



Linda Carsberg-Davis interviewed by Janet Horne

Linda Carsberg-Davis mother and grandfather worked at Caldwell's Nurseries. She joined as an office junior in 1965

Duration:	00:10:50
Recording date:	20.11.2012
Recording Location:	Linda Carsberg-Davis's home
Access restrictions:	None
Recording equipment:	Zoom H4N
Recording notes:	
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Interview summary

00.00.05	Linda introduces herself as having been born in Cranford Avenue Knutsford in 1949.
00.00.10	<p>Linda recalls her Mother and Grandfather both working at Caldwell's and her Mother's friendship with William Caldwell's Aunt Winnie.</p> <p>"My granddad, William Edwin Wilkinson, was herbaceous foreman and the family lived in Bramble Cottage, Chelford road, which was owned by Caldwell's. My Mum, Amy Wilkinson, Carsberg was her married name, worked at the nurseries on and off throughout her life and she loved the place. As a girl she helped Miss Winnie Caldwell, assisting her with bulbs and seeds. I remember Miss Winnie, she was an aunt of William Caldwell, as a formidable lady, but mum remained her friend throughout their lives and we visited with a home-made Christmas cake for her every year.</p> <p>I think mum and dad met at Caldwell's but I don't know what dad's job was. It's more than likely that other Wilkinson children worked there. Mum was one of nine. I worked as an office junior between 1965 and early 1967 approximately. As my mum worked for Caldwell's for many years, I think Mr William, as she called him, found this job for me. It was to be temporary as I planned to study to become a journalist like my brother David. However, one day in the nursery my first husband, Peter Acton, asked me to go out with him and those plans ended.</p> <p>Mr Neald was in charge of the office, with Mary Chorlton, Winifred Hutton and myself as office staff. Mary's father was a lorry driver for the nurseries and their father lived then at Bramble Cottage. It was a lovely atmosphere but I was shy of Mr Neald. Though kind, he seemed very serious. I sat at a window facing the direction of his house and when I saw the top of his trilby hat as he returned from lunch, we all</p>

	knew that the atmosphere in the office needed to become more professional.”
00.02.50	<p>Caldwell staff</p> <p>“Across the corridor from the main office was Bill Wilson, When I joined the staff I was warned by Mrs Hutton that his bark was worse than his bite and although very gruff he was kind. A large, very broad man, he always wore a cap indoors or out. I remember also that he wore a shabby kind of fawn mac and think he wore that indoors and out.</p> <p>I also remember the two Caldwell’s representatives Mr Ford and Mr Freddy Halliburton, very nice men. Other members of staff were Cyril Jones, George Sanderson and Frank Passant, who I think was Company secretary. Mr Neald retired when I was there and Frank Yarwood took his position as office manager.</p> <p>My mum Amy Carlsberg (?) worked part time in the shop over many years. Nursery staff that I remember were Pater Acton, of course, Alec Harrup and Jo Melaney(?). Sid Taylor and his father Alf were van drivers I think. Of course there was also Harry England, in charge of the greenhouses, which were on the other side of Chelford Road, and Donovan Leaman, a cousin of William Caldwell and a company director, and I’m sure there are quite a few more names which escape my memory. There was also Caldwell’s florist shop in King Street, run by Mr Jack Daniel and his wife. Their daughter Catherine also helped behind the counter.</p> <p>Mr. William Caldwell was a very good employer and the atmosphere in my experience provided a pleasant way for me as a 15 year old to begin my working life. But I suppose I am rather biased as the nurseries were always an important part of my life.”</p> <p>The names are given of ‘inside staff’ and mention of Linda’s Mother working in the shop.</p>
00.04.56	Mother’s enjoyment at being part of Caldwell’s followed by mention of her family life.
00.07.00	Linda remembers walking along the herbaceous border with her Mother and Linda has used knowledge gained from her Mother to give school talks on seeds.
00.08.00	Linda parents had an allotment and the family’s love of plants has lasted through the generations, with Linda’s daughter in the process of setting up her garden design business.
00.09.20	David and William Caldwell were caring of their employees and brought plants to Linda’s Mother during an illness.