

Oral History Society Regional Network

Annual Report
2014

Contents

Annual Report Welcome	3
Developing the Network	4
Oral History Website and Yahoo Groups Site	4
Reports from the regions	
East of England	6
East Midlands	8
London	11
North East	15
North West	18
South East	19
South West	24
West Midlands	25
Yorkshire	29
Scotland	33
Wales	35
OHS Conference 2014	36
Regional Network representatives	37

Annual Network Report 2014

Thank you for your contributions to this year's annual update, as you will see, there are a wide variety of oral history projects across the country and it's useful to have an overview of what's been happening. I'd encourage everyone to share the report with their local OHS members and when it's available on the OHS website, I'll keep you posted.

During the OHS Strategy Review in the autumn last year, Padmini Bloomfield and I presented a report on the Regional Network with an audit of where we were, what we aimed to achieve in the next few years, and how we were going to do this based on feedback from the network.

We have achieved some of our goals at the time of writing and are working towards delivering other aspects in the coming months. So far we have:

- Aided better communication through updated contacts lists and yahoo group discussions. Social media platforms, updated website and regular newsletters – thanks to Michelle Winslow, Anne Gulland and Fiona Cosson are proving popular and reaching a wide audience
- The redesigned website raises profile of the Regional Network with map on front page; we have had lots of inquiries via webpage
- Compiled and circulated a comprehensive Information Pack to all Regional Networkers listing useful information about their roles and responsibilities; events and activities; communication methods, including newsletter, social media, yahoo groups; information about the Trustees and Chairman's Report at the last AGM. This pack was aimed at providing information for new as well as long-serving networkers
- Increased attendance of local members and non-members at the annual events

We always welcome feedback on how you think the OHS Regional Network can be improved and at this year's event Mary Stewart and Sarah Lowry will be presenting their idea for workshops in the regions and this will be communicated via the network.

We're looking for offers from the network to host our 2015 annual regional networker event and ideas for the theme so please do contact me if you're interested in hosting it next year.

Juliana Vandegrift, Regional Network Co-ordinator

Developing the Network

As a response to the OHS five year strategic review held in 2013 we are re-launching the London network which is the reason why we are holding our annual event in London this year. We are currently recruiting for networkers in the London area.

New Networkers:

In the last twelve months we have one new Regional Networker:

- For Yorkshire we have a new networker, Simon Bradley, a community digital artist who specialises in digital media, voice and memory.

Former Networkers:

In the last twelve months two Regional Networker have left the network:

- South East - David Lee - has retired from the Hampshire Record Office
- South West - Chris Webb, moved location

Both have been valued members of the regional network and we will miss them and wish them good luck on their new ventures.

The OHS Committee still funds a limited bursary scheme to enable networkers without institutional support to carry out activities to support their Continuing Professional Development. Please do contact me for more details.

Juliana Vandegrift

Oral History Society Website and Yahoo Groups site

The Oral History Society Virtual Network has a web-area on the Yahoo Groups site where Regional Networkers can access not only archived messages but files posted onto the site – including this Annual Report. If you don't already have access to this, follow the instructions below:

Accessing Files/uploaded material on this email group's Yahoogroups web-area.

- 1) What happens when you click on (or cut and paste into your browser window) <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/oral-history-network/files/> ?
 - a) You get right in, and see a list of files. You're in, these instructions are not for you!
 - b) You get a bumptious Yahoo! sign-in page. Sign in and try again.

- 2) If you don't have a Yahoo! ID to sign in with:
Suspend disbelief, read 'Signing up is easy', and click on the link.
Jump through the hoops. Billions of people around the world have already done it, so it must be possible.
- 3) Try again. The combination of a Yahoo! I.D. and email-address membership of the oral-history-network email group should be enough to get you in to the files, and you should be able to download or upload as you please - even bits of audio file, if you wish.
- 4) If you've done all that, and still can't get to the Files, then get in touch with me directly at craigfees@aol.com

Craig Fees

Reports from the Regions

East of England

Suffolk (Juliana Vandegrift)

I'm currently recording a group of retired Gurkha veterans living in Colchester. **Gurkha Stories** is a twelve month project to record the stories of the veterans for a book, a website and an exhibition at Colchester Castle Museum in the summer of 2015. A project blog can be viewed at www.gurkhastories.wordpress.com and a full website will be available early next year.

Little Waldingfield, Our Village History From 1840 to 2014

A new local history book written and researched by members of Little Waldingfield History Society as part of our Heritage Lottery Fund 'All Our Stories' project, which includes oral histories. Over 350 pages, full colour throughout, with nearly 500 photographs. Price £18.00, all sale proceeds will go to preserve St Lawrence Church. To order please contact: Sue Sheppard on 01787 247980 or Di Langford on 01787 248298

Britten-Pears Foundation has begun a new project called **Britten Stories**. The idea came about because many of our public visitors tell us anecdotes about meeting Benjamin Britten or visiting The Red House during his lifetime, and we wanted a way to capture these for the archive. So on the days we're open to the public, we invite our house and site visitors to take a little break from their visit to tell us their stories. This involves a short, simple interview with one of our project volunteers, usually 10-15 mins, which we record to add to our existing oral history archive.

Thanks to support from the Heritage Lottery Fund, prior to starting the project we were able to arrange a training day for our volunteers with the brilliant British Library/Oral History Society trainer, Rib Davis, which gave us all a valuable grounding in the issues involved in oral history interviewing. We have plans for an online repository for the stories as part of the ongoing development of the BPF website, and hope to get this up and running in the new year.

If you have a story to tell about Benjamin Britten or The Red House in Aldeburgh, please let us know: reveal@brittenpears.org. (**Jude Brimmer, Archivist, Britten-Pears**)

Eighth in the East: Recording the forgotten story of the 'friendly invasion'

The epic tale of how American air-crews flew daylight raids over Nazi-occupied Europe is a familiar one to historians of the Second World War. Surprisingly, the life-changing experiences of people living in the East of England, who witnessed the dramatic social and landscape change that accompanied the Yanks, has been largely ignored. Now, a region-wide project, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, is working to record this important testimony and it needs the support of volunteers to deliver a lasting record.

The Eighth in the East is looking for volunteers of all ages and abilities to help collect this gripping history. It needs Oral History Coordinators, Interviewers, Summarisers and Technicians so that the testimony of those who lived in wartime East Anglia is recorded.

"We've become fixated by pilots and planes", said Project Director Nick Patrick, "but the story of local people is just as remarkable. It wasn't all chewing gum and spam. Children witnessed horrific accidents, saw black and white Americans segregated because of the colour of their skin and witnessed the fields and woodlands bulldozed to make way for runways".

Training sessions will be held throughout the East of England over the next 18 months and equipment is available to borrow so please get in touch now. Go to the project website to find out more www.8theast.org or email Project Manager David Cain david@8theast.org

Sturmer oral history project carried out oral histories by villagers as part of a project for a heritage trail in Sturmer near Haverhill. They interviewed eighteen people starting in 2012 (aged 90s to 20s). The interviews have been stored with Essex County Council and are available in Sturmer on request. www.sturmerhistory.com and YouTube – Sturmerism (**Linda Bevan, Sturmer Local History Group**)

Stoke by Nayland Local History Society was granted funding by Heritage Lottery earlier this year to set up a Community Archive. It will include memories of several residents who have spent most or all of their entire lives in the Village. In March Juliana Vandegrift kindly agreed to hold a training workshop for several volunteers to introduce them to oral history interviewing and recording techniques. (**Melanie Isted**)

Essex (Martin Astell)

The Silver End Heritage Society is nearing completion its HLF funded project to record the experiences of those living, working and growing up in the village of Silver End which was designed to house workers at the Crittall windows factory. The recordings have now been deposited in the Essex Sound and Video Archive at the Essex Record Office.

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service' project (which is also HLF funded) to record events and incidents in the history of firefighting in Essex is on-going. The subjects being covered are: Essex Firefighters in World War II; the Auxiliary Fire Service; the Southend Pier fires of 1976 and 2005; the Saffron Walden Rose and Crown Public House Fire of 1969; and the work carried out by Essex crews in rescue missions overseas.

Other projects are in their early stages. Members of South Woodham Ferrers Local History Society are to carry out interviews relating to the creation and development of South Woodham Ferrers, a new town built in the Essex countryside in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The National Trust has included an oral history element in a major restoration project at Rainham Hall, and I have given some initial advice to the Maldon Society as they consider applying for funding.

Colchester Recalled have completed the digitisation of their recordings (around 3,300 of them!) as well as summaries and transcripts of the recordings. They are working with the Essex Sound and Video Archive to make these more accessible.

The *History of Jazz* in Essex exhibition continues to tour a selection of libraries in Essex. This is the result of a project delivered by Essex on Tour for Essex County Council in which nearly 50 interviews were recorded with musicians, promoters and venue holders.

The Essex Sound and Video Archive at the Essex Record Office is engaged in the development phase of its HLF-funded project *You Are Hear: sound and a sense of place*. The project will digitise and catalogue oral history and other recordings held in the archive, and then present them in different ways including audio benches, audio-visual kiosks and online access.

