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Interviewer: What is your name?

Jacky Berners: It's Jacky Berners.

Interviewer: Could you spell that for me?

Jacky Berners: It's J-A-C-K-Y, Berners is B-E-R-N-E-R-S.

Interviewer: What town do you come from? Do you come from Stevenage?

Jacky Berners: No, I was born in London.

Interviewer: When did you come to Stevenage?

Jacky Berners: When I was 11 years of age.

Interviewer: Okay. Do you want to give your age? Are you happy to give your age?

Jacky Berners: I'm fine. I'm 55.

Interviewer: How are you involved with the club, in what capacities?

Jacky Berners: At the moment I'm involved with the Support Association. I help Jenny Dowden run the 50/50; the two of us do that. I also organise things like the hospital visit at Christmas, with the players, with another young lady called Claire Hickey. I'm also sitting just as another committee member of the Stevenage Supporters Association. Previous to that, I was treasurer for them for about 10 years.

Interviewer: Okay and are you a fan of the club as well?

Jacky Berners: Yes.

Interviewer: Do you like football?

Jacky Berners: I do enjoy football.

Interviewer: What is the 50/50 you mentioned?

Jacky Berners: It's a match day raffle that we run. We give out 50% of the proceeds to the fans in prize money over three prizes.

Interviewer: Okay, the proceeds from ticket sales?

Jacky Berners: From the raffle tickets, that's right.

Interviewer: How does that work? How do you sell them?

Jacky Berners: Okay, we have a team of girls; about 12 of us that sell them on match days. We have different girls on different gates and they're drawn at half time by either the referee or a player. As I say, we split the proceeds 50/50, the rest goes into the Supporters Association's funds. We do donate back to the major club a couple of times a year, but we also use thing like that to help pay for, as I say, we do the hospital visit, we buy presents for the children etc.

Interviewer: So that comes out of the money from the tickets?

Jacky Berners: Yes, but we do have other fundraising. We have a membership, so obviously that helps pay for everything as well.

Interviewer: You can join membership for the club?

Jacky Berners: There is a Supporters Association membership that you can join; it's an annual fee. We have individual tickets and we also have family tickets.

Interviewer: How much are they?

Jacky Berners: I cannot remember exactly the pricing on that. You would be better talking to the secretary.

Interviewer: What do people get for their membership?

Jacky Berners: Okay, they get a badge, there's also discounts with local retailers and outlets, when there's tickets on sale they get preferential on the queuing and things like that and the fact being that they're actually supporting the club.

Interviewer: Yes. Are you a member yourself?

Jacky Berners: I am a member myself; all committee members have to be members. The Supporters Association was formed many years ago, originally we used to have a team of committee that actually started the club, but when you got too big, it actually ended up becoming a limited company. The Supporters Association was actually formed then.

Interviewer: Right and when was that?

Jacky Berners: I can't give you an exact date, I'm really sorry.

Interviewer: Have you been involved with that since the beginning?

Jacky Berners: Yes.

Interviewer: You have? You've been involved with the club since?

Jacky Berners: The very beginning.

Interviewer: The '70s?

Jacky Berners: Yes.

Interviewer: How did you get involved with the club initially?

Jacky Berners: My husband and I used to support Athletic. My husband used to do the gates; I used to help on the tea bars etc. When Athletic folded, we actually were part of a committee that was formed to try and get football back in the town.

Interviewer: Oh, I see. Who formed that along side you?

Jacky Berners: It was a group of local people. There was my husband; my father in law, Ron Berners was involved. There were people like Geoff Harding, Harry Wrench, Jim ____ [0:04:28], Rob Vincent, John _____. We have actually got some information with us - my husband and I - that can be actually copied and will give you a list of all the committee members then.

Interviewer: Were they people who were already involved with Stevenage Athletic?

Jacky Berners: A lot of them were actually supporters of Stevenage Athletic and as I say, we just wanted to make sure football stayed in the town.

Interviewer: What was that like when that happened, when it folded?

Jacky Berners: It was very, very sad. We'd been following the club for many years, my husband and I used to go to all the away games. I can remember a lot of the old players. There were people like Ray Dingwall - who I am actually still in touch with - he lives locally. There was Tim Johnley, there was Huey Pratt, and there was John Downs. There just seemed a lot of local players still around.

Interviewer: Did you get involved with the club through your husband or were you a supporter of football before that?

Jacky Berners: The very first game I went to was because my husband used to follow them and it just went from there. The whole family that I have now are actually involved with the club still.

Interviewer: At the time then, were there a lot of women that followed football?

Jacky Berners: There weren't that many women. There were a few around; Leslie Johnson was one. Actually I've tried to persuade her to come down today, whether she will I don't know, because she lost her father last week. But no, there weren't that many women to start with.

Interviewer: What was that like, being a woman at that time, watching the football?

Jacky Berners: You just didn't really think about it. You just came down, you just watched and people were very, very friendly, officials of the club were very friendly. There were Athletic days, there was Jim Briscoe who is still around now and follows the club. There was Bill Coldwell; there was Alan ___[0:06:33], people like that. Jonny Brooks was an ex-player here that I remember quite well, he occasionally comes down here still. But no, it was good times.

Interviewer: You didn't get any animosity from any of the male supporters or anything like that?

Jacky Berners: No, none at all.

Interviewer: They didn't want you to watch football or be involved?

Jacky Berners: None at all. People tended to know me by name; I've got to admit I only know people by faces. That's even true today, so many people know me by name, but I don't always know their names.

Interviewer: When Stevenage Athletic was no more and they were playing over – how did you get the football started again?

Jacky Berners: Okay, we decided we wanted to have football back down here so we decided to play a game on the pitch that was still here and the grounds here. Mr [Revolta 0:07:30] decided he would dig the pitch up to stop us playing, so he dug the pitch up. Actually then the council had a long battle trying to get the lease back for the club. We actually started playing on King George V's playing ground or playing field, which is across by the town. We used to use the Pavilion there; I used to make teas and coffees. I used to walk round the pitch selling raffle tickets.

