

INTERVIEW WITH MR. FRED MORAN, BOOKMAKER

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I wonder if you mind telling me something about your early life, your childhood?

Right from back in my school days?

Yes.

That's a long while ago.

Oh, that's all right.

I originally came from Richmond. I was born and bred in Richmond and, of course, I left school when I was about 13. I went and worked for the Government for years.

What were you doing there?

I was in the Government Printing Office, and I worked there in 1910 - I started work in 1910 in the Government Printing Office and I was there in the War years. I used to print exam papers for the Education Department and help them with pound notes and one thing and another, and I can remember the 1918 War. And after the War was over, well, I was, in the meantime, supplementing my income. My brother was a Bookmaker, see, and I used to work for him on a Saturday afternoon.

How old were you then?

I was about 16.

That would have been an interesting life for a boy, wouldn't it?

Yes. Well, there was a bit of money in it. At 16½ to the 1918 War, it was hard to get a job because a lot of soldiers came back from the War and they were out of work and couldn't get jobs. Eventually they got up a petition objecting to Public Servants working two jobs. I was a Bookmaker's Clerk for my brother in those days. Eventually they asked me to - they came to kick me out - they told me I had two jobs and I'd have to turn it up and go to work, you know, give away the Public Service. So, I said yes. He called me down and said "I'll give you three months to turn up Bookmaker's Clerk of a Saturday afternoon, having two jobs. I used to get two pound, five a week (\$4.50) working for the Government, and I used to get 30 shillings (one pound, ten/\$3.00) for a Saturday afternoon - three hours work. They said, "well, I'll give you three months", so I said all right then.

In the meantime I got a Bookmaker's Licence myself and, ah, they asked me if I'd turn it up - Bookmaker's Clerk. So one day, I got transferred into the Guineas at Caulfield this day - I used to bet on the flat at Caulfield and, unfortunately, Boxing Day at Caulfield, a man had a bet with me and he looked at these tickets and it was Fred Moran. He said, "he's a Bookmaker, just a moment" he said "he turned up Bookmaker's Clerking" see. So after my Christmas holidays I was called down at 10 o'clock in the morning and I thought 'what's happening here'. He said "I thought you told me you would turn up Bookmaker's Clerking". I said "yes, that's right, I have". He says "you're a Bookmaker" he said "that's worse". I said "you didn't tell me that, though". So he said "well, you finish up at the end of the week".

So, from that day on, I've been a Bookmaker and ever since then, say, 20/21, earnt a good honest living, you know, and

Well, what was life like on the course, on the race courses when you started, when you first started as a boy?

It was all right, there was no Totalizator. You could get a quid easy those days. There were no Totes, you know. Then, eventually, we'd battle on and battle on and I've earnt a living ever since. Never made a fortune, had a lot of fun, and kept going.

What's the most important thing to you about, say, working on the course, what's the bit you enjoy most?

Well, people are lovely, I reckon, I've met some wonderful people and one thing and another and, you've got to be a bit smart at figures to be a Bookmaker.

I can imagine you would.

Yes, like you know, you can be, well you can have a dash but you won't last long dashing unless you've got your figures in your papers. That's all that's in the game, you know. Well we kept going and when I was working at the Printing Office I met my lass.

Was she working there?

She worked there then. Eventually I'd go to work there for a while and she worked there and she could play the piano pretty well, see. So I bought a music shop in Smith Street, Fitzroy, and we had that for a long while. It was going all right, you know, getting a living out of it and, eventually some fool introduced crystal sets.

Oh yes, when was that?

That was about 1924/25. Well that ^{of} wet the cat's whiskers and that, you know, and when that got going it got a bit of a rage, everyone was getting these crystal sets and dropping the music. The piano, no they didn't want that. At that time there were that many new gadgets coming into crystal sets, everyone went in for them - radio - that, bless my heart and soul, it dropped the music business. So, eventually, I met my lass and we decided to get married. We got married in about 1927 and we've been 'happily ever after'. We've had a good life, until just recently. But, it's been a wonderful life and I worked at Fitzroy for years, at the racecourse those days. I think it got closed in about 1930/31 - the Fitzroy racecourse and, you know where the racecourse was, down here, you know, well you've got the library on the racecourse.

Yes, that's right, I was going to ask you about that because, I didn't realise until I started asking people things about the local history, because I've only worked here a year, and they said "oh, this used to be the racecourse" and I thought, when I was coming down to see you, I must ask you about the racecourse here.

