

## Winslow Oral History Project

### Interview Summary

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Ray Phillips</b>		<b>Date of interview</b>	<b>31 January 2012</b>
<b>DOB</b>	1926	<b>Place of birth</b>	Shipton	
<b>Fathers name</b>	Charles Phillips			
<b>Father's occupation</b>	Farm worker			
<b>Mother's name</b>	Rose Warner			
<b>Mother's occupation</b>	None			
<b>Interviewer</b>	Mary Hunt			
<b>No. of files (tracks)</b>	2	<b>Copyright status</b>	Cleared	
<b>Abstract</b>	Ray talks about his life, starting in Shipton and moving to Winslow. He recalls his childhood, schools and army experience. His career is outlined and his many hobbies including being Musical Director of the Great Horwood Band. Ray talks openly about his family and bereavement. He outlines his work for Winslow Town Council, the Rural District Council and AVDC. Principally he started the Twinning Association and was involved in the Bowls Club and fund-raising for the new Public Hall. He received the MBE after his retirement.			
<b>Keywords</b>	Shipton, Rand's Farm, Tinkers' End Church, allotments, Burleigh's Road, Winslow School, Buckingham School, Crooked Billet, Cours La Ville, Winslow Co-op, Labour Exchange, Winslow Town Council, Winslow Rural District Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council, Horn Street, Missenden Road, Highfield Road, Calvert Brick Works, Ministry of Transport, Magistrates' Bench, South Wales Borderers, Great Horwood Band, Down your Way, Winslow Bowls Club, Public Hall, Winslow Anglo French Twinning Association, MBE, railway.			
<b>Key people</b>	Terry Foley, Warner Family, Dr Leapingwell, Countess of Latham, Mr Walters, Mr Jennings, Miss Chatteris, Misses Green, Walker family, McCorquodale family, Sir Edward and Lady Tomkins, Bob Holmes, Bob Maxwell, Dr Murphy, Mrs Micklin, John Micklin, Mr Costin, Brian Johnston, Alan Wigley, Dennis Taylor,			
<b>File</b>				
<b>File 001</b>	<p>Ray was born in 1926 and his parents lived in a farmworker's cottage in Shipton. His father got a job as a farm-worker at Rand's Farm on his return from the 1<sup>st</sup> World War. The house went with the job and it had no toilet, no water and no electricity. It was eventually demolished and there is a bungalow on the site now. Terry Foley has a picture of the cottage. His father was an ambulance driver during the 1<sup>st</sup> World War. Ray believes that his parents married before or during the war. Ray had 6 brothers and 2 sisters. All the boys were in the army in the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War.</p> <p>Ray's father was from Adstock and his grandfather was a postman. Terry Foley has a picture of them outside the old post office. Ray's mother was a Warner and Ray believes that her father was from Winslow. His paternal grandparents moved from Adstock to a small cottage at Tinker's End, Winslow. Ray remembers a small church at Tinker's End, which had services every Wednesday. Ray was in the choir at Winslow Church. There were about 30 people living at Tinker's End at that time and 1500 in Winslow. Ray remembers that there were 7 allotment fields in the area: one between Shipton and Winslow, Verney Rd, the end of Avenue Rd, Piccadilly, back of the Buckingham Rd, where the present allotments</p>			

	are, and another near Shipton.
07.31	When Ray was about 8 his parents moved to a new council house in Burleigh's Rd. At the time Ray thinks that only about 6 people in Winslow had cars: 1 belonged to Dr Leapingwell and another to the Countess of Latham. Ray remembers being able to play football in the Market Sq.
09.17	Ray's wife is from London and they married when he was 24 and she was 18. They had three children, two girls and a son. The latter, Peter, unfortunately died while playing cricket at the age of 40 in 1997. Ray tells a story about hearing of his death and talks about his son's business activities. Ray has 2 daughters, one living in the US. There are three grand-daughters in the US and two in England. He has a grandson who lives in Italy. Ray talks about his grandchildren and his wife's health.
16.40	Ray remembers his paternal grandparents. His grandfather died aged 88 when Ray was in the services in Palestine. Ray was 13 when war broke out. He served one year in the army during the war and two after the war. Two of his brothers were wounded in the war but they all came back.
17.50	Ray passed his 11+ but his parents could not afford to send him to the Royal Latin School. He stayed at Winslow School but then went to Buckingham School for two years. Ray remembers that only two pupils from Winslow passed the 11+, a girl obtained a scholarship but although Ray passed his fees would have been £16 guineas a year, unacceptable for a farm labourer on 27s a week. Mr Walters was the Head of Winslow School when Ray was there, with Mr Jennings as the deputy. The latter moved to Buckingham School which is why Ray went there. Ray recalls there being 6 teachers at Winslow including Miss Chatteris and the Misses Green. He believes there were 15 to 20 children in each class. Ray enjoyed school and loved learning. He obtained a diploma in diesel engineering after army. At school there were no assemblies, he remembers lining up in the playground, marching into the classroom and then the register being taken. Asked about his activities outside of school Ray remembers helping his father grow vegetables on a plot of land close to the house and helping the farmer with haymaking and harvest. The farmer was Mr Walker. Everyone at home had to help with something. Ray recalls his father giving him a small strip of the garden at Burleigh's Rd to grow his own vegetables. He remembers his father as a perfect gentleman, who was affectionate and kind. He played darts at the Crooked Billet. He remembers his mother as strict but generous. She bought him clothes when he came home from the army. Asked about school holidays Ray recalls playing in the 'bean field' near to the school. He played with other Shipton children and with some cousins who lived along the Aylesbury Rd. The Walkers at the farm were kind to him. They had created a small 9 hole golf course on their land and Don made him a golf club when he was 7 or 8.
28.35	Ray remembers that the McCorquodales were not friendly and there was an 'us and them' feeling. However, he became friendly with Sir Edward and Lady Tomkins when they lived at the Hall. Ray was influential in starting the twinning with Cours La Ville and he recounts how this started.
31.00	Ray's first job after leaving school aged 14 was at the Winslow Co-op in the Market Square. He earned 10s a week as an errand boy and odd job man. After two years he worked for a haulage contractor in Winslow. Bob Holmes was the manager of the Co-op which employed about 8 people. Ray did deliveries on a bike. Ray was called up when he was 18. He registered for the army at the Labour Exchange in the Market Sq where Brimley Bears is now.

