

Name: William George Tricks

Date of Birth: 1966

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Interviewed by: Nathan Lindsell

Duration: 00:52:30

00:00:00

Can I ask your name and date of birth please?

Yeah, I am William George Tricks, Will to me friends. 1966.

When and how did you first hear about Skateboarding?

I had been on a skate board a couple of times in the seventies, probably '76 when it was, you know, sort of popular but I never owned a skateboard until '83. I bumped into a couple of lads on a demonstration. I was on a peace march with a couple of other punk rockers 'cause I was a punk rocker in my young days and they were into skateboarding and I thought yeah perfect, I think that is great, it's totally un-cool to be a skateboarder in the early 80s and yeah, and it is a free way of getting around and it's cheap and you can pick them up for fifty pence at jumble sales so I got into it straight away.

And is it that what first attracted you to it, was there anything else that appealed to you about it or?

Yeah it was just a laugh. I mean if you are hanging around with a bunch of mad punk rockers going to gigs and you got a skate board as well it was like you could keep up with them instead of having to run behind them so yeah I got a skateboard to keep up with them because you know. I used to do a lot of hitch hiking to get around 'cause I didn't drive and you couldn't carry a bike and hitch hike but you could carry a skateboard and hitch hike so you would have that in your bag or behind your back and you could travel and get about easy.

Who were the other people that you skated within your group?

In Milton Keynes initially it was me and a lad called Ollie who I met at Campbell Park, and another lad from Glasgow, Stef and then we sort of we met other folk around. There was Phil Chapman, there was Muppet and Potter, the Stoke Hammond boys and fellows like Andy Huggins and then there were just loads of these horrible little kids that come sort of skating around.

Where were the first places you started skating in Milton Keynes?

The first places I started skating in Milton Keynes, probably I lived in Newport and then on Netherfield and there was a skate spot at the end of Netherfield, I lived on The Hide so it was the first spot that was dead local outside me front door and then we'd be up at the Shopping Centre before they put doors on you could skate around, you could skate there any time of the day or night so I would be up there regular, up by John Lewis if it was daytime or anywhere at night time, especially after the pubs had closed and you would have had a few drinks. A couple of times I was up there people would drive cars through the aisles as well, so I nearly got knocked off and people would ride motor bikes as well through as well late at night which was awesome - the sound was great. You would get chased occasionally but yeah that was the spot and then we would ride down from the Shopping Centre. We would go all the way down through all the little office bits, we skated in, I think they called it The Beige, we skated there in '83 or '84. I think it was probably before anyone else did and down the Bus Station, and the Bus Station in them days, the downstairs bit was a twenty four hour cafe so you could skate inside as well and I guess around the Bus Station.

Did you realise at the time that Milton Keynes was something unique into Skate Boarding?

Yeah.

The architecture and that it was a new City?

Yeah, I have travelled around. I would go and see bands and visit pals all over Britain and there was nowhere like Milton Keynes for Skating, you had the Redway and you could get anywhere but somewhere like the Shopping Centre basically marble smooth, you know and open all the time, it was really impressive. Plus we had things like Caldecotte when we first discovered Caldecotte and Willen Lake you were blown away 'cause like you have got the perfect sort of really dodgy half pipe as well.

Going back a little bit what was the first Skateboard you bought or got around on the time?

Yeah, I got the Flyer the old blue plastic flyer.

Oh yeah, I forget yeah.

It's alright, is it that one not that one but one like that?

It was exactly the same as that, that one

Yeah okay so just to right people are sort of laughing a little bit and trying not to I know I know it is funny stuff.

(Unidentified female) Trying not to be funny.

Alright yeah, hello.

It's not me.

No, no.

(Unidentified female) No it's not me (laughs)

It's not me I have to stop myself.

You are doing great, so if you can include the skateboard.

(Unidentified female) You are doing really well Nathan.

So if you just include?

00:05:00

Yeah, I forget the question that's because I am talking so I forget. So I will start again. The first, yeah, the first skate board I ever got was a blue plastic flyer with red wheels and it came with a bag as well which was ridiculous. It had like a sort of bag and that had a picture of like a palm tree and a Hawaiian beach, nothing to do with a skateboard but it had that sort of influence on it. I got a scooter which was a slighter bigger deck and slightly wider wheels but same size little trucks. But the first proper skate board I got was an Originator and I got that from a shop in the Shopping Centre called Taylor and McKenna. They had two shops, one in Bletchley and one in the Shopping Centre and I got that and I paid seven pounds for that. It was a lot of money and it was just a bit of plywood basically with bespoke bigger trucks and 70mm wheels which was all the rage in them days. The bigger the wheel the faster you would go.

