Staff Interview 6 Audio 110324 MARCH 2024 - JTW - DEPTH - 27 MINS

[Other comments:]

**[Moderator explains market research]**

**The first part of the interview is generally about memory and memory keeping for you personally, and then how you view it for the children where you work. Then the second part of the interview will be just your opinions about the archive and what you think about that as an idea and that kind of stuff. One of the things that we've been doing with the interviews, what we were initially doing, we said to folk, if they were comfortable, do you want to bring something along to the interview that reminds you of something good or important from the past that you could talk about. I realise I've not done that with you, but if I was to have asked you that, is there anything that comes to mind for you that you think I would have maybe brought that concert ticket, or that photograph, or that…?**

Well I'd probably go even back further than that, I've still got some of my old teddies up in my mum's loft when I was a wee boy, so it'd probably be one of them. She keeps threatening to want to get rid of them as well, and I keep saying no, mum, we're keeping them.

**So they're from when you were really quite young?**

Aye, from when I was a wee baby. I think most families keep all those wee mementos don't they from when you're a kid, and wee things like teddies, and the old school reports and all that sort of stuff. So probably the teddies, if I'd have brought something it would have been a wee cuddly toy.

**That's a really interesting thing that you said there, so your mum's got these things for you, and she's got them there, and she's not sure about keeping them, but you want her to keep them rather than you having them?**

I think I'll get them eventually, because I feel like the older my mum gets she moves things out of her house in bits, so they come to mine. So every time I visit her there's always something, oh I found that in the garage, it's yours, do you want it? I found that in the loft, do you want it? She's moving it out bit by bit, so I'll get the teddies one day I reckon.

**So they'll come to you eventually then. She's been the custodian of them in the meantime.**

Absolutely. I'm sure the old school reports are still up there as well. I'm not as keen to study them as much! I'll take the teddies.

**Aye, nicer times.**

Aye.

**Are you the kind of person yourself that does that? You've mentioned families do that, they keep wee mementos. Are you a person that keeps things yourself?**

Not really. I'm not really good at that. I'm not one for keeping mementos like concert tickets or trinkets or anything like that, so I'm kind of a minimalist. I don't really keep a lot of wee mementos and all that. It's stored in the old grey matter I think, yes.

**If you just keep memories then, I'm just wondering about, so if somebody would maybe say, I'll take a photograph to remember that, for you is that then meeting up with people and talking about things from the past?**

Aye. I think as well, I'm pretty bad at remembering when things happened. Like when somebody jogs my memory and has a wee trinket or a wee photo or something like that, it freshens it up for you, because I'm terrible for, what year did I do that, and when did that happen? So I think as well for our kids in here, their lives are so much more jumbled than ours, so it must be even more difficult for them not having the memory box of things in their mum's loft or whatever.

**Absolutely, that's definitely the kinds of things that we're hearing. What about digital items for you, are you a person that takes photographs in your phone or anything like that, do you use social media?**

I'm not on social media, but I do take a picture on my phone occasionally, but I'm not prolific at it by any stretch of the imagination. If you went through my phone it'd probably be like 500 pictures of my dog and three of something else. There's not a lot in there.

**Important relationship in your life.**

Aye, absolutely.

**What about for you personally, how long have you worked at [F\*]?**

I've been here, it was three years in November, just over three.

**Is there any memories that you've particularly got from your time working there that you think that'll probably stay with me for a long time?**

A lot of it will to be honest with you. It's an emotional job. It's hard not to be attached to the kids, and the memories, and the things we've done. I'm sure that'll carry on.

**Yes, you're right, when I was doing some research in residential childcare before as well that was an awakening for me about how full-on the job is.**

Aye, it's almost like you have two lives. I've got a family at home and then a family here sort of thing. You're splitting your time between home and – this is your home as well, you know? I always say that to the kids, this is my house – I'm saying, no, this is our house, I live here as well. Aye, it is almost like you've got two lives, and both of them are just as intense usually.

