

Úna Gan A Gúna	
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[00:00:00]

PR: Right, we're off. Hello, this is Pat Rodwell for the Úna Gan a Gúna project, and it's the 12th February 2025. And we're in Birmingham, at the Irish Welfare Association, and today I'm with–

RG: My name is Ravinder Gill, and my year of birth is 1984 and I've come from West Bromwich to do this interview.

PR: Lovely. Let's, let's just start then by you telling me a bit about your family and where you're from.

RG: Okay, well my parents are from India, the state of Punjab, and they had moved to Cork in, in Ireland, and that's where me and my brother were born. And then we lived there, they helped out in my dad's uncle's restaurant, it was an Indian restaurant. They had a very nice time living in Cork, they said they were welcomed by everyone, erm, and they really enjoyed their time there. They tried some other, erm, business ventures whilst they were in Cork, tried to open their own shop, and then a few other things, but then they decided, because of work to move to England, and they had some friends here, in West Bromwich, so that's where I've been since the age of 5. Erm, and I did travel around a lot after that but we moved together as a family to West Bromwich.

PR: And, you were there for the first 5 years of your life...

RG: Yes.

PR: Do you have any memories of that time?

RG: I do have memories, of being in a school, and I remember my parents going in and talking to some nuns, so it must have been parents evening or something, and them saying that I daydream a lot [laughter] so they were talking to my parents and I just remember going up and down some stairs in the school and passing nuns. I remember having the uniform there and I

just remember the place we lived. We had this really old, big, brown box TV, yeah [laughter], and then a little bit of the restaurant that my parents worked in that, you know, I remember one time it was really cold and I walked out of the restaurant and my mum told me to come back in, so little things like that I do, yes, remember about it.

PR: And how about your parents? What are their, what's their view of their time in Cork?

RG: Erm, really good views, and a lot of the things to do with being Irish I've picked up from my dad a lot. He still has his Irish passport. My mum changed to British, but he wanted to keep it Irish, and we've always kept ours, mine and my brother, as Irish, and he always said to keep it as an Irish passport, and he's told me a lot about the time in Cork. That my mum told me one time that me and my brother escaped from the restaurant to go to the shoe shop down the road and the police officer said [laughter] 'oh your kids are [inaudible]' and he brought us back. And things like that, the whole community knew each other. And my dad recently was telling me about Women's Christmas, which happens in Cork, and I mentioned it to a few people that I know that are Irish and they knew nothing of it. So I saw that it was a big thing in Cork and he remembered about this, so things like that I've learnt from him. And, erm, I was part of the 50th anniversary pub bombings event through Birmingham Irish Association, and I spoke to them about it and they said they remember when these men were innocently accused and things like that. And yeah, they remember their time in Cork as a good time as well.

PR: So you consider yourself Irish?

RG: I do, yes, yes. I think when I was younger, it, I didn't value it as much as I do now, because having moved to the UK and when I started school I would always have to say 'but I'm Irish' and everyone else is British, and you were kind of like the outsider. But people were also shocked because of my Indian background and so they would say things like, which I still find they say now [laughter] when I tell people, 'but so are you Indian? Are both your parents, like how does it work?' and then I'd have to explain that well I'm actually born in Ireland that's why I say I'm Irish. But I do think it's not just about that I was born in Ireland, but it is a part of me in a lot of ways and that, like I said, has been bought down through my dad and things like that, so even though I do get people saying 'but you don't have the Irish heritage so you're not really Irish', I do think of myself as Irish, and I do remember growing up telling people that I'm Irish and so that has always been a part of me because I have been different to everyone else [laughter].

[00:05:44]

PR: Is that why you decided to volunteer here at the [Irish] Welfare Association?