And when did skate boarding become something more than a mode of transport and a sort of a bit of rebellion and when did you start bringing tricks into the equation and?

(Unidentified male) I just thought I would mention, there is a plane, can you hear that, no?

(Unidentified male) *Yeah, yeah I can now that you mention it.*

Yeah, Yeah, okay you just wait for it to pass and you can ask the question again.

(Unidentified male) It's okay it's one of ours.

(Unidentified female) [Laughs].

(Unidentified male) And a private jet comes in.

Do you reckon that is slow enough now?

Once you finish asking the question it should be okay yes it has gone.

So when did you go from using the skateboard as a mode of transport to actually doing tricks and using it in a different sort of experiment (what was the phrase earlier)?

I began using the skateboard instead of just a form of transport like to get tricks probably about '84 'cause you could ride it around all day but there were places you could go and I ended up at the Bus Station on my own late at night and I thought right, I am going to try the acid drops which was an old school trick and just jumping off the edge of the blocks on and I had not heard of hollowing but I knew how to do an acid drop, and yeah, I just used to try and get as much distance off there so it was probably '83 so you could see how far I could get off the end of the block was probably the first time, and then everyone wanted to do 360s which are still really cool, yeah, probably about '84.

When did you have any notable injuries when did you start you must have hurt yourself?

Yeah, yeah I got, we went, I think that probably the worst I went to Rom Skate back in probably '85, '86, and that was a blast. That was a real a load of us went, about six skaters from Milton Keynes and it was a proper skate park which there weren't really many about, and I took a flyer from the long run in and landed on my back and took a big chuck out of me lower spine. Let's say the rivet on my jeans took a big slice out.

(Unidentified male) *Could you just explain back to Nat what Rom Skate is?*

Yeah, well Rom Skate, when we went to Rom Skate there was five maybe six skaters there and it was in the mid-eighties one of

the last properly run skate parks that I knew of in the Country and it was the only place to have a proper blue tile pool in it which was filled in not long after we had been there, but that was a really good skate park. Yeah in Romford.

Going back to the Punk thing was there anything like particularly fashion wise that you had to skate in or latest trends of the time?

I tend to skate generally in boots in them days but then I got when you try to do more, let's start again with the question...

Yeah, yeah.

Ask me the minute question again and yeah I remember part way through.

Bloody question yeah?

That's right.

What was the style the sort of fashion that everyone skated in those days, the skater look?

The skater look that I knew of in those days fashion wise was basically baggy trousers. The punk rockers that I knew of were all basically bedraggled, you know, half crusty tramps, and you would inevitably end up wearing your clothes for as long as you could get them to last because you didn't have a lot of money so it was fashionable to wear crusty trousers, crusty and mainly boots, I used to wear a lot of German para boots so yeah, not great for pulling tricks. Eventually you learnt to start wearing Vans and that became quite cool, and then cut off shorts and Vans and anything you could get on basically to keep yourself warm because you would skate all weathers.

00:10:00

What particular music did you associate with skate boarding at the time?

Everything there, the music that I associate with skate boarding in the eighties was every punk band that I wanted to see had at least one song and the fellas' that I met from Mansfield who got me into skateboarding in the first place. They were in a punk band and they were all skaters as well. They were called Scumdribblers and NME voted them the fastest band in the World ever in 1985 so they were a proper band. And then me and Ollie and Stef we formed a Punk band called [unclear], and we were all skaters and we were all punks and yeah that was the music it was very loud, very fast, real chaos, screaming lyrics and proper thrust punk and we had a saxophone as well.

And crossing over to punk again did you associate skate boarding with politics at all or was it just a way of escapism and fun?

It sort of featured into that sort of free spirit is like I can ride this.

(Unidentified male) Please could you try sorry...?

Sorry, yeah.

(Unidentified male) Would you like a drink of water or something?

I have got a slurp of coffee here.

(Unidentified male) It is getting a little dry.

(Unidentified male) I know it is not sunny but it is still pretty warm.

(Unidentified male) Can we turn on the humidifier?

