as I said, after I was born they just worked contract work and that. But we had a topsy turvy life, my brothers and sisters, you know. At least they were together. I used to … you know we missed a lot together as kids, and today we're still very close. We don't …

I Are you the eldest?

R 00:23:00:20 Yeah, I'm the eldest in the family, yeah. And Janet's the youngest, and she goes to uni too. I said 'We're both stupid bloody people,

going to university at our ages'. But no, she's doing Mental Health, which is good. That's Stolen Generation and the effects, and it's very well-deserved too. Where I concentrated mainly on history and culture.

I And what was your mother's exemption based on?

R Ah, because she was half-caste and she was married. And she had a good, reliable husband, so they let her go.

I And even after the marriage broke up …

R Well, they were free. Nothing anyone could do about that then.

I So once you were out of the Act, you

R Yeah, you were free. That's right, unless you did something wrong or you were starving, you couldn't work. Now they were two exceptions. You could have been placed back on the Act.

I And I think, if you were exempt from the Act you weren't allowed to go to reserves, were you? You couldn't contact your people who were under the Act?

R 00:24:12:20 Oh, no. No, no. Well, when they took poor old grandmother Jenny away from Diamantina Lakes, there was five old people destined to go on the Cobb & Co. Oh, it wasn't Cobb & Co., it was the coach, the passenger coach that used to run from Windorah and Murrubri and all those stations out there, so they were supposed to pick them up and when they got there, there was only three left. The other two had died and, of course, the rest run away and hid. But they grabbed my old great-grandmother, she was nearly 80, so there was one white passenger in this great big coach and the other three people had to walk from Diamantina Gates Station to Winton. So you could just imagine …

I Because there was one white passenger …

R 00:25:08:00 One white person, yeah, that's right. They couldn't. So one of Dad's uncles died before they got to Winton. He's buried somewhere

along the road. I've never been able to find out where and I can't find any documented police records but Dad said he's buried there somewhere, but you'd never ever find him in a million years. Ever. Unless bones were exposed or something, and then you wouldn't know if it was him or not anyway.

I Now Joslin, I'm going to ask you a question that you might find offensive, but I'm interested in this film to put next to each other different views of history. It's been put to us in the last week or so that Aboriginal people finding burial grounds hasn't got a basis in history because Aboriginal people would put bodies up in the trees and that then the bones would … that there isn't a kind of a burial place in the way that white fellas understand it. How would you respond to that?

R **Aboriginal Traditions – Burial**

00:26:15:20 Yeah. Yeah, well that'd be right too, because they had their own customs with burial and different areas had different ways. In the Channel Country they were all buried in the sandhills and they were left there. Their bones … sometimes in some of the areas, now Dad was telling me when he was only a young boy, because he was born in 1905, even then they were still burying them traditionally, and he as a kid was never allowed, of course, at any of those special burials because they were very special ceremonies. He said they used to bury them in the sandhills and then they would get their bones out after a certain time and put them together and they were always reburied back in the sandhills. But they were in a compact. I have discovered about ten traditional graves like that and I've also discovered burials that have never had that second burial. So they're still there today. But there was a time when everything was traditionally, including burials.

00:27:22:08 Today when I find a grave, I document them, I find their history, who they are, I give them a life, and then their spirit can return. It's not just any bones, it's somebody's bones. To me they have a special meaning. Maybe not in the traditional sense from two or three hundred years

ago but a different sense, but still just as spiritual, and just as meaningful. I wouldn't go and take their bones and do like they did because I wouldn't have the expertise or the rights to do it. Now each person in a family clan group has special rights and special procedures in burials. And the women did too. Each single person had a special thing to do. I can't do those things because I don't have that right. You have to be fully initiated to have that right to do that. So I'm doing, I guess, the second best thing. I'm looking after them. And I do other things that I can do now as a descendant of those people. There are special little things that I can do, which I do. It doesn't solve it completely but it does pave the way that I'm still carrying on traditionally but in a more modern way. And the feelings are still there, the deep feelings are still there, because they'll never go away. It's like if you go to a funeral today, anyone's funeral, sadness is there, the sympathy, the hurt. All those things. Even if it's not your relative, you still feel that sorrow for anyone. It doesn't matter who they are, even if you don't know the people, but out there, in that country, when I see, when I find these places, and I've found a lot so far, I document them, I have my own way of doing that, and I have a special procedure that you have to do. And that's what I do so, as I said, I can't do what they did because I don't have that right.