Yes, it was a real family concern, us and a lot of other local supporters.

Interviewer: So you were selling raffle tickets all the way back then as well?

Jacky Berners: Yes.

Interviewer: What did you do with the proceeds of that then? Was it similar?

Jacky Berners: A similar thing actually, they paid for the running of the club at the time and paid for obviously match fees, pitch fees, things like that. It was a long time ago.

Interviewer: Were you involved in the club then coming back to here?

Jacky Berners: Yes.

Interviewer: How did that happen?

Jacky Berners: Well eventually the lease was got back and we were given a peppercorn rent from the council.

Interviewer: What does that mean?

Jacky Berners: It means basically a penny rent, really cheap, to actually come back into the stadium.

Interviewer: What was that like?

Jacky Berners: Yes, I remember back, there was a few years that I wasn't quite so involved when we had the family, but the first proper game down here was – I think it was Terry ____ [0:09:00] we had a big game down here. I've still got the programme at home but I couldn't find it to bring down with me. Yes, it was really good.

Interviewer: Was there a lot of support from the town?

Jacky Berners: Reasonable support at the time. I can't remember what the gates were like. Gates now are getting back to what they used to be years ago.

Interviewer: What do you think the football meant to the town then?

Jacky Berners: For the hardcore supporters it meant an awful lot. For the size of the town, it's a shame we don't get more support, but I think it's because of the London clubs.

Interviewer: Did you support a London club?

Jacky Berners: No, never.

Interviewer: Does your husband support a London club?

Jacky Berners: He says he's Spurs, but he never goes. That is his club that he would follow, but no. I like watching Stevenage; I like the fact that I know people.

Interviewer: Yes, I was going to say, how important is that, that it's players that you know or players that come up from the town?

Jacky Berners: It's not so much players now. It used to be years ago because it was a lot smaller club; we were a lot more involved in the running of the club where obviously we're not now. We support the club and I suspect we'll always support the club. I suppose when we were very small it was very much family, the whole club as a family, not our individual family.

Interviewer: How does that make you feel as a supporter now, that you're not involved in the club in that way?

Jacky Berners: I think it's the only way forward for the club. If we didn't have the likes of [Phil Wallace 0:10:43] then we wouldn't have got where we are today. As a team of supporters, we could actually only take it so far. We all worked, we all had our own family commitments, so it's got where it is eventually because we had to step back and let people take it on who were a lot more qualified than we were.

Interviewer: Your involvement with the club today is essentially – do you coordinate the raffle?

Jacky Berners: Yes.

Interviewer: And then you have volunteers?

Jacky Berners: Yes between Jenny and myself we coordinate it and run the raffle. We have a team of young girls, the girls ages span these days from – I think our youngest is about 15 or 16, up to about 28 I think now, because a lot of them have actually been with us a long time, so even though they do other things, they actually enjoy coming back down. I have three of my daughters that work down here, Claire, Kathy and Lara. They do the 50/50 with us. Jenny has one of her daughters - Beth, she helps. Most of the girls are connected to the club in some sort of way. We've got Charlotte; her dad supports the club. Kirsty, her mum and dad actually work as stewards around the ground. I'm just trying to think. Sam, her mum and dad support the club. Becca, her family support the club.

They're all young girls who actually have been involved with the club one way or another.

Interviewer: Good.

Jacky Berners: I hope I haven't missed any of them.

Interviewer: What other capacities have you been involved in with the club over the time?

Jacky Berners: When we first started I did an awful lot of the fundraising, silly things actually if I think back. We did jumble sales, bazaars, setting up stalls in the high street, jumble sales at the Joyride. I used to run a book where people donated so much every time we scored a goal. When I look back now, they were such small ideas but they actually kept us running at the time.

Interviewer: You said about you don't think that there's enough support now as what there was, but it's coming back; what do you mean by that?

Jacky Berners: I think the supporters dropped off for a time. We're now becoming very successful, touch wood, I hope that continues and hopefully the gates will keep improving because you need the supporters here. If you haven't got the support, you haven't got a club.

Interviewer: When the club has done badly, do you think that reflects how many people support the club?

Jacky Berners: Yes, when you're not doing very well on the pitch, the hardened supporters still come, but perhaps the others don't come so much. Hopefully we have a lot of schemes involved. Alex runs a scheme where he gets children here and different organisations actually come to the matches, so hopefully he can get an interest back to improve the support.

Interviewer: Do you think there was a time when the support was really huge in the town?

Jacky Berners: I think it's when you're having a good run, like when we were on the way to Wembley, things like that, then people come to the larger games or bigger games hopefully, like Saturday we've got Sheffield. That will probably be a big game.

Interviewer: You said you went to away games as well.

Jacky Berners: I always used to go to away games. I used to follow Athletic away. I used to up until a few years ago follow Stevenage away to most games, but through other circumstances we can't do that so much now.

Interviewer: Do you think it's important when you support a team to do the away games?

Jacky Berners: It is important because I think the players appreciate the support away. I think we have a hardcore of about 300 perhaps that go to a lot of the games.

Interviewer: Oh, that's a good few isn't it? When you were going to the away games, would you take your children with you as well?

Jacky Berners: We have in the past, not so much now. My daughters are a lot older. They won't appreciate me telling you their ages. They're in their 20s.

Interviewer: How did you get your children involved in the club?

Jacky Berners: We used to bring them – I believe my eldest I pushed round in a pushchair at six weeks old round the ground. There is a young lady called Emma who brings her baby in arms as well, similar age, she supports the club, and she's here. The baby is very, very young, but she brings her along.

Interviewer: So you have dedicated a lot of time to the club.

Jacky Berners: Yes, the whole family have dedicated a lot of time, but we've enjoyed it. I suppose it's part of our life really.

Interviewer: Have you got any really great memories of being here at the club, either in work or as a fan?

Jacky Berners: I suppose as we've gone through the leagues, won different cups and celebrated with different people. Over the years there's been the likes of George Clarke and Marian, that's his wife. There has been Kieran ____ [0:16:29], I mean yes, we've celebrated an awful lot of wins and highs for the club. I think the biggest disappointment was the year we didn't go up because the grounds weren't actually up to it. It has taken a long time to get back up through the leagues, which has been fantastic.

