

In Conversation with...Professor David Walker

Interviewed at the Britannia Panopticon Music Hall, by Professor Robin Webster on 4th July 2017



Robin Webster: Thank you so much for coming and agreeing to be here in this rather remarkable old theatre, the Britannia Panopticon, which has survived almost by mistake, probably because nobody knew it was here. What do you consider the most significant events related to the built environment in Glasgow over the last fifty years?

David Walker: I think one probably has to go back a little bit further to the comprehensive development areas. An awful lot of good architecture disappeared in the comprehensive development areas. Often you could do very little about it because the buildings were not designed to stand alone. The problem about them was when they came in to be examined by the Scottish Office we went over them and did this very carefully, and put in an order of importance the things that should be kept. Unfortunately because the Development Department, (or Department of Health as it was before that), like to keep the answers very short, the great problem was it didn't matter how much trouble we'd gone to, it was always just a vague hope that listed buildings in the area would receive attention. It didn't matter how much we protested about it, it made no difference.

As a result of that of course we lost Pugin's last building, the Catholic Apostolic Church in McAslin Street, which was a bit of a disaster. The other thing I would have ideally liked to have kept was Carrick's Police Court on Cranston Hill. A lot of the other buildings like Cowcaddens Cross buildings we couldn't do anything about. But I did obviously regret the loss of Stow College in Cowcaddens.

The next thing that hit us was the eastern flank of the ring road: what happened in changing the setting of the Mitchell Library and Charing Cross was bad enough, but we did try to do what we could in relation to the eastern flank, which kept changing its line. First of all there was the Martyrs' School, and my own regional planner Robert Turnbull in the Scottish Office said "we can't keep it, these lines of motorway are precious, they can't be changed." However I had very good connections with Nicholas Pevsner and Jane Fawcett of the Victorian Society, and with the Architects' Journal in those days, so they organised a campaign over it, and more letters came in, and more poured into the Scottish Office than anyone could read. A lot of them had confused the Martyrs' School with the Glasgow School of Art but it didn't really matter because no one could read it all anyway. And one of Glasgow's planners, Sir Fred Steeds, was very sensible about it and he did manage to negotiate a change in the lines. So Martyr School as you see is still there today but it was a close-run thing.

Needless to say, of course, I wasn't supposed to do that. Everything in those days was strictly confidential, the public were not meant to know until the final decision had been taken. And apart from Sir Douglas Hadow I think most of the people involved in the Scottish Office knew what I was doing and turned a blind eye to it. But anyway, where we were much less lucky was in relation to the James Adam college residences, the old college residences in the High Street. The University of Strathclyde wanted to save them, and it appealed to the University of Glasgow to join with them in doing so, and they were proposing to re-erect them if absolutely necessary. At that point there was great uncertainty over the line that the eastern flank was going to take, which was the biggest problem. The University of Glasgow, I regret to say, thought it was a ridiculous idea and ridiculed it so the University of Strathclyde was not prepared to do it on its own.

While they were still arguing about it Building Control stepped in and demolished them both. So there was that.

Then things changed a bit in terms of legislation because suddenly we had a Civic Amenities Act and the concept of Conservation Areas came in, and in 1968 we had a change in the Planning Act which meant of course that it changed around things completely because everything effectively had a preservation order on it, you didn't have to make one. It was much more a question of whether or not the applicant was going to obtain consent to be released from the statutory listing. And for the first time Glasgow always had to consult us. Sometimes they didn't, no one told us that the magnificent St George's Church in Elderslie Street was to be demolished, they just kept quiet about that one. And a few other important things disappeared without telling the Scottish Office at that time. The changes in the legislation unfortunately came just too late for some very important buildings, which perhaps we'll come to later.

I suppose the next important development was that for a short time Glasgow ran a very successful grant scheme, and that went very well and did a lot of good, until one day a councillor on the planning committee, went to look at one of the houses that was proposed for grant aid, unfortunately he wasn't very numerate and he was looking at the wrong house, but he ridiculed the grant for it in the planning committee. Although it was pointed out that he was looking at the wrong house, he nevertheless managed to swing the committee against continuing the grant scheme: that was distinctly unfortunate. The other important development obviously was the west end grant scheme, it really started with a very good study and brochure that was done of the Park area in the late '60s. When Edinburgh got its New Town Conservation Committee Glasgow naturally wanted one too. And without consulting the Historic Buildings Council or the Historic Buildings Branch, our planners, (a very Edinburgh lot of people), decided that the architecture of Glasgow did not justify such a measure. We did manage to get that rescinded, but it wasn't really until Ken Uist became Secretary of Scottish Development department, he knew what he was looking at, and also Sir Robert Matthew I think probably thought that one big scheme at a time and not frightening the Scottish Government too much was the right approach. And Ronnie Carmand, who was then our assistant secretary, they were the people who changed things round. But there was a great deal of bargaining about how generous the Historic Buildings Council contribution to the Glasgow Scheme should be. That delayed the start up date a bit, and obviously was a very important development.