(Unidentified male) Yes go ahead, Sorry continue. How did politics, remember to open.

How much did politics associate with your skate boarding, was it, ah start again. Did you associate skate boarding with politics was that reflected in your skating or was it just a bit of fun and escapism?

Skate boarding and politics were slightly combined in my mind because I was attached to the punk scene and a lot of that was political and there was also the vast restrictions that you cannot go there with that and so you I was a bit of a rebel anyway and that did lead a little bit to more of a rebellious attitude and you cannot tell me where I can and cannot go, you can't tell me what I can't do, I am going to use this even this it is unfashionable, it did become a little bit of a symbol or rebellion but quite how effective it was in bringing down the Thatcher Government is debatable.

(Unidentified male) *Can I jump in has skate boarding ever got you into trouble and how?*

Various times, skateboarding has got me into trouble on a few occasions, you would always be chased around by Security Guards or Policemen throughout Milton Keynes it was always a problem "You cannot be here doing that". We also visited the Stonehenge Festival in 1985. I was eighteen and a little bit naive and found that there was a bit of a riot going on and the Police were attacking people at the Festival sort of before it started, and attacked a group of people and I sort of reacted badly to the situation and attacked a Policeman with a skate board and was

duly arrested for my out of order behaviour, but I did get arrested and I got fined for that as well along with riotous assembly which was very unusual at the time but yeah I ended up going to Court for that and paying fines for it.

Unidentified voice: *Can I butt in with a question? How do you feel with you saying there was a sign of rebellion back in the day, nowadays it is a lot more "look how cool I am!" It's about a lot more accepted to be a skateboarder with it being in the Olympics and how do you feel about it changing from a rebellious thing to like always accepted?*

00:15:00

NL: *And remember to answer your questions to me?*

Yes. My thoughts on the change from skateboarding being completely uncool, rebel, sort of, bad attitude type of underground culture, to the position it is in now being sponsored by huge companies and in the Olympics. I think it's great. Everything is going to change and possibly it will disappear from the Olympics and it will possibly disappear from mainstream sort of funding or sponsorship and big companies. It may change but all the time people are out there shredding and having fun, having a good time. I think it's a good thing.

There was always a hard core of people who were against the bus station being developed as being the skate spot for Milton Keynes and I always thought you're going to skate wherever you are going to skate. If you can skate somewhere where it is totally 'legit' then that's a bonus and if you do want to rebel and carry on, then fine, find a place where you can skate then and carry on.

There is always going to be... in places where we are not as... you know... in countries that are not quite as free and not quite as well developed... cases like, you know, Zimbabwe, where they've had their first skate park put in – first skate park ever! That is outstanding and they had to be rebels in the 21st century to do that. But they've done it and you know, without that sort of rebellion without it be coming from on cool to something to be seen with and in the mainstream. Yes, it's going to happen.

(General discussions)

Yes, to be honest I have never been done graffiti, it's never...

(Unidentified female) It would be nice to ask about something...

(Unidentified male) You feel like there is a link though.

(Unidentified female)...the building sites, you know, you when you were talking about building places before they were built and the changing scenery of Milton Keynes.

(Unidentified male) Yes, OK. So you can say ... how did graffiti feature in the early days of skateboarding in Milton Keynes?

Yes, OK, so you can say 'How did graffiti feature in the early days of skateboarding in Milton Keynes?'

(Unidentified voice) *Is it the same problem you experienced or did that come a bit later, or was it a punk thing, or did it come more later as a hip hop ...?*

Well, in terms of graffiti being involved in the skate scene, it was never particularly a punk thing. There were obviously punks who were into graffiti but to be honest, if somebody had money they wouldn't spend it on a spray can for paint and they would spend it on ... you know, a bag of chips, a new set of bearings possibly or a pint of beer. So that never took hold with me but it was always around and if you found a skate spot it would either have graffiti on it to do with skateboarding ... and everything else that, you know, that graffiti ... But it did become, the skating graffiti, did become much more abstract and colourful, rather than just putting your name and 'skate here' ... 'this is my skate spot'.

So it did, it did develop and I did notice it but it was never really something that I got involved in.

(General discussion) (00:18:46)

How did you personalise your boards?

Yeah ... yeah ... how did I personalise my skateboard? Em ...

(Unidentified male) How did you personalise your boards?

Make sure you answer the same problem as the question.