Interviewer: What was that like when you were refused?

Jacky Berners: Very, very sad. People were very disappointed, but through the court case I believe the rules were actually changed to enable clubs to have their grounds put up to scratch after they'd actually qualified to go up.

Interviewer: Oh so that's a good thing.

Jacky Berners: I think things were altered after we were refused entry.

Interviewer: What was the general atmosphere like with the supporters after that, do you think? Can you remember the first game after that?

Jacky Berners: I can't remember the first game after it. The hardened supporters just keep coming, which is good.

I don't take them out of my bits because I don't want to lose where they were. I didn't have time to pull too many out, but still. (Cross talking) [0:17:53]. That's when we were division one. That's my husband actually.

Interviewer: Oh is it?

Jacky Berners: What year was that? When was that?

Jacky Berners: Oh gosh. You'd have to check with one of the guys, they would know. I haven't got a date I don't think on any of this. They were just old photos I'd had. That's George Clarke actually who I mentioned.

Interviewer: Who was he?

Jacky Berners: I believe he was chairman at the time. He is one of our old chairmen. My husband was the first chairman of the club.

Interviewer: Yes, I read that. What was that like?

Jacky Berners: What, the first chairman? I suppose it's because of the way we formed as a committee and he became the first chairman. I think my father in law was the first secretary. I always tended to do things like treasurer, because I'm in banking, and raising funds actually. ___[0:18:44] George's wife Marian. That's my mother in law.

Interviewer: Gosh, are these pictures of the pitch? What do you think about the changes to the pitch?

Jacky Berners: Oh, it's really good.

Interviewer: I read about the pitch, there was-

Jacky Berners: Where it was dug up?

Interviewer: Before that, yes, what was the pitch like before that? Was it good?

Jacky Berners: It wasn't bad. I'll be honest, it's such a long time ago it's a job to remember everything.

Interviewer: What was the ground like-?

Jacky Berners: In the old days? We had a small stand where the stand is now. There was a grass bank where the away stand is. That was just a massive grass bank that people sat on. There was almost like an old tin shed over by the old East Terrace, which is where most fans stand. Yes, there was an old hut type clubhouse etc. and changing rooms. That's a view behind where the score and the goalies were. I'm just trying to think. ___[0:20:00] skip where I can find some more. See, that is behind the goal area, which is facing Fairlands. That was the old clubhouse; there you go.

Interviewer: Oh yes, I see.

Jacky Berners: That was the old changing rooms.

Interviewer: The changing rooms, they look almost like portacabins.

Jacky Berners: They were portacabins.

Interviewer: Oh, they were?

Jacky Berners: I'm just trying to think what else I've got in here. If you take them out, you never put them back, that's the trouble.

Interviewer: So the away fans, where did they sit before?

Jacky Berners: The away fans? I suppose it wasn't like it is now because everybody used to mix. You didn't have segregation years ago.

Interviewer: Why was that?

Jacky Berners: I don't think you had the hooligans and that you do now, or people being so aggressive.

Interviewer: Can you remember instances where people were aggressive here? Have you seen any instances like that?

Jacky Berners: Here?

Interviewer: Or away.

Jacky Berners: I didn't enjoy Halifax. It was the last game of a season; Halifax needed to beat us to go up. Halifax was a very open ground at the time. I had my three young daughters with me at the time and when they won, they actually came charging across to the supporters and I've got to admit, one of the away directors took me and my young daughters out of the way. They took us inside. That was a bit scary. I never, ever went back to Halifax.

I'm just trying to think. Most grounds have been okay over the years. There's been the odd incident. We didn't get on with Woking and if you went to Woking, when you walked back to your car you tended to hide your colours, even if you were a woman, walking back. You used to hide your scarves etc. But most clubs have been fine.

Interviewer: That didn't put you off going, or put you off those places but not-

Jacky Berners: Yes, as I say, I never, ever went back to Halifax. I never wanted to go back there, but then I used to take my children when they were quite young with me, so I didn't feel comfortable doing that, but most grounds there's never been an issue.

Interviewer: Have you seen anything here, any violence here?

Jacky Berners: Not particularly. You have the odd incident, but you are talking about one in thirty games, if not more. The last time I can remember us having any issues here was when we played Luton. We had police horses outside and that wasn't particularly pleasant.

Interviewer: Why do you think that was?

Jacky Berners: I think local riot rivalry. I think Luton fans can be – what can I say? I'm trying to think of the right words here – they support their club and perhaps are over zealous is the word I can think of.

Interviewer: So did anything happen?

Jacky Berners: The police were very, very good here, so we had police horses outside and they did keep the crowd segregated. But years ago you didn't need to segregate crowds.

Interviewer: Did they still chant like they do now?

Jacky Berners: Yes, we chant, it's part and parcel of football. You chant at each other's fans. It's whether you take it any further.

Interviewer: What do you think the chants bring to the game?

Jacky Berners: I suppose it's atmosphere more than anything else. We have a hardcore over in the East Terrace that sing a lot and make a lot of noise.

Interviewer: Do they sing particular songs?

Jacky Berners: Yes, they have their own songs over there. We have a particular one that a lot of clubs have taken on now where people all join in; even the away fans join in with that.

Interviewer: What's that?

Jacky Berners: I can't remember the name of it.

Interviewer: Are the chants positive for the – or is it negative towards the other fans?

Jacky Berners: It's part and parcel. Sometimes it can be, it's a mixture, but a lot of the chants are really to encourage the players on the pitch.

Interviewer: How do new chants come about?

Jacky Berners: It's the East Terrace; the guys up there tend to make the songs up.

Interviewer: Did they do chants over at King George's? Was it like that?

Jacky Berners: No, there were very few fans.

Interviewer: How many fans used to watch over there?

Jacky Berners: When we first started, you'd have 50 over there, if that, those types of numbers. I can't remember the exact numbers.

