



**Oral History Society
Regional Network**

**Annual Report
2019**

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OHS Regional Network News

Welcome to the Oral History Society (OHS) **Regional Network Report 2019**. The report also contains a brief update on activities of the OHS committee. Thank you, as always, to all our networkers who have sent in news of all the oral history activity taking place in their regions.

Regional Network:

The OHS Regional Network currently consists of 46 networkers covering 13 geographical regions across the UK. As experienced practitioners working in diverse fields – museums, libraries, archives, academic institutions, community organisations, and freelance – they provide a point of contact for anyone seeking advice on oral history. The network facilitates sharing of this expertise so that if a networker is unable to answer a public enquiry themselves, they most certainly know someone who can help.

List of networkers on the [OHS website](#).

Changes: Following a recruitment process, Sarah-Joy Maddeaux, Sound Archivist at Essex Sound and Video Archive (Essex Record Office), was appointed as East of England networker. She replaces Martin Astell who resigned due to a change in his job responsibilities. We would like to thank Martin for his long term contribution as a networker.

Obituary: It is with great sadness we report that Mary Ingoldby, networker for the South West, passed away earlier this year. At her first network meeting in Glasgow, where Mary presented her projects in Bristol, she made an impact with her bubbly personality and warmth. She will be missed by all those who knew her. Messages of condolence were sent to Mary's family from Oral History Society Trustees and Regional Networkers. An obituary about Mary's life and work was published in [The Guardian](#).

Regional Network Annual Event:

In autumn each year, Regional Networkers from across the UK get together for a programme of business meeting, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) workshop and public seminar focusing on a theme relevant to oral history.

Last year's **Annual Event 2018**, held at the University of Newcastle, was attended by 14 networkers from across the UK, who were joined, for the public events, by local students, academics and OHS members. [See report on page 5]

The Annual Event 2019, at the British Library, London, on 22 - 23 November 2019, will focus on *Creative Uses of Oral History*. Full programme on page 34

A Continuing Professional Development workshop for networkers, on the Saturday, will include a Q&A session with Melissa Strauss, Policy Advisor from the National Heritage Lottery Fund, followed by presentations on creative uses of oral history. The afternoon session, open to local OHS members, will showcase local projects where oral history has inspired creative interpretation through artistic, digital and audio-visual outputs.

The event has been scheduled to tie in with the OHJ@50 anniversary event on the evening of 22 November, when networkers will also join invited guests for an “evening of discussion, reflection and celebration”. BBC Radio 4 broadcaster and oral historian Alan Dein will host a panel including *Oral History* Founder Editor Paul Thomson and other oral historians.

To mark the 50th anniversary of the journal, *Oral History*, a special issue of highlights from the past 50 years has been [published online](#).

We would like to thank Sarah Gudgin, networker for London, for putting together an inspirational programme of speakers. Also the staff at the British Library National Sound Archive for their help in organising the event at the venue.

Annual Report 2019:

This edition is a compilation of reports sent in by networkers of oral history activity in their regions. It highlights the large number of projects they advise on, support or deliver. Each year, the variety of projects – the topics, locations and outputs – grows as more organisations recognise the value of oral history to engage and diversify their audiences. This year we have more reports of PhD students using oral history in their research. The report brings together this rich mix of oral history related activity led by museums, community organisations and higher education institutions.

Please note that due to the large amount of content we received, we have had to edit some contributions; more information can be found via project websites or contact details (where provided). All Network Annual Reports are published on the Oral History Society [website](#).

We would like to thank all Regional Networkers who volunteer to act as a point of contact for anyone seeking information about oral history and respond to inquiries and share their knowledge, expertise and passion for oral history.

Juliana Vandegrift and Padmini Broomfield
Regional Network Coordinator & Deputy Coordinator
November 2019

Useful Links:

- Regional Network Reports: www.ohs.org.uk/regional-network/
- List of Networkers: www.ohs.org.uk/about/regional-networkers/
- Guidance on budgeting for oral history contractors: www.ohs.org.uk/advice/guidance-on-budgeting-for-oral-history-contractors/
- Data protection for oral history: www.ohs.org.uk/advice/data-protection/
- Training – GDPR: www.ohs.org.uk/training/introduction-to-the-new-data-protection-legislation-gdpr-for-oral-historians/
- [Oral history for schools and youth groups – A Guide](#)

Regional Network Annual Event 2018

Last year's annual event, 26 – 27 October 2018, was hosted by Graham Smith and Sue Bradley at [Newcastle University Oral History Unit and Collective](#), in collaboration with North East regional networkers, Janette Hilton and Kath Smith. Our thanks to them all for organising the excellent programme as summarised below:

Friday 26th October 2018:

Public seminar led by Rob Perks on *Oral history and sensitive personal data: recording, archiving and partnership working under GDPR*. OHS networkers were joined by 50 participants, including oral historians, students and academics. A lively discussion on the implications of the new regulations raised many issues pertinent to oral history practitioners. Information on GDPR on the [OHS website](#).