Yes, well, I worked at the racecourse here in 1922, I think, at least '22, and it used to be on the corner where Pitt's tannery is, that street there, you know, behind the, just two streets down from you.

Ah, Normanby Avenue?

EADD ST LEINSTER GROVE

ST GEORGE'S RD.

WOOLTON AV.

No, no.

The other way, is it?

Yes, right down. There are two brick houses on the corner.

EADD ST.

There's, we're on the corner of Bradley Avenue/St. Georges Road.

Yes, well, that one - that's the racecourse - Bird Avenue's the racecourse. There's one further down, nearer to Town.

I'll have to look it up on the map.

It's Shaftesbury Parade this end isn't it? It's Shaftesbury Parade and that street where Pitt's tannery is now, I can't think of the darn name of it now. Well that was there and St. Georges Road right down to Leinster Grove, all that square was the racecourse there.

EADD ST WOOLTON AV.

And how long had it been there?

It had been for donkeys years. I don't know, before my time.

What did they race there?

They raced ponies - you could race ponies those days, but they had to be 14.2 hands high and under. You could race them at Fitzroy or in a register at Melbourne. Any register, of course, but over that, over 14.2, once you raced there you weren't allowed to race on the big courses in Melbourne. See, well, they used to, horses that couldn't win in Melbourne raced, well I don't know, take it to the ponies. Once you went over to Richmond, Ascot or Fitzroy, you were barred from coming back to the registered races.

What, they were kind of second-class were they?

Third class horses. And they'd race there and, for years, and about '32, I think, or somewhere about that, they closed Fitzroy, then they closed Richmond, you know, and then they closed Ascot, because they were all new housing estates then, see.

You must have noticed there'd be different sorts of people who, perhaps, would come to the races here then would go to the big Flemington type races?

Oh, yes, well, every Tom, Dick and Harry went to the ponies those days. Anywhere to try and boost their income. 'Cause things were very, very quiet those days, you know. Yet we turned over a lot of money. But a big bet, you know, ten shillings was a big bet those days. And they'd have a shilling on, and sixpence on. They had all the Hawkers and wheelbarrows. They used to finish their jobs going around selling vegetables or rabbits, or anything like that. They'd all finish up at the racecourse and we'd just help to relieve them of a few bob, you know.

Yes, now they were, were they Monday - night?

Monday afternoon and, these only had horses here, but Richmond ran trotting meetings. The trotting meetings were a Monday or a Friday, you know. And then later in the year, of course, the trots went to Ascot then. Then they, of course, finished them up, the trots.

*EADD ST
WOOLTON AV.*

But, all that racecourse, oh, it was, you know, big those days.

Yes, and what happened when all those type of race courses closed, do you think those people went on to the bigger race courses like Flemington and Caulfield?

Oh yes, they were barred from racing, you know, all those horses. They were all disqualified those horses - the racing ponies. I think they had a, they let some of them in for the time being afterwards, you know, they'd forgive them, you know, give them a chance to come back - give them another go, but then, of course, they eventually they all got right out the pony meetings. Mr. Wren and that, he used to race, he was a man that raced only ponies - John Wren, you know. And they used to start at Shaftesbury Parade at the one corner there, and they'd go round and they'd come round again and that was a nine furlong race. From that corner, Shaftesbury Parade, right down to the bottom, along Leinster Grove and turn round, and they'd go twice for a nine furlong, so it must have been, probably about four and a half furlongs around the racing track. It was all cinders, but if there was a windy day come, my word, you'd finish up like blackfellows they'd be singing out there - dust and dirt and everything like that.

But it must have made for the atmosphere, did it?

Oh yes, of course, in those early days I lived in Richmond and we'd come along and we used to have to get the train from West Richmond up to Croxton here, and walk from Croxton down to the racecourse. There were no trams along St. Georges Road.

And what, did you walk down with your Bookies' bag?

Yes, from the station.

And everybody had to walk?

Oh yes, some might be flusher than others. Down to, actually, the electric tram came from Town and it stopped at Holden Street. Then you'd have a cab from there up to the racecourse, or something like that, and a cab back. But most came in horses and carts and everything, you know.

Yes, well it must have been interesting. Did you have any special people, you know, interesting characters you met over the, you know, on the racecourses?

Oh millions of them.

Tell me about some of them.

Oh, well, they used to have the 'tick tackers' you know, gathering all around, you know, tick tacking the prices from inside to outside, you know. Signs like this, you know.

