

Zane Jansone b. 17/01/82 and Marcis Jansons b. 23/11/85
Transcript of Interview with Judy Caine on 2nd January 2019
(N.B. – timecode numbers refer to the audio recording)

Judy Caine: [00:00:01] We can just ignore this (recorder). Okay. This is Judy Caine, and I am in Corby. How do I say your name correctly?

Marcis Jansons: [00:00:12] Martis.

Judy Caine: [00:00:13] Martis, OK, Yansons (silent 's')?

Marcis Jansons: [00:00:17] Jansons.

Judy Caine: [00:00:17] OK so it's a 'Ja ynót a 'Ya y ' Jansons. I'm with Martis Jansons and Zani Jansons?

Zane Jansone: [00:00:24] Jansone (pronounced with 'ey' on the end).

Judy Caine: [00:00:25] Jansone - masculine and feminine, and it's the 2nd of January 2019. They're both from Latvia and they've kindly agreed to talk to me about Latvian dance and music and all things Latvian. OK just to start ...I'm having great difficulty hearing myself here so bear with me when I find out what is going on ... I'm sounding like I'm down a drain I'm just going to ...



JUDY SORTS TECHNICAL ISSUE WITH RECORDER ...

Judy Caine: [00:00:02] OK. Let's go again.

Marcis Jansons: [00:00:05] Zane, in that time was living in London. And we both are, we was dancing in different pub dance groups. Zane was dancing in London. I was dancing in Leeds/Bradford folk dance group. And we met in Brussels on the like final day of that time and we was performing as a big festival in Brussels. And me and Zane met there and after a couple of weeks we, we moved together into Corby.

Judy Caine: [00:00:54] What year was that when you met then?

Marcis Jansons: [00:00:56] 2015, in June 18th or 17th?

Zane Jansone: [00:01:02] 18th.

Marcis Jansons: [00:01:03] Yeah, and we moved to the Corby in 2015 - 29th of June - and since then we live in the Corby. She came from London, I came from Bradford.

Judy Caine: [00:01:15] Why did you come to the UK from Latvia?

Marcis Jansons: [00:01:21] I have end of my first relationship, and I was, wanted something new and my, the rest of the family, my sister and mother was living in the UK already and I needed some changes and I moved to England because I knew the language. I can't go somewhere else and don't speak in that language.

Judy Caine: [00:01:44] Did you study English at school?

Marcis Jansons: [00:01:46] Yeah, yeah. My main language is Latvian. Then I studied Russians and then I studied English as well. But it was difficult in the first because I moved to the Yorkshire and it was terrible because I was studying English when I was from ten-year-old and I was thinking I'm speaking quite good in English and I understand. But then I moved to the Yorkshire to the Bradford and I was thinking, what the? (Laughs)

Judy Caine: [00:02:20] I have trouble understanding it - I lived there for 4 years and I have trouble they don't say water it's watter, they don't say baby it's babby.

Marcis Jansons: [00:02:29] Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:02:30] They have a short hard 'a' so don't worry, it's not you!

Marcis Jansons: [00:02:33] Yeah, because in Latvia we're not learning English. We are learning American English and that's different.

Judy Caine: [00:02:41] Yes that's very, very, very true. So, you've been in the UK since 2015?

Marcis Jansons: [00:02:49] No, in the UK I'm living more than nine years. I moved in 2009.

Judy Caine: [00:02:55] Right, but you met each other in 2015.

Marcis Jansons: [00:02:57] Yeah. In Belgium. Yes.

Judy Caine: [00:02:59] In Brussels. What were you doing in Brussels?

Marcis Jansons: [00:03:01] We was dancing, the Latvian traditional folk dances. Zane was in the London's dance group and I was in the Bradford's dance group; the oldest folk-dance group in England right now being founded in 1965 I think.

Judy Caine: [00:03:22] The one in Bradford.

Marcis Jansons: [00:03:23] Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:03:24] Wow. So, when did you start the one in Corby that now meets at Catthorpe Manor?

Marcis Jansons: [00:03:33] Because, Latvian community, we're not that big like others, thinking that oh you are so many over here because we are only two millions in the whole world. So, if we are comparing other bigger nations. But, we was, me and Zane, was into all the cultural heritage in the England, Latvian culture since we are more because like I was dancing folk dances since I was five and Zane the same I think in Latvia. So, we love to do that. So, once you move in any country of the world you try to find the same people which is doing the same what you love to do and then yeah, we found out that in the Catthorpe Manor there a Latvian Welfare Trust which is Latvian land which was bought more than 60 years ago around, exactly when we need to find it out.

