

Peter Fitzgerald

Born in the UK in 1939. Peter's family emigrated to Southern Rhodesia in 1949. Joined the BSAP in 1959. Met his wife, Anne, in 1962 and married in 1965 (Anne's family also emigrated there in 1949). Peter was medically discharged from the Force in 1978 after he was paralysed in a house raid. His parents left Zimbabwe for the UK in the 1980s. Peter and Anne left Zimbabwe for the UK in 2004.

This is Dr Sue Onslow talking to Mr and Mrs Fitzgerald in Gloucester on Friday, 17 October 2008. Mr and Mrs Fitzgerald, thank you very much indeed for allowing me to come to talk to you. I wonder if you could begin, please, by telling me how did you come to be in Rhodesia?

My parents were already there

So your parents were already living there?

No, they came in '49. They emigrated

Where did they emigrate from?

From Manchester. From here in England, they went over to Salisbury

What were your parent's backgrounds in Manchester?

My father actually was in the fire brigade although Mother didn't work. Like I say, he was in the fire brigade and he was also plastering

Yes. So after the war, what then?

Yes

Why didn't they stay in England after the war?

Good question. I think it was my mother who said to my father that "you know? We should emigrate. We should go to Rhodesia."

So what was their experience on first coming to Rhodesia? Where did they go?

They went to Cranborne and stayed in the flats there which were, I believe, flats for the Air Force during the war

And how long did they stay there?

For about a year

And then where did they go?

Then they moved to a house also in Cranborne

What was your father's job on coming to Southern Rhodesia?

He was plastering

(00:01:59) **He stayed as a plasterer?**

Plastering, yes

And so when were you born?

I was born 13 July 1940

1940, so do you remember moving then to Rhodesia?

I do remember, yes vaguely

Can you remember your first recollection, your first memories of Rhodesia?

I remember the Cranborne hostel as we called it; then I remember the school we went to

Which school was that?

Cranborne Junior School. It's now called Nettleton

Nettleton. Do you have brothers and sisters?

Yes, I've an older brother. He's in Canada and I've a younger sister who's in Switzerland

Is she now? So growing up you went to the Cranborne primary school and this is in Salisbury, as it was?

Yes

What was life like for you growing up?

Fine, very good

In what way 'good'?

Well, there was a swimming pool - the local swimming pool we used to go there. At junior school we used to play lots of football, cricket, all sorts of sport and it was very nice.

Did you stay most of your time in and around Salisbury or did you make trips out into the bush?

No, at the time we stayed in Salisbury

Did your mother work?

(00:03:37) She worked in a crèche and then she ran it.

Peter, you would have been 15 at the time of UDI?

No, UDI was in 65

I'm sorry, 25. I can't do my sums today

I was in the Police then

So when did you join the police?

I joined the police on 12 January 1959

This was still then during the Central African Federation days?

That's right, yes

What was your rank when you joined?

Constable

You joined as a constable?

Yes

What sort of training did you have?

I spent five months in the police training school in Salisbury and it was quite heavy training really

In what way?

Horse riding, marching, physical training, mental training, you know. You'd go to your classes and what have you, learning about the law

So did you do criminal law?

Yes

Which was your favourite type of law at that point?

I would say common law

Common law, ok. After your police training where were you sent then?

(00:05:20) I was sent to Bulawayo

Right: in the centre of Bulawayo or one of the outlying...?

Centre

In the centre. So this was at a time when the Central African Federation was starting to split up?

Well, how can I put it to you? When I first joined the police force I was in the depot in the training depot for about five months. I was only there for a short time when they sent squads into Nyasaland which is now Malawi and, unknown to me, but probably at that time it was the beginning of all the problems that came to Zimbabwe or Rhodesia as it was.

It was around about 1962 I was sent with a bunch of policemen up to Victoria Falls- I remember Sir Roy Welensky there, that was the **Federal Government**. Ian Smith was there, the Rhodesian government, I remember Kaunda. Banda wasn't there from Malawi, Nyasaland as it was. **We** were there for about a week or so, whilst all these politicians had their meetings, and then I would say after that, Malawi got their Independence, Zambia got its independence. Zambia and Kaunda, and Malawi and Banda, but Southern Rhodesia where Ian Smith was, weren't given independence. It wasn't until 1965 that we declared independence. Well, Smith declared independence with UDI

Do you remember what you thought about UDI at the time?