The business meeting, attended by 14 networkers, covered various issues faced by networkers in their regions, including technical and other inquiries, advising or managing volunteer-led projects, changes to the National Lottery programme, and networkers' own training needs. Rob Perks (London) and Verusca Calabria (East Midlands) outlined the development of the Volunteer Recruitment Policy that will support the recruitment of volunteer roles (including Regional Networkers) in a consistent and fair manner through the adoption of a transparent process. Networkers will be recruited to ensure a good representation across geographical regions and areas of expertise.

Networkers also discussed and approved a document aimed at clarifying fee rates charged by freelancers for different oral history tasks. It was drawn up by a sub-group, led by Sarah Gudgin (London), in response to concerns raised at previous meetings about the low rates being offered by organisations who often underestimated the time, skills and budget required to deliver projects. The [Guidance on budgeting for oral history contractors](#) is now online.

Saturday, 27 October 2018

On Saturday networkers were joined by local oral history practitioners for a programme of presentations and discussions on the Challenges and Opportunities of Partnership Working. (*Programme on page 2*). Graham Smith gave a brief introduction to the setting up of OHUC and their current projects and collaborations with local organisations. Other speakers shared their experiences of partnership working, the pros and cons of collaborative projects involving universities, charities, community organisations and freelancers. Janette Hilton and Kath Smith closed the event with an overview of the changing landscape of heritage funding and organisations in the North East and how this had impacted on long term relationship building and joint projects.

Juliana Vandegrift and Padmini Broomfield

December 2018

Oral History Society News

The OHS Trustees meet four times a year at the British Library. Trustees with specific responsibilities on various working groups and sub-committees occasionally meet between meetings or communicate through conference calls.

New trustees appointed

- Emily Gibbs – Membership Officer
- Sarah Ellis – Records and Data Management Officer
- Erin Farley – Scottish Oral History Group Representative

Trustees resigned

- Alan Dein
- Sarah Lowry
- Hilary Young

OHS Strategic Action Plan 2019 – 2021: an update

Trustees have been busy working on the organisational priorities identified during the Strategy Review weekend in 2018.

- The new Membership Officer, Emily Gibbs, is working on a **Membership Strategy** to formalise and clarify the OHS' membership priorities and development, understand its present and potential membership, and increase and retain members.
- Publicity Officer, Cai Parry-Jones, is leading on a **Communications Strategy** that will consider how the OHS should enhance its public profile, communicate more effectively with its members and increase participation in the work by the wider oral history community.
- Mary Stewart is leading a working group on **Governance Review** to consider ways of developing more inclusive and engaged membership, effective succession planning and greater clarity and transparency of OHS structures.
- Other working groups are focusing on areas such as the website, income generation, Higher Education group and Training.

SIGs (Special Interest Groups)

- **LGBTQ SIG:** has grown its membership to over one hundred oral historians and organised several events and seminars.
- **Migration SIG:** was relaunched at a roundtable event on narratives of migration held at the University of East London Archives.
- **Environment and Climate Change SIG:** no recent activity to report
- **Psycho-Social Therapies & Care Environments SIG:** no recent activity

Share news of events, activities, projects with the OHS membership via:

- **E-newsletters:** Publicity Officer, Cai Parry-Jones, is always interested in items for the e-newsletters. Contact Cai: caiparryjones@rhs.org.uk
- **Current British Work,** OH Journal: Send news items to Cynthia Brown cb@cydfx.net

OHS Virtual Network Group

UPDATE: Forthcoming changes to the Virtual Network (November 2019)

The Oral History Society Virtual Network acts as a forum for networkers and trustees to benefit from the shared expertise and experience represented in the group. Members can share information, post inquiries or initiate discussions on oral history practice and research.

Until recently, this forum operated through the Yahoo Groups site where emails posted to the Group could be seen and responded to by any of its members.

