

INTERVIEW WITH FIONA GARDINER

DATE 1 MARCH 2013

JG

00:00:04 So, today is the 1st of March 2013, we're here at 400 George Street, interviewing Fiona Gardiner. And, interviewing you is Robert Riddell and myself, Janina Gosseye. So, I think our first question is what architecture qualifications did you gain and from which institutions?

FG

00:00:24 Okay. Well, I went to the University of Queensland and I had the Bachelor of Design studies and the Bachelor of Architecture.

RR

00:00:34 And, you started in - - -

FG

00:00:35 I started in 1972.

RR

00:00:40 And, who was teaching, that you remember?

FG

00:00:43 Well, Gareth Roberts was the Professor, but he left in maybe the first – and, it was still terms in those days, not semesters – he might have left after the first semester and then Balwant Saini, there was a bit of an interregnum and he came, maybe later that year or maybe the next year.

00:01:05 But, the people that I remember, Bill Greig was the lecturer who ran first year. Ian Sinnamon, I think Ian Sinnamon might have run second year when I was doing it. Other, Bill Carr and then there was sort of all those Scottish people. Like, Hamish Muirson and, who else was there? Peter O’Gorman, I remember one of my – on the first day – one of my fellow students though Peter O’Gorman was one of the fellow students, not a lecturer. So, he must have been young.

00:01:42 Other people who were teaching, Stan Marquis Kyle, Graham de Gruchy and I remember them as the permanent staff and then there was – a lot of people used to come in and, sort of, who do I remember as the, sort of, the famous people who came in? Well, there was a wonderful structural engineer called Bernie Davis. So, people have probably talked about him.

00:02:08 So, he used to come and, do you remember Bernie Davis?

RR

00:02:12 No.

FG

00:02:13 I'm not sure whether he's even still alive and I think he was from – he might have worked at McWilliams or somewhere and I think he might, because I think might have talked about Mr McWilliam. But, he taught structures and he taught structures in a way that you could kind of understand it.

00:02:33 I think it should be 'this big' or, you know, like, he was very – he had a great personality. Then we had, also Wilf Duhs taught us specifications and he was kind of a famous, he was actually at Conrad and Gargett.

RR

00:02:48 He was?

FG

00:02:49 He was a famous specification writer. And, there were lots of other practicing architects popped in for various things, over the course of the course. And, the people that I remember, like, I remember the first day, we were up in the tower at UQ. 'Cause they didn't have the – the new building hadn't been built. I think the new building came, maybe when I was in second or third year. So, maybe '74 or something.

00:03:25 So, we – they were still in the tower and also over in the Social Sciences Building. And, the first day in the tower, Blair Wilson was there, I think he might have been President of the Institute of Architects, and I can remember him showing a slide, because, you know, it was all very new then because people had been to space, and looking back at the world from space and saying, "Kids it's yours" sort of thing.

00:03:52 So, but, other people I remember, John Dalton, everyone was crazy about John Dalton in those days, so, he used to come and - - -

RR

00:04:00 He was a bit of a super star.

FG

00:04:02 He was a – well, and I think he was probably really at the height maybe then, because he was probably doing, maybe the buildings over at Kelvin Grove and, you know, the houses were very well known and all that kind of stuff. So, he used to come.

00:04:16 Another one who used to come quite a lot, I remember, was Michael Bryce, you know, now the – and, David Hunter used to come to, who worked for – do you remember David Hunter – who worked for, well, he was probably a partner with Michael in those days. So, he worked in Michael – so, I don't know, they probably used to come and talk to us about graphics and – I can't actually remember what they – but, I have very clear memories of them coming.

00:04:45 So, there was a number of people came from the profession – would be invited from the profession.

RR

00:04:54 And, was Bill Carr?

FG

00:04:55 Yeah. I'll talk about Bill Carr.

RR

00:04:58 Somebody you didn't forget.

FG

00:05:03 Yeah. I did mention him, he was one of the – he was there, but, yeah. I mean, I thought I might talk a bit about art week. So, and Bill Carr's central to art week.

RR

00:05:13 Okay. So that's coming.

FG

00:05:14 That's coming, I don't know whether we do it now or in the - - -

JG

00:05:16 You can go ahead. Yeah.

FG

00:05:18 Well, maybe we'll do it in the next – about, what I remember about the curriculum content and quality and suitability.

JG

00:05:24 What was Bill Carr teaching at uni?

FG

00:05:26 Bill Carr, I think he did – he was big in my second year. He – well, I'll move on, but, when I hit the course, it's the 1970s, 1972, the year before – you know, so, we've got the Vietnam war, we've got all the protests, and I'm not from Queensland, I was educated in Melbourne.

00:05:55 Nineteen seventy-one, a really big year on the campus of UQ with the Springboks and all that kind of stuff. So, I suppose, an energised student population and the university was probably still quite small in those days. There was only 42 in my first year.

00:06:19 And, the course itself had probably gone through a revolution. Because, when I was studying, it was three years full time, a year off and two years full time again. And, I'm not sure of when it changed from being three years full time and three years part time.

00:06:40 But, some time probably not too long before that they changed and probably reorganised the two degrees and things. And, they probably – I was in the, sort of, in a way the course was terrible, they didn't teach you anything. And, in some ways, it was very good, because, they taught, like, in a way they were reacting against everything in – that had gone before, so, I can remember seeing photos of the generation before and they all had their white shirts and their ties on and they were all sitting there and they would have done lettering for a whole term or something.

00:07:21 They didn't teach you to draw – like, probably, we were a generation that graduated without – being very hard for people to employ. Because, we didn't come out with the kind of skills that people who had much more practical parts to their education did. And, I think it's swing back, there's a little bit more balance. But, I would – I've been to a talk where Peter O'Gorman actually apologised about that. Because, they kind of, almost said, well we realise we didn't really teach you anything practical.

00:07:58 But, in some ways they let you – there was a lot of freedom, so people could really pursue things and people have pursued, I suppose, interests that they had there that have been their passions for life and their directions.

RR

00:08:16 That weren't architecture?

FG

00:08:18 Well, that weren't architecture – and, I mean, the previous generations did that too because, in a way, if you were creative and you were going to university what could you do? You know, architecture was the only creative thing. There wasn't all - - -

RR

00:08:35 Creative industries.

FG

00:08:36 There wasn't creative industries and all those kind of things. So, lots of – and, you know, people's parents probably thought, you've got a very good mark, you must go to university, that kind of thing

00:08:44 So, I think, you know, that attracted – so, you had all those people of the generations before me who were in the architectural reviews and became film makers and, you know, artists and things like that.

00:08:57 I suppose, I'm thinking in my time, people spun of into – I was – computers. Computers were just starting and in fact we had – we did have some lessons about computers which I must – I don't know how I would have passed them because I didn't know what they were about.

00:09:16 But, it was in the days where they had punch cards and there was one – there was a whole – the whole ground floor of the Steel Building, there was one computer at UQ and it took up like half a building or something. But, there were some people who got really interested in that and they, I think, I did run into one of the fellows who was in my year and he'd got a PhD in computers, so, they'd gone off that way.

00:09:44 There was also a lot of interest in environment things, that was sort of – so, I suppose I didn't mention him before, but Steve Zoccoli came while I was at the school, so, he was a huge influence on a number – I'm quite friendly with Richard Sale and Richard got very interested in environmental things, right from being at university and I suppose it was a more, maybe scientific interest than maybe previous generations had had. So, they were measuring things and, I'm not exactly sure what they were doing, but - - -

RR

00:10:22 Well, Steve Zoccoli was always running programs like that.

FG

00:10:27 Yeah. And, so there were those kind of interests. And, yes, people did spin off into other creative things or go off and become art teachers or film makers or something, but, I think, like, being right there when computers – the whole interest in computers and the whole interest in environment and design and science I suppose.