RG: Yes, it's because, well I spent a few years in Hong Kong and I was working there as a teacher. And I got to know a few Irish people there, and they all have like a little Irish community there and they would do an Irish breakfast at the Irish Centre in Hong Kong. And that made me connect more to my Irish roots, and I connected with a friend who was from Ireland in Hong Kong and we got on really well talking about Irish things. So we were able to be in this different country, but also there's a lot of ex-pats from Britain there, but we didn't

connect with them, we connected more with like we're both Irish. So, he would tell me about the Irish sport he's doing in Hong Kong, so that was our little connection. And when I moved back, I went again to the St Patrick's parade, and when I saw all these banners coming up, I thought I've got to try and get involved in one of these, but at that time I was also volunteering, and I still am, with visually impaired and blind tennis and through that I got really connected with the Irish tennis team, and I went to Dublin to the nationals and things like that. So that connected me more with being Irish. And they were so pleased, 'oh she's from Cork', 'she's one of us', 'she can be part of the team'. They welcomed me so much. And then, yeah, so I found out if I could volunteer here and then I started volunteering here, helping people with passports. But I'm also part of their ramblers team. So we go rambling every Friday, when we can, so through that I connected more with people from different parts of Ireland, and got to know more about the history and things like that.

PR: Brilliant! And you've got a brother, is he older of younger than you?

RG: He's two years older than me.

PR: And does he have the same view?

RG: Erm, no that's quite strange, he doesn't. Whereas I feel like very in my heart I'm Irish, and, erm, when people talk about things like 'The Troubles' or Republic of Ireland, being from the Republic of Ireland and what happens in North Ireland and what's happened with the history of British government, I feel like I can connect with that, and I speak about that, and I make people aware of that. My British friends I speak to them about that a lot, and they sometimes say 'no, Irish people love England!' and then I'll have to tell them the views that people have, and I'll say this is why. And they sometimes don't know about those things, and I've spoke to them about it. Whereas my brother sees himself, even though he's born in Ireland, he thinks he's British-Indian, yeah.

PR: No that's interesting. I've known other families and siblings like that, so I was interested.

RG: Yeah, whereas when me and my dad talk, we talk very much like we are Irish. [laughter]

PR: And erm, lets go to when you were 5, and you and your family moved to England, and you settled in West Bromwich at the time, which is in the West Midlands, just west of Birmingham isn't it?

RG: Yes, yes.

PR: And what were your memories from arriving at that time and being in a different country?

RG: Yeah, I remember that we were first living with my dad's friend, because my parents had to find accommodation and work. And then I remember going with them, looking at houses, and then we were renting a house through another friend they knew. And then that area, my mum ended up getting a job in a sewing factory 'cos she did a design course in India, but

because of not having the English language, she couldn't use it fully. So they've pretty much done labour jobs like that. And then I remember then we moved to the street next door because they had bought a house next door, and the reason was my mum loved the kitchen, it was so massive, so she wanted to get that house! And we moved in there and, erm, then I just remember starting school, but because I started at that age, and not from nursery or reception, I remember being, again, kinda the odd one out. And I remember I was still quite upset the first day I went to that school, and I wanted to go and run to my mum, but my mum asked the girl next to me to take care of me, so we became good friends. But I do remember people saying to me, 'you're Irish?', 'you're Irish?'.

[00:10:54]

PR: What type of school was it? Was it a catholic school, was it a [inaudible]...

RG: No, it was just a non-rel- it was a Christian school but not a Catholic school, and they weren't as religious. We did they hymns and things like that, but no nuns and things like that walking around! [laughter]

PR: But even at that age, 5/6, you definitely identified as coming from Ireland?

RG: Yes, yeah, but I remember being around more of an Asian community when we moved here, so that was I could see the difference there, and so being from Indian parents, my family did want me to be involved in a lot of the Asian community, yeah.

PR: And then from primary school, you went on to secondary, and was that again in West Bromwich?

RG: That was, yes.

PR: What was that like?

RG: Erm, I think that was completely different! [laughter] 'cos that was just like being in high school anywhere I guess, and you'd have your little groups of friends, so I'd have, in our high school, people were very much in their little community groups. So it was a lot of, in my circle, were a lot of Indian girls that we'd hung round with each other, and it was very much girls, because coming from a mum that's from a very strict background [laughter] Indian, she would want to see you with other girls, and not so much with boys, so I was always around the girls in high school, even though I had crushes on boys [laughter], and they were all on like different races because I was just attracted to who I was attracted to. And just very much, erm, you'd have people not getting on, you'd have some bullies, you'd have teachers you got on with, teachers you didn't get on with, and West Brom is multi-cultural, so I guess you would see that there was a bit of race divide sometimes, a bit of cultural differences, things like that would be brought into high school.

