

Name: STEVEN INCE and DAMIAN INCE
Date of Birth: STEVEN INCE 1975
DAMIAN INCE 1976
Place of Birth:
Date of Interview: 14th July 2019
Interviewed by: NATHAN LINDSELL & an unidentified woman and man
Duration: 00:22:54

00:00:21 *Can I ask your names and dates of birth please?*

Steven Steven Ince.1975.

Damian My name is Damian Ince. 1976.

Nathan Can you tell me both when you first encountered skateboarding?

Steven I remember it in Springfield, like there was this lad Paul Pickett, he had a little, tiny little chicken board (I think they call them penny-boards now) and he used to like skate down the street and everyone used to chase after him, didn't they?

Damian Yeah I've vague memories of that, yeah.

Steven Like, everyone wanted to go on Paul Pickett's board. Like, he was the only one who had a board and I think me and you had roller skates, didn't we?

Damian Yeah, something stupid like that! I didn't like them.

Steven But I went to, I went on holiday to Cornwall I think -

Damian Yeah

Steven - and there was a little skate park in

Damian Holywell Bay, Newquay.

Steven Yes, Hollywell Bay ...

Damian Just round from Newquay wasn't it?

Steven Yes, but we didn't have our own boards but I think then you could hire them from the skate park and you could hire pads and helmets, or whatever. And we went there and skated and we had a few banks and whatever, and I rolled down this thing and I fell off and I think I broke my arm so... Yeah, I remember that about skateboarding for the first time really.

Damian Yeah, and there was... big bold up bit at the end and I think people were just doing kick-turns at the top and -

Steven Yeah, that was a long time ago, weren't it, I think? I can't remember when that was...

Damian That might have even been before Paul Pickett had a board.

Steven Yeah... it could have been like early, early 80s maybe, at some point. So yeah, skateboarding hadn't developed that much. It was just like turning about really, weren't it?

Damian Yeah.

Steven I didn't do any skateboarding after that, though. I broke my arm, I thought, oh yeah, I don't like this! [laugh]

Nathan *When did you guys both get your own boards and get into it a bit, a bit more?*

Steven I remember when I was ten. It might have been that, that holiday that we went to, that skate-park Holywell Bay. I think I bought a board in Newquay that year. So that, it was '86 and I was ten. So yeah I bought it from Smarts' Surf shop in Newquay and I actually went back there this year. It's still open, still selling boards and stuff. Bought some sunglasses there

Damian And I think the first professional skateboard I bought was from Jamie's Cycles in Wolverton. So, they used to have a skate shop there at the Agora, which was a roller skating rink but they had like, a skate board and cycling shop there and I bought a Santa Cruz, Cory O'brien [unclear] That was the first pro board I had in 1988, I think that was. Quite a few years ago.

Nathan *When did you guys start skating in Milton Keynes, specifically in the City?*

Damian I don't know for me it was probably about '89/90, maybe?

Nathan *Would you be able to do that as a sentence, as I first started to skate in Milton Keynes, or ...?*

(00:03:14)

Damian Oh, right, yeah. Yeah, I first started skateboarding in Milton Keynes in 1989 because, well, it wasn't far from Northampton on the train and we lived there then, so a little train journey over to Milton Keynes and yeah. Probably about the same for you weren't it?

Steven Yes! ... Because, well because mum and dad had the café, didn't we?

Damian Oh yeah, that's right, yeah

Steven So, I started skating in Milton Keynes probably when I started skating – probably '86, like - yeah, because mum and dad still had the café then, so, probably would have been '86.

Damian Yeah.

Woman *Did you work in the café as well, or did you have memories of the skate shop and working in the cafe and all the skaters coming through?*

Damian I remember I was, worked at the skateboard, at the

Steven Mate, not the skateboard.

Damian I worked at the, at the café for a few years, just on a Saturday and yeah, you did see a few people on skateboards round the area, yeah - I remember that.

Nathan *Did you ever work there?*

Steven Yes, I worked, I did a few weekends didn't we? Saturdays. And then it was 'cos there were loads of people skating at the bus station that we started selling boards as well. That's the reason it all, that One Stop became a skate shop as well as a café.

