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Address: Stony Stratford
Date of Birth: 1963
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Caz Tricks. Today is the 25th January, 2018 and I was born in 1963.

Lovely. So, tell us when you first moved to Milton Keynes and why you came here, or your family came here.

I first moved to Milton Keynes in 1978. We moved in with Aunty Phoebe in Bletchley. We used to live in Lincolnshire and, Dad's business, people didn't pay him for his business. So he went out of business; we lost the house; we moved to London, with Nan and Grandad, and then we moved to Bletchley with Aunty Phoebe; and then we got a house in Great Linford. So, since 1978.

So when you first came to Milton Keynes what were your first impressions on that day, or the first days when you actually discovered the place?

When I first moved to Milton Keynes I lived in Bletchley and I know people might laugh about it now but I loved it. It was a lovely town. And it seemed like the sun was always shining, walking down towards the open market, it was brilliant. Then we moved to Great Linford and for about a year I hated Milton Keynes. It was, in those days, pretty much just the V8 from one end of town to the other. I loved Stantonbury Campus, it was a brilliant school and my teacher for drama was Roy Nevitt, so theatre, which is my real world, that was amazing and I was really happy at school but, until I got involved in the music scene, it was like, 'What the hell? This place is just mud and a city centre,' – which opened just after we moved there – and, yeah, I thought it was really grim.

Right, so you've just nicely segued us into the pop video. Do you want to tell us the band? Do you want to tell us the year? And, what I was interested in finding out, how did you actually get yourselves into the shopping centre? I mean, what avenues did

you have to go down, or did you just show up? So maybe you could tell us a bit about that – the year and the band name, etc.

So the pop video – pop princess: that's hilarious – the pop video, 'NA Pop 2000', was made...I think the video was made in 1981. I got into the band because...I can't remember exactly but I knew Dylan at school, who was the songwriter and bassist, and I...in all honesty, I think I got into the band 'cause I looked right –because I couldn't sing and it was a bit difficult really, being the vocalist but, there you go, I managed to blag it – so I had, like, the white hair and the leather miniskirts and all that malarkey, so I *looked* right, which is why they put me in the band. So Dylan and I, pretty much from then on, became like best mates and we had a real crack.

So I went along to Peartree Bridge youth club which, for all of us, it was a real life-saver. Dick Emmings used to run it and all the local musicians, all us youth at the time, used to go there. We'd rehearse; we'd go to gigs and that – Dick would take us there; he really looked after us and mentored us. And then 'The Police' gave them money to make the album, 'Warped Sense of Human', which came later, but we recorded the song in The Mill studio in Stony Stratford and 'Big George' Webley was our producer, also a really good friend and a mentor. And then the idea to make the film – so that was Colin and Dusty and Steve Baker, they were kind of like the film kings and they said, "Let's make a video." And we went, "Yeah, right. Great."

And so we went to the city centre, 'cause Dusty lived in North Twelfth Street so we just walked over. There were no doors on the city centre, it was clean, it was shiny, we walked in and we made a film – we just did it and that was what you did in those days. And that's very Milton Keynes for me: you're a pioneer; you'd get up; you'd do it; 'I've got an idea. Let's do it,' and we'd do it. In those days it was a lot easier.

This is a side question, as a girl. How did you do that hair?

The hair. Right, okay. My current boss says it looks like I've got a ferret on my head but he's an idiot, so that's fine. The hair was just peroxide, so I...'cause my hair naturally is this colour, so it was just pure peroxide and I bleached it over time until it was white and then I used to wash it and put old ladies' setting lotion in it – like, the liquid – and then crimp it dry and then just put my hands in my hair and shake it and that was it. That was how I did the hair. I used to dye it sometimes as well and do Mohawks and bits and bobs like that but, yeah, it was just pure peroxide. Lucky I've got any hair left, actually...*[laughs]*.

So how was the video received, sort of, locally? Was it received nationally? What sort of feedback did you have and what success did you have with it?

