

Interview with Male Shopowner

How his profession started:

MR: Well, actually I got into photography, uh uh uh, I think I was about 19, 18, 19 around there. And um I start out with a little point and shoot camera taking pictures of myself and my friends, but when I migrated to St. Croix [2 second pause, truck drives by] a few years after, I um, I bought myself a Pentax K 1000 basically for taking pictures of my work, of my art work that I do and um, [2 second pause] I realized that I was pretty good at it and apart from that I was taking pictures of my friends there and my family there. Eventually I found myself doing wedding pictures and birthday parties and stuff like that for people and I said well if I can do this for free for um my friends and family I can do it for money as well so I [honking horn] so I sort of developed, developed the skills more you know by reading and doing more practical stuff out there in the field. And I found that I got quite good at it.

Narrator has not only documented the activity and effects of the volcano, but has also made it the focus of his business:

MR: Well for me it was more excitement more than anything else I mean during the time when everybody was like panicking and running here and there and not wanting to be in Plymouth I was one of those who wanted to be there to see exactly what was happening because when the crisis actually started, I um started taking pictures from the very day one, you know. So its like uh I actually didn't want to move out of Plymouth, I wanted to be there, you know so that I could capture everything.

DS.: Uh huh. Some of pictures are taken pretty close up, um how did that come along?

MR: Well, um, in the firs few weeks of the crisis I wanted to see where, where this whole thing was happening so I ended up way up into the mountains on the crater rim itself staring down into this monster you know, and uh, uh [car goes by] when I keep doing is going back to same places so, you know, so so that, so that I could document this whole thing properly because I mean apart from getting really spectacular pictures I mean that everybody likes, um, I also did it from a, I think I did it from a scientific standpoint as well because um I did a lot of before and after scenes of um the volcano and some of the areas around the volcano. Like I would go back to the same place, stand at the same place to get pictures of the crater this week, next week I'll go back there, photograph the changes

Narrator used to have a business in Plymouth, now located on the other side of the island:

MR: but um, I was I was actually doing the same thing in Plymouth, a lot of photography work, and a lot of paintings and stuff. Well you know still [1 second pause] you know still same small business not on a huge scale because as you know Montserrat is not a [1 second pause] highly populated place so, [chuckle], you know not much tourists or anything. So back in Plymouth, when I was living in Plymouth years before the volcano, um, [2 second pause] we only had what a 12,000 people living on the island [car goes by], so um there's no there no point in having a big big store yeah.

Business on the island today:

DS: Ok. And do you find that your store is very successful with the tourists now or that there's...

MR: It has been, because um, you know, um [car goes by, 5 second pause], I know what the people want, I think I know what the people want

DS: Uh huh.

MR: so um yes I have been I've been pretty successful [car goes by],

DS: uh huh,

MR: in what I do yes. Because a lot of people [car goes by] come to this place. You want the best pictures on the island, you want the best paintings on the island,

DS: Uh huh.

MR: You have to come to this store. [chuckle]

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