00:11:01 And, when I say – so, in a way, the course was – they didn't teach you anything or they did teach you. Like, when I was in first year we had lots and lots of subjects. I remember there were lots and lots of subjects. And, they were things like – a subject we'd have – and, I don't know whether they went for – it's such a long time ago now, but – whether they went all term or they were just short bits of term, you know, four weeks or something, or they were one or two lectures.

00:11:33 But, I do remember, like, we had lectures in physiology. And, actually, the people who came and taught those, we had Professor Butsolz [00:11:40] and he was the head of physiology. He came and talked to us in first year about physiology. So, you were getting a very broad education. Sociology, Professor Western, he would have been head of sociology. He came and talked to us. So, there was that sort of – first year, there was this amazing smorgasbord of stuff, I suppose.

00:12:01 But, we didn't sit down and draw or do lettering or anything like that. I think we'd go out and sketch by the lake occasionally. But, I think one of the things, when I was in first year, we had Art Week and that was probably part of this smorgasbord of what they were giving, so, rather than each Friday going and doing sketching, or something like that, it was all squashed into this week. Which I think might have been towards the end of second term or something. Near the end of second term. So, August, September maybe.

00:12:43 And, they gave it to Bill Carr. Now, Bill Carr probably was a bit out of kilter with some of the other lecturers in the school and they probably didn't know what to do with him, or he didn't fit in, or he didn't want to fit in, that would be for sure. So, he organised Art Week, and I did jot down who I remembered being there because – and, I went wow, because, the people that he gathered were now some of the most well known artists in Australia. They've all had amazing careers.

00:13:24 So, people like Garry Shead who one the Archibald and all that kind of thing. And, Tim Johnson and he's quite a well known artist now and from an architectural family. But, at that stage, he was probably a conceptual artist and Albie Thoms was there. So, they were – there's probably more that I can't – that's when I thought about who was there, that's what I could remember.

00:13:54 And, I remember Tim – so, this week with all these, you know, I suppose radical artists coming to – and they were from Sydney – coming to Brisbane and the whole school did Art Week, so, we all did Art Week, not just first year or - - -

RR

00:14:18 There was a College of Art by that time, in Brisbane.

FG

00:14:20 Yes.

RR

00:14:21 Did they have any input into it.

FG

00:14:23 I don't think so. Bill Carr probably would have thought that they were dreadful. I don't know.

RR

00:14:29 Right.

FG

00:14:32 See, Bill Carr thought we were all very unsophisticated and naive and, you know, probably we all need to be – and, this was all through the things that he taught us. We needed to be shocked and everything and - - -

RR

00:14:52 Were you shocked?

FG

00:14:54 Was I shocked? Well, I kind of – I was expecting university to be, not like school, and – was I shocked? Not, I, sort of, just took – I was thinking, this is what university is meant to be like. But, there was a session, so, Tim Johnson was a conceptual artist and at that stage he used to do things like, rearrange people's clothes or partly undress them and I think – there would be time lapse photography going and there was this – and, I was actually there and we were in the Michie Building, upstairs, because we had – it must have a studio up there and it was in one of the rooms up there. And, it was night and he was doing one of these performances and, so, and it was dark and then the strobes were coming on.

00:15:53 I think, and his wife whose name I can't remember, she was – she worked with him so he was rearranging her and rearranging her clothes and things and that's when Bill Grieg and some others stormed in and, I think – I don't, and I was trying to think about this, I don't think there was police but there was definitely, probably the university security, and the whole thing was stopped.

00:16:18 So, Art Week was closed down and this – so, this became a great cause to let – some of the students, I wasn't one of those, but, they actually went with the artists, I think they moved out, went to Mt Tamborine and finished it off. So, they went off. I don't know whose place they went to or anything, but, it was in the paper.

00:16:46 There were questions in parliament, I think, about it. I don't know whether the vice squad was involved, because we would have had one of those by then. Bill Carr got called up to some, you know, like, the senate – he would have – the university would have – he would have been an inquiry or disciplined or - - -

RR

00:17:07 Do you think he was set up? I mean, to run Art Week so that they could attack him?

FG

00:17:13 No, I think he probably wanted to, you know, shake everyone up.

RR

00:17:21 Okay. And, he did.

FG

00:17:22 And he did. But, it was – it had – well, it was in the newspapers, it even was in the – I remember someone – one of my relatives rang my mother because it was in a Southern paper and things like that. And, it led to – there was even a – as it went, after, Bill Carr’s wife actually took a defamation case against the newspapers, because, you know, with the way it was written up.

00:17:54 And, various people were witnesses in that. Like, I think Don Watson was one of the witnesses for Bill Carr, as was Quentin Bryce. So, it was a really, you know, it caused a huge – it was probably the most exciting thing that had happened for a while in the architecture school.

JG

00:18:13 But, how long had Art Week been going when it was shut down?

FG

00:18:17 I reckon it must have been Wednesday.

RR

00:18:19 So, three days?

FG

00:18:20 Three days. Because, it started off, the first day was you went to – the university owned that lovely Masonic temple down in Alice Street. Do you remember the Masonic temple in Alice Street? And, there were some sessions down there and we went running around the town, and we must – I think it would have been about the middle of the week, the Wednesday night by the time they were – because it was all too - - -

JG

00:18:50 And, how was it organised? Was it the idea that the students got workshops or were there just artists doing their thing that you were looking at, or were you involved in - - -

FG

00:18:59 We would – they were doing their thing, but, we were also participating in things and we were participating in conceptual things. And, I remember we were photographing – we were running round photographing things and so, I think they

involved us in, you know, in conceptual things. But, I cannot remember sitting there sketching during it. I don't think there was any of that.

JG

00:19:30 Who were – you said there were 42 students when you started in the first year, and did they all go through or how many did you end up with and do you remember?

FG

00:19:39 So, 42, seven women, three women graduated and by, I think 28 might have graduated out of the whole course. I might be slightly wrong on that, because, people sometimes fall back and, you know, take longer out or something. But, yeah. And, as I said, seven women in the first year, by the second three of those had left after the first year and gone off to do other things, to Art College and things they - - -

00:20:15 And, I suppose there was no women on the staff, no women lecturers, tutors, anything in those days.

RR

00:20:24 So, the four that were left, were who?

FG

00:20:29 No, it would take me a while to think of their – I know one went to go and went to Art College and became an Art Teacher. Yeah. No, they went and did other things. But, I can't remember their – they haven't stayed in touch or - - -

RR

00:20:54 But, the ones who did stay, do you remember those?

FG

00:20:58 Yeah.

RR

00:20:59 The graduates. Who were those four graduates?

FG

00:21:00 Well, three, I think.

RR

00:21:01 Three, and you?

FG

00:21:03 Well, myself. No. There was three graduates, myself, Helen Wilson and Catherine Baudet, Catherine Ferrier. And, so, we were unusual, that might have been the largest number of women into first year ever, in the history of the course, because, as we were talking before, they were – like, the year ahead had only one female student, and that was Catherin Brouwer.

00:21:31 And then, the year ahead might have had a couple and then there was Margie Thom [00:21:35] and Helen Josephson, the famous pair. So, they were – there tended to be one or two or three, but – so, that was the most it had ever been in first year.

00:21:51 And, of course, probably by the time I was finishing uni and looking back at first year the numbers were starting to change dramatically, in the balance of the genders in the course. And, it was quite sexist, to be honest, I mean, I've talked to – we're still very friendly, those three women who graduated and we have talked about it and we, kind of, can't believe that we put up with it and the treatment that we had. We don't think women today would do that, would put up with it.