I personalised my skateboard by?

I personalised my skateboard mainly with stickers and in those days, the early eighties, there weren't really any skate stickers and so you grabbed any sticker you could and if you were in a band you'd stick them on your guitar as well and so you would have skateboard stickers or stickers for your skateboard and stickers for your guitar and some days you would get a new sticker and you'd think 'I don't know where to put it ... I want it on me guitar, I want it on me skateboard, so that was the biggest dilemma I had probably with that.

Personalising skateboards, I wanted me deck covered with grip tape, I never wanted to see anything on top, was never that

fussed, you know, I didn't want to ... I didn't need to see the any design on top. I'm not really into massive designs for skateboards. When I did get a deck I would fling loads of stickers on the bottom ... but yes, full grip tape on top.

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Was there a particular skate club [unclear] within the skate scene at the time, was there like a fraternity or was it accepting, or was it more of a, sort of, tight-knit sort of closed small scene...?

That's alright I will invent something. The skate scene in Milton Keynes, the etiquette was anyone was welcome, anyone, no matter who when they rolled up, what age they were, we were fairly easy-going. The old boys I knew were mainly punk rockers into skateboarding, generally open people who liked to have a laugh and everyone was welcome. That wasn't always the case around Britain. Me and Ollie and Stef and another fellow, we ended up going to a party at... it was in Clacton on Sea, in the out of season Butlin's Camp and it was an all-night party. But an Alice in Wonderland All-night Magical Mystery Tour... and that was great because we started off from Liverpool Street Station, so we got to skate round Liverpool Street Station as well... 1985, that was and we had a blast there.

There was a train with 5,000 lunatics going to Clacton on Sea for a big party and we filled the place. It was an all-night party; it was a really good thing. But outside, there was an outdoor pool and we was like, 'Yeah, this is great...! We've got a pool to skate in ... bit of rubbish water at the bottom but you know, we can avoid that!'

And there was another lad there skateboarding and we instantly walked up to him and said, 'Allo!' Sped said who we were, gave him our names, wanted to shake his hand and say '... let's have a look at your deck; let's see what you're riding... what you doing here and that?' and he didn't want to talk to us... at all! I think he wanted to be the only one to turn up with a skateboard and be cool. But yeah, he didn't talk to us at all and I didn't understand that, just couldn't figure it out we were a friendly, happy... but he just weren't interested! Outside of that wherever you went every skate park you went too pretty much everyone was accepting in any of the skate parks or the skate spots that weren't illegal parks you would still find that everyone was quite happy, most scooters are even in those scooters it was no scooters.

What do you think about the scooter epidemic?

Multiple laughter and discussions.

I refer the speaker to my previous answer.

I think the next two questions are quite important.

Okay.

What has been the worst memory skate boarding?

My worst memory of skateboarding is breaking my first proper wooden plywood deck, yeah that was gutting because I had no way of fixing it off, right off the bat straight away and yeah I was off a block trying to do an acid drop at the Bus Station and yes, slapped my deck one footed in the middle and it snapped completely and yeah that was gutting.

The week before I had broken, I had a set, I had managed to get a set of Cally Slalem trucks which were seven inch wide trucks, which were, I mean they were old seventies trucks and they were just the best thing I had ever had. I managed to snap one of them hitting a kerb in London, fast, too fast and snapped that and then signed up with one, one decent truck, one Cally Slalem and then I snapped me deck and that was probably yeah, that was because it was a nice day and I skating and that was the end of the day for me like and I it took me weeks to get fixed up, so yeah that was probably the worst memory.

Could you explain a bit more about fixing it because that might not be so common anymore?

Oh yeah, yeah. On the worst day of my worst day in skateboarding when I snapped me deck I knew I had to fix it, but I had to get a bit of plywood that was the right length and the right sort of depth and the right quality so I ended up with some marine ply I had managed to scrounge off this old boy and then you got to drill holes

00:25:00

holes through the deck from the truck holes into the bit of plywood and then you got to get longer bolts and then you have got to figure that all out. It wasn't easy but, you know, you used a hand drill and I managed it and I was riding within a couple of weeks. Yeah, these days you can go and get another deck or keep a spare. I did end up riding my scooter for a while so I wasn't completely without a skateboard.

What has been your best memory skating boarding?