East Midlands

Leicestershire & Rutland (Cynthia Brown & Colin Hyde)

The East Midlands Oral History Archive (EMOHA) continues to provide training and support for projects across the East Midlands. This year's East Midlands Oral History Day, organised by Colin Hyde and Cynthia Brown, took place in Nottingham in July, and was a celebration and showcasing of the contribution the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has made to oral history in the region over the last twenty years. EMOHA is also involved in a new research project, 'Affective Digital Histories', at the University of Leicester. This is investigating how community ties and bonds have changed, and continue to change, through periods of decline and regeneration of urban landscapes in some of Britain's post-industrial towns and cities. The archival materials that document these changes include new oral histories. More details are on the project website <http://affectivedigitalhistories.org.uk/>.

Following on from the 'Building Shared Heritages' programme, the University of Leicester has created online training resources for community historians, which include oral history, at <http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/history/outreach>. Colin Hyde of EMOHA and Dr Sally Horrocks of the University of Leicester have also been advisors to the East Midlands BBC radio stations who are recording local stories for

the BBC's 'WW1 at Home' project; and Colin has compiled more than two hours of oral history material about WW1 from the collections at EMOHA. He will be making these available online in the near future. Community-based projects using oral history to research World War 1 include 'How Saxby Street Got its Name: the First World War and South Highfields', an HLF-funded project launched in Leicester in February 2014. Its title refers to the renaming of several streets with Germanic names, among them Saxe-Coburg Street, Gotha Street and Hanover Street, which became known instead as Saxby, Gotham and Andover Streets. It aims to record some of the stories that people in this area of the city recall about the war, including those from relatives who fought in it, protested against it, or were forced to leave their homes in other countries.

De Montfort University (DMU) has also been involved in oral history projects in 2014, including the ongoing Theatre Archive Project (TAP) in partnership with the British Library. Around seventy five rugby players will be interviewed as part of a new three year Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) research project by DMU's International Centre of Sports History and Culture, in collaboration with the World Rugby Museum in Twickenham. The interviews will focus on internationals who played between 1945 and the advent of the modern professional game in 1995, and will include past captains, record-breakers and 'one cap wonders', alongside such well-known names as Sir Clive Woodward, Will Carling and Martin Johnson.

Nottinghamshire (Christina Raven-Conn)

The Local Studies section of Nottingham Central Library continues to support local projects, mainly with advice and access to our collection for research. We are also willing to receive copies of oral history from local Nottingham and Nottinghamshire projects for archiving and also copies for the library's collection where possible.

The **Nottingham Women's Centre** project is now completed, about the Women's liberation movement in Nottingham and Nottingham Women's Centre when it was on Shakespeare Street in the 1970s - mid 1980s. Their exhibition in March at Nottingham Central Library, showcased the project. Find out more at <http://wolannottingham.wordpress.com/>.

Eleven-eleven-eleven (Part of Nottingham City Council First World War Project - 'From the Trent to the Trenches' - Nottinghamshire in the Great War 1914-18) as mentioned last year is still continuing. It is a community memories project gathering stories from the many diverse communities that make up Nottingham as it is today. Their exhibition opened at Nottingham Castle Museum; from 26th July to 16th November. They also had a smaller exhibition on August 9th at the Nottingham Central Library's 'What Price Glory?' exhibition and event. Find out more at <http://www.trent-to-trenches.co.uk/>.

What Price Glory? - Oral history from the Nottingham Local Studies collection is being used as part of our 'What price glory?' exhibitions in the Nottingham Central library commemorating the First World War, in 2014-18. <http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/whatpriceglory>.

Rada visit – 10th January 2014. Helen Ashton, dialect coach at RADA in London, emailed regarding the Nottinghamshire oral history collection at Local Studies, particularly the resources relating to D.H. Lawrence as they were about to put on a production of his play 'The Daughter-in-Law'. She wanted oral recordings for the students to listen to, so they could understand the sounds and rhythms of the dialect in which the play is written. Helen, 5 actors and the director were able to come on a trip to visit Eastwood, and the Local Studies library and 'hear these voices!' They included an interview with George Lawrence, DHL's elder brother, which is particularly good for the Eastwood accent; as well as other material from the Oral history collection featuring people from this mining area. They then visited Eastwood, where we had arranged with a local contact, for them to have a short guided tour.

The most important thing for us is the way the oral history was able to help the students, as director Deborah Paige said, "the material –both listening and reading was invaluable. I could see how much the students were lit up by the experience, which was incredibly rewarding."

Nottingham Theatre Royal 150th celebration project has started with its research and has put in for HLF funding too. It is in partnership with the University of Nottingham looking at its history. It aims to achieve the following:- a call-out to the public for items relating to the Theatre Royal's past; to recruit and train volunteers to conduct oral histories of people's memories of the theatre; three heritage open days at the Theatre Royal; monthly informal 'memory days' for people to talk to staff and volunteers, and bring their own archive items, as well as seeing what is in the theatre archive; a video booth in the foyer for audiences to record their own memories about the venue; a heritage education programme based around for Theatre Royal for local schools; the creation of a new on-line digital archive; new heritage display boards in the foyers, including an interactive touch-screen for visitors to interact with our on-line archive.

The **Nottingham Lace Project** led by Deborah Tuck of Nottingham Trent University currently awaiting confirmation of HLF funding (July 2014). The project aims to record the last histories of the Nottingham Lace Industries; It would complement an earlier project that was recorded between 1982 and 1984 regarding people's lives from 1900 – 1950, which covered work in the home and their social activities and included lace workers as well as lace manufacturers. Therefore this new project would complement the earlier work and facilitate the completion of the story of Nottingham's lace industry.

Old Gardeners tales, the project about St Ann's Allotments (or Hungerhill Gardens as they are sometimes known), the most ancient of Nottingham's allotments sites, has now been completed. The oral history from the project will be archived at the Nottingham Central Library as part of its oral history collection. Find out more about the project on their website - www.staa-allotments.org.uk.

The Lenton Flats project, carried out by the Dunkirk and Lenton partnership, recording the thoughts and memories of residents of the Lenton flats which have just been demolished is now completed and a film produced.

European Reminiscence Network (Pam Schweitzer)

This has been an exceptionally busy year, with an international project, conference and website on reminiscence in dementia care, a new digitized archive and website on reminiscence theatre at Greenwich University, and a new professional reminiscence theatre production for Eastern Angles.

REMEMBERING YESTERDAY, CARING TODAY TRAINING (RYCTT)

The project, entitled 'Remembering Yesterday, Caring Today Training' (RYCTT) ran since 2012 and involved European Reminiscence Network partners from 12 EU countries. We piloted a common 2-day training course and a 6-month apprenticeship scheme, culminating in an essay reflecting on the role of reminiscence in improving the quality of life for families living with dementia. The apprenticeship scheme enabled trainees to attend a number of sessions with families and to learn positive, creative ways to work through reminiscence with people experiencing dementia.

Gradually, the apprentices took over the running of these sessions and received accreditation as group facilitators of reminiscence in dementia care.

The overall project statistics of RYCTT were as follows:

Number of trainees who took the 2-day training course 362

Number of apprentices involved 146

Number of people with dementia involved 250

Number of family carers involved 196

Number of reminiscence arts sessions run by project partners 311

Please visit the new website to see how each project partner developed the project in their own countries. It is at www.rememberingtogether.eu

This international project on reminiscence in dementia care came to a grand conclusion in June 2014 in London. On 26th June 2014, the European Reminiscence Network hosted a conference at Greenwich University attended by 100 delegates, including 40 from European partner countries who presented their work. There is a report on the conference on the news page of the above-mentioned site, and there is a conference report by Joanna Bornat in the last issue of the Oral History Journal.

REMINISCENCE THEATRE ARCHIVE:

This last year has seen a major step forward on the Reminiscence Theatre Archive. This is held at Greenwich University in the Drama Building and has been used by students as a basis for reminiscence theatre work experience. Drama students have created a new version of "Can We Afford The Doctor?" a reminiscence theatre production based on archived memories of health care before the NHS. This production was toured to older people in south east London living in sheltered housing units, thus giving the students practical experience in this type of theatre work and providing high-quality theatre performances for older people in the local community. www.reminiscencetheatrearchive.org.uk

Enquiries should be addressed to me at pam@pamschweitzer.com

NEW PROFESSIONAL REMINISCENCE THEATRE PRODUCTION 'GOING BACK' BY EASTERN ANGLES THEATRE COMPANY

In spring 2014, I was asked to co-research and co-write this production with Jon Tavener of Eastern Angles Theatre Company, based in Ipswich. This involved conducting interviews in 5 Suffolk sheltered housing units with a large number of interviewees.

The show covered the years 1935-45 and was based entirely on verbatim transcripts of the interviews we had conducted. Two professional actors supported by a technical team developed the show through rehearsal and then toured it to all the venues where we had recruited memories, and others as well. It is hoped to further develop this material in the future. For me personally, this was a very exciting project as I have strong Suffolk connections and was delighted to be conducting oral history interviews for the first time outside London, and hearing about rural lives. It was also a great pleasure to return to professional reminiscence theatre after a gap of some years. The show was premiered at the conference at Greenwich University in June this year (referred to above) where it was very warmly received and is illustrated in the review of the conference in the latest Oral History Journal.

So it has been a very busy year and a very fruitful one, covering specialist work in dementia care, archiving work in partnership with Greenwich University and professional theatre work with Eastern Angles.

I have also fielded many enquiries coming through the OHS website, and enjoyed hearing about recent initiatives in all these fields.

