



David Cooke interviewed by Barbara Moth

David Cooke worked at Caldwell's Nurseries for approximately 5 years in the 1960's.

Duration:	00:21:27
Recording date:	03.10.2011
Recording Location:	David Cooke's home
Access restrictions:	None
Recording equipment:	Zoom H4N
Recording notes:	Some background noise from computer in room
Copyright:	Cheshire Gardens Trust

Interview summary

00.00.00	David was born in Allostock in 1946. His father worked at Wash Lane Farm. They spent a lot of time at Labrunum Cottages on Middlewich Road near the farm and lived in no.11 Chapel Lane, Allostock.
00.01.20	David went to Allostock Primary School and Knutsford Secondary School. After school he went to work at Pochin's as a French polisher.
00.01.40	He left Pochin's after a couple of years and ended up at Caldwell's rose nursery at Ollerton. He went to work on his bike. The working day was 8 - 5, or 7.30 till 5. "There was a fair few there. There was Willie, he was a Latvian, Willie Amanus. There was Ted. We used to call him Khrushchev, a Lithuanian; Freddie Birchmanus, Big John, Bill Mullings, and then in the seasons time there used to be Sid Taylor and Jacky Painter come from Knutsford depot budding roses. Cyril Jones from Marton. He used to get all the buds ready..... it was all general work, no machinery in those days..... We used to band the buds on to the briar" David did have a little go but it was delicate work.
00.05.25	Willie was the supervisor. It was all outside work, just a little shed there with a fire in the corner in winter. "When it was bad weather we used to do quite a bit of labelling and stringing and that kind of job."

00.06.42	<p>The two houses where Willie and Ted lived were demolished across the road from Arthur Caldwell's near the Dun Cow. There was a big sign for the rose nursery.</p> <p>David was there 5 or 6 years. He believes that the nursery was sold off. It was still a working rose nursery and trees across the road.</p>
00.08.08	<p>"They used to grow about 75,000 roses a season. It was lovely to see just a field of colour. In the clay ground Queen Elizabeth grew very very well. My favourite would be Superstar or Peace or highly scented roses. I liked the scented ones best but also the variety of flowers from the floribunda to the HTs, all the different shapes, it was lovely to look at. There were also standards, climbing and shrub roses, some old ones, such as Zephirine Drouhin and Speks Yellow, old climbing roses."</p>
00.09.39	<p>Big orders from all the local councils round Manchester and further afield than that.</p> <p>Sid Taylor came round for the orders. He started at Barnshaw, and then on into Knutsford.</p> <p>Mr Caldwell came in person every day, with his pipe, and gave them their work for the day. If the weather was bad in winter Bill Caldwell would take them up to work in the tree nursery on Garden Road in Knutsford felling trees not required or overgrown.</p>
00.12.40	<p>David worked at the rose nursery for 5 -6 year and then had an offer of a job for more money in transport, just 500 yards away from where he lived.</p>
00.14.00	<p>Bill brought the wages every Friday with his smiley face and his pipe. David enjoyed his work. Freddie had an allotment with roses too.</p>
00.15.16	<p>Don is still around. He was at Orchard Farm. David got on well with him.</p>
00.16.36	<p>They used to cut some rose blooms for showing but David never went to the shows.</p>
00.17.40	<p>Only the specialist had budding knives. They used to open up a T section in the bark without touching the wood.</p>
00.18.32	<p>David enjoyed being in the open air. He was "happy go lucky in those days".</p>