



Unheard Voices: interviews with deafened people

Derek Johnston
Interviewed by Ann Thallon

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IMPORTANT

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[Track 1]

Good morning. This is Ann Thallon interviewing Derek Johnston for the Unheard Voices project in Edinburgh. The Speech to Text Reporter's name is Hilary Maclean. Right Derek, so, can you tell us your full name and when you were born and where you were born, please?

My full name is Derek James Johnston. I was born in Newport, Fife. I was born in 15/01/52. I've been brought up in a market garden with my Mum and Dad.

Tell me Derek... your background there - did you live with your Mum and your Dad?

My background was with Mum and Dad and the market garden business in Balmullo and selling fruit and vegetables and we had pigs, hens, it was an animals farm as well.

Was your Mum helping with that?

Yes Mum was helping looking after me in-between.

Did you have brothers and sisters or is it just you?

My brother was 10 years older than me but we never got on well. It's just life.

So, Derek, what are your earliest memories? What was your hearing like away back then in 1952?

I can remember there was a lot of people around me doing tests and I was a bit worried, what was happening to me at that time but when my mother, as I got older, my mother told me that when I was five years old my hearing just went just like that, and the headmaster phoned up my mother to come down to see him and he tried everything, got me to sit down and tried everything, dropping toys, something that made a noise, bursting balloons so I maybe have a reaction to hearing but I never heard anything so that's how my mother told me as I got older.

So you were actually five when your hearing just went overnight?

Yes.

Do you remember hearing sounds before that?

Yes I do. I can remember when I was in the pram with animal noises. I can remember that, but that's a long time ago now, but all of a sudden blank.

So when your hearing went when you were five, do you remember being aware of that?

No, no, no I don't. I remember being aware having lots of meetings and the Council was going to put me into Donaldson's Deaf School for the deaf, Donaldson's in Edinburgh or Dudhope deaf and dumb school and there was no place at that time run by Fife so my father decided to take me to Dundee and I stayed there from 5 until 11 years old.

You were actually at 5 years old you were –

Yes.

You mentioned the ferry over from Fife to Dundee.

Newport to Dundee, by ferry.

Was that quite a long journey?

I'd been staying there, like a hostel there, been at boarding school then a school so didn't get a chance to get home until summertime, Christmastime, Easter. Away from my family.

What are your memories then of being at - what was it called - Dudhope?

Dudhope deaf and dumb school. Still there. Not a deaf and dumb school now. It's a - I think it's back to a house and the school is in Social Services offices, so it's all changed. I've passed there a few times. Got memories about them.

[05:05]

What sort of memories do you have about being at a primary school as a boarding person as a young lad?

Poor. Poor. I didn't like it at all because you'd be in bed by 8 o'clock and very strict, it's very strict, got to clean your shoes, get your clothes on tidy, serve, be there for the line up, go in groups of twos all the way down to the school, the same coming back and got to clean your shoes and you can only watch the TV from 7 until 8, and it was all black and white at that time and by 8 o'clock everybody would be in bed and put straight to bed and Mrs Dunlop used to come round 'is everybody in bed?' light goes off then you could see the light on the other side of the room. We used to get out in the middle of the night with pillow fights and sometimes you'd see a light somebody coming up and run back to bed and hide and pretend to sleep and that. It was great times.

There were some good fun times as well. What about other kids. Did you make friends?

No we didn't have any photos. Didn't have school group photos, never had anything like that.

Right so there were quite a number of other children at the school and –

They were all deaf and dumb, some can't speak and some got a speech impediment and like myself some got hard of hearing, a mixture.

A real mixture and of course your speech was absolutely fine because you'd been speaking

Since I was up to 5

And hearing

I heard until I was 5 and that was it.

What was the teaching like? Can you remember much about that at primary school?

Can remember two of the teachers, they were strict as well, you couldn't do what you'd like to do. There was more of, how could I say, games like basketball, football, but when I left I

went back to have a look, a year after I left, and they've improved it much better, they have typewriters for people for typing and they have pottery-making, something to do with the hands and I'm amazed since I left what they've put in now to the school, there is a lot of hand-making things like woodwork, doing woodwork as well and pottery –

And they didn't have anything like that when you were there?

No

It was all strict and regimented. How about sport. Did you do any football?

Not much. Teachers were keen on getting them to go out to do keep fit things and that, a lot of running about round the block, every day round the block for about 10 minutes.

[08:51]

You said that you don't really have very happy memories of your primary school. So, what happened after that when you were about 11?