Oh, hand signs?

Hand signs, yes.

And, who were these people?

Jack McNabb, Phillips and all those. The Bookies had to pay them. They'd run around telling the Bookies, see.

They worked for the Bookies?

Yes. They worked for the Bookies. Well they worked for themselves, but they went and told the Bookies and they'd collect so much off every Bookie.

And what were they saying - what were they telling by these hand signs?

Well, say, if a horse was 10 to 1 inside, it's been backed to an av. of 5 to 1, they'd run around and say so-and-so's 5 to 1 inside, and all this. And they'd called it 'tick tacking the prices' right through.

And they was, so everyone knew what was going on all round the course?

Oh, the Bookies did, you know, and you'd shorten them in their price because they were backed inside and fancied. But we knew them all by nickname - Lemons and so-and-so; one fellow used to always be going around selling lemons and he had a big basket on his head, you know, and we'd say "oh Lemons is back there" or something like that. He'd sell all the things that, oh, fruits and ice-creams and everything - sell it on the racecourse, you know.

It used to be three shillings to go in at Fitzroy and, oh, inside was ten shillings. The inside end was where on the corner of, oh I can't think of the damn street now, and they used to have that, like the block wiped off, see, you couldn't always stand in the street and go in, so they had these houses blocked away, you know, in a big square, say, 30 or 40 feet square, and you went back and you had to go inside that square to get the tickets because they wouldn't let you stand in the street. Oh it was big deal those days, you know.

Oh it must have been interesting, I mean, see things have changed, where do you go now?

Me, oh Flemington, Caulfield, Mooney Valley - I've got to go to Warrnambool tomorrow, Seymour the next day. Have a bit of fun.

Yes, but have you noticed there's any - what are the changes - there must be changes that have happened, say, on the courses since you started when you first went on the course as a boy, till now when you're?

Oh yes, well, everything's regulated and you've got to do what they tell you to do like, you know, the stands are all put up for you, you pay so much today, and there's betting boards put up for you and you pay so much a day for a loan of those boards, you know, and they have the slips all printed for you. Of course, in those days, in the early days, you never had betting boards, in the early days, but now they've got betting boards. Have you ever seen a betting board?

Only on the television?

Oh, yes, well that's, all that kind of business and the regulations are much stricter now than it was, you know. And, in the early days, anyone could go and get a licence then, but nowadays, no.

Do you think that the regulations have made much difference?

Oh yes.

What difference have they made?

Well, you couldn't scale nowadays, it's all guaranteed, everyone's guaranteed, like the Bookies Association, you've all got to join that. And I'm guaranteed every day like, for five thousand or seven thousand, and you've got to pay it to the Bookmakers' Association. There are only a certain amount of Bookies licensed nowadays.

That's to safeguard everyone?

That's to safeguard everyone, we're practically - insured, you know, to a certain amount.

Well can we look at how you see Northcote, you know, when you first came here as a young bridegroom, I presume, did you come down to Northcote then, when you were married?

We came here for a while, yes, Northcote, during - my wife knew Northcote from a girl, and I lived in Richmond and Albert Park, you know, I didn't know that much about Northcote, only I was travelling from train to tram. I used to go out with my wife of a Saturday night or something, and meet her in Town and we'd go to the pictures and I used to have to put her on the tram to go home 'cause I couldn't get back myself. See, there was no hope of getting back - I lived at Albert Park then.

Yes, of course, the thing is you think of Northcote now as being very close to the City but, obviously, then it wasn't.

Oh, for a long while, no. They only had the cable trams. I think the cable trams finished up the top here, didn't they, those days, but the electric trams only went to as far as Holden Street, then back in and go along Lygon Street. One of them - Nicholson Street - one of those trams. But St. Georges wasn't made. The centre was nothing but a big mullock heap, you know, where they put the mains down, you know. It was very, very dirty then, in those days. The roads were bad.

Well were you here during the War, in Northcote?

Yes. I was here.

Did the War affect the area here?

Which War do you want. The last War.

Yes?

Oh, you know, a lot of people were away, and one thing and another. It got a lonely place like, with so many soldiers away, and they'd come back on leave or so and so, you know, back, but it just trundled on, War. There weren't that many houses there, buildings started to spring up during the War. As soon as the War was over, it was a very, very quiet old, Northcote, during the War years.

Didn't you ever feel that War was going to come to Northcote?