00:22:29 So, we were quite patronised and – 'cause I don't think you were expected to – you were probably just there filling in time, you know, so, you weren't actually going to probably ever work for the rest of your life or anything because you'd get married and, you know, all that kind of thing.

00:22:48 I can remember one of the lecturers said to me, "Well, you could go and become a colour consultant." So, that's the kind of thing that they thought, that you weren't really serious, or something like that.

RR

00:23:03 So, was history taught?

FG

00:23:05 Was history taught? The person who was interested in history was Ian Sinnamon. Who, you know, we all – everyone really adored Ian Sinnamon. He was someone you really looked up to. He was the only one who may be taught a little bit about local and Australian.

00:23:34 You used to see thousands of slides, because they all had wonderful slide collections. And, so, you know, they'd all been on overseas trips and everyone had gone. So, you used to see lots of slides of European buildings and America and things like that. So, history was, kind of, taught in that way.

RR

00:24:00 But, Ian had slides of Australia.

FG

00:24:02 Well, I suppose Ian was interested in Karl Langer, by that stage probably. So, Ian probably talked a little bit more about Australia. But, there was no – like they have now, there was no, sort of, study of the local or anything.

00:24:22 And, you know, and I suppose I'd come from a different place and I actually thought, Brisbane is amazing it's so hilly. And, there was all – because, you know, Melbourne's not hilly, and there's all these houses on stilts and – so, I, in a way, was interested in what was around me, because I'd come from another place and not grown up with it and it seems so exotic.

00:24:48 When I'm talking about the course and saying that they – you could actually pursue things that you were interested in and I suppose my interest in history and conservation and everything came from being a student in those days.

00:25:06 Getting interested, I was – Helen Wilson, my friend – we got very interested when – over in South Brisbane there was a gas works that – on the river there – an amazing brick building, and it was about to be demolished. So, that was in third year, 1974, and we, sort of, had this little campaign to try and actually stop its demolition and we were actually allowed to do that as a project.

00:25:40 And, we wanted it – and, when I think about it now, we wanted to actually turn it into an industrial museum. And, we were in the Australian and we were on TV and all that kind of stuff. But, we were encouraged by our lecturer, Stan Marquis Kyle, who's the father of Peter Marquis Kyle, I can remember he came – because, we did a report and all – that would have been what we got assessed on.

00:26:10 But, we went around to – he came with us to see the director of the Queensland Museum, Alan Bartholomew, to try and excite interest in the idea and everything. So, there was a lot of freedom to pursue what you were interested in and a lot of support, in a way, when I think about it, thinking that Stan probably set up the meetings and all that kind of thing.

00:26:36 Yeah, so interesting in that way.

RR

00:26:40 But, it didn't survive.

FG

00:26:42 No. No. It got demolished.

RR

00:26:44 Except for the stripping tower.

FG

00:26:45 Yes. But, it was wonderful, you know, and hardly any of those gasworks, I think there was one in Tasmania, in Launceston isn't there, but there's hardly any – and, it would have been a – like, the spaces were amazing. It would have been a fantastic, you know.

00:27:02 This is long before there were any powerhouse museums or anything like that. So, they did give you a lot of freedom and support in some ways.

JG

00:27:14 And, what did you do during your year out?

FG

00:27:17 Well, in my year out, everyone went travelling, everyone went to Europe. And, I think that was just in the era when overseas – 'cause, overseas travel was – there was AUS, you know, Australian Union Student travel service. All of a sudden you could fly instead of go by boat. Did you go by boat or fly?

RR

00:27:41 I flew.

FG

00:27:42 Yeah. Flew. But, do you know - - -

RR

00:27:43 I think it was the second jumbo out of Brisbane.

FG

00:27:44 Yeah. Or something. But, you know before everyone had to go – so, all of a sudden, there was an explosion in going by plane and it was a student travel service, who, you know, made it cheap for people to go. And, there was a bit of a down turn, probably, in getting work in – there was probably a bit of – '75, maybe a bit of a recession or something, so, the opportunities to get work in architectural offices weren't that great.

00:28:15 So, a large number of my year went travelling and – which, I've still got drawers and drawers of the slides, and, you know, one day I probably should scan them all or something. It would be interesting to look at them again and see what – but, we went round and, you know – and, I went travelling with my friend Helen Wilson and we went round and looked at Le Corbusier buildings and, we didn't go to Finland, but, you know people went and looked at Aalto and - - -

RR

00:28:51 And, who would have made them aware of Aalto?

FG

00:28:56 Well, it's probably, you know, people like Ian and Bill Carr and things like that. They would have, you know, they all had their slide collections, which, you know, they'd all been and looked at things.

00:29:10 So, yeah, so, I mean, we certainly – and, we went in – we went to America as well. And, you know, we went and looked at Frank Lloyd Wright, so, Frank – you know, 'cause everyone wanted to – so, we went to Chicago and looked at all the Chicago buildings and things like that.

RR

00:29:35 So, when you decided to come to Brisbane, was that on your own or did your family move to Brisbane?

FG

00:29:40 No, my family were moving, so there was a kind of at – I couldn't make a decision about because, when I – you know, I could have stayed or – like, because I was leaving school and going to university, so, I could have stayed or could come. You know, it was a – and, I thought, well, no, I can't, you know, seemed like something different. So, yeah. I decided to come.

RR

00:30:02 I mean, there were quite a few Melbourne people who finished up here. Like, Birrell and Dick Stringer, Peter Newell.

FG

00:30:09 Yeah. But, they all came after.

RR

00:30:12 Yeah. But, I mean, there was this tradition and there was also the feeling that there was a lot of stuff going on in Melbourne that was better. Did you encounter that, or not?

FG

00:30:25 I don't know – don't we feel that even now? Did I encounter – well, I suppose when, like, you know, I was interested in doing architecture and I was at school and I'd been to like – you could go to Melbourne university open days and Darryl Jackson would be talking and things like that.

00:30:48 And, I suppose we were – there was an interest in architecture. Like, I – people were interested in architecture did – I did art and in art we did a bit of architectural history, and, so, you know, we looked at 'cause, we looked at Queen Anne buildings

and, you know, so we had a bit of an understanding by just looking at what was around you.

00:31:12 I suppose in the course, thinking about the male and female students, the male students were a lot less well educated than the female students. Because, we probably – they'd all done technical drawing, whereas we'd done art. And, so, we would have probably knew a little bit more about the world and architecture than they did, because, they'd just done technical drawing.

RR

00:31:37 We used to do technical drawing at primary school, not at secondary school.

FG

00:31:42 Well, but, in my year there was all these guys who'd done technical drawing as a subject to grade 12.

RR

00:31:48 Okay. They must have been very good.

FG

00:31:53 So, they – so that was a sort of a – and, say, like my – Catherine Ferrier had Betty Churcher as an art teacher. I'd had, my art teacher, Mrs French, was Leonard French's first wife, you know had been an art student with him. So, they were, sort of, people who were, you know, very capable and – to me.

RR

00:32:18 The Melbourne thing interests me because I think you said, you know, Brisbane was so exotic and different to Melbourne - - -

FG

00:32:26 Yes. Yes.

RR

00:32:27 And, that made you aware of what was here in a way that it wasn't aware to people who'd grown up with it.

FG

00:32:34 Yes.

RR

00:32:33 And, Dick Stringer, I think, had the same experience.

FG

00:32:35 He said he had the same. Yeah.

RR

00:32:37 That, you know, what is this fantastic wooden stuff.

FG

00:32:41 Yeah. Hilly and, you know the wood and the sound, you know, the rain – the rain's amazing.

RR

00:32:49 The smell of it and all of that. The vegetation.

FG

00:32:52 Yeah. Yeah.

RR

00:32:54 Yeah. So, that was a pretty potent kind of injection at a time when you were looking for where you were going.

