

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

INTERVIEW WITH MARK PRESLAND

INTERVIEWERS: ABI OBENE and LAURENCE HILLEL

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[NOTE: This transcript is of Part 2 of the interview]

0:00:03.9 Mark Presland: What can I tell you?

0:00:05.0 Abi Obene: Yes.

0:00:05.6 Mark Presland: Well, I'm probably the least knowledgeable about my own family history than the rest of my family.

0:00:12.5 Abi Obene: So correct me if I'm wrong, but from what I understand, some family history relatively recently came to light, or came to your attention.

0:00:23.8 Mark Presland: Yes, there's a website, and I haven't found it yet - I'm still looking - which is supposed to have many details about my family, and history, and my close relatives. I have found stuff about - little mentions of my family in other archives that are online. It seems that the family in question is the Phaure and de Souza family. Now the Phaure is P-H-A-U-R-E.

0:01:00.3 Laurence Hillel: Any ideas where that's from?

0:01:04.4 Mark Presland: I almost found out today. The Phaure family - no, I'm not entirely sure where exactly I hail from because when I started looking online, I thought, oh, really? So there were different places around the world. I'm not even entirely sure where they came - but it sounds - I think it's a French name, isn't it, Phaure. I'm not sure about that, and de Souza... Yes, my family that I know about, my grandmother lived in Burma, and grandfather.

0:01:44.5 Laurence Hillel: Sorry, lived in Burma. Were Burmese or...

0:01:48.0 Mark Presland: Yes. Actually, I think they had British citizenship as well somehow. I'm not sure how that worked.

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

0:01:57.1 Laurence Hillel: Ethnically, you think Burmese.

0:01:58.4 Mark Presland: Yes, I think it's Burmese. Oh, yes.

0:02:01.1 Laurence Hillel: I'm not sure if you could call them Burmese. Myanmar, isn't it, but yes.

0:02:06.4 Mark Presland: Yes, well, I still call it Burma. It's been Burma all my life. Yes, I remember it's Myanmar now occasionally, but it's still Burma to me. My dad apparently was Anglo-Indian. Now I've always wondered, what - who are the English people, but I do remember that his mother, I'm pretty sure, was Welsh. I remember her as an old woman with long, grey hair, vaguely, but they didn't meet over there. They met in Britain, apparently.

0:02:52.3 Laurence Hillel: When you say Anglo-Indian, what do you mean by that?

0:03:01.4 Mark Presland: Well, my dad definitely looked Indian to me.

0:03:04.8 Laurence Hillel: Right, so he was ethnically Indian.

0:03:06.9 Mark Presland: Yes, and my mum definitely looks Burmese. So I have very little knowledge about my dad's family actually, but my mum's family is a bit more - I could find out enormous detail about it given time, but yes, they came over - when my mum was in her early teens, I think, they came over from Burma. There was some sort of Japanese invasion or war-like activity going on, and they escaped this way. So my grandma and grandpa, and a lot of the kids - there were a lot of kids - came over and took up residence in a house in Battersea. Weirdly, even though they managed to escape any bad effects of the war, I think, in their fleeing, a bomb did fall on the house in Battersea. Well, in the back garden, or in the yard, I think it was.

0:04:39.8 Abi Obene: Was this World War II?

0:04:41.9 Mark Presland: Yes, World War II.

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

0:04:44.1 Laurence Hillel: So they came to England during that period.

0:04:48.8 Mark Presland: Yes. You will have more idea of the dates than me, probably. So will this website if ever I find it. So a lot of my uncles and aunts were living in this house in Battersea, which had several levels of stuff. Quite a big house. Grandparents on the ground floor, different uncles and aunts on the subsequent higher floors and things. Used to go and visit them on a regular basis with my mum. I've got fond memories of that place in Shelgate Road. Yes, then my mum took up nursing while she was here. How did that work out? I don't know where she met my dad exactly, but I think it might have been in a place called AEI. I think she worked there for a while, possibly after - no, before working as a nurse. I think they met in AEI. Anyway, and married, and lived in Potter Street. Did I go through all that, where I grew up?