London (Sarah Gudgin)

Having recently made the transition to freelance work after 15 years of permanent employment at the Museum of London, it's been an eventful year in which to change career. In this time, I have devised and facilitated oral history training workshops with a number of groups in London, facilitated reminiscence sessions on the themes of childhood and play and have also been asked to conduct new oral history interviews.

Oral history continues to flourish in the London region with a range of projects taking place around the hundredth anniversary of World War One, such as Remembering Kingstone at War run by Kingstone Museum and the Village Stories Project at Orleans House Gallery in Twickenham. Other oral history projects are underway such as The Voices of Medicine project at the Royals College of Physicians and at a local history project at the Honeywood Museum in Carlshilton.

Whilst at the Museum of London in my role as oral history curator, I would receive several oral history enquiries every week via the museum's website and the Oral History Society website. These ranged from how to carry out an oral history project, to issues around archiving and copyright. This year however I have not

been experiencing the usual volume of enquiries via the Oral History Society website, and I wondered whether groups are going elsewhere?

I contacted oral history society members in the London region to see if they had any information about oral history activities or projects over the past 12 months which they would like to share. I have listed their replies below.

These provide some insights and perspectives of a range of projects. I am sure there are many more innovative and creative projects, engaging with the arts, sciences, technology, the environment and social and working histories which we have yet to hear about.

Reports received from London OHS members working on oral history related projects in the past year:

Oral History Department Museum of London (Hilary Young)

Following last year's round of redundancies at the Museum of London, including the post of Curator of Oral History and Contemporary Collecting in Oct 2013, the Museum has not been pursuing any new oral history collecting.

However development work continues at the Museum in order to make the oral history collection more accessible to researchers via its Collection Online pages. Recent research visits to the collection have included people using the collections to investigate migration to London; Londoners' experiences of the Blitz; and with the 20th anniversary of the No M11 road protest imminent the Museum has also received more interest in this collection to access the many interviews which it holds on the subject. The catalogue records of most of the No M11 protest collection are available online

<http://collections.museumoflondon.org.uk/Online/SearchResults.aspx?description=M11§ion=Oral+History>.

The History Collections Department welcomes research appointments to listen to its oral history collection one day a week on Tuesday's between 10am – 4pm by appointment.

In order to request access, please fill in the research appointment form with details of your enquiry available at <http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/collections-research/access-and-enquiries/research-visits/> and email to enquiries.later@museumoflondon.org.uk.

Giving a voice to the voiceless: Allowing disabled academics to say the unsayable (Nadia Ahmed)

Nadia Ahmed is a PhD student at Queen Mary University of London. She is researching on practicable working environments for disabled academics at universities in the United Kingdom using oral history interviewing techniques. Her inspiration is her own disability and struggle towards getting employment as a disabled academic.

Nadia can be contacted at nadia.ahmed@qmul.ac.uk

British Chinese Workforce Heritage Project (Chungwen Li)

The British Chinese heritage centre is a cyber space created by Ming-Ai (London) Institute, which aims to preserve and exhibit information about culture heritage stories of the British Chinese. Over the past two years the project has delivered 26 training sessions to 78 volunteers including oral history, video production, web design, archiving, cultural heritage education and exhibition design with industry professionals including the Metropolitan Archives, National Army Museum regents University and the Oral History Society.

For more information please visit <http://www.britishchineseheritagecentre.org.uk>. Or contact Chungwen Li at c.w.li@ming-ai.org.uk

Feedback from London OHS members, Lynda Finn, has been working on three oral history projects in the past year:

Sounds from the Park: an oral history of Speakers' Corner, project managed by On the Record - <http://soundsfromthepark.on-the-record.org.uk>.

Fascinating interviews with some of the eccentric, individualistic and wonderfully opinionated people who are, or were, speakers, hecklers or listeners at Speakers' Corner.

Bishopsgate Voices: an oral history of the lives of ordinary people living and working in the East End, run by the Bishopsgate Institute until March 2014. A compilation CD of interviews over the past few years was produced in March: <http://www.bishopsgate.org.uk/Library/Library-Displays/Bishopsgate-Voices> <https://uk.patronbase.com/Bishopsgate/Store/Item?id=1>

Queen Mary University of London: a series of interviews with people from the waste management industry following on from the February 2014 Wellcome Witness seminar on the Development of Waste Management 1960 – 2000.

Report from London OHS member and OHS diversity officer, Sarah Lowry:

I've run training for approximately six groups in the London area this year, including Black Women in the Arts, Stonewall and the Zimbabwe Association.

My feeling is that the level of activity remains quite high, although I think we lack opportunities to get together as practitioners and this means we are not always informed about other oral history projects going on in our region.

Legasee is running a project about naval activities in the Second World War which seems to be pretty big. (www.legasee.org.uk)

Report from Nick Hayes:

I have continued working with the Waltham Forest Oral History Workshop which is possibly London's longest established voluntary oral history group. Our work continues with various projects, details of which can be seen on wforalhistory.org.uk.

The group have continued to carry out work on digitising our 650+ archive going back to the 1970s.

Nick Hayes can be contacted on nick.hayes@clara.co.uk

Jam Yesterday Jam Tomorrow – South west London (Verusca Calabria)

Jam Yesterday Jam Tomorrow is a 3-year Heritage Lottery funded project run by the Environment Trust for Richmond. The project is bringing back to life the rich history and growing practices of market gardening and commercial nurseries that were a dominant part of the landscape and economy of Twickenham and much of South West London for around 200 years. As London expanded, so the local market gardens gave way to housing. The project has collected 22 oral histories of people that worked in market gardening and commercial nurseries in the area, before the redevelopment into housing. The collection will be deposited at Kew Library and the Royal Horticultural Society's Library. The oral histories will go to inform an audio-visual exhibition that will tour in Richmond and beyond from 2015 onwards.

To find out more about the project, including the model market garden that has been created in Marble Hill Park, please contact Verusca Calabria, Heritage Project Manager, email: verusca.calabria@environmenttrust.co.uk or visit the website: www.jamyesterdayjamtomorrow.com.

North East

Tyne & Wear (Janette Hilton)

Living History North East is continuing to promote and support the recording, documentation and interpretation of oral histories within the north east region. As an organisation we often work as the heritage specialist to support project delivery. The demand for our services and resources are based largely on our expertise in training and advice for oral history projects funded by HLF, local authorities or private sector sponsors. The work we have been involved in as a "heritage partner" has often focused on the process of the project and less on the archive/research value of new oral history audio/video recordings.

LHNE have been involved in a number of projects or training workshops, these have included:

Groundwork North East, which supports people and organisations to make changes to create better neighbourhoods, working with many projects in communities. **Groundwork, Elba Park**. Elba Park is an attractive new Country Park in Sunderland which is quickly establishing itself as a haven for wildlife and a popular place for people to enjoy the natural world. Owned by the Land Trust and managed by Groundwork its home to a number of fascinating original pieces of artwork commemorating the site's industrial and mining heritage. LHNE delivered initial training to the newly formed Friends of Elba Park to support the recording of local oral histories.

Durham University's Research Project: Imagine, The social, historical, cultural and democratic context of civic engagement: imagining different communities and making them happen.

The five year Imagine project, led by Professor Graham Crow at the University of Edinburgh, will bring together researchers and community partners to engage in a series of enquiries into the ways in which disadvantaged communities imagine better futures in a harsh economic context. The work package that is coordinated by Durham University focuses on historical dimensions of civic engagement – taking as its starting point the Community Development Project areas in the early 1970s in Benwell (Newcastle), N. Shields and Hillfields (Coventry). Living History North East has been working with some of the community partners' delivering training and support in recording community oral histories.

"An Interpretation and educational project of Sunderland's Old Parish Church (1719)" Working with young people from ESPA College (Educational Services for People with Autism) and community volunteers the project developed new audio/video interpretations of Holy Trinity Church; new educational resources for school children and opportunities to collect and record peoples experiences of this building and the community. The project enabled people with autism to develop new skills; including recording and editing oral histories, and developing new innovative resources. The project developed a new website to host the resources and record of the project. <http://www.sunderlandparish1719.org/>.

The Home That Won The War: An Intergenerational Project, led by the Friends of The Donnison School; Explored Sunderland during The Second World War, focusing on Sunderland's home front experience, providing opportunities for young and old to work together to re-create a Dig For Victory allotment scheme; a WWII re-enactment school learning programme; a re-created Anderson shelter, and a one off celebration event. Children from Broadway Juniors School worked alongside community volunteers to create new resources and pilot re-enactments based on oral histories.

Jambo Africa: Jambo Africa was created in October 2005 to act as a greeting between the African population and the local communities living in Sunderland. The aim is to help them to meet, understand and appreciate each other through the channels of culture and creativity. Jambo Africa aims to facilitate and promote creativity in African people living in Sunderland, with a focus on performance, media and education.

The project enabled young people to experience new skills, enabling the creation of a new oral history collection; considering different cultural challenges for young people, whilst reflecting on past traditions and African heritage. The project was seen as a pilot project engaging a wide range of young people and older adults who explored specific areas with their interviews. The video recordings were edited by the group into a collection for exhibition.

Exchanging Generations; a theatrical Journey through time: The Friends of The Donnison School extended their work in 2014 in intergenerational practice and the use of archived oral histories held by Living History North East. The project intergenerational team included volunteers, children from Broadway Juniors School and The Canny Bunch Theatre Group. The group produced and scripted a new musical which charts the development of the Sunderland Exchange Building from

1812 -2014. The story is told through oral histories collected by Living History North East and historical records that chronicle the dramatic changes this building has experienced. The musical has been composed and written by the project and includes an original score of new songs. Resources and a new toolkit will be available later in the year on www.donnisonschool.org.uk and www.lhne.co.uk.