FG

00:33:02 Yeah. So, probably moving to a different place has – and made me interested in the place and the history of the place and what made it and everything.

JG

00:33:12 But, you said there wasn't really at the school, this awareness yet of the local - - -

FG

00:33:14 Well, I suppose it was, you know, well, people like Ian were – he was probably getting interested in Langer then. So there were people – he was someone who was interested in it and - - -

RR

00:33:32 But, Langer was pure European. I mean, you know, he's here.

FG

00:33:34 Yeah. He was here – he was transposed here wasn't he. So, I mean, I'm saying that in being interested in something that was local. Someone that wasn't in Europe.

The other thing they were – they all had a million slides of Japan too. They'd all been to Japan and they had all been to all the temples and the gardens.

00:33:57 So, we all thought Japanese gardens were wonderful and - - -

JG

00:34:03 But, you said that John Dalton was a super star, did you?

FG

00:34:06 Yeah.

JG

00:34:08 How was his architecture regarded. Was it seen as - - -

FG

00:34:11 We probably thought it was just wonderful, you know, and – because he was, I suppose he was good looking and spoke well, all that kind of stuff and, I suppose all the interest in climate and all that kind of stuff and it seemed so modern what he was doing.

00:34:30 And, so, yeah. He was a super star. The – in the notes that I made, the other thing, thinking about the education and things that were sort of influential, was the student conferences. And, this is why I had to make the notes because I - - -

RR

00:34:50 So, you went to some?

FG

00:34:51 I went to some. I went to some. I went to three. So, in 1972 we went to Sunbury, and Sunbury is in Victoria outside Melbourne and there was a, sort of, famous rock festival that used to happen at Sunbury, but, I think it happened around Australia Day, or in January or something. This must have been my memory – now, this must have been a little bit because it wasn't that time of the year, 'cause I hadn't started the course then.

00:35:21 So, it's later in the year, but it was at the same place where they had the rock festival I think. It was an architectural student conference and it was probably quite influential on a number of people – well, I remember very much that Barry McNeil spoke at it and he was running the school in Hobart.

00:35:47 And, he actually influenced – a number of students left the University of Queensland and went to Tasmania to study his course. As, as result of seeing him at that conference. And, so, one of the people who did that was Catherine Brouwer. So,

she – I don't know whether she was in second year, so, whether she went off in third year.

00:36:14 I had a friend in my – one of the – the fourth woman, Anne Ruck, she went off to Tasmania. So, I can think of – and, it might have been more – five or six of them who – and, that was all from seeing – and I think that, you know, the course was more interesting.

00:36:36 The course was seen to be cutting edge – well, we wouldn't have said cutting edge – but, more interesting.

JG

00:36:42 So, he was talking about the course at the - - -

FG

00:36:44 Yes. He would have. Because, that was a huge influence from that, when you think about it. A large – well, I can think about – I can't remember all the names, but I can remember that guy in second year who was a friend of so and so, they all went. You know, there was a real Queensland contingent in Hobart, and that all came from that.

00:37:05 And, the other people I remember speaking at that one were John Andrews, Evan Walker, and I think Peter McIntyre and for some reason I think Gough Whitlam might have been there. And, it was one of those ones where you – it was at where the – where I think the pop festival must have been because we all camped, but, the people in the year ahead of me were a very energetic group.

00:37:38 And, you've probably interviewed some of them, but, they were the ones that got the bus. And, like, Bruce Wolfe was in that year and they got the bus and they were 'boyos' I call them, but, they were very energetic.

00:37:54 I can remember they made this amazing structure which they took – because they were great at making things and doing things and they made this amazing structure which they took down and erected down there, which was sort of, had some central thing and they all had like, sleeping slots out of it.

00:38:18 But, it was made out of something incredibly heavy. So, it was really heavy – but, you know, they made it and they took it down on a trailer down to Sunbury, and people would have made things to be there, because, you know, it was the era, like, everyone was influenced – like, there was probably Buckminster Fuller and there were probably lots of domes there and everyone had the Whole Earth catalogue.

RR

00:38:42 So, what year is this?

FG

00:38:43 This is '72.

RR

00:38:44 Seventy-two, so, you were second year?

FG

00:38:46 First year.

RR

00:38:47 First year?

FG

00:38:46 Yeah. Yeah.

RR

00:38:48 Sorry.

FG

00:38:49 So, I can remember going – so, I did go, and I think we – I just – with some other people in first year, we just camped, we just had a tent. We hadn't made these amazing structures or anything like that.

00:39:06 But, that was something that had – would have influenced a lot of people, that, obviously, the people that went to Tasmania. And, then, the next year, 1973, was Nimbin and I did – I actually Googled a bit about this because I – my year, and this wasn't – this was prior to the Nimbin Aquarius Festival, which was run – I found out when I looked it up was run by the Australian Union of Students.

00:39:43 So, at Easter time, we actually went to Nimbin and as a project we built some little bridges and things. So, we worked on some of the infrastructure for what was then this, sort of amazing festival which must have been, you know, after – a month later or something like that.

00:40:05 Now, I didn't actually, some of the students actually went to the actual festival. I didn't go probably because uni was on and I, you know, would be – I wouldn't want to miss unit or something, being too sort of, good, to think – oh no, you can't take time off.

00:40:23 But, I mean, so, a number of our people from our school involved in doing things there and going there and going to the festival and that seemed to – so, I don't know whether the thing that we went to at Easter was like an architectural conference thing, or - - -

00:40:44 And, then the next year, '74, there was a conference, it was in Queensland and it was an architectural one and it was on a train and it went from Brisbane to Mundubbera, on a train. And, stopping at various places. I can remember being stopped in Maryborough. So, I don't know whether we slept on the train or we camped or – I can certainly remember being in Maryborough, in Queens Park, listening – I can't remember who spoke at it, or anything like that, but, I remember this train very, very vividly.

00:41:23 And, I think I must have been slightly involved in helping organise it or something. Because I can – because it was a UQ / QUT combined thing. But, it was a national one, because I'm sure people came from all over the country.

00:41:42 So, but then I don't think I went to – I can't remember going to – in the final two years – going to any conferences. But, they would have had them, but, so whether they were in places that were difficult to get to, or, I just, yeah, I don't remember going. I didn't go to any. But, I remember those, very, very – bits of them quite vividly.

RR

00:42:10 Were the reviews on in those days, or not?

FG

00:42:12 I think the reviews were almost were over. Like, there was no – I do remember once and whether this was in first year, going to the Avalon Theatre and there was something, and I remember Paul Memmott up the back showing – working the projector or something and there would be psychedelic – maybe they had two projectors or something.

00:42:38 There was something going in and out or something, they were really, really fantastic. But, no, that had all - - -

RR

00:42:46 That was the previous era.

FG

00:42:47 The previous era. And, probably the people who came – as I said, so, some of the people, like, the year ahead of me, they were full of lots of energy, but, it was a different type of energy. My year was a – probably fairly quiet year. The year that came up, the next year was a bit quiet, then, the year when I was in third year, that was first year, so, 1974 was the year that Peter Skinner and Libby Watson Brown were in and they were very creative years – like, they, kind of, you look back and they were lots of musicians and they had – by that stage, I think we were having, probably BBQs on Fridays with bands and things like that.

00:43:41 And, we probably moved into the new building by then. That's right. So, we were, you know, we were down by the lake. The student association – but, certainly that year with Peter and Libby was incredibly creative. They stood out that year, you know, as – a lot of energy, creative energy. They did lots of, you know, and they're still – so, they still – a lot of those people still get together and be a band a things, at people's birthday parties and things, don't they?

RR

00:44:15 Are you talking the Corleone's?

FG

00:44:22 Yeah. And, by that stage we would have been in at the architecture school by the lake and so, there was quite a – and, probably why there was less student life in those – well, different – was that we were spread in different places. So, everyone wasn't together.