0:06:22.8 Laurence Hillel: Yes. Were you aware as a child that they were from - that their roots were actually not...

0:06:36.6 Mark Presland: No, I wasn't really interested in roots. It was just mum and dad, and that was it. By the time I'd reached the age of about seven or eight, I would walk along the street in Harlow, in Upper Mealines, and at one end of the street, I'd be called 'blackie' and at the other end of the street, I'd be called 'whitey' because there were quite a mixture of people in the area. I was quite a brown child, and I don't know how brown I am now. Do you know what I mean? So I found that amusing, but I never had any real issues with feeling as if I was an immigrant or alien in any way. I was born in England. So I'd never had any real tensions in that department as far as I know. I've always enjoyed the interesting stories from my mother about Burma. It sounds like she had some lovely times there. Stories about how fabulous it was when the monsoons came, and they all used to go out and play in the rain, and dance around, and things like that. A few of my uncles had stories from Burma, which were sometimes made up, like one of my uncles had a tattoo of a snake on his arm, and I said, 'How did you get that?' and he said he got it from wrestling a snake. So not too much factual stuff for us kids.

0:08:27.6 Abi Obene: So you had all these stories growing up, but you didn't ever really - it wasn't something you necessarily thought about. It was just part and parcel of your life, of your childhood, and you just...

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

0:08:37.9 Mark Presland: Yes. So yes.

0:08:42.5 Laurence Hillel: What about food?

0:08:44.2 Mark Presland: Food was - let's see now. I used to...

0:08:49.1 Laurence Hillel: I'm thinking about as a child, and whether your mother - whether that came...

0:08:54.5 Mark Presland: As a child, we had fairly - I seem to remember, as a very small child, having fairly standard British fare, as it were, but a little while later, maybe when I was about six, seven, something like that, my mother started going to cooking classes at a college or something, somewhere in Harlow. Now I wonder if that's where she met my stepdad. I don't know if that's where, but any case - that could have been where they actually met because I think he was going to those as well. Anyway, even though I thought that she'd been a fabulous cook, and she did all these Burmese dishes and things all our lives, I think she mentioned once that, no, she really learned to cook properly at this place. She used to come back late from these cooking classes with all the different things that she'd cooked, and she used to get us out of bed, and give us tastes of all this lovely stuff.

0:10:09.8 Abi Obene: Those sorts of cooking classes, was it a bit of everything, or was it focused on one particular area?

0:10:15.7 Mark Presland: Yes, it was just from round the world kind of thing. Yes, just interesting food. I can't remember too much about it. Risottos, and maybe a little bit of biryanis and things like that. Things which we weren't all that familiar with. I think she started cooking at that point, and she probably learnt a lot of her cooking skills from the rest of our family. Her mum, and my other aunts and uncles and things. Some of my aunts and uncles were great cooks as well. Certainly, towards the last 20 or 30 years, she became a fantastic cook, and cooked a lot of Burmese food, Burmese style things, and some Indian style food as well, plus she was a good cook generally. She could cook anything really well. Then my stepdad became very good at cooking as well, so we had two great cooks in the family there. Burmese curries were some of my favourites, I suppose, and quite simple to make. I make a few of those now. I made one a couple of days ago actually. My favourite curry, [?madi 0:11:35.9].

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

0:11:37.4 Abi Obene: Madi. What's in madi?

0:11:40.4 Mark Presland: Onion, chilli, ginger, and garlic, basically, and turmeric. You fry the meat or - well, it's usually beef, ideally, cubed in small - in that. A little bit of fish sauce. It makes a very rich curry, and we eat it with - well, I eat it with spaghetti, not rice, that one. Noodles, I imagine, were the thing, but I've always eaten it with spaghetti. It clings to the spaghetti nicely. Yes, so it goes a long way. A little bit goes a long way, and it's very rich, so you don't need an awful - and you have what are called 'toli molis' with it, which are like golden fried bits of garlic, toasted pea flour, gram flour, chickpea flour, tamarind juice, and a host of other things that you can - it's served up with, and you just add little bits of what you want to your curry. It's absolutely out of this world.

