

PABLO JUSTO

Edited transcript of a recording of Pablo Justo interviewed by Chris Eldon Lee on the 3rd September 2012. BAS Archives AD6/24/1/185. Part 1 transcribed by Barry Heywood, 25th November 2019 and edited by Andy Smith. Part 2 transcribed by Andy Smith, 30th December 2019.

Part One

[Part 1 0:00:00] Lee: This is Pablo Augustine Justo, interviewed by Chris Eldon Lee on the 3rd of September, 2012.

Justo: My name is Pablo Augustine Justo. My place of birth is Buenos Aires, 14th July 1942. I have a French Passport as well. The French like to celebrate my birthday on the 14th of July [Laughter]

[Part 1 0:00:37] Lee: Tell me about your ancestors, your forefathers.

Justo: My Great great grandfather came to Argentina in 1827. He came with a British Passport. Why? Because they lived in Gibraltar and at that time Gibraltar was a British Territory.

[Part 1 0:0:04] Lee: It still is, Pablo.

Justo: It still is, yes. Some other places, as well, still are. But we won't get into that.

[Part 1 0:01:14] Lee: A good groups of islands, which we claim as ours as well.

Justo: Yes. That's right.

[Part 1 0:01:18] Lee: Are you not then Argentinian?

Justo: Yes. I am Argentinian! In fact this great great grandfather that came from Gibraltar, he was really from Spanish origin. He was from Italy, from a town called Convolito [?? phonetic], and when they crossed they were called Gusto. And when they went to Gibraltar they changed their name to Justo. It was like pulling out a bit of Spanish accent. He came to Argentina with some money. He established in the north of Argentina in Corrientes. He married a girl called Rolon [?? phonetic], which is a very ancient name, a society name in Corrientes. He was one of the founders of the Sociedad Rural in Argentina, which is one of the most posh organisations of the farmers. Then he had a son who was a lawyer. He was Governor of Corrientes. He had a very good political activity. Then that doctor [of Law? – Transcriber] had another son who was my grandfather, who was a military... he was an engineer. He graduated as an engineer and then he was in the Army. In 1922 he was Head of the Colegio Militar, it is like the Military Academy [for the Army – Transcriber]. Then he was appointed War Minister for President Alvear, Then he was elected President of Argentina from 1932 to 1936 [Agustín Pedro Justo – Transcriber]. At that time he had a lot of children, one of them my father, who was sort of a rebel. He was one of the founders of the left-wing Trotskyist Movement in Argentina, and he was really against his father. In fact when Theodore Roosevelt came to Argentina in 1936 to

inaugurate the Pan-American Congress, where all the Presidents of South America were joined in Buenos Aires, my grandfather opened the Congress and introduced Roosevelt. Before Roosevelt could utter a word in the Congress, a voice was heard 'Down with Imperialism'. There was a big row. All the ceremony was stopped. It was the first time that they had transmitted anything through radio. That is in 1936 so that shout was heard in all South America. So when my grandfather finished the Congress, he was leaving and he asked his Personal Secretary 'Was the one that shouted, Liborio?' That was my father. He said 'Yes'. That was my father who had obtained an entrance from his mother. He was against my grandfather.

[Part 1 0:05:46] Lee: Your father in fact went South before you did.

Justo: Yes, that's right! You can see the picture of my father, just by Shackleton's grave in [South] Georgia. He travelled a lot; In Patagonia, down south he went to the South Orkney Islands. He wrote a very nice book - unfortunately it is not translated into English. It is called 'La tierra maldita' 'The cursed land' – that's because Darwin, when he went down to Patagonia with the *Beagle*, he said Patagonia was a 'tierra maldita', a cursed land. In fact Darwin was accompanied by my other great grandfather, who was called 'James Harris'. If you read Darwin's diary, he is all the time saying 'Yes, James Harris went with me to this place and to that other place'. So he accompanied Darwin.

[Part 1 0:07:01] Lee: You must come to my town of Shrewsbury, where Darwin was born. I will show you his birthplace.

Justo: Darwin was born where?

[Part 1 0:07:08] Lee: In Shrewsbury. In England. Where I live. Next time you come.

Justo: OK.

[Part 1 0:07:16] Lee: Why did your father go to the Antarctic? Was it to write the book?

Justo: No. He wanted to travel. He wanted to see. My father is a writer. He wanted to explore, to see new things. He travelled all over the world and he lived in the United States as well. It was easy for him to get tickets and all that because at that time my grandfather was in office and so everybody would offer him facilities.

[Part 1 0:08:04] Lee: How about you. Why did you want to go to the Antarctic? Did you choose?

Justo: I was doing fifth year at University and I saw a little ad that they were asking for volunteers for Antarctica. I had read my father's book and I thought 'Well, it is a good opportunity to leave studies for one year and go there for adventure'. To be honest, it was one of the best years that I have lived in my life. It was really fantastic. To me it was a new world, living with people that I didn't know. My experience in Antarctica was really valuable.

[Part 1 0:09:08] Lee: How do you mean? Did it make you grow up?

Justo: I think so. I met people who I would have never dreamed of meeting before. People of other nationalities and of other subjects [work disciplines? – Transcriber] The experience of living with...we were 12 altogether in the Base, and we had to cope with all the people. It taught me how to calm down and behave better. I read everything about Antarctic history and I was really, has a passion and we even edited a newspaper! Do you remember we had a newspaper and it was called *The Pinguinera* ... (The Penguin Rookery). My job was the History of Antarctica. The Commander had novels and others had football themes. It was something different. When I came back I finished University...I graduated.

[Part 1 0:10:40] Lee: Did you have to go for an interview when you applied?

Justo: Yes. Actually there were two of us only. They asked for two. One was for Orkneys, South Orkneys, and the other was for Deception. It is the only two bases that the Navy has, or had, at that time. Well, I was a radio amateur since I was 13 years old. Electronics was for me something familiar. The first thing they did was 'Look this doesn't work. You will have to fix it'. I fixed it easily so they said 'Alright' this chap is going to Deception, which was the base ... we had to receive meteorological information every hour from all the islands...from all the bases (Argentine bases). That's why we had four radio operators! They worked 8 by 24 hours...they worked eight hours and then rested for 24. But there was always somebody on the radio. So we received information from Belgrano, Esperanza, Marambio...I don't know...all the islands. They sent me information 10 minutes before the hour. Then at the hour we had to transmit the...I was in charge of the transmitters, receivers, the ionospherics. You know we had the ionospheric equipment to study the ionosphere. We had to interpret that. That was a little bit of a nuisance because that was the only work – the real job that I had, because the rest was just visiting Base B, visiting Aguirre Cerda Base the Chilean base, and skiing...it was really a fantastic time.

[Part 1 0:13:05] Lee: Did you in fact join the Navy for that year?

Justo: No.

[Part 1 0:13:09] Lee: But it was a naval base.

Justo: It was a naval base but they just had civilians.

[Part 1 0:13:13] Lee: Was it run like a Navy ship? Was it a Military base? Did it feel like that?

Justo: No, I didn't feel like that. Of course there were differences. For instance...and I really pity the Commander...he had a special dining room where he ate. He had dinner, lunch, separate from us, from the rest. And there were only two of them. BC and Governor who was from another organization, it's called Gendarmeria preserving the boundaries of Argentina, and they didn't get on well. Every day they had to eat together. They had a waiter who took them the meal. I pitied them because we were altogether. We had a nice time, laughing! You could only hear silence. They would eat during one whole year without talking to each other.

[Part 1 0:14:35] Lee: This is the Leader and...?

Justo: The Leader and the Second. The Leader was from the Navy and the Second was from this other branch of the Gendarmeria.

[Part 1 0:14:54] Lee: What kind of man was the leader?