I didn't think anything really

You don't remember thinking whether this was a good idea or a bad idea?

No, because I wasn't politically motivated. I was a policeman and that's all I was

But you were also a voter?

I was, yes. But, I mean, the thing is these things didn't worry me at the time. I was representing the **Government** and the **Government** was representing England

Yes, but then Ian Smith was in rebellion against London, so do you remember your loyalties being really called into question? After all, how could you be loyal to the Crown, and loyal to the Ian Smith government?

Well, Ian Smith's **Government** at the time - so I'm led to believe - was loyal to the Crown. We still flew the Union Jack and I was still loyal to the **Government**. Put it that way, nobody else in the police force questioned that.

(00:09:15) **So do you remember what you thought of African Nationalism in the 1960's?**

It was just ... well, I expected that type of thing. They wanted it, they wanted their Independence and, as policemen, we weren't really interested in politics. All we were really interested in was to maintain law and order.

Right. So you made a distinction, then, between political dissent, demonstrations and civic order?

Yes, more or less. We at times had to get involved in political things but, I mean, they were forgotten as soon as we came back to base or back to our Station. But we were policemen and that job was just maintaining law and order

Peter, I'm going to ask, please, at this point where was "home"? You talked about your parents coming from Manchester, arriving in 1947 but you were, after all, seven when you came to Rhodesia. Where did you regard as "home"?

Home, of course, was Rhodesia. But still, there in the back of our minds, as I say, England was the main place.

So where did your parents regard as "home"?

They were the same

Same thing?

Same thing. In fact, they came back here in about the 80's

Did they?

Yes

So you kept up your contacts? Your family kept up its contacts with people back at home?

Yes, all my relatives are here

Yes. Where were they?

In the North

In the North as well, around Manchester?

Yes

So did UDI make you think differently about where was 'home'?

(00:11:34) It didn't make me think at all. I just thought why is England doing

this to us?

You never thought ‘What are we doing to Britain?’

Not really. We were doing nothing to them. We didn’t think so.

So when did you meet Ann?

About 1960

(Ann – ‘62, we got married in ‘65)

So you got married, when in ‘65?

(Ann – July)

In July, so just in the run up then to UDI?

(Ann – yes)

Ann, do you remember what you felt about it all?

(Ann – No. I just think that we were in Rhodesia and that was it, you know. I think there was a happy feeling that Smith had taken the UDI. I suppose we didn’t really worry about it)

So to you, you’re suggesting then it made sense, that you remember?

(Ann – yes)

Were your family also long term Rhodesian residents or new arrivals?

(Ann – We also went to Rhodesia in 1949. My mum and dad went out there with my brother and myself)

And you lived in Salisbury?

(Ann – No, we lived in Bulawayo and Peter was transferred to Bulawayo. Then we met in Bulawayo from Salisbury)

So after 1965 did your lives change at all?

(Ann – no)

They didn’t? Peter, where were you after UDI then? Were you still in Bulawayo?

Yes

(00:13:10) **And what rank had you reached by this point?**

I was **Section Officer**

So how many African policemen did you work with?

Can't quite remember

So did you speak Shona or Ndebele by this point?

Ndebele

You did?

Yes

Had you acquired that yourself or had you been taught it? Had you been told...?

We acquired it ourselves

So how much understanding did you have of Ndebele culture as well?

Well, the culture. Really it was with the Africans throughout, there was quite a lot, we understood that they were completely different to us as far as culture was concerned.

In what way?

How can I put it? They were different in their ways. In a number of things I would say they were different to what we were. I mean, complete difference. It was just like we're different to probably the French or the Italian people. Well, the African is different as well in his way and that way we accepted. We understood and we respected it.

Then, having as you've said identified that sense of difference, did you feel that you shared common values? I'm just trying to move towards what did you think during the war you were fighting against, and what were you fighting for?