Oral History still proves to be an innovative and imaginative vehicle for community engagement. It provides an opportunity to introduce real people from many walks of life and various decades to new and older generations alike. LHNE is a creative facilitator in this process.

Other News

Beamish Museum: The Peoples Collection. Beamish Museum is currently undertaking to digitise and make available on line some of their oral histories alongside other documents and photographs. Visitors will be encouraged to upload their photographs and memories directly to the site. <http://collections.beamish.org.uk/>.

Beamish Museum recently secured HLF funding for a 1950s Town and Farm. This new 'Living Museum' will use oral histories to tell the story of everyday working life, linking a therapeutic day centre for people living with dementia in a Aged Miner's Homes.

North Tyneside Area (Kath Smith)

This report looks back at some of the projects that have been running in the North Tyneside area since the last Network meeting.

Examples of work in 2014

RPRF has developed the oral history expertise of the **Tynemouth World War One Commemoration** project's volunteers and they now have an archive of 40 recordings. Relatives of casualties listed on the Tynemouth Roll of Honour have talked about the impact the death had on their family. This work has raised several interesting issues about interviewing 'at one remove' from the person being talked about, especially in relationship to family history research techniques.

We are also just completing a year long piece of work researching the history of **Shiremoor & District Children's Treat**, a local tradition dating back to 1907. As with most of our work oral history was only a part of the whole and the most significant interviews were captured on film rather than audio. This more generalist style of work is becoming the norm and we have several other commissions beginning in 2015 using the same mix of interviewing/filming to suit the needs of the project brief.

Larger commissions are coming from a variety of sources including local authorities, clubs and societies and private companies. Small scale grant funds such as HLF's 'All our Stories' have encouraged groups to identify local people as a source of living history. This has led to the increase in interest in interviewing and recording techniques. However, these pieces of work are small scale and time

limited, offering little incentive to translate the interest generated into active membership of the OHS.

To finish it is useful to note a difference between the scale of activity in relation to OHS membership.

- Apart from ourselves there is only one other individual/group (not sure which) in North Tyneside that has a current membership to OHS. There are 15 listings in the database with addresses in the North East, out of a membership of OHS of 850+.
- Generally we are aware of a significant number of projects that are using reminiscence and oral history techniques but none of them are set up specifically as oral history projects, or are members of the society. Oral histories are most often part of a package of work, particularly for those projects attracting HLF funding where a range of outcomes is expected.
- We receive very few enquiries as OH representatives to advise on OH techniques.

North West

Greater Manchester (Rosalyn Livshin)

Due to other work commitments, involving the analysis of archive oral history interviews and new interviews with the descendants of communist families for a PhD on political radicalism within the Manchester Jewish Community, I have been unable to make contact this year with many of the oral history projects in the North West. Nor has it been possible to hold the annual oral history training day at the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre, which was involved in a move to the redesigned Central Library. However a training day will be scheduled for early next year. This is therefore a reduced report showing three projects completed in 2014 and one project about to start.

During 2014, the Race Relations Resource Centre has been active in supporting 3 community-based Oral History Projects .The AfroSolo Project was an exploration of early African migration to Manchester based upon 39 family interviews. An e-book has been created from the interviews see <http://www.afrosolouk.com>. The Congolese Oral History Project undertook 29 interviews with refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, see can.uk.com/archive/lisapo-oral-histories. Finally the NanaBonsu project was an exploration of the life of Manchester Caribbean activist Beresford Edwards. 22 interviews were conducted with community members, see <http://nanabonsu.com/>. The interviews of all 3 projects have been deposited at the Race Relations Archive.

The Windermere Holocaust Oral History Project 'From Auschwitz to Ambleside', which ran between 2007 and 2009, and followed the story of 300 Jewish child survivors who were brought to Windermere in 1945 has received new funding to interview local Windermere residents and Second Generation survivor families. Following the initial project a permanent exhibition was established in the Library at Windermere, which has attracted thousands of visitors from around the world.

The follow up project will address the oft asked question of the visitors 'what happened next?' and will enable an ongoing engagement with the children and grandchildren of the child survivors. See www.ldhp.org.uk.

Manchester (Stephen Kelly)

The Granada Television project continues apace. Following the award of a £2,000 grant from the Granada Foundation last year and a £500 grant from Manchester Metropolitan University, the project has now successfully carried out 12 digital audio interviews with former staff members. Each of these interviews lasts at least an hour in length. All the interviews have been transcribed and are in the process of being uploaded onto a dedicated website for public access. In the past twelve months project leaders Stephen Kelly and Judith Jones, have also given a presentation at the Manchester Histories Festival. Manchester Metropolitan University's Centre for Regional Studies has now donated a further £1,000 to the project and a second batch of interviews will be carried out over the next six months. Hundreds of photographs have also been donated and these have been uploaded onto the website (www.granadaland.org).

South East

Southampton (Sheila Jemima)

It's been a slow year here in Southampton for my work as a freelancer, approximately six e-mail requests for training, interviewing requests, and general questions for advice.

My interview with a Holocaust survivor is still ongoing and I have another request via Padmini to interview a WW2 veteran.

A more ambitious plan is to carry out an oral history of Southampton's garden suburbs, with Padmini Broomfield and another interested contact Carole Smith. Southampton's garden suburbs, known locally as 'The Collins Houses' were set up in the 1920's by London Architect and peace worker Herbert Collins. Little known even by many local people, the suburb lies behind the Main Street of Portswood, five minutes from the city centre, and consists of houses, flats, semi's, detached and terraced properties, built in the style of the Arts and Crafts movement, and set amongst wide areas of greenery, a duck pond and gravel streets lined with a variety of fruit trees. The residents also have use of tennis courts, and a community pavilion. Built originally for 'working People' they are much sought-after today, and can command a high price.

If you take a walk around the suburb today, it is hard to believe you are not in the middle of the countryside, instead of a short walk away from a city of 242,000 people.

Garden Suburbs have been in the news recently as both Government and opposition have been talking about building new Garden Cities, and Southampton's

garden suburb incorporates the setting up of the original housing association in the City, (Stoneham Housing Association) affordable houses for working people, the peace movement, design, Architecture and the Arts.

Some of the original residents are still living on the estate, and many have registered an interest in getting involved in such a project.

Kent (Jocelyn Goddard & Manda Gifford)

Canterbury Museums & Galleries used oral history again in 2 special exhibitions in 2014.

At **Herne Bay Museum & Gallery**, *French Dressing at 50* celebrated director Ken Russell's first feature film, which was set in Herne Bay. The beach, bandstand and pier recognizably starred in the film, and many Herne Bay residents were extras, so the exhibition was used as a means to draw out those with photos and memories of the filming.

At **Whitstable Museum & Gallery**, *Home Front Whitstable, 1914-18* explores life on the British home front 1914-18 through original posters, cartoon artwork from the British Cartoon Archive and popular arts and souvenirs. *Telling Whitstable's Story* community memories group contributed a listening post with accounts by individuals involved in recruitment drives, convalescent nursing, fundraising, rationing, and supporting family on the Front. The material was harvested from earlier whole-life recordings or re-recorded from local written accounts. The exhibition continues 25 October to 2 November 2014 (daily) and during the Christmas holidays.

Received from OHS member Dr Jacky Moore, Independent Scholar:

Having recently completed my PhD I now have the time to become involved in oral history projects. I'm about to participate in a very new project creating a living history of the people, who live in the village surrounding Rainham Hall in Essex, interviewing and recording their histories face to face.

I am considering the context for two books: an academic book based on my oral history research, and a shorter book telling the individual life stories of the women I interviewed using their oral testimonies.

I am presenting a paper about my research at the Institute of Historical Research as part of their seminar series 'Gender and History in the Americas' at Senate House in November 2014.

Hampshire (Padmini Broomfield)

Over the past year I have received a few inquiries from organisations setting up oral history projects, the majority of these being funded the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). It has also been evident that the HLF is directing them to us to seek advice and training from the Oral History Society to ensure they comply with best practice and record to a high standard.

In my own work as a freelancer, I have been involved in various oral history projects in the region.

Guildford Cathedral: I worked with the Project Team to help scope the oral history element of the Activity Plan for the HLF Stage II grant application. As part of a wider repairs and interpretation project, the Cathedral aims to record the memories of 'brick-givers' (people who bought a brick for 2s 6d to raise funds) and others involved in the building of the 'People's Cathedral' in the 1950s. During the Development Phase a group of volunteers was trained and supported to carry out pilot interviews. The response to a call for interviewees and written memories has indicated a huge interest and potential for participation in anticipation of a successful bid.

Website: <http://www.guildford-cathedral.org/learn/oral-history>.

WW1 Soldiers' Journey exhibitions, Hampshire: The Hampshire Solent Alliance launched their Big Theme for 2014 to mark the centenary of WW1. A series of exhibitions titled, Soldiers' Journey, are currently on show at several Hampshire museums. I was commissioned to select and edit audio extracts from archival oral history recordings for display on sound posts at SeaCity Museum Southampton and Winchester Discovery Centre. The interviews recorded in the early 1980s included dock workers, women war workers and others who remembered life on the home front during the war.

