

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW GARRY GIBBONS AND PATTIE LAWLER, 9 NOVEMBER 2025

00:00:00,280 --> 00:00:31,840 [Garry Gibbons]

Now, so, I'm interviewing an interviewee on Sunday the 9th of November, evening, and we're recording this via a laptop and that'll become a clear why in a moment. So perhaps I can ask our interviewee her name, where she lives and which decade she was born in.

00:00:31,840 --> 00:00:41,200 [Pattie Lawler]

My name is Patty Lawler. I live in Morristown, New Jersey and I was born 1964, which is a little more specific, but 1964 is good.

00:00:41,200 --> 00:00:46,460 [Garry Gibbons]

1964. Fantastic. Right. So, you live in the US, New Jersey.

00:00:46,460 --> 00:00:47,920 [Pattie Lawler]

I do.

00:00:47,920 --> 00:00:54,420 [Garry Gibbons]

Why are you interested in the hill figures of the UK?

00:00:54,420 --> 00:01:32,820 [Pattie Lawler]

That is actually an excellent question that I'm not exactly sure I can answer. It came up in a conversation with my wife, regarding the Uffington White Horse and I decided that it would be a pet project to start looking into the hill figures because I only knew the Uffington White Horse. And of course, from there, you know, you learn the Cerne Abbas Giant and it depends on how far afield you want to go, to Scotland and all. But I became very interested and I've always been that sort of girl that was into horses growing up, so it was kind of a natural progression in my early 20s.

00:01:32,820 --> 00:01:38,620 [Garry Gibbons]

Sure. So initially, it was through the Uffington Horse?

00:01:38,620 --> 00:01:39,570 [Pattie Lawler]

Correct.

00:01:39,570 --> 00:01:45,080 [Garry Gibbons]

And what sort of date was that? When, how long ago?

00:01:45,080 --> 00:03:56,500 [Pattie Lawler]

I'm going say it was probably around 1988 because my actual field of research started really picking up in '89, but there was a lot of.... I never went to college. I was not, like, the model student or anything like that, so I actually had to learn how to do research before I actually started doing research and my wife is a college grad, and she's a librarian, so it was very easy for me to step into, but it was a huge learning curve. So originally, I

was reading a lot of Barry Cunliffe. I was looking at a lot of numismatic texts. Eventually, I started refining but I was still always very interested in Iron Age, Bronze Age. When we're over in England I swear to God, I can spot a barrow 90 miles an hour, still get my camera up and take a picture without swerving into traffic. I'm very good at that sort of thing. But I'm also very good at finding them. So, the two kind of moved together as I was looking at the Uffington Horse and then learning about Iron Age, Bronze Age, England. And then, of course, we make the trip. Actually, the first time I saw the Uffington Horse was from a train and I don't remember where we were going and it was full of very obnoxious schoolchildren who were going on and on, but anyway, so then we made it a point to go back specifically to start seeing the horses. And we did the James Young's driving tour, the pamphlet. I've got, like, 80,000 of those pamphlets and we did, you know, the loop to look at all the horses, and I became very good friends with the people in the Vale and Downland Museum. I was the American enthusiast and also spent a lot of time in Devizes (however you guys say it) doing research and I did whatever I could wherever I could and I'm not shy. I'm your typical American and was knocking on doors, including Tony Parker's.

00:03:56,500 --> 00:03:59,720 [Garry Gibbons]

Tony Parker's. It's Devizes. You're right.

00:03:59,720 --> 00:04:00,420 [Pattie Lawler]

Devizes. Thank you.

00:04:00,420 --> 00:04:13,440 [Garry Gibbons]

That's all right. So, yes. So, well, let's move then to Broad Town. Was it on that first tour that you visited Broad Town?