Well, the African was the same as us. He was loyal to the police force and that was with us. I can only talk about them, and like, if you were attached to PATU, the Police Anti Terrorist Unit, there would be four whites and an African with you. He acted as an interpreter and he was very loyal. In fact, during your normal police duties you would have an African policeman with you, and he was very loyal with you - just like you were to him - you were like mates, being both on duty

When did you join a Police Anti-Terrorist Unit?

(00:16:10) It must have been in the 60's

In the 60's. How much formal training did you have for that?

We had a lot. We used to go out quite often to the bush and learnt about things there. We'd go out to the rifle range and firing and there was a different training to it.

So in the PATU, what was your principal job? What was your principal aim? Was it gathering information? Was it identifying where militants were coming in?

When we went out, we would go out and patrol a certain area. We'd patrol this area and, of course, if anything came into that area, we would radio back and tell our superiors. Basically, we would patrol the areas and see who was coming into those areas, and we'd speak to the people who lived in those areas as well.

To the Chiefs? To the Headman?

Well, to anybody who could give us information.

Were Spirit Mediums important in how you identified where there was guerrilla activity? Did you use that?

No, not spirits with the African. We never involved ourselves with them or if anything, in fact, they never involved themselves with us

So it wasn't a case of identifying where there would be a particular Spirit Medium? Tony Trethowan has said that this is what he used to do; that he would be aware of the guerrillas congregating towards a particular Spirit Medium and that enabled intelligence.

Probably. You see, each PATU section was different. We in Matabeleland might have been different to the other people in, say, Mashonaland. The lot that I was involved in never involved ourselves in anything like that. Nothing at all.

How long did you serve in the Police Anti Terrorist Unit?

I was there for approximately six years before I was transferred from Bulawayo to the Midlands to a place called Que Que. Then I went out there and I worked with Special Branch, in 1976 and then I was transferred back to Bulawayo.

So in '76, as part of your work for Special Branch, what were you required to do?

(00:19:30) Well, all the work that we were doing really was contacting people: finding out who had come into the area, what they'd seen and what they'd done. There was an Army patrol in that area as well, an Army company. If there was any contacts with the terrorists, the Army would do that.

Did you stay with the same other three colleagues that when you first joined the Police Anti Terrorist Unit to before you joined Special Branch in '76?

No, I wasn't in Special Branch. I only worked with them

I'm sorry, thank you for clarifying that

I only worked with them. No, I would have different blokes in PATU but we belonged to more or less the same unit as such; but it would be different blokes. Then I came back from Que Que to Bulawayo, and then I joined SWAT which is actually Special Weapons And Tactics. Now that was purely a police team, SWAT was. When we would go round in PATU, we used to get camouflage. But SWAT, we wore plain blue – same as our people in the dark.

But this was for urban policing? Was the Police Anti Terrorist Unit really for the rural areas and (information) gathering and SWAT was created for the urban environment?

Yes, the urban

Right, so you joined SWAT then in 1976?

It must have been '76/'77 when I went

And that was back in Bulawayo?

Yes

Right. So what was your experience then as part of this SWAT?

Well, with SWAT, the difference had been, as I told you, the uniforms had changed. In PATU you'd carry a rifle, the FN rifle which is long. In SWAT you'd carry a small Uzi sub machine gun, so it was easier to handle and to get round the houses and things like that. Basically, that's what it was formed for, and the difference between the two was that you were more, how can I say? **Town Policemen** as such, as opposed to going out in the bush.

So who was analysing all this information that you were gathering?

Well, we passed this information on to CID who, in turn, would give it to Special Branch.

What did you think you were fighting against up to 1977?

(00:23:33) Terrorists and people who were breaking the laws because the Rhodesian **G**overnment did not declare war against terrorism. So, in actual fact, these people were breaking the law and committing a crime.

You didn't distinguish between political violence and normal, well, domestic violence?

No, not really, although the criminal activities were the same, which is ordinary common law violence. We knew there was politics involved then, of course; it was obvious. And these Africans, we knew these Africans were actually inciting punishment, inciting this behaviour and we had to stop this.

How much was communism or anti-communism also tied up with this?