0:13:01.1 Abi Obene: Oh, lovely. Just to say, this isn't an advertisement or anything, but have you been to the new World Food Shop in Barnstaple? Have you found some things easier to find now?

0:13:12.4 Mark Presland: No, where's that?

0:13:13.9 Abi Obene: Oh, so you know where the post office used to be?

0:13:17.5 Mark Presland: Yes.

0:13:17.7 Abi Obene: It's there. Yes, the same end of the high street where the cinema is. Yes, they opened up in a slightly smaller place, immediately got very popular, and they've moved literally right next door, to a slightly bigger place, and are still unloading all their boxes. Yes, they have - I popped in there the other day - Maggi and plantain and all sorts, and lots of Asian and African spices and vegetables.

0:13:44.5 Mark Presland: I don't use a vast range of ingredients. I keep it pretty simple, but I do need a good source of fresh chillies.

0:13:58.1 Abi Obene: They definitely have. There were boxes and boxes of chillies, different sorts, depending on the day.

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

0:14:03.6 Mark Presland: When I make Indian type curries - not real Indian, I'm sure - I tend to use Bolst's curry powder, which - and I've been going to Exeter to find these ingredients. There's a Heera supermarket, I think it's called, in Exeter. They do a fabulous range of foods.

0:14:31.5 Abi Obene: Lovely. Did you find that food and cooking, recipes, all of those things are probably one of the more frequent bits of your family heritage to interact with?

0:14:49.2 Mark Presland: Yes, and in fact, my cousin, Pauline, has brought out a few books. I think it's three books now with all our family recipes in. It's fabulous, and a little bit of history of the family too. Little notes at the bottom of the page, sometimes with an occasional photograph and things. Phaire Family Recipes, I suppose it's called. I've got them. I'll have to show you. Yes, really good recipes, but they've also got the different variations from different members of our family, like this cousin, or this auntie or whatever. They may have both made the same thing, but they have completely different approaches, so it's got the different recipes and things in there. It's a really excellent book. Thank you, Pauline.

0:15:38.9 Laurence Hillel: What about music? This is totally off the cuff, but I was thinking, Burma, Burmese flute. You've formed a band with lots of whistle players, and I didn't know whether - have you ever thought about the links with...

0:16:04.9 Mark Presland: No, I've never really thought about it. I have ended up making whistles now. See, I got really interested in - I was playing guitar with my friend who played whistle, but I was also listening to the radio quite a lot, and my attention was caught by this - the very first of these Young Tradition Awards that they had on the BBC. What I heard that I was absolutely besotted by were several of the people there. Kate Rusby and Kathryn Roberts were young girls who sang together. They've both got pretty good careers now actually. They were teenagers then. Then there was Three Nations Flutes, which was Michael McGoldrick, Brian Finnegan, and Sarah Allen. They all played flutes and whistles together, but they were just astonishing, the sound they made. Again, they were pretty young at the time. I think they may have won actually. I don't know if there was a first prize or whatever. Anyway, this is where I heard - I started getting really interested in folk music because I realised how good it could be, and before that, it was a bit finger in the ear, boring, what I'd heard. It

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

was the young kids who were really doing great things, and I'm still following some of these people today.

0:17:48.8 In fact, Three Nations Flutes have morphed into a different outfit which they called Flook, and that's my favourite band. It has been since then, and I think I was there at one of their first gigs. We play quite a few of their tunes now actually in my band. I liked the idea of playing whistle. I really wanted to play whistles, but they were quite expensive. There were excellent metal whistles that were quite large and deep sounding, and I couldn't afford them. In fact, I've been very poor most of my life, so I couldn't afford £150 for a whistle, or a guitar for that matter, or anything, so I started making them out of water pipe. You know that white water pipe you get?

0:18:48.2 Abi Obene: Yes.