00:44:38 So, there was the tower, there was the Michie Building and there was the bottom of Social Sciences. So, it was very, you know, and that's quite a lot of walking across, so, people probably didn't interact as much. Once we got into the new building there would have been, I just remember it was much more, there was a studio – well, people were around there a lot and people stayed – there were the all nighters and all that kind of thing. You know, people stayed at university, working on their projects like crazy and all that kind of thing.

00:45:09 That was of course the days, there was no security or anything. Now, they've all got swipe cards and all that kind of stuff. But, so, maybe it was a bit dispersed in the first couple of years because of the physical locations.

RR

00:45:24 And, did Bal Saini have an impact on what was taught?

FG

00:45:31 I don't really remember him having an impact on what was taught. No.

RR

00:45:37 He' come from Melbourne.

FG

00:45:38 He'd come from Melbourne and I'm trying to remember what his research – was his research interest climate or something? I mean, I think the person I had the biggest – in the climate thing obviously, is Zoccoli. I mean, other people who were – when I was in first year, Paul Memmott was in final year and actually, Memmott and Bycroft, they were names that were said together in hushed tones too.

00:46:08 And, John Mainwaring was in that year. They were probably a star year, you know, and they were very involved. I remember we all went out to John Mainwaring's place at Brookfield for the final party and all that kind of thing. They were a very, probably – they had lots of really bright people in it and they had a lot of energy too I suppose.

00:46:36 Then, you know, Paul and Peter Bycroft, I suppose, stayed on and did higher degrees. By the time I was in the final year, they were – and, this would be, when I look back, this is another – I did a subject that Paul ran, maybe in final year, was on research methodology. And, that's probably, you know – 'cause Paul was probably the most scholarly person at that stage to have come out of University of Queensland and I don't know whether he was the first – he was the first person to get first class honours or something.

00:47:15 And, so, it was actually a subject where you read architectural theories and things and it affected – one of my friends from doing that work with Paul – became very interested in the work of Bill Hillyer in London, that's gone completely in that direction, and that was probably, I'm thinking that research subject with Paul where you actually had to do proper research and footnote things properly and all that kind of stuff, which you didn't have to do for anything else.

00:48:03 It was also something that I look back on and I say I actually learnt a lot from that.

RR

00:48:10 So, did you work for any practices during your study?

FG

00:48:13 In the holidays in first year, I worked at Jim Birrell's office, and it was down in the Valley, and that's where I met, Russell Hall was working there, and so, you know, I became a friend of Russell's. I'm trying to think who was working there. And, I'd never met anyone like Russell Hall before, I can tell you.

RR

00:48:44 And, Russell Hall gets to demolish the gasworks.

FG

00:48:48 He demolished the gasworks. Yeah.

RR

00:48:50 So, he could actually get close to it and keep a few bits.

FG

00:48:55 Yeah. Well, I actually do have some of the bricks still under my house. I've got a pile of bricks that I bought from Russell, you know, and have carted around.

RR

00:49:04 Dick Stringer would have been working for Birrell?

FG

00:49:06 No. It was – he - - -

RR

00:49:07 Phillip Conn?

FG

00:49:08 Yes. Was he – was he the partner? Did he - - -

RR

00:49:14 Phillip Conn I think might have been a partner. Or **Laurie Culley [00:49:18]**

FG

00:49:19 **Laurie Culley** was, but the partnership was just breaking up. So, Bill – we were in a building in Ann Street, upstairs, before you get to the pub, the Empire.

RR

00:49:42 Okay.

FG

00:49:43 Yeah. So, between that and - - -

RR

00:49:44 Somewhere near Lucky's or on the otherside?

FG

00:49:47 The other side. Yeah. Towards All Hallows. And, one of the things he – Bill must have – I can remember, I spent an awful lot of time measuring up what was then David Jones, I think. The Dodds building, wasn't it David Jones?

RR

00:50:12 T C Byrne.

FG

00:50:13 T C - - -

RR

00:50:14 Well, David Jones was in the T C Byrne building.

FG

00:50:17 Yeah, by that stage it was David Jones and he must – I think that must have been at the stage, maybe, that David Jones was going to close down and maybe it was going to be arcaded or whatever happened. So, I can remember spending an enormous amount of time measuring up that building. But, I suppose that sort of the biggest – and, Jim Birrell must – I think he was having a personal crisis at that stage, because he didn't seem to be there very much.

00:50:53 But, certainly, like, Russel was the big personality there. And, at that – and, see Jim Birrell's daughter Ann was – she was working there. And, that's when Russell got – 'cause Russell married Ann Birrell.

RR

00:51:11 Of course. Yes.

FG

00:51:14 But, they divorced, but, yeah. So, that was all happening then. So, that kind of – and I think maybe Larry Kinuir [00:51:24] worked there too. I'm trying to think who else was there.

RR

00:51:28 Don Watson was he?

FG

00:51:29 Don wasn't – I hadn't met Don by that stage, no.

RR

00:51:34 So, which year is this? Seventy - - -

FG

00:51:36 This is '72 – '73.

RR

00:51:39 Okay. Because, by '74, Don was working on that thing, the T C Byrne building.

FG

00:51:45 But, for someone else.

RR

00:51:47 For Geoffrey Pie.

FG

00:51:48 Yes. So, Birrell must have lost the - - -

RR

00:51:49 Yeah. It was John Roberts who developed it as Fashion Valley.

FG

00:51:54 Yeah. Yeah.

RR

00:51:56 And, Don's famous colour scheme emerged.

FG

00:51:58 That's right. Yeah. So, now well – and, so, an awful lot of time was spent measuring up that building. Then, in the next holidays, I worked at the Public Works Department, and, I probably – the person who I – I must have worked for – because who seemed to be influential on my was Peter Prystupa, so, I met Peter Prystupa then.

00:52:28 And, I don't know whether people have talked about him in anything you've done, but – so, he was obviously – maybe he was my boss – because I actually worked with Gary May, I remember, but Peter Prystupa, I formed a friendship with him that continued on after that. I suppose, we lived in the same suburb or something, but he always took an interest in how I was going with my course and all that kind of thing.

JG

00:53:06 So, that was for all the rest of the years, 1974 – 1975?

FG

00:53:10 Yeah. And, then we went overseas the next year.

RR

00:53:14 Did you work overseas?

FG

00:53:17 But, not in architecture. No. Bars and Au Pairing and all that kind of thing. And, then when I graduated, and it was – it must have been still tough, everyone took a while to get a job. So, it might have taken a few months. I think I didn't get a job until April or something.

RR

00:53:49 Of which year?

FG

00:53:50 That would be '78. And, I was probably – I'd actually got a job working for my friend's father. So, I went to work for Ian Ferrier and he had a big extension of a hospital. But, he didn't have his daughter – his daughter didn't work there, at that stage, she was working somewhere else.

00:54:26 So, my post graduation work was working for Ian Ferrier and that was – he was extending the Holy Spirit Hospital at that stage. I would have been doing cupboard details and bench details and all that kind of thing.

RR

00:54:49 So, while you were a student, which architects did you admire?

FG

00:54:53 Well, who did well – we, as I said, Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright.

RR

00:55:03 But, what about here?

FG

00:55:06 What about here, who did we admire here? Well, I suppose because I'd been working in Bill's office, I was – I thought Bill was pretty good and because we had the buildings on the campus and we all thought, Hartley Teakle was fantastic and Union College. Because, Union College was the most fashionable college on the college. People really wanted to get in there. It was hard to get into and had the best building and all that kind of stuff.

00:55:36 So, Bill was – the cooler students went to Union College.

RR

00:55:42 The cooler students went to work for Birrell.