This really we didn't go into. It may have been, as far as we were concerned, I mean, we weren't on to the higher fellows who knew all this.

So you didn't feel that the Cold War environment, and Russian or Chinese support was at all important?

We knew that these terrorists had been trained by the Russians and the Chinese. That was information they gave to us; we knew this but it was just one of those things.

I'm just trying to create a picture here of your view of radical African nationalism at this point as being violent, civil disobedience and it had to be dealt with as a police action?

That's right. It had to be, but you know, there's such a difference. The African is such a funny person. In Africa you're looking at people who want to be politicians. They want to get there whether they know everything or not, and all the money and the lower kind, say the 'peasants' are very easily influenced; and that's what the hierarchy of the African terrorists knew. They just actually terrorised these people.

Ann, what was your memory of the 1970's? What did you think you were fighting against?

(Ann – it's hard to sort of explain. You know, I just thought, 'Well, we were in Rhodesia, it was our home.' Peter was just doing his duty and I just accepted that.)

So you didn't have a... did you feel you were fighting a war? Or is that actually an exaggeration?

(Ann – No, it's hard because you just do it. Peter was in the police force, he just did his duty. Even when he was injured I just didn't think 'well what's this for?' You know, I didn't think that way.)

(00:27:25) So you were living and working... were you working at this time, Ann?

(Ann – No, we had two small children. I wasn't working)

What were your sources of information about what was going on in the country? About what was going on in the outside world?

(Ann – I just don't know. I just accepted life as it was)

So you don't remember ever sitting down and thinking to yourselves...

(Ann – What are we doing?)

Or why is this happening?

(Ann – No, I never thought about that. We just accepted it.)

I think the best people for that to interview really is a farmer's wife...

A farmer's wife, yes

I think they would give you (?)

Yes, because their experience was very different, very different indeed. Peter, how did you come to be injured?

Well, it was while I was in SWAT and we were called out one night. We went to the local police station and a Special Branch bloke interviewed us. He said "Listen, there's terrorists in this area". We had three houses to check and he's in one of these three houses, which one I don't know. So anyway we said right, and we went to it. Now the bloke that was in charge of the duty couldn't come out that day; he'd been doing another job so...

Do you remember who that was?

Max somebody. I can't tell you his name so I normally took my posting at the back of the house, but the very fact that this bloke wasn't there, I went to the front of the house. When you approach a house, you tell them to start thinking, is the light on? and I opened the door and this I did but I didn't see the bloke behind the door. It was a terrorist and as I approached the house, he threw out a hand grenade

He threw it out into the yard?

He threw it outdoors and it went up

So what happened to you? I mean obviously you were injured but...?

(00:30:15) (Ann – the shrapnel went into the back of the brain.)

Oh yes, paralysed down my right side. You can say it's a bit (?)

Were your other colleagues also hurt?

There was two. They received injuries but...

(Ann – nothing serious)

What happened next?

(Ann – He went to Harare. He went to Salisbury and he was operated on and then he stayed there until January 1978; and then we came back to Bulawayo)

So I'm just trying to think, what did your colleagues do to the terrorist?

(Ann – Well, they did open fire)

I think that's history. The next day the terrorist was found dead, they said, but I can't actually confirm this. But he was found dead next to a railway line by a group of soldiers who were checking the railway line.

(Ann – Peter doesn't remember very much that happened that night. He doesn't remember)

I'm not at all surprised

(Ann – And it's thirty one years ago. It's a long time)

It's just how you can have a memory from what other people have told you

(Ann – That's it, yes)

So you were convalescing then in Salisbury

(Ann – In Salisbury for three months, yes. And then we went back to Bulawayo in January)

And you said Fred Punter came to talk to you?

Yes, Fred came a few times, didn't he?

(Ann – Well, there was a few police chaps that used to come and see you)

Fred came a few times and then I remember he did come and he told me...

(Ann – But that was a year later. That was in 1978)

(00:32:16) So you were still convalescing, you were still on sick leave at that point?

(Ann – Yes)

You hadn't been trying to struggle back to work?

No, no

And so that's when Fred said that unfortunately you had to be medically discharged?

