

## Pat O'Connell

Oh I suppose my earliest memory of the statue would be my mother because the number 3 bus from Ballyphehane where we lived at the time was right in front of the statue. So my earliest memory would be of my mam telling me about Fr Mathew and the temperance movement and what it meant to Cork city. As a Corkman, I suppose as iconic as the English Market is at this stage. It's jsut part of the character of Cork and you know you come onto Patrick Street and you see Fr Mathew statue and you say - you know – home. And for a Corkman it means an awful lot obviously and very proud of it. I think a couple of years ago they wanted to move it a few feet and there was absolute uproar. And it's amazing what people think of monuments like the Fr Mathew Statue until somebody tries to do something with it and then all of a sudden you realise you know people really so recognise this and respect it for what it is and you know – you ain't moving this one. And I suppose they are my memories of it but I mean for a Corkman it's just iconic.

Q: And it's important to celebrate it?

It's very important to celebrate it because you know sometimes you don't see the wood for the trees as the fellow says and you don't realise the connections these have with your past and with your history and again as a trader in the English Market you're very much aware of how much important tradition and heritage is to a city. And I suppose as a trader in the English MARkey, sometimes you kinda think do people realise how important it is? But they actually do because when something comes up about something like moving a statue or doing something to the English Market that might be out of context with it, there's generally absolutely a mass movement against it, and I suppose that's when you see what people really do think of these iconic statues or fixtures and Fr Mathew Statue certainly comes into that classification.