I'm not really sure how the video was received at the time. We were all really excited about it and I think there was a showing somewhere but I can't really remember. It was...you felt like a real pop star. It was really exciting making it; it was really exciting being part of the Warped Sense of Human album. And then it...as far as I'm aware, it kind of disappeared. I understood that it was showing at...in Japan or something but I don't know – I don't know where I got that from. It could be another film that Dusty made – but I think that pop video went there. And then Colin digitised it and put it on YouTube a couple of years ago and watched it and just screeched with the laughter. It was so, so funny looking back at, and...looking back at it and just thinking, 'What were we playing at?' [Laughs]

00:05:18

I've been watching. I think it's great. (Are we okay with that for the music video? Can I do the generals? Okay?) Now, if you were to go back in time to those years, and from where you are now, what would you change about Milton Keynes, moving forward?

What would I change about Milton Keynes? At the time, nothing. It was right, it was a pioneer town, there were loads and loads of council houses, all the new developments used to have a community officer who was there to help the community develop. So what I would do now is I would fund council housing: end of. There's...all the council houses were sold off and they weren't replaced. Sell them off; let the people who live there buy them: brilliant. Don't replace them: that's criminal. And that's one of the reasons we've got real housing problems in this town.

For the arts: when I was first involved in the arts, with the music and the theatre, there was always a support network, someone would always help you out, you could just rock up and make a video, someone would go, "Let's go to the recording studio. Oh, there's loads of gigs. Let's make some theatre, we'll do that then." And that's what happened and that's what we did. And then lots of funding got cut and I think that's also criminal. So it's about funding the core values of society: the arts and housing. And that's what Milton Keynes has always been brilliant at doing in the past. So I think we need to look back at that and let that happen again. Because if people have got creative options in their lives and a safe home, everything can follow from that and it's a better society.

That's great. I mean, I was going to say to you, 'How do you see the future of Milton Keynes?' but maybe... Do you see that happening in the future or do you think it's going a different way?

I think Milton Keynes, in the future...I have hope for it because I love this town. I'm really passionate about MK. I am really lucky 'cause I live in Stony Stratford, which is an old coaching town and it's north of Milton Keynes – and that's another point: I want it to stay in Milton Keynes. 'Cause there's talk of it being moved over to the Speaker's region, or whatever, so that we don't vote Labour, and so they can jog on with that – but Milton Keynes, I'm passionate about it, it's a really brilliant place and I think, with the right support and the right guidance, it's got a great future. We've got so much on offer and there's so many community values and community organisations like Living Archive, Milton Keynes Museum, Bletchley Park, Arts Gateway and all the, like...the arts stuff that goes on in Stony Stratford particularly. I was talking to people quite recently about it and I think Milton Keynes should, at some point, go for the European City of Culture and my friend said, "Well, actually, Stony Stratford could go for the European Town of Culture," and we could but I believe in Milton Keynes and I think the more we give to it and the more opportunities there are to develop it and the more support for organisations like the museum and Living Archive, all that sort of thing, that's where the town is going to be more enriched and it's going to develop and everybody will be happier. And there's a ripple effect. It goes out into education, into housing, into workplace and into society in general and, yeah, when I run the country, that's what it will be like.

Well, I think that's great. I don't know if anyone else...any questions from the floor?

Didn't know I was going to get all political but there we go...[laughs].

While you're here, just tell Victoria a little bit more about the whole...the Peartree Bridge setup. You told us a little bit about it but I just think, just...while...you know, on the record.

Okay.

Yeah, so if you start off mentioning Peartree Bridge.

Yeah. I'm going to moan as well about that, so there we go...[laughs].

Okay, go for it.

