

SYLVIA FRY

26/06/14

Interviewer: Napheas Akhter

Interviewer: I

Respondent: R

00:00 I My name is Napheas Akhter. Today I'm speaking with Mrs Sylvia Fry who was born in 1944 in Winson Green. Please can you tell me about your background?

00:22 R I was a war baby, my brother was nine years older than me and part of the reason was because my father was in the army throughout the war and I've still got upstairs the telegram that my auntie sent to him to tell him that he had a daughter, and I must have been I suppose a few months old before he saw me first. I was from a close family. My grandfather lived next door to me and my aunt moved into the house about six doors down when she was bombed out of her original home. So it always was a very close family and the community were a very close knit community. It was like having dozens and dozens of aunts and uncles who all looked after each other.

01:17 I Has your father ever spoken about his war time experiences?

01:23 R Yes but he didn't see active service, he was in this country all through the war and I think he always felt a little guilty that he was safe at home when many others were fighting. My mum always said that dad had the best time in, the best sort of experience in that she was left working in the local canteen bringing up a new baby and didn't have anything like the amount of food that he did in the army (*laughing*).

01:58 I What are your memories of your home and area that you lived in at that time?

02:05 R Well the only thing that was green in Winson Green was Black Patch Park and it actually was black, there was not a blade of grass left where kids all played football. We were a poor area, nobody had any money so it didn't matter that nobody had any money. You made your own entertainment, playtime was in the street. There was virtually no cars, you had a bus that came down the road every twenty minutes but you knew when that was coming, so you played marbles in the gutter and you played hopscotch on the pavements, and it was a very happy childhood. We always joked that you could do a triangle between the mental hospital, the prison and the gasometer and that was where I lived.

- 03:03 I Can you tell me about your infant school please?
- 03:08 R Mother always said she thinks I was the only child who ever ran away to school and not from school, because Foundry Road School was just round the corner from where we were and I used to love watching all the children playing games in the playground and I was desperate to join them.
- 03:30 I Can you tell me about your teachers and the school routine?
- 03:37 R I don't remember a great deal about it. It was the fun part of school that I remember most. I used to love singing and music and most of that singing actually was folk tunes from the British Isles, everything from Londonderry Air to Molly Malone sort of thing, so I remember that. I remember being very competitive in maths, I always wanted to be top of maths and I and another boy called David, we always had competitions to see who would get top. And I can't remember the names of the teachers, apart from the head teacher was Miss Moyle and she was a very wise lady, erm, and had all of our interests at heart. The physical environment wasn't good, there were classrooms just off the hall, there was a toilet block outside and it was interesting because come break time and dinner time, it was a case of you all stood in a line and you all had to go and use the toilet because there was no way you were going out of the lesson to go to a toilet. I never ever remember there being anything like school trips. That's very much a modern day thing, but loads of games and not a very good education I have to say. Erm I was fortunate to pass the Eleven Plus and I was the only girl, I was the only child in the year who actually went to a Grammar School from Foundry Road, that wasn't because I was the brightest, there were many people who were as bright as I was, I just happened to be good at taking exams. And we lost a generation of really good brains was my feeling because other people didn't have the opportunities that I had at Grammar School.
- 05:47 I Which Grammar School did you go to?
- 05:49 R Oh that's another tale. Erm there was no way was I going to be allowed to go to grammar school, that was for boys according to my parents. My brother went to George Dixon Grammar School and the head teacher this wise Miss Moyle very quickly realised that was the sort of approach that many parents had and she called my parents in and said there was a new sort of school going to be built, or just had been built and it was called the Grammar Technical School and my mother always dreamt of being a sewing machinist in one of the local factories, so she assumed that technical meant that I would be taught how to use machines, so I was allowed to go to the Grammar Technical School. Little did she realise that actually it was a very, although it was new, it was very much along the lines of girls are the equal of boys. We did physics and biology and chemistry as separate subjects. No such thing as home economics, you only did that for the first two years and then you got down to the real serious stuff and I was fortunate to go there.