The other area of development (which was really after my time but I was involved in it), was that I was an expert advisor when the Heritage Lottery Fund came along, and first of all it rescued the Whistler's collection, not part of the built environment, admittedly, but it was important at the time. It also of course paid for the repairs or partial reconstruction of Kelvingrove. This was the big event in terms of the statutory side of things. There was, of course, a running battle always on case work that perhaps is best dealt with under a different question.

RW: What did you do that you're most proud of?

DW: I didn't do anything on my own. The Scottish Office was never like that. Also of course the Historic Buildings Council in those days was a different department, different ministry, it was with the Ministry of Public Building and Works. It was a good working relationship between the two departments, partially because Ian Lindsay up until his death in 1966 was a member of both bodies and he was on the Ancient Monuments Board too. So the liaison was pretty good, we had a very sympathetic secretary of the

Historic Buildings Council in Geoffrey Crane. But as regards what I did myself, the original lists for Glasgow were made up by Alfred Lochhead: they were very scholarly, they were organised in wards. Ian Lindsay gave me the task of putting them into the so-called Dat form where the buildings were divided into categories, there was a single list for the whole city. And the whole thing was indexed with an index of architects and index of places and so on. It impressed our American and European friends no end, but it didn't work in the longer term for the simple reason that the churches kept on changing their names, and even the public buildings kept on changing their names, and it was impossible to keep it up to date. But out of that exercise and some work that I had done in teaching in Glasgow in the late '50s after I came out of the army I spent my evenings in the Mitchell Library came a lot of work on "Glasgow At A Glance", which was organised by Andrew Macleod Young and Archie Doak. I actually wrote most of it, Archie Doak wrote the bits on modern buildings. And then of course out of the blue Andrew Gomme wrote to me and suggested that we should combine our efforts, because he had been working on a book on the architecture of Glasgow until he moved down to Wigtownshire as a sort of University of Glasgow outstation. Out of that of course came the "Architecture of Glasgow" which was published in 1968. Most of the writing is Andrew's, there are paragraphs here and there in it which are mine, and the gazetteer of buildings at the end was mine. Essentially Andrew did the writing, and Alfred Lochhead and I had done the research for it. That was how it was. What did I do after that? I suppose ultimately that kind of research extended into the Dictionary of Scottish Architects. But I certainly couldn't have done it alone, and I doubt whether I had departmental support but we did have some successes in Collins, particularly Virginia Street and a very important corner building in St Vincent Street where the strategy seemed to be to break up the big listed groups on St Vincent Street and West George Street, if you knocked out some of the important corner buildings then the whole thing perhaps could be redeveloped. And in each case the reports have the same reporter, George Pease, he reported against us, he reported in favour of demolition. It was an awful lot of work trying to get a decision of that kind rescinded, but with the support mainly of Nigel Sharp, who was our assistant secretary, we did manage it on both occasions. Well, the second one actually was Jules Stewart. And it caused tremendous outrage, Virginia Street, when we overturned the reporter's decision, and Guy Slowman was approached, he had been with Glasgow Council and he proposed to Derek Lidden, who was then our chief planner, that in future since I wasn't really qualified for what I was doing it'd be much better if the planning division became arbiters between the Historic Buildings Branch and Glasgow City Council. But Tom Ulster absolutely refused to have it because it affected what had hitherto been clearly defined responsibilities, so I survived that.

RW: What specific buildings do you think you most regret losing?

DW: Well, there are an awful lot of buildings that one regrets. The first one was the Walter McGibbons Corn Exchange on Hope Street. Fred Steeds was then Glasgow City Council, he was with Edinburgh later, he was determined to keep it. The applicants became alarmed and managed to persuade the town clerk that the QC should address the planning committee. So we lost it. That was very unfortunate. The next thing I particularly regret I suppose was the loss of the Randolph and Elder Engineering Shop. And it was a magnificent Egyptian thing, it had a tremendous spacious interior, all heavy timber, most remarkable thing. Put up in the days before iron and steel construction on that scale really got going.