Well, when Dad had taken me back to Dundee back to school again at the hostel, I told my father 'I don't want to go back, I hate it' and I broke down and he said 'right that's it you're not going back' so my father took me away from there and the Council was involved and they were going to take my father to court for not taking me back to school, and of course my father was a friend with another Councillor. He backed up my father and this had been going on for a few months and gave me a trial period of Balmullo primary school - try it for 2 months and from there I went, fantastic, and then I went back to Bell Baxter, Cupar.

That's the secondary school. But you were actually at the local primary school for 2 months. You say it's fantastic. What way was it fantastic? How was it different from Dudhope?

I got more help from teachers than what I did at Dudhope. A lot of my friends with - secondary school especially, and the teachers go out their way to help me as well because they brought me to the front of the class and they had a monitor with a microphone and ear loops and loops round the chair and pick up the sound while the teachers speaking to me and I

could see in the front and can lipread as well. It was great that time. Every teacher I go to different classes I'm always in the front so I could see the lips and hear with the loops round the chair.

Tell me, you could actually hear quite well with all that equipment then at that age?

Yes, yes. But I had the hearing-aid on as well - one of these long old-fashioned hearing-aids.

How did you get on with your old-fashioned hearing-aids? How did you get on with them? Were they comfortable? Were they any help?

I'm used to it I'm used to it, I can , if I have them, its worth having them. I have to have it I can hear what's going on.

But with the lipreading?

I lip read a lot. If I'm facing a different way I maybe hear sound but I never know what you said. If you speak when my head is facing that way I would have to turn round and ask you to repeat it please or something like that.

So you can hear sound sometimes but you need to look at somebody to communicate.

What I hate is noisy places like a club, a pub, football match. I hate these, the background noise, can't pick up what your partner's saying I hate that.

That must have a real impact in your life then.

I can't, sometimes my voice varies when I'm talking. My wife used to say, wave her hand, down, because I've not got no balance of how high or how low I am, trying to keep it level all the time.

[12:35]

OK. Take you back for a little while, back to your secondary school at Bell Baxter, big secondary school in Cupar in Fife. How about friends there, did you make friends there, were you quite sociable there?

Quite sociable. They helped me. The odd one or two bully - take the mickey out of you with hearing-aids and that, call you names and that, but sometimes my friends helped me out, sort them out.

You got friends to help you sort them out and did that work?

Yes it does, it does. Some of them are bigger than me though.

So that was quite a happy time for you?

Yes, yes.

How about your exams and things like that?

That went fine I can see the paper, I can read and it's fantastic.

So how did you feel about yourself at secondary school?

I felt much better there, being at the other school at Dundee - I was a bit more happier. To be quite honest, was more happy there because I had more freedom do what I want and teachers give you, if I'm stuck, go out thier way 'that's right that's what it is' and –

And you're just in with everybody else and you were just included.

There were various teachers can - if I can't go into like some sports like rugby for instance, the teachers kept me off there as well because I've got a hearing-aid and I can't use rugby for tackle and might break my hearing-aid and that's one of them. Other ones, swimming, if you don't want to go swimming because the hearing has to come out for swimming sometimes they'd ask 'do you want to go, Do you not want to go'. As long as the teacher knows that I'm deaf it's fantastic. Put their hands up wave to you and try this, try that. It's great.

You do swim then Derek?

No - rusty now - haven't been swimming for - I'd love to go back.

OK so, school went well, secondary school went well, then what happened to you after that?

I went to Elmwood college in Cupar again for a year - an agricultural course. Then after that I got some other jobs like East of Scotland Factors, work in an office, then working with my Mum and Dad, my brother in a market garden...

[15:30]

What about at that time in your life, let me see, you would have been what about 18, 19, round about that age? You about -

18, 19 -

That would be the late sixties, late 1960s.

To be honest I like the sixties and seventies. That's one of the - once I got older it makes me think - the music, the groups are much better than nowadays, learning to drive, going out and about, making friends, I really liked the sixties and seventies. I've got happy memories of these. I'd love to go back.

You mentioned music and you've got a hearing impairment. How did music, how did you know about the music and the wonderful music back in the sixties and seventies?

Things like TV, *Top Of The Pops* I'd watch it there and there would be something on I like or love. I put it in my mind and I buy the record and I get the record player beside me and listen listen until I pick it up so if a song comes through the radio and it's turned up I recognise who it is way back in sixties and seventies but eighties I've no interest in pop -

I don't think that's uncommon!