Interviewer: Did you get away fans when you were playing over there?

Jacky Berners: Only perhaps people who'd driven their players there. There wasn't that many, no.

Interviewer: Who were the players then? Were they members of Stevenage?

Jacky Berners: They were all young, local lads to be honest. I'm just trying to think of a few of them. Trouble is it's a job to remember where we started there and came here; John Huxtable comes to mind, he was a local lad. Martin Thompson was a goalkeeper then. There were just lots of young, local lads.

Interviewer: Have you got any favourite players?

Jacky Berners: I've got favourite players over the years, if I was honest. Ray Dingwall was a friend, yes, that's Athletic days, Josie Wishaw who I knew quite well, that's Athletic days. Over the years, [Smudger 0:26:02], I used to like. I also liked Robin ___ over the years, but it was the personalities I think also more than actually on the pitch.

Interviewer: Was it because you knew them personally?

Jacky Berners: Yes, I knew them personally by talking to them. They were very nice to my daughters, pleasant to my daughters, whereas I think the players on the pitch now, you don't get to know in the way you used to.

Interviewer: Do you think that takes something away from the experience, not knowing the players?

Jacky Berners: No, not really. I know their names; I do talk to different ones. As I say, they support us at the hospital visit. You don't know them quite like you used to years ago. They used to come over to the bar, mix with the supporters etc., whereas they don't do that so much.

Interviewer: What do you think it meant to the club to have changed its name recently? Do you think that makes a difference?

Jacky Berners: Are you asking me as a personal view on it?

Interviewer: Either.

Jacky Berners: Okay, I didn't agree with the name being changed. I felt we'd been Stevenage Borough for many years. I think it's perhaps because of my personal involvement with the club. We did start off as Stevenage; I won't say we didn't. We reverted to Stevenage Borough not long after we were first formed. We decided to include the name "borough" for the support we were given by the local councils. I was asked my opinion and I just think I will always know it as Stevenage Borough.

Interviewer: Do you think because of it being in a town and the local support, that is what the name means, Stevenage Borough?

Jacky Berners: I think the likes of myself; it will always be Stevenage Borough. It will take a long time – I still refer to it as Stevenage Borough. I know it's Stevenage, but it's the way I view it. As I say, it's a personal view.

Interviewer: Have you got a different view, you said your personal view or... do you think it's better for the club professionally?

Jacky Berners: I don't see that it actually makes a difference professionally at all. I don't know the reasoning behind why it was changed, so I can't really comment.

Interviewer: Obviously you said you were asked your opinion; did they ask for supporters' opinions or players' opinions or was it just a decision that was made?

Jacky Berners: I really don't know. I don't know who made the decision or why. I was just asked what did I think if it was changed and I was asked different names. I will agree, I did say that Stevenage was better than some of the other names, but to me it would always be Stevenage Borough.

Interviewer: They didn't ask fans?

Jacky Berners: They may have done.

Interviewer: They didn't do a poll or anything like that?

Jacky Berners: I can't say I ever saw a poll.

Interviewer: Do you come to match days as a fan?

Jacky Berners: Both.

Interviewer: Both, you come as both. What's an average match day at home?

Jacky Berners: At home, for me? Obviously I pick my daughters up or whoever's coming down with us. We're usually down here about quarter past one for a match day, set up the 50/50. My husband does the match day music, which he has done for years as well. Yes, we just set up, get the girls out on the gates, do the raffle, or the 50/50 I should say. The only problem these days is I do miss most of the first half because of the money that we take; it takes such a long time to count now.

Interviewer: You get a lot of support for the 50/50?

Jacky Berners: We get a lot of support. We always base it on about a third of the gate we take in funds.

Interviewer: Once you've done that, what do you actually do, so you set up the girls?

Jacky Berners: Set up the girls; sell tickets myself throughout the ground.

Interviewer: Oh right. Where do you stand, or do you go round?

Jacky Berners: Oh I go round. We first of all go over the bar, Jenny and myself, and sell around the bar area. We come back and we do all the sponsors lounges, we walk round the stands selling tickets. If we're short on girls then one of us will always go on a

gate. We usually come in to cash up just after 3 o'clock. At half time I go round all the sponsors lounges with the winning tickets and then after that I can actually sit down and watch the second half of the game.

Interviewer: Where do you watch the game?

Jacky Berners: I usually sit in the stand, wherever we can find seats.

Interviewer: What do you do when the game is finished?

Jacky Berners: Usually wait for my husband to pack up and then we go home. We don't tend to go in the bar for a drink after the game, no.

Interviewer: Why not? Is that a personal question?

Jacky Berners: No it's not a personal question. We used to years ago and I suppose through personal commitments, with family etc., we don't have the time, more often than not.

Interviewer: Are you here every home game?

Jacky Berners: There are not many we miss. My husband doesn't like missing home games, even for weddings, so no, there's not many home games we ever miss.

Interviewer: Do you think it needs a lot of commitment to be involved?

Jacky Berners: I think people can give as much commitment as they want to give. I suppose because it's something we've always done as a family, yes, we are committed to the club.

Interviewer: Are there more women coming to support the club than before?

Jacky Berners: There are quite a few women out there. There are some of the old supporters who have been here for many, many years. I know Betty [Vow 0:32:30] sits in the stands still and watches the game. Yes, there are quite a lot of women that watch the club. There are quite a few women that actually go away to away games as well.

Interviewer: You said you don't always go away to games now.

Jacky Berners: No, we tend to pick and choose which away games we go to these days.

Interviewer: When you went to away games, it's just as a fan is it?

Jacky Berners: Yes, just as a fan.

Interviewer: Does anyone say to you, "Why do you like football?" because there's the stereotype that women can't be involved in football?

Jacky Berners: No.

Interviewer: Nobody is sort of, "Oh gosh"?

Jacky Berners: No, nobody's ever said that. I suppose in my line of work, people say to me, "You support who?"

Interviewer: It's not a good thing to support-

Jacky Berners: No, I just think I suppose sometimes people are surprised that you follow a club.

Interviewer: Because you're a woman?