No. The only time they got a fright was when they bombed Darwin and those places. But people were pretty confident. You'd get letters. That wasn't that much worry in the War years to the general people. Only the ones that had their relatives away in the War.

Did you dig trenches to get into if you were bombed?

Oh yes. We all had a trenches in the backyard, you know. But you got sick of digging them and say "oh yes, that'll be deep enough".

Yes, I was talking to a Miss Coles (another lady who lives up in Shaftesbury Parade) and she said that they, luckily, had a nephew who dug it for them but they kept falling into it and it kept filling up with water.

Can we go back to your early life in Albert Park and Richmond, you know, what was it like growing up, then, for you?

It was a good life, I had a lot of brothers, I had five other brothers and we all lived happily. My father didn't get much - he was in the boot trade, a Bootmaker. He was off of a daytime. Monday, no work Monday, sent home, so he'd come back again. It was a struggle those days.

When was this?

Say, 1904/5/6. They were bad years. Well, you didn't get much. A Bootmaker'd get about two pound, five shillings (\$4.50) a week and he'd have to walk from Richmond to Bedgood's in Jolimont, you know Jolimont? Well he'd have to walk there every Monday for two pound, five shillings per week. But we managed. We had good neighbours and in one of my early days, we had, he used to be a horse dealer, doing horses and having, of course, I was in my element. He used to take me in the jinker and ride these horses around the place.

Were you always interested in horses, were you?

Only through him, through a neighbour, you know. Of course, my father was a Bookmaker many years ago, in about 1905, but I don't think he had enough cash in the bag, so he didn't make a success of it. My brother, we made a success through the War years in, say, 1915/16, that's when we got money, see, in that 1916-18 War, you know. Ooh, things boomed after that here. We went on like wildfire - Bookmaking got very big.

So you had Bookmaking in your blood then?

Well, it was only through the family, yes.

Because I mean, it's not say the sort of business that a lot of people would think of going into?

Oh no. And of course, I used to work for my brother as a Clerk at 16 and it was a pretty good earn.

And what do you do as a Bookie's Clerk?

I used to live in Richmond and when we got married we used to help out to keep all our betting books for the Government and what I had, like we never had enough room at home, and I used to turn round and store them out here, and I found an old book you can have a look at for yourself. See the date there - 1926.

Yes, and these up the top are the names of the horses, I presume.

Of course, it wasn't a very plain bet but these are the bets 24 to 6 - well you had to put 6 in that column - that section goes in the bag that one there, and that one there's your ticket number, what I give you.

Does that look like me?

Oh, look, there you are. Now, when, can I borrow this one day and photocopy it, because then I'll use it as part of, you know, I'll have your interviews and I'd like to have that and a little bit about you? That'd be lovely. Now I'll - when was this - 1975 - goodness me!

I've got another one. That was the son. There was another article in "The Age", an interview. I don't know why they've picked me out. The Sullivans rang me up about six or eight weeks ago and they wanted some things - they wanted some Bookmakers' tickets off me and those sheets like that and Bookmakers' books and how they would stand, and one thing and another, but I never saw it, I was away somewhere on the night they had it on. They had to have a stool and Bookie on a stool and

Then is it unusual - it's unusual for me to someone of your age - how old are you now, over 80?

82.

82 - Still going strong, still working. I mean most people who work in a job are only too glad to see the back of it at 60 or 65 and here you are, at 82, well it's obviously kept you young?

Yes - oh, interest all the time - interest and liking people. It's a big thing, you know. I can go along Northcote now and I wouldn't know a soul. Yet I can get to the racecourse and everyone says "good-day Fred, how are you" and you're geared up for the day.

Yes, oh, it must be wonderful to still feel that kind of feeling?

Yes. You stand up there - you know what you're going to do. You know your business. You know what makes this and what makes the clock go round.

Yes. Well now, you were telling me about this

See, these are all bets. You know, now if you can put - see, now that's 7 to 2, that's \$14 to 4, that's 18, well you put the 14 to 4, ~~80~~ there; oh, he's missed that one there - that's 36 on to that makes it 66. And that goes on. And you add I just can't understand - 17½ to 5, that's 20, 22½, he's made that 800 see. That's what they take out at the end of the day. That column added together comes out at that. And all that column, that's what goes in your bag. And that column is only ticket money.