Jumping up and down –

Did you go dancing?

Yes I did go dancing a lot yes. Weekends we'd go dancing, St Andrews, used to go to youth clubs as well. Darkness, you know how some clubs have lights dimmed down and I hate that, can't see the lips. I can remember going to the cubs and the scouts when I'm young, I'm going further back a bit, going to cubs and scouts and my mother would come down to pick me up at the bus stop at Balmullo and on the way walking back my Mum used to shine a torch in her mouth so I could see what she's saying and in the winter time, and my Mum did a lot for me so did my father, still got memories of that.

They really supported you.

Oh yes.

And your brother being 10 years older.

I think being away for so long and he's older than me we never got on well.

Can you tell me a bit about how your Mum and Dad supported you then? What are your memories of that? Did they you get round the fact that you were deaf? Your Dad took you away from school –

When Balmullo was starting up a new football team I can remember that they didn't have enough players and they asked me to play. And I was over the moon getting picked for this team. I was only there for a month or something, and I can remember I was not playing and my father came down to see me play and I wasn't playing at that time and my father asked me 'why are you not playing?' and I said 'they've got somebody else' but at that time I didn't know what was going on, my father went up to see one of the managers there asked 'what's going on?' and picked somebody because I've got a hearing-aid, they picked somebody better than me, that's what I realise, oh right. Old-fashioned hearing-aid, my Mum used to make a strap round the body and hearing aid clipped on. If I had a football strip over there and I'm

running and get it rubbed and rubbed and rubbed and chest and that and it's a lot of noise going in my ears.

[19:50]

Because of the kind of hearing-aid you had to wear then the bit on your body and the football strip kind of messed that up. OK. Now, you said that you started to work in market gardening a bit and was that something that you chose because it was something that really interested you or was it something that you thought, right, what I'm trying to say is, did your deafness have any impact on your choice of work?

Not in the market garden side but my Mum always wanted me to work in an office. I thought it's a nice clean safe job but when I worked at the East of Scotland Factors, I found a lot of disadvantage was the phones going in and I couldn't use that but this employer kept me on for two years but I felt like I want to move on further, so I left and went to - Newburgh floor covering at Newburgh, worked in a factory there, starting at 6 finish at 6 at night and shift work but I find generally it was going too long. That's working in the farm in-between, if my Mum and Dad needs my help, sometimes you're not busy sometimes you're busy, so that's in-between.

Where are we now, let me see, we're in the seventies are we?

Seventies, yes. After Newburgh, then I went to Fife Council, Parks department, there for about 4 years. Then, I went to the university after that, so I've been there 25 years. As a gardener.

As a gardener?

1981 I started and I left 4 years ago because of the problems I'd been getting –

OK let's take a pause for a moment there before we get into that next bit because it's a natural break as we get into your career at working as a gardener with the university. Is that OK Derek?

Yes.

[Closed between 22:20 and 37:50]

So, Derek I was just thinking that there you were working and having all this trouble after so long. Can I take you back just a little bit? You mentioned friends earlier on. What about your social life, your love life if you like. Did you have girlfriends? Did you get married?

I had a girlfriend and I got married and we've got three kids, two boys and a girl, been married 37 years coming this August, this year, 37 years. My wife is a great help, a great care for me, without her I'd never be the same. She goes out her way to help me as well. She's good to communicate with me.

You've got a partner there who supports you all the time.

She is my partner. Supports me all the years up until now. Great.

How did she help you in this really difficult time with your work?

When I first met her I mentioned I had a hearing-aid and I thought that might put her off but she took it in very nicely and - how can I say?

She just accepts you as the person that you are?

Accepts me as I am and I feel wonderful today, this day I'm still happy with her.

How did she cope with you having such a hard time in 2004?

She goes out her way. I know when others carry on she used to go for walks in the afternoon because she works in the mornings up until 12 or 1 o'clock, she gets finished and by the time she comes home we go for a walk just to get the fresh air, forget things, and she came with me to the meetings and she was really a help.

So with her support and with your GPs support?

Support me in any way she can. Even if the phone rings, I can't use phone you see so she answers the phone and then take notes what it is and she tells me even at night-time when it's time to get up she gives me a nudge, get up.

[40:37]

OK that's great. How about your kids? Being deaf, has that had any effect on you as a Dad do you think?

I'd like to be able to hear things but I've got to accept what I am now, but I get on with my life as it is as long as no one bothering me.