My yeah, the time that will always stick with me my favourite ever feeling of skateboarding was hitting the pool at Romskate, a blue tile skate proper bowl, beautifully formed and perfect transition and I think it had like a seven foot transition so it was quite tight but once you hit it the run in was pretty steep with a little bit of a kink to it and when you got around that and you got up to the blue tiles your head was in the middle of the pool basically so as

your feet were flying round the tiles and proper pool cement your feet fly around on a decent set of wheels but your head stays in the middle and it was a blast - still remember it.

Why do you have lasting connection and commitment to skateboarding?

I have had a lasting connection to skateboarding because I never wanted to be about a skateboard even though I don't ride much it is always part of me which will always be there, and I have always got a guitar even though I don't play that much, but, family, like, you end up with kids that initially, you know, repulsed by your skateboarding as being an old man's sport and then they sort of get the drop and "Actually yeah it is pretty good" and there are a lot of folks out there who they can hang around with, they are usually a decent bunch and they end up, and it will always be around and also I saw a thing in the The Citizen of 2003 and thought Yeah, I want to get involved in helping develop the a proper skate spot in Milton Keynes, and you get sort of back into it, a lot deeper, sort of trying to get involved on that side of it as I knew I was never going to skate the spot, whatever it was going to be before it was a Bus Station. It was going to be somewhere I knew I was never going to skate it but I thought you need an older fella who could hang around and keep turning up to meetings and, you know, not really do much but be, I did not really do much but I was there that was part of what keeps you going and stuff like that.

Can you talk about skate brain, you know, like it doesn't matter how old you are or where you are it is something that will be with you like that would be a good way of making you feel like a skateboarder, even though like you do not even have to stand on it?

[General Discussion].

Yeah, yeah, well I can just jabber on about. So, on a question of skate brain is yeah, I have always had a skate brain I think before I was even a skater, I was into bikes, I liked riding bikes, I liked owning a bike, I had a motor bike but as a kid I always wanted to have a motor bike and you would think "I would like to ride that on a motor bike and I would like to ride that on me bike" and you would try stuff and you could see that before you even you got near it you knew how to ride it and that is innate in people I think, but with skate brain, yeah, I do constantly still drive around a lot, I do a lot of miles with work and I've always got a skateboard in the back of the van still, but, I would, yeah I would yeah spot, you know it catches your eye and you can't help but turn, and yeah you see the right curves and you are going to look.

Could you give any examples of spots that you have seen in Milton Keynes that use skate brain?

00:30:00 In Milton Keynes, I was at, yeah, examples of places I have seen recently in Milton Keynes that have triggered me skate brain, I was at that shop in Monkston Park where they have the robots and straight away I think "I want to skate over one of them" [laughs] and I do not even skate anymore but I want to skate over, I want to skate round one of them and want to mess around and that's the sort of thing that's is still in your brain and like how can I apply my skateboard to that and even though I don't ride one much.

Perfect.

(Unidentified female) Could you talk a bit about Caldecotte and Willen 'cause I don't think there will be not be many people being interviewed about that

(Unidentified male) I know earlier we were talking about and you mentioned people bringing extra things like concrete to?

Yeah, taking a broom.

Did you sort of go through how that works at Caldecotte?

Yeah.

And direct us?

Yeah, will do, hello Nathan.

[Multiple discussion].

Other spots in Milton Keynes that we found that we could skate that were not standard Milton Keynes flat bank or a block there was Willen ditch which was very tight and impossible to skate that well and then there was Caldecotte, Caldecotte ditch and we found that entirely by accident, and yeah, it was painful but great fun. It was pretty grubby when I first got there but it was swept out and cleaned and skaters would turn up with brooms, and or just, you know, whatever you could just to swept the gravel and the mud out of the way if it, if it had been raining.

Initially, when I first skated it, the first time, I dropped, you could ride it, you could pump it, but that was never the cool way, and you needed to be able to drop in, and the first time I dropped into Caldecotte I really landed badly, and didn't expect to be going straight up again. We had spotters at the top of the pipe to stop

boards from hitting the water, they didn't grab mine, so yeah, for my first ride in Caldecotte was a bang on the head and then into the cold water which woke you up, and you would have to jump in, work your way along on the chain to where they pointed to where your board went to, go out a bit, drop down 'cause it was about eight feet deep but I went in and it was pretty deep, fiddle around your feet until you found what you thought was your skateboard, hook that up with your feet and drag it back in, it took me about twenty minutes, but it was cold, but, yeah that was a good skate spot. But then it was adapted, I remember the plates got put on saying "No Skateboarding or BMX Riding" which was hilarious, and also somebody at one point because there was a bit of a gap between the concrete and the dirt behind it, somebody had bought along some concrete and put in a little bit of flat so you could drop in with your tail on the flap which helped, yeah, it was a good skate spot.