- 07:13 I Can you remember some people from your secondary school?
- 07:20 R Teachers were a good balance. We had a male chemistry teacher who we teased no end because he was the only male in the school and he had a terrible time. I continued to enjoy music and learnt the clarinet and therefore Mrs Kulich who was our music teacher was very important to me. Erm I suppose they were the two key people, the one poor man and the other person who was a really very strong woman.
- 07:59 I Any friendships?
- 08:02 R Yes erm friendships at Bournville was actually quite difficult because to get there took at least an hour and a quarter on two buses and the majority of the girls who went there were from the local area, were from Bourneville, Northfield, Rubery, so there was no way could I actually go out with people from the same school. I made a very good friend called Pam and we are still in contact with each other and I remember being horrified the first time I went to her house. I came home and mother said *"did you enjoy your time?"* and I said *"yes but they're a filthy family, I'm never going there again."* And my mother looked horrified and said *"what was the matter?"* and I said *"they'd got this lovely long garden and they put the toilet in the house!"* Because I just wasn't used to indoor toilets. So that was always a laugh afterwards and Pam still says to me *"do you remember your face when you went up to the bathroom?"* They had got a bath as well, I mean a bath for me was a tin tub that you brought out of the yard and put in front of the fire once a week and she'd got one in her house. We were each other's bridesmaids by the way, so Pam was my bridesmaid and I was hers and we are god parents to our respective oldest children. We lost touch with each other for many years, she and her husband moved house fairly frequently at one stage and then we found each other through Facebook. We then found that Pam lives within a couple of miles of the lady who founded the charity that I go to Gambia to help with. So when I go up there to then fly out to Gambia, I now go and see Pam, so we're back in touch which is lovely.
- 10:19 I Your school holidays, can you tell me some of the things you did?
- 10:28 R Erm mum used to make the old fashioned curlers. She had a little press that was on the kitchen table, well the one room's table, and a man in a van used to deliver the materials for her to make the curlers with and I graduated from just helping to actually doing some of that, so that was our holiday fund. So mum always had got a bit of money and we used to go out perhaps two or three days outings in the long summer holidays on one of the charabangs, Gliderways or Nash's or Smiths coaches along the Stratford Road and apart from that we would try to go out on the bus once a week into the countryside because mum and I both loved wild flowers and I spent many hours collecting wild flowers and I have to confess now I'm very guilty when I

look at all the pressed flowers I've got including bee orchids and things like that, that are now protected and I quite happily picked when I was a child *(laughing)*. We had, I suppose I was about ten when we had our first holiday and that was in a caravan and until when I left home, once a year we had a week in a caravan, couldn't take many clothes because of course you had to take your own bed linen with you and if you were going on a coach, then you hadn't got a huge amount of capacity to take clothes and bed linen with you.

- 12:26 I As you came towards the end of secondary school, can you tell me about your expectations and ambitions?
- 12:37 R I hadn't really thought a great deal about it. As far as I was concerned you got your O Levels and then you'd continue on and do you're A Levels, and then if I worked really hard I could do medicine. If I didn't get the results then I could do teaching. So it came as a bit of a shock when mum and dad just looked in horror and said *"but of course you're gonna have to leave because we can't afford for you to stay on at school."* Err so that was it really, I left school one day and started school in a medical laboratory the following day. I enjoyed myself but then decided that I was going to get some form of qualification, so for the next two years I worked every hour I could over time because I was with the Blood Transfusion Service, so I'd work in the evenings and weekends doing cross matching for the various hospitals, saved up enough money to then apply to go nurse training. So I went to Greenhurst School of Nursing.
- 13:58 I What did you do there and how long?
- 14:03 R I was a student nurse for four years, it was a so called teaching hospital, so you did three years to get your state registration and then a further twelve months to get your hospital badge which I have and I still have and I'm very proud of it. I had met Peter during my training and we got married soon after I qualified, but I continued as a nurse until I left to have my first child because in those days there was no such thing as maternity leave, you had to leave, so I left. Oh and I didn't get my gold medal. I went to ask matron's permission to get married and she said *"you choose nurse, you have a career or you have marriage and you were going to get one of our medals for your exam results but there's no way would married woman, be allowed to walk to get that medal."* So I said *"thank you very much, my wedding date is September 10th"* *(laughing)*.
- 15:23 I Please can you tell me about your wedding day?
- 15:28 R Yes we got married at St Michael's, Bartley Green, hence the reason that our eldest son is called Michael, and it's Peter's second name as well, so that was a double thing. It was a horrible new church because Bartley Green was one of the new estates that was built just after war, yes it must have been in the 50's. Erm we had a budget of £100 which we thought was very extravagant,

but £32 of that was a honeymoon as well. My brother took me to the church in his car, so we didn't have to pay for the cars. I did all the flowers in the church, so that was quite cheap and we had the reception in the church hall and everything went beautifully on that day and there were all little sort of coincidences like the fact that we arranged to give both our mothers a bouquet of flowers, didn't ask the florist for any specific colours or anything, just said please and the colour scheme was exactly the same colours of the gladiolas and flowers that I had arranged in the church and in the hall and everybody thought this was absolutely designed, it wasn't, it was a happy coincidence.