Jacky Berners: Yes, it most probably is.

Interviewer: What drew you to football initially?

Jacky Berners: I suppose my husband. I knew my husband when I was about 15, 16 and if I wanted to see him on a Saturday then I went to a football game (Laughter). If I was really honest, I suppose

that's how it all started, but now it's a case of I really enjoy it. If he chose not to go, I think I would continue to go. I can't see him actually doing that though.

Interviewer: Do you think you've got more connection with it because you're involved and you've been involved for a long time with the club?

Jacky Berners: Yes, I think so.

Interviewer: So you get something-

Jacky Berners: I just get enjoyment out of it, enjoyment of following it and being part of it. It's been a long journey.

Interviewer: Do you think that town football clubs can offer something to the community?

Jacky Berners: Most definitely. The players, they go out in the community, they go out to local schools. There are match days obviously, it gives something for people to do. It's great to encourage youngsters. We run a baby borough scheme, which was actually formed by Jim Briscoe many years ago. It was his idea and what we do is we encourage people to enrol their babies when they're born. There is a form that they complete at the registrar's office, and then what we actually do is we send a birthday card to the children, up to the age of five, so every year they get a birthday card. They also get a gift from the

club; I think it's a bib still, with Stevenage Borough on it. After five years we actually give them the chance to join the club as a member. I'm trying to think of all the different things with it.

I don't know if we've still got them but we were issuing books about being a big supporter – not a big supporter, but how to be a good supporter to the club, regarding how you talk around the club etc. That's been going an awfully long time; there are an awful lot of members for that.

We also run a scheme for loyal young supporters, where youngsters actually register each game and then we give out certificates etc. at the end of the season, to encourage them. There are a lot of things we do.

Interviewer: When the stands were developed, the new stands, how long have they been here? I know there's plans to build a new stand again isn't there?

Jacky Berners: That's right, they're talking about doing that. The away stand, when we played Newcastle at home, we actually had a temporary stand put up and it was put after that, but I can't remember the exact dates. But I know Phil Wallace organised that. It's a really good asset to the club.

Interviewer: Because?

Jacky Berners: Well, we didn't have much that end of the club at all. It gives the away supporters somewhere to sit. It looks good.

Interviewer: You mentioned the Newcastle game; you were here on that game?

Jacky Berners: I was here at that game.

Interviewer: What was that like?

Jacky Berners: The atmosphere was terrific. I was doing the 50/50 then. My daughter and I before the game – there were lots of events around the town, like promotion packages, like meals and then coming to the game, so my daughter and I went to the Blakemore selling our 50/50 tickets that morning before the game.

Interviewer: Oh really?

Jacky Berners: We met a few of the Newcastle players there because they were there as well. It was just something else. It was just a fabulous atmosphere. The whole club was – yes, really good.

Interviewer: You watched the match or was that a situation where you were busy up to half time?

Jacky Berners: I watched as much of the game as I could. But no, really exciting the atmosphere here, there's nothing like it.

Interviewer: What was the game like?

Jacky Berners: What I saw of it, it was exciting and then it was really good going up to Newcastle afterwards.

Interviewer: I was going to ask you, did you go to that one?

Jacky Berners: I did go to the Newcastle game.

Interviewer: What was that like?

Jacky Berners: Yes, again, everybody was just in such high spirits, you know, to actually be going to Newcastle basically. We went as family; I took my eldest two daughters. I wouldn't take my youngest down at the time because I wasn't sure what it would be like up there. Yes, we all just had a fabulous day; it was just the result that wasn't so good.

Interviewer: What was it like watching that match?

Jacky Berners: Just really exciting. It was like on a knife-edge really; it was just terrific.

Interviewer: What were the Newcastle supporters like to the Stevenage?

Jacky Berners: They were fine. I did not see any aggravation, I didn't see any problems whatsoever up there.

Interviewer: What was it like coming back?

Jacky Berners: Very sad, very quiet on the coaches. There is nothing worse than going to a big game away and actually losing and then coming home on the coach. We go up there and everybody's singing, everybody's chatting and when you come back, there's hardly anybody talking on the coach.

Interviewer: Yes. Did you go up to Wembley when they played at Wembley?

Jacky Berners: Yes.

Interviewer: What was that like?

Jacky Berners: Wembley? The first year we went to Wembley was fabulous, great atmosphere. I'm just trying to think, we've been a few times now. It was just a fantastic atmosphere. We went as a family. I've got pictures here actually.

Interviewer: Oh, shall we have a look? What pictures have you got there?

Jacky Berners: I think these could be the first Wembley. They are the first Wembley I think. Supporters walking across the pitch there. There's my niece, because there was a crowd – that's my youngest daughter at the time. We just came up with friends and family. He's a regular supporter. This is my eldest who comes down, my youngest.

Interviewer: Do you see other supporters outside of the club? Have they become friends?

Jacky Berners: I see Jenny and Richard. Jenny helps with 50/50. There is Derek and Linda I see, he's a supporter, but then I suppose we became friends before we came down here. Sorry, we were friends with them before they came down here. I became quite friendly with a lady called Claire Hickey who comes down here. We do sportsmen's evenings, or help with sportsmen's evenings. She's a nurse up at Lister Hospital and she helps us organise the children's ward visits etc. She has been down here a long time and I did meet her here. She has become a friend from here.

There are lots of supporters out there who become friends. My boss, I encouraged him to come down here. He's now a season ticket, he brings his two sons down, and they're all season tickets.

Interviewer: Has the price of the tickets changed?

Jacky Berners: They've gone up over the years. I was looking at some old records actually before I came down here and there were

things like we were going to charge players a pound registration to help pay for the league costs and it was something like ten pounds at the time.

Interviewer: Oh really?

Jacky Berners: Yes, when you look back, prices have increased so much. You couldn't run a football club without the outside promotion work etc.

Interviewer: Do you know how much a ticket is now?

Jacky Berners: I think it's about 18, 20 pounds to sit.

Interviewer: Which is still small in consideration to London clubs.