Judy Caine: [00:04:32] I can have a look on-line for that ...

Marcis Jansons: [00:04:33] ... and this is Latvian Welfare Trust it's not only in England, the Latvian Welfare Trust is all around the world which was founded after the Second World War because some of the Latvians fled to Sweden, some to Australia, America, England, Germany - it's been all around and we are like just part of it but it's a, we are big part.



The current manor house was built in 1925 following a fire that burnt the original building to the ground in the early 19th Century. The estate has been owned since 1975 by registered charity 'The Lattis an elegant country a manor house set within 22 secluded acres of landscaped gardens, parkland and woodland on the Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire borders. Today Catthorpe Manor is a function venue, conference centre and wedding reception venue. It houses the Latvian Supplementary School, purpose built residential care homes for elderly Latvians and many rooms (large and small) that the Latvian community use for a variety of meetings, celebrations and events.

Judy Caine: [00:05:00] So the entire population of Latvia in Latvia is about 2 million.

Marcis Jansons: [00:05:04] It's all together in world, it's not only ...

Judy Caine: [00:05:06] ... in the world?

Marcis Jansons: [00:05:06] Yeah, if you're counting all the peoples in Britain, Germany, also wherever we are. It's on only 2 million.

Judy Caine: [00:05:15] So how many Latvians approximately are in the UK, do you know.

Marcis Jansons: [00:05:20] Two hundred thousand?

Zane Jansone: [00:05:21] Yeah.

Marcis Jansons: [00:05:22] I heard something.

Judy Caine: [00:05:23] Two hundred thousand? That's a lot.

Marcis Jansons: [00:05:25] Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:05:25] That's like an eighth of the total world population of Latvia in England. [actually 10%].

Marcis Jansons: [00:05:32] Yeah. Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:05:34] Gosh I'm stunned. That's a surprise to me. And how many live in Corby?

Marcis Jansone: [00:05:41] To be honest, I don't know because we are only here three years and we don't go looking for Latvians in Corby. If the future brings it on, they're going to bring them to us or, we're going to find Latvians over here. We, we know only 10 or, not more than that. But I heard that there's quite a bit of Latvians in Corby because like, I was told that Corby was first of the societies where Latvian's moved there.

Judy Caine: [00:06:14] Yes, and am I right in recalling that during the second world war.

Marcis Jansons: [00:06:19] After the Second World War.

Judy Caine: [00:06:21] Didn't a Latvian steel worker come over wanting work and said could he

bring his whole choir because they were all steel workers? Or, is that a myth?

Marcis Jansons: [00:06:28] No. Basically, Latvians was on that time flooding from Latvia, some of them was in the Germany concentration camps. And after the Second World War, England was looking for the workers, mainly men, the hard-working men, the singles. And the Corby was steel village which needed workers, that's where Scottish came over, and the same with Latvians. The first Latvians came to the Corby, Leeds, London, those big places and they established here. Then after 10, not even 10 years, they bought the land next to the, not far from the Corby, which we still have.

Judy Caine: [00:07:23] That's the Catthorpe Manor.

Marcis Jansons: [00:07:25] Yeah, part of Latvian Welfare Trust.

Judy Caine: [00:07:29] When did your parents come over here.

Marcis Jansons: [00:07:33] My mom came 10 years ago.

Judy Caine: [00:07:36] So not long before you came over.

Marcis Jansons: [00:07:38] Yeah. So, in Latvia I only have some friends and Grandma living there.

Judy Caine: [00:07:45] So tell me about Catthorpe Manor, because you' r on the board of trustees?

Marcis Jansons: [00:07:50] Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:07:51] Tell me about what that means to you.

Marcis Jansons: [00:07:53] It's a countryside and I came from the countryside in Latvia as well. You can go freely there, of course respecting the people who live there, because there, there is living there, all the Latvians. It's like care home. Only five now living there but used to be bit more than 50 Latvian elderly people living there.

Judy Caine: [00:08:20] 50.

Marcis Jansons: [00:08:20] Yeah, all even more than that. But now there's only five left which still live there. That's where they're spending their days.

Judy Caine: [00:08:32] And they allow you to use their rooms to practice your dance there?