00:29:53:10

I So Joslin, you were with your Dad mostly around Springvale Station …

R Mmmm, mmm. And Diamantina, all that area. Winton … yes.

I That's something I don't precisely understand. Isabel tried to explain it to me and Isabel talked about how she grew up on Glen Ormiston and that her parents both worked on Glen Ormiston but then her father would be taking contracts on other stations as well. How did that …

R Well, when that happened …

I … work, I guess, between Aboriginal people and the white station owners?

R Well, just going back now, if I remember, there was times when Dad wasn't there and I remember Mum used to go into Boulia because we used to stay at the camp there, because I just vaguely remember.

I This is the One Mile?

R **Race Relations – Stages**

00:30:46:20 Yeah. No, no, not that one, that's the government one. This is the Aboriginal camp, the other one. I remember the corroborees that used to be there when I was only a kid and lots and lots of Aboriginal people, so that's probably how they did it. If Mum wasn't working, well she … she used to just help Dad. She didn't, like, he wasn't away. Like the white people's system in them times, they changed, like, from first settlement they'd shoot them or rape the women and kill the kids, or whatever, and then there was another phrase that come in, 'Oh, no, we can't kill these mob. We'll keep the best woman for sex and we'll keep the other ones to do all the work and all the stockmen'. See? 'The old people, well we'll just send them to the mission' so that was the next phrase. And then the third phrase, they got rid of all the old people. By then they had to pay wages and they only kept the women for sex partners. They all had them, every one of them. And if there was any kids, my guess they were killed, because I can't find too many half-caste kids, but most of them did die. From research material that I've found, it was a flu epidemic that the soldiers brought back from the war.

I

R 00:32:08:17 In 1918, I think, or there was another one came from 1910, 1911. There was about two or three different flus that came from Europe and they were brought back by the soldiers. Not on purpose, of course.

I It was 1919, I think, yes.

R Yeah. Because that's when my Dad's mother died, in that one, and my Dad's youngest brother, and they're still buried out on Springvale.

I Now Joslin, another question that comes out of that, that you might find offensive but I'm interested in your response to it. Again, it's been put to us that Aboriginal people didn't value half-caste kids any more than whitefellas did and that Aboriginal people would have left half-caste kids to die and that part of the Stolen Generation thing was white people saving Aboriginal babies, half-caste Aboriginal babies, that would otherwise have died.

R 00:33:08:04 Well my guess is, and it's not 100% positive because I haven't got no proof, only just history, oral history. They did kill some of the babies at the very beginning, but not many, because by that time they knew what was happening down south. Aboriginal people had a wonderful way of telecommunication and Australia was so vast but they knew what the whites were doing, how they were just moving in and just taking over and shooting Aboriginal people, take up the best lands and all that. They knew that so they were waiting for them, even on Diamantina Gates in 1864. They were waiting for them because they murdered him. Which I found his grave in the massacre site that followed afterwards. So that's just one of the events but they were prepared anyway, and they were prepared to die too, to protect their country.

I And going on beyond that kind of …

R And the kids, yeah. Yes.

I … savage period, I wondered, for instance, and I need to put this question to Isabel so I'm not asking you to tell me about Topsy but I just use this as an example. You know how Topsy, Isabel's Mum, Topsy Hanson's Dad was Scottish …

R Yes, know all about her.

I Yes, and her Mum died as Topsy was born and the story is that Topsy was left for dead.

R That's right.

I And I must say I asked Isabel, 'Wouldn't the Aboriginal women around Topsy have looked after the baby?'.

TAPE 1 – SIDE B

R 00:34:53:04 I don't think so. No. Personally, at that time, there was a lot of hate for them because they knew and fear, fear was a lot of it, and they'd heard all about what they were doing in Victoria, Adelaide and New South Wales, how they were taking the kids away and just raping even kids. Even in Burketown they had a special place up there where they used to just rape the young kids.