Websites: <http://www.seacitymuseum.co.uk>

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/1914.htm>

New Forest Remembers: Untold Stories of World War II: I am currently carrying out an evaluation of the oral history element of this project led by the New Forest Park Authority. The project set out to document information on and memories of the role the New Forest played during the war – when it was used for operational activities, training and logistical exercises, army and Prisoners of War camps. Over the years many of the sites have disappeared and knowledge of them has been lost. A large archaeological survey has been recording these sites, while a team of volunteer has been recording interviews with people – both local and further afield – who lived or worked in the area during the war years. An interactive portal brings the research together, and includes audio extracts, podcasts, images and other documentary material emerging from the project. The portal also invites visitors to send in their images and memories. An app that will allow visitors to access content while exploring the New Forest is being developed.

Website: www.newforestww2.org

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/info/20097/history_and_culture/214/world_war_ii

Other projects for whom I provided training or advice have sent in their reports:

Jo Hennessy reports: Theatre Royal Winchester celebrated its centenary this year with an intergenerational project supported by Heritage Lottery and Hampshire County Council. Over 200 young people, aged 5 – 16, from ten Hampshire schools, took part in an oral history project to share the building's heritage, its people and its stories with the community. The pupils and teachers were immersed into the theatre's history through a series of teacher training events, theatre tours and archive workshops. They conducted interviews and collected memories from those who worked, performed and visited the theatre over the last 100 years. With the help of ushers, patrons, theatre staff and historians

who gave up their time to support the project, the young people collected a varied body of research, which paints a fascinating historical picture of the theatre and its community. They worked with Strong Island Media to turn this into a series of short films that were premiered at the theatre's Centenary Gala in a re-creation of the Cine Variety experience – live variety acts interspersed with screenings of silent films and Pathé Gazette newsreels – reminiscent of the theatre's past. All research from this project can be found at Hampshire Record Office.

Website: <http://www.theatreroyalwinchester.co.uk/blog/>

Gillian Edom writes: The Graylingwell Heritage Project was set up to capture the history of Graylingwell Hospital, formerly West Sussex County Asylum, which closed down in 2001. West Sussex Record Office has been recording interviews with a wide range of people having a connection with Graylingwell. Thanks to a truly committed team of volunteer interviewers and transcribers, in just five months we have recorded fifty interviews that are being transcribed and summarised. Volunteers are continuing to join, and interviewees still offering their stories, even as we move into the second half of the project. It is proving to be an amazing and eye-opening project, and I can honestly say that the whole team has become passionate, through the project, about helping to remove the stigma of mental health illness that seems to be eternally with us. A partnership between the Chichester Development Trust, the University of Chichester, Pallant House Gallery and West Sussex Record Office, with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the project will result in a book and an exhibition.

Website: <http://graylingwellheritage.co.uk/>

Other news:

Velmore History Project, Hampshire: Now Heritage led a series of reminiscence cafes and oral history interviews with residents of the Velmore estate, which culminated in a book, *Velmore: From Huts to Homes (1950s-2014)*, telling the story of the Velmore estate from its first days as a post-war huddled camp to a flourishing area of mixed housing. The project was commissioned by First Wessex and managed by Now Heritage.

Website: <http://www.nowheritage.org/>

Information: www.eastleighnews.co.uk/2014/03/velmore-from-huts-to-homes/

David Lee retires: Following his retirement from his job at the Wessex Film and Sound Archive in Winchester, fellow networker for South East, David Lee, has also left the OHS network. A long time and active OHS networker, David held annual seminars that were very well attended, was a regular presence at the network events and supported large numbers of oral history projects in Hampshire encouraging small organisations to deposit their collections in the archive for preservation and access. We wish David well in his retirement.

So this year, with the help of David's colleagues, here is a brief round-up of projects deposited at the Hampshire Record Office.

- Copies of oral history recordings made in 2006 with residents of Tristan da Cunha, some of whom were evacuated to Fawley in 1961 due to a volcanic eruption on the island (AV1494)
- Interviews with contributors to the project 'Vision of the Past', deposited by Open Sight, formerly Hampshire Association for the Care of the Blind (AV1500)

- Interviews from the D-Day 70 Oral History project carried out by Bishops Waltham Museum (<http://www.bishopswaltham.net/museum>) in conjunction with the D-Day Museum, Portsmouth. (AV1527)

More information about these can be found on the HRO catalogue: <http://calm.hants.gov.uk/> using the reference numbers above.

D Day Recollections from Bishop's Waltham, Hampshire

Our Oral History Project investigated memories of World War 2. We interviewed 38 people who were children or young adults living in and around Bishop's Waltham in 1944. The transcribed recordings and findings were used to illustrate the D-Day 70th Anniversary Exhibition at our Museum. Funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund enabled us to purchase improved recording equipment. Oral Histories can be accessed at Bishop's Waltham village museum and extracts will be available on the museum website later in the year.

Website: www.bishopswalthammuseum.org.uk

For further information contact gillianatkins@bishopswaltham.co.uk

Sussex (Jo Palache)

As a freelance oral historian and life history researcher, I have been employed by Brighton Museum to collect and research family accounts and anecdotes about the First World War. During this year long Interreg project, we produced individual narratives from these stories which now form the basis for the current exhibition, 'War Stories: Voices from the First World War' (Brighton Museum until 1st March 2015).

University of Sussex

The Centre for Life History and Life Writing Research continues to promote oral history initiatives both locally and nationally. In the past year, the centre has hosted an oral history masterclass, and promoted training and support for students using oral history in their postgraduate research.

Margaretta Jolly has continued her work on the national 'Sisterhood and After: the women's liberation oral history project' with a sound installation, 'Voices in Movement', that showcased at the University of Sussex and the Peltz Gallery, London.

The centre is currently supporting an Arts Council project to produce a play about the history of the Stanmer Estate based on 50 oral history interviews with local residents.

Regional Network

As a regional network representative, I have received a number of telephone and e-mail enquiries on recording oral history, consent forms and recording family memories. I am also supporting the centenary oral history project of Blind Veterans UK on a voluntary basis. This locally based charity is putting together a collection of 100 oral histories that capture the spirit of the charity from its inception in 1915 to the present day.

There are local HLF projects in the locality that do not join the Oral History Society and some local oral historians have discontinued their membership. I am concerned that we appear to have little to offer members. Advice is available to members and non-members alike via the website and the journal is not always relevant to their community-based work. If I had more to offer members, such as a regional community newsletter, there would be more reasons for people to join.

South West

Gloucestershire (Craig Fees)

Bristol's busy year: HLF-supported projects with oral history included Arnos Vale Cemetery www.arnosvale.org.uk; Bristol 2014 www.bristol2014.com; Desh - 'Homeland' www.deshproject.tumblr.com; Our Streets: Heritage and traditions of street parties in Bristol www.streetparty.org.uk; OutStories Bristol www.outstoriesbristol.org.uk; Vice & Virtue: Old Market Heritage Project www.3ca.org.uk; Westmoreland House www.carriageworks.org.uk/stories/; YES we did! History of Bristol ROSLA Project and Youth Education Service www.youtheducationsservice.org.uk; and 'Race' Through The Generations: Digital Stories From BME Communities in Bristol and Gloucester hlfbacktothefuture.wordpress.com/author/bswnbristol/. Filton Community History Group continued long-established work www.southgloshf.org/filton-community-history.html. A neighbouring dream approached reality: Bristol Aerospace Centre www.bristol aero.org. And AHRC is funding The Thatcher pension reforms and their consequences www.bris.ac.uk/news/2013/10032.html.

Projects in Gloucestershire included: Gloucestershire Archives LGBTQ History blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/blog/lgbt-history-month-gloucestershire-archives; Jenner Museum's Small Pox Eradication Oral History Project www.jennermuseum.com; and Stroud Local Voices www.stroudvoices.co.uk.

Meanwhile, at the Planned Environment Therapy Trust we celebrated 25 years of the Archive and Study Centre with events, and papers at the annual conferences of the Oral History Society and Archives and Records Association. Two recording devices have been on continuous loan; 71 audio recordings entered the collections; I answered questions, and conducted trainings throughout the region organised by the National Life Stories at the British Library with the Oral History Society. www.pettrust.org.uk

Bristol and surrounding area (Chris Webb)

There has been a lot of oral history activity in Bristol this year, both through larger organisations and museums and grassroots level groups. Numerous museums and heritage sites have oral history work happening as a part of their research, exhibition development or through links with community groups. One of the PhD students linked to ss Great Britain and the University of Bristol is working on a project which includes recording memories of the ship as it was left in the Falkland Islands for nearly a century, while the successful M-shed and OutStories Bristol exhibition "Revealing Stories" continued to tour through libraries and archives

across the wider region. Outstories continues its oral history work and I have been involved with them as a member and volunteer.

Oral History and the arts are coming together in Bristol through a range of mediums, including oral history work being added to the Know Your Place and Know Your Bristol websites and creative uses of oral histories being linked to place and space throughout Bristol. I provided support to Bristol based Artist Tom Marshman who engaged Queen Mary University performance students in his practice and hosted "The Lost Gay Cockneys: a Tea Party" last October. Some interesting links between personal narratives and urban spaces were explored in "The Promise" at Arnolfini, an exhibition which documented "a dialogue between the city and its people." Though not explicitly an oral history project, this exhibition presented some interesting talking points and ideas that may be of interest to oral historians.