Well you add these across, when you're ready, you'd say well there's two there but I had 10's first, a lot of people go units first, two and seven are nine is 32, 39, 65, 68, 78, what's 14, 92, that's, we put it at 92 - that's 920, you add the 0's on that's ten's, that's 920, then you add your units; two and three are five, ten, 16, 20, 23 - 931, I'm 4 out. Now, that's 931's in the bag. Now, if that - well, we'll have to have paid out 1,191, so we've done 260 on that.

Yes, so that wasn't a good one?

No, no. The favourite won, see. Well then we'd lose

Now this was the favourite, was it?

He must have been - he's a 7 to 2, he's the shortest one, the shortest price is the favourite.

Now this, obviously, wasn't a very popular horse?

No. Well, they've backed a winner. It wasn't popular with me. Popular with the public.

That is Fitzroy.

Yes, and that was here?

In '26, yes.

And this course at Northcote was called Fitzroy?

That's Fitzroy, what's that - Richmond.

Now what's this - this Controller's stamp?

Oh, yes, all these books had to go through the Tax Office and be stamped before you could use them, and then we used to have to pay tax on the big bets - fiver bets and tenner bets. But that, I don't think that was in that day, but we used to have to

Here's Mooney Valley.

Yes, well here's one here - 98 before we had to pay in that race. What'd we do - it looks like 614 - pay 98. There's 518 we won you see.

So that's all right?

That's OK, yes.

Yes, well this is really fascinating.

But that's, that's Richmond - it must have been a wet day, that one.

Why, is that because there weren't many?

No, not many, well that's a dry one - some are good and some are bad, but you made

How do you know that it's a wet meeting or a?

Well I can tell, because the rain's on your book, you see.

Oh, here am I looking for something in the figures - I see, yes, I can see that now, yes it's all washed out, yes, and a bit of mud on it as well. And so you stood there, come rain?

No umbrellas those days. This is Caulfield. See, there's another one - 96 - Requisite or whatever it was won it. Well we generally put the holdings, it looks like 700 - well we won 600 on it.

Oh, oh, well that was a good day too?

Yes, it's at Caulfield. But those days the money was small and they backed a lot of horses. It's quite different to nowadays.

Yes, what people tend to put all their money on the one horse?

Yes. See, that's nowadays, it's the same type of thing.

Yes, so you've got a special Government printed heading, and you've got to fill in

The name of your Clerks and dates and all that there, and that's got to go in to the Government every week.

Every week?

And, you pay your tax on what's your turnover. There you are. Turnover for the day - \$2,534. Now we've got to pay 1.75% on that turnover tax. The Government gets that. But you win, lose or draw.

Oh, so you're not paying on your profit margin, you're paying for the glory of being able to . Now, this is for Ballarat and that was, what was that - last Thursday?

Yes, the 6th/9/83.

Oh, I can see, I can actually read - I don't bet, I

No, don't you.

No, I'd lose all the time. No I can see.

See we've done some money there - we got 850 and we paid, lost \$505 dollars on that race. That was a bad day.

And so, sometimes, you have a

Well, we get clean sheets and one thing and another.

And this is what you've got to hand in every week?

Every week.

And that's to the Taxation Department?

Yes. If you're betting in Melbourne you would have paid 2.25%. Now that's, what was that, \$2,500, well you put \$2,500, \$35, \$500, there's \$43 I'd have to pay on those two days.

So you have to pay \$43 even though you had a bad day and lost a lot of money?

Oh yes.

Yes, well that really makes it - it must be something in it, though, of that gamble, because it's a gamble for you as well, isn't it?

Oh, yes, well they've got to pick the right horse that wins. Well, there's a race there - oh we did some bad, bad races there that day.

Now, how do you know when - you know, when to change the odds?

When you get a big bet you turn that down then, you know, and turn somebody else up. There's 500 to 50, 11 to 1. 150 To 50. Well, we turn that down then, but no-one else might want to. But, to finish up, we're still on deck.

Yes, that's right, but you must enjoy doing it.

Yes, I do. Well it's not really a gamble, you know, well you feel that this can't win and that can't win, you watch horses, you know.

Yes, so you're building it on a long knowledge?

Knowledge, figures and that.

But still, it's not like going to work. Now where everything's predictable, you go to a job and everything's predictable, you get the same money every week. Nothing you do's gonna make you, you know, give you any more money, unless you go out, I mean you're in something where you're putting your whit against, you know?

Oh, yes, you've got to watch races and horses, and say this is bad and this is so-and-so. Watch horses. Oh, and you've got to have your eyesight about you, and your wits.