Justo: He was somebody who had had a very good education. In fact his father had gone with my father to the same school in Buenos Aires. It is called La Salle. It is a very old traditional school. He belonged to a very 'known' family as well. Once, I came into his special officer's place and he was listening to Beethoven. Well we were born with classic music...my mother loved classic music...I entered and he said 'Oh, that is nice! his Ninth Symphony!' He was enjoying it. Suddenly he saw me and said 'Yes but I can't be enjoying this. I am from the Infantry.' He had to reject everything nice because he had to be tough. That is the only thing that I noticed.

[Part 1 0:16:11] Lee: What was his name?

Justo: Benitze [??? phonetic]

[Part 1 0:16:14] Lee: Lieutenant Benitze?

Justo: Yes. Unfortunately he died. He had an ATV [Atazanavir - antiviral infection? - Transcriber]

[Part 1 0:16:24] Lee: How did you get on with the other Nations that were also on Deception Island?

Justo: Fine. With Chile, especially...I visited them in Santiago. We had a very nice time after we were in Antarctica, and they were very nice, especially the cook, Silva [??? phonetic]. I went to visit him in the little town he was living in Chile. I was in his house and it was about ten-o'clock at night and I said "Look, I am leaving now. I am going to look for a hotel" He looked astonished, and he took me apart and said 'Listen, Pablo, if my home is too humble for you, then you can look for a hotel'. He lived in a two room house! I said 'Listen, I would like to stay here but I don't want to bother you!' I don't know where he went to sleep but he gave me his place there and they were very nice. And with the English people as well! I visited them when I was in England in 1968. I saw Bernie [Bernie Chappel - Transcriber], I saw Nigel [Nigel Bacon - Transcriber]. I went to visit the one who we performed the operation on...

[Part 1 0:18:11] Lee: Bill Geddes?

Justo: Bill Geddes in Dumfries. I went especially to see him; we had a very nice evening together. We drank some good beer...

[Part 1 0:18:22] Lee: Were you not under instructions from the Navy not to socialize with the British?

Justo: No. They never told anything about that, no, none whatsoever. Remember, we were civilians so they wouldn't tell us anything. Even if they had that idea...perhaps

they would have told the Military, the ones that were in the Service but they didn't tell is anything.

[Part 1 0:18:53] Lee: So did all the Argentinians socialize with all the British or was it just the civilians?

Justo: No, I think everybody got on well. I am not sure because I never heard of any problem, quarrel or nothing like that. On the contrary, we were very glad when they came to visit us. We had cinema, movies. I was in charge of films and every Saturday we had a film, and sometimes they would come from the English base. I remember I had the same ending of the film because they were all...they never ended because they were all so much used that they didn't have an end so what I did was I cut an end of a film and every time I had a bad one, I used to glue the ending so even if I had cut the film at half the reel time but with the words 'The End' they were all happy [Laughter]. Nobody quarrelled. No, when I was there, we had a very good relationship.

[Part 1 0:20:16] Lee: Did you go to Base B, the British base?

Justo: Yes, I went lots of times.

[Part 1 0:20:19] Lee: Did you always take steaks with you?

Justo: Take?

[Part 1 0:20:23] Lee: Steaks with you?

Justo: No. no we didn't have meat.

[Part 1 0:20:28] Lee: You didn't have meat?

Justo: No! You know that is something that I shouldn't be...like washing the clothes... We were sent about 3000 kilos of meat. It was useless. It was very little to eat...it was badly organized. Somebody must have been making money... We had also 3000 bottles of wine and it was all completely vinegar!

[Part 1 0:21:11] Lee: Really?

Justo: We couldn't drink wine.

[Part 1 0:21:14] Lee: So did the British have better food and drink than you had?

Justo: I am not sure of that...Food and drink. What we used to do, is we'd change. I would take olive oil which we had... no olives we had in glass bottles...big ones. I used to take them to your base, and I used to swop them for whisky because I... I don't know what happened that year. Somebody from the British Antarctic Survey complained that you had very little to drink and I think everybody contributed and sent a lot of whisky. So we had a lot of whisky. So we used to change. I used to give Bill, for instance, a lot of olives, and he gave me whisky. So at least we had some

alcohol, but to be honest, our facilities were very poor. The shirts they gave, you just did this, and it broke. We weren't prepared for Antarctica.

[Part 1 0:22:40] Lee: So you were not doing National Service.

Justo: No.

[Part 1 0:22:53] Lee: Do you know why the Argentinians bothered to open a base on Deception Island? Why were the Argentinians there?

Justo: No, I couldn't answer that. I don't have an idea. Deception Island was opened not many years before I went there. I think it was in 1948.

[Part 1 0:23:13] Lee: Post-war.

Justo: Yes. But I don't have an idea...

[Part 1 0:23:24] Lee: Did you have dogs?

Justo: We had two dogs at the beginning, and then, I don't know what happened, they left. We never saw them again. I don't know if they belonged to the Chilean Base or what. We had cats... we had a cat. I was in charge of the cat. But we didn't have dogs. In fact the cat was an issue, because the Chileans...it was a female cat. The Chileans gave us a tom cat. We put them together and everybody was spying to see what happened, and the Chilean cat was rejected. So we were saying 'You gave us a gay cat. He was good for nothing'. Nothing happened.

[Part 1 0:24:18] Lee: Were you also doing survey work, and other kinds of work, or was it just purely meteorology?

Justo: No. I didn't do meteorology.

[Part 1 0:24:27] Lee: You did radio work?

Justo: I did radio work and I did the ionospheric. I had to develop the film and then study it with a machine. I had to write down all the movements of the ionospheric layers and that was it. The rest was really having fun.

[Part 1 0:24:57] Lee: Tell me about the fun then.

Justo: I was surprised. I was being paid for being there. I would have paid to be there! We went out many times. We stayed out. We made igloos. We carried a transmitter powered with a bicycle type generator.

[Part 1 0:25:26] Lee: Pedals?

Justo: Pedals. We went all round the island. I didn't have many volunteers, I can tell you, because, for instance, the boat. Although it was a military base, a naval base, everybody was scared of going on the boat. I think they all went there because they needed the money. I was the only one who went for fun. Then I found Soro [? -

Transcriber], he was all the time an electrician. He was all time with me and he liked going out. But all the rest, they didn't really enjoy the adventure.

[Part 1 0:26:19] Lee: Were they made to go? Did the Navy post them to the Antarctic?

Justo: No. They chose, I think because they were paid an extra. We weren't paid extra. In fact they paid us very little. Even so, it was sometimes three months late! The meteorologist... he had his wife...she needed the money. It wasn't everything perfect.

[Part 1 0:26:56] Lee: Was it fun to go to the British base?

Justo: Yes. I loved it.

[Part 1 0:27:00] Lee: Tell me about going there.

Justo: Well, I went a lot of times on my own. Then I went accompanied with others. They wanted to take me because I was the only one who spoke English. I remember going during the weekend...every Saturday. They used to dress properly. Traditionally...he told me they were waiting for a boat full of girls that would arrive on a Saturday. That is why they all got together and dressed up. It was fun. I liked it. It was something different. I used to sleep over...ah, Jack gave me his bed. I remember nice Playboy girls behind...I sent it to somebody and they were shocked! 'Oh that's the Antarctic!' I enjoyed very much. I am not sure that the rest liked it. We went with only vague ideas...I remember Lachiver [??? - Transcriber], the Radar...and Cameral [??? - Transcriber], as well... Yes, good fun. It would have been completely different if we hadn't had the Chilean base or the British base. It would have been very lonely.

[Part 1 0:28:50] Lee: Did you get to know Bill Geddes before the famous incident?

Justo: Yes. I talked to him a lot of times because I built a transmitter in Deception using all the spare parts that we had in stock. I built the transmitter to show one of the officers who was there. He was a ??? [indecipherable]. He was a big... He wasn't very friendly. He was a big guy. Commando? Yes that is right. I was teaching him electronics so I built this transmitter and I used to talk with Bill [Geddes] through the radio. He watched and saw everything and he had a long chat with Bill.

[Part 1 0:29:49] Lee: Bill, of course, developed what people thought was appendicitis. And at some point in his illness, the Argentinian base was asked to help. I know that we talked about this earlier but now let us talk from scratch. What do you remember of that story?