Nathan *Do you have any notable stories or memories that you can elaborate on about sort of teams passing through. Maybe you could go into the whole death box thing and, I don't know, sort of*

Man *Yeah, I don't think any – particular tricks at certain spots, like different spots around the city.*

Steven I think when we first opened One Stop Skate Shop at the Bus Station here, we used to go to Wellingborough to get our skate boards off the Death Box Skate Boarding Company which was owned by Jeremy Fox, which turned into Flip Skate Boards. And they were the first boards that we stocked in the shop. And then

from that, Jeremy Fox used to send some of his skateboarders down here to skateboard, so I think Alex Mole came on one of those first visits. And I remember him skateboarding, well, just outside the building here actually. And I think he was doing backslide nose grinds on the benches outside, which was quite good for sort of nineteen eighty eight, ninety eighty nine.

Nathan *Any others?*

Damian I don't really have any memories of any teams as such passing through it was just all my friends and local skaters really.

Steven Because loads of us come down from Northampton didn't we? At weekends as well when we weren't working in the shop and cafe.

Damian Yeah.

Steven We used to come down with Dan and Trev and Andy and Bert. Didn't we?

Damian Yeah just –

Steven and Daraby.

Damian It was more about the locals around, round here and the guys from Northampton as well, because we lived in Northampton. I think the first time we had a lot of people coming here to skateboard was when we held a big skateboard comp in, I think that must have been nineteen eighty nine, nineteen ninety. And then yeah, I think we had about sort of about four, five hundred people from all around the country turning up. And I think Matthew Pritchard came down, Chris Pullman, a lot of different skaters from all over the country that was quite good.

(00:07:00)

Steven I think you got the year wrong though. The year was ninety ninety two.

Damian Was it ninety two?

Steven 'Cause I think it was the same year we opened the skate park at Radlands because that was one of the....

Damian Was it the same year. I thought it was the year before?

Steven It was the catalyst for opening the skate park, weren't it?

Damian. I dunno. I thought it was the year before.

Steven It might have been.

(?) S. Ince I don't know, I am sure we can edit this down if only to get rid of this babble.

Nathan *I think it was ninety two, wasn't it.*

Man *Yeah I think it was April 1992.*

Nathan *[unclear] there was a jam before that as well, so I don't know*

Steven Is this the one that was at that end? I have seen the footage of it. That was ninety two, weren't it?

Woman *And do you have any tricks that you were famous for or known for or favourite bits you liked to skate?*

Man *You are just leaning a little bit out of the frame there, sorry.*

Damian Yes, tricks was it?

Woman *I was saying that Steve's name came up the other week when we were talking about spots, and there's a lot of Steve [unclear] I cannot register what it was, it might have been the brown bar or the beige or something....*

Damian Oh right, yeah.

Female voice: *and have you got memories of favourite places that you liked to skate or any kind of big tricks that you have done in the City?*

Damian I remember when I first started skate boarding up here bumping into the locals. Leo Sharp was taking a lot of photos and we would often go out to different spots up the City like the Beige and the Burgundy the Court house hand rails and then just skate.

Steven Like at the Bus Station as well yeah, the Library Gap. And yeah he took some photos of me which ended up in RAD Skate Board Magazine and I was doing a one footed tail grab down the three stairs at the Beige and I was also doing a nose grind tail grab on the block just outside here at the Bus Station and for some reason RAD Magazine published them so that was quite good for me.

Damian I was well stoked that my brother got into the mag as well. It was like...

Steven Yeah, I always thought there was a lot better skate boarders than me out there so I didn't know why he was taking photos of me, but it was quite good.

Man *But could you think of any examples of watching other skaters or big things go down at different spots?*

Damian Oh yeah, there was definitely some big sessions down the Beige stairs, up the City Centre. The big, well, six or seven stairs at the Beige. In the early days Rob Selley done a Switch pot shove it down them, and I'm sure he very nearly done a switch back side flip down them, but I am not sure as I wasn't there that day but apparently he made it. So that was pretty amazing and it's really ahead of its time. I wasn't there the day that Colin Kennedy nollie heel flipped down the Beige seven. That was quite outstanding. Mark Baines was on the cover of Sidewalk doing a 360 flip down the Beige stairs that was really good.

Steven Yeah, I nearly 360 flipped but, I snapped, snapped my board.

(00:09:56)

Damian Did you, Oh mate you could have been on the cover of Sidewalk. [laugh]. Oh blimey.

Steven Nollie heel- flipped them as well and snapped my board. Yeah, I remember James Jessop, the guy who's organised Horrific Skateboards? He was one of the first people to kick flip down them. I remember him and the photographer Leo Sharp both doing Ollie mute grabs down the Beige stairs which back in sort of ninety eight was well ahead of its time.