How old are your kids now?

Fine, fine, since I left my firm my GP helped me set up my own business and I've been doing my own business for 4 years now, got a new van, tools, and it's been fantastic. Everything's going up and up all the time. Wish I'd done that when I was a bit younger. Got my son, he helps me at weekends but at the moment he's in Australia - a tree surgeon - and he's coming back in October so he'll be with me to help and I've got another two men working under me and it's a great place, I love working. My own boss and start when I like, finish when I like and get on with it.

You're smiling there. Your own boss and other people's boss as well.

Yes, yes.

And your son has gone into the same sort of line of business as a tree surgeon.

Once people know, it's word by mouth - I've got an advert in the local paper and that's been coming in quite good. I'm trying not to take too much on so I can't cope with it all but I am very busy. Especially summertime it's very, very busy. In the winter I've got a lot of digging, pruning and tree work but quieter but still enough to tick over and then come the spring through autumn is my busiest time.

How about your hearing round about this time when things were pretty bad in 2004 round about there, how was your hearing at that point? Was there anything else happening about your hearing then?

Got two new hearing-aids one for both sides, and my - what's his name again? Nose, Ear, and throat specialist said to me, 'How would you like to have a cochlear implant?' This is before 2004. This had been going on before the carry on at my workplace. So I had tests and back and forward to Edinburgh and in 2004 in February I was called for a cochlear implant and got my operation done and waited for the switch on 6 weeks and I found it powerful - a lot of noise. So I had to go back to Edinburgh to get it retuned to put the volume down a bit and I'd been going back and forward and had a hearing test and I found that my cochlear implant hurts, I wasn't picking up things, and at this moment I don't use it now, since I've had the operation, I felt a bit disappointed with that, in a way, but I've got my back up - my other hearing-aid and I should get on with my life as it is.

Can you remember why you made the decision to go for a cochlear implant?

It was if I was suitable or not and there were two persons thinking about that and asking me and I met other people with a cochlear implant and got talking to them and it made me more keen to go for it which I did go for it but unfortunately it didn't do what I expected.

So you really had your hopes up that it might make a difference?

Doctor said don't build up your hopes until after switch on. See how you get on. So I'd been warned it could go - it might not go and it didn't go for me, so I just got to put up with it. I'm disappointed, but as I said again I've got a hearing-aid, I'm happy with that, get on with my life.

I am interested in that 6 week period between having the operation for the cochlear implant and the switch on, because you have those 6 weeks with no sound at all?

No I had this hearing-aid on. Still have sound, they said come away and listen and concentrate on the cochlear, but I couldn't do it, I couldn't pick it up. I had another operation

when I was 21 for an operation in my ear to find out the problem, this was at the RI. Prof. Gibb was my surgeon. I had to wait until 21 because my head stopped growing and when 21 came up, the doctor referred me to the RI, and had an operation there but he found the problem was in the inner ear of the head and he didn't want to operate on it because I might turn into a vegetable or get worse so he had to leave it and left it at that. I can remember looking forward to it and waking up and I said to the nurse 'is it OK?' and then she didn't say much about that and when my Mum came in I was really disappointed when she said they didn't go for it, stopped halfway, so that was that.

So, that was another disappointment. Was that when you were 21 - had you met your wife by then?

Yes met my wife by then. She was my girlfriend at that time. I feel disappointed. I'd looked forward to that. All that time since I went deaf, at 5 years, when the doctor told me you have to wait until 21 for an operation I really thought I would be able to get a fix and hear sound, wow, look forward to life. Unfortunately it didn't. Another let down. But I'm not bothered. I'm just happy.

And you found that life went on anyway and you still got the girl.

Yes I've still got her.

[47:54]

So let's fast forward then to here you are with your own business now. What about the future?

I'm getting old! Well I'm 57. I'm just hoping that when my son comes back, I still want to carry on with the business going from strength to strength but once my son comes back I hope he'll work and I might be on standby once I get older. I'm not doing too much tree climbing nowadays but may be a medium tree but not large trees, that's one of my advantages I'm cutting down. I'm doing a lot of physical work like digging, cutting grass and that, keep me fit and trim.

Absolutely, I can see that Derek! I haven't asked you about any help that you got from any organisations, you know particularly round about the time that you went for your cochlear implant that wasn't successful for you. Apart from the NHS was there any help around for you at that time?