Marcis Jansons: [00:08:36] No, it's, it's not only one building over there, the Catthorpe Manor, it's a big countryside. We have a hotel where we are taking their weddings over there because we are a Welfare Trust, we can't sell something because we are a Welfare Trust. So, we found a company which is selling the hotel rooms in London, we have a land in London as well, not far from ... Zane which park?

Zane Jansone: [00:09:08] Hyde Park.

Marcis Jansons: [00:09:09] Not far from London's Hyde Park, we have a hotel in there as well.

And there we have a main house where the wedding's happening and all the rooms which you can rent out, it's a country hotel. And then we have other rooms, that's a different house, where the elderly people lives. And then we have a Baltic lodge, the name of that, where is the Latvian

school's going, Latvian folk dance, the dances take place the church, art groups and my wife Zane is one of the teachers of Latvian Sunday school so there.

Judy Caine: [00:10:01] And that's in Catthorpe Manor?

Marcis Jansons: [00:10:03] That's in Catthorpe, yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:10:04] Judy checked spelling of Catthorpe and asked if they had a website to check later.

So, tell me about dance and your passion for dance and passing it on.

Marcis Jansons: [00:10:28] The Misses can speak about it, because she's a dance teacher.

Judy Caine: [00:10:31] OK, Zane, tell me about the dance and why you started it, why are you so passionate?

Zane Jansone: [00:10:35] I am dancing since I was five as well. Also, my Mum and my Dad were dancers. They met each other in the dance group. So, we are all family dancing. And when I came here, I started, I used to live in London for five years and I was looking where, where can I find like a dance group, Latvian dance group. So, I found there, and I was dancing there for five years and then we came to Corby. We didn't know anyone here and I found out there is no dance group. I said to my husband, I said look we need to, we need to do something. So, we started dance in Corby two years ago, and then we find out that in Catthorpe Park there have like rooms, like a small house for Latvians. We don't need to pay rent, because you know this is our place. So, we moved our trainings there and now we are dancing there for two years, and also in that place we are trying to do some ...

Marcis Jansons: [00:11:47] ... just, some, not like a party, it's all what matters Latvian like, celebrating Independence Day, making a ball. Like a New Year's ball which Zane was a main organizer. Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:12:17] So running cultural events?

Marcis Jansons: [00:12:19] Yeah, yeah. Culture events.

Zane Jansone: [00:12:20] So, we are doing these events like all around the year. And then, now, so you have like a day for dancers, or like a day for where all the dance groups coming together and then we dancing all day and then we have something for children. Also, children I'm dancing. We spending all day there and then in the evening usually we have some barbecue in a very nice atmosphere and then some bar or something. So, yeah, like dance for me it's like my, my world, my life.

Judy Caine: [00:12:56] What is special about Latvian dance? It's clearly very unique ... I've seen bits of it on the Internet?

Zane Jansone: [00:13:05] Yeah. Every five years in Latvia we have that big huge festival. And this is like for us something very big as well. And then people from all around the world coming together like this year [2018] we were 18,000 Latvians, 18,000 Latvians, from Canada, from Australia from England, from Sweden, from Germany, from everywhere. And we spend one week there, yeah. Somehow, if you are dancing, then this festival it, all the time trying to get, to be there. So, yeah, it is like ...

Marcis Jansons: [00:13:52] For a sportsman, its main goal is to get the Olympics for the Latvian

folk dancers, the main goal is get to the big event. And this year, that was a hundred years of independence and in that same year it was the big festival. Yeah. That's it. It's hard to explain how it is. Why? Because you need to see all the costumes and all the big dance which happening. In that one stage, we was 18,000 people and dancing the same dance.

Judy Caine: [00:14:27] 18 seems to be a magic number in Latvia. Independence 18th of November 1918 ...

Marcis Jansons: [00:14:33] Yeah, probably.

Judy Caine: [00:14:34] This year 2018 is your 100-year celebration of that?

Marcis Jansons: [00:14:38] Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:14:39] 18,000 people there ...

[00:14:41] All laugh.

Marcis Jansons: [00:14:41] Every five years is, for, a big dance festival but every three years, so there is for school kids as well the same festival. So, and that's grow in your blood, basically if you starting to dance, you're going to go draw generations and it's not like only twenty-five-year-old is dancing there is a sixty five or seventy five year old locals dancing so it's, it's part of history.

Judy Caine: [00:15:12] How many different styles of dance are there? Because you mentioned history there...

Marcis Jansons: [00:15:17] ...yeah ...