RW: Could you repeat the name of that again?

DW: Randolph And Elder's Engineering Shop. They built steam engines for steam ships. It was one of the earliest really big...

RW: Where was it?

DW: It was in Tradeston. And it was designed by William Spence. And it had sort of Greco-Egyptic elevations. Tremendous scale, rusticated masonry from top to bottom. And we got a lot of help on that from the New Glasgow Society, there were proposals that it should be used by Kelvingrove for large exhibits. And they were of course alarmed at having large exhibits in buildings with so much timber about. And I don't think they were keen on the idea anyway. And then the developer came along with a proposal for an elegant skyscraper of offices designed by a French architect engineer. The committee was thrilled by it, thought it would be great, so they granted consent. And at that time Douglas had a wind allowance to call in anything so we couldn't do anything about it. Needless to say the tower was never built, it was just something to persuade the committee. For a long, long time afterwards the site wasn't built on. But it was obviously the weakness at that point of time in the ancient monuments side of the business too. It should really have been scheduled and taken into care as a major industrial monument. But at the time those in charge of the Scottish end of the Ministry of Public Building Works said "well, we don't really know enough about industrial architecture, they may not be the most important ones." And the whole thing was put off. They never really seriously considered Randolph and Elders but the attitude arose in relation to a few other sites. And that of course was what got John Hume going on the industrial archaeology of Glasgow. We badly need a new edition of that book with really good illustrations, because the illustrations were far too grey. So the next big disaster was the Tillian Henderson building in Miller Street. The planning department didn't want to lose it but there was a lot of pressure on the planning committee. It was a magnificent Venetian palazzo, it was nominally by Alexander Kirkland. It was built for a Belfast firm of shirt makers in 1854. It has an open courtyard to the street. It was absolutely splendid. And it was also built of very well selected stone, it was in very good condition.

RW: Which street was it in?

DW: 37 to 51 Miller Street. Anyway, I was allowed to address the planning committee in Miller Street in front of it, I managed to win them over with help from my allies in the planning department. We also went to Geoffrey Cradle at the Historic Business Council and said "look, you've never assisted a building beyond 1840 before but are you prepared to make an exception in this case?" And he did agree, it was the first breakthrough on Victorian architecture with the Historic Business Council. It was put to them, they agreed to it. Well, we did have difficult meetings with Harold Dykes, Charles Rattray and Co who owned it. He regarded it as aesthetically inappropriate for his van drivers. To him it was an aesthetic issue, they must be destroyed. We for our part got William Jack in St Andrews to show how it could be very successfully converted to modern offices. That really enraged him. Somebody put the plugs in the sinks and turned the taps on as hard as they could go and soaked the building from top to bottom, at which point Charles Murdoch who was the deputy town clerk said "ah, your grant is now derisory, we must agree to demolition." He was an engaging character but sort of playing people off against one another, and particularly asserting the independence of Glasgow from central government, it was a great game. He thoroughly enjoyed it as far as I could see. I don't know what he'll feel about if he's still alive today, I doubt that he'll still be with us but he may be. But anyway he then tackled my very weak principle and said "everything you've done has been wrong. You will gain far, far more by agreeing