So, the Peartree Bridge youth club setup, like I said, it was Dick Emmings running it, as the youth leader, and there was like spaces downstairs and there was a big space upstairs and there were rooms off the sides. And it was a really safe place for young

people to come together and to play pinball and meet up and hang out together. And play music together, rehearse, watch each other, support each other. And there was a real sense of community and then we'd sort of go to the Compass Club in Bletchley and do gigs from the core centre of Peartree Bridge. And it had a wonderful safe feeling to it. I mean, there was a biker night there but all us sort of arty lot and the punks and the sort of New Romantic lot, we all just mucked along together. I'm not saying there weren't disagreements but it was...as far as I can remember, it was a really peaceful, fun environment and it was safe and it was incredibly creative.

And I think that's what might be missing sometimes nowadays, is not so many options for, not just young people, people across the board, to be creative and go, "I think I'd like to play the bodhrán. Where can I do it?" "I think I want to make some theatre. Where do I go?" you know, and I'm lucky 'cause I'm still involved in that world and I do it and make it happen for others but, for me, Peartree Bridge and Dick Emmings was the core of it and it just went on from there. And Living... – not Living Archive – Inter-Action was right next door to Peartree Bridge and there was kind of a collaboration there and wonderful arts centre and supported the community. Did a lot of work on the estates, going out from the estates and doing fun days. Community cohesion: really important. Peartree Bridge youth club got sold off and it's now a marina and also The Rectory no longer exists – well, it does but Inter-Action isn't there anymore. You know, funding again; lack of imagination that spoils it.

00:10:50

[Discussion about the interview]

Okay, everyone happy? I think we've captured you. Is there anything you'd like to add that you haven't added, to do with the video or anything like that?

No I don't think so. I mean, I could witter on for ages but I don't think there's anything...

Well, we're going to put insets of the video in and it's going to be great.

I suppose there's one thing I could say about the fact that, you know, we made it all those years ago, yet some...we were played on John Peel; our tunes were...they're on, like, 1980s German radio stations and stuff so I suppose I could do that, so okay.

So, if you'd like to tell us more what happened with the music at the time.

So, we recorded these two tracks for the album 'Warped Sense of Human' and on side one was 'Panic In Your Mind', which was the video, and on the other side was 'So-so' and we recorded them, as I said, at The Mill studio with 'Big George' as our producer and it was really exciting. Oh, and then there was the launch gig as well, at Woughton at The Pitz, so that all the bands that played – and there was a real variety from the album – we played at The Pitz and that was great fun and then, you know, those things fade out, people go off and do other things, but ever since then, those two tracks have been played on, like, German eighties radio stations. I actually had somebody email, or message me on Facebook, about three years ago saying, 'Are you the Caz Tricks from NA Pop 2000? I've got the album.' – I think he was in some Eastern European record shop. It was playing and he bought it – and I just thought it was a bit weird but actually it turned out he was genuine and he really liked the music. And then, about three years ago, Dylan, who wrote one of the songs, and Mark who wrote the other song, they were both approached by some American record company – and they do lots of eighties stuff – and so Dylan agreed for our track, the one on the video, to go onto this album. So it's on a vinyl from, like, eighties originals and I think it's also on a CD but we've got a copy of the album each and it's like clear plastic vinyl. It's really groovy.

So, all these years later people are still listening to it and, when you listen back, it's actually a real pleasure to think, 'Yeah, we did that,' and it's a good record of stuff that we did when we were younger. And I just wish – for me – I wish I'd had more confidence in those days 'cause I was terrified. It wasn't just being all posey by not smiling, I was like, 'Oh my God, what am I doing here?' It was that sort of thing. So I just did what I was told. And another thing about the video that I've just remembered is, there's a lovely shot – I think it's probably one of my favourite shots of the whole video – and we're standing outside what was Braids hair salon and it's all black windows and then it's got the red strip lights and it was just so exciting and we did all this soppy posing outside it. It was all Dusty's direction. We just did as we were told. So yeah, it...just so many memories and it's nice that the music is still going on and actually still being appreciated. And I can even sing now, which is really nice.

Yeah, great.

I do rabbit, don't I? *[Laughs]*

That's great, that's great. Well, I've got to cut that down to three minutes, so...

Oh good.

END OF INTERVIEW