Jacky Berners: Yes, it's a lot cheaper than London clubs. Phil Wallace does do some promotions at different times. He will let children in free sometimes or if you're a season ticket and you bring somebody with you, they get in free. He does lots of different promotions. He tries to encourage youngsters into the club, so there are the community projects where youngsters get in free. He does try and encourage the young supporter in other parts of the town to come.

Interviewer: I take it that the players weren't paid originally?

Jacky Berners: No.

Interviewer: Do you know when they started to get paid? You said you were treasurer of the club?

Jacky Berners: I was one of the original treasurers. I don't know when we started paying them. Our first manager when we first started, there were two gentlemen; one was Derek Montgomery and Paul Peterson. I believe Paul might be coming down today. I've lost touch with Derek Montgomery so I don't know what he does now, but they were our first two managers.

Interviewer: There were unpaid were they?

Jacky Berners: Oh yes, nobody got paid. There is still an awful lot of voluntary work in the club where people don't actually get paid.

Interviewer: What sort of jobs do they not get paid for?

Jacky Berners: Jenny and I run the 50/50 but we do it for part of the association etc. It's part of the love of the club I think. Obviously the likes of Andy Green who does the match day, he doesn't get paid, young Stephen and Lloyd and my husband Keith. It's all voluntary.

Interviewer: Do you think it makes a difference with the players being paid?

Jacky Berners: If you didn't pay the players you wouldn't have the players out on the pitch.

Interviewer: Why do you think that's different now?

Jacky Berners: I suppose they're professional footballers and that is their wage. Years ago it was young fellows who wanted to play, but then it's like anything else, the higher the division you go up, the more the players get paid. I do think the players get overpaid in the higher divisions, but I have no idea what the players get paid at this club.

Interviewer: ____ [0:44:32]

Jacky Berners: There were just a few I grabbed. There's a young Stevenage player, which was at Wembley actually. That's Martin Gittings. That was at Wembley. I was just trying to grab a few actually. See, that's before the large stand was done. That's the clubhouse. That is before the stand went up.

Interviewer: Oh right, so which side is this?

Jacky Berners: That is where the away stand is now, that massive stand.

Interviewer: Oh right, so it's just trees.

Jacky Berners: Yes, that's the trees and that was just flat. There was just nothing there.

Interviewer: What are they, sponsorship?

Jacky Berners: Sponsorship boards. That is the clubhouse that's there now.

Interviewer: How did you get sponsorship for the club?

Jacky Berners: Sponsorship now is done by the promotions manager here, so that's all run by him.

Interviewer: Originally?

Jacky Berners: What, years ago?

Interviewer: Yes.

Jacky Berners: We would just approach local companies. I think the very first shirt we had, my husband has actually brought one down with him, I think Propak, which is still in the town, I think that was one of our first sponsors. There is Becker Transport; he still comes down, Rod, actually. I was saying that Rod from Becker

Transport, he was one of our old shirt sponsors. They were just local businesses that you actually approached and who wanted to support the club. Rod you actually see on the terraces quite often.

Interviewer: Were you involved in that, organising sponsorship?

Jacky Berners: I think over the years I've approached different people. Again, my memory is not as good as it used to be; it's trying to remember who did what at the time. We just used to raise funds wherever we could. We also used to do carnival floats where we used to get involved with the carnival. I've got photos of that as well that we've still got, many years ago.

Interviewer: Oh wow.

Jacky Berners: The thing is my house was actually on the route, so quite often, yes, people used to run in to use my facilities. It was just different things you just got involved in; you made money wherever you could to actually keep the club going at the time.

Interviewer: So are you pleased at where the club is now, obviously?

Jacky Berners: Oh definitely. It's good to see how well we are doing, on the pitch and off the pitch. Hopefully the club is here to stay.

Interviewer: What else have you got there?

Jacky Berners: As I say, these were just a few of the ones I pulled out. That's Martin Gittings again. This is just some fundraising, we used to do discos, fancy dress, and raise money doing bingo. All the things you look at now and you wouldn't actually dream of doing to raise funds.

Interviewer: I know, but they do work.

Jacky Berners: Oh definitely. I've got an old photo here of the team of 50/50 girls when they were quite young.

Interviewer: What are they wearing there?

Jacky Berners: That's old shirts. The girls always wear different shirts. This is Jim Briscoe who used to be involved with the Athletic years ago. You still see him on the terrace in a wheelchair watching the game even now. He was 86 about a week ago.

Interviewer: Do you wear a shirt?

Jacky Berners: Yes, all the 50/50 girls wear a shirt. They tend to wear an away shirt rather than a home shirt so they actually stand out.

Interviewer: Do you think that's important, to have the shirts as fans and to wear them?

Jacky Berners: I like wearing the shirts. If you go to big games, I always wear a shirt.

Interviewer: What shirt is that they're wearing there?

Jacky Berners: That's a really old away shirt.

Interviewer: Is it yellow and blue?

Jacky Berners: Yellow and blue. Away shirts have always tended to be yellows and blues, whether they're striped, just plain blue, plain yellow. Most away shirts I've got at home and a few of the home shirts.

Interviewer: You keep them as memorabilia.

Jacky Berners: Yes, I keep them. I've got a wall in my loft at home. It's just over the years people have got involved. There are an awful lot of people on the terrace that are still watching from years ago. It's a shame there's a lot of faces there no longer. We used to have [80 0:49:53], it was a group of gentleman who used to come and do voluntary work around the ground and used to clean up after matches etc., but there's very few of them around now. I think Jim Briscoe may be one of the only ones around now.

Interviewer: Now I asked you about favourite players. Have you got any favourite people who were involved with the club? Obviously your husband, but...

Jacky Berners: It's not so much favourite people.

Interviewer: Memorable people?

Jacky Berners: Yes, memorable people. When we first started, there was a team of volunteers. My husband's father, Ron Berners, whom we lost a few years ago. We were actually at a Wembley game when he died, so we came home to the sad news of that. That's just over two years ago. There were people like Sid Vincent and his son Rob Vincent. Sid is no longer with us. There was Harry Wrench, he ran the local butchers, and he was involved. In fact, there was a cup that we used to present every year. Again, sadly he's not around. Jeff Harding, again, was one of the original ones, and he's no longer with us.