Following an announcement in October 2019 that Yahoo was to withdraw most of the functionality of its Yahoo Groups service, the trustees made the decision to migrate to a new system.

Move to new list provider: Groups.io

As of November 2019, we have moved the OHS Virtual Network to a new host provider called Groups.io. All of our content currently on Yahoo Groups will be copied to the new service and the list of members will automatically be transferred to oral-history-network@groups.io.

You won't have to do anything to continue receiving and sending emails via the virtual networks.

Networkers are being contacted to inform them of the changes and address any concerns they may have on the transfer.

More information on Groups.io GDPR compliance and privacy policy can be found at: <https://groups.io/static/compliance>.

We will continue to update Virtual Network members in coming months.

Reports from the Regions

EAST OF ENGLAND

Essex (Juliana Vandegrift and Sarah-Joy Maddeaux)

Community groups in Essex continue to show an interest in oral history, with a number of projects being completed and the recordings deposited with the Essex Sound and Video Archive (ESVA) at the Essex Record Office, and some new projects started in 2019.

Following on from last year's report, the artist Ewewright has now deposited both the full-length oral history interviews recorded with elders from the **Windrush generation**, together with the edited versions created for the immersive exhibition. The edited versions are freely available through our SoundCloud channel, and we are delighted to announce that we have also used this collection as a trial of adding material to Europeana Collections (<https://tinyurl.com/y44usbwc>). Ewewright held a follow-on exhibition at the Migration Museum in London this year, and hopes to continue developing the project in future.

The Lottery funded **Resorting to the Coast** project (run by Juliana Vandegrift) has now finished, and over twenty oral history interviews have been deposited with the ESVA on the topic of seaside heritage along the Tendring Coast, from the tourism industry, residential, and holidaymaker perspectives. Engagement activities have included two academic conferences; a schools programme working with 10 schools and the creation of learning resources; town heritage trails; and a seaside revival day celebrating the best of seaside entertainment.

Juliana has also been finishing off her **Gurkha Voices** project, in collaboration with Umesh Kumar Pun, MVO. The interviews with retired Gurkhas now settled in Colchester cover life before, during, and after their service with the British Army. Brief biographies and some clips of the interviewees can be found on the project website: <http://gurkhastories.com/veteran-stories/>. The full recordings have been deposited with the ESVA, and there are plans to publish a book based on the interviews.

Community 360, Colchester's volunteering service, hosted two Master's students from the University of Essex on placement to undertake oral history interviews. They spoke to a range of volunteers about their activities, as a start to building up a picture of the history of volunteering in Colchester. Community 360 would be keen to talk to anyone else looking at the history of volunteering – contact information@community360.org.uk if you want to follow this up.

The **Mercury Theatre in Colchester** is tying up a two-year Lottery funded project to develop their archive, including collecting oral history interviews to capture memories of the Theatre across its 80-year history, speaking to past and present staff, performers, and audience members. They have recently deposited

the interviews both with us at ESVA and with local oral history group Colchester Recalled to widen access to these memories.

A couple of years ago we reported on **Galleywood Heritage Society's** ambitious oral history project to record the memories of local inhabitants. They have now completed their project, marking the occasion with a tea party which brought together interviewees and their families to share memories over a cuppa and plentiful cake. The interviews have all been deposited with ESVA, and the Society will continue to draw on the material to create sound bites for their **listening bench** (www.essexsounds.org.uk/content/benches/galleywood).

Colchester art gallery Firstsite has been chosen to participate in the Arts Council's National Partners Programme, to run from 2019-2022. The first stage of the programme features Elsa James collaborating with other artists and residents to co-curate exhibitions about the identity and experiences of black people living in Britain today. The first exhibition, **Super Black**, opened on 11 October. Additional funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund will allow Elsa to record oral history interviews with people in response to this and future exhibitions, which will in turn shape and be featured in later exhibitions. I am excited to hear the results of this co-curation approach.

EAST MIDLANDS

Leicestershire & Rutland (Cynthia Brown & Colin Hyde)

Helen Foster, who has been appointed as **EMOHA** (East Midlands Oral History Archive) Research Assistant and Outreach Officer for the period of Colin's secondment to UOSH, sends this update on its work: 'We've been working on updating the website to showcase the range of material that we hold from across the region. We should be launching in December at www.le.ac.uk/emoha/. We also have a new blog at: <https://eastmidsoha.home.blog>. New collections have come into the archive over the last few months from Derwent and Wye Valley Railway Trust in Derbyshire and St Paul's Church Heritage in Woodhouse Eaves, Leicestershire.