There have been a number of requests for advice coming in from small groups and community projects, including a potentially exciting project in Bath, which engages the Bath Ethnic Minority Senior Citizen Association who are looking to record stories of the historic house they meet in so there seems to be much promise for 2015.

Sadly for me, relocation at the end of 2014 means leaving Bristol but I hope another regional networker will take over, as there is lots to be involved with in Bristol and its surrounding area.

West Midlands

Birmingham & area (Helen Lloyd)

Julia Letts & I are both involved in projects all over the West Midlands and elsewhere, but the majority of my contacts are in the city of Birmingham, where I live. At the time of writing, the new Library of Birmingham is organising an oral history conference in November 2014 called *Connecting Histories – Voices Past and Present*. It will include a talk on '*Working People's Histories: Primrose, Pool Farm and Hawkesley 1914-2014*', organised by Kings Norton Library and the Sweet Project (Social Work Experience Education & Training in South Birmingham). The project's aim is to document and record memories of people who've lived on three housing estates built in the 1950s along the Redditch Road (www.libraryofbirmingham.com/article/kingsnortonlibrary/workingpeopleshistories) Another recent project featured will be "*From Mirpur to Birmingham*" run by Our Community CIC, which has given young people the opportunity to work with professionals to record memories of those who came from Mirpur in Azaad Kashmir to settle in Birmingham in the 1960s. (See <http://ourcommunity.org.uk/mirpur2brum>).

I've been involved in a different Mirpuri project called '*Home Away from Home*' in which bilingual young women volunteers from the Saltley and Washwood Heath areas of Birmingham were trained to interview older Mirpuri/Kashmiri women about their memories of travelling to England and settling in Birmingham. It was organised by The 'Go-Woman! Alliance' CIC (www.gwacic.com) and culminated in an exhibition in Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery from April to August 2014.

Alongside photos and artefacts from the 50s, 60s and 70s, visitors were able to listen on headphones to extracts from interviews in Mirpuri or read English translations of the complete interviews. Perhaps surprisingly, the women interviewed all said they'd encountered very little racism when they first arrived and found neighbours and shop-keepers friendly and helpful. Some of the older women are now learning English in order to be able to speak to their grandchildren.

Last year I did some research for the South Asian arts organisation, Sampad, (www.sampad.org.uk) before they submitted a Stage 2 application to the HLF for a project called *My Route* which aimed to preserve the history and culture of different immigrant groups who've settled along the Stratford Road in Birmingham. They were awarded funding this year and volunteers have been trained to record the memories of people from the different communities who have settled or worked in the area. These interviews are feeding into a programme of planned artistic activities, of which the first were highly popular free heritage tours in a taxi.

The Midlands Polish Community Association (<http://www.mpca.eu>) made a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2014 for a project entitled *Fitting in and Getting Along: Integration and Identity for Birmingham's British Poles*. It will record children of first generation Polish migrants talking about their memories of growing up in Birmingham during the 1950s, 60s and 70s – to explore how much Polish national identity survived in these British-born Poles. The project aims to conduct oral history interviews with 25-30 second generation Poles, not just those with two Polish parents but also the children of 'mixed' parentage. It will focus on languages spoken at home, contact with Polish community organisations, attendance at church, schools and education, friendships, food and choice of life partner.

Cerebral Palsy Midlands has completed a project entitled "*Fulfilment through Achievement: The History of Cerebral Palsy Midlands and its community of people*" (<http://www.cpmids.org.uk/node/347>). The project recorded the life history of individuals who have been involved with the charity, and the challenges and successes people with cerebral palsy have had during the 20th century.

In 2013/14 the Warwick Oral History Network ran a programme of events organised around the theme 'Ways of Remembering: Testimony, Narrative and Witness' and in 2014/15 they will be offering training sessions for new and more experienced oral historians. Their website is: http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/ias/current/networks/oralhistory.

West Midlands (Julia Letts)

As a networker, this has been my quietest year since I joined the OHS about 10 years ago. I have had very few enquiries for advice and almost no requests for training. The projects I've been involved in have either been on-going, self generated or Arts Council funded. Several HLF funded projects are working directly with the Archive and Archaeology Service at the Hive in Worcester. Whilst there is quite a lot of oral history activity in the region, the OHS network seems to have little or no involvement with them.

I have been directly involved with the following projects:

Black Country Stories – Multistory, West Bromwich. Approximately 80 interviews created over 3 years. This project has recently culminated in an exhibition of photographs and films by Magnum photographer Martin Parr, and extracts from the oral history interviews currently on display at the New Art Gallery Walsall. <http://www.thenewartgallerywalsall.org.uk/whats-on/exhibition/martin-parr-black-country-stories-0>

Aston Martin, A Century of Craftsmanship – Volunteers recorded interviews on all aspects of the production of Aston Martin cars. Audio points with themed extracts from the interviews are now on display at the Heritage Motor Museum at Gaydon. <http://www.heritage-motor-centre.co.uk/aston-martin-a-century-of-craftsmanship-project/>

'You just had to get on with it, didn't you?' – An oral history book and archive of women at work in Sandwell and the Black Country from 1914 to 2014, commissioned by the Mayor of Sandwell, produced by Multistory and funded by the Arts Council.

'Our Droitwich' – Droitwich Spa since the 1950s

An oral and photographic history of Droitwich Spa focussing on the massive expansion of the town between 1950 and 2000, funded by HLF's All Our Stories. Archive of 25 interviews + photographs handed over to local library which is also running school workshops with the material.

'We did our bit' – Video Oral History Project, Worcestershire

This video oral history of Worcestershire WW2 veterans produced for last November 11th has recently been short listed for a Midlands RTS award for best promotional documentary.

Bromsgrove People and Places – An oral history of Bromsgrove High Street, recorded by Bromsgrove School students with local people, and managed by the Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service. It was funded by HLF for the Townscape Heritage Initiative, Bromsgrove District Council. An audio CD 'People & Places' is now available.

<http://worcestershirearchives.blogspot.co.uk/2014/09/treasures-from-worcestershires-past-42.html>

Counter Culture – An HLF funded project run by The Arena Theatre in Wolverhampton which worked with children from 2 local schools to record interviews with local people on changes in shopping and community interaction. The project created a stage play, book, DVD and archive. <http://counterculturewlv.wordpress.com>

WW1 – I have been working with a children's author John Townsend on WW1 days in local schools that combine oral history, creative activities, drama, singing etc. The day is based on an ordinary school day in 1914. Children are in costume and in role.

Below I have listed some other projects currently going on in Worcestershire:

Witley Historical Society – An oral history of Great and Little Witley and surrounding communities funded by HLF. The stories and archive will be transformed into an online interactive map.

The Projectionist – An HLF funded project run by the VAMOS Young People's Theatre company, with research support and oral history training provided by Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service. This culminated in an exhibition and theatre piece in local care homes and schools. <http://www.vamostheatre.co.uk/education-and-training/vamos-young-peoples-theatre>

Engineering the Past – An HLF funded project run by Jestaminute Theatre, with research support from Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service and a local teacher. Recordings of 30 people who worked in various Redditch industries from 1939 to 1964. <http://www.jestaminutehistory.co.uk>

St Dunstan's – Oral history interviews have been used in several wall displays and on tables in the café to mark the former uses of this site, now the newly formed Heart of Worcestershire College's Art & Design Department.

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service (Maggie Tohill)

The Hive, Worcestershire County Council

For much of the year I have been seconded to a cataloguing project so have had less time to undertake oral history work.

That said I have had an increased number of enquiries this year from people wishing to use oral history. In particular our partner at the Hive, The University of Worcester, runs a World War II Home Front module and is keen for the students to use original material. We therefore ran an introduction to oral history for course participants and outlined some of the relevant material we hold. I subsequently had many enquiries from students wishing to use oral history material for topics such as evacuees, rationing, working women, the Home Guard and POWs. On the back of that interest I have been gradually inputting basic details about our oral history collections into our cataloguing database and will shortly be recruiting some volunteers to start making detailed summaries of interviews to add to the basic catalogue entries, which should make it easier to search for specific topics.

Colleagues in our Directorate have been involved in a HLF project to restore neglected orchards in Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire – **The Three Counties Traditional Orchards project**. The project includes recording reminiscences about the orchards, so I was asked to provide support and guidance to the Project Team. It is planned to have the recordings made available on websites and as QR codes on information boards as well as depositing copies with us.

Our outreach staff have been involved with several projects over the last year as follows:

As mentioned in last year's report the **Jestaminute Community Theatre (JCT)** were awarded HLF money for a project '**Engineering the Past**' to investigate the industrial heritage of Redditch 1939-64. They have worked in partnership with us,

local volunteers and school children to record reminiscences of people who worked in various industries. The company have produced a performance piece 'one back of nineteen' and have also launched an online education resource for study at key stages 2 & 3 called 'Springs, Batteries & Bikes'. More info can be found at: <http://www.jestaminutehistory.co.uk>.

Our staff were also commissioned to deliver a number of community programmes for the **Townscape Heritage Initiative**. This included an oral history project with students at the Bromsgrove School, on the High Street. Fellow networker Julia Letts has also been involved in this project, editing and producing a CD 'People & Places' which will be on sale at the local library, where there is also a listening post with audio clips. There will also be a 3-part YouTube film later in the year using the interviews.