(Ann – Medically discharged and they gave him a 100% disability)

So you then stayed in Bulawayo?

(Ann – yes)

And what was life like then?

(Ann – Quite hard: two small children, Craig was six and Shannon was four and Peter couldn't do anything for himself. Couldn't dress himself, bath himself, shave himself, nothing like that. I did everything for him)

How much help did you have?

(Ann – Nothing)

You got nothing then, not in Zimbabwe

(Ann – You actually don't know how lucky you are in this country to have the after care that you do whereas there was nothing. I did battle, I must admit. It was hard, bringing up two small children and feeding him and cutting up his food and everything else)

Did you have physiotherapy?

(Ann – A little bit, yes. He used to go to physio. Didn't you?)

Yes

(Ann – And try and do a bit of swimming and things like that. But nothing compared to what he's had, the attention that he's had here since we've been over here)

Ann, given how this must have filled your mind and filled your world, were you aware of anything else that was really going on?

(Ann – No, I accepted the fact that with a thousand dollars I couldn't leave the country. I didn't want to leave the country with two small children. I didn't (00:34:11) know if I could start a life somewhere with two small children and a disabled husband which now I think I could have done, but of course you can't think of that can you? You just carry on...)

It would have been such an enormous step because you'd have said goodbye to your network of friends?

(Ann – Yes, I also feel on the personal side of things that it might have been too much for me and we wouldn't have been here together. That's the way I feel at the moment. Things might have gone wrong or I don't know...we just accepted it)

What did you think then of the transition to independence in 1979/1980?

That was something that was going to happen. We knew that. We weren't really happy with it. We knew who was taking it over; we weren't really happy with Mugabe and how can I say? It was a 50/50. We think we could do better

So you stayed after independence?

(Ann – yes)

How many of your friends left?

(Ann – Oh most of the police chaps left because they were allowed to take their commutation out. This made a big difference whereas Peter wasn't, because he wasn't in the police force in 1980. He was discharged in 1978)

How long did you stay in Zimbabwe after independence?

About twenty years

(Ann – well until 2004)

When did you start your business?

(Ann – It must have been at the beginning of the '90's because then the children were at school, high school and things like that, I felt I could take on a business. Peter did have the odd job now and again. You worked at the police clinic, didn't you?)

Yes

(Ann – and then he got a job with...)

Technim

(Ann – Technim. It was a panel beating firm and he was there for quite a long time, just pottering around at the back and just doing things with nuts and (00:36:57) bolts and that sort of thing because it was all car repairs and panel beating so they kept him on there)

So when did you leave Zimbabwe?

(Ann – 2004)

And when did you come back to the UK?

(Ann – 2004)

In 2004

How did you find coming back? After all, you left when you were very small children?

(Ann – Yes, we settled in very well.)

We settled in very well but it's a different life.

Why did you come to Gloucester?

(Ann – Our daughter's here)

So how did you find coming back to Britain? British society?

(Ann – Fine)

No problems at all?

(Ann – No problems at all)

Nothing changed. Nothing was different from here except the Rhodesian weather

(Ann – The weather!)

Well, yes! Well, the sun's shining today. It's a beautiful autumn day, come on! I'm just particularly struck by talking to your other colleagues who still feel very Rhodesian. What do you feel yourselves to be?

(Ann – You see, that makes a big difference. Now it's quite funny how you should say that because they do think of Rhodesia as Rhodesia. Now when it went Independent, we had to wipe Rhodesia out of our minds because if you mention Rhodesia, you know the African didn't like it. It was then Zimbabwe so you'll find that we will talk about Zimbabwe, they will talk about Rhodesia. They don't remember the hardships that we went through at the petrol queues (00:38:43) and the lack of food in the shops and things like that. We were having problems after UDI but I don't know, we just seemed to carry on.)

One question: this is from a personal level, were you aware of the Gukurahundi campaign in 1982 to 1985? The violence in Matabeleland?

(Ann – Oh yes we were. Yes very much so, we were aware of that.)

How did you find out about it?