EMOHA's work partnering with Nottingham Trent University on their **Textile Tales** project continues apace. We have been training community groups across Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire to record memories of the area's textile industries between 1980 and 2005. There have been a series of open days at former textile towns such as Ilkeston, Long Eaton, Mansfield, Ruddington and Loughborough. The resulting material will come into EMOHA to complement our existing collections on textiles. EMOHA has also been involved supporting the University of Leicester's Journey to Justice project which "celebrates the remarkable stories of ordinary people in and around the city who have stood up for social justice and human rights". Finally, we also opened our doors for Heritage Open Days in September 2019'. Helen can be contacted at h.l.foster@leicester.ac.uk.

The annual **EMOHA Oral History Day** was held in July 2019 in conjunction with the Unlocking Our Sound Heritage Midlands Hub team, based at the University of Leicester, who talked about preserving and using sound recordings. This was well attended by people from across the region, and included sessions on the history and identification of recording formats; preservation of formats and a guide to

digitisation; cataloguing sound recordings; and using the archives – ideas for what to do with sound recordings.

Colin Hyde, **UOSH Midlands Hub Project** manager, reports that: 'Over the past year the Unlocking Our Sound Heritage project's Midlands Hub, has taken in oral history collections from Coventry Archives, Coventry University, Derbyshire Record Office, Worcestershire Archives, and Nottingham City Libraries. The collections comprise general oral history material from each of the regions and include specific projects about the car industry, World War Two, and folk dancing. The Hub is also preserving collections from regional BBC radio stations, including series on archaeology, transport, and current affairs in the 1970s. Details of these collections are being added to the British Library's Sound and Moving Image (SAMI) catalogue, and further collections of oral history from across the Midlands will be preserved in the coming year'.

Local projects over the past year have included '**Typewritten Tales**', funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, which marks the forty-fifth anniversary of a strike at Imperial Typewriters in Leicester. An exhibition and storytelling project at Newarke Houses Museum, Leicester, has included oral histories of workers at the factory, and others who were directly involved in the strike, or who recall it. It began in May 1974 as a walkout by around forty predominantly South Asian women workers in protest at pay, working conditions and alleged racism, but soon escalated into a 500-strong strike. It continued for fourteen weeks until a settlement was reached. The Race Relations Board, which investigated the grievances, subsequently found no evidence of discrimination, but the factory had been suffering from falling orders for some time and was closed by its American owners in January 1975 with the loss of 1,800 jobs.

LONDON

London (Sarah Gudgin)

I have continued to work as a **freelance oral historian** within the museum and heritage sector and with community groups, offering support and guidance in the development and definition for a range of heritage projects throughout delivery stage. I have also trained and supported volunteers to carry out oral history interviews and have spent many hours sound editing for projects. Unfortunately, I have had much less opportunity to conduct oral history interviews of late, however I did carry out a very significant end of life interview in the summer. My thanks to Michelle Winslow and Mary Stewart for their support. This year in my roles as a Regional Networker in London, I have dealt with around 15 enquiries, the majority of which have been in the nature of advice on starting or running an oral history project or asking for quotes for oral history work at application stage.

A significant piece of work has been the completion of **Guidance on Budgeting for Oral History Contractors**, which is now available on the Oral History Society's webpages. <https://www.ohs.org.uk/advice/guidance-on-budgeting-for-oral-history-contractors/> The consultation for this work was intended as a guide for organisations setting up projects and estimating budgets for grant applications, or commissioning professional oral history practitioners to carry out some or all of the tasks required to deliver their projects. I collaborated with a group of other experienced freelance oral history and heritage professionals from

around the country who have many years' experience of working in oral history practice. Our aim has been to provide a set of guidelines that are a true reflection of our current charges and activities, which we hope will be helpful to all other professional oral history practitioners, community projects and funders. I have already referred several enquiries to these webpages and made reference to them in budgetary quotations that I have given for oral history work. Whilst the Guidelines are extremely useful reference, it will take time for this to become widely known or the gold standard. In the meantime, I still get approached to by heritage projects which have completely under budgeted for the oral history element of their projects, or more worryingly, by projects that decide not to employ a professional to carry out oral history training because they either don't think it is necessary or they don't have enough money.