17:13 I My mother-in-law made the bridesmaid's dress, she was going to make my dress but at that stage she worked in Rackhams, she was head of the alterations department and so she said to me "*let's go into Rackhams, you try on the dresses to sort out which style you want and then I will make you one.*" We went into Rackhams, tried on a dress, fell in love with it and bought it, so she only made the bridesmaid's dresses (*laughing*). It was a very happy occasion. It was just before my brother and his family were leaving to take up a new life in South America, so it was great that my brother was there, a couple of months later and he wouldn't have been and I had a very close cousin, as I said my aunts lived just half a dozen doors down from me and Derek really was as close as my brother, so again that for me was real fun, but that was, we are a small family. Peter's family is the opposite, it's a very big family and so there was loads of his aunts, uncles, cousins etc. at the wedding which was great fun. The first time I'd met any of those aunts and uncles was at a birthday for one of the aunts. I walked in and she said "*Oh hello you're the number thirty two*", because I can't remember, there was about sixteen or seventeen cousins and so just gradually everybody was getting married and just extending the family.

19:08 I How did life change for you after getting married?

19:17 R Life is a whole series of contained, almost rooms in the house isn't it. I suppose the biggest change of all was when I moved from Winson Green into the nurse's quarters as a student nurse and I moved back into my home, by then we'd moved to Bartley Green for just twelve months before Peter and I got married, that was to save money for the wedding and the house and everything. Erm and then we were fortunate for the first twelve months we rented a property in Moseley and our landlady had the downstairs of her house and we had the upstairs. She became a very dear friend to us and it was almost therefore, that was almost a twelve month transition phase. I had to learn how to cook, because I had never cooked in my life and I had to get used to the fact that there was two of us, but it was still a fairly natural event and then of course we bought a house in Kedleston Road in Hall Green and have been roundabout ever since. You don't notice it, changes in that way, you don't really notice the changes that go on. I think one door closes and the next one opens.

- 21:01 I Please can you tell me about your children, having your children.
- 21:09 R Erm I did the traditional thing of having Michael in Solihull Hospital and two years later when Nicolas was on the way, I thought very hard about issues around this little boy had been the one and only for two years, was spoilt rotten by everybody and I was aware that children could very easily become very jealous, so I decided the best thing to do was to have my second baby at home which we did. Michael came round here to this house, while I had the baby and slept with grandma and grandpa that he was used to and when he came back the next morning and he climbed into bed with me and then sat and played with the new baby all day. The boys have had a very close relation with each other throughout their life and I like to think part of that was because Michael always saw Nicolas as a welcomed person and he wasn't pushed out of the scene if you like (*laughing*).
- 22:25 I Having two very young children, how did that impact on your life?
- 22:34 R I loved having children. The happiest time of my life was that first five years. I was fortunate that because I was a qualified nurse, I actually did night duty all the way through their childhood, but that meant that the boys went to bed, I then went out to work and I was back in the morning for when they got up. I hadn't realised quite how tiring that was until I went back to college, couldn't understand why I had got so much more energy and realised it was because I was going to bed seven nights a week instead of five, but it fitted, it fitted beautifully with the boys. I did housework or the shopping or whatever in the morning and we were always out and about at the local park, watching the birds, just going for walks in the afternoon. They were taught their numbers by going 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 along the road with all the different houses and coming back home we'd look for the odd numbers. So by the time they had got to school, they at least knew their two times table. They were taught their alphabet by putting their fingers around the different letters on the street names. It was that sort of approach and I didn't have a washing machine so if we were in the kitchen I would be saying please can I have two red socks to do the washing or please can I have daddy's shirt with spots on or things like that, so I enjoyed educating the children.
- 24:29 I Can you tell me a bit about some of the celebrations that you arranged at this time?
- 24:37 R Erm I suppose I've always been a bit of a busy body. I've always enjoyed listening to what other people do and I've always enjoyed helping the community, whatever you call it if you like. So the little celebrations were around, I was one of a gang of women who set up a playgroup way before playgroups were the norm. It's a different sort of celebration isn't it. We celebrated the fact that we could have children in who had disabilities as well as didn't, so we had a little girl with Downs Syndrome and her mum said "*this*