We have also provided research support and oral history training to members of the **VAMOS Young People's Theatre** for their HLF project '**The Projectionist**'. As part of the project they have produced an exhibition 'From History to Theatre', which ran at Worcester Arts Workshop and have performed a theatre piece in local care homes and schools about the life of Norman Holly who worked as a projectionist at the Regal Cinema in Evesham for many years.

The Heart of Worcestershire College has opened a new Art & Design Department next door to the Hive. One of their wall displays in the building has used oral histories of local people who worked or lived close which were by recorded by us as part of the Worcester City Archive project we ran in the run up to the building and opening of the Hive.

Yorkshire

North Yorkshire (Van Wilson)

Over the last two years I have co-ordinated the York Oral History Society project 'Voices of the First World War'. We were donated 285 recordings (never heard previously) of veterans of the war and a few conscientious objectors, which were conducted in 1980. These are frank and detailed interviews with people in various parts of the UK, but mainly in Cambridge, York, Bradford, Hull and Manchester. All the subjects died in the late 1980s and '90s. Thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund, we have been able to have the collection digitised and largely transcribed, and have produced a book, CD with sound extracts and exhibition. The touring exhibition, consisting of quotes from the interviews and photographs, most never seen before, has already been seen by hundreds of local people and tourists, having been inside the York Castle Museum for several weeks. Additionally we have run workshops and presentations in libraries, community venues and schools, including a whole WW1 day in a primary school with year 5/6 pupils. In the latter, the children were asked (at the request of teachers) to consider whether they would fight in the war or whether they would take a pacifist stance, and why. Perhaps surprisingly they had quite strong feelings about war. The children interviewed each other from the perspective of veterans, which was their first experience of oral history.

The project has been very rewarding and we will continue to take the exhibition to other venues and make extracts from the recordings available on our website. One other aspect of my work was to try to trace relatives of the veterans. This was a huge task but we were delighted to welcome over 120 relatives who had come from all over to an event in the York Guildhall which was both a launch of the book and exhibition and an act of remembrance of those who had survived the war and told their stories in old age. This proved to be a moving event as most of the relatives had never heard the interviews, and their fathers, grandfathers, and uncles had not really talked to them about the war.

Also this year I have produced a book on the world famous Shambles area of York, published by York Archaeological Trust, using both background research and oral history interviews with about 40 people.

Both projects have brought oral history to a wider audience in York and beyond, and have resulted in new members joining us who have been inspired to become involved in oral history.

South Yorkshire (Michelle Winslow & John Tanner)

Michelle Winslow, John Tanner

The *South Yorkshire Through Time* website, a hub for community-based history groups and projects in South Yorkshire was officially launched on September 20th at Experience Barnsley Museum with a day of talks by local historians and heritage professionals. The event included performances by regional folk musician Ray Hearne and poet Christine May Turner. The website features a directory of groups and projects and useful resources for people interested in all aspects of community-based history in South Yorkshire. It will regularly be updated with articles from history students at Sheffield Hallam University. www.Southyorkshirethroughtime.org.uk

Currently in South Yorkshire, oral history projects include:

The *Witness Project* run by the University of Sheffield's History Department was set up in 2011 to collect and preserve Sheffield's past with oral history. Interviews are carried out by trained history students who find participants and record interviews based on their own interests. Themes have included Sheffield and the Second World War, local politics, youth culture, the Miners' Strikes and the impact of deindustrialisation. During 2013 – 2014 the project has been collaborating with *Walkley Historians*, a community history group researching this Sheffield suburb. The collaboration has focused on the work of the Walkley Action Group during the 1970s and their fight against slum clearance. <http://www.witness.group.shef.ac.uk/>

A University of Sheffield project that has been piloting oral history as a service for people in palliative care came to an end this year. In partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support five further services have been established in the north of England and Northern Ireland, based on the model developed in Sheffield with Sheffield Hospitals Charity. The project highlighted the importance of voice recordings and the opportunity for interviewees to reflect and express their identity with no medical agenda. Interviewees have

described the oral history process as cathartic but have not confused it with therapy. <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/snm/research/oralhistory>

The Heritage Lottery funded *Our Broomhall* is working with local community and heritage professionals in Sheffield to capture the changing history of the diverse Broomhall area. The project is providing training in oral history, heritage and other skills to help participants contribute more to community life in the future. <http://www.ourbroomhall.org.uk/>

Another HLF project in Sheffield, *Trading Histories*, has collected stories with Castle Market traders and shoppers whilst the age-old market was in the process of closing (not without controversy) and relocating elsewhere in city. <http://www.sheffieldcastlemarket.co.uk/>

Doncaster Ethnic Minority Regeneration Partnership held an oral history training day in March this year for their HLF project *Partition and Life in the UK*. The group are now conducting interviews to collect and share memories of the 1947 partition in India and migration to the UK of those it displaced.

In Barnsley, a number of projects have continued, been completed and a series of new projects are getting underway. One has been progressing strongly throughout the year. Taking its focus as the Shaw Lane Sports Club, the home of Barnsley of amateur sport in the town for over 150 years, *People's Sport in Barnsley* has brought together dozens of volunteers to record and share the memories and history of both the site and local sports teams. The project restaged a cross-town school sports day which once regularly took place at the club, based on locals' memories, many of whom turned out to watch.

Barnsley Museums have secured funding for a project about the history of the Co-Op in the borough, focussed on capturing memories about the once-thriving organisation and its many institutions. The culmination will be a major exhibition based on stories and oral histories, following on from a number of very successful exhibitions in the last year which have taken a similar approach:

Coal Not Dole - Women Against Pit Closures shared powerful stories from coalfield communities. Young women in their teens interviewed former activists, to create sound installations for the exhibitions, story content for the displays, and inspired an award-winning film, which can be watched here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6AEQHC10o8>

A light-hearted but moving exhibition, *Just Like Watching Brazil*, drew on fans' memories and anecdotes of following Barnsley Football Club over the last eighty years.

The Dearne Valley Landscape Partnership spans much of South Yorkshire and will last until 2019, having secured £1.9m of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Led by Barnsley MBC, it involves many partners from across the Dearne Valley, including parts of Rotherham, Doncaster and Barnsley. Looking to carry out works and activities to conserve and highlight the rich heritage of the valley, and having just employed two new Community Officers, it promises to capture and share some wonderful stories and much more. See www.discoverdearne.wordpress.com

East Yorkshire (Stefan Ramsden)

There have been no major new public oral history projects of which I am aware in Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire since last year's report. However, since the last report Hull has won the competition to be UK City of Culture in 2017, so there is a good chance there will be projects to report in the city soon as history and heritage are a key component of the plans to celebrate Hull's culture (<http://2017-hull.co.uk/>). I have given advice by telephone and email to a small number of groups. I am booked to speak to the Driffield Rotary Club about oral history in November, and in the same month will also give a talk on analysing oral history at a training day for new researchers organised by the Heritage Consortium (<http://www2.hull.ac.uk/fass/heritage-consortium.aspx>).

Recently published academic work utilising oral history from Hull and the East Riding include my own article on Beverley's working classes in the mid-C20th century (entitled 'Remaking Working-Class Community: Sociability, Belonging and 'Affluence' in a Small Town, 1930-80', to be published in Contemporary British History in 2015 but available online now <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13619462.2014.951338>), and Dr Margaret Lane's article on working-class marriage (entitled 'Not the Boss of One Another: A Reinterpretation of Working-Class Marriage in England, 1900 to 1970', available in Cultural and Social History, Volume 11, Number 3, September 2014).

East Riding Museums Service staff and volunteers continue to undertake excellent work collecting, catalogue and making publicly available oral history from residents of the county, on a wide range of subjects.

Leeds (Tracy Craggs) 1

In the past busy and enjoyable year I have answered a number of enquiries about starting up and running new oral history projects in the Leeds and Yorkshire area, both formally and informally. The formal approaches have tended to be funding related, asking for assistance with HLF applications and the informal ones have been contact with individuals and organisations I have worked with previously, who have usually asked for help around what equipment to invest in, and how new volunteer interviewers can best be supported.

Projects I have worked on have included a series of interviews on what Yorkshire means to different people who live in the county, which culminated in an exhibition at Abbey House Museum, and a project with military personnel on behalf of the Ferniehurst Dell Improvement Partnership whereby I trained Sixth Form Psychology students to interview veterans and currently serving personnel. The interviews were used as inspiration for creative community workshops and a series of sculptures which are on display in an Armed Forces Sculpture Trail in Bingley. I worked with a small group of Leeds University students who were on a placement with Armley Mills Museum and who needed to interview people associated with the tailoring industry in Leeds. Their interviews informed an exhibition they created in the Museum.

I continue to work for the Holocaust Survivors' Friendship Association and interview survivors and their families. I am also assisting a community initiative in Oakwood

in Leeds whereby a local clock, which is a well-known landmark, is being renovated and a group of volunteer interviewers is collecting memories of the neighbourhood. The interviewers have been trained by John Tanner, who has also trained Sixth Form students at the local High School, and I am helping the interviewers as they start to put their training into practice.

Northern Ireland

Linda Ballard has stepped down as our regional networker in NI to pursue her PhD in theology. We will be advertising early next year for a new networker in this area. (Thank you very much Linda for your contribution to the OHS over several years and best of luck for your future career.)