FG

00:55:45 And, probably, as I said John Dalton would have been because he came and lectured and everything, we were very influenced by him. Everyone thought, say La Boite Theatre, which Blair Wilson had probably just done in those days, was fantastic too.

00:56:16 I can remember – I was thinking about what we thought and how much the city has changed. I can remember being with Helen Wilson over at South Brisbane and looking back at the city, and this was maybe in first year or something, and there were only two high rise. And, it was the T & G and then Conrad and Gargett had just done SGIO.

00:56:38 And that was, I mean, there was obviously the earlier buildings that might be eight storeys or something, but, there was only two high rises and you could see the City Hall clock and all that kind of stuff. So, probably the work that people were interested in was much smaller scale, in a way, like, they were influenced by the houses people were doing or, you know, a small theatre or the work architects were doing wasn't of the scale that people do now.

RR

00:57:13 Well, did you know about people like John Railton, were they out there doing – Pat Moroney.

FG

00:57:21 We knew about Pat Moroney, and I think Gabriel Poole used to come and talk at the school, so, we knew about Pat Moroney because he lived in Chelmer and some of the other students lived in Chelmer. They'd seen his houses and things.

00:57:44 I don't think we knew about John Railton at that time. Because, would he have left Brisbane by then?

RR

00:57:52 Well, he must have – I can't remember when he left Brisbane. But, certainly before 1970 he'd done a handful of houses here.

FG

00:58:06 Yeah.

RR

00:58:07 And, we'd been to his own house in Spring Hill, which was a sort of a pilgrimage he did.

FG

00:58:12 Yeah. Well, I don't remember, so whether he'd dropped from our consciousness by that stage, like, if he wasn't around maybe if he wasn't coming out to the school or

something, or if he wasn't getting published in Grace Garlick's column, or something.

RR

00:58:30 Well, there's – I mean, Hayes and Scott were active.

FG

00:58:35 Yeah.

RR

00:58:38 And, so was Curro Nutter Charlton.

FG

00:58:43 Yes. I think we were aware of Hayes and Scott. And, I suppose we – because we were of that generation where people weren't working in offices in the way – during the course in the way that, say, the previous generation, you didn't have that thing of everyone – oh, so and so works at this office and they're working on this house or something, we didn't quite have that.

00:59:15 But, thinking about, in the notes that I made, I was thinking about leaving university then – I worked, as I said, with Mr Ferrier, then I worked at Bligh Jessup Bretnall, and for Mr Bretnall. And, I think we probably did banks or something. I was probably working on interiors.

00:59:45 They probably, I don't know, they might have had the ANZ bank or – they had a bank client and we would be doing interiors or fit outs or something to banks. But, you know, that's kind of when I met Jon Voller and, Mr Voller still worked there and he was very scary.

01:00:10 Yeah. You didn't want to get into trouble from Mr Voller. And, Mr Bligh, I had, you know, Graham's father had retired, but he - - -

RR

01:00:21 Arthur.

FG

01:00:22 Arthur, but he used to come in once a week or once a month or something and he was this lovely old gentleman. And, then I went to work at Conrad Gargett. Well, I suppose, Conrad and Gargett.

RR

01:00:39 Yes. Which year's this?

FG

01:00:41 This would be maybe '80 – 1980. And, I – and this is probably one of the things that pushed me in the way I've gone – I actually went to work on the, we called it, restoration of Parliament House. And, the offices were in the SGIO in those days, but, I was actually in a site office down at Parliament House in the time that I was working there, the 18 months or something.

01:01:16 And, Ian Charlton was the partner in charge. Don Winsen was the project architect, and we had a – like, our office was in one of the rooms along Alice Street. And, Graham Young, who still works at Conrad and Gargett, I saw him coming in the building the other day, he was on the team.

01:01:43 So, there was a small team on that. And, I think I stayed there for about 18 months and by that stage I had decided that I really wanted to do more about conservation and I left there and that's when I went to York. So, I went to study at the University of York. I was at York for '81 – '82 that academic year.

RR

01:02:11 Which was the best place to do it.

FG

01:02:13 Well, it was the only place to go wasn't it? You could do it at – something at the AA couldn't you?

RR

01:02:18 Not in the same way.

FG

01:02:20 Yeah. And, the reason why I did that was Derek Linstrum, who was the head of that course, had been on a tour around Australia, probably a couple of years previous and lectured, and he'd lectured in Sydney and Melbourne and he'd been to Brisbane and I'd been to his lectures and so that sort of - - -

RR

01:02:43 So, when would that have happened, what year?

FG

01:02:45 When he would have come? Well, obviously before '81. You know, it's going to be '79 or '80. And, that's, you know, it was probably the National Trust maybe would have been influential in bringing him out. I think it was like a British Council sponsored tour. But, that's the height of, you know, you've got the Bellevue, so, very active, the National Trust's very active in those days.

RR

01:03:13 Peter Forrest. Yeah.

FG

01:03:14 Peter Forrest and the staff that they're getting, that's when Don Watson goes and works there and Richard Allen goes and works there.

RR

01:03:26 Bob Moore, did he work there too?

FG

01:03:27 Yeah. And, I can remember Bob Moore was – he was at uni when I was at uni. He might have been in the same year as Helen and Margie I think. And, I remember him, he was always interested in history and heritage buildings. And, he went and did something, like, he drew up Newstead House or something, you know.

01:03:50 I can remember he as a student, he did, yeah, he was always interested. But, he would have – and then he probably went and worked at the National Trust. But, he went off to Sydney to work, very soon, he went to Sydney to work and he worked in heritage in Sydney, for the government, initially, so he might have done a short stint at the National Trust.

01:04:16 So, I've sort of moved on, I talked about who I'd worked for and how I got into heritage conservation and thinking about who are the influential people on me and around in those days, and really, you know, Richard Allen, and I don't know whether you've interviewed Richard, but, Richard in a way is, well, I suppose he left UQ, but that's a story in itself in itself isn't it, went off to Melbourne.

01:04:45 But, yeah, you'd have to say – like, he was the intellectual leader wasn't he, of heritage conservation and they were really making it up, in a way, like, he was right there at the earliest days. Went to the meeting where they decided to make the Burra Charter and I suppose they were actually developing a practice and a profession.

RR

01:05:11 Well, Peter Forrest was probably very influential there and Richard and him together I think.

FG

01:05:18 Yeah. See, I didn't know Peter Forrest as well. Actually, when I came back from York, I got in touch with Peter Forrest and he was going to – he said, "Yes, yes, I've got a job you can work on." But, it was just at the time. He then left the National

Trust in whatever circumstances they were, unusual circumstances. So, I didn't get to go and work with him at the National Trust on whatever project he had in mind.

01:05:52 But, Richard – and I suppose that's when Richard then went off in to start his own practice.

RR

01:05:59 With Meredith.

FG

01:06:00 With - - -

RR

01:06:03 I'm not sure where Meredith came.

FG

01:06:04 Well, Meredith worked at the National Trust didn't she? She's a planner. Meredith Walker. So, she got a job at the National Trust I think and then when Peter Forrest left the National Trust it probably all imploded a bit and it had also – there'd been quite a lot of money from the Commonwealth, with grants and things and maybe that was starting to dry up a bit.

01:06:31 Richard and Meredith – they went off together, were they in practice together were they?

RR

01:06:36 Yes. Because I worked for them when I came back to Brisbane in '79.

FG

01:06:43 And, then of course, I mean, Robert's one of the influential people in history and heritage too. Because I did work for – because, by the time I was doing work with Richard Allen, his office was in the building that Robert owned, and you were upstairs.

01:07:01 Or out the back. You were in some kind of cubby hole out the back weren't you?

RR

01:07:04 Yes.

FG

01:07:05 Like, under the house.