**I can absolutely believe it. In terms of the young people then if we switch away from you towards them and their memories, are there any things that come up in your experience that you think, oh this will be important for them to remember? Are there any things that stand out for you?**

I definitely think things like birthdays and Christmas are quite important. Especially birthdays because a lot of the kids don't seem to like Christmas as much. I think because it's a big family event and the birthday is much more personal, much more about them. But definitely birthdays, and things like holidays and stuff like that as well, massive sort of things, they're the sort of things you remember when you get older, your holidays and stuff like that. It's mega important to keep track of that stuff, and even more difficult for our kids, because like we were saying before they move around so much a lot of them. So it's difficult moving from place to place and having a record of all that stuff.

**Yes, as you say things can be a wee bit more fragmented for them than would be otherwise. You guys, you go on holiday with them don't you?**

Aye, we do. All sorts of stuff. Even things like the other week there I was asked, The Greatest Showman singalong in [E\*] with [D\*]. That's the sort of thing as well, I've actually got a photo I need to put on the archive. But those sorts of things as well, they're the big events. She came away from that and said, that was better than Christmas. That's a massive experience that you've just had there. So that's the sort of thing they probably need to keep track of.

**She wants music and singing on here as well, so.**

Absolutely, adores it. There's never a day goes by that The Greatest Showman is not on at some point in here. We get at least one hit belted out.

**Good to encourage the talents isn't it?**

Absolutely.

**Because I've heard she's very good as well.**

Yes, she's a great singer. Great wee singer.

**You maybe take pictures of things like that – do the young people ask you, do you do that spontaneously yourself because you think it might be important, is it a combination of the two?**

I would say for me it's probably me who does it, I take that on thinking it's going to be important. Because it might not be important for them until they've left us. They might think that was a great night, and by that time it's too late, you've not got the memento. But if we do it for them then they will have that. So I think it's me that does that more than them saying take a picture, and we need to remember this.

**Yes, I think that's something that was learned in this project as well, it's great for kids to participate but there's a responsibility on the adults, because you don't know when you're a wean what you…**

No, all you're looking for is the future when you're a kid, and it's not until you get a wee bit older that you start reminiscing and looking back and remembering. So when you're young all you're worried about is getting old, and then when you get older all you think about is back in the good old days when I was young sort of thing.

**When you've got more years behind you than in front of you!**

Exactly. Panic stations.

**Have any of the young people reacted to any of the things you've done, so like if you've taken pictures or you've kept something for them say for maybe [C\*] or whoever, have you ever shown them? Because I know he keeps a memory book and stuff like that.**

Aye, well we do do memory books every now and again for them, sometimes at big birthdays or when they're leaving or something like that. Apart from chatting about stuff I've never really sat and gone through, shown them a photo and said remember when we did this, or shown them a wee memento or anything like that. Most of the time it's much more about chatting about things, remembering things, having a laugh about it, than it is with an actual physical thing.

**Yes, they've still got you there to have the storytelling thing.**

Aye, but again I would say when they move on from here they might want to say to somebody else or show a member of their family, I went to such and such with [K\*]. Who's [K\*]? This is him in this photo, sort of thing, you know?

**I know [F\*] not that old, there's a good few young people have moved on now since I first started, but maybe only a couple that have moved on before that who might have come back looking for anything. Have you ever been involved with any young people coming back looking for anything yourself?**

Aye, all the time. Just last week I was helping [S\*] move a fridge-freezer, so there's always something. I wouldn't say I'm involved in anything like – we do ask them back, and are you coming round for your tea and stuff like that, but I've not really been involved in much personally promoting them coming back or asking them to come back. They all kind of come back anyway, and quite regularly.

**I remember that being a thing at [F\*], coming back for their tea. I'm just wondering, when young people come back for their tea, I'm wondering about the conversation round the table when somebody comes back, is that how are you getting on now, is it stories from when you lived there?**

A wee bit of both. A wee bit of reminiscing and a wee bit of chatting about – and oftentimes they chat about their experience of being here to the younger folk that have just moved in. There's a lot of reminiscing and a lot of talking about the present day and how they're managing their lives and all that sort of stuff.