Scotland

Scottish Oral History Centre (Angela Bartie & Arthur McIvor)

Scottish Oral History Centre Activities, 2014

The Scottish Oral History Centre has had another really full and exciting year, with a number of important developments.

Erin Jessee joined the team of oral historians at the Centre in Oct 2013. Dr Jessee is an interdisciplinary specialist on the oral history of genocide. She won a Carnegie grant in summer 2014 to do fieldwork in Uganda and is planning a new oral history project on Africans in the Allied Armies in the Second World War. Erin is well known for a seminal article published in *Oral History Review* in 2011 which examined issues relating to interviewing in highly politicised contexts like Bosnia and Rwanda.

The SOHC operates as a hub between academic and community oral history and has again been involved in an extensive programme of training, CPD and support for local projects in West Scotland, as well as further afield (Dunfermline and Dundee). This work is growing all the time. These initiatives have been led by Susan Morrison and David Walker (with the assistance of Alison Chand). This includes work with a cluster of HLF funded projects including the Paisley Local History Society, Thera Trust (Strathmartine Hospital Histories), Glasgow Film, the Inverclyde Community Development Trust, the Fife Cultural Trust, the Watt Library (Greenock), the Pollok Storytelling Group, Renfrewshire Council and the Scottish Community Development Centre. Dr Walker has also been interviewing extensively on a major new oral history project for Inver House Distillers, part of International Beverage Holdings Group. 50 interviews with staff past and present will have been conducted by the end of November. David is also currently writing up a book from the project.

The Centre has also initiated a new oral history project working with 14-15 year old schoolchildren at the Springburn Academy in north Glasgow. This training and project support is led by Andy Clark (SOHC) under the MUSE initiative and integrates with the honours years UG class we teach at the UoS, *Work Placement*

in Oral History (led by David Walker). The school children presented their findings at a SOHC seminar in April 2014 and Andy gave a talk on the Springburn project at the Oral History Society annual conference in July 2014.

The SOHC co-sponsored a major international conference with our partners, the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling, in Montreal, Canada, on *The Aftermath of Deindustrialisation* in May 2014. This was organised by Andrew Perchard (SOHC), Steven High and Lachlan Mackinnon (COHDS) and included oral history based papers by several SOHC members (Perchard; Clark; McIvor). Discussions were held with the COHDS that we hope will result in the establishment of a rotating postgraduate oral history summer school at the two centres in the future.

Linsey Robb, Juliette Pattinson (Kent) and Arthur McIvor continue with their AHRC funded (2013-14) oral history project on the Reserved Occupations in the Second World War. 55 interviews have now been completed and the project team are currently writing up the monograph. A conference has also been organised at the Centre to bring historians together who are working on the oral history of gender in the Second World War on 8-9 Jan 2015. Postdoctoral fellow Angela Turner also continues to work on the history of disability and is currently preparing (with McIvor and Julie Anderson, Kent) an AHRC application for a major new oral history project on disability in the British coalfields since Second World War. Angela Bartie has continued to work on a series of oral-history based projects, including the AHRC-funded historical pageantry project and the British Academy/Leverhulme-funded residential childcare services project.

The SOHC has a strong cohort of PhD students and recently organised and held the first SOHC oral history postgraduate conference (May 2014), which was a resounding success. PGs Andy Clark and Aimee McCullough are the organisers of the regular SOHC seminar series and this new PG summer conference. Andy is working on a PhD on the female factory occupations in Scotland in the 1980s. Aimee, who is working on a PhD on working-class fatherhood and masculinity in the west of Scotland, won the Economic and Social History Society Research Essay Prize 2013 (based on her MSc. research on lone motherhood) and the Neil Rafeek Oral History Prize in 2014. Other PhD students using oral history in the SOHC are Nicola Graham, investigating the body at work in the Second World War in Scotland; Lucy Brown, who has recently begun a doctorate exploring changing conceptions of community in relation to community arts in Scotland in the 1970s and 1980s; Jessica Douthwaite who is an AHRC-funded CDP (SOHC and the Imperial War Museum, London) PhD student working on an oral history of Civil Defence and the Nuclear Threat during the Cold War; Martin Conlon, investigating memory and industrial heritage in Scotland and Jan Brownfoot, working on an oral history of women and gender relations in post-war in Malaya.

Scottish Oral History Group (Howard Mitchell)

Plans for a Scottish National Sound Archive continue under the National Library of Scotland with Phase 1 of a development plan. A project is in progress, developing a Sound Scotland web portal which brings together metadata from 8 sound collections across Scotland increasing the visibility of the collections and profile of sound archives to the libraries, archives and museums sector and to

researchers and the general public. While the Scottish Government have made two grants for development of the sound archive, further funding possibilities and development options are being discussed at present.

Dr. Maggie Mackay, who was a founder member of the Scottish Oral History Group in 1978, has stepped down from the committee after 36 years of active involvement. Maggie's experience, knowledge and skills in oral history will be a sad loss to the group as she winds down her commitments after retiring from the Department of Celtic and Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh.

Following a series of Seminars titled Reclaiming Lost Childhoods, hosted by Strathclyde University, it was evident that many survivors of care wished their experiences to be formally recorded and made public. Subsequently a charity has been formed – Talking Care Scotland – to record, archive and publicise the experiences of children in care across a broad range of settings, through oral history. The charity is supported by The National Records of Scotland, The Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland, In Care Survivors Centre Scotland and The Scottish Oral History Group.

Wales

(Andrew Edwards & Beth Thomas)

Beth Thomas

St Fagans National History Museum continues to give advice and support to those planning or already undertaking oral history projects. Working with CyMAL (Museums, Archives and Libraries Wales), training courses are offered to those working in museums, archives and libraries, as well as bespoke courses for individual projects.

One of the most fulfilling of these was training given to **Mencap Cymru's oral history project *Hidden Now Heard***. The three-year project aims to raise awareness of the hidden and often painful aspects of national history when people with learning disabilities were routinely institutionalised in long-stay hospitals. Testimonies of up to 80 people throughout Wales will form an important record of the impact of care policies on the lives of people during the period of 1913 to 2006.

Exhibitions will be developed based on the testimonies gathered and photographs and documents discovered through archival research. A programme of education and participation events including workshops, talks, lectures and tours will run alongside each exhibition. Volunteers involved in the project, including those with learning disabilities, will receive oral history training and will learn new skills in research, exhibition presentation and interpretation.

Six regional museums across Wales will display the resulting exhibitions St Fagans is working in partnership with Mencap Cymru in order to archive the recordings, add to our collections of material evidence relating to learning disability, and also

to exhibit some of the material collected in new galleries being developed as part of our own HLF-funded project.

The image above is from Hidden Now Heard's Twitter feed, and shows one of the interviewees, Phyllis Jones, together with the oral history interviewer, Councillor Sara Pickard. Sara has Down's Syndrome, and would challenge

Another oral history project which has succeeded in getting HLF funding is one initiated by **South East Wales Racial Equality Council** called **Back-a-Yard**. Its aim is to gather stories from African-Caribbean people who arrived in Newport during the 1950s and 1960s. Back-a-Yard was originally conceived by Lester Freckleton of the Black History Association Wales; his idea was to create a platform whereby the early memories of older African-Caribbean people arriving in the city could be preserved for future generations

Other oral history projects have come to fruition over the past year. **Swansea Chinese Community Co-op** completed their HLF-funded **All Our Stories** project which aimed to capture and preserve the oral history of the older members of the community so that the history of Chinese settlement in South Wales was preserved. The digital resources produced by the project have now been archived at the West Glamorgan Archive Service and the Swansea University Library. The **Hineni Project** which capture the life stories of 60 members of the **Cardiff Reform Jewish community** is now being archived at St Fagans.

Coming up in November is a joint continuing professional development workshop organised by Llafur and the Oral History Society. On the agenda is a discussion about the future of oral history in Wales. Hopefully this will touch on the question of how we note and record the progress and completion of oral history projects in Wales. Many potential projects come to my attention in the early stages of planning, but it is difficult to track what happens to them subsequently unless they get in touch again.

2015 ORAL HISTORY SOCIETY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Oral Histories of Science, Technology and Medicine **Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX, UK**

The 2015 Annual Conference of the Oral History Society in conjunction with Royal Holloway University of London and the Oral History of British Science at the British Library, with support from the Wellcome Trust

From: 10th July 2015
To: 11th July 2015

Conference Scope:

What can oral history and life story methodologies bring to the study of the history of science, technology and medicine? How have historians of science, technology and medicine made use of personal memory and narratives in their research?

This conference will explore the theoretical and practical challenges of using oral history-based techniques in the broad areas of the histories of science, mathematics, engineering, technology and medicine, and welcomes contributions which use oral history to:

- Understand change in medicine and science
- Consider the links between organisational history and memory
- Juxtapose oral history with other historical sources
- Review the cultural interface between history, memory and technology
- Uncover personal reflections on technological and medical innovation and change
- Examine ways in which memory can be used to interpret and engage with wider public audiences about current scientific issues in, for example, biomedicine, the environment and lifestyle choices

This conference would bring into dialogue oral historians, historians of science, technology and medicine, medical sociologists, technologists, archivists, the scientific humanities, and heritage professionals working in museums, higher education, broadcasting and other media.

Proposal Invitation

We invite proposals for oral history-based contributions, including papers, panels, presentations, workshops, posters and displays by 1st December 2014. Please refer to our website for exact details:

<http://ohs.org.uk/conference.php?conf=5&status=0>

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