PR: And at that stage, did you have any friends who were also felt or said that they were Irish?

RG: No. Again, It was I the only Irish one. And I do remember when I'd say, I wouldn't just go in and say I'm Irish, but if it ever came up, something about Ireland, I'd say, 'yeah I know that because I'm Irish', and people would say 'stop lying you're not Irish', and then I'd get accused, 'you're not really, why are you making it up', but they didn't believe that I was Irish, yeah.

PR: Well that's where you were born, where you spent the first 5 years of your life. Can I just ask about the religion side, how were you brought up in terms of religion?

RG: Erm, my parents brought me up as Sikh, because they are Sikh, but again, I remember rebelling [laughter] against that because I was always questioning things about the religion. And being in a multi-cultural environment and then growing up in England, I just, I didn't really connect with it, but again, my brother did but I didn't.

[00:14:32]

PR: So you took slightly different paths, you and your brother, in terms of choices. Let's move to the time when you were 15, can you think of anything in particular, what things were like when you were 15? Any memories that come to mind?

RG: I just remember that I really wanted to leave home [laughter] because I just wanted to be myself a bit more, and I thought my parents, like I said being from an Indian background, thought you should be like this, be like that. Very much was from my mum how a woman should be and you should learn cooking, and you should be a good housewife when you grow up. You should be getting married was from both of my parents, and that it should be to someone that's Indian, but I was like not connecting with those ideas as well so I would rebel and talk back to my mum and I would say that 'no, I don't want to grow up to just go cooking. I want to work and I want to travel and I want to do other things', and so I remember that, and also being very excited at that age to leave high school. I just thought I've had enough of high school now and I can't wait for the next step, so I was really looking forward to college and getting out of there!

PR: Why do you think that was?

RG: I don't know. I just feel like, I just felt like school was very... everyone had to conform to a certain way, and also I have friendships that worked out, friendships that didn't, people you got along with, people you didn't, and then I just thought now I've come to that stage where I'm just ready for something else, and I just want to grow a bit more and not be stuck here. Yeah.

PR: From what you've said, your dad was quite supportive of the view that you were Irish and that you were born in Ireland, what did your mum think of your feeling about that?

RG: I remember we were, I was wearing a cross when I came over here and I was in primary school, and a girl said to me, who was from a Muslim background, 'how come you're wearing a cross?', but I didn't think anything of it at that time. And I just thought, yeah, because I wear

this, it's a part of me, but after that my mum got rid of it, and said 'we don't need to wear this anymore', so she didn't really explain, she just said 'you don't follow this'.

PR: That is interesting. Tell me a bit more about high school while you were there. What was it like? What did you enjoy? What did you not like?

RG: Erm, I think, [laughter] its quite [inaudible] in high school I didn't like following the rules because I just found them silly. Everyone having to wear these black, it was a black uniform with a white shirt, everyone had to conform. So I used to wear black jeans [laughter] and white trainers and one time, the teacher picked up on that, but other times they didn't seem to really care about that everyone would notice that I'm wearing black jeans and white trainers. And also I think, like I said, I developed a few crushes on the typical bad boys [laughter] erm, but I always felt that I knew who I was so I remember one time, one of the crushes, I heard him say to his friend, 'oh watch this', and he came over and he said, 'oh can you borrow me a pound', and I said, 'no' [laughter] he expected me to give it because he knew I had a crush on him, but I thought no, I'm not giving you a pound. Somehow I just knew my own mind.

PR: That's good, that's good! How about your group of friends at high school?

RG: I remember having a big group of friends, but then it dissolved because there were certain characteristics I didn't see fitted into my values and the way I want to be. So I would see some of them mocking other girls, or saying things about other people being two-faced and I started then drifting away, which at that time in high school wasn't very good because they then started on you for getting out of that circle, so they didn't like all that. And people had their little connections but I didn't want connect-, little groups. I wanted to be able to talk to everybody and get on with everybody. And I remember being popular with boys [laughter] even though I didn't have a relationship with any boy at that time, that I remember one boy saying to me that 'the other girls are saying that I shouldn't talk to you because they don't want me to talk to you, they say come and sit with me', and I didn't understand that, because to me, I didn't get why I was popular with boys. Yeah.