**Thank you very much, that's all the memory type stuff, so we'll move on now and just have a wee chat about the archive. I was explaining it the other day when I was up last week, and that idea of having this thing where young people can potentially log on and access stuff in the future. What's your general impression of that as just an idea rather than the actual archive itself?**

I think it's a brilliant idea. It's like we were discussing before, our kids didn't have the option to go to their mum's house to look through the loft, that wee box of mementos that have been kept for them. So we've almost got to be the custodians of their mementos, and having a place where they can see it without having to turn up somewhere or go somewhere is perfect for them. Because they will all move around and do different things, and having the ability to do that whenever they want – because nobody knows when they're going to want to reminisce about stuff, or talk to somebody, or show somebody something. Having that available almost on your phone is perfect for young people now isn't it.

**Yes, everybody seems to be positive about the idea. It's been the technology and the legal aspects.**

I think that's the more frightening side, the technology and the legal ramifications of it all. But I think as an idea it's a brilliant idea.

**Have you been on and put stuff on the archive, then? You mentioned something earlier.**

I've not yet. I've had a look through but I've not put anything on it yet. But I have got that wee photo of me and [D\*] at The Greatest Showman I need to stick up there, so that'll be going on soon.

**That's the kind of thing you think should be going into this archive, these particular special occasions?**

Aye. Things that we maybe just think are, it's just a wee night out, but to them it's probably a huge night out and a great memory for them. Like I was saying, [D\*] saying it's better than Christmas. She loved Christmas, so to know that she thinks something's bigger than Christmas it's obviously really important to her, so I think it's important that we keep a hold of that memory for her for the future.

**I'm excited for this project, [?where I'm going to put that 0:15:19.1] about her saying if that goes along into the archive as a comment, she could make a wee comment on that photo or something. Yes, there's options in there for it, isn't it. Pictures can go on there, have you had any thoughts about other things that could potentially go on in terms of digital content? Pictures should be the obvious thing that people are thinking about.**

Aye, surely you could put a wee video clip up there of some things as well couldn't you. There must be things like at school, [D\*] does talent show things and all that. I know there might be some kind of legal ramifications with data protection and all that with all the kids being there and all that sort of stuff, but certainly those sorts of things like a wee performance or something like that. Even things like opening your Christmas presents, it'd be nice to video that sort of stuff. Or even like being on holiday, a wee video somewhere, all that sort of stuff. All the sort of stuff your dad or your mum would have wandered around with a camcorder chasing you about, all that sort of stuff, the sort of stuff we should be recording for them.

**We've been trying to work out consent, so we're putting together a general guidance, but it'll be down to individual places about how they handle – how do you think consent needs to be handled with this kind of thing?**

I guess it's down to everybody's personal preference, isn't it? I'm not really bothered if there's photograph of me on the archive or anything like that, but there might be somebody that doesn't really want their stuff put up on there, so fair enough if they don't want it up there. But aye, I wouldn't mind, and I think it's down to the individual really.

**Even the young people I was speaking to, they're no different as well. [C\*], she wanted to rubberstamp every photo to make sure she looked all right, whereas [C\*] was like, I don't really care.**

Aye, put them up, I don't mind! Yes, I suppose it's all down to the individual.

**We've been thinking as well about different things about people potentially changing their mind in the future about that as well, and removing consent or giving it back. So that might be a fluctuating thing for these young people.**

Aye, moods down here can go up and down for the young people, so one week if you ask them the wrong week whether they wanted to be part of the digital archive they might say no. But the week after you could probably ask them and if they're in a better frame of mind they would say yes. So I think having the ability to give consent or remove it is probably a good thing as well.

**You mentioned earlier this other question I got was about responsibility, so you mentioned earlier that you have a view that you've got a responsibility there to do that.**

Yes.

**Is that a fair assessment?**

Yes, I would say so. I think as the adults in the house we've all got a responsibility to do that, and to upload things, and to make sure that they've got a record of what they've done. It is much more of a parent sort of thing to do when the kids are younger isn't it, you take the photos, you take the videos, you're the one that organises the trips and all that sort of stuff. Aye, I think it's important for us to take that on.

**In terms of access, so we anticipate that young people can continue to have access into the future, what about the adults who work there in terms of their access? If you were to work there for some years and then move on or retire, would you want to still be able to access that? How would you feel about that?**

I think I would still want to access it. I think even if I left I would still be interested in what the kids were up to, and what they've been doing, so I think I would still want to access it. Obviously I don't know if I'd want to upload any pictures of myself, what I'm doing in my life, but it'd be nice to see their life and what they're getting up to, and how they're moving through life.