Judy Caine: [00:15:17] ...and Latvia has a history of being ruled by as far as I know by Germans, Russians, the Polish, Swedish. Have you taken influences from all of that, or has Latvia got its own proud indigenous folk music of Latvia?

Marcis Jansons: [00:15:32] No, no it's only Latvian.

Zane Jansone: [00:15:36] Yeah.

Marcis Jansons: [00:15:36] And that folk-dance festival actually once happened in Britain as a well, in the Leeds.

Judy Caine: [00:15:43] When was that?

Marcis Jansons: [00:15:44] Exactly? It was one of the first ones 1930 something? But then I need to look into this. But, one time that dance, folk dance festival, was happening in the Leeds as well.

Judy Caine: [00:15:58] So how long the folk-dance festival been going on for since the 19th century?

Marcis Jansons: [00:16:03] Yes, since the 19th century. Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:16:04] Wow, amazing. So, the next big one will be in 2023.

Marcis Jansons: [00:16:12] Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:16:13] But you will have a smaller one in 21.

Marcis Jansons: [00:16:15] That's for the kids.

Judy Caine: [00:16:17] For the young people.

Marcis Jansons: [00:16:18] Yeah.

Zane Jansone: [00:16:19] This year we had the, how you say in English, (some Latvian chat between Zane and Marcis).

Marcis Jansons: [00:16:29] They are like 25th Olympic Games, then we are counting the festivals as well. And this was 13.

Zane Jansone: [00:16:37] Yeah. So, this has happened already 13 times.

Judy Caine: [00:16:41] 30 or 1,3?

Zane Jansone: [00:16:42] 13, so if you count that happening in every five years so then you can count when was the first one.

Judy Caine: [00:16:51] Right. Okay. Yes.

Marcis Jansons: [00:16:52] But there was some missed years because of the war and the Russians, so...

Judy Caine: [00:17:03] Because, you were quite young when they, when you were born, you were still under Russian rule weren't you?

Marcis Jansons: [00:17:09] Yes.

Judy Caine: [00:17:09] Was it 19 er.

Marcis Jansons: [00:17:12] 1991.

Judy Caine: [00:17:14] 91, Yes.

Marcis Jansons: [00:17:14] January.

Judy Caine: [00:17:15] Yes, when you finally got your second independence.

Marcis Jansons: [00:17:18] Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:17:18] Because there were lots of uprisings in the mid-eighties weren't there?

Marcis Jansons: [00:17:21] Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:17:22] How did that affect your childhood?

Zane Jansone: [00:17:25] I remember these years, I remember when I was like eight years old, I think seven. It was the evening at home and then my Dad said I need to go out because there is something happening outside. So, he put a jacket and then (in Latvian to Marcis).

Marcis Jansons: [00:17:44] Some metal wire stubs like ...

Zane Jansone: [00:17:53] Something, he does up the jacket and this put this metal thingy under the jacket.

Judy Caine: [00:17:59] Like a metal wire. [N.B. later decided it was like a metal baton or coshe made from bits of wire twisted together]

Marcis Jansons: [00:18:01] Yeah yeah yeah.

Zane Jansone: [00:18:02] And then he went (in Latvian to Marcis) ...

Marcis Jansons: [00:18:06] Yeah, erm, in Latvian, there is a name 'The Barricades'. Basically that's, that's America's ...

Judy Caine: [00:18:14] A barricade, yes, a wall of people?

Marcis Jansons: [00:18:14] Yeah, big streets was barricaded with people there, heavy machinery, was bringing it out, like a tractors, big, from the countryside. Zane was living it, in the capital city. She was actually born in capital city. I was born in the countryside and I lived there. So, I only see that on the TV every evening, went together to see what's happening in the capital city because all the big things happened over there. So, my Grandma, actually my Grandpa, he was a farmer and he used to own a big tractor. He and his friends ran from the countryside to block those roads, the big ones, to protect the big streets, the Latvians, and the big statues just everything. What matters to Latvians. Just don't let the Russians, KGB, to get in there. Yeah. Couple of days there was big disturbance and yeah. We are independent now. And that's the part of Latvian history. Yeah.

Zane Jansone: [00:19:32] Yeah, I remember when my Dad came back he said there was like ... wives was coming to that place with bowls of hot soups, bringing to husbands because it was really cold outside. Also, the teas, you know the tea, hot tea. So yeah. And then as I remember that some pictures and some fragments on TV. So that's, it's so emotional for me because I had remembered these years.