0:18:48.9 Mark Presland: So basically, I realised that this white water pipe is about the same dimensions as the pipe that they use for these whistles, and I had one of those little tin whistles in the key of D, which is the most common Irish type whistle, six holes, and made of metal with a plastic top. So what I did was I got hold of a piece of this water pipe, which was somewhat longer than the - well, a lot longer than these little - it was about the right length for the big metal ones I wanted to emulate, and I thought, how am I going to make this work? So the first thing I did was I thought, well, let's get it to make a sound to start off with, so I had a go at making a sound with it, and all I could come up with was to cut a small hole in the blowy end, if you like, and cut a little panel out, and make a little piece of plastic to act as the blade, the bit that cuts the air. Kind of made a narrow blow path towards it. So still no sound at this point, but then I found that if I moved this little blade into exactly the right place, I suddenly got this nice whistle sound, but I didn't know how to keep it there, so what I ended up doing was blowing through this thing and supergluing this little blade into place.

0:20:34.4 I moved it until it made a sound, and I let it set where it was making the proper sound, and then I had to figure out how to unglue my finger from the whistle. So I'd got this thing making a nice sound; no holes in it. No finger holes in it. So then what I did was, I knew it had to be in the key of D, and I - I'm being a bit long-winded about this, aren't I.

0:20:58.3 Abi Obene: No, it's fine.

0:20:59.1 Mark Presland: I had to cut it down until it made the lowest - the D note. So I just kept filing it down, cutting it down until it made the lowest note, and then I took it and I compared it to this little

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

tin whistle, which was an octave higher, I suppose, and I just moved them so that the tin whistle was near me, and my whistle was far away until they looked about the right size, and then I marked a cross where the holes should be if you know what I mean. Then I opened up the furthest hole until it was in tune, then the next hole until it was in tune, and so on, and that's how I started making whistles. I've refined the process a little since then. So I made all my own whistles. I made a complete set of all the keys I could think of.

0:21:55.9 Laurence Hillel: It's like your technical skills that you learnt in electronics being applied into your field of music.

0:22:03.9 Mark Presland: Well, there weren't any electronics involved. It was really hunches on how to make it work. Since then, I've refined it, and I have a much better way, without gluing my fingers to anything.

0:22:18.0 Abi Obene: It sounds advantageous to not have to do that every time.

0:22:21.1 Mark Presland: Yes, but I did make a few whistles like that, and one or two of them - because they all sounded different. One or two of them worked really well.

0:22:27.8 Abi Obene: Lovely. Do you ever play any of them with M'Larkey, or do any of your band members play?

0:22:32.0 Mark Presland: Well, actually, Lindy plays a few of my whistles, [?Colleen's 0:22:35.7] got a few of my whistles, and I sold one or two as well. This band, Flook, I was telling you about, I made some for Flook. Just a couple for Flook because when we'd seen them at one or other gig, they'd had a go on the whistles, and Brian had said, 'Oh, can you make me one of these?' So that was the supreme accolade, to be able to make a whistle, albeit out of plastic water pipe, for my ultimate whistle-playing hero. That was great.

0:23:09.2 Abi Obene: Lovely. Oh, gosh. You might have gone through quite a bit of our stories here, so I suppose - our questions here. Well, there's a couple we could ask. So you moved here 30 years ago, roughly.

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

0:23:41.0 Mark Presland: Yes. Wait a minute, I think it was 1981. What does that put it at?

0:23:44.9 Laurence Hillel: Thirty-three years.

0:23:46.1 Mark Presland: Thirty-three years, yes.

0:23:47.4 Abi Obene: Gosh.

0:23:48.9 Laurence Hillel: Actually, it's 39, isn't it, if you moved here in 1981. It's 43 years.

0:23:58.3 Mark Presland: Oh, it can't be that long. It couldn't have been 1981 then. I must have got that wrong. Why am I so rubbish with dates? I don't know. Other people, they fluently patter out all these exact dates and things, like when they did this, that, and the other. I can't do that. I don't have that facility.

0:24:20.7 Abi Obene: So you've been here for a while.

0:24:22.0 Mark Presland: Been here for a while, yes.

0:24:22.7 Abi Obene: A while. Yes, a while is good. Something that you mentioned earlier regarding when you were a child, walking down the street, and there was the odd incident of - at one end, you'd be called 'blackie' and the other end, you'd be called 'whitey'. I know it's different being a child versus being an adult. Did you have anything like that here, or has it all been quite plain sailing?