There were a lot of old names. Some of them still come to the club, some of them still watch out there on the terraces. They used to go a lot to our old away games to Athletic, a gentleman called Paul Jakes. He actually still watches the club; he's still out there on the terraces. Over the years there's been the likes of George Clarke and Marian. George was one of our chairmen, Marian used to help do the tea bars again, like myself, fundraising for the club. There was Jill and Dave Hughes, Jill, again, husband and wife team. Jill is still with us but sadly Dave is no longer with us. There was Rene and Arthur; they were quite a team. Arthur was part of the A team,

Rene did teas and tea bars and all sorts of things. Again, sadly they're no longer with us.

There are a lot of people that were around that are no longer with us. Jim Briscoe, he's always been here. He was part of the Athletic and he is still here. He actually comes to most home games if he's well enough. He's in his 80s; he sits in his wheelchair in the disabled area. His son, Lloyd, is the present chairman of the Supporters Association. Sue who used to be Lloyd's wife, I can remember her doing fundraising, selling the tickets with the rest of us on the match day tickets.

I'm trying to think of more current day people. I suppose over the years with the 50/50 girls, we've had quite a good team of girls. Usually the girls have come because they actually do watch the games, their families watch the games. As I say, Claire Hickey has always been a major part of our fundraising, though she's never been an actual committee member of the Supporters Association. She still comes down and helps actually with the press hospitality now. As I say, my three daughters, Claire, Cathy and Lara, they've always helped down here. My youngest Lara used to actually play for the Stevenage girls team many years ago.

At one time when we very first formed, my brother was involved and his wife [Lynne 0:53:44]. I'm just trying to think of some of the other old names, Alan Rayner and his wife. He still comes and watches the games; he's an ex-chairman of the club. A lot of people still come down, a lot of faces out there. Leslie Johnson, I mentioned her earlier, her uncle and her dad were always involved from the word go and she actually used to be involved with Athletic many years ago. She comes out; she's always in the stand watching the games. There are a lot of people out there who have been with us a long time.

Interviewer: Do you think the club is welcoming to new supporters?

Jacky Berners: Almost definitely. We need to encourage the new supporters because that's the lifeblood of the club.

Interviewer: When the club went up, were promoted, did you see any new supporters come then, because it was now league?

Jacky Berners: I think so. I think there's perhaps a lot of youngsters that now come, out there on the terraces, but not knowing them individually, I don't know.

Interviewer: It didn't seem like a massive influx of supporters?

Jacky Berners: No, there seems an awful lot of support in the East Terrace now, a lot of young lads out there, and young girls. As I say there is quite a lot over there, very vocal on match days.

Interviewer: Do the women get involved in the chants as well as the men?

Jacky Berners: Most definitely. We do as well in the stand.

Interviewer: Is there a separate area for families?

Jacky Berners: There's a smaller area over the East Terrace for families as well, but families can sit anywhere or stand anywhere in this ground. Our supporters are very, very good. There is not a lot of trouble at this ground.

Interviewer: What is the difference between the seated and the standing, atmosphere wise? Is there any difference?

Jacky Berners: I suppose it's a lot more vocal over on the East Terrace where people are standing. You get most of the youngsters over there, guys on their own, whereas perhaps you get more business people, you have the press, older families actually sit more than they stand. I always used to stand; I always sit now.

Interviewer: What do you feel is the difference, you wanted to be in with that and now you don't?

Jacky Berners: My husband always used to prefer to stand at a game; he thinks the atmosphere is better standing, whereas I prefer to sit.

Interviewer: Is it quieter over the seated area?

Jacky Berners: Oh yes, definitely, but people do still clap and shout and try and join in.

Interviewer: What was the last game that was played here, just recently?

Jacky Berners: Just recently? It was a couple of weeks ago. I'm trying to remember who we played, sorry, I can't remember. I know we've got Sheffield on Saturday.

Interviewer: Were you here?

Jacky Berners: I was here, yes.

Interviewer: What was that like?

Jacky Berners: It was good. It was a nice day. Yes, like any other game here.

Interviewer: Have you got any memorable games that were awful?

Jacky Berners: I mentioned the Halifax game.

Interviewer: What also made the Halifax game – was the game good?

Jacky Berners: We lost, so no. It wasn't good as far as that was concerned. As I say, their supporters weren't particular pleasant that day.

Interviewer: Throughout the game?

Jacky Berners: Yes, they wanted their club to win. They seemed quite aggressive on that, which is unusual, because I don't see a lot of aggression in football, regardless of what the press day.

Interviewer: Do you remember the score of that game?

Jacky Berners: No, I don't. It was something like 1-0, 2-0, I can't remember. I don't remember scores from games.

Interviewer: Do you remember them scoring at all that game, Stevenage?

Jacky Berners: No, I don't think we scored that day, but I can't be 100% sure. I've got to admit, I think a lot of the guys remember more of the statistics of games than I do.

Interviewer: Have you got any memorable bad games from here?

Jacky Berners: Bad games from here? Any game we lose is a bad game. Nothing particularly, to be honest. I can't think of anything that really stands out.

Interviewer: You said you can't remember the goals, so it's not about the goal scoring for you.

Jacky Berners: It is on the day, but I just don't tend to remember the score line etc. Yes, I could say perhaps that we lost or won, but no.

Interviewer: What do you get when you come to the games? What do you feel like? What do you get out of the game when you come here?

Jacky Berners: Come to watch? I just enjoy watching the football. I like to see us win. I like to see us play well, because it's not always all about winning. It's the atmosphere and I've got to admit with us, it's something we've always done as a family.

Interviewer: Do you think it's important to have something that you all do together?

Jacky Berners: I suppose so, over the years. As I say, my daughters have been down here from very young ages, the three girls. What can I say? We don't have sons, we have daughters and they all come down here. My middle daughter perhaps comes down because it's something we've always done, whereas the eldest and the youngest do it because they enjoy football as well.