00:04:13,440 --> 00:05:23,520 [Pattie Lawler]

No, it wasn't and it wasn't until I went by myself. There was going to be a dig on the Uffington White Horse so I got myself a part-time job. I saved up my money and I flew over by myself and stayed just outside Avebury. Windmill Hill was the name of the bed and breakfast that I stayed at and because I had a car, I was more, obviously not beholden to the trains and able to move around better. At that juncture, I had already been talking to Tony and drove to Broad Town, saw the horse and I was like, "You gotta be kidding me." Because in my mind, of course, you know they're all pristine and wonderful and you know, you get there and the reality is sometimes people just don't care enough and I get that. You know, you have other priorities which is why I walked up to Tony's door and he was very surprised to see me, to say the least. But they were very accommodating. They were very sweet and we became besties.

00:05:23,520 --> 00:05:30,360 [Garry Gibbons]

So, you walked up to Tony's door. So, you knew Tony beforehand or corresponding?

00:05:30,360 --> 00:05:58,990 [Pattie Lawler]

Well, we had been talking a little bit because that was after my letter to the Broad Town Information Center had wound up in his mail slot and he had written back. I didn't know where they lived. I mean I got to Broad Town, I see the horse and I'm like - I was very miffed, I have to admit and then slowly I backed into the fact that Tony lived next to the town hall. Well, there's the town hall. This must be Tony's house. So, I just marched right out.

00:05:58,990 --> 00:06:01,360 [Garry Gibbons]

Right. And what year was this?

00:06:01,360 --> 00:06:04,780 [Pattie Lawler]

I do not know.

00:06:04,780 --> 00:06:06,468 [Garry Gibbons]

That's okay.

00:06:06,468 --> 00:06:08,188 [Pattie Lawler]

... I'm going to go with '89 still.

00:06:08,188 --> 00:06:09,488 [Garry Gibbons]

Yes, sure.

00:06:09,488 --> 00:06:12,088 [Pattie Lawler]

Somewhere in that area. '89 or '90.

00:06:12,088 --> 00:06:12,448 [Garry Gibbons]

Okay.

00:06:12,448 --> 00:06:20,908 [Pattie Lawler]

Whenever the dig was at Uffington and the thing that kills me here is I went to Uffington and they had postponed the dig. I was like, "Great. I flew over here for nothing. Thank you very much."

00:06:20,908 --> 00:06:22,768 [Garry Gibbons]

Yeah. But you got to Broad Town.

00:06:22,768 --> 00:06:25,408 [Pattie Lawler]

I might as well see the rest of the horses.

00:06:25,408 --> 00:06:28,588 [Garry Gibbons]

Yes. So, Tony's full name is?

00:06:28,588 --> 00:06:31,028 [Pattie Lawler]

Tony... well, Anthony Parker.

00:06:31,028 --> 00:06:31,258 [Garry Gibbons]

Excellent.

00:06:31,258 --> 00:06:38,178 [Pattie Lawler]

He worked for the railroad. And he had an amazing pension is all I can say, because they went everywhere. They never stopped.

00:06:38,178 --> 00:06:38,188 [Garry Gibbons]

Sure.

00:06:38,188 --> 00:06:39,868 [Pattie Lawler]

They were like that bird that never lands.

00:06:39,868 --> 00:06:43,008 [Garry Gibbons]

And what was his involvement with the horse then? Or was there an involvement?

00:06:43,008 --> 00:07:16,107 [Pattie Lawler]

Just me knocking on the door. I mean because he was in Broad Town and because there was this American standing on his doorstep, he became involved. I don't think he was ever particularly interested. I don't think that it was nothing other than the thing that they could see in the window, they had a window view of the horse from their house and it was just, you know, the horse up there on the hill. I know he said he had scoured or helped scour it once but other than that, I think if it hadn't been for me, he just would've gone on merrily and never thought about it.

00:07:16,108 --> 00:07:23,588 [Garry Gibbons]

Sure, and I mean, you continued that relationship for some time, did you not?

00:07:23,588 --> 00:07:24,848 [Pattie Lawler]

Yes, until they passed, yes.

00:07:24,848 --> 00:07:26,028 [Garry Gibbons]

With Tony, yes.