(Unidentified male) *Could you also mention the something about the ramp that was under the underpass at Simpson...?*

Oh right, yeah, yeah.

...Could you just tell us a bit about that and mention a few other spots?

Well there were several other, yeah, other skate spots that we had found and appropriated, I think was the trendy term used. We, I helped, but I wasn't the main builder we built an eight foot flat bottom ditch ramp in an underpass over a water overflow underpass so it didn't lead anywhere just went to an overflow in an dip in an underpass near Simpson and that had eight foot flat bottom both ways and reasonable transition made out of pallets and tatty bits of plywood that had been built. We even had a competition there, with the BBBDG Skate Comp and everyone got prizes and that was a good spot and there was probably, there weren't a day when there weren't somebody on that ramp, it did get dragged out and burnt in the end, but that was a great skate spot 'cause you were guaranteed to find at least two or three people there. It had scaffold coping as well and at the end there was a bit of transition, a savage transition, but, a decent bank as well which you could if you worked hard you could ride that, I did manage that a couple of times.

Another spot was there was an old Youth Club on Peartree Bridge, Peartree Bridge Youth Club which was closed down and due to be demolished and due to be re-developed, there is a pub on it now, and that had a huge hall at the bottom we got into that and all the windows were put in by vandals, but we got in, and again that was another place that in the winter that was under cover so you could skate that, and there was a lot of ramps in

there, and that was a little bit more dicey to skate in as there was lots of broken glass, but still a good spot, and again you would always find half a dozen people there.

00:35:00

Did you have anything to say about the underpass near the Milton Keynes Theatre 'cause then there was that and the Bus Station were the two undercover?

Yeah, yeah, so yeah, the problems we had with in the old days if it rained, and it rained a lot, there was nowhere to skate that was dry that was any good. If you got chased out of the Shopping Centre the two places you would go to is the Underpass by Campbell Park which is not interesting but it was always dry, a bit windy but you could always skate there, that was always a laugh.

One of the things we did just to while away the time was you'd get runs of water rust when it rained you would get runs of water heading down and so you would see how many times you could get across before you had to skate over the water. Hard core tricks of the early eighties.

Yeah, and if you get down the Bus Station you could skate at various times even inside, where it was a cafe at the time, and it was a 24 hour café. You would skate around in there, and you could get a sandwich at the machine if you wanted, I did once buy a sandwich.

*Cool, was there other questions other people want to ask?
(00:36:18)*

[General discussion].

When did you first hear about Radlands and when did you go?

I first heard about Radlands when my eldest boy, Jay, he got into skating; him and his pals wanted to go so we filled up the van with youth ... there were six of us. I thought I'll go along ... I'm an old boy but I can still skate and we took a whole bunch of lads over there and paid to get in; they didn't charge me any less because I was a pensioner, but I did get in and we skated around in there, and that's pretty much I ever had any knowledge of Radlands, the only time I went. I fell hard several times because I was unused to skateboarding. I had to take a week off work because I felt like I had been run over.

Going back to the injuries and memories, your worse memory was [unclear]. World Cup Day, which I think for everyone else it would be a time, not when you've injured yourself which I think other people would say... would think that [unclear] why do you think that injuries weren't worst memories?

Yes, injuries wise, they were never as bad as breaking a skateboard because personally, I don't feel... personally, I don't really feel a lot of pain; I am quite a... quite an insensitive fool! But yes, in terms of injuries like, you know, you'd get a bad calf first day back skating after a good winter of snow. You end up with one calf muscle, you know, or one of your arm muscles hurting bad because of what you've been doing. But in them days you couldn't buy another plywood skateboard. There just weren't any in Milton Keynes. There was two, I owned one and Stef was the other and that was it. You know, you couldn't go and buy... no one had a spare deck in them days, unless it was a, you know, a flyer or a scooter. So, that's why it was so devastating.