I So you're saying there was fear of half-caste …?

R 00:35:24:20 Yeah. Yeah. Because they knew they were special, they were treated better than the black ones. See Victoria bred them. That was the breeding farm. Victoria was the very first, actually, that they bred them, and it was for a purpose. To bring the women out. And so they could have a white race, pure white race, with no convicts. Victoria was the only state in this country that did it. It was like farming. They bred them for reasons.

I You're saying that traditional Aboriginal people would have seen whitefellas as creating half-caste babies to breed the Aboriginal out …?

R 00:36:09:20 Yeah, they knew everything. They would have got all that wind from all down south and they also got the last version. 'Please don't kill any more babies because we're too many of us going too fast' and by that time, by the sixties, by the 18 … that's just my brother.

I Hello.

R It's just two friends, just doing a little bit of thing.

I Hello, I'm Trish.

R Trish and Erica, and that's Stan.

Race Relations

00:36:35:18 So by the 1860s, they'd known all what was happening and what to look for the future then, so they started to protect the kids then, the best that they could, used to hide them. And even Mum will probably tell you too, when she was little her Mum used to cover her with charcoal so they'd make out she was real black, see, because she was half-caste too. Her father was a whitefella. And they did it to a few others, too, around. And this is in the early 1900s, they were still hiding half-caste kids. But by then they'd treasured them, too, at that time then. Say from about 19 … maybe from the 1900s onwards, or even before that, they started to really look after them because they knew their race was dying and they had to have somebody left.

I So you're saying that traditionally Aboriginal people may have killed half-caste babies to keep their own culture together?

R Yeah.

I But as things became more and more dislocated …

R 00:37:37:16 That's right. They knew they had to hang on because they probably foresaw the future. They were very spiritual-minded people. I mean, they lived in the past, thousands and millions of years back, it's only natural or them to think millions ahead, in front, and that's what they did. So that was one way of preserving their culture. They knew, because once an Aboriginal person is born, it's what comes in here and it'll never go away. And it doesn't matter how educated you are, either, or how far any generations to come will go, you're Aboriginal in here. And you've only got to talk to some of those people in Victoria. Since I've been going down to university down there, I was surprised. I thought 'Oh, my God, what are all these white people doing here? At this Koori institution?' They were all black. And then I delved into a bit of the back history, then, of Victorian Aboriginals, and that's what I found. And it's true. You've only got to go down there to see that. You talk to people and they're Aboriginal people but they're whiter than most Europeans. Culturally, they're more educated, they live in beautiful homes and married white blokes, or maybe white, I don't

know. They're probably Aboriginals too. But they just live normal lives but it was the breeding system. There weren't too many people escaped that.

I So Joslin, you then, both your parents were part Aboriginal?

R Yeah.

I Did you, in any way, grow up feeling something less because you were not fully Aboriginal?

R No. No, I didn't, actually.

I I shouldn't say 'fully Aboriginal'. You know what I mean.

R **Eduaction**

00:39:37:00 Yeah, I know what you mean, yeah. No, I didn't because I remember a lot of the kids around Boulia when I was little, and even in Hughenden after when we were over there, Dad was carting wood for the powerhouse, there was a lot of little black kids there too, so we got on … I always got on well with them. But most of my young life was fight. I used to fight my way through school, through everything, and got expelled quite often for punching them up, name-calling and that sort of stuff.

I So that was racism?

R 00:40:10:12 Yeah, racism. Yeah, right through, and then of course we come up, Stanley and Janet, Johnny and I, we would have come up through that time when there was, it was just time to fight. You had to beat racism. That was the main thing and by then we were free, see. We were born free. That's what it was. And we couldn't understand why we weren't free because even in Winton, I remember, we all lived in camps. We never lived in a town. We used to live in a camp called Boomerang Alley which was just outside of town and we were there for quite a while and we had to go to school, and that was terrible, you know. Boy, oh boy, did I fight. And when I look at some of the old people there now, you know, blokes I bashed up. We smile now. Yeah, God I used to give them hell. 00:41:04:10