0:24:44.9 Mark Presland: No, not here, but I did have several other little incidents in Harlow, and in school and things. You'd expect it in school, especially in primary school, and a tiny bit in secondary school, but nothing to speak of, and nothing to worry anybody about.

0:25:04.6 Abi Obene: Good, good.

0:25:07.7 Laurence Hillel: I know this is sensitive, and please don't...

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

0:25:11.6 Mark Presland: It's fine.

0:25:13.7 Laurence Hillel: You've talked about your stepfather, haven't you, who is your dad, and he's the one who is de Souza, presumably.

0:25:19.4 Mark Presland: No, my stepfather is Presland.

0:25:23.6 Laurence Hillel: Oh, okay, so it's actually your...

0:25:25.8 Mark Presland: So he's a British guy.

0:25:25.8 Laurence Hillel: Yes, so your biological father...

0:25:29.2 Mark Presland: Oh, my biological father. Platel, my biological father.

0:25:34.9 Laurence Hillel: P-L-A-T-E-L?

0:25:37.0 Mark Presland: Yes, that's right. Now that's weird because Patel is a very common name in India, and I always thought, oh, it must be a derivative of that somehow, but - I can't remember who it was, but somebody told me subsequently that, no, Platel is actually Portuguese.

0:25:53.8 Laurence Hillel: Yes, so where does it link with de Souza then?

0:25:57.5 Mark Presland: That's my mother's side of the family, the Phaure, de Souza. There's a lot of information about somewhere.

0:26:05.4 Laurence Hillel: That's interesting because de Souza is - it's quite common in Goa.

0:26:11.2 Mark Presland: Is it?

0:26:11.6 Laurence Hillel: Yes, which was part of the Portuguese empire in India. If Platel is Portuguese as well - I don't know. I'm sorry. I'm throwing these out.

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

0:26:27.5 Mark Presland: Sure, but when I've asked, what nationalities do we have in the family, I've heard that we have, well, Burmese, Indian, Irish, Scottish, French, Welsh, and there's probably - Portuguese. Did I say Portuguese? So there's everything. We've got everything in the family.

0:26:56.5 Laurence Hillel: Yes, a real mix.

0:26:59.5 Mark Presland: I'm not familiar to any degree about all those details. I might become familiar when I find this website because it's got the family tree and everything.

0:27:12.0 Abi Obene: Did you say that the website was being managed, as far as you were aware, by relatives?

0:27:16.5 Mark Presland: Well, my cousin, Pauline, and her partner, Robert, I think - is it? - are the ones who worked on the family tree. Oh, plus my cousin, Roger, did a lot of family tree work, I think, as well. I haven't seen any of this, but I'll let you know when it comes along if it helps.

0:27:42.3 Laurence Hillel: I'm throwing this out. It may well be accessible via Ancestry or Findmypast, so it would be easy for...

0:27:48.0 Mark Presland: Yes, I know. I had a quick look today, and this particular site wasn't there, but I did see the occasional references to people I did know about, and some of my cousins and things.

0:28:01.6 Laurence Hillel: Yes, so I'm sure that Abi could research. Obviously, I could, but you know Abi better.

0:28:08.4 Abi Obene: Yes, we've got it through the project, so we can always have a look.

0:28:14.6 Mark Presland: Well, if I could add this link to you - if I get hold of it.

0:28:17.1 Abi Obene: Yes, that would be fantastic.

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

0:28:19.0 Mark Presland: I don't know where my cousin is at the moment. She was living in France, Pauline, and her partner, who did all this. She said she was going to move back to England. She may be here, back in England by now. Yes.

0:28:32.9 Abi Obene: Perfect. So do other family members mostly live in England or the UK, or are there others abroad?

0:28:39.3 Mark Presland: Yes, well, a lot of family members lived in the UK, but then I think my auntie, [Pritard 0:28:45.8] went and moved back out to Burma or something. Then my uncle, Derek, moved to... What's it called? Is it the Canary Islands? Tenerife. Is that in the Canary Islands? Probably not.