is the most wonderful thing, she is being a normal child, she's not being singled out." And another friend had a child with spina bifida and we were concerned that she would be pushed around on her Zimmer frame you know because she would be pushed out of the way by other kids, actually the kids thought it was fantastic because if they were good, they were allowed to use Joanne's Zimmer. So that was another sort of celebration, it was celebrating in the community if you like and we then did some of the bigger celebrations like the Queen's Jubilee. We said we'd do a street party, so how were we gonna fund it? Well we funded it by doing little events all through the year, we had a mini Olympics in the park and various things like that and then hired the school and had three hundred people for the queen's jubilee celebrations with fancy dress parties and the whole lot. That was probably the biggest celebration I did before the kids were really growing up. They were celebrations as part of life. I've forgotten about the one I was going to tell you about, but it will come back.

26:58 I Does religion play a part in your life?

27:05 R Erm a very important part but a bit unconventional. I'm a bit like Peter in that I love the traditional Evensong of the Church of England and again I think some of our happiest years was when both the boys were in St Peter's Choir, the choir at that time would go visiting different cathedrals, so when the choir schools were on holiday, then various local parishes go to different cathedrals and sing evensong and I think one of my most special memories was of the boys singing the solo at St Georges Chapel Windsor on St Georges Day, so that was really very special. I still do go to church but I have, it's faith rather than a religion if you like and I'm now very involved in multi-faith activities because again one of the joys is living in a multi-cultural city. But I'm well aware of the huge barriers that this is bringing and the small group of us, Muslims and Christians have said let's use the family to bring us together properly. It's very clear when you look at say my own granddaughter goes to a school which is predominantly Muslim, but her friends are predominantly white Christians. **(laughs)**. So I think it's very very... sorry, do you mind if I take that call?

29:03 I Please can you tell me about your work?

29:08 R When the, when Nicolas, my younger boy went into junior school, I was absolutely lost, I didn't know what to do because life revolved around these two boys, and all of the sudden somebody else was looking after them for you know from nine til three and so I decided instead of working on night duties I had, I would actually go back and become a health visitor. Part of that as well was because listening to the women in the night when they were tired or in pain, you realised the importance of what happened in their own lives and that it was having a huge impact on their health as well. So I trained and became a health visitor, I was a health visitor in Farm Road in Sparkbrook for three years, again it was a wonderful experience, most of my families

were migrant families. When I was a student I was told, one of our set of text books was on the migrant community in Sparkbrook, so when I then was placed at Sparkbrook, I knew all about this community that I was going to be working in, they were mainly second generation, Irish migrants. Well actually when I got to the health centre there was an Irish Community Centre next door that virtually nobody used because there was no Irish community there any longer. The area had changed and I found I was working in an area where one day I'd be working mainly with Mirpuri mums, the next day it would be the Bangladeshi mums and the next day it would be with Bengali mums and I began to appreciate very much the wonderful different cultures that were coming into Birmingham, but also recognising huge problems this was bringing. Rickets and TB that I had been told in my student nurse days had long gone from this country, were beginning to come back in with migrant community. That's not a negative to them, it was simply a reality that we had to deal with the issues that came. I began to love the food that they served and loved it to the fact that a lot of the mums used to say to me "*if you come at half past twelve we can talk while we eat*" and I began then to realise how much food was a commonality between people. It's the sharing part of communities isn't it, yea it's the hospitality.

32:08 R So I worked there and then began to get really quite irate at some of the bigger health care issues at the inequalities of health that you found. I saw no reason why children in Sparkbrook weren't as healthy as children in Solihull and decided I better put my money where my mouth is so I moved into nurse management and then moved into general management and my headquarters were always in Sparkbrook, well in Balsall Heath actually in an old school, in St Patricks School was converted into a community headquarters and when I retired in 2000, I was the Director of Nursing in the Community Services. So I'd got a very wide perspective on health care and on education and the impact that health has on education. So when I was retiring, the then Director of Education said "*you need to be a school governor when you retire Sylvia*" (**laughing**), so I became a school governor and I actually wanted to keep contacts in the inner city because I enjoyed working in such a multi-cultural community, so I then became a governor at Clifton. Again I've been there now for twelve/thirteen years, huge changes, the school that was predominantly a, when I started we had, although there was probably a predominance of Pakistani Muslims, there was also a lovely mixture with Sikhs and Hindus and Jews and Christians and we were all a very much mixed community.