Damian Jasper did amazing like melons down them as well, backside grabs, didn't he?

Steven Yeah the legend was this guy called Dean Jasper done a kick flip indy grab down the Beige stairs in 1990 which is common folklore around these parts, but, no one actually knows if he done it or not. It's still like a myth. So Dean Jasper is the legend really and there was a guy called Ian Weston as well, his nicknamed "Weston" and he was the guy who sort of first done handrails in Milton Keynes. So I think he done a Caveman board slide down the Courthouse rail and I think he might have been one of the first ones to skate the Sainsbury's rails as well. And then following him, James Jessop was probably the guy to pick up on the handrails after that.

Damian And Brian from Milton Keynes.

Steven Yeah Brian was Northampton, weren't he?

Damian Yeah.

Steven He was from our patch. Yeah, Brian Wynn was pretty good. He actually got in the RAD magazine he was doing a fifty fifty down

the Courthouse handrail but it looked like he was doing a frontside feeble. So like literally everyone in the skate world thought Brian Wynn could frontside feeble down a handrail which no one could do back then. But it was just sort of like a bit of an accident that turned that into a really good photo. But, yeah when I first started coming up here the legends for the local guys like Leo Sharp and James Jessop and just sort of looked up to them and they could do all these tricks that I had seen in the skateboard videos and they were doing it in front of me and it was like 'Wow I want to be able to do that too'. So that was pretty inspirational really.

Nathan: You mention the 'Burgundy', could you tell us what that is and if there's any tricks that went down there?

Steven I don't know the actual name of the building of the 'Burgundy' but it's a couple of blocks up the City, that way. Basically, it is just like sets of stairs with marble next to them with little hand railings too. I remember James Jessop skateboarding on the hand rails there and apparently, there was a young skateboarder called Alex Decunha, I'm not sure if that's how you pronounce his name or not, but apparently, he took a nasty slam ollying from the top of one of the blocks over the path into the road. The rumour was that his dad made him do it but I don't know if that's true or not so don't quote me on that ... what do you reckon, Nath?

[General discussion about skate spots] (00:13:00 – 00:13:35)

Steven Ah well, yes, there was a couple of spots up the City Centre, which were basically, like, little ledges downstairs... I don't know if anyone's mentioned them before. Quite a lot of tricks went down on them. I seem to remember Geoff Rowley doing a 360 flip nose slide down one, and there is video footage as well of Tom Penny, I think he does the front side nollie to five-oh down one.

Damian He does switch nose, nose slides down it as well.

Steven Yeah.

Damian Big ones.

Steven Yes and also, there was another ledge going down some stairs which was, like, on a double set, which was sort of, like, went down, went across and then went down again, and I'm sure there's a photo in an old - there's a RAD Magazine or Sister Magazine of Carl Shipman doing the nose slide down the sort of double set ledge thing, which was pretty amazing at the time.

Damian And yes, Carl Shipman, he was amazing. He was one of the British skaters who went to America and turned professional. So, he was one of the best skaters in Britain... and yes, he's come to Milton Keynes for a little skate as well. So that was quite good.

Nathan *Could you elaborate on the MK skaters in particular, like their coming up in the magazines and videos like [unclear]? Any memories of those guys? Like what made the Milton Keynes scene special in itself, the sort of, maybe the architecture and made these people like skate the street in a certain way and sort of*

(00:15:02)

Damian I think people coming up for Milton Keynes, I think because there was just all the marble ledges - it was all about ledge skating, block skating and then... I don't know... I think Rob Selley just took it to the next level; like, he got into switch skating, like, pretty much before anyone else. Like doing switch crooks, switch backside tail slides, switch five-ohs that pretty much no one else was doing in the country. I don't know where he got his inspiration from. I've known him, you know, for 25/30 years but, I dunno, he was just good at what he did and took it to the next level.

Nathan, man & woman *Multiple questions about how Radlands got started.*

Damian Yes, one big bit of inspiration for starting Radlands was a jam we held up here. Through, through Jeremy Fox we used to get the boards off Death Box. He said he'd send some riders down... I think Selley's dad made some little ramps and then the word just got about that we were having a jam on the street and Steve as said probably 400 people showed up like...