0:29:08.1 Laurence Hillel: I'm not sure.

0:29:09.1 Mark Presland: Anyway, he moved to Tenerife, then I had uncles living in London still. I think my grandma and grandpa had 14 children.

0:29:24.1 Laurence Hillel: Gosh, that's a very big family.

0:29:26.0 Mark Presland: That's the number that springs to mind. I'm pretty sure that's it. That's a lot of kids, isn't it.

0:29:30.5 Abi Obene: It is a lot of kids.

0:29:31.2 Mark Presland: Sheesh. There you go. I'm probably giving you the wrong steer there, but we will find out. So yes.

0:29:47.9 Abi Obene: Yes, and then it's been playing with M'Larkey, and also running various open mics, private events and everything.

0:29:56.8 Mark Presland: Yes, I started doing the open mics more than 20 years ago. I started originally at The Pier in Ilfracombe. The landlord changed a couple of times there, and eventually, we got a landlord who wasn't interested because he was only into rock and roll, and so we left that one

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

alone and started doing an open mic in the Landmark Pavilion, because it was built and done by then. Yes, so I did an open mic at the Landmark for quite a while, and then after that one - oh, the Landmark pretty much closed for a while for some reason, I'm not sure exactly what went down, and I started doing an open mic in Morteheo. The Ship Aground in Morteheo, and I did that for quite a long while. That was very successful. It was a lovely little place to do an open mic. Great people. Difficult to get to because it was an eight-mile walk sometimes. Something like that anyway. Eventually, I got a bicycle, and I - but I often got a lift as well, but you never knew where you were going to be with that. That was great. I did that for quite a long while, had some wonderful musical experiences there. Bill brought some of the equipment along as well; some of the M'Larkey PA for that.

0:31:27.5 Then after that, it was at The Grampus, and it's been at The Grampus now for 17 years.

0:31:33.0 Abi Obene: Yes, was that from when Bill...

0:31:36.0 Mark Presland: Yes, when Bill acquired the place, and started it up, and made what is quite a successful little venture out of it now.

0:31:43.5 Abi Obene: Yes, so is it - there's band practice, and then there's open music night, I think.

0:31:49.9 Mark Presland: Yes, the band practice on Wednesday still at the pub, unless there's some complication and we have to have it at somebody else's house, but it's mainly at the pub. Every Friday, without fail, for the last 17 years, until next week. It's not going to be an open mic, but people can come along and play acoustically if they want to. I did try and cover that eventuality, but I couldn't, is all I will say about that.

0:32:24.0 Abi Obene: Fair enough, yes, and the open mics at The Grampus have become quite a successful thing. Occasionally, you can see some quite famous people in there.

0:32:36.0 Mark Presland: Yes, we've seen some quite - I'm not going to drop any names. I'll do that privately, but not on tape. Yes, we've had the occasional famous person in there, but a little village like that, people have their little holiday lets or houses because they can afford to and stuff, I suppose, and maybe they'll bring the odd celebrity down, but it's rare. Yes, they don't usually play.

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

0:33:13.0 Laurence Hillel: So this is Lee Bay?

0:33:14.8 Mark Presland: Lee Bay, yes.

0:33:16.6 Laurence Hillel: On a Friday night.

0:33:17.6 Mark Presland: The Grampus in Lee on a Friday night. It's just the place to be in North Devon, frankly. It's fabulous.

0:33:23.1 Laurence Hillel: I shall have to try it out.

0:33:23.9 Mark Presland: For me, it's a musical fix every week. I get to hear new people, sometimes people who have never played before and are a bit nervous, but anybody can do - I like to think anybody can do anything at our open mics. If it's not music, they can do poems or tell a story, a bit of comedy, whatever. Anybody, and however old they are, or whatever level. Anything. Totally as inclusive as possible.

0:34:00.5 Abi Obene: I think one of the most memorable experiences I remember from going to one of the music nights was Bill would often have people popping in from Europe to work for a few weeks. They had a visa or something, and they'd work in the pub, and a lot of them, it seemed, were also very musically talented, musically inclined.