Justo: He was brought with a sledge with dogs. I remember the first dog was this very big dog...she was called 'Putá' [Laughter]. That means prostitute in Spanish.[Laughter]. Anyway, they brought him with a sledge and he had pain. When he was seen by the doctor, it was evident that it was a appendicitis problem. So we decided to operate. Unfortunately we didn't have the proper equipment. We didn't have the anaesthetic. We tried and we didn't succeed. So the doctor started looking for something else. He found a product called 'kemikal' [??? - Transcriber] which worked and he was put to sleep. It took us a couple of hours. We didn't find the appendix. We

removed all his intestines out. We couldn't put them back in and... Well finally the doctor managed to put the stitches back. When Bill woke up, he asked for the appendix. I told him it was in a bad shape. It smelled bad so we threw it. I think that there he wasn't convinced. I couldn't lie that much. He accepted it but at the end of the year when I called him to the radio, I told him we hadn't found his appendix. He said that he was suspicious about that. He had certain doubts but anyway we had to tell him, imagining he really had appendicitis and was dying. We said 'No, don't worry about appendicitis because it has been removed'.

[Part 1 0:32:41] Lee: You found something though inside?

Justo: I found something, yes. Why I say I found, I was the second surgeon here. The first surgeon was the doctor but the doctor had the same experience as I had as an engineer because he had never operated. He was young. They just sent him. So I started touching the intestines...I found something but it dissolved. It was very little like a small pea. That was it. We never knew what was wrong with him, but he got on well.

[Part 1 0:33:30] Lee: Did his pains come back at all?

Justo: I don't think so. Not while we were there. We left Deception on January and until then he didn't have any trouble. The only thing is, we had Hugh Field with us, a couple of months. He stayed some months at our base, remember. [REDACTED] I think that Dave [BAS Station Commander – Transcriber] thought the best thing would be a change of atmosphere a little bit. He lived with us and he lived quite well. In fact he taught us a lot of things. We played a game called 'Bindu'. He knew that game from India...from his father. He made the board there. We had a sort of a shop and he made the board. It was played with a... It was similar to Draughts. He made everything himself. We helped him. It was a nice job; he even painted the board, smoothing it. Every night we played Bindu. It was like football. It was something that Hugh made at our base. He stayed more than a month with us. He was very nice and everybody liked him. It was like having one more of us in the base.

[Part 1 0:35:37] Lee: Was the doctor having real problems with the prospect of operating on Bill Geddes?

Justo: Yes! He was scared because we had to... We read a book. It was an Anatomy book. It was there lying somewhere in the base. We read all about it. What we had to do... How to operate and all that. All the Argentinians were already operated on. They went there with the appendix removed so he [the medical doctor - Transcriber] never thought that he would have to operate on somebody's appendix. So he had to cope with the situation. He was being paid as a doctor so...

[Part 1 0:36:28] Lee: There was a Chilean nurse who was helping...

Justo: Yes, Benavides [phonetic]; he was also with us and he helped a lot. There was the doctor, Benavides, myself and Hugo Stanich [phonetic], who was the one carrying the cameras. He was the one who fainted. Everyone looking for their camera and looking for if there was any damage. Everyone forgot about poor Bill lying on the operating table [Laughter].

[Part 1 0:37:05] Lee: Can I ask you about the UFO reports that have come from Deception Island from all three bases? What if anything were you aware of?

Justo: As I told you, I didn't see absolutely anything and... We were outside and Perissé was pointing to the sky and saying 'Look you can see how it is moving.' There were four or five of us looking up, and we couldn't see anything. There were stars. You know stars twinkle and I didn't see anything special. In fact a lot of us hadn't seen anything. The Second Commander claimed hadn't seen anything. To be honest, I didn't see absolutely anything but remember that the Commander was very keen on UFOs and he was dying to see a UFO! He was reading books about the subject and everything that was supernatural.

[Part 1 0:38:42] Lee: Did you discuss it on base when he started making these claims?

Justo: Discuss it with whom?

[Part 1 0:38:50] Lee: Amongst yourselves.

Justo: Yes. When Perissé said he was going to write and send a telex to Buenos Aires informing about the UFOs, the Second Commander... that's when they really had a quarrel... The Second Commander said 'Look, everybody will laugh at you because we haven't seen anything, to be honest. So don't do it!' He thought that the Second Commander was trying to impose something on him. That is when they had a row. We discussed it, among the ones who said they didn't see anything. We just all laughed and said 'Well, you know how Perissé is; he likes to see flying objects.' In fact in the magazine, which we edited there, all the subjects were mainly UFOs. That was before seeing... So I think that we didn't see anything really.

[Part 1 0:40:08] Lee: What did the Chileans and Argentinians think about the British there because you were a military base and so were the Chileans and the Brits were a bit more amateurish perhaps?

Justo: We never discussed about... as usual English for us, Latin-Americans, were very eccentric and strange people. But we never criticized them; we accepted them as they were.

[Part 1 0:40:46] Lee: What impressed you about the British base?

Justo: I don't know. It was more cosy than our base. Our base was too military in design. Base B was more cosy, full of colours. We didn't have any colours... it was more homely. I didn't see anybody pushing another one with orders, which could have happened on our base... not with us... we were civilians... but between the Navy chaps.

[Part 1 0:41:37] Lee: But by-and-large, the British men wanted to be in the Antarctic because of the adventure, fun and excitement. You were suggesting earlier, that some of the Argentinian Naval people didn't really want to be there. They were just doing it for the money. Did you notice that difference in attitude between the two bases.

Justo: Yes certainly. In our base, people weren't interested in adventure. I only found one or two who were really keen on going out and sleeping outside and things like that. The rest were only trying to pass the time as quickly as possible. They were not interested in adventure.

[Part 1 0:42:28] Lee: You had a letter from Sir Vivian Fuchs?

Justo: Yes. I wrote to him because of the operation on Bill Geddes and suggested to him that all the British people should have their appendix removed. He answered me. He was very nice and he quite agreed with me. I still have the letter. Peter Bird has a copy of the letter.

[Part 1 0:43:05] Lee: I am just wondering if ... well there is a lot of minor details to ask you about. One is: was there a mail drop, an attempted mail drop? The Argentinians tried to do a flight across Antarctica in your time and tried to drop some mail at Deception Island?

Justo: They did.

[Part 1 0:43:23] Lee: They did drop some mail?

Justo: They did drop.

[Part 1 0:43:25] Lee: How accurate were they?

Justo: It fell about 200 metres from our base. I have a picture of the hole that this mail sack did when it fell on the ice. It didn't break the ice. That was very accurate.

[Part 1 0:43:49] Lee: I have to also ask you about the Chilean base's dog. They had a pet dog. Is that right?

Justo: I don't remember that. A cat? Well we had a cat. A famous tom cat.

[Part 1 0:44:13] Lee: Are you aware of the Argentinian Government trying to hold a meeting in Deception Island, in the Bay?

Justo: A meeting? When?

[Part 1 0:44:21] Lee: A Cabinet Meeting on a ship in the bay, whilst you were there. Does it ring any bells?

Justo: When we were there, General Amuse [???? - Transcriber] came in a ship with the Head of the Navy. They were all together. I don't know what ship. It think perhaps it was the [???? - Too much background conversation - Transcriber]. They came to visit our base and I remember that they were not very happy with me because they wanted me to show these top people the ionospheric. I was smoking a cigarette at the time and they called me 'Could you come and explain...' 'Yes, sure.' I was explaining to them with my cigarette in my mouth and all the military men turned around and said 'Is this guy a military from the Navy?' 'No, no, he is a civilian.' So they didn't say anything but I know that in [??? Too much background conversation -

Transcriber] knew me, because he belonged to my family. He knew exactly because they had told him. So he said 'Don't do anything about it.' It was being a little too informal – smoking a cigarette whilst explaining. I was always anti-military

[Part 1 0:46:27] Lee: Were you aware of any telepathy experiments going on?