Well, different people spoke about it and that's how we knew about it. That

was when Mugabe sent some of his troops up there and wiped out most of the Matabele. You see there is a difference between the Matabele and the Shona as tribal. Most of the Matabele, the real Matabele lived in the districts and that's where he went with his Shona crowd, his soldiers and what have you. And I think it became well known all this and that's how we found out about it.

Did you stay in touch with your African police colleagues?

No, most of them just disappeared, went back to their kraals. I did know of one that **was** a sergeant major and often this sergeant major was the one who came to me. I mean **this** was often... you know I spoke to him when I came across him, but I would say the last few years I was in Bulawayo I didn't see him.

So just to wrap up, how much do you think the war, the struggle in its forms helped to create a sense of Rhodesian patriotism?

I think ... Well, it's very difficult to say because you know some people left, other people stayed. I think that once I left it, I stopped thinking of the old days.

I'm just thinking because it was a pretty mobile society. Between 1945 and 1965 the white population had risen after all from 30,000 to 230,000 plus; then there was still a fluid population between '65 and 1980 with people still immigrating but also emigrating.

I think it was. I can say people who really enjoyed Rhodesia was when it was they were thinking back, thinking of the good life we used to have there. Because we did have a good life there.

(Ann – Yes, we did.)

Make no mistake and I think that's what they were thinking of whereas as Ann says you can actually, how can I put it? You can put a knife between the Rhodesian and Zimbabwean because the Rhodesians remember what Rhodesia was like; but the Rhodesians who stayed and went through Zimbabwe, they can remember that side and that wasn't a very nice side.

(00:42:48) (Ann – Both our children always turned around and said that they had a very good education and they had a very good life in Zimbabwe)

Do they regard themselves as Zimbabwean or British?

(Ann - Yes, my daughter still wants to go back)

It's a beautiful country

(Ann – Yes. Well you see the thing is, the son-in-law, he was born in Rhodesia and he comes from a farming family)

Afrikaans family or a farming family?

(Ann – No, a farming family and Kevin is our son-in-law's His father was shot by terrorists)

Oh no, really? So they attacked the farm and...?

(Ann – They were at one of the clubs. You know, one of the district clubs and the terrorists just went in and opened fire and there was three of them shot dead)

When was this?

(Ann – this must have been '70 something)

It was a long time ago, must have been the '80's

(Ann – it was in the '80's yes, I don't remember the date)

So if it was in the '80's, it was after independence then?

Yes it was

(Ann – Yes, it must be because we used to go and stay at this club when the kids were still doing their swimming and what have you in the different districts and it was there that it happened. My daughter would like to go back but our son's in South Africa. He's quite happy in South Africa at the moment. He also would like to go back. They were both born in Rhodesia, you know,so they are really true Rhodesians)

We'd all like to go back, but the country's not the same as it was...

No. The past is another country

Even now I would say if it changed tomorrow and it got better overnight.

(Ann – It would take a long time)

(00:44:56) It would take them about ten years to really get things moving.

Oh at least. The country has gone down so far that it...

(Ann – It's such a shame because we really did enjoy life in Rhodesia)

So looking back then on the '60's and the '70's in Rhodesia, some of your colleagues have said they can divide their friends between those who say "yes it was worth it, what we were trying to do" and those who say "no it wasn't worth it".

(Ann – Well, I would say No. It wasn't worth it because of the circumstances

that we have been in; that's what I would say because maybe what were we fighting for? With Peter being injured like he has been, what were we fighting for? Because now there's nothing there, is there?)

You think to yourself, what were we fighting for? Many mothers and fathers lost sons

(Ann – Yes and lots of families have been split up all over the world)

Oh, the trauma of it

(Ann – And it's a big thing, I think, that the families have been... I feel terrible for the families. Lots of our friends: they went to Australia. My brother, a year after Peter was injured, he said "no, that's it, I'm off to South Africa". I'm not going to go into the Army. I don't want this to happen to us")

But you stayed?

(Ann – Yes)

Because you felt you had to? What did you vote? Did you try and use your vote?

(Ann – No)

We did on the one occasion but we didn't vote for Mugabe. We voted for the other fellow.

Muzorewa or Nkomo?