[00:20:14]

PR: It sounds like you were quite self-assured at that time.

RG: Yeah, yeah. I did have, erm, I did have things that I was unsure about. Like at times, I'd sit in class and I'd speak quietly, and other people would say, 'oh what, how come you, you seem to shy' and people in my friend circle didn't think I was shy, but if I was put in the classroom with other people outside of my friend circle, I found at the beginning I was shy, but towards the end, I was speaking up a lot, and saying, 'this is wrong, I don't want to be involved in that'.

PR: And how did you get on with your exams and things when you were 16, Year 11?

RG: Erm, I remember I liked certain subjects. I liked Religious Studies a lot, I liked English Literature and Language a lot, I liked History a lot, and then other stuff, I didn't like so much [laughter] so when it came to my exams, I just kind of revised last minute, but I did do well, I

did pass them, apart from Maths, I had to do again [laughter]. And I remember people saying 'she doesn't really come in and work as hard as us, but she gets the grades' [laughter] but that's because I knew when to work hard and that was when you have exams or you have an assignment. And other times, like I said, I just thought the whole system was a load of nonsense.

PR: What did your parents think of your education and exams?

RG: They used to just say, 'when you go to school, make sure you're listening to your teachers'. When I had homework, they'd say 'make sure you're doing it' and they wanted me to do really well and thought a lot of education. Erm, but I remember one time I got caught going out of school at lunchtime and we had a letter come home and my mum thought 'that's it, she's going to be really bad now' but my dad's more like 'we do these kind of things when we're young' so yeah.

PR: So your mum was worried that it was the start of [inaudible]. How about at that age, 15/16, erm, what did you do outside of school?

RG: I remember we didn't really do much outside of school because my parents would both be at work because they did the labour work. And I would be at home, me and my brother, and I would often think 'why are we not going anywhere', and my mum would often say, 'we need to save up money and we need to have money', and then she would sometimes say, 'when you get a job, then you can go and do what you want', but at the time, at that time, we weren't really doing a lot. I remember going to San Francisco because my mum's brother lives there and it was his wedding. So I remember at that age going, and I was like, 'oh its going to be boring, we're not going to go anywhere'. And all my friends were saying 'wow you get to go to San Francisco!', and then, yep, I remember being in San Francisco and I really loved that, and then I was saying, 'I want to move to San Francisco, I want to live here'. And my mum was like, again, 'no, when you get your own job, then you can do what you want'. Yeah.

PR: Did you have any links to any community organisations or groups then? Whether Indian or Irish?

RG: We had, when we were growing up at that age, a Welfare Association group that was Indian group. So we'd be left there sometimes in the summer holidays and we'd have summer groups there. Or we'd go on trips with them to different parts of the UK, and we'd go on coach trips, yeah.

PR: Tell me what did you do after your exams? Go to college? Find work? What did you do?

RG: So I went to college to study A-Levels in Media and things like that. Erm I did get a part-time job in a factory, yeah, that was just to make money and so that's when I started making my first pay cheque. And my mum, again, was worried because she's worked in a factory and she was like, 'I hope you're not going to stick with this job' and she wanted me to do more. And then, yeah, it was two years in college and then working. And then I always decided I'm going to go somewhere far to university, so I picked ones that were quite far, and then I ended up going to the University of Hull [laughter].

PR: I know several people that went to Hull, that's really strange! What was it like moving away from home for the first time?