Justo: Yes. Yes there was a very interesting telepathy experiment. It was performed during the whole year. That really is an accomplishment because that Perissé had insisted and he had every six hours or once a day they read... Somebody would go in and put four cards... shuffle the cards and put four cards and then the transmitter would have to arrive exactly at the hour, turn the cards and concentrate on the cards. There was a square, a triangle, a circle and two waves like that. It was done with the Duke University and some other university in Argentina, I don't know which. We never heard of the results.

[Part 1 0:47:37] Lee: So the receiver was back in Argentina was he?

Justo: In Argentina and in the States. That was organized by the Americans.

[Part 1 0:47:48] Lee: You have no idea how successful it was?

Justo: I was never told.

[Part 1 0:47:50] Lee: Was it a source of amusement to you?

Justo: No.

[Part 1 0:47:54] Lee: You took it seriously?

Justo: We didn't take it very seriously really. I wasn't taking the Commander very seriously.

[Part 1 0:48:04] Lee: I heard that he was trying to communicate telepathically as well, wasn't he? With submarines?

Justo: This was precisely to have a procedure to communicate with submarines, American submarines. Everything was organized by the University of Duke in the States, through some contact in the Argentine Navy. But I wasn't informed of the outcome.

[Part 1 0:48:40] Lee: How did you feel when it was time to come home?

Justo: As the Portuguese say 'The sadness never ends but good times do end' and so they did end, unfortunately. I would have stayed longer but I knew I had to finish my university course but I really had a nice time, a very good time, a really nice souvenir of that time.

[Part 1 0:49:26] Lee: Thank you very much indeed, Pablo.

[Part 1 0:49:30] [End of Part One]

Part Two

The high level of background noise on this recording (in a restaurant) has made some of the conversation inaudible.

[Part 2 0:00:00] Lee: This is Pablo Augustine Justo, having lunch with Nigel Bacon, Bernie Chappel and Jules Brett, recorded by Chris Eldon Lee on the 3rd of September, 2012.

[Part 2 0:00:16] Lee: How did you guys meet?

[Part 2 0:00:19] Justo: Well we lived on the same island. With Nigel, Nigel came to visit me in Argentina with Peter. They were returning from Antarctica.

Chappel: No, with me.

[Part 2 0:00:34] Justo: Ah with you. That's right.

Chappel: And Nigel. Peter was separate.

[Part 2 0:00:38] Justo: I remember I took you to an asado. You were eating the intestines.

Chappel: Correct.

[Part 2 0:00:51] Justo: You said 'They taste wonderful. What do they fill them with?' I said 'It just comes out of a cow. That's it.'

Chappel: Well wrapped up.

[Part 2 0:01:04] Lee: They are called chinchulines. Is that right?

Bacon: Chinchulines; I remember the name. Knotted up, plaited. And you still lived.

[Part 2 0:01:16] Justo: That was nothing.

Bacon: Well it was the contents, which was milky.

[Part 2 0:01:21] Lee: You met in the Antarctic, surely? You met ...

[Part 2 0:01:24] Justo: I met them in Antarctica.

Bacon: Across to their base.

[Part 2 0:01:35] Justo: I was the only one who spoke English.

Chappel: So you had to go on every trip?

[Part 2 0:01:39] Justo: I had to go on every trip. I don't think the BC went there. Remember the Commander we had? He never crossed.

Bacon: Was that Dave?

Chappel: Well Dave¹ didn't go to your base, did he?

[Part 2 0:01:56] Justo: Dave? Yes.

Chappel: Did he?

Brett: Yes, I went once. I walked around with Alberto, from the Chilean base, so we walked all the way round, played bridge.

[Part 2 0:02:06] Justo: Played bridge? Alberto, the Chilean? He played bridge?

Brett: I think he was the male nurse, wasn't he? Benavides [phonetic]

[Part 2 0:02:17] Justo: Alberto Benavides. Yes, that's right. He's the one who helped us in the operation, in Bill's operation.

Chappel: And mine.

[Part 2 0:02:30] Justo: And yours? I wasn't there.

Chappel: You were, yes. You offered to do the extraction.

[Part 2 0:02:43] Justo: I don't remember that.

Chappel: I do because you were there with a mask on.

[Part 2 0:02:53] Justo: You know we get together with the Antarctic people in Argentina, and do you remember Soro [phonetic]? That was the electrician, and he went back to Deception and he saw Deception as it was when they abandoned it, because he was commissioned in the boat to see how the base was. And he said it was like a mystery story. The food was there.

Chappel: Chris and I went in 2000, to Deception.

[Part 2 0:03:36] Justo: Did you visit the Argentine base?

Chappel: No.

[Part 2 0:03:43] Justo: What about the Chilean base? It disappeared, right?

Chappel: Submerged, yes, pretty well. Much of the Deception base had disappeared.

[Part 2 0:03:56] Justo: The English one?

¹ Dave Walter, BL at Base B in 1965.

Chappel: Yes. The only bunk that was left was mine. And the Otter was still there wasn't it, in bits?

[Part 2 0:04:23] Justo: Was the aeroplane there, still?

Chappel: In pieces, yes.

Brett: I went for a check-up on skin cancer last year – I had been to it before, about ten years before – to have it looked at again. He said 'What were you before you went civil flying?' 'Oh really?' he said. He forgot all about the diagnosis for the skin cancer. He dialled up the Antarctic. 'Where were you?' 'Adelaide Island and Deception Island and Alexander Island.' He dialled up Deception and there's a picture of the hangar and the aeroplane in pieces, propped against the side.

[Part 2 0:05:07] Justo: How did he get that?

Brett: On his Google Search on his thing. I said 'I thought that was supposed to be used for medicinal purposes, claimed against your ??? [inaudible].'

Bacon: Did you travel down on the *Biscoe* or the *Shackleton*, Jules?

Brett: *Biscoe* to Stanley.

Bacon: And then you transferred to the 'Shack', didn't you?

Brett: The *Shackleton*. I remember we had to go ... We had to run for Arturo ...

Bacon: We went Punta Arenas. Yes I remember that. And the plane you were brought down to fly with was the Pilatus Porter. Is that right?

Brett: No, two single Otters. We then got stuck in ice. I can't remember if we had switched from the *Biscoe* to the *Shackleton* then. Anyway we got stuck in the ice, eventually got about two miles off Adelaide where it finally came to its resting place. They were flying loads off the ice onto the plateau. Unfortunately one of my predecessors who I was due to relieve crashed, 317 I think it was, just smashed the thing into the ice and drove it and carried on through the cockpit. There the aeroplane sat for about thirty or forty years and was dug out about five years ago, and sold. It was almost perfect condition, apart from the propeller.

[Part 2 0:06:45] Justo: Was it in a museum or something?

Brett: Might be used for parts.

[Part 2 0:06:52] Justo: How many motors did it have?

Brett: One.

[Part 2 0:06:54] Justo: One only?

Brett: Yes. Just the one at the front.

[Part 2 0:06:57] Justo: It was really crazy. I flew. You took me.

Brett: Yes we went to Elephant Island.

[Part 2 0:07:03] Justo: I think now about that. I would never take that plane again.

Brett: When I came back, I said 'That's it! No more single engined ... over large stretches of icy water. That's it.'

Bacon: There were Twin Otters, weren't there?

Brett: There were, but later.

Bacon: They came later.

Brett: Of course my next job was flying single engined aeroplanes.

[Part 2 0:07:32] Justo: For the Sultan of Oman. You sent me a picture of two aeroplanes and you wrote 'This is half of the Sultan of Oman's air force.'

Brett: 'And I'm the commander of that detachment.' You produced this to some of your friends and said 'This is my friend Jules and this is what he I doing now, flying very old World War II ground attack fighters for the Sultan of Oman.' And this is the man who flew you in the Antarctic. You are very glad that you are still here.