RR

01:07:06 I built myself an office behind his office. And, then he said, "We need that." I had to go out and build another one.

FG

01:07:15 Okay. So, is that when you – did you build the little cubby house under the house then?

RR

01:07:20 Yes.

FG

01:07:21 So, they – I think Richard's really important in kind of intellectual – I think Peter Marquis Kyle is really important too. He then was working there and became a partner.

RR

01:07:35 Yeah. They went into partnership. Meredith wasn't a partner, Meredith had her own practice but she was there and, together they were where it was happening.

FG

01:07:47 Yeah. And, really, all the people who – a large number of people who work in heritage conservation have all been through these offices. So, they've been through Richard Allen's office or they've been through Bob's office. So, they were the kind of the training grounds.

RR

01:08:07 But, their first practice was in Waters Street.

FG

01:08:09 That's right.

RR

01:08:10 A little shop.

FG

01:08:11 Yeah. Yeah.

RR

01:08:11 Which was where I started.

FG

01:08:11 Yeah. I wasn't - well, by the time - I was over in your building by that stage. And, I suppose here, if I'm talking about the other person who's been a great influence on me, is Don Watson.

01:08:25 And, I suppose I didn't actually get to meet Don, maybe - because he wasn't at university, I might not have met him until about 1980 or maybe it was after I came back from York, because, at that stage he would have been working at the National Trust on his Queensland House and everything.

01:08:54 And, so, you know and I've done various research projects and things with him and I think Don's just one of these, not only is he an encyclopaedia of everything that's happened in architectural history in Queensland, with an amazing memory and interest and everything, like, he's a wonderful architect. Just a fantastic architect. So, he's a bit of a genius I think. So, yeah. They're the kind of people who have been influential.

RR

01:09:37 Well, we get onto your architectural career?

FG

01:09:42 Well, this is - I've said all the offices I've worked in and I haven't really - because I haven't practiced as a traditional architect, I can't say my most wonderful building is, or anything.

RR

01:09:55 We don't want you to say that, we want to know the story. So, we've covered, probably, I mean, you didn't start practicing as an architect per se, you were working for who first?

FG

01:10:13 Well, it was Ian Ferrier, then Bligh Jessup Bretnall and then Conrad and Gargett. And, then I went and did more study and the - I never actually worked for the National Trust, then I came back and I did work for Richard Allen, I did research for you on - so, I worked I did work for myself. So, I did little jobs for myself and then I worked for these other, you know, Richard and Bob.

01:10:52 I did a - I suppose I did a job with Ian Sinnamon at the University of Queensland on Glengallan, so we did that first big conservation plan on Glengallan. I did that first work on 20th Century architecture and that was for the Institute of Architects.

RR

01:11:13 [01:11:13] work.

FG

01:11:15 It's, sort of, you're embarrassed when you look at it now, but, you know nineteen – that was in the early '80s and, in thinking – one of the questions, and I did travel around Queensland a lot looking at architecture. And, one of the people who jumped out at me, who's in this period, was Eddie Oribin.

01:11:37 I'd never heard of Eddie Oribin and I saw that Proserpine Church and I saw the Mareeba Hall and I thought, "Where's this – who's this person, where did they come from?" So, he really jumps out when you are looking at things in Regional Queensland in the '80s.

01:12:02 So, yeah, I suppose during the '80s I'm working for a number of different people, doing – so, the 20th Century, the Glengallan – if I'm thinking what are the big things is the 20th Century, the Glengallan conservation plan, some of the things with Richard Allen, like, I worked with Peter Marquis Kyle on the first conservation plan for the old museum.

01:12:34 We did work on the – and that was when we were really working out what conservation plans were and how you did them.

RR

01:12:41 They weren't really invented.

FG

01:12:42 They weren't, we were inventing them. And, I think I might have brought to Richard's office, a little bit more research and rigor to the conservation plans. We did work at Nudgee, at the orphanage on the orphanage buildings. So, they're some of the ones that pop out. Are we running out of time?

JG

01:13:11 Disc 1 is running out of memory space, I'll have to replace it in three minutes.

FG

01:13:16 Okay. So, that was sort of like – and, I suppose that was in the '80s there were lots of – like, it was a contested time in Brisbane for heritage and heritage buildings. And, when I say, you know, in 1972 we were looking at the city and there was only two high rises, well, you know, then there was kind of devastation in a way.

01:13:42 The city was remade. Eagle Street was totally remade wasn't it. And, so there was a lot of demolition. The National Trust was really very active, like, Bob was on the – you were a councillor weren't you, of the National Trust, and I was – like, the listings committee, I was on the listings committee and that was – an awful lot of people in

work in the field now were on the listings committee – had been on those committees. Because that was another amazing training ground.

RR

01:14:19 Well, you know, we didn't have a Heritage Act here and therefore we didn't have a government department, so, it all had to happen through the National Trust in a voluntary way. And, you know, these were times where you had to take sides and - -
-

FG

01:14:37 So, you've had – '79 is the demolition of the Bellevue and then was it, '82 was Cloudland. Like, I think, when I came – I'd just come back from overseas and they demolished Cloudland.

01:14:53 Now, when was the Regent Theatres. Because, I remember getting very involved in the 'Save the Regent' campaign, which was run by - - -

RR

01:15:03 Jack Kershaw.

FG

01:15:04 And David Hunter.

RR

01:15:05 And, David Hunter.

FG

01:15:06 Yeah. And, so, that might have been – that was in the '70s.

RR

01:15:12 It must have been '74.

FG

01:15:14 No. No. It's later than that. It's more like '79 or '78 or – at that time, I think. I think I'd finished uni.

RR

01:15:23 Beg your pardon, yes, it must be '79. Because I can remember the 'Save the Regent' poster.

FG

01:15:30 Yeah. Yeah.

RR

01:15:30 That you had on your car.

FG

01:15:32 Yes. So, you'd come back and they – you know, so, there was a lot of – there were those huge concerts, that last concert thing that they organised that was in the Regent Theatre and they had the famous English actor, who I think he might have been Steptoe or something, I can't remember the name.

01:16:02 But, they had some famous person who was, sort of, headlining this thing. It was all the – the 'Save the Regent' people had organised it. And, they weren't totally successful, because they didn't save the whole thing, but, I don't think what remains would have remained if it hadn't been for the sake of the Regent, so, the building that fronts Queen Street, which had the entrance and some office above, it was a little four storey building and then there was a huge cinema theatre thing behind it.

01:16:39 I don't think that would have remained if it wasn't for 'Save the Regent.'

RR

01:16:52 These last questions, the last three questions here were about significant architects who had worked in your office. Which isn't really applicable.

FG

01:17:03 No.

RR

01:17:04 But, it is applicable in terms of where you are now and where you've found yourself in the department. I mean, you worked with a lot of people in the course of that. So, maybe you could talk about those. Or maybe you already just have.

FG

01:17:24 Well, I have in a way, sort of, I suppose talking about, you know Richard Allen and Peter Marquis Kyle and Robert. Don Watson, because, in my career I was working for myself and working with other people and working on projects and then in the very late '80s, '90, I went – I got an opportunity and I went to work at the Works Department and that's how I came into government.

01:18:03 And, I went into what was called the historic building section then, and, we were starting to work on a, you know, actually to look at what heritage buildings the government owned and, you know, catalogue them and work out what to do with them. And, probably from – the thing that I think I feel stands out a bit for me in

that period, was I authored, with Judith McKay, doing the historical research, was called – we didn't call it Conservation Management Plan, but, anyway - - -

RR

01:18:48 A study.