I was trying to get ones that actually showed the ground, how it used to be, I suppose more than anything else.

Interviewer: Is that the ground here?

Jacky Berners: Yes.

Interviewer: Who is playing?

Jacky Berners: I don't know whom we're playing there.

Interviewer: Which colour is Stevenage wearing?

Jacky Berners: Stevenage there, the odds are we were in yellow there. We've got an away strip there. I'm just looking. I wonder if that was here. It looks as though it is because that's the tree line. My husband is here with me; he'll be able to tell you more actually. That was just a fundraiser down here. As I say, it was just a quick grab of a few photos this morning.

That was 50/50. That's Jim Briscoe. You've got Andrew there.

Interviewer: Oh yes.

Jacky Berners: This guy actually lives in Canada now. He lives in Spain. Fiona, she still comes down here. There was a petition and they were trying to get two teams to go up, instead of one. We used to have so many go down and only one went up, years ago. Barbara [Fullet 1:00:57] was involved with that.

Interviewer: What do you mean two?

Jacky Berners: It was the league we were involved in at the time and only one club used to go up and it was a petition that was going on around the grounds, a petition that two went up and I think actually they did alter the rules again. Barbara always used to

follow Stevenage, she used to come and stand. Andrew won't like me for that one. Steve Watkins, he does the local radio here. That's Claire. That is what we bought for the club years ago, the Supporters Association, the old minivan.

Interviewer: The Supporters Association, tell me about that.

Jacky Berners: The Supporters Association was actually formed when the club became limited. It was formed by the original committee who used to actually run the club and our main aim is actually to support the club. We do fundraising exercises, so we have the membership etc., and we donate funds back to the club.

Interviewer: To be used...

Jacky Berners: Well, usually it's what we call capital expenditure, something that actually the fans benefit from. It could be refurbishment of tea bars, it could be the minibus that we were involved in, and it could be to do with improving the pitch. It just depends what's needed at the time. We've raised an awful lot of money over the years and as I say, it's all been donated back. We do actually own shares as the Supporters Association, that Phil gives us. We donate to the club and they give us some shares. I suppose in the big scheme of things, it's insignificant what we own, but it's just something that the Supporters Association – it makes them feel more... you know.

Interviewer: How many members are there?

Jacky Berners: At the moment I think there are about 500. It has been more, it depends, and we've had over 1000 over different years. It's amazing, you think you would keep the same supporters in it, but you get new ones each year and then perhaps you lose a few of the old ones.

Interviewer: I wonder why that is. Have you got any ideas?

Jacky Berners: Many, many years ago we had an arrangement that if you were a member of the Supporters Association, you got a pound of your admission for tickets. There have been different schemes over the years, but that one ceased to exist quite a few years ago now. I think that encouraged people to become members.

Interviewer: Because they'd get money off the ticket price?

Jacky Berners: Money off the tickets coming in.

Interviewer: How do you become a committee member?

Jacky Berners: Well, like any committee, we have our annual general meeting every year. At the moment we're looking for somebody to apply to be our main fundraiser or event organiser. We haven't got anybody for that. The last member resigned through family commitments, a new baby on the way, which is Emma's baby

who comes to each game. It was her partner, Paul. Yes, approach the committee. Anybody can approach the committee, Lloyd; we're always looking for new members.

Interviewer: So do you each have a different role?

Jacky Berners: Quite a few of us have. Jenny does the 50/50 with me, she's the treasurer, and she took over from me about two or three years ago. Lloyd Briscoe, Jim's son, he's been chairman now, after my husband resigned, because we decided that it was time that perhaps somebody else took the reigns. It might be three or four years ago since my husband resigned as chairman. We still sit on the committee, but not as main committee members. You've got promotions on there; there are different roles.

Interviewer: What happens at an annual meeting?

Jacky Berners: At the annual general meeting? Like any meeting really, it's called in accordance to the constitution. You have to be a member of the Supporters Association to turn up. We go through the different things over the year, reports from each of the main members of the Supporters Association and then obviously it's opened up to the floor for any questions and answers. Usually a member from the club appears afterwards. Bob ____ [1:05:46] quite often comes, he's a member of the Supporters Association and he will do a question and answer session with the members after.

Interviewer: You mentioned this sportsmen evening, what is that?

Jacky Berners: The club actually runs sportsmen's evenings, where they have sportsmen who actually literally come and do a talk. It's run by Clive Aybury, usually about 100, sometimes 150 people here. It's just an event the club runs two or three times a year. A lot of local businessmen come to that, whether they're supporters or not. Yes, they're good events that Clive runs. Again, it's all fundraising for the club.

Interviewer: Yes and it's raising the profile of the club isn't it?

Jacky Berners: Yes definitely. Clive, as I say, is employed by the club and he does lots of events.

Interviewer: Just as a final question, why did they rename the stadium?

Jacky Berners: It's a sponsorship deal. The company, I believe Lamex sponsored the club and it was renamed because of that. It was part and parcel of the sponsorship deal.

Interviewer: Oh, I see. What do you think about that?

Jacky Berners: The club needs to make money. Again, if I was truthful, I suppose I always refer to it was Broadhall Way, but then I suppose that's an age – I shouldn't say age. It's just what I've

always called it. No, it would have been part of the sponsorship deal to get money for the club and we need money.

Interviewer: Are you happy for us to copy some of your photos?

Jacky Berners: I'm happy for you to copy my photos, no problem at all.

Interviewer: Have you got photos of yourself in there?

Jacky Berners: Old photos, there's a few old ones.

Interviewer: Let's have a look.

Jacky Berners: I'm in that one.

Interviewer: Oh yes, that's a nice one.

Jacky Berners: I know; it's an old one. I'm sitting there as well. I did the London to Brighton bike ride, that's in there as well.

Interviewer: You can put a chosen picture of yourself in.

Jacky Berners: Yes, I can arrange a chosen photo. I know that sounds awful.

Interviewer: No, that's perfectly fine.

Jacky Berners: Are you taping this?

END AUDIO

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