[Part 2 0:08:10] Lee: How did you get the job?

Brett: I turned up at the Air Ministry with a beard and their lordships said to me 'You can take that off for a start and we think we have got just the right place for you.' And off I went.

[Part 2 0:08:25] Lee: A British appointment?

Brett: Yes, secondment but we were actually paid by the Sultan. The Air Force made a nice profit out of it.

Bacon: So it was the temerity of growing a beard, was it, that got you the job?

Brett: Well my previous employment was more important than that. But I served in the Army before I came to the Air Force. Did my two years National Service in the ranks and so the field marshal, or the air marshal's baton was lying in my knapsack. It didn't take too long to work out that if I took my promotion, I would be rewarded by a possible promotion and put in an office with desk. If I was any good at that I might get back on aeroplanes for another two years. If I did that all right I would get a bigger office with a bigger desk and that would be that. So I didn't bother to do a promotion exam. I had worked that one out.

Bacon: When I lived in Cheshire, the Vulcan was developed at Woodford. I remember talking to you about that because you flew Vulcans, and this weekend I was thinking about you because the Vulcan was at the Bournemouth Air Show, showing its paces. It's about the only one that's left.

Brett: It's the only one left still flying.

Bacon: A chap called Withers was flying it. He was mentioned so you probably know him.

Brett: No.

Bacon: Is there a sort of club of Vulcan pilots or Vulcan enthusiasts?

Brett: Yes. All the money that was raised by the *Daily Telegraph* to get this thing flying by subscriptions and so on. The guy who is flying it now is one of the last guys to fly the thing in service. It went out of service in about '91 I think. They are difficult things to maintain.

Bacon: I am sure they are. What was mentioned at the Bournemouth Air Show, Jules, was how similar the planes of it were in the development of the Concorde because it sort of evolved almost.

Brett: Do you remember a test aeroplane called Fairey Delta 2.

Bacon: Yes I do.

Brett: Flown by Peter Twiss. Well that one, when they were doing Concorde they actually dug out the Fairey Delta 2 and started doing it again.

[Part 2 0:11:09] Lee: Tell me which of these men you met in the Antarctic and how.

[Part 2 0:11:16] Justo: We were living in the same island, Deception Island, and we were what distance? Four miles, five miles across the water.

Chappel: By sea. Twenty six miles walk. I did a walk there. A long walk back with one of the Chilean guys.

[Part 2 0:11:42] Justo: I used to go to visit the Chileans. Remember we has a skidoo, sledge but I lost one of them. I still have a process going on with the Argentine Navy. I was going to visit the Chilean base and I had two dogs and they were going in front and all of a sudden the dogs turned left. I thought 'I am going straight.' And I went straight and the sledge went into the water. Fortunately I was not far from the base, but it was lost and you know how the Navy work ... Everything had to be written down. They said 'What about the sledge?' I said 'I am sorry, I lost it.' It is under the sea. So I had to fill forms, twenty forms to explain what was the problem. But I went to visit the Chilean base and I went to visit the British base, Base B.

[Part 2 0:13:00] Lee: I thought you were enemies.

[Part 2 0:13:03] Justo: No, we are not enemies. Why should we be?

[Part 2 0:13:08] Lee: Because you were opposing nations who were squatting in each other's territory.

[Part 2 0:13:12] Justo: No. According to the Antarctic Treaty, nobody has a right to claim any territory for at least fifty years. Which is spinach? That is spinach? OK. Can I have a little bit of sugar?

[Part 2 0:13:34] Lee: Were you not having to deliver Protest Notes to Dave Walter?

[Part 2 0:13:40] Justo: No. This was way before the Falkland Island issue so nobody cared.

Chappel: Well initially we were informed that we mustn't have any contact with your base.

[Part 2 0:13:59] Justo: You were informed that you didn't have to have any contact?

Chappel: Yes, then I developed toothache. You don't remember this?

[Part 2 0:14:11] Justo: No.

Chappel: And obviously the guys on base, Geoff Hodson, Dave Walters, offered to pull it out. It was a big tooth.

Bacon: You are a big softy.

Chappel: Absolutely. So I said 'No.' And I walked round to the Argentinian base which was absolutely taboo. But one of the first people I meet was your good self.

[Part 2 014:46] Lee: That's how you met?

Bacon: The fact that you are a six-foot rugby player, you are really a pussy cat when it comes to having your teeth taken out.

[Part 2 0:14:59] Justo: I would like to see you with an aching tooth down there.

Chappel: We had Benavides, he came over. Dracula. Can you remember that name?

[Part 2 0:15:12] Justo: No. Why did you call him Dracula?

Chappel: Well he was so eager to practise his nursing skills. You don't remember?

[Part 2 0:15:25] Justo: No, I don't remember that.

Chappel: So he and the doctor formed the operating ... Novocaine didn't work.

[Part 2 0:15:40] Justo: No, at that time I didn't even think about any problem with the English base. On the contrary, I was very eager to go and visit them. I don't know.

Perhaps it's because ... I have a great grandfather who was a pirate, who was called James Harris, and he lived in Argentina. And we descended from him. Perhaps I have something of his blood. I was sent to a Scottish school in Argentina. It's called St Andrew's Scots School. I used to play cricket which was absolutely boring to me. I used to go to the Caledonian dances, Scottish dances.

Chappel: Did you wear a kilt?

[Part 2 0:16:42] Justo: No, I didn't wear a kilt. So for me the British base was very familiar. Something like that. And we were never told not to go to the B Base. So I am surprised that you say that you were told ... Why was it?

Bacon: It was British protocol. We were told when we arrived at Deception by Frosty (Captain Turnbull) the protocol was that you didn't have anything to do with the Chileans or Argentinians because they had a similar claim to the Antarctic 'cake' as it were, and they were militarily based for another, and therefore ...

Chappel: That was the main problem.

Bacon: Ah yes, I think it was because the Chilean and Argentinian bases were run on military lines whereas BAS was, I suppose, backed by the Royal Navy, but it was ostensibly part of the Foreign Office.

Bacon: The funniest thing I recall, arriving at Deception, at the aircraft hangar, there was a red triangle and it said 'BAS for Men', which was a popular brew from Burton-on-Trent at the time². And apparently when Sir Vivian Fuchs, the Director at the time, visited the base, he took exception to it and had it removed. He wouldn't even find it amusing at all.

[Part 2 0:18:38] Justo: I have a letter from Sir Vivian Fuchs because I wrote to him complaining about how come they sent the people, Fids, to the bases in Antarctica, without removing their appendix. I told him about the operation and all that.

[Part 2 0:19:02] Lee: From Bill Geddes?

[Part 2 0:19:04] Lee: Bill Geddes, yes. And he wrote me back. I have the letter. I sent it by Stanley; I sent it to Peter. At that time I was living in London. Not in London; in Rugeley in Staffordshire. Nigel came to visit me, with Bernie. What was the car that you were using? I loved that.

Chappel: It was a Morgan.

[Part 2 0:19:31] Justo: It was a Morgan or a TR6?

Chappel: Morgan.

Bacon: Was it green?

² A pun. The Burton brewery, with a red triangle trademark, was Bass, pronounced the same as BAS.

[Part 2 0:19:36] Justo: No, it was sort of a dark green. I have a picture. I am going to send you a photograph. I took both of you.

Bacon: I had a frog-eyed Sprite, an MGB and then a Morgan.

[Part 2 0:19:53] Justo: I think it was a Morgan.

[Part 2 0:19:55] Lee: What did the letter from Sir Vivian Fuchs say?

[Part 2 0:19:59] Justo: That he agreed but it was a ... I don't remember what was the reason. Perhaps he didn't have time or money, but if you wish I can send you the letter. He answered me in Rugeley. I was living in England at that time. I came here under a scholarship scheme made by the CBI (Confederation of British Industries). I was a graduate engineer. The CBI guys said 'There's three ways of spending money for the big firms, the industrialists. One was in gambling which was stupid. The second one was in women which was the most agreeable. The third one in engineers which was the most useful because they paid us to come and train in England. Then when we went back we were supposed to buy British products, English products. Well that happened with me. I bought ... I was a representative of Sturmev Archer. They produced the Raleigh bicycles. That was the beginning.

