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Log summary of an interview with

MARTY JEFFERIES

on 15 and 27 May, 12 and 21 June, and 3 July 2013

by Allison Murchie

Recording available on CD

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MARTY JEFFERIES

NOTES TO THE LOG SUMMARY

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NB: Zoo or AZ means the Adelaide Zoological Society now known as Zoos SA.
MZ means Monarto Zoo

Card 1: 15.5.2013

Martin Leonard Jefferies was born in Bristol, England on 21.3.53; parents Leonard and Maureen; father worked for electricity provider and mother was housewife; has a younger sister; lived in a semi-detached in the suburbs; were lower middle class and comfortably off; had annual holiday to South Devon; bombing damage after WWII; Bristol was close to everything for country walks, picnics and other family outings; he was shy as a child and still is; had an early interest in botany and liked the countryside; did train-spotting as a teenager and collected their numbers, continued hobby as an adult with model railways; cold wet afternoons in his anorak collecting train numbers – was considered a geek; liked the Great Western Railway; religion played no part in his life; stopped train-spotting about 17 or 18 when he bought a car; came to Australia in 1976; at school all his teachers were middle-aged women; school hours 9.00 to 12.00 and 1.30 to 3.00; went home for lunch; food was stodgy and there were still shortages after the war; bought food over the counter at the grocer and butcher or it was home delivered; Sunday roast; lamb from New Zealand; ate a lot of bacon, eggs, chips; fish man called at home; Chinese food began to appear; Bristol Zoo was always very busy and took 2 bus trips to get there; kangaroos at the entrance to the zoo; also had bear pit, bird house, big cats, apes, monkey house, aquarium, it had a huge animal collection but it was not a big zoo; had very good gardens; only visited in school holidays; read a lot including Famous Five, Wind in the Willows, I Spy, pocket books, comics; visited the library every week; got TV in the mid 50s, had a 12" screen; TV started at 5.00 pm and bed-time was 9.00 pm; BBC was better than ITV; liked Beatles, Shadows, Rolling Stones; there was a flood of music and it was all happening; he was at the Adelaide Zoo when he heard about the death of John Lennon and he was very sad; now likes all types of music, as long as it is good.

Card 2: 27.5.2013

He did his last year at primary school in 1963-64; did the Eleven Plus Exam at the end of primary school, testing took all day; it was a type of IQ test which determined where he did his secondary education - the top group went to Grammar School, next was Comprehensive schools which were streamed and the last group was Secondary Modern; he was in the top 6 students in all of Bristol; decided to go to Cotham Grammar where his friends were going to go but in the end he went on his own; it was state funded education, including all books; parents had to pay for uniform; if students needed financial help with travel and other costs it was subsidised; a Grammar school gave him good opportunities to go to university; there were no boarders; all secondary education in Britain was state funded; the school was a long way from home and he had to get the bus to the city followed by a 20 minute walk; he had no friends at the new school; there were about 800 students with all male students and staff; it was a big culture shock in relation to the size of school, the number of students and the discipline of the masters (teachers); he was teased a lot - skinny kid with glasses; the school was in a good suburb and close to Bristol University; had good facilities including art room, music room, laboratories and physics building; there were about 30 students a class; school hours were 8.30 to 4.00 with a school assembly every morning; in the morning there were 4 classes of 45 minutes and three 40 minute classes in the afternoon; settled in after a few weeks; left home at 7.45 and got home about 5.00 and had homework every night; had to study a wide range of subjects and the school was very strict; the French teacher only spoke French for the first week even though they did not understand the language; they were told that it was important to get good results in French and the only way to learn it properly was to do an exchange program with a French student but he didn't do it; all the kids at school were bright and he had to work hard to get average results; no streaming in first year but they were streamed in second year; in third year he was in the top group but it was too hard for him and he failed; needed to study Latin if you wanted to go to Oxford; he didn't like school and had no direction; hated school sport but became interested in soccer after England won the 1966 World Cup; music was compulsory - studied theory and history but did not learn an instrument; the masters were intimidating and handed out harsh punishments; all grammar schools were single sex and there was no contact with any females - girls were a different species; left school in 1971; thought he might like to work in biology, wanted to work outdoors; he was good at science but couldn't write essays - he saw the logic of science; at age 16 he did his O Levels Exams [Ordinary level exam as part of the British General Certificate of Education - GCE]; these were national public exams in all subjects; he attained 9 O levels over 2 years; he

saw his career direction in something like marine biology and studied Botany and Zoology; after his O levels he couldn't study as efficiently, was not disciplined and did badly in exams; had to apply to university 10 months in advance but he didn't know what he wanted to do, had no ambition; the outside world was a scary place and it would have been easier to keep studying.