I have also continued to deliver a range of **creative reminiscence and story sharing projects** exploring personal histories around heritage themes with people with dementia. These projects have resulted in the creation of memory books and creative writing activities for people with dementia based on their memories. On one such project I worked with Gunnersbury Park Museum to deliver a programme of activities based on their collections and develop further activities such as a museum reminiscence toolkit tailored to support a range of learning styles.

This year in 2019 the Oral History Society London region have the pleasure of hosting the annual **Oral History Society Regional Network event** at the British Library, with the theme of Creative Uses of Oral History. I have had the task of devising the schedule for this event and of finding fascinating presenters who have found creative ways to work with oral history. My thanks and gratitude to those speakers who have given their time and energy to share their experiences with Networkers and OHS members; these include Sue McAlpine, Charlotte Knowles, Julia Pascal, Karthika Sakthivel and Giulia Brancati and their tutors Eleanor Dare and Matt Lewis from the Royal College of Art, MA Digital Direction Course and Mary Stewart.

As in previous years, I have reached out to the Oral History Society membership in the London Region in order to help compile the rest of this report. My gratitude to those who responded. **What follows shows the broad variety and diversity of oral history projects in the Capital.** These range in subjects from oral histories with Community Health Practitioners, to Memories of Door-step Milk Delivery in London and from PHDs on British Military Encounters with Italian Civilians. 1943-1946 to the Untold Stories of First-Generation Bangladeshi Women in the East End (1970-2000). The scope and breadth of this work is both fascinating and inspiring.

Projects from the London region

Oral History Society Migration SIG: Paul Dudman

For Refugee Week 2019 in June, the Oral History Society Migration Special Interest Group hosted a very successful re-launch event at the Refugee Council Archive based at the University of East London's Docklands Campus. A number of interesting and engaging speakers showcased community-based oral history projects and reflected on the ethics of engaging with and trying to document and preserve life history narratives and stories of migration. The accompanying exhibition was based on materials drawn from various oral history projects, existing archives and loaned items.

The Migration SIG supported the Wai Yin Society in Manchester in a Heritage Lottery Funded project, Crossing the Borders, which explores immigration and settlement of individuals of Chinese ethnic origin in Greater Manchester. We are pleased to have received copies of the oral histories for the Refugee Council Archive. [Details of this project can be found in the North West region report above] Contact: p.v.dudman@uel.ac.uk

On the Record: Rosa Schling

[Fighting Sus](#) : Young people aged 15 -21 recorded 8 oral history interviews about experiences of the sus law and racist policing, wrote and performed poems in response to their research and produced a publication, film and learning resources. Website: fightingsus.org.uk

Doing It Ourselves: recorded the history of the unique parent-led Neighbourhood Co-operative Nursery and drop-in, Walthamstow, that culminated in an interactive all-ages exhibition at local community hub, The Mill.

[The Texture of Air](#): In November 2019, On the Record is launching a series of permanent public artworks inspired by oral history at 47-49 Huntley street, Fitzrovia. It is a tribute to staff, patients and architecture of the Royal National Throat Nose & Ear Hospital and the Eastman Dental Hospital, who closed their historic centres on Gray's Inn road in October 2019.

Writing And Reading Newham: an oral history project about writing and reading in Newham, centred on Newham Bookshop and funded by the Gilda Street Trust. On the Record will launch learning resources for schools and a publication sharing the stories of some of Newham's writers and readers in Spring 2020. Contact: info@on-the-record.org.uk

Jewish Museum: Dr Kathrin Pieren and Laura Baggioli

"Family History from A to B: Armistice to Brexit": The project, conducted with the help of Dr Peter Ride and students from the MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture at the University of Westminster, involved intergenerational work and group interviews with Jewish families, covering a hundred-year period from the Armistice in 1918 to the contemporary changes faced in Britain at the time of Brexit.

We are interested in Jewish family identities and how they are passed on through the generations, the stories they tell each other and how these have been shaped by personal and intimate moments as well as being affected by wider political events in their lifetime.

Interactive workshops aimed at triggering memories and prompting conversations invite the family members to present objects, images or other items that have been passed through the family, or respond to a "box of smells" or participate in a "time-travelling" workshop. A professional photographer takes photographs of the family. The project is still underway, but we are hoping to group all our material together into a display soon!