34:09 R You then said well we need to put things in like teaching assistants with appropriate languages, you employ your teaching assistants and then five years later everybody's moved up the road so the community that you were serving has moved to Sparkhill and then to Hall Green and then to Solihull and all of a sudden you've got a Yemeni community coming in, you've got the wrong languages, you have to start, everybody has to think about a very different sort of culture and now we have a fair number of children from

Somalia and just the start of people coming in from Eastern Europe. So one of the challenges of that school is the constant changing, the percentage of constant changing people because there is also an underlying group of parents who are second generation migrants and their perspective is very different from some of the newer migrants, but it's wonderful that you've got that stability, so my Vice Chair who is also the Chair of the Finance Committee has been in this country for forty five years, all his children were born here and were all educated at the school, so you've got that wonderful level of stability as well the changes.

35:39 I Can you tell me of some other things that you've been doing since you've been retired?

35:47 R Erm retirement, the joy of retirement is that you can work with the things that really interest you. You can get rid of the stuff that you don't enjoy and just concentrate on what you enjoy and you know you're good at. So I have done quite a bit in terms of working with schools, I am now a National Leader of Governance, so I support other less experienced Chairs of Governors and I have recently taken on board the Chair of an Interim Executive Body which is put in place when the schools go into special measures. That's a whole new experience for me, I'm learning quickly, so that's the sort of school part of it. Because I also wanted to give something back to my own local community, when I retired, I agreed that I'd be Chair of Bilsley Children Centre, Sure Start Project, which was one of the first six Sure Start Projects in the country. I said I'd do it for six months and I'm still there and we've seen huge changes in Sure Start Children Centres and I'm sure there will be major changes in the next few years or so as well.

37:16 R What else do I do? I'm involved in again because of what I used to do when I was at work, I recognised that the health service would fall flat on its face if it wasn't for carers who looked after loved ones day in, day out and wanted to give something back to them, so I set up a little carers group. We got some funding from the Millennium Project in 2000 and that's still going, we meet every month. We have a sort of befriending type service so that we buddy each other in the group, so there's always somebody looking after somebody else in the group and as a bit of light relief I'm also on the rota to act as a hostess and cook for an elderly group that meets every week at church and in the last three years I've become very involved in the charity called Schools for Gambia.

38:22 R Erm Schools for Gambia, the assistant head at Clifton School, when her father died, she was looking for a charity to send the money to that was collected and her dad wanted her to find a small charity where every penny went to the people it was supposed to and not go into to admin. So as we came across this small charity and since then she and a group of her friends and the parents at Clifton have raised enough money to build a school in the Gambia and several wells in villages and currently we've raised about £10,000

towards a £12,500 needed to build a school way way up country in the Gambia, so I tend to go over there once or twice a year to help with that charity. It's great. I get back to my childhood because all of a sudden you haven't got electricity and you haven't got water and you live on rice for a fortnight (*laughing*).

39:51 I Your children and grandchildren's lives, how do you think they differ from your own experiences?

40:02 R Erm financially they are much better off. They see so much more of the world you know. Penny and James when they were in their early teens went with parents on a holiday to China. James at nineteen has just come back from Egypt and our grandchildren down in Somerset have just been over to see aunts and uncles in Italy, so the world is their oyster and we lived in a very close contained world, but they don't. But they have far less freedom than we had or have. I could go out in the streets and my mother never worried until I came home and I went home when I was hungry or when I was tired and needed to go to bed. Children don't have that sort of ability now. They're not used to making their own entertainment to an extent we're fortunate in that the oldest grandson was very sporty and still is. Our granddaughter sings with the Youth Choir of the CBSO and the two boys down in Somerset are very involved in Sea Cadets so Joe has just come back from having a week sail on a tall ship and Sam is also that way inclined, so those sort of wonderful experiences, we would never have had in the reign of kingdom come. So it's a different life, it's a different world.