Card 3: 12.6.2013

He applied to 5 universities and was accepted to Ulster where he could do Ecology and Environmental Studies; there were no course fees and a living-away-from-home allowance was paid by the Bristol Council which covered his accommodation; he lived in a bed & breakfast near the university; lived on £10 a week of which he paid £4.7.6 on rent; it was a new university, near Coleraine on the north coast; it was cold, wet and windy; it was in green fields; it was a good opportunity to study; family came over on the ferry with him to help him settle in, it was a grim farewell; he was 18; the semesters were September to December, January to March and April to June with a 10-12 week summer break; it was the time of Reverend Paisley and Bernadette Devlin, he thought the 'troubles' would be resolved within 3 years; there were paratroopers in the city; most people in Antrim were loyalists and it was quite peaceful; after 'Bloody Sunday' [in Derry on 31.1.72] the students met and decided to go on a 3 day strike; he mainly met English students; he was unsure of Irish students and their politics; he was not interested in politics; Loyalists still think they are English; the IRA became serious in the 1970s; he was a new kid and found it hard to meet people but eventually formed a group of friends; the university was isolated from the town and as it had bad weather he was mostly inside and the university was very crowded; he failed chemistry and decided to leave; returned home to Bristol to look for a job; he wanted to work in a lab but it was hard to get work and he had little self-confidence; he lived on the dole of £5 a week until 1973; he got a job in a bank in Bristol in the trustee and income tax section; he did wills and clerical work for 3 years, £15 a week for a 35 hour week; member of the National Union of Bank Employees; worked at the National Westminster Bank; had to do bank exams to get promoted; father died in May 1974, aged 51, heart attack; his mother re-married and they all moved to a new home; his friend Chris went to Australia on a working holiday in July 1975 and asked him to join him; in January 1976 he came to Adelaide on a working holiday for 8 months, which could be extended to 12; he could only bring £200 with him; sold his car to pay for his ticket - £700 one way; he arrived just after Cyclone Tracy and his friend was making buildings for Darwin; he shared a caravan with Chris at Dalkeith Caravan Park, in the extreme heat of February; in England he could not find any books on Australia and did not know what to expect; it was a culture shock for him and he was disappointed; had a 4 week holiday before looking for work; went to the employment office and got a job at Michell's Wool Factory at Salisbury; he was doing wool processing and it was good pay and a permanent job; Chris returned to England when his visa ran out; he had no friends but decided to stay until his visa ran out; bought a VW then got a loan to buy a Holden; Werner Zur Eich's [from the AZ] sister was his

neighbour and he met Werner at a weekend party; he then introduced him to 'Lanky' – Mr Lancaster, the Director of the Zoo; he did not have any experience working with animals but was offered a job in the Food Store; it was 1976; it was not good pay, about \$90 a week but up to \$120 with weekend work; Werner was his boss and showed him how to do his job over a 2 day period; there were no women on staff [other than in clerical areas]; there were not many staff, there was no vet; the animal enclosures were cement and steel, very dingy and overcrowded; most staff were unskilled; prior to working at the zoo he had only visited it once.