Judy Caine: [00:20:03] You must have been very young.

Zane Jansone: [00:20:06] 5 or 6.

Judy Caine: [00:20:06] What year were you born sorry?

Zane Jansone: [00:20:08] 82. Yeah, yep.

Zane Jansone: [00:20:13] But from other side when we were, even under the Russia, these years I remember really good, because we were living there. My parents had really good wages, very good flat. There wasn't any problem about you know you're missing some food at home or some clothes or something. It was like we were living like a really good life, not like a king, but everything somehow was really smooth and good and no fighting; oh, you know I'm getting more wages than you are and something like this. It was really good I remember it yeah, well, the army childhood can't say nothing bad about that.

Judy Caine: [00:21:03] And The blockades were 86/87 or later.

Marcis Jansons: [00:21:08] What blockades?

Judy Caine: [00:21:10] The Blockades you were telling me about ...

Marcis Jansons: [00:21:11] ... ah barricades.

Judy Caine: [00:21:11] yes barricades, not blockades.

Marcis Jansons: [00:21:12] Oh this was a '91, January, 25th January. Because there was, in the 1988, there was a Baltic, basically human chain. Basically, people from the Tallinn to ... ik& a live man chain throughout all the Baltic states. That was in 1988 and then all starts suddenly to fall apart for the PSR and there was the barricades for the people.

Judy Caine: [00:21:45] PSR?

Marcis Jansons: [00:21:47] Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:21:48] Ah, People's Soviet Republic.

Marcis Jansons: [00:21:49] Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:21:50] Sorry.

Internet Research



Dubbed the 'Baltic organizers, the human chain stretched from Tallinn, the Estonian capital, in the north east through Latvia to Vilnius, the Lithuanian capital, in the southwest. It was also called the 'Chain of Freedom peaceful political demonstration that occurred on 23 August 1989. Approximately two million people joined their hands to form a human chain spanning 430 miles across the three Baltic states – Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

It was to protest the Soviet takeover of the three Baltic states that resulted from secret agreements between Moscow and Nazi Germany 50 years ago.

Marcis Jansons: [00:21:54] Yeah. So, it's like Zane said, it was a different time than now and then. But it's, it's not only about the Baltic states, but it's all the world, the world that basically we are so naturalized, we are so into all that. Everything was easier then. But, that's a different story.

Judy Caine: [00:22:19] OK, so I tell me what is it, which is essentially, what makes you Latvian and what is the big thing about Latvian culture that makes you say, 'I'm Latvian' and proud to be Latvian!

Marcis Jansons: [00:22:37] We're small nation and every time when something big happened like one of our sport teams winning something it's big, big for us. So, and then you said I'm proud to be a Latvian, and I'm proud that we have so good sportsmans so. And if you are the folk-dancer and you gonna say oh that's the main thing if you are a hockey, ice hockey player, you're going to say, that makes me a Latvian because we can play ice hockey.

I think it's, it's into the blood because all that history that we are fighting, we are finally independent. 1918 the first day of independence, first there and then we suddenly went under the Germans the Russians and yeah, that's makes us probably? After a couple of centuries maybe they're not gonna feel that one, because my grandma she's still alive and she still can tell the stories about that, how it was the second world war that my kid not gonna know what that means because she has born in independent Latvia and yeah. I think for each of us it's different what makes you want to be a proud like. Like my wife, she says the folk-dances, like my wife saying

she's all over the folk-dancing and that's what makes her to be a proud Latvian.

Judy Caine: [00:24:20] The dances.

Marcis Jansons: [00:24:21] Yeah. Yeah. The folk dances because that's something unique.

Judy Caine: [00:24:25] What are the folk dances? What style are they? Or should I talk to Zane again about this. Are they circle dances, squares? Are there many different ones?

Marcis Jansons: [00:24:41] Many different ones. There is the dances were dancing only the man, there is the dances were only the woman dances by themselves and then mainly in the pairs, man with the woman together. And like eight pairs dancing the same dance and making the circles, the squares, their lines everything.

Judy Caine: [00:25:04] Is there one traditional dance that everybody knows, that everybody does?

Marcis Jansons: [00:25:06] There is many traditional dance. There is not only one dance there is many. If, you can count the hundreds of folk dances.

Zane Jansone: [00:25:19] Yeah. We don't have like one.