There was a lot of help from Fife Sensory Awareness in Kirkcaldy. They went out of their way to help me a lot. They tried. Had to go to my old workplace to see if they could get ways to help me with my hearing awareness but they had a meeting one morning there for a morning and they found there was nothing needed changed, everything is suitable for the way I've got my hearing-aid on. The only change I need was a mobile phone. A works mobile phone they were supposed to have given me, which they never had, I always used my own phone, and I got a letter about six months later doing everything to get me to come back and I couldn't face it after the carry on seeing the boss wanted me to come back clear this up, but it had been on too long and there was no way of getting this fixed.

Yeah, it's gone too far. Do you think that - that your workplace was generally aware of how to help employees with hearing impairment?

They're quite good but some people sight at you like an idiot, you can tell by the tone to the voices and the shaking their heads and all that, they're not aware of what a hard of hearing person is, they're not really aware, but Fife Sensory Awareness has meetings, awareness groups up explaining just letting them know the outcome of a person with hard of hearing and hasn't got a choice, different people give them awareness course to show how bad they are.

Really in a way your employers were not hearing about deaf awareness - they weren't in the right frame of mind to think, right, this is our responsibility to think differently to support our employees.

They treat me differently, I know that for a start, because the way they treated people and then if they come to me I'm just like a daft person.

How did that make you feel?

Since this new boss came in - my old boss retired, he was ok, he was strict - I got on with him OK, but my other boss came in - he sort of couldn't care less but he wasn't a caring person, he wasn't a caring person.

[52:30]

OK. Did you ever get involved with any other organisations. You've talked about Fife Sensory Impairment Service but any voluntary organisations that you got?

I went with the British Red Cross, as a first aider, then I went to - on to a trainer, which I teach first aid at St Andrews, been doing that for about 8 years, 15 years altogether and I had to give it up because I've got my own business and my business comes first because I put a lot of time and effort going with the British Red Cross doing first-aid cover, doing exams and so on, and my best memory was getting hand picked out of Fife go to see the Queen Mum's birthday parade, in London, and really made my day. Got a train down there. Stayed there three days. Was in the parade with the Red Cross in London and the train back. Then a year later there was another, in a newsletter of the Red Cross wanting a story about people's life, not disability life but normal life and I put a story in and out the blue I got that and got a trip to Geneva for a week, fantastic! The best one. I got an aeroplane from Edinburgh to London stayed overnight then London to Geneva stayed there for 5 days then back to London and back to Edinburgh and back home. Happy memories. Wonderful. I'd go back if I had a chance. I really would. Really enjoyed it. This is for what I've done with the Red Cross.

That's terrific. Did you do all that –

I love meeting people but before I start a teaching class I always remind them that I've got a hearing-aid to remind them because sometimes when I look away they speak something and I don't hear them and they'll be thinking that's a bit rude, he never spoke to me for that. I always remind them I've got a hearing-aid and since I've done this they've been quite good and I've been doing this training for 8 years and it's been - it's nice to meet people and I'm approachable and they'll come to me and I teach them how to bandage and help them how to do first-aid, what do you do? how you do that? I've enjoyed it though.

What a contribution, Derek.

That was a time when I didn't have much to do but nowadays I've got lots of work.

You did such a lot at that time. When you went to Geneva, when you were travelling - how is travelling for you as a deafened person?

First time was in a plane my very first time was going from Edinburgh to London, the noise and the height and looking down wow, fantastic. And the clouds are like cotton wool balls. I was just over the moon. I was over the moon. All the people I've met there, they've been very good because I've got a hearing-aid and that, they know how to communicate and they've been fantastic.

[56:18]

Great OK. Do you have any plans for the future for travelling then?

No. Well I'm going to Turkey again this year. My daughter works in Turkey with Thomas Cook. She's been there three years now so she's going back to Turkey next week and we're going back in September to Turkey so that will be our third year we've been going back so that's our plans flying.

Sounds great. Were you ever involved with other deafened people? You've met other deafened people?

No to be quite honest, I was on a train from Fife at that time when I was at Dundee but I've never met anybody since, no.

So you've felt that you really don't know a lot of other deafened people?

I notice a lot of older people are starting to wear hearing-aids you see them behind the ears but they just have them for old age and their hearing going down but I've never met any deafened people. When I was at the deaf and dumb school I used to do the hand language but I'm a bit rusty because I've got nobody to do it to.

How did you hear about this oral history project then?

Ninewells told me about the LINK Centre and I've been at the hotel for 5 days - awareness of different kinds of help you get for hearing-aids and equipment and making friends. Still make friends, send out Christmas cards every year to the ones we know and that's something –

That was the intensive training programme then with LINK?