No, Nkomo. It would have been a different story if Nkomo had got in because then again you've got the Matabele, you've got the Shona. I don't think Nkomo would really have been all that interested in taking Mashonaland. He would have liked to have settled down in Matabeleland, in Bulawayo but anyway he became, oh what was it? Vice President and then he retired.

(00:47:17) Well, there was also the pact of unity of '87 where ZANU effectively swallowed up ZAPU which is why MDC is so worried the same might happen to them now.

(Ann – Yes exactly)

Well, as you probably know, the Matabele are related to the...

(Ann – Zulu?)

Yes Zulus down there.

One last question: as an enquiry looking back on the 1960's and '70's. How racist did you feel Rhodesian society to be? How egalitarian was it?

(Ann – Very racist, I would say, definitely)

In what way?

I wouldn't say they were very racist myself. They got on alright living with the blacks and they weren't out to...

(Ann – But there wasn't lots of mixing, was there?)

No, no there was no mixing

(Ann – And the blacks and whites still didn't mix)

But I think we go back to knowing the culture. I think that basically is what it was really all about.

That were all tribal?

No, I wouldn't say it was tribal, although the Matabele are not great lovers of the Shona. But then in Bulawayo a lot of the Shona, both male and female have married the Ndebele and I don't know what you would call them now but anyway, so they let them call themselves Shona.

What about the part Europeans? After all, how big a society was there that was part African/part European?

Coloureds

(Ann – oh the coloureds, yes but they never liked the blacks)

I was going to say, where were they in society?

(00:49:49) (?) because we never had them in the police force

(Ann – no, the coloureds...)

It was black and white in the police force

(Ann – Yes, you very seldom had coloureds in the police force)

Was that a self exclusion or was it a deliberate policy not to recruit? Not to accept volunteers?

(Ann – I think it might have been deliberate because you know when we got married I was interviewed by a member in charge of the police station and I was interviewed to see if I was...)

Acceptable?

(Ann – yes)

You see, that was the way it was. In the Army as well, I do remember although I can't really be 100% sure. But I do remember there was a coloured battalion, not even a battalion, a company I think, just coloureds.

So were there certain professions that the coloureds, to use the term that you did, that they went into? Were they artisans, were they professionals?

(Ann – Oh they did start coming in, didn't they? But as I say, they just didn't mix but I think the coloureds were more on the white side than the black side. It was a shame really)

How about white society? How egalitarian was it? We have this idea of class structures in Britain in the 1960's and the '70's and of sharp lines

(Ann – Yes, I would say that there is a distinction there)

In what way?

What do you mean? Between the whites and the blacks?

I'm talking about within the white community in Rhodesia?

The white community in Rhodesia?

Was that also divided by class?

(Ann – Yes)

(00:51:54) I wouldn't say so. I don't think we were all that snotty nosed or anything like that you know, Put it that way, but I just think that we (?) them like in the police force. I would see two town men or something like that in the morning and in the afternoon I would see people who could be the President. So there was no problems like that. It's just that (?) so it's never going to change I think.

So you'd say it was more egalitarian? For the whites it was a meritocracy? On merit?

I would think so. Mind you, the owner of a shop or something like that wouldn't mix with some layabout or anything like that. He'd have a different circle of friends.

Ok, so that's a different class division then?

(Ann – I think there is a different class. I think there is a level)

It was still there though?

(Ann – Yes)

But in a different way?

(Ann – Yes in a different way)

Because I've read that it's artisanal, white collar, skilled or landed farming community and the businessmen. So there were strata of society?

(Ann – Yes, but I think it's the same anywhere in any country, isn't it?)

It's just that when you compare it to what would have been, had you stayed in Britain. What were your family circumstances and how you would have identified yourself?

(Ann – I see, yes)

Differently

(Ann – It is because I mean being in Zimbabwe for fifty five years, it's very hard)

It's a very different structure?

(Ann – Yes, it is)

Similarities, but different?

(Ann – Yes it is)

(00:54:02) Mr and Mrs Fitzgerald, thank you very much indeed. You've been very kind and very patient. Thank you for your time.

End of interview