Judy Caine: [00:25:21] OK. Can I come to one of your rehearsals and see?

Marcis Jansons: [00:25:28] Yeah, of course.

Judy Caine: [00:25:30] When do you rehearse?

Marcis Jansons: [00:25:36] At the moment, we don't. There is a practices happening every week, but the practice is practice But

Judy Caine: [00:25:47] I don't, if you don't mind, seeing practice. I'm happy to come see a practice.

Zane Jansone: [00:25:53] Well there will be one Latvian Cultural Day on 4th of May in Mansfield.

Marcis Jansons: [00:25:58] It's a big one.

Zane Jansone: [00:25:59] It's a big one. there will be like a dance groups who will come together in just one day there if you go, then you will, then you can see all costumes and everything.

Judy Caine: [00:26:09] Yeah. I would love to see that. But I would also like to see something before then.

Zane Jansone: [00:26:15] Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:26:15] If possible, with our Artistic Director from the charity, Neil Paris, who's a lovely man. So, that he can just, learn styles. He is a professional dancer and choreographer and he, he will just be fascinated by the steps and the whole process. You haven't got any performances before the fourth of May, practices?

Zane Jansone: [00:26:41] I think. Yeah. (chat between Zane and Marcis in Latvian).

Marcis Jansons: [00:26:44] There maybe something appear, because sometimes suddenly we have an invitation to some dance performance, to make a dance performance. But at the moment the biggest one is the 4th of May.

Judy Caine: [00:27:14] So, would you maybe, and you can say no to this, would you be prepared to come and perform some dances to our little dance theater group - there's only eight of them - or would it be better for them to come to one of your practices one evening and for you to just do a couple of dances for them.

Zane Jansone: [00:27:32] That is something very interesting. Yes, we can.

Judy Caine: [00:27:36] Could we. Could we talk about that? What days do you practice, and I'll let Neil know.

Zane Jansone: [00:27:42] Well, well we are dancing on Mondays but, we can meet on Sunday as well and then do some practice.

Judy Caine: [00:27:55] Okay.

Marcis Jansons: [00:27:56] If you are really interested in that we can make me make a small like a concert for you. There is a Latvian choir which is singing in Catthorpe and there is another folk-dance group ...

Judy Caine: [00:28:16] So, you have a Latvian choir as well as the folk-dance group?

Marcis Jansons: [00:28:17] Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:28:18] Amazing I didn't know that.

Marcis Jansons: [00:28:20] And Latvian art group as well. Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:28:24] I'd love to see all of this.

Marcis Jansons: [00:28:26] You Should come to the Catthorpe Manor.

Judy Caine: [00:28:28] When?

Zane Jansone: [00:28:29] Now, well we can talk about it. You just let me know what would you like to see and then I can manage.

Marcis Jansons: [00:28:37] Yeah. Zane probably can make one.

Judy Caine: [00:28:40] I'm just going to pause this a second. Judy stops recorder because of another technical issue.

Judy Caine: [00:00:00] OK. So, we're back again. Yes. I would love to come over to your Catthorpe and to see some dance in the choir and drama.

Marcis Jansons: [00:00:08] Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:00:08] You were just telling me 'off tape' about somebody you could introduce me to. Tell me about that lady.

Marcis Jansons: [00:00:15] Her name is Ilza, she is born over her in a Corby and she live her whole life in the Corby. At the moment she is living in Oakham. and she's a board member of Latvian Welfare Trust. As well, and she's gonna tell you all what you want to know about that first Latvians, in the Corby.

Judy Caine: [00:00:38] That would be brilliant, thank you. [Ilze interviewed on 17/01/19].

What about food? Is there a traditional Latvian national dish, or is it regional? What's your favorite Latvian food?

Marcis Jansons: [00:00:49] To be honest that's one of the questions that people ask all the time, I'm asked, what's your Latvian national food.

Zane Jansone: [00:00:55] I'll show you one...

Marcis Jansons: [00:00:55] No, that's not Latvian...

Judy Caine: [00:00:55] ... the fridge has been opened, and there's something coming out of the fridge ... Sauerkraut

Zane Jansone: [00:00:55] Yes, it's Christmastime.

Judy Caine: [00:01:10] Is it a special sauerkraut, what has it got in it?

Marcis Jansons: [00:01:12] To be honest that's what I wanted, Latvian, there is no Latvian traditional food because that, we mix all three. Like, this the sauerkraut, that's the Germans, German sausage and sauerkraut. Then something from the Russians and ...