with everything we do, please do not cross us again, it is completely counter-productive.” And Tom Brougherty meekly admitted “yes, we got it wrong. Yes, you’re quite right.” Anyway, he didn’t last. But we had trouble again, the thing that riles me just as much was the loss of McGeough’s at 28 West Campbell Street. All my American friends told me it was as important as anything we had by Mackintosh. Nicolas Pevsner shared that view, the idea of the Sullivanian Grid appealed to my American friends enormously, and what they particularly admired was the way that Burnett could turn a corner in the way the Americans had never attempted. “Gee, he sure knew how to turn corners.” But Bob Buster who was then our assistant secretary put the chartered surveyors report justifying demolition to our chartered surveyors in the Scottish Office. The chartered surveyor’s view was that all this red sandstone and sculpture would have a negative effect on the lettable value of the site. They also thought that the columns might be cast iron rather than steel, although that was never proved. And we said “So what? It has carried McGeough’s for sixty years and is unlikely to fail now.” But our chartered surveyors were absolutely sure it should be demolished. Needless to say we never asked their advice ever again. When the change of the Planning Act came along McGeough’s was still standing. So we asked “can we start again, please?” But the administrative view was it would be unfair to take advantage of the legislative change to do that. So sadly it was demolished. A loss after that which annoyed me no end, but it was after my time, was the loss of Elgin Place Church, which of course went on fire and the fire could not be controlled because it was behind the later linings that had been put into it. The fire brigade couldn’t get at it. So those are the ones which concerned me most. Just perhaps in the very early days, before we had any statutory control of course, the issue of Holdsworth’s cotton mill in Anderston, which had tremendous plaster facades, also very up to date early 19th century frame. That would have been one of the most important industrial buildings in Britain, anywhere in the world indeed, if it had still been standing today. Unfortunately it had been damaged because the floors have been overloaded with whisky casks, but that was how it was. We didn’t perhaps fully appreciate the importance of it at the time. We do now, we just know so much more than we did in 1962.

RW: Are there any buildings you are currently really concerned about that we should preserve at all costs?

DW: Well, Egyptian Halls, obviously. The international disgrace of losing that is simply unthinkable. I know the subject has been raised again by Gavin Stamp and others recently, and I really hope we get somewhere this time. The embarrassment will be enormous if we lose it. I don’t know if there are any others, I’m not so much in touch with Glasgow these days, that are similarly at risk.

RW: It’s certainly a very important one. Who do you think are the most important folk who have had an impact on Glasgow in your lifetime? (Positive and negative!)

DW: Well, there’s an awful lot of people. I think JM Reid’s Batsford book on Glasgow was very influential. He also founded, if I remember rightly, the Glasgow Buildings Guardians. That passed from JM Reid to Robert Rodgeron, it never somehow came to very much. But then undoubtedly the scholarship of Alfred Lochhead was a continuing help to me right up to 1972, was extremely important, an awful lot depended on him. If you didn’t know who did what somewhere or other you could find somebody who did. Alexander Wright was an incredible source of information, he had a most marvellous memory. And what might not be so obvious, Nicolas Pevsner, Jane Fawcett, Ander Gomme, and Colin McWilliam as the Victorian Society’s agent in Edinburgh. When the

setting up the Victorian Society branch in Scotland was considered, Colin said “well, it’s no good having it in Edinburgh, we should start it in Glasgow.” And of course that was the beginning of the New Glasgow Society. There were great Victorian walks which attracted an incredible number of people. And although no one saw it, it was Nicolas Pevsner and Jane Fawcett who really started all that off. The Lord Provost was absolutely furious, and we had to change the name very quickly to the New Glasgow Society to keep the peace between the society and the council. But obviously the important people in the Glasgow end were Geoffrey Jarvis, Pat Douglas, who was secretary at that time, and Robert Clow had quite a lot to do with it. And of course later he organised a reprint of the Architecture of Glasgow which was a big help. Within the planning department the people one depended upon were Fred Steeds and Frank Braceful. Frank Braceful was an absolutely marvellous friend. But he lost out a bit and he went off to be the chief planning officer in Central, he didn’t get the job in Glasgow. Jimmy Rae, of course, came to the fore. Undoubtedly Michael Kelly as Lord Provost brought about a different psychological attitude in Glasgow. And in the planning committee Pat Chalmers was a great force for good, she was also in the building control committee and knew some of the rogues sometimes in the way the Jimmy Rae did not. And she was also an extremely good member of the Historic Buildings Council, sometimes she was able to put Nicky Fairbairn in his place when he went a little bit over the top as chairman.

RW: What do you think is the most effective way of persuading people to save a building from demolition from your experience?

DW: It always varies an awful lot according to circumstances. We’ve lost an awful lot of buildings through bad end uses. That was certainly the case of John Baird’s church in Albion Street and Milton Street School which annoyed me to death at the time, it was completely unnecessary. Caledonian Road Church of course went on fire. The school holidays in those days were a terrific hazard because gangs of kids went around looking for what they could set on fire. You couldn’t do much about that. Where things weren’t so bad and grant aid was effective obviously you could do something. Sometimes we needed great public campaigns as we did on the Martyrs’ School. We could have done a few more. There should have been a campaign to save the Alhambra Theatre but it wasn’t enough. There was a bit of interest in it but it wasn’t enough. Oddly enough the City Halls manager wanted it because he preferred it to the King’s, better in terms of capacity. But he couldn’t persuade his committee or the council and so we lost it. Again, it was a tremendous landmark because it precisely reflected what was being done in America at that time in the way of simple brick aesthetic, Albert Kahn and people of that kind.