RG: Well I was very excited until I got there, and then I realised, 'ooh I don't know anyone', and its very, everyone had already made friends again. It was like, again, like when I moved here from Ireland, everyone had already made friends and they were all getting on. And I remember my dad dropped me off and he was crying because it was the first time I'd be away from them. Then, erm, I called my mum up and I said, 'I don't have many friends, I'm not happy'. Then she had said her aunt had done the same in India, moved away and gone to university to do nursing, and she had told her that it feels like that at the beginning and you'll get used to it, and I was thinking 'I'm never going to get used to this. I'm going to be so upset all the time, I'll be upset'. And then eventually I did get used to it, and, erm, I made some friends. And then I really liked, I think, having my independence and just being able to develop my own character instead of my parents saying, 'you should be like this, you should be like that, or you should follow this'. And then I really was able to develop myself

[00:26:42]

PR: And did you make friends?

RG: Yes I did. I made a few small friends, yes.

PR: Who were they? What were they like?

RG: So there was one from London, and he was studying Economics whereas I was studying Sociology, so we had those differences there [laughter] but we got on really well because we both, we did come from Indian backgrounds, but we both been away from home for the first time, we had that connection. And then I had a Chinese friend who had moved away, and he was from London, so he found it all different in that way that, 'where's the underground', 'where's the...' [laughter] he didn't realise that outside of London you don't get all of this. So we connected on all these different things. And then, yes, I had another friend, I think she was from up North, and she was doing Medical Sciences, and then we started just going out a lot, and then that's when I started drinking and doing things like that [laughter] and going to all these nightclubs. Yeah.

PR: And what was that experience like?

RG: Erm, it was really good. I felt like it was just student life. That's what you do, it's part of being a student. So everything we were just taking in being a student, enjoying our student life there. And we'd go to a lot of gigs, and if there were any we knew about, we'd go and get tickets and make sure we were there. And there was a lot of you'd be up late at night, all night, and you'd be sleeping all day [laughter] things like that. And you'd go to lectures that you were interested in and maybe you'd skip some and things like that. But then at the same time, again, when I had assignments or exams, I'd be there studying, making sure I did pass. But the other times I'd see as just trying to have fun.

PR: Did you meet, make any Irish friends when you were at Hull?

RG: No. Again, I didn't think of doing that for some reason at that age.

PR: Okay that sounds good, and after university, well, let me go back a stage, during your three years at Hull, how often did you go home? What was it like when you went home?

RG: Erm, I didn't go home that often maybe if there was a long break from university, and then it felt weird to go home because I'd be thinking that I want to go back. But my mum wouldn't, she'd want me to stay there. But I would be thinking, 'I can't wait to go back', unless it was the summer holidays, where I felt that I'd then go and meet my friends in London, or I'll go do this, or go do that, and I'd be a bit more adventurous of exploring other places.

PR: And what happened at the end of your degree? What did you want to do then?

RG: I actually never knew what I wanted to do, whereas other people really knew what they wanted to do. I just knew that I wanted to sociology because it had a lot to do with social issues and that's what I was interested in always and I enjoyed. And then when I left, I found out a lot of people were asking for experience, and we were never told that, we were just like 'get the degree' [laughter] and so a lot of people were asking for experience, but because I didn't know about all that, that you should get experience, or you'd go and do this first or go and do that first, I kind of just got a job where I could in an office at that time, and it was an interpreting office that they'd send interpreters out, and they had another bit where they were renting out houses, so I was working in that office for a few years until I figured out what I wanted to do next.

[00:31:03]

PR: And was that back here in West Brom?

RG: It was, yeah, it was close to West Brom, it was in Handsworth.

PR: Right, right. And were you living at home?

RG: Yeah, then I came back to live at home which was really strange [laughter].

PR: What was it like?

RG: It just felt like, erm, it was a bit like you'd gone a bit backwards or something, and then also that you're watched again, kind of like, 'Where are you going? What are you doing?' Yeah, yeah, but I liked that I was able to get a job and I was still figuring out what I wanted to do, so I wasn't sure.

PR: I think that's really common at that age.

RG: Yeah.

PR: You mentioned earlier that you went to Hong Kong, when was that? And how did it come about?

