

INTERVIEWEE: Kenny Raymond  
DATE OF BIRTH : 1961 Paddington  
PARENTS' OCCUPATIONS Father: Despatcher  
Mother: Nurse  
INTERVIEW LOCATION Griffin Park, Brentford  
DATE OF INTERVIEW 9th March 2020  
INTERVIEWER: Fiona Gilchrist  
SUMMARISER: Natasha Joslin

Kenny was bought up around Paddington, his uncles were QPR fans who took him to his first football match at 4years old - an experience he doesn't know whether he enjoyed or not.

He moved to Brentford and went to his first BFC game at around 10years old, he laughs as he remembers being quite surprised by the lack of commentary like there is on TV.

But from that point on, he was hooked, he was a Brentford fan and wanted to go to every game.

His uncles still continued to support and watch QPR but they never really saw BFC as were a 4th Division side at the time they didn't see them as a threat, in fact, they actively felt sorry for them. Kenny feels that this was generally true of most supporters who were fans of the upper leagues but fans of the lower leagues were more interested.

He started watching Brentford on the New Road but this has changed over-time as to has the supporters when he first started going there were big groups and then it dwindled to about 4K supporters and now back to get a full house.

Kenny lived on Bramaer Road from 1986 to 1983 and was 3 doors down from the turnstiles. He talks about hearing lots of noise from the ground when he wasn't a at game but not being able to tell who it was coming from home or away. He recalls asking fans as they came out what the score would be and they would say 3-0 and he still wouldn't be any the wiser which way round the score was.

The positives of living so close meant that he could leave at 2.45pm to get to a game but the negatives where that away fans liked to kick his gate and remembers a Oxford United fans taking a particular dislike to the gate.

There was always a smell of cigarettes and booze in the ground and Kenny states proudly 'I loved it', he did go on to say that he remembers being really cold though and couldn't wait to get inside after the match.

He's not a great fan of the burgers or hot dogs as even though he loves burgers the buns were always too hard so he doesn't tend to have them when he goes.

Kenny often refers to 'back in the day' when he was in his teens and twenty's (80s/90s)

Back in the day, getting tickets for games often meant long queues, one game you had to queue all around the block to get a ticket, he recalls queuing for the Chelsea game when it was snowing and freezing and it meant queuing for 4 to 5 hours to get a ticket.

He does recall a time when he was a school as some classmates wanted to jump over the back wall to get in the ground for free, this is something that he would never do but allowed them too. But it didn't go unnoticed and the police ended-up knocking at his door.

He has always loved the lights of evening games and it does feel different, lots more seems to be going on and more things happen, but he really doesn't know why.

Kenny has been to a lot of away matches but specifically recalls a Leighton Orient game which was at a crucial time in the season for both Brentford and Leighton Orient who looked both good to go up - BFC went on to win and eventually went up but after that game, Leighton Orient continued to go further down the league.

Kenny talks about fans being more vocal about football back in the day with more singing, whereas now it's much quieter from fans unless there has been a goal.

But fans aren't as aggressive as they were back in the day and he doesn't see any agro or trouble at games, with Brentford fans even inviting away fans to join them in the pubs. He feels that Brentford are quite advanced in this thinking though compared to some Premier League clubs where they are more exclusive about who goes to which pub.

On the whole Kenny didn't really feel that any different being a black fan in the 80/90's but has experienced some trouble from away experiences.

After watching a Crystal Palace v Liverpool game waiting for a train at Norwood station he was grabbed by both set of fans, but he was saved by a Liverpool fan saying 'you can't beat him up because he is black'

He also retold a story where he driving through Reading after a game and he saw his friend Billy being chased by about 30 Reading fans he quickly pulled over and Billy jumped into the car saving him.

BFC rivals have changed over the years back in 78/79 when BFC was in the 4th Division he recalls that Watford, Gillingham and Swindon were quite strong rivals and there was often a lot of trouble.

Some fond memories that he has back in the day watching the game:

About 1982, there was the CHOMP era, for about 6 weeks each time BFC scored a goal everyone would throw a CHOMP chocolate bar into the air and onto the pitch. It got to the point that kids were buying 40 or so bars at a time. Eventually, the FA had to get involved to ban CHOMP bars at the ground.

His mate Billy was always great at organising things like boat trips to Leighton Orient and Fulham and starting of new things with the fans to get the supporters all involved, including waving a shoe in the air when BFC scored.

He is really proud each time Brentford has been promoted, but especially when they leaped frogged Birmingham and Stoke when no one expected them to beat Peterborough and went up. Also, when Jota score in the last minute to beat Fulham.

His match day routine has changed since he was a boy and now revolves around rushing from working in the morning, picking up his son to get to the ground for 2.30pm. If it is a big game though he will take the day off and join fellow supporters down the Globe for pre-match drinks.

He summarises what being a Brentford fan means to his as 'Hard times' and explains that because every time it looks like we are going to do something and when that doesn't happen, players leave and usually means relegation.

Even though he loves Griffin Park he does recognise that the physical appearance is outdated and the move is necessary. He felt positive about that it was only down the road and its going to be modern and will be proud to show it off to other clubs.