FG

01:18:49 Study or something about Boggo Road Jail. And, it was right at the time when they'd built a new prison, out on the outskirts, they were going to – they really wanted, and there'd been a big enquiry into prisons in Queensland. Boggo Road was really seen as the symbol of everything was wrong, in how people were treated and all that kind of, you know – and, there was a big – they thought that they would demolish it as well. They demolished the – and, this report actually, which we wrote, the I don't think it was the Director General, but it was Mal Grierson took it home on the weekend, read it, said, "We're not demolishing it," and that was – there was no heritage legislation or anything like that.

01:19:42 So, that stands out to me as something that was influential in that period. And, then from working in the Works Department in – this was all in the period when there'd been lots of agitation by the National Trust. We need heritage legislation, there was a change of government after a very long period, Wayne Goss coming in and he had a commitment to making heritage legislation.

01:20:16 So, I came and worked in what the department that I'm still in, although it's changed its name about ten times, but, in 1992 when the legislation started, so I came to work then and that's where I've been since.

RR

01:20:39 Well, you've done the study of 20th century buildings along the way.

FG

01:20:46 Yes.

RR

01:20:48 Firstly, there's two questions here, which buildings constructed in Queensland between '45 and '75 do you consider significant either personally or generally. Now, you've talked about Birrell.

FG

01:21:00 Yeah. And, I seen those Oribin ones which were in that study really. And, that was before – I don't know that that many people knew about. I mean, Rex Addison knew about Oribin, but, I don't think that many people knew about Oribin, that's before anyone had done a thesis on him and things like that.

01:21:26 Hayes and Scott, certainly in working on that 20th century work, I think that Hayes and Scott are incredibly influential. I think the buildings, but, also the people through the offices. Everyone seems to work for them, so they're very - people, I think Jo van den Broek is really interesting and he's probably not as well known and their houses.

01:22:00 His wife, Barbara, was well, she was an architect and a landscape architect wasn't she?

JG

01:22:06 Yes.

FG

01:22:07 And, I think actually when I was at university, Barbara, some of the landscaping – Barbara had done some of the landscaping on the campus, at UQ. Probably, I think, and they were a bit earlier, but they come into this period too, Lucas and Cummings, you know, because some of those buildings were – they were still going after the war aren't they.

01:22:43 Probably as a practice, and it's a bit up and down, is Fulton Trotter Moss, Gilmour I mean, they - - -

RR

01:22:53 Then you have the Tower Mill.

FG

01:22:56 Yeah. Well, you know, you've got Fulton and then you've got Trotter. So, I think that – and they're probably, well, a lot of – we did have a nomination for a Trotter building, which didn't go onto the register, but, there's other better ones I think, like the Tower Mill and things that should be. And, that's one thing about this period it is really poorly represented on lists and people and it's very vulnerable.

RR

01:23:26 And, it's not popular. That's the reason.

FG

01:23:29 It's not popular, people don't like it. And, I find, even buildings like Heritage Council, the decision makers, they're all probably grew up with that stuff and they think it's, you know, not very - - -

RR

01:23:43 Well, like the Executive Building for instance. I mean, is that a building with any credibility or integrity, or is it just to be removed? And, the – I mean, the Pearl Assurance, I think, was very competent, sort of, tall building. Hammerson, likewise.

FG

01:24:07 Yeah. Yeah.

RR

01:24:08 They're all still there.

FG

01:24:11 Yes. But, they're not ---

RR

01:24:12 But, then they get done over.

FG

01:24:14 Yeah. And, not very nicely do they, you know. I always, and it's probably just slightly out, the Comalco Building would be the '80s wouldn't it, it's just slightly out of ---

RR

01:24:26 Comalco being the AMP Blue Tower.

FG

01:24:30 Well, it's now Crown Law.

RR

01:24:31 That one. Yes. Sorry.

FG

01:24:33 But, and you know, it was an aluminium building, you know. And, now it's completely done over and you wouldn't know that it was an aluminium building.

RR

01:24:40 Yes. Or, the Taxation Building.

FG

01:24:44 Well, it was kind of chip boarded or something wasn't it?

RR

01:24:48 Worse.

JG

01:24:51 What about buildings post 1975. Anything you think?

FG

01:24:54 Say, what do I think, post 19 – who do I think?

RR

01:24:59 Post '75. That's the last question.

FG

01:25:02 The last question. I think – not that I'm myself, was ever, like, when we were students we weren't great fans of Robin Gibson, but, I do think that the Cultural Centre is something – the fact that it got built and it's all those pieces together and the time it was done. You know, he's got to be one of the main - - -

RR

01:25:42 Well, it wasn't just that group of buildings, it was also the University of Queensland and Main Hall and the Library.

FG

01:25:47 And, then they worked at the other, like, thinking of where were the other major bits of work going on after the period, is, like the expansion of the university, so, say, like, Griffith, like, he did work at Griffith as well.

01:26:04 So, not that he would be one of my favourites, but, I've got to say he's got – he's important.

RR

01:26:15 Well, Seidler, he's here too. How do you relate those two?

FG

01:26:25 What did we think about. Well, I suppose we get the, well, the first Seidler building we get is pretty boring isn't it. It's the Hilton Hotel.

RR

01:26:32 Which he never really acknowledges as being one of his buildings.

FG

01:26:36 Yeah.

RR

01:26:36 But, Riverside is the one that he would point to.

FG

01:26:43 It certainly has, it's a classic isn't it. It's got all the pieces. It's all his philosophies and thinking very well resolved and everything.

RR

01:26:54 But, then he did Kooralbyn here.

FG

01:26:56 Yes. Which, and then there are some flats down the Gold Coast and things, some earlier periods which are - - -

RR

01:27:02 Do you know where they are? I've seen pictures but I have no idea where they are?

FG

01:27:05 Well, I think Don and Allison and I went looking for them once and I thought we did find what we thought were something down Currumbin Way, I think. And, then I think in the more recent times, you'd have to say that people like Donovan Hill and their practice and I suppose they're people who made the transition from doing the houses to the bigger buildings.

01:27:40 In a way, Hayes and Scott didn't really transition very well did they?

RR

01:27:43 Neither did John Dalton.

FG

01:27:45 No. No. So, to the bigger work, whereas, Donovan Hill did. And, things like – and she probably doesn't get enough, I think Libby Watson Brown and that house up at – that house for her sister.

RR

01:28:10 At Dickie Beach.

FG

01:28:11 We look back and see and she was unfortunate, the year that she did that house she didn't win the House of the Year because, I don't know, there was something else flasher. But, I think she should have and I suppose she's a friend of mine, but, she's

one of the women who's actually had her own practice and continued in practice and now moving onto bigger scale work and everything, I think we'll look back and she'll be someone who'll be – are you going to interview here, she just gets in?

JG

01:28:49 Then we should.

FG

01:28:50 Yeah. Because she started university in 1974, and in fact, I met her on the first day because we'd just had the floods, the '74 floods and Ian Sinnamon decided that all the students, we were all going out and we were going to go around to all these poor people who'd been flooded. We had a questionnaire we were to see how materials stood up in the flood, and all that kind of thing.

01:29:21 And we got paired with various people and Libby and I got paired together and we went around, you know, with our clipboard asking these questions of people round near the Milton Tennis Courts somewhere, and I remember we went to one house and knocked and the lady came out and said, and it turns out it was Paul Memmott's grandmother.

01:29:43 So, we went in for a cup of tea I think. So, she's right at the end of the period and she's just, things changed quite a bit because I think making universities free changed the composition of the students probably.

01:30:01 Although, most people had Commonwealth Scholarships when I was there anyway. There seemed to be like, everyone had a Commonwealth Scholarship so, and probably to get into architecture you needed – whatever score you needed meant you got a Commonwealth Scholarship anyway.

RR

01:30:19 I think we're there.

FG

01:30:20 Yeah.

JG

01:30:21 Thank you.

FG

01:30:22 Thanks.

END OF TRANSCRIPT