RW: Isi Metstein said that he felt Glasgow was dying the death of a thousand cuts, he was talking about the number of small losses...

DW: Well, it depends what you mean by ‘small’. The buildings we lost were sometimes very big indeed. Our first call in was the YMCA on Bothwell Street which was the most enormous Alfred Waterhouse style building. Nicolas Pevsner didn’t like it very much, said it was quite bad, really. But nevertheless it was tremendous townscape. And at the time no one mentioned to me that perhaps the reporter’s recommendation could have been overturned. In hindsight I do have some regrets about that. The stone wasn’t terribly good, it would have been a difficult building to keep, but really sometimes you need a campaign, sometimes you just need a grant, and most of all you need a suitable use. We solved one or two cases inexpensively because we were short of money at the

time, whether it was ever a good idea to turn Trinity College into flats I very much doubt. The secretary of the HBC said at the time it was a cheap solution, but on the other hand lumbering flat owners with the maintenance costs of a colossal campanile. It's a bit difficult. And I don't know what happened in the end to the staircase which was really a very fine thing that may have gone in the redevelopment, I've forgotten now. because I didn't deal with it directly, a colleague of mine dealt with that one.

RW: What do you hope for in the city?

DW: Well, looking around Glasgow this morning before coming here a lot of what I saw seemed in more stable condition than it was. On the other hand, I was obviously horrified to see trees growing out of the parapet on Thomson and Sullivan's City Improvement Trust buildings on High Street. And obviously there are great worries still. Quite a lot has been stabilised compared with what it was. So I think the one other thing which perhaps I might mention, because it didn't comfortably fit anywhere else, and very few people will know about it, we nearly lost the façade of St Andrews Halls. Glasgow was a bit slow in doing it because unfortunately the back wall of the portico blew over in the '68 gale and it upset the alignment of the tabature in a way which you can still see to this day. But the reconstruction of the building was in the hands of the Govan office of Frank Mears and Partners. And I tried hard to get a little bit more of the return elevations preserved but it wasn't possible. But nevertheless we thought that we had done the best we could. And then one day Tom Briarty and I were summoned to a meeting at Scottish Education Department, the chief architect Bruce Beckett objected strongly to what we had done. He was supported by Ian Robertson, the rather over-civilised secretary in the Scottish Education Department, and he proposed that the SED write off everything that's been spent on Rendall Govan's fees, demolish all the Victoriana and commissioned a completely new building by Arne Jacobson. So one just had to take this in his hands, I suppose, because we were completely outranked and taken totally by surprise. Anyway, Ian Robertson at the end said "well, you've defended your interests very successfully if I may say so, but you were quite wrong, all this Victoriana should not have been kept." And he said "never, ever agree to anything like that without consulting the chief architect." I didn't take that seriously, of course, and we protested while it may have been Victorian indeed the façade of St Andrews Halls wasn't Victoriana at all, it corresponded precisely to what was happening in Germany with the Shinckel School at that time and that no European would have seen it as being just Victoriana. But as you see they didn't get away with it, and the façade of St Andrews Halls is still there. I'm no doubt breaking the Official Secrets Act, but in the Freedom Of Information Act it doesn't matter now.

RW: Thank you very much indeed, quite fascinating.

DW: Yeah, it was good.

RW: I think we've probably covered it. Is there anything else you want to talk about?

DW: No, I think those are the main things. But perhaps the one thing that I haven't touched upon was the rescue of Homewood. Alexander Thomson's Homewood. The sisterhood which had it entered into a deal with a developer, wanted to build flats in the garden, and Jimmy Rae was in favour of it, and indeed the workings under the site had been consolidated with that in view, old coal workings there. And of course the great fear was that the house would go on fire or something would happen while the development was being carried out, although Jimmy assured us that the developer was perfectly genuine, not a bad chap as these people go. But we were generally uneasy, and although the

Marquess of Bute was no longer our chairman, still took a very close interest in what we were doing. At the time he was dying of cancer of the throat, and nevertheless he unlocked the whole situation. He went and saw the Mother Superior of the sisterhood, he got the deal with the developer unscrambled and Lord Rothschild through the National Heritage and Memorial Fund provided the money to acquire it. It's nothing short of a miracle that was still there. And you just feel a tremendous sense of gratitude to John for what he did.