Yes.

That was in Edinburgh?

In Edinburgh. I can't mind the women's name. She's still in the LINK. I can't remember the name now.

It doesn't matter. This was round about 2005?

2005.

Did you get benefit out of the intensive course? You're still in touch?

Got, like Typetalk, Mrs. Jackson, she was one that came to my house to help me Typetalk, I didn't have confidence to use the text phone, phone to text or something I didn't have the confidence, I didn't have the confidence. I did get a lot of help actually. Made friends.

Did you go with your wife?

No, my wife was working so I went myself. She was working. And the minute we went to this hotel and meet everybody and met up for dinner and it was unbelievable, just all got in together, just like I'd known them for months. Get a laugh, some of them.

In this interview Derek, I've got an idea of the sort of person that you are. How would you describe yourself? If you had to write a description of the type of person you are. Right now.

Happy go lucky. I just get up and go. Just like to get on with my life there. I don't like any interference - I'm happy the way my wife helped me out and my business. That's one reason it's boosted me a bit. If it hadn't been for my GP I don't know what I would have really done.

[01:00:26]

OK, is there anything else you would like to add to this interview? Anything you think we haven't covered that you would really like to get off your chest?

Get my thinking cap on. I think I've...

[Break in recording]

Will I turn on again?

To be quite honest I wouldn't like to have somebody with a hearing-aid to go through what I've been through because you've really got to fight for your independence because the hearing people can take over you like anything but for me I fight for myself.

For somebody that is newly deafened, would you have some advice for them?

I would go out my way to help them. I would go out my way to help them. If somebody came to my door with any hearing problems I would go out my way to help them, no problem. We used to have meetings in Ninewells with - can't remember the name - can't remember the name - meetings every 3 months with the cochlear implant meeting but was never heard, used to go for Christmas meal near Christmas time, never had any meetings and that, so we lost touch with people now.

So people who are deafened should be helping each other?

Yes, same boat as same boat as what I've got cochlear, hard of hearing and everything. Emails are quite a good thing, keeps you in touch in the computer and can email them back what's going on, rather than phone up. But we never heard any more. But I would go out my way to help anybody.

Your story has gone from in the fifties when you had to be taken away from home to go to school and that didn't work out too well and the teaching wasn't that great, you were better in your local school, and the help that you got back then nowadays you've talked about email, do you think that the opportunities are better now for –

Oh yes in a way with TVs we didn't have any subtitles. It was all black and white and I didn't like watching TV very much but sometimes I'm forced to sit and watch it with Mum and Dad and that cold winter nights and got to try and think what they're saying. Sometimes you see lips and sometimes you don't see the lips and got to guess and think that 'they must have said that or this',. Nowadays I think hearing aid people ones are finding the benefits are much better than they were in my days. I'm a bit jealous actually.

If there was one thing that you could change about society, to make things better for people with hearing impairments, is there one thing that you would like to change to make things better?

I would love to be able to hear like a normal person. That's my one, top of my priority list. That's one of the things I'd love to be able to hear.

If that's not possible, then is there anything that the rest of people in Fife or the people in Scotland or the government, people generally, is there anything that other people could do that would make life better for people who have got hearing impairments?

They've got like Fife Sensory Awareness, clubs, these are quite good to have now because you don't know who to turn to, and they can put them on the right path same as the LINK as well the other one they can get involved with hard of hearing persons, put them on the right track. That's what I mean.

OK, so keep in touch with people. Derek, that's –

Can I go back halfway through before the problems at the workplace, I hold a heavy goods licence and when I, got to get a medical every 10 years and when I went to my GP I didn't mention anything about the problems I'm getting in my workplace but I went for a medical

through my GP and he passed me and I sent the forms away to DVLA in Swansea and about 2 weeks later I got it back. I can drive a lorry but my old firm is not going to let me drive a lawn mower, a car, what a mess. An absolute mess.

A real lack of understanding.

Really. They've got the voice side and then they've got the doctor gives you the good back up. I'm in-between - don't know what's going on, where to go or what's happening to me. I've never experienced this. I've never been depressed in my life to be quite honest and I'm so happy with my GP. We still keep in touch. He knows me well.

So, right now, right now, how are you feeling?

I'm feeling great, great. I wouldn't like to experience anything like that again what I've been through.

I think we'll stop it there thank you very much indeed Derek.

[End of recording]