Bacon: Three and five speed gears

[Part 2 0:21:35] Justo: Yes. I still have two bikes. They may be old, with three gears and hub brakes.

Brett: Dynamo?

[Part 2 0:21:55] Justo: I don't have a dynamo. Well anyway that's why I came here to England. But as I had a lot of extra time, I worked at many things. I was called the stereo doctor. I advertised in *Time Out*. I repaired everybody's audio system and they used to pay me. I lived in Notting Hill. At that time it was a very hippy place. They used to pay me with all sorts of merchandise. Then I worked for Porter Guide; it was a company off Gloucester Road. I used to collect tourists in my car, take them round London, all-day London. But I took the French speaking people, Italian and the Spanish. It was fun. I finished in Evershed and Vignoles, a firm in ... south of London. I remember now. I enjoyed very much my stay in the UK. It was very nice.

[Part 2 0:23:31] Lee: Were you surprised that the British men did not have their appendix taken out before they went South?

[Part 2 0:23:37] Justo: Yes, because we were all ...

[Part 2 0:23:41] Lee: You've had yours taken out?

[Part 2 0:23:43] Justo: We had all our appendixes taken out. Fortunately I had mine already taken out, but all the rest had their appendix out and I think it's a way of ... I've seen the books you had in your base. They said 'Lay the guy down on a couch or a table. Cut, remove it.' You remember that book?

Bacon: Somebody took rid their own appendix I think in one of the British bases, way back in time. Somebody held the mirror for him while he took it. On Signy Island, when I was down there, between '65/ '66, there was a crew member on the *Kista Dan* that went down to Halley Bay and he had a rumbling appendix and they performed the appendectomy on the base, and it was a big scrub-up time, and whipped his appendix out and that was it. But, as you say, it makes a lot of sense to take it out before you go and cause a lot of trouble.

[Part 2 0:25:01] Lee: How would you have felt, before you signed your documents to go South, being told 'Oh just one thing. That appendix you have got in your stomach ...' Wouldn't it have put you off?

Bacon: I don't think so, no, because it's a useless bit of gristle anyway, isn't it?

[Part 2 0:25:19] Lee: How about you, Bernie? Jules?

Brett: Well it was never suggested. The only thing that the Air Ministry did: they took all my filings out and redid them.

[Part 2 0:25:32] Justo: Oh yes? That's to avoid having ... That's a good idea. I didn't think about that.

Chappel: Mine was removed 12 months after returning, so a near thing.

[Part 2 0:25:54] Lee: Who witnessed to the operation ... Did you witness the operation on Bill?

[Part 2 0:25:58] Justo: I was there. I was the second surgeon. The funniest thing: I had to give him a drug, pentothal, to put him to sleep. So he had a little rubber tube ...

[Part 2 0:26:22] Lee: A drip?

[Part 2 0:26:24] Justo: Yes, so I put some pentothal in and waited to see how ... I told him 'OK Bill, just count up to ten and that's it.' And Bill was there 'ninety nine, a hundred'. It didn't do any effect at all. What really was very strange: after 'a hundred', Bill started counting in German. I don't know if he had any German blood or relatives. Why, one wondered? When we looked into it, the pentothal wasn't the problem. The problem was that he was speaking in German. We never sorted that out. I told Bill, I went to visit him in Dumfries when I was here in England and he was all right. I told him about that. He said 'Perhaps we understood that he was Scottish'; his English was bad. So we had to cancel the operation and look for another product.

[Part 2 0:27:41] Lee: I understand the ampoules were out of date.

[Part 2 0:27:43] Justo: They were out of date; that's it. So we found another drug.

[Part 2 0:27:49] Lee: You cut him open?

[Part 2 0:27:50] Justo: No we didn't cut him open.

[Part 2 0:27:52] Lee: Did you not?

[Part 2 0:27:53] Justo: No we didn't start that.

[Part 2 0:27:54] Lee: He woke up because you put the knife in?

[Part 2 0:27:58] Justo: No.

Bacon: It was the sell-by date. 'What do we do now?'

[Part 2 0:28:01] Justo: To be honest, the truth about it was that at the second attempt, we found a drug called kimical [phonetic] and I put the drug, a very little, and he fell asleep; he was out. And when the doctor cut him, he opened his eyes. So the doctor said 'Give him a bit more.' So I put more in but unfortunately see the ??? [inaudible]. A white cloth, and I was going to the other side. So I was putting one centimetre but it was pouring onto him until I found out he was ??? [inaudible] with his eyes open. Finally I could get the kimical in and then he slept. But we had a big problem then because the doctor had never performed an appendix operation and all of a sudden he sort of ... he had a panic attack and he was sitting like that. And we had studied the operation with a book called ??? [French title]. It's a French book we had at the base. You are supposed to put the separators in, and then with sort of pliers, expose extraction. You had to pull out the tissues until you find the three, the intestine. This is the appendix. We had act as though ... The doctor was completely ?? [incomprehensible] trying to find the appendix.

[Part 2 0:30:03] Justo: And I was with Minarindes [phonetic] and I pulled his intestines out and I couldn't find it. So I told the doctor 'Look Doc, I can't find anything, so what do we do?' The doctor was like that Soria [phonetic]. He said 'Put everything in.' So he started putting his intestines in and they wouldn't go in. I pushed (I had gloves), I pushed and they kept coming out and it was almost impossible. I told the doctor 'Listen. Look what's happening.' He said 'Put them in the lenward position.' We didn't know what that was. Lenward means tilted. When he explained, we turned him over and then all slid down and finally everything was inside and there we stopped. We said 'Look Doc, you had better pull your socks up. Do something but you have to finish the job. You have got to stitch him up again. Yes, so he did that.

Chappel: We never found the appendix.

[Part 2 0:31:21] We never found the appendix, no. And the worst thing was: we had Stanich [phonetic]. You remember Stanich, the met guy, meteorologist here, Hugo Stanich. He was a met guy and he had all the cameras. Everybody gave him a camera to take pictures. And suddenly he finished everything. He finished all the pictures and he started looking and suddenly he fainted. Everybody was so worried about their cameras. Bill was forgotten. He was lying there like a corpse, and of course everybody was looking at the cameras. 'It's working. OK. Now you.'

Brett: I think I would like to change my order for sausage to something else. [Much laughter]

[Part 2 0:32:21] Lee: They did find something, didn't they, inside him?

[Part 2 0:32:24] Justo: I only found something. We didn't have anything to do because we didn't get all his intestines out. It was very touching. Suddenly I found something hard and I resolved it. To be honest, I didn't think that was the problem. We never knew what was his problem because ...

[Part 2 0:32:51] Lee: According to the transcript of Peter, translated into English from Spanish: basically he was constipated. It was nothing to do with ... something very hard. Shit in his ... squeezed it out. Is that right? Is that what you remember?

[Part 2 0:33:09] Justo: Because it was very small. One symptom that is really true was that when he lifted his leg, and we pushed here, he had a pain, and that is an appendix thing. So that was why the doctor ... He didn't want to operate. He was scared to death. He never performed an operation in his life.

[Part 2 0:33:41] Lee: Bill was fine, wasn't he?

[Part 2 0:33:44] Justo: He was fine and he asked me when he woke up 'Can I see the ...' 'It was filthy with ... it smelled so we threw it away' I said. 'OK' but at the end of the year, I remember I called him on the radio and said 'Look Bill, ...' The ships were coming in. I said 'Look Bill, we have to tell you the truth. We did not find your appendix.' And he said 'I had a suspicion.' But he was all right. So we never knew about it. The funniest thing: we received a telegram from the Queen, thanking everybody involved ...

Bacon: Because it was a multi-national ... wasn't it?