RG: So what happened was, when I was at that job, I did then think I need to leave this job and I wanted to, because I'd gone on a holiday to Spain, and I'd got on with kids a lot that we were on this coach trip, and I was messing around with a lot of the kids on the coach trip, and I thought, 'Oh, I'd like to do something with kids'. Which was funny, because in school, I couldn't wait to leave school, and then I was going back to that. And so then I started volunteering and I went part-time in my job, and volunteering in hospital with kids. And then I got a job as a play worker, and I got a job as a teaching assistant, erm, and so that led, I started in my six weeks going to Brazil, and I had made friends in Brazil, and teaching abroad in Brazil, and erm, a few people said to me, 'why don't you just become a teacher?' so I did the course and I became a teacher, but as soon as I started I knew I wanted to work abroad somewhere, but I just wasn't sure, again, where that was, so I just went on a trip with my friend to certain parts of Asia, and Hong Kong was just an add-on to that holiday, but I really liked it, and I thought, 'why not try for a job there'. And I ended up getting the job, so I moved that same year out to Hong Kong.

PR: And how old were you at that stage?

RG: Erm, I think like 32, yeah. And then I lived in Hong Kong for about 5 years.

PR: And what were you teaching?

RG: So at the beginning, I was in a private English school, teaching just primary education. Then I moved out of that to be more with the culture and the kids from that culture, so I started working in a local school teaching English. Yeah.

PR: And was it at this time that you met, you made a friend who also had Irish heritage?

RG: Yeah.

PR: Tell me about that.

RG: So we were both in this group that had just started at the first school that I had started at, and erm, they said we were the newcomers, and we just got talking, and he said he was from Ireland, and I said, 'oh yeah, I was born in Cork'. And he was taken back as well, and he really liked that, erm, there was someone else in this group that was Irish, and so we got on well. And then he started telling me about the Irish activities that happen, so I started joining in some of these groups, erm, so I joined a few times with the Irish pub quizzes, and then another event was they had was an opening of some Irish pub there, and I went with my friend, his girlfriend took me, and she saw herself as Irish as well, and then, erm, they had this, in the Irish Centre there, they used to do breakfast on one of the days in the week, so I went to one of those, and to some of their meetings, and that's when I got back in touch, more in touch, with what being Irish is and knowing about all these activities that I didn't know about growing up.

PR: Why do you think it appealed to you?

RG: Erm, for some reason I saw myself as Irish even though, as I said, I was there with a lot of British ex-pats, I saw myself as Irish still, and so I wanted to be more involved in what the Irish people there were doing as well, because even though I grew up in England, and I did see myself as English, and I could relate a lot to those activities, I still thought there was that difference, and there was an element that I couldn't relate to, but I could with the Irish community.

[00:36:07]

PR: And what do you think the difference was?

RG: Erm, I think a lot of activities, and sports things, and how we do connect where we think like, 'yeah, I hope England loses that match!' [laughter] and things like that. And even though I was growing up in England, I always thought, 'no I don't want Eng-' I always thought, 'I don't want England to win', and I'd always want Ireland to win these matches, so.

PR: So it sounds you felt very at home with this Irish community in Hong Kong. Do you think the same would've happened if you'd stayed in England? Was it the fact that you were in another country?

RG: I think so, yeah. I think I was in another country, being able to explore more about what's out there, and because I was meeting people from different countries and backgrounds that I was able to find out about what other activities and other things are going on and learn more. Yeah.

PR: Are you still in contact with any friends from that time?

RG: Yes, yes. I'm still in contact with him. And when I moved back here, he was having his wedding in Ireland, and I was invited, so I went over for the wedding there, and I got to see West Ireland a bit more, because his wedding was, went over to Knock, and it was, erm, at Ballintubber Abbey [unsure], and yeah so I explored a bit more of Ireland, and that's when I thought, 'oh, I'd like to know more stuff that's going on in Ireland and connect', and that's when I started finding out about what things I could do here in England to connect more with being Irish.

PR: Had that been, when you went to the wedding in West Ireland, was that the first time that you'd been back since you were small? Or had you been back at all in the [inaudible] years?

RG: I had been back, yes. I had taken my dad for his 60th to Dublin, yeah, because I knew we'd always have that connection with my parents, and they always spoke about Cork, and we've all got the photos of going to all the places in Cork. So, I know that I wanted to take them back, but instead of Cork, I took them to Dublin so we went there. And then I went a few times to Dublin, never went back to Cork until last year [laughter].