Yes, and you're still going?

But what hope have you got punting. Now I average paying about \$220 or \$230 a week to the Government for that, but I've got to get \$230; it costs me \$40 a day to bet. There's \$40, it might cost me \$80 a day for wages - that'd be for Clerks and that, you know. \$80 and \$40 is \$120 and you pay those sums, it costs you nearly \$300 a day.

So you've really got to ?

I get that, I've got to live too. So what hope have you got punting. People say, "oh yes, they're punters, you know, back horses", you might have a bit of fun, a bit of a thrill but you'll still lose your money.

Yes, it's pitted against you - and I mean I don't know, I've never met a Bookie before, I don't know anything much about them, and so I mean I presumed that ?

It's harder now than it's ever been. See, it's a hard life now, like we win today, lose tomorrow, but we're still in front, but if you don't use your brains or have your wits, you'll never get in front. You'll do your money. And if you lose your money it's being a Bookie. I keep on run into a lot of money, win Tattslotto, I don't know buy a business, get in a fruit shop, get in a lolly shop, do that and do that. No, I know nothing about it. No, don't know a damn thing about it. They say, get a Bookie's licence, oh yes, get a Bookie's licence. They'd soon go broke.

Well it's like any other business isn't it?

Yes, if you've got too much money, it's the worst thing you can take on, bookmaking. You can have money but if you haven't got any brains you're up the pole.

Yes. Look, these are really interesting. When I come to do my display, would I be able to put these behind glass, because I'm sure people would be interested, you know, like a lot of people would remember the racecourse, but also to be able to have these. I mean I don't know if the school teachers would approve of, you know, of showing betting sheets, but I'm sure the old ones would be of terrific historical interest.

Yes, I might find some better sheets, plainer sheets than them. Listen, now that and that, now they look similar don't they, all these bets, they're similar. Now they're in dollars, every one's a dollar bet or, you know, \$8 to \$1, there's nothing under a dollar, 50¢ is half, you know, what we put in for someone else.

Oh, is that half?

Yes, that's one that, that's half each way, 1.25 to half, that's that, that's 50¢ at the lowest. Now, and all these others are dollars.

Yes, so this is \$50?

Yes, that's \$50 to \$10. Now, there's under \$60 to \$20. There's \$500 to \$80 - he must have been a failure - 5 to 4, \$80; but, now that is shillings - the difference of the times; they're all shilling bets, you know, two bobs, four bobs. That's how they bet those days, and now it's all dollars - nothing under 50¢.

Yes, no they are really fascinating. I love the one with the rain on it though, you know, I mean, it really

Yes, well often when it rained and they were wet, you'd rely on the imprint on the paper. You could, see, this kind of paper used to make an imprint. See your pencil would make a mark.

But you can see, there's little bits of mud and, obviously, a few thumb prints, there it is. Yes, you can't really read it.

You can feel it, that on there, it's like brail there.

Yes, 'cause that could be a bit embarrassing, couldn't it?

There, there, see. On "Voyage" 40 to 455, now just turn him over the back and there it is.

Yes, you have to learn to read brail! Yes, obviously that was a wet muddy day?

Oh, yes. Now these have got to go into the Government every Friday, only seven days, if you don't have them in by 3 o'clock, you get fined 10%.

Well, that brings home a few home truths about Bookies to me. I thought they either made lots of money or went broke. I didn't realise they were subject to just as many taxes and abuses as the rest of us.

Oh, yes, and then you pay your income tax on top of it you know.

Oh, so that's a separate tax. That's for just being allowed to be a Bookie?

Yes. And pay them every week, you do. Tax on every bet we pay.

Yes, well they certainly shorten your odds in making a lot of money don't they?

Oh, well, we went ahead and made a good living out of it and, but all I wanted was to earn a living out of it. I want to make sure that I don't go broke, but some will make a gamble and they've got money and nothing tomorrow. I suppose I would have earned a lot of money, and people owe me a lot of money, but that's nothing to do with Bookmaking. Someone borrows off you or something and never pay you, you know. Never mind, I'm still alive, and if I had a lot of worry to get a lot of money I'd have a lot of worry then. But I'm still on deck at 82 and haven't fallen off the foot yet.

Oh, well, how many people are still able to go on with what they enjoy doing their job at 82?