[Part 2 0:34:43] Justo: Yes. So all the problems between the two bases were completely dismissed.

Chappel: They were, yes.

Bacon: They evaporated.

Chappel: I think Dave Walter, even the last time I met him didn't really talk about it a lot. I think he had a lot more (I don't know how you found it, Jules), a lot more for the Argentinians than he did ... a lot more time for your people than the Chileans.

[Part 2 0:35:27] Justo: But the Chileans were very friendly. Remember we passed the 18th of September, their day, and we had a nice time. They gave us little hats and you know like the Chileans. Do you remember the Russian ship that came to visit us? I'm trying to remember the name. Was it *Eltanin*³?

Brett: I can't remember. I remember the skipper. He came ashore. Do remember in our base we had a little game thing with the end of people's ties. He immediately dispatched somebody, some lesser mortal, to go back to the ship and bring a tie. The captain's we put next to Prince Philip's tie.

³ The *Eltanin* was an American ship.

[Part 2 0:36:20] Justo: Prince Philip? Was Prince Philip in Deception?

Brett: He had been there, so he was very pleased with this. And the commissar was getting more and more upset. I said to the skipper – he had about 400 words of English but 300 were brand names of Scotch whiskies.

Chappel: Would you like water?

Brett: He had been skipper of one of the fishing mother ships up in the North of Scotland, so he knew all the little Scottish ports like ??? [inaudible] in the Hebrides and so on.

[Part 2 0:36:59] Justo: You had to carry him back?

Brett: No, he was on his feet but we all went back for more booze on board.

[Part 2 0:37:11] Justo: We had to carry him back.

Brett: Somebody fell in the water.

Chappel: Moriarty was his name. He was at the Argentinian base.

Bacon: There was a Moriarty who was an ionosphericist⁴. Dark hair, he went to Halley Bay.

Brett: He was pulled out of the water. The captain proceeded to have him rubbed down with a rough towel, and vodka poured down his throat. He recovered quite all right. I remember him saying ‘So you have been here for one and a half years and you haven’t seen a woman.’ But you had. The Third Engineer. Some of us had us noticed.

[Part 2 0:38:04] Justo: The Third Engineer?

Brett: The Third Engineer was a woman, yes.

[Part 2 0:38:08] Justo: One of the meteorologists was also a woman.

Brett: None of us had noticed.

Chappel: Yes, he fell into the oggin (into the sea).

Bacon: Who did? You did?

Chappel: This Chris Moriarty, disappeared. So everybody rushed to one part of the boat and the boat tipped over. So it was Geoff Hodson barking orders for half of us to get to the other side of the boat so we could haul him out. He hadn’t been aware of anything. Just ??? [indecipherable] with the cold.

⁴ Daniel T. Hudson Moriarty.

[Part 2 0:39:07] Justo: He came to visit us as well the captain of the Russian ship. They didn't leave us any gifts or anything like the American ship. The American ship was the *Edisto*. They left boxes and boxes of chewing gum. All the year round we had chewing gum.

Brett: The Russians had been very numerous. I was flying one night between Bombay and Dubai. The radio reception was pretty bad but I was talking to Bombay. I could hear this Russian aeroplane. Nobody could speak to him at all. So I said whatever it was; it wasn't Aeroflot; it was some cargo outfit. I said 'Give me your position. I will try to relay. So he gave me his position. I relayed it to Bombay. Bombay said 'Oh yes, just tell him to continue on his flight on his present course. Thank you.' 'Anybody ex Royal Air Force?' We were all ex Royal Air Force. I said 'Yes. All three of us.' 'Oh' he said. 'Anybody serve in Aden?' I said 'Yes.' 'Ah' he said 'We've been in Aden for three days. Now we know why you left.' We actually had to stay in some hotels with the Aeroflot crew in Bombay. Some extremely good parties with them. A week's trip: two days in Bombay then Dubai and back in the middle of the night. Three days and then back to Hong Kong.

[Part 2 0:41:11] Justo: Now coming back from Antarctica. We came with a ??? [incomprehensible]. And I betted somebody that the first woman I saw, I would give her a kiss. So the bet was on. We arrived in Ushuaia and the first woman I saw was the wife of the Commander in Chief of Ushuaia base of the Navy. I thought I would ask to meet her. So I went up to her and she was young and I told her 'Look, my name is so-and-so. I come from Deception Island. One year I was there. I made a pledge with somebody I would kiss the first woman I see.' She grabbed me in front of everybody and she kissed me. It was incredible. She had a very good sense of humour.

Bacon: Was it a good smacker?

[Part 2 0:42:21] Justo: I don't really remember that. I think so. Her husband was beside her. It was polite, yes.

[Part 2 0:42:34] Lee: Was there, Bernie, an appetite amongst the Brits to socialise with the Argentinians? Or was it mainly you that was forging a link?

Chappel: I think Peter Bird was interested; and myself. We were the principal ... Peter was fascinated with your leader and his minder.

[Part 2 0:43:06] Justo: He was a ??? [indecipherable] unidentified flying objects.

Bacon: Peter was?

[Part 2 0:43:18] Justo: No, our leader. He wrote books.

Bacon: Did he see it?

[Part 2 0:43:27] It came out in the newspapers, all about sightseeing. He reported sightseeing. It came out on the front page of the Argentine newspapers, but to be honest we didn't see absolutely anything. I think he was dying to see something. And

of course everybody that said that they saw something were all his subordinates, in the Navy. 'Did you see it?' 'Yes, of course.' 'Oh yes sir.' But we never saw anything. They were seven Marines and all the rest were civilians and we didn't see anything. And he wrote a book about these UFOs, the Antarctic experience and all that.

[Part 2 0:44:50] Lee: I thought other stations, other nations reported it too.

[Part 2 0:44:56] Justo: Perhaps, but did you see anything on Base B? You did see? What did you see, Bernie? Was it the same day you spotted them? Yes? What did you see?

Chappel: Your meteorologist, I can't remember which one.

[Part 2 0:45:28] Justo: We had one: Hugo Stanich.

Chappel: Hugo, that's it, observed the same thing as I did, but knowing the characters on base, the likes of Jules etcetera, I kept quiet about it, until I heard from your meteorologist. The Chileans hadn't seen anything but he said he seen exactly what I saw. The next thing I know, it's in the national Argentinian press.

[Part 2 0:46:14] Justo: What did you see?

Chappel: A whole green glow. It appeared in a clear sky, above, stayed there for quite a while.

[Part 2 0:46:36] Justo: That was during the night?

Chappel: Yes I was going out to make an observation and I was looking up at the cloud cover. I saw this orb and thought ... It stayed still in the sky. I thought 'I will go and make my observations, take temperatures and what have you.' And as I moved towards the screen, it shot off to the north at high speed and disappeared. I then took my observations and was walking back. It reappeared and then shot off in the opposite direction. That's what ...

[Part 2 0:47:31] Justo: How come we didn't see anything of that?

Chappel: Oh right. Well I kept quiet about it until I went over to the Argentine base and they said, whoever it was I spoke to said they had seen it too.

[Part 2 0:47:44] Justo: Probably the Base Leader. He was dying to see something. He was reading all the time books about UFOs and ...

Chappel: When we landed, we had become the laughing stock of Base B, if I wasn't already.

[Part 2 0:48:06] Lee: So you didn't discuss it on base, what you had seen? Nobody else on your base claims to have seen it?

Chappel: No they wouldn't, anyway.

[Part 2 0:48:19] Lee: Whatever it was, was it moving in an unnatural manner.

Chappel: Well it was the speed at which it travelled. I didn't think an awful lot ... I thought perhaps one of the planets was visible in that particular season, Venus or whatever. I didn't think a lot more of it until it moved off. Then I thought it can't be. There aren't any aircraft flying around so what was it?

[Part 2 0:49:05] Lee: The Chileans also claimed to have seen something? Is that right?

Chappel: I don't think so, no. Only the Argentinians.

[Part 2 0:49:36] Justo: A Spanish professor wrote to me a couple of months ago to ask for this phenomenon.