00:07:26,028 --> 00:07:26,888 [Pattie Lawler]

Yes.

00:07:26,888 --> 00:07:27,488 [Garry Gibbons]

And you collected-

00:07:27,488 --> 00:07:28,628 [Pattie Lawler]

They were wonderful.

00:07:28,628 --> 00:07:31,748 [Garry Gibbons]

You collected a whole bundle of letters.

00:07:31,748 --> 00:07:46,068 [Pattie Lawler]

Yes. We were very much in each other's back pocket for a very long time and when Tony passed, Gwen moved to a home and I continued writing to her until she passed. It sucks.

00:07:46,068 --> 00:07:51,688 [Garry Gibbons]

Yes, am I right in thinking - I don't want to put words in your-

00:07:51,688 --> 00:07:53,208 [Pattie Lawler]

You can assume. Go ahead, whatever.

00:07:53,208 --> 00:07:56,588 [Garry Gibbons]

Was there, was there a fete or some sort of event that-

00:07:56,588 --> 00:08:31,348 [Pattie Lawler]

That is correct. So, you'll know the date better than me. There was a fete. I was doing a different line of research at that point. I was doing wassails and had been... I wrote to Jesus College 'cause I knew they had like a 10-gallon wassail bowl that I wanted to see and the Dean was very accommodating. So, the day that we went, Eric and I went to Oxford, Broad Town was having a fair, and one of the things on display was the original... well, we're to assume the original cartoon by Mr. Simons... Simons? Simmons?

00:08:40,138 --> 00:08:40,988 [Garry Gibbons]

Simmons, that's fine.

00:08:40,988 --> 00:10:11,808 [Pattie Lawler]

Thank you. Simmons. His great-granddaughter Mary Hacker had them and was... I don't know how they got her there but she had them on display. So, I come back from Oxford and Tony tells me about what had happened and I'm like, "You gotta be kidding me." I mean, it would've been really nice if I'd known maybe I could put, you know, Oxford off a day or something. So Tony was very accommodating again, 'cause he absolutely adored me and he got on the phone and got Mary's number. Apparently, I called her. I thought he had done it, but apparently, I called her and made arrangements to see the cartoons the next day at her house which is what happened. Eric and I drove over there after saying goodbye to Tony and Gwen and she met us at the door and it was not a favourable impression, I have to say, which is a terrible thing to say. I mean, I'd never met the woman but she was so focussed on getting them published that there was little room for anything else in her conversation. She kept asking me, you know, "What is your line of research? When will you be publishing" and I just did what I always do. You know, I'm taking notes, I'm taking pictures and we parted ways. I mean, it was not... I don't think we were there 15 minutes because she was a woman with a mission and I did not meet the criteria so off we went and that was basically the sum total of my interaction with Mary.

00:10:11,808 --> 00:10:16,688 [Garry Gibbons]

Right. So, she wanted - really wanted some sort of, um-

00:10:16,748 --> 00:10:17,728 [Pattie Lawler]

Recognition

00:10:17,728 --> 00:10:19,728 [Garry Gibbons]

Yeah... to get that.

00:10:19,728 --> 00:10:21,948 [Pattie Lawler]

That was her number one priority.

00:10:21,948 --> 00:10:29,188 [Garry Gibbons]

Right. Okay that's interesting and she never mentioned where she got the cartoon from?

00:10:29,188 --> 00:10:54,127 [Pattie Lawler]

She did not, actually, like I said, she was very focussed. She wanted to know where I was going to publish, when I was going to publish, how the pictures were going to be used, was there a release of information that I needed to have, what do you do when you give permission? She wanted to know if I had those forms with me. I mean, it was kind of uncomfortable this bottom line. So, we blew out of there.

00:10:54,127 --> 00:11:08,188 [Garry Gibbons]

Yes. So, did your connection with Broad Town sort of finish with Tony and Gwen's passing?