PR: And what was that like?

RG: That was really great. Erm, and my parents before I left said, 'oh, make sure you see this, and tell us if this is still there, and try and go to this road!' So I was going round Cork, and it was really nice. There was some things that I told them about and they said, 'yeah, I remember that', and yeah, things like the shops and things, yeah.

PR: Oh that's nice. Especially that you were able to tell them what it was like there. Any plans to return?

RG: To Ireland?

PR: Yes to Ireland.

RG: Yeah, I'd like to now, because of being part of the Irish Association, and I do the tennis and everything, I'll go back with them, but because I've met so many people from different counties, whilst being here, I'd like to explore a lot more of Ireland, and also I went to Northern Ireland, by myself to Belfast, as well, so just I do have a plan to just explore of Ireland.

[00:39:55]

PR: And your volunteering here and at the Tennis Association, what do you enjoy about those things?

RG: Erm, I think, again, that connection I made with the Irish team, and that was really good, and we talk about loads of things to do with Ireland and different things, and also the community, just being involved in a community I like, even here, it's even though I didn't spend a lot of time in Ireland, I've seen myself as Irish, so getting to know more about that is like I'm trying to, I know more about myself, and things I like, and just exploring these different foods that I didn't know about, and different things that go on, and knowing about the history, knowing more about sports as well, and more about the sporting teams. So all of that, getting involved in the tennis, and doing that in Dublin, and meeting people from different areas of Ireland that come to those teams, so just all that I enjoy.

PR: Those first 5 years of your life and being born in Cork have had a profound effect on you haven't they?

RG: Yeah [laughter] looks like it, yeah.

PR: And how about your dad, do you talk to him much about your work here and your work with the Irish community?

RG: Yeah, so I tell him about the rambling, tell him about what we did here about the 50th bombing, pub bombings, and that event, and yeah, and he starts telling me about memories that he's had. He'd say, 'oh I remember when I used to go do [inaudible] when I first moved here, and there was a lot of Irish community and I'd go into the pub and sit with the Irish people' and this and that, and he'd say that in Ireland, his name's actually Jaswinder but they would shorten it to Jimmy [laughter] as that's more like Irish, so yeah. Things he'd talk about what

he'd do when he first got here in the Irish community in Birmingham, and he loves going to the Saint Patrick's parade as well [laughter].

PR: That's good. And he, again, must surprise people by saying, 'oh I lived and worked in Cork'.

RG: Yeah, yeah. And even when I say my dad's certain views about Ireland, people are surprised that, 'I'm surprised your dad thinks that, that means Ireland must have had an effect on him', and I said, 'yes'. [laughter]

PR: Oh, that's lovely. That's really good. Is there anything else that you would like to say about being, your experience as a young Irish woman? Anything else you'd like to add?

RG: Erm, just about when people say, 'oh but how are you Irish? Is it a parent then?' and so sometimes they may think, 'oh but your just born in Ireland' and I know a lot of people have spoke about Irish heritage, but currently I was speaking with one of the tennis players from the blind tennis, and he said, 'I think you are as Irish as anyone, because look at everything you do for the Irish community', and he said, 'a lot of people who say they're Irish don't do that but you do all that', and he said, 'I wouldn't listen to anyone saying about Irish heritage and thinks like that because, in my eyes, you are Irish' [laughter]

PR: That's great!

RG: Yeah.

PR: And I think that's a good point to stop. That was lovely! Well thank you very much Ravinder.

RG: Thank you.

PR: That was excellent, it was lovely hearing about it.

RG: Oh, thank you.

PR: And, as I've said, what we'll do is send the recording off, get the transcription back to you, and then we can talk about it further.

RG: Yeah.

PR: But that was lovely, thank you.

RG: Thank you.

PR: I shall now end the recording.

RG: Okay.

Digital Recordings:
Ravinder Gill. Ref 0UNA-U10023XX-0001M0

[00:44:00]

[Insert time codes about every 5 minutes]

[00:00:01]

Interviewer name: Text

Narrator name: Text