They wanted to close the flat at Caulfield, and we had a deputation to them not to close the flat and they said "well the Board of Health says they've got so much to do and they'd have to close it, it wasn't hygeinic" you know. The Cafeteria was no good and we tried to tell them they could put mobile canteenson the flat but they wouldn't have it

160 People, and are they, they all spread around, do they?

Oh, no, at certain places. There's a race book - have a look at the date.

This is Victorian Racing Club, November the second, Spring Meeting, Cup Day, 1926.
Yeah!

~~SPEARHEAD~~ won the Cup. RECORD CROWD 126,000 NEVER BEATEN

And were you a Bookie at this race?

No, I wasn't in at the flat then, my brother was. I never got anything until 1927, 28. I just missed out. Well I had a licence then, but I wasn't allowed to work at Flemington 'cause I didn't have a Flemington licence. My brother was there. They're all in the back. I'll show you.

Oh yes! Yes, and where's your brother?

There were 470 Bookmakers there. There's about 160 now. The flat, that was the flat, and there's no flat now. So, all the ones with the dot - they're all dead, there's only myself and another still alive. My brother, Ern,

There he is, E. Moran, now he was on the hill ring? And what's happened, they just don't replace their - I mean when somebody dies that's the end of it, is it?

Oh, well, the game faded and faded and the Totalizator put them all out. See, there was no Tote those days.

Yes, it must have made a lot of difference.

I guess, 470 Bookmakers, there - and now there's about 160 Bookmakers. Hillside and big difference.

Yes, oh especially for things like the Cup?

They used to have the Cup Meeting there and they had all these in there when a race came along, they'd have Sweepstakes between them and in a hat and you'd draw your number out, you know, the visitors to the Cup and whatever you got number you drew out of there. They tear these up into bits, that's what they're in there for. Sweepstakes they called them. You'd have two bob in each yourself, or so, or a shilling, and you'd tear those numbers and get you'd have a draw out - you've got horse number 6 or something.

Oh, yes, well of course they still do that sometime, where you work, you know!

Yes, well we lived in Hawthorn for years and I *took Old Books* nana and that was here and I used to bundle them over there and put them down the shed that's how I've got them here now like, those books, they've been down there for 'cause we got rid of them when we lived at Hawthorn, and bulk store them over there, 'cause you used to have to keep them for years then.

Well, it's certainly interesting to see them now. That's one of the things, of course, about keeping a lot of old things. You don't want to unless you have to.

No, but you've got to with the Government.

Yes, with these, you had to keep them?

Bet told you about Mr. Goldsworthy. You ought to get hold of Mr. Goldsworthy.

I will, she's going to ring him for me and introduce me to him by phone, and I'll go over and make an appoint

'Cause he can tell you about old Northcote before the brickworks and all that.

Oh, that'll be fascinating.

There was a fellow here used to live on the racecourse, opposite the racecourse training horses - oh, a fellow named Butcher and they used to train horses on the course, lives in Darcy Parade, I think it is, and Roy Shaw, he used to work for the brickworks down here, carting bricks, and he turned out to be one of the leading trainers in Melbourne, on the VRC in the big meetings, and he used to train the ponies there, he and at Fitzroy and that.

So he really moved up in the world?

He did, yes. Roy Shore.

Yes, you think of those things not happening as often now because there's a lot of

No, because they haven't got the opportunities, 'cause he used to drive a brick cart and have an interest in the ponies, you know, then he raced his ponies there. Then in '32 when they closed them down, he went over and got a licence to go to the VRC see, and he turned out a very successful trainer, Roy.

Yes, and he was a local?

A local, yes, a brick carter, yes. Everyone used to work at the brickworks those days. My wife, she could tell you all about Northcote, all the people and one thing and another. You see I, well, of course, Kelly's pub up here used to be the Walker place up there in Fitzroy, they'd get out and come up here to the station and they'd go up to Croxton pub there, you know, it was only a little place those days, and it grew, and grew and grew, didn't it?

Yes, well it's still growing. Still had the most beer drunk in Melbourne last year.

Did it? Dear, dear, I thought they'd go off it at the price.

Oh I don't think it stops people ever drinking.

Well, look, I'll have to get shot, I have to start work at 12.15, but that was really fascinating. I was really pleased, and thanks very much.

I'll uh, if I think of something else, I'll get in touch with you.

Yes, well do that, and I'll come down and, well I'll get in touch with Ms. Moran first and come down and borrow these to photocopy one day when I come back from overseas.

Going overseas, are you?

Yes.