	<p>In the 1930s Ray remembers queues all around the Market Sq to the Labour exchange. This affected his politics and he has always been a Labour supporter. When Bob Maxwell stood for Buckingham Constituency in an election Ray became friendly with him and their families became good friends. Ray was elected to Winslow Town Council in 1962 and remained on the council for 47 years. Stood for Rural District Council in 1964. He always stood as an Independent. He recounts how three former presidents of the Conservative Party signed his nomination form at one time: Dr Murphy, Mrs Micklin and another, to the annoyance of the Tory candidate.</p> <p>On leaving the army Ray went back to the haulage co. for a while. He was paid £3 10s a week.</p>
38.25	<p>After marrying in 1950 he and his wife lived at a small cottage on Horn St, either no. 16 or 18, which was sold for £30 while they were living in it rent free. They obtained a council house no. 2 Missenden Rd and lived there for 9 years. Ray went to work at Calvert as an engineer to get money for a mortgage. In 1960 they bought no. 44 Highfield Rd for £2,400 and Ray tells the story of how they got this house, a development by a Mr Costin. Ray stayed at Calvert for 9 years as a Shift Fitter and later as a Charge Hand. During this time he had been studying an engineering course. He responded to an advert by the Ministry of Transport for engineers and got a job. He was based initially at High Wycombe, then at Northampton and finally in Bicester as District Manager. His job involved managing car, lorry and bus testing in the areas. He visited garages to monitor the standard of testing.</p> <p>Ray talks about having a motorcycle after leaving the army and then when he married he bought an Austin 7. He remembers the Routemaster buses being brought in to London and talks about having to test their braking systems. Ray also discusses the training he received on the job. Ray retired aged 65.</p>
55.43	<p>Asked about his hobbies Ray remembers that he worked at a wine company in Aylesbury for about 9 years before he went to Calvert. While he was there he started a cricket team. He played football for Winslow and played rugby in the army (South Wales Borderers). Ray tells a story about his friendship with Captain Swift of the Borderers and recalls how he ended up in the Borderers.</p> <p>Ray has a love of music and joined the Great Horwood Band as a cornet player. He taught himself. After several years he became the Musical Director and retained that position for 26 years from about 1953. Ray's father was a good singer. His parents lived in Burleigh's Rd until their death, his father's at 67 and his mother's at 82. His paternal grandparents were called Elijah and Emma.</p>
1.09.30	<p>Ray tells the story of being interviewed by Brian Johnston for the radio programme 'Down your Way' on Winslow around 1973ish. He has a recording of this. Moving back to his relationship with Bob Maxwell, Ray was his sub-agent for the election he won for the Buckingham Constituency.</p>
1.16.08  End 1hr 20m 42s	<p>Ray talks about how he became a magistrate when asked by a friend John Micklin in 1972. He served on the bench in Winslow, became Chairman. He was later on the bench when it was amalgamated with Buckingham, where he also became the Chairman, and after another reshuffle he served on the Aylesbury Bench, where he was Vice Chairman.</p>
File 002	<p>1962ish went onto Parish Council. Alan Wigley was Chairman. In two years Ray was Chairman. At a bi-election for the Rural District Council Ray stood as an Independent and was elected. Elected VC of Finance Committee. Elected to AVDC. Became VC of Policy and Resource Committee. Ray was asked to join Conservative Party so he could become Chairman but he refused. Left Town</p>

	<p>Council around 12 years ago. Main achievements on Town Council: setting up the twinning association, setting up Winslow Bowls Club, setting up new public hall fund. Dennis Taylor, secretary for the latter. Ray mentions recent ideas for knocking the public hall down and building a community centre.</p>
10.00	<p>Ray talks about setting up the twinning association (WAFTA). He went to Cours La Ville and met Mayor. Became friendly with Sir Edward Tomkins while working on this project. Ray was chairman of Twinning Committee and then became President. After retirement was awarded the MBE. Currently Ray still bowls but he left all other committees when he retired. Ray was elected a Freeman of the Town by the Council members.</p>
14.12	<p>Ray believes the town has outgrown its facilities.</p>
End 21.16	<p>Ray thinks it will improve Winslow if the railway re-opens and mentions the extensive building programme at Bicester. On leaving the Council Ray suggested that future Mayors should have some remuneration.</p>