41:53 R We had to go and find out things from the library, you walked two and a half miles to get to the library and you were only allowed to take two books out at a time in any case, whereas the boys and Penny, they've got their I pads, they've got the equivalent of the Encyclopaedia Britannica on their laps all day and we forget the fantastic advantages that modern communication brings for them. I mean I know at school our children, it's interesting I'm at a generation where I was petrified, I had a laptop, but we had a PC upstairs and then all of a sudden I've got a laptop and now I've got an I pad, so an I pad to me is the absolute top of the tree and at school it's moved round again, the children start off with a big white board, so get used to technology when they haven't got a great deal of control. Once they've done that they move onto personal I pads, but when they get to year 6, they're now bringing back that they sit in front of a keyboard and use a laptop, because actually when they're studying and writing essays etc. it's better on a laptop than on an I pad and it takes me quite a while to get my head round that process when at the moment you know *"I've got an I pad"* you know *"and I can touch type."* I don't know, I just think every generation has its own challenges, every generation has its own advantages.

43:44 R I wouldn't like to say whether they are better or worse off now than they

were then. I think we've now become, we've almost reverted to a pre-industrial revolution society in that work and home and school, they've got no clear boundaries any longer and just as you had a weaving machine in your room or you were an agricultural labourer and you were out according to the seasons, it feels as if it's almost like that now. I mean you know we've been interrupted a number of times this morning, which wouldn't have happened ten years ago. Our sons and daughter-in-laws, will very often you will see them at eleven o'clock at night and all of a sudden they're doing something and it's a work related email and it seems a natural development and it may be but it actually may be that we've simply reverted back to a preindustrial revolution type environment.

44:54 I You've work in health, can you tell me how you think the health service has changed over the years?

45:08 R The changes in health I think are a reflection of the changes in society. People's expectations now are huge and rightly we won't accept the sort of health care that we used to have in the 1950's/60's/70's. If you've got osteoarthritis of your hip, you don't want to wait two and a half years before you can have it done. But I do think that we have become very intolerant as well, we expect everything immediately and we forget that everybody makes mistakes, so for me one of the tragedies is that we have a litigious culture now where if there's an issue we will sue you and it doesn't matter how many structures you put in place, you know quality is about getting it right the very first time. But if you don't there has to be a means of remedying that without it being seen as this is dreadful, this is a tragedy, it's that sort of thing. Because the demands on healthcare are so much greater, the technical abilities are so much greater and the financial climate is not good, that becomes a real toxic mix, so when I was a student and newly qualified, you knew what days of the week you were going to have an operating list. Everything was planned so that people actually were able to be discharged the day or the two days before the major operating lists and you kept your beds empty for the twenty four hours until you knew the next person was coming in. Whereas now you know the mattress doesn't get cool from one discharge before the next person come in and I think there's an intolerance of people and the pressures that that puts on normal everyday people, you know on normal staff. I do believe that we've lost a fair amount of compassion out of health care. I was somebody who was a total believer in a university led training for nurses, but I think that's distanced the nurses to an extent from their hospitals so I've been really pleased to see that actually the newer type training will actually almost to an extent, it would be the hospitals who will be doing the training, a bit like it's happening in teaching as well. But health care is a really interesting one.

48:25 I What are your plans and hopes for the future?

48:29 R I don't have any. Erm most of my life has been a happy accident, you just go

from one thing to the next thing to the next thing *(laughing)*. Erm I will take what comes. I think Peter said how close the family is and for me, if you ask me what's the one thing that you're most proud of, I would say that our two sons have grown up to be responsible members of society, they are bringing their children up in exactly the same way and despite the fact that Nick left home at seventeen to join the army, they have remained extremely close friends and it's wonderful to watch them all together, so my biggest delight is when we all go as a family. And What Peter doesn't realise is that his seventy fifth birthday celebration in Switzerland, there will be the whole family with him and it has taken some organising, so that's my delight, my delight is in my kids and my grandkids. But it's also in watching so many other children growing up. We are in a really difficult time in Birmingham at the moment in terms of the issues around the so called Trojan Horse, but all I can say is we have seven hundred and odd children in Clifton School and they are fantastic kids and it's each and every one of our responsibility to ensure that they stay fantastic kids.

50:30 I Thank you. Is there anything that I haven't covered or anything at all that you would like to share with us?

50:43 R No, I don't think so, apart from saying that Birmingham is a fantastic place to live in, it's got a huge history of social development and we forget that at our peril you know. I've enjoyed living in Birmingham and people say to me "*why haven't you moved out?*" and I say "*Well we can walk out to the bottom of our garden which is just five miles from the city centre and sit and watch kingfishers. We can walk though and jump on the train and hear first class music. You can go down to Ladypool Road and have a fantastic meal.*" There's nothing really that you haven't got in Birmingham. So that's it. **(laughs)**.