RW: Can you explain how it felt at that time to be in a group of a minority of people to fight against a growing establishment that wanted to get rid of these buildings? What was that experience like?

DW: In the '60s our department was not prepared to help. First of all the Department of Health and then the Scottish Development Department, the secretary for both was Sir Douglas Hadow. He didn't believe in interfering with local democracy no matter how important the case... So we were a small minority, yes, and Ian Lindsay of course was just very unhappy about how things were going. But what we had to do all the time was try and get confidential information into the public domain without being found out, so that the newspapers and public became aware of it and some interest was taken. Sir Robert Matthew of course changed all that with the concept of public consultation in the 1968 act when everybody could read in the newspapers of what was proposed. That caused a lot of unhappiness in some quarters, even within the Scottish Office. They were initially a bit unhappy with it but it was UK legislation and they had to go along with it. It made all the difference. We were still in difficulty when Sir Alan Hume was in charge, because Sir Alan was very civilised and knew what everyone was worth, I think, but he took the view that those who were proposing that kind of destruction should answer to the electorate for what they had done. Well, there was never really very much in that because our councillors were elected on a far wider range of issues than the destruction of an environment which is dear to them. It was really only when Ken Uist became secretary of department and Murray Bell was his undersecretary, and Ronnie Cramand was assistant secretary we had support from top to bottom. We also had a succession of sympathetic Secretaries of State. The only one who had a very limited sense of what was important was Willie Ross. That period was very, very difficult. Dickson Mayburn tried hard as undersecretary but he couldn't really move his boss. But from the early '70s onwards we had considerable support from the Secretaries of State themselves. At least we didn't have a bad one at a critical point, shall I say. We never lost out at ministerial level from 1972 onwards.

RW: Did John Betjeman feature at all?

DW: Yes, he did. He was interested in Glasgow of course but I came across him more in relation to the Edinburgh end of things because he was one of the people that Robert Matthew brought in to speak when they had the big public meeting which led to the formation of the Edinburgh New Town Conservation Committee. But he was interested, yes. I have a few letters from him still.

RW: He said he thought that Glasgow was the finest Victorian City in the world.

DW: Yes, well, I think Henry Russell Hitchcock also shared that view. I didn't take him around Glasgow but it was Andrew McLaren Young who did that. Andrew, of course, was a great force for good in those days and died far too early. But he took Henry Russell Hitchcock around, just previously I'd taken him round Dundee, so meeting him for the second time.

RW: Thank you very much, David. If you were talking to a complete stranger to describe Glasgow as a city, how would you describe it? Someone from the moon, someone from another planet, how would you describe it?

DW: Well, it has an architectural magnificence that can only be matched in some degree for that period in Manchester. Liverpool, yes, but there's not enough of Liverpool left, far too much of it has been demolished. But the important thing about Glasgow is just the way things moved. In the late 18th and early 19th century the important developments were in Edinburgh. I wouldn't for a moment dispute the importance of David Bryce from Frederik Pilkinton and Rowan Anderson and the Geddes father and son, but nevertheless the initiative moved from Edinburgh, and new ideas moved from Edinburgh to Glasgow in the 1840s. Architecture here became far more experimental than anything in Edinburgh at the time. And also land values had a great bearing on it. Land values in Edinburgh never went so high, so you didn't have so many elevator buildings. But once we had a power supply in Glasgow, buildings went to great height. And that's what makes Glasgow so very different from Edinburgh, we don't have that in Edinburgh to the same degree. For a brief period, roughly from 1895 to 1906 there was a tremendous proliferation of high quality elevator buildings, and that was a point at which we were in some degree paralleling what happened in the United States, although only a few of our buildings were quite as big as what was going up in Chicago and places of that kind.

RW: What do you get out of seeing a building being saved, personally, emotionally? What's your connection to it?

DW: Of course it's emotional. Sometimes unfortunately one only saves them for a short time. You can't imagine now how I felt when I managed to sway the committee on 37-51 Miller Street. I think I wept on the spot. It was great, but it didn't last.

RW: Thank you very much indeed, David. It was absolutely splendid.

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