Chappel: Yes. He's been writing to me.

[Part 2 0:49:46] Justo: Yes? He's really insistent.

Chappel: Yes.

[Part 2 0:49:51] Justo: I told him finally I hadn't seen anything but he insisted. But you know, one of the most important things that they have done in the Argentine base was: they had an agreement with Duke University in the States and with another university in Washington. And remember they went to read cards every six hours. There were four cards laid on a table at exactly the same time. You had to turn a card, and they had a square, a circle, a triangle and two waves like that. They had to look at them, think about it and transmit it. And at the same time, the University of Duke and the University of Washington and in Buenos Aires, there were people receiving that, and they had to write down. And that was done by Duke University. They were trying to find a method of communicating with the submarines which went down the North Pole. They lost radio contact, and that was a way of transmitting information. But the trouble is: we were never told about the results. I don't know the percentage. Perhaps they only received 5% or perhaps 90%. I offered myself as a volunteer. But he said 'No no. You don't believe in anything, so you are not going to do that.' So he got Stanich and all the rest in the Navy because they couldn't refuse. But it was a pity because it was a very interesting experiment. But I think I was classified. He never gave me a mention but he never told me about that once I asked him.

Bacon: I remember going to a 16mm film presentation of the eruption at Deception Island the year after it was, in 1970 whatever it was: seventy something.

Brett: Bernie and I left in 1967. Pablo as well.

[Part 2 0:53:08] Justo: Not '66.

Bacon: Were you '66/'67 Jules?

Brett: '66.

Bacon: I only remember the very early '70s. But there was this BAS presentation of the eruption. Somebody on the base at Deception had taken all this film what had gone off. And there was some very graphic accounts of reports from each of the three bases as to the effect. And apparently the epicentre, the area of greatest activity: I'm not sure if it was either the Chilean or ...

[Part 2 0:53:53] Justo: It was the Chilean side.

Bacon: And they took shelter in a sort of underground cellar. Apparently the walls were coming in on them and it was a pretty hairy experience I think. The other thing that I can remember from the film was the explanation of the tons of ash that was rather like the Icelandic eruption. But that must have been an incredible moment in bringing together the people on the island at that time, because everyone would have been looking out for everyone else, I would imagine.

[Part 2 0:54:37] Justo: How did they get them out?

Bacon: I don't know. I don't know which boat was in first.

Brett: The Chileans made their way across to the British ... It was only about ??
[inaudible]

Bacon: I think everyone was taken off en masse really.

Brett: As far as I know, the hangar is still there.

[Part 2 0:55:05] Justo: You know, I wrote an article about the first car that was taken to Antarctica. My passion is old cars, vintage cars. The first car that was taken to Antarctica was an Arrol-Johnston, a car that was built in Scotland, and that was taken by Shackleton in the *Nimrod* expedition. And I published an article in one of the vintage car magazines and a photograph of the wheel. That is the only part remaining from this Arrol-Johnston car. They removed the radiator because they thought what was the radiator used for in Antarctica They were working with it and they had to stop every twenty minutes because it overheated. And it sank in the snow. It wasn't properly tested. It went sent as a ... Johnston was a naturalist and he had a lot of money and he had a thought: who was in good relations with Shackleton. So when Shackleton said he was going to Antarctica, he gave him money and the car, just to get rid of him, to separate him from his daughter. That's how they took the car. And the mystery now is whereabouts is the remaining of that car. Nobody knows. Nobody knows what happened to the car. Somebody said it fell into a crevasse. Shackleton planned to take it on the *Nimrod* expedition, just in the hold. The problem was he did not have any sort of sledge type wheels. It had wooden wheels, and when it found soft snow, it would stick there and they couldn't do anything, pulled it out.

Brett: Did you say it had some tracks on it?

[Part 2 0:57:43] Justo: No, it didn't. That was the main problem, but what was interesting was: in 2008 somebody from England went to see the hut that Shackleton built, and was looking for the car, or parts of the car, and they found some wooden

crates. And they found whisky and it was a hundred years old. The brand was Mackinlay.

Chappel: Ogle, the chap that went.

[Part 2 0:58:22] Justo: Yes? I don't remember the name. They tried the whisky and it was excellent because it was kept a hundred years at low temperature. The whisky industry was very upset about that. They wanted to know if the whisky was still all right. It's not the same as what happened at Sotheby. There went at auction three bottles of wine which belonged to Napoleon and a guy bought them and he was with friends. He paid about a thousand pounds each bottle. They opened a bottle. It was ...

Chappel: Like vinegar?

[Part 2 0:59:14] Justo: Yes but the whisky was there hundred years and wasn't changing. Mackinlay was the brand. I'm not sure if you still have that?

Bacon: It's still going, yes, Mackinley's is. We used to sell it when I was at ICI. When the Scottish whisky industry went through a bad time, they had the clever marketing idea: Whereas it used to be five years old for a minimum aged for blended whisky, because they had got so much of it, they could afford to say that it was eight years old. So they relaunched it saying it was 8-years old. It was fantastic. I went on a train; it was quite a riotous affair, from Manchester with a brass band to see us off. It was a steam train; it was the *Royal Scot* actually. We went up to Grange-over-Sands and there were copious amounts of this 8-year old Mackinlay whisky which they had relaunched because they had got so much of it. I think the brand has still survived as a brand. It's an old brand by somebody or other.

[Part 2 1:00:31] Lee: Was that a trip for selling it?

Bacon: No we just went to Grange-over-Sands and it had a large enough platform for inebriated passengers to walk off the effects of this whisky and then go back to Manchester again.

[Part 2 1:00:55] [End of Part Two]

ENDS

Highlights:

- [Part 1 0:00:37] Family origins
- [Part 1 0:01:18] Illustrious forebears
- [Part 1 0:05:46] Pablo's father's visit to South Georgia
- [Part 1 0:07:16] Reasons for father's visit
- [Part 1 0:08:04] Reasons why Pablo went to Antarctica
- [Part 1 0:09:08] Influence on Pablo of his period in Antarctica
- [Part 1 0:10:40] His interview for Antarctic service and nature of his work
- [Part 1 0:13:13] Organisation of the Argentine Station on Deception Island
- [Part 1 0:14:54] The Station Commander of the Deception Island Station
- [Part 1 0:16:24] Relations with Stations of other nations on Deception Island
- [Part 1 0:18:53] Argentine/British relations on Deception Island
- [Part 1 0:20:28] Argentine Station lack of decent provisions
- [Part 1 0:21:14] Exchange of provisions between Argentine/ British Stations
- [Part 1 0:24:27] Pablo's ionosphere work
- [Part 1 0:24:57] Pablo's leisure activities
- [Part 1 0:26:19] Reasons why Argentine Naval personnel went to Antarctica
- [Part 1 0:27:00] Pablo's visits to British Station
- [Part 1 0:29:49] Bill Geddes phony appendicitis and operation
- [Part 1 0:33:30] [REDACTED]
- [Part 1 0:35:37] Preparations for the appendix operation
- [Part 1 0:37:05] UFO observations and reports
- [Part 1 0:40:46] Comparison of Argentine and British Stations and attitudes
- [Part 1 0:42:28] Correspondence with Sir Vivian Fuchs
- [Part 1 0:43:05] Failed mail drop
- [Part 1 0:44:21] Argentine Cabinet meeting on Deception Island
- [Part 1 0:46:27] Telepathy experiment and reasons for
- [Part 2 0:05:33] Plane crash at Adelaide.
- [Part 2 0:11:42] Bureaucracy after a dog sledging incident.
- [Part 2 0:18:08] 'BAS for Men' joke.
- [Part 2 0:25:58] Anaesthetising Bill Geddes.
- [Part 2 0:32:24] Bill did not have appendicitis.
- [Part 2 0:41:11] Kissing the first woman after return.
- [Part 2 0:43:27] More on UFOs.
- [Part 2 0:49:51] Telepathy experiment.