Zane Jansone: [00:01:28] t h e y o l d r . . usually we need to heat it up. [Zane showing Judy Christmas sauerkraut]

Judy Caine: [00:01:28] Yes absolutely. I love sauerkraut.

Marcis Jansons: [00:01:32] So, yeah, that's Latvian traditional food, the potatoes...

Judy Caine: [00:01:40] Do you have a traditional, any sort of traditions around food at Christmas or Easter?

Marcis Jansons: [00:01:46] Oh yeah. Well in the Easter you need to eat the boiled eggs.

Judy Caine: [00:01:50] Same as in many places?

Marcis Jansons: [00:01:52] Yeah, and Christmas time it's a sauerkraut and you take that, you are actually cooking in the pig's nose. That's for them happiness of the next year, you eat the p i g ' s nose.

Judy Caine: [00:02:09] You actually eat it, or do you just cook it?

Marcis Jansons: [00:02:11] Cook it and eat it as well. Actually, some people even cooking all the head of the pig. And there is a well-known, to Latvian, but basically a story that every Christmas day well you should have nine types of the food on the table. One is meant for happiness, another for the money, another for the different, basically nine types of food you should have on your Christmas table.

Judy Caine: [00:02:43] That's interesting ...

Marcis Jansons: [00:02:44] The fish ...

Judy Caine: [00:02:46] ... what Sort of fish?

Marcis Jansons: [00:02:48] The carp I think, the polish on the same.

Judy Caine: [00:02:51] Yes, they are, they have Carp. But you have meat, and is Christmas Eve your main ...

Marcis Jansons: [00:02:56] Yeah, the 24th ...

Judy Caine: [00:02:57] Yeah, the Christmas Eve.

Marcis Jansons: [00:02:58] Yeah, the Christmas Eve the evening before the Santa is coming.

Zane Jansone: [00:03:02] You know for us, for the pig head, the main thing is the nose and you need to cut this nose in the pieces how many people you are and you need to eat it and then you will like Lucky next year.

Judy Caine: [00:03:19] So you cut the end of the nose off and cut the number of people round ...

Zane Jansone: [00:03:22] Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:03:26] I'm sure it's not as gruesome as it sounds ...

Zane Jansone: [00:03:28] ... it's really tasty.

Marcis Jansons: [00:03:30] I never tried.

Zane Jansone: [00:03:32] Because it is hard to find here.

Judy Caine: [00:03:35] Well actually we used to, but in Tudor times a long time ago, cook a pig's head traditionally with an apple in its mouth.

Marcis Jansons: [00:03:43] Oh yeah. I've seen the pictures.

Judy Caine: [00:03:46] And then you used to do a similar thing. Share the apple out, I don't know about slicing the front of the nose off and chopping it up, but I will find out now.

OK. What else would you like to tell me that I haven't asked you about.

Zane Jansone: [00:04:05] We are amazing people ...

Judy Caine: [00:04:06] ... you are, that goes without saying. Why are you amazing people?

Zane Jansone: [00:04:15] Because we are amazing, I don't know why!

Marcis Jansons: [00:04:16] Let's be proud to be a Latvian.

Judy Caine: [00:04:21] Clearly a very strong nation. Happy to fight for what you believe in.

Marcis Jansons: [00:04:26] Of course but each nation is the same.

Zane Jansone: [00:04:28] I need to say one more thing. Like in New Year. We had Latvian New Year's, like a ball in the Catthorpe Manor, two days ago and then the main New Year's Day. And afterwards we heard so many feedbacks that it's so nice that there is a place where all Latvian's coming together and like, you know, dancing and ...

Marcis Jansons: [00:04:56] ... just Keep alive the Latvian culture in the Britain.

Judy Caine: [00:05:00] Why is it important for you to pass on Latvian culture to you daughter for instance?

Zane Jansone: [00:05:09] For me, because I would like her to know like our traditions. Like in that autumn, in October, they also are doing like an autumn market. Well usually it's happening in Latvian schools where we are teaching them, not like at home or something ...

Marcis Jansons: [00:05:31] ... it's in November, 10 of November.

Zane Jansone: [00:05:33] Oh, November, so basically in the autumn. And then we like, taking all the vegetables and putting all together vegetables and making some animals, or, or something, and then we have like a small market and then the children can see they're just like a horse or a dog all from vegetables.