00:11:08,188 --> 00:11:31,608 [Pattie Lawler]

Yes. Yes. 100%. I've had no contact with anyone there since their passing, but I really didn't know anybody else in town other than them. I mean, they took us to the Bowls Club. We played bingo. Erica won. I mean, we met people but we didn't have the same sort of relationship. It wasn't like I felt comfortable knocking on anybody else's door.

00:11:31,608 --> 00:11:39,408 [Garry Gibbons]

No and since that time, how have you progressed your research with the hill figures?

00:11:39,408 --> 00:11:54,388 [Pattie Lawler]

Spotty, actually, because I have other lines of research that I do and things will appear. Like your friend Janet? Who was the woman who contacted me?

00:11:54,388 --> 00:11:55,608 [Garry Gibbons]

Judy?

00:11:55,608 --> 00:11:57,258 [Pattie Lawler]

Oh, Judy. Sorry. Something with a J. Sorry.

00:11:57,258 --> 00:11:59,888 [Garry Gibbons]

So, what, from Broad Town?

00:11:59,888 --> 00:12:00,488 [Pattie Lawler]

Correct.

00:12:00,488 --> 00:12:02,218 [Garry Gibbons]

Yeah. I think you're -

00:12:02,218 --> 00:12:02,498 [Pattie Lawler]

That sort-

00:12:02,498 --> 00:12:03,268 [Garry Gibbons]

... probably referring to Judy

00:12:03,268 --> 00:12:37,148 [Pattie Lawler]

... of thing though. People will see something and think of me because apparently, I'm somewhere in, like, the zeitgeist and they send me stuff. I mean, like that, like I said, that James Young's pamphlet, I have to have 80 of those. I mean people are, "Oh, I saw this and I thought of you," and they send it to me. And then you know, a week later, "Oh my God, did you know about this?" And they send it to me. I don't know. I don't know why but it does happen a lot. I mean, I have articles and just stuff so I'm not actively doing anything, but I'm still very much interested. 100%.

00:12:37,148 --> 00:12:41,478 [Garry Gibbons]

Sure. And we've been in contact a fair-few times. And you've-

00:12:41,478 --> 00:12:41,478 [Pattie Lawler]

This is true

00:12:41,478 --> 00:12:45,828 [Garry Gibbons]

... been generous enough to share your correspondence that relates to-

00:12:45,828 --> 00:12:46,608 [Pattie Lawler]

My great pleasure

00:12:46,608 --> 00:12:54,068 [Garry Gibbons]

... Broad Town. Which I'm going to share with the community on Tuesday. I'm passing it over to them.

00:12:54,068 --> 00:12:54,968 [Pattie Lawler]

How exciting.

00:12:54,968 --> 00:13:02,208 [Garry Gibbons]

Yes and I'm sure we'll be in contact again in the future. Yes.

00:13:02,208 --> 00:13:03,528 [Pattie Lawler]

That would be fine with me.

00:13:03,528 --> 00:13:04,248 [Garry Gibbons]

Okay. Well, thank-

00:13:04,248 --> 00:13:09,867 [Pattie Lawler]

It won't be as in-depth, I'm sorry to say but I'm happy to keep a finger in.

00:13:09,867 --> 00:13:13,867 [Garry Gibbons]

Yes, that's good. Anything else you want to add?

00:13:13,867 --> 00:13:43,528 [Pattie Lawler]

I'm very excited for all of this because the Broad Town Horse did need attention and has received that attention and Tony and Gwen were just such a massive part of my life through, you know, a random misplaced letter and it's just, it's just been kind of miraculous and really awesome so thank you for allowing me to revisit all of that after all these years.

00:13:43,528 --> 00:13:45,948 [Garry Gibbons]

Yeah, it's a pleasure. Pleasure.

00:13:45,948 --> 00:13:46,028 [Pattie Lawler]

Mine too.

00:13:46,028 --> 00:13:48,828 [Garry Gibbons]

Oh, thank you very much, Pattie.