Could you, em, explain a little bit about ... you said earlier about skating on Sundays at the bus station, what you used to do there... to bring things along [unclear]?

(00:40:00)

The days for skating at the bus station on Sundays became a regular event for us. One of our little clan had a van; you need a van so we could stick whole loads of people in and you could and you could fit a little kick-around and they were the right shape to fit on the VW roof because they were the same sort of curve and so we would strap a ramp to the top of that, we would maybe bring a little block as well. Someone turned up with a decent sort of square rail... one time I remember. But we would go up there every Sunday and then more and more people would turn up and more and more people would hear about it and more folks would turn up. And we would end up with a... because at that point, early to mid-20s, we would then end up with like ten 15 year olds turning up as well and skating. Which was great! Because you would end up with 20 to 25 people skating at the bus station. There was nothing else set up for it; there was nowhere else in Milton Keynes to skate and it became a bit of a Sunday afternoon excursion. We would stay... we'd take a tape player, play some tapes... bit of music going on; usually punk-rock but not always and then the other place that we ended up skating during the winter, was the fellow Jamie, who ran Jamie's cycles in the Agora. He spoke to them and the old roller-skating rink was available on Sunday afternoons or Sunday evenings. So we booked that and again we would have to pay... it was about 50p but you could skate to ten o'clock at night indoors with some sounds and again, 20 or 30 people sometimes in there. And again, all ages; all different people, all... and little kids as well. Our kids would turn up on a skateboards. They were always, you know, looked after and monitored and people skated around them rather than through them. It wasn't half a good spot! And yes, that was indoors with lights.

Could you talk about any landmarks in skateboarding where it would be mentioning something about blocks, or these first coming in and then [unclear] and things?

Skateboarding landmarks for us, something that you would achieve would be like 'I am now like that...', 'I am now at that level'. There was no grading system, there was no licenses you could get but you could, if we did leant to 'ollie', the first time we hit an 'ollie', then you could 'ollie' onto the block at the...

[General discussion].

Well, landmarks in you skating ... well, it's not a career, if you become a skater there was no 'you become a 7th level skateboarder' suddenly but you would get a certain bit of respect once you'd... like, for instance ... when you could skate and 'ollie' onto the blocks, which, you know, I was, like, the third person that could 'ollie' onto blocks at the bus station and that was, like, yes... the first time I landed that I was like, 'Yes! I am now a hero in skateboarding!' I loved it, it was great and it was very cool!

Wall riding ... I got into wall riding, [unclear] kick-around at the bus station where [unclear] wall is: where the doors are [unclear]. There're gone now. But we used to hit that wall as hard as I could and I used to get up to above the height of the doors and then land down very heavy on the concrete from a good 6 or 7 ft. That's why me ankles are knackered.

[General discussion 00:43:6].

No proper question.

In skateboarding things that I could never really challenge to the point of completing was... oh! I wanted to ride a 'half-pipe' but I got to the half part where I thought, 'Why am I doing this? I've no need to be doing this!' I have abseiled off of mountains. I have attacked entire police forces with nothing but a skateboard. I did tree surgery for years and got to the top of a half-pipe... proper half-pipe with two foot of earth ... nay! I'm not interested. Tried it a couple of times myself... hurt myself... and nah! I'm not doing that! There's bits that I just couldn't see the point in me doing it; like to watch it, but not my cup of tea.

Unidentified male voice: Exactly the same for me.

What about stuff like 'flip-tricks'? Was that ever a favourite of yours?

Well tricks that... skating tricks that I'd learnt, I had a really old fat, wide flat deck, piece of junk which and I leant to 'ollie' that up onto

a block at the bus station when I got a better board. [Unclear] was my favourite deck and she had a bit more knowledge and was a bit square of them ... 'cos she was ... had a bit more nose and was a bit square of them... 'cause everyone else was into Vert and then skated on the street; I wanted a street deck so when the Pat Wallender came along I wanted that and I had a couple of them and they were great, nice big nose on it (like myself) and a good square tail. I'm quite happy to ride around on one of them and I could 'ollie', I could 'ollie' and I could spin a board but get a flipping bunch in there, that didn't really take off until after I sort of, pretty much, packed in skateboarding. I got into trucks and Land Rovers, so that sort of took up all my time. Raising a family as well... that sort of burns hole in your pocket and you can't afford a new skateboard.