Marcis Jansons: [00:05:55] But it's like, basically celebrating the ones, that all the goods is taken in from the field, from the garden ...

Judy Caine: [00:06:04] It's like a harvest?

Marcis Jansons: [00:06:06] Yeah, yeah and that's like a celebration it's, it's happening all the time on the 10th November.

Judy Caine: [00:06:11] And what do you call celebration.

Marcis Jansons: [00:06:14] MARTIN, that's a human name. In English it's Martin, the Day of the Martin and in Latvian it's day of the Martin's.

MARCIS writes it down to clarify for Judy as confused ...

Internet Research



The Martin's Day: "Mārtiņdiena" marks the beginning of winter in Latvian calendar. At this time all farm works should be brought to an end on the farm and all produce will be in for the winter both on farms and in gardens. Each year on Mārtiņdiena people dress up and wear masks (not widespread), others sing and dance to bring luck, prosperity and harmony to their lives. Pretty much everywhere people eat as traditional 'rooster roast'.

Judy Caine: [00:06:36] Ah, OK, is that [Martin] a saint?

Marcis Jansons: [00:06:51] No, not a saint.

Judy Caine: [00:06:51] From my reading, Latvia seems to be incredibly tolerant of different cultures and different religions. Am I right in that or are you mainly a catholic country?

Marcis Jansons: [00:07:11] It depends, we don't have so many religions. We are not as religious as the Polish are to be honest. They are building monuments in the cemeteries. We are not that, we

are still religious people, yeah, but I don't know. It's still too hard to introduce with like Islam or something new what's coming into Europe to Latvia, because we are so small nation. There's a saying when you go to Russia, they don't like black peoples still. They're racist. We are not racist, but it's harder to introduce them than you basically. But yeah, we still believe in the gods, and we got our own actually God's, Goddesses. Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:08:08] A Pagan tradition.

Marcis Jansons: [00:08:09] Yeah. The Latvian Gods.

Judy Caine: [00:08:11] Who are your Gods?

Marcis Jansons: [00:08:14] Oh, there is like Laima, that's goddess of happiness. Then there is a Perkons, the thunder man, up in the sky, then there is a Dievs god, an old guy with all the grey hair and gray bird sitting up in the skies. That's the main God Dievs, the God.

Judy Caine: [00:08:43] Yeah, yeah.

Marcis Jansons: [00:08:44] ... and then a God of - Usins, who is a God for taking care about horses.

Judy Caine: [00:09:03] You talked about the nine dishes on Christmas Eve.

Marcis Jansons: [00:09:06] Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:09:07] Are they related to God's? Like you talked about you have a dish to bring you happiness.

Marcis Jansons: [00:09:11] Yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:09:11] Are they related to different pagan gods?

Marcis Jansons: [00:09:12] Yeah. There is like, oh that's not a Christmas, but in the New Year's Eve you'll need to put some fish skin in your wallet. So, if you're gonna have a fish skin in your wallet that means you're gonna have money in the next year. So that's it. Yeah, but is it related to the gods? To be honest I don't know. But we have Pagan gods.

Judy Caine: [00:09:41] I think everybody does.

Well I think I've taken up enough of your time at the minute because this young lady [2-year old daughter Matta] has been unbelievably patient and she clearly wants to do something loud and noisy and play with her Mum and Dad. Is there anything else you want to say to me now? Because I can always come back, or you can come to me and we can chat.

Marcis Jansons: [00:10:00] No to be honest, but like I told you, you need to look in the Latvian Welfare Trust, which was founded in the Great Britain. And I'm going to speak with Ilze. I'm gonna tell about you and I'm gonna give to you her contact details and you can introduce yourself and it should be a good visit to you because she knows all that history about Latvians in the Corby, exactly, because she's born in the Corby.

Judy Caine: [00:10:33] That would be fantastic. And shall I talk to you Zane about coming over. One day to see your dances.

Zane Jansone: [00:10:39] Yeah yeah.

Judy Caine: [00:10:40] Okay. Do you think we could set us up in the next month?

Zane Jansone: [00:10:44] Yeah, maybe, end of February.

Judy Caine: [00:10:47] End of Feb. OK, I should talk to Neil, our artistic director to see when he's free. A Sunday or Monday is best for you is it?

Zane Jansone: [00:10:55] Sunday.

Judy Caine: [00:10:56] Sunday, a Sunday. OK. That's absolutely perfect. Thank you very much. I'll turn this off now.