**That relates to what you were saying earlier, the emotional aspect of your job, that you've almost got two homes and two families to a certain extent. Is that the thing that drives that position do you think?**

Aye, probably. But probably just for the kids having access to that is what drives it. Because I've not got anybody to look at that sort of stuff for them, so we definitely need to be responsible for that. We can't just send them away when they're 18 years old with jumbled up thoughts. They might not have the clearest memories. So having all that stuff to jog their memory is probably really good for them. I think aye, we should be the brunt of the responsibility for that. Also it'd be nice for the kids to be able to upload a photo as they're getting older and they all get phones and tablets and stuff like that, it'd be nice for them to be able to stick stuff up on it that they think is important.

**Yes, it's certainly set up in that way that they could be given logins and potentially put stuff up, and maybe somebody moderating that.**

We'd need that, we'd need a moderator!

**Yes, that can certainly be setup to make sure it's nice and safe. One of the things we're putting as a default in the system is that your login has a time, so the time that you were there to the time that you left, and you basically have access to everything that's uploaded in that time. Then you can potentially be added to other folders as well. Your thinking about that was, if I live in [F\*] from 2010 to 2020, I know everybody who was there, I can see everything that's there, and maybe young people that come in after I've left there's no need for me to have access to all that stuff as well. I don't know what you think about that?**

Yes, I think that's probably fair. I don't really think it's fair on the kids here now to have the kids from the past looking in on their lives just now. It feels a bit weird to me. The kids who have left, they still come back, they still know the goings on of the house, they still know who's here, they know the new people that have come in, they know the new kids. So they've still got access – I'm not saying it's going to be like that for all kids in every residential place over Scotland, but aye they still know the goings on of the house without having access to a digital archive I suppose.

**Yes, I suppose the only complicating factor I was thinking [unclear words 0:23:02.4] like [D\*] or [M\*] coming back for Christmas dinner or something in their sports cars. Because they do come back, your kids do come back.**

They do, aye. They're probably at an age where they can take a photo of themselves. They're the ones that should maybe be taking on the record keeping and the memento keeping. They've got their own houses, they've got their own lives, they're moving on. I think if they came back for Christmas, there's nothing to stop them taking a picture of themselves and keeping it on their phone.

**What about interaction with this then, it's set up you can put comments on and stuff like that, how do you feel about that generally?**

Aye I think it's good. I think it's a good idea again. It'd be nice for folk to add their own wee comments in, just to add to the memories, having different people chiming in on what they thought of whatever's happened. It would just add to the memory I suppose.

**Because I guess a photograph might trigger different memories.**

Absolutely, it might have been enjoyable for somebody and maybe not so enjoyable for somebody else.

**Yes, that was a great day; no it was shite!**

Aye!

**We've got the moderation there as well just to help the comments…**

I think that's important, because given the opportunity to write something offensive about somebody, they'll take it. So I think a moderator is quite important for that I would say.

**I suppose we're [?take a lesson 0:24:56.6] in which social media can go sometimes.**

Aye, exactly. Some of the comments can be quite horrific on social media, so I'm assuming it'll be almost like Facebook-lite, but there might be opportunity for somebody to write something not very nice to somebody else about something. Aye the comment section can go a wee bit in a downward spiral when you get some right negative things. Most of them are all right when you read social media, but you do get the odd thing in there that's kind of horrific, so no need. So, moderators required.

**Absolutely. Okay, that's all the questions I've got, is there anything you want to ask me or check?**

No, I think it's a brilliant thing that you're doing, I think it's a great idea, and being set up brilliantly. I think the wee website is great. I think it's a brilliant thing, and long may it continue. I hope it gets traction and starts taking off throughout the sector, because I think it's a great thing for them.

**Residentially at [G\*] council, going in to speak their teams about it – just like you were saying, the idea of it's good, the practicalities of it are tricky on a few different fronts, but the actual idea I think people and residential are like, oh yes. They seem pretty open to it.**

Aye I think we're moving into that sort of world as well, where maybe photos and trinkets aren't kept as much, but photos on your phone are, a digital archive is kind of the way things are headed now. It's not as much printed out photos, it's much more photos on your phone. So I think a digital archive is definitely the way forward.

**[END OF TRANSCRIPT]**