Steven I think they published it in RAD Magazine, that there was going to be a 'Comp' at the bus station in Milton Keynes.

Damian Yeah.

Steven So, we had a PA system and then ... yes, it literally went off, everyone was skating so good. And from that, my dad sort of thought, well, if there is going to be this many people coming to a jam on the street, then surely - we had a few ramps there - surely there's a need for an actual place where people go to skate. 'Cos, there was one place in the country, St. Albans, had a park that had a few tours where American people come and Comps there that, you know, hundreds of people would show up. So I think probably Jeremy gave my dad the idea that maybe we should open a skate park and my dad... he didn't

know where to get a ramp builder from or anything so Jeremy gave him the number of a ramp builder in America, probably one of the best ramp builders in the world and then it stemmed from there really.

Damian I looked for premises for a skate park and we took Jeremy along and he brought Alex Mole and we looked at this one building in Kingsthorpe in Northampton and yes, it was a perfect warehouse. And Alex Mole basically, he tested the floor out and I think did some tricks - he did this, like, pressure flip, lip flip, nobody's like, over knee high, I'd never seen anyone do it before - he did it first go. I think that sort of sealed it; that it was going to be a good place to have a skate park.

(00:18:10)

Nathan *Once Radlands was a bit more up and running was there, what was the connection between that and people coming to Milton Keynes*

Steven I think 'cos we had the skate park in Northampton we'd get a lot of the American pros touring, coming round doing demos at the skate park and then on the way to do the demo at the skate park, which they had to do, all the skateboarders – they don't really like doings demos, what they want to do is go street-skateboarding, that's what it's all about. So, they'd just come to Milton Keynes as it was close to Northampton and then they'd just go and skate up the city, or down here at the bus station and the train station. And then, yeah, you started seeing Milton Keynes popping up in a lot of videos.

Nathan *Is there anything else you think is like [over talking] from Milton Keynes from staying here?*

Woman *Do your kids skate as well?*

Damian No, not yet. No.

Woman *It would be quite interesting with the family. What's it like being a whole family connected to skateboarding?*

[Over talking]

Steven I don't know if anyone's said about the way that, I don't know, that maybe with Rob Selley being the professional skateboarder, he inspired a lot of the younger generation. So then you have other really good skateboarders coming through, like Sean Smith, who himself is pretty much a professional skateboarder, who then inspired James Bush, who's pretty much nowadays an inspirational professional skateboarder himself. So the sort of

legacy of the Milton Keynes skateboarding keeps continuing because of the inspiration left by the forefathers who skated before them. But I'm sure someone else has already commented about that haven't they. I don't know.

(00:20:17)

Woman *Do you feel like a skateboarding family or is it just a job?*

Damian Not at all, no. Skateboarding's about a community really, of friends. It's friendship more than an actual job. And it is a hobby to a lot of people and a pastime. But skateboarding's more of a lifestyle which brings people together and it's sort of like a good way of networking between friends. And like, yeah, like today we've got a reunion going and then people who haven't seen each other since, sort of, 1990 get together and then you can get to know each other again.

Steven I think it's a way of life as well. Skateboarding, it's a way of life. If you – once you start skateboarding I think you'll always want to do it. It's about friendship and connections and community. But I think mainly, a lot, it's also about doing it. The love, the love of doing it. The feeling you get landing a trick like, even if you're on your own it's the same feeling. It's just an amazing feeling. It's all about love really, love of skateboarding.

Woman *Are you going to encourage your children to take up skateboarding?*

Steven Well, both of my children have got skateboards already. I bought my first daughter her first board at 1 and then that's been passed down to my second daughter now. And I've set a board up for my other daughter now. So, they've both got boards, but I think it's a bit too early for them to be actual skating properly yet. You just want to hope they don't start scootering or rollerskating. You'd be upset. Imagine how upsetting that would be?

Damian We started rollerskating before skateboarding. I suppose it gets you like

Steven I've never touched a rollerskate in my life. Sorry.

Damian Steve – you used to have roller-dance lessons at the Agora in Wolverton.

Steven No, I didn't.

Damian You did – you should have seen the skates, they were yellow and red and white skates.

Steven I don't remember that.

Damian They were. You loved it.

Steven At least I didn't have a pink tutu like you.

Damian You were jealous.

Steven That's shameful mate.

Damian The only pink tutu I've got is my daughter's, mate

Nathan That's a brilliant finish.

Female voice until 00:22:54