Card 4: 21.6.2013

Spent his first 2 weeks at the zoo learning about the Food Store; it was 1976 and the job was for 8 months; his visa still had 5 months left and he was able to extend it for another year; started at 7.00 am and was happy in the job; the butcher and the driver would go out and shoot horses for food; he had regular food deliveries, a list of what had to be prepared and it was collected by the keepers; they collected food in a hand cart; hay delivered once a week; there were 10 mammal keepers, Werner as supervisor and 6 bird/reptile keepers, 3 gardeners, a butcher and small maintenance team; standards were low; all keeping staff were male, many were semi-literate and many migrants; it was low pay and poor working conditions; most were family men; he had applied for a job at Bristol Zoo but was told he was over-qualified; worked 12 days then had 2 off, take home pay was about \$90 a week, with weekend penalty rates he could get \$140; he had some problems when his visa was due for renewal and ended up marrying his flat-mate – he was 23; he became a permanent resident; he resigned and had his flight home to England booked; he was unemployed and re-applied for a job at the zoo and got the job of butcher for 2 months; it was a horrible job and very primitive; he had to cut up 3-4 horses a week – describes process in detail; they also got donkey meat, cows, sheep, goats and kangaroos – there were a lot of carnivores and they needed a lot of meat; many of the horses came from racecourses; there was no cost for these animals; Terry Hodson was the last butcher/driver employed in the zoo – about 10 years ago; there was a vacancy in Ungulates and he worked there as a Rover keeper; worked with hippos and bison and it was a very heavy workload; worked with Werner, Hans and Hero (Nuus) who were all very driven, Dutch background; he was trained in 2 days by the keeper; it was dangerous work and he had to climb into the hippo enclosure; he got very fit and strong; it was hard work and he was always in a hurry; he was the only keeper on the round; a water buffalo, Melville, had been hand-raised and was very dangerous; male camels were nasty in the mating season; he always used a cart as a barrier to stop the animals kicking him; a work experience person was bitten by a camel; bad safety conditions were accepted as part of the job; Director, Mr Lancaster said 'Leave if you don't like it'; Lanky retired in 1978; many of the staff were not very bright; he started to do an Animal Care Certificate and was given paid study leave; Werner lived at the zoo and at night he took the chimps onto the central lawn, Suzie the chimp was like his pet; he hand-raised a lion and a tiger; the Head Keeper Charlie Watkins's wife hand-raised the chimp Peter and he was very nasty; a chimp Percy drowned in the moat.

Card 5: 3.7.2013

In the late 60s they stopped hand-rearing animals as it was no longer acceptable; it caused psychological damage to the animals and they had no fear of humans; as a Rover he did all the rounds in 1979; after 2 years in mammals he found the work very hard and asked for a move back to the Food Store where he stayed for 18 months; he continued his studies at Panorama TAFE- this course is now done at Gilles Plains; it was the only course available at the time for zoo keepers; the course was 3 years part-time and he got paid leave to attend, supported by Directors Lancaster and Robert Baker, did the course in the late 70s; it was easy to shift jobs as there were a lot of vacancies; he then became a bird keeper; Trevor Gibson was in charge and it was a very relaxed job, problems with birds fairly easy to resolve; when he started there were Rainforest and Botanic aviaries, Jewels of Asia, a large curved aviary, Row 19; birds included birds of prey, ring-necked parrots, macaws, cockatoos, wooded parrots, pelicans, cassowary and flamingoes; it was a very large collection, probably the largest in Australia; there were 6 keepers and 6 rounds plus a Rover and the Supervisor; there are now only 3 rounds; there was usually a pair of birds and a back-up pair; there was no policy of what would be in the collection, it was just a 'stamp collection' policy - one of everything; there were a lot more ducks, swans and birds of prey; there were 5 flamingos and they were easy to look after, they were very tough, they were fed mashed fish, meat, carrot and lettuce; aviaries create a natural environment and are good for the public to view animals; some political issues with the Horticulture section as to who is responsible for maintaining trees and foliage in exhibits, growing trees create holes in the mesh and birds can get out; compatible species are housed together and are easy to look after; he enjoys the Q&A talks with the public at pelicans, penguins and other exhibits but does not like public speaking such as for the macaw free flight; explains process of training macaws; several pairs were retired from the free flights when they started to breed; the current bird used is Manu; they have a work experience person every Thursday; daily activities include feeding birds, cleaning all areas, trays washed, raking, cleaning ponds, replacing shell grit and sand, fresh browse, check breeding boxes; other activities include tending to sick birds, fixing fencing, washing walls, monthly scrubs, cleaning drains; there is now very little hand-rearing; all birds are allowed to breed and excess to needs can be sold or swapped; breeding of Orange Bellied Parrot and Regent Honey Eater strictly managed as both are endangered; breeding determined according to stud book keepers in Tasmania and New South Wales; he is concerned how an aviary is presented to the public and puts a lot of work into getting it right; he is happy to see the birds in large cages where they are well cared for, fed and able to breed.