0:34:22.2 Mark Presland: That's true. We've had some amazing people in who are like - what do they call it? - HelpX. I don't know where it's advertised, or how people get on to it, but I'd imagine it's mentioned that it's a musical pub, which is why we draw - we've had some amazing people recently. There was a great saxophonist not too long ago, and his friend who was a singer-songwriter. It was great, but there are so many names to remember, it's just impossible sometimes. Yes, we've had some great people come in, and some people who just - who come, maybe holiday in the area, or have family in the area who pop in occasionally, and who are just fantastic. Luca Wilding is a really good one. I think he lives in London, but he pops in a couple of times a year usually. There's a family, I think they're called the [?Bradshaws] - yes, the Bradshaws - who have been - a big family who have been congregating in Lee for about a hundred years or something. It's a big family, and they have a

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

get-together about once a year in the - and a lot of them are musical. Some of them are top musicians, really lovely people. They don't always play, but they can, and sometimes they do. Different members of the family play.

0:36:13.4 Yes, it's a great inspiration for me because I'll discover new music that way, and yes, I'll never run out of things and people, and different things to listen to as a result of the fact that I've got all these influences from the open mic.

0:36:37.6 Abi Obene: Wonderful. Well, that's about it, unless you have any other...

0:36:42.1 Laurence Hillel: No, I think it's been a fascinating interview.

0:36:47.5 Mark Presland: It hasn't really been an interview. I've just jabbered on.

0:36:49.6 Abi Obene: Well, that's half of what it is. Usually, we end with a very broad, incredibly easy-to-answer question, just maybe a little bit pretentious. So we'll just finish it off with, what is the one thing you would most want people to remember about you, or to remember you by?

0:37:12.5 Mark Presland: Me? I fully expect people to forget about me. To remember about me? My cakes, probably.

0:37:30.3 Abi Obene: Your cakes?

0:37:30.8 Mark Presland: Yes, my pear and cherry cakes.

0:37:32.6 Abi Obene: Oh, lovely. So leaving behind more recipes.

0:37:36.2 Mark Presland: I'll give you the recipe now if you like.

0:37:37.4 Abi Obene: Oh, that would be fantastic, yes.

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

0:37:38.3 Mark Presland: It's dead easy. It's really good. It's the same quantity of flour, sugar, and butter, which, for argument's sake, is about 110 grams of each, and you put in pretty much what fruit you like. I like to put in chopped up pear and chopped up glace cherries.

0:38:01.7 Abi Obene: Lovely.

0:38:04.4 Mark Presland: So you've got softish butter, you cream the sugar into it. I tend to use something like unrefined sugar, but I don't know what works best. I've tried demerara, that's pretty good. Ordinary sugar works, but it's not the best, I don't think. So yes, cream 110 grams of sugar into 110 grams of butter, and then you add two whisked eggs and stir that carefully in. Then you add 110 grams of self-raising flour, which has got just a touch of salt in it, and you mix that in for some reason with a metal spoon. I don't know if that's important, but I've heard that that's what you do. Then you've got your cake mix. I usually use one or two chopped up pears and half a small tub of chopped up glace cherries into it. There's the cake mix, all done, and I do it in those cake tins. The muffin type cake tins, the quite large, non-stick ones. They're tins of 12, and you can usually make somewhat more than 12 cakes with that. I'm not too picky about it. I just fill it up, and when there's some left over, I start on another tray, so I do two trays worth of cakes, and I take them down to the open mic on a Friday, and sometimes to rehearsals on a Wednesday as well.

0:39:51.7 Laurence Hillel: Food is the way to people's hearts.

0:39:53.5 Abi Obene: Food is.

0:39:54.1 Laurence Hillel: Food and music.

0:39:55.0 Abi Obene: Food and music, yes.

0:39:55.8 Laurence Hillel: There you are.

0:39:57.8 Abi Obene: Fantastic. Well, thank you ever so much.

0:40:00.4 Mark Presland: Pleasure.

Telling Our Stories Finding Our Roots

DEVON'S MULTICULTURAL HISTORY
ILFRACOMBE

0:40:01.3 Abi Obene: It was lovely speaking to you, and I'll just get this off.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]