So, yes, I sort of ducked out of that and all the flip tricks and ... people doing 'finger flips' before then ... I saw it, had a go but I wasn't that dextrous. But I could 'ollie' hard and I could 'ollie' high and I could fly around but mine was more about momentum, rather than dexterity.

Can you describe any tricks you did up at the [unclear]?

Tricks I could do from a jump ramp tended to be very hard, very high 'ollie' airs, I could clear about 8/9ft. Again, that's why my ankles are knackered! 360 'ollie' air or a ... what do you call it ... or a Japan air, or a (melon air?). Any 'airs' start off of a ditch ramp, I was quite happy to do ... off of a jump ramp or into a ditch ramp if I could. But, yes ... bigger momentum.

Can you describe modifying the depth [unclear] square.

Well, with skateboard decks I did modify one that was an old, worn out, skateboard. Usually, when a skateboard was finished, if I had ridden it and couldn't right it any more, I would have burn it. I have never kept a deck that I weren't going to ride and I never wanted to see... you know, that was gone! Stickers as well, worn-off stickers, they're going. Never, never... all these folks used to have stickers they'd take from skateboard to skateboard and re-glue them. But I'd say they're done... get rid of it.

I did have one deck and it's still a nice solid bit of marine ply and I'd Rodney Mullen, I thought he's pretty good... I'm going to have a go and Rodney Mullen style, flat tricks, handstands and standing on the wheels, that sort of thing. So, I cut one down and moved the truck back and then used that as a basic, like they really tightened up the trucks so they didn't move. I always like tight trucks, never liked the sloppy sort of... if you couldn't turn... I'd like riding around and getting on one wheel and stand still. You know, the trucks not flexing and I like solid.

But yes, I modified that one deck and I think that's still around somewhere, possibly. But yes, I'd like riding that one. Beyond that, you know... occasionally a friend of mine, Ollie, in fact, he got a pro-am, solid aluminium sheet deck. It was a nice property slalom skateboard and it started to wear out and of course, there is nothing you can do about that, so he... we called it 'the knife' because it got sharpened to a point. He used some old baked bean cans as a ... like a tail, a tail-guard for it, which was savage! You cut your hands just picking it up. Yes, that was a good skateboard and... Yes, modifications like that we did.

[General discussions 00:49:13]

(Unknown female voice) *Can you tell us about your family being in skateboarding as well?*

Yes, yes. What has skateboarding given me since I have sort of stopped skateboarding, a lot, has been this now, surrounded by people who I haven't met before, or have met but don't really know that well, you know, being in a room that I haven't been in for a long while. There's people that I've met who aren't skateboarders that are good people that I know now, friends, who are involved in skateboarding but not skateboarders and it has carried on, and I have got families that skate, possible next generation that's going to skate. I've been to places on a whim just because I've heard there's a decent spot to skate, like Market Harborough. I've never been to Market Harborough before but it was like, yes, it's a rainy day but it's not raining in Market Harborough... we're going to go there and skate. I met an old boy that I hadn't met for years... yes, going to Romford as well, things like that, meeting things like that... seeing kids eating pot-noodles all day long in Romford... one of the best. An abiding memory!

[General discussion 00:50:55]

The funniest thing I have ever heard skateboarding, and there is always a lot of humour around skateboarding, is Stef when he turned up, and he'd come down from Glasgow and he is only 16. Me and Ollie had our skateboards and he wanted to come round with us skateboarding but he didn't have a skateboard... he had a racer, bicycle, which I don't think they even exist these days and he, Ollie, who is an artistic genius, without telling anyone without it... got a roller skate, got a roller boot, took the boot off and made a cardboard cut-out of a skateboard; drew on grip tape, bolted it to the skate and the skate truck itself and give it to him one night and was going to go skating. And he rode around on it for about a fortnight before he finally bought a skateboard and we laughed at him and he said, 'No, have a go.' So, he would stand on it, he

wouldn't strap it on his foot, he would stand on it with the cardboard deck on it as well and then, when he was rolling along, put his left foot on top of his right foot and stand on that and skate around.

And I thought it was ridiculous and he said, 'No, have a go.' And we did, we had a go and it was hilarious, it was... honestly, try it. It's a real laugh ... it really was funny [laugh].

Yes, I can't believe I'd forgotten that! But that was just... we'd roll around on the floor for ages!

Sorry... I've got to stop!

End of interview! (00:52:30)