Contact: laura.baggioli@gmail.com

The Story of Windrush Migrants: Ademola Adeniji

Learning Through The Arts have been collecting oral histories of Windrush generation and their descendants in and around Brent, in partnership with The Brent Museum. For more information please visit the website at www.learningthroughthearts.co.uk contact: info@learningthroughthearts.co.uk

The untold stories of first-generation Bangladeshi women in the East End (1970-2000): A Stepney Community Trust Project

The project will be delivered through engaging community participants in a voluntary capacity and equipping them with relevant training provided by Oral History professionals, Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives and London Metropolitan Archives. Outcomes of the project include a collection of oral history, a book, an exhibition and a drama performance. The oral history, photographs and documents generated will be deposited at the Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives. Contact: heritageproject@stepney.org.uk

The Migration Museum Project: Sue McAlpine

The [Migration Museum Project](http://www.migrationmuseum.org) aims to establish a permanent national museum to shine a light on the many ways that the movement of people to and from Britain across the ages has shaped who we are as individuals, as communities and as a nation. We have staged an acclaimed series of events, exhibitions and education workshops at venues across the UK since 2013, attended by over 170,000 visitors, while more than 7,500 school and university students have participated in our education workshops. In April 2013 we opened our temporary Migration Museum in the Workshop in Lambeth, enabling us to build and engage audiences, grow links with community and test ideas about what people would like to see in our permanent museum. In 2020 we move to another temporary venue where we will continue to build on our work. Sue McAlpine curated Room to Breathe, an exhibition at the Migration Museum which told the stories of new arrivals to Britain, presented in a series of rooms in which the struggles, joys, creativity and resilience of living in a new land were brought to life through audio, films, photographs and personal objects.

Website: www.migrationmuseum.org Contact: sue@migrationmuseum.org

Coldharbour 360° oral history project: Charlotte Knowles

Coldharbour is a 360° oral history project that explores the history Coldharbour Ward in Brixton, focusing on the market and Coldharbour Lane. Coldharbour Lane and the buildings connected to it carry enormous symbolic relevance for the local community. The stories of people who have lived and worked here tell us much about the social, political and cultural evolution of Britain over the past 70 years, yet they remain largely under-explored.

The Coldharbour Project has recorded over 30 oral histories with residents, business owners, community leaders, local historians and politicians to develop an archive of untold stories that will be housed at the Lambeth Archives. The oral histories will be made available online. The project is a partnership with the Independent Film Trust, University of the Arts London, the Lambeth Archives and Brixton Library. Website: www.independentfilmtrust.org/coldharbour
Contact: charlotte@independentfilmtrust.org

The Women's Resource Centre (WRC): Dionne Nelson

The women's voluntary and community sector (WVCS) grew out of the Women's Liberation Movement (WLM) which will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2020. Many of the women who were involved in setting up women's organisations and campaigning for change are now in their late 50s and 60s, and their struggles and achievements have remained largely invisible.

We want to create a unique oral history archive of video interviews documenting: (1) the testimonies of hitherto unknown current and past leaders of London-based women's organisations, and (2) interviews between school girls and women leaders. The project will focus on the contribution of the first refuge on the development of London's WVCS. Interviewers will receive training in interviewing skills. Our special thanks to Kate Melvin for her guidance and input. Contact: Dionne@wrc.org.uk

Eastside Community Heritage: James King

During 2019 Eastside Community Heritage have undertaken a number of oral history projects exploring various communities in East London. '**Becoming Becontree**', a National Lottery funded project in partnership with LBBB Archives at Valence House, celebrates a hundred years of one of the country's most iconic and largest housing estates, built in Dagenham as 'homes for heroes' in the wake of the urban slum clearances that followed WW1. The project speaks to residents from the estate's distant and recent past to paint a picture of life in Becontree. The project aims to produce an exhibition, school workshops and reminiscence sessions.

'**Thames Ward: The People's Story**', also funded by the National Lottery, preserves memories and experiences from Barking's historic industrial heartland. Now predominantly a residential area, exemplified by the burgeoning housing complex Barking Riverside, this project aims to collect residential stories and experiences to help actively improve life in their communities through activism, lobbying and publications.

We have recently completed a short oral history project on the former **Canning Town tower block of Ronan Point**. Opened in March 1968, it was just two months later the subject of a national disaster as an explosion on its eighteenth floor prompted a partial collapse of the tower, killing four people. A retrospective investigation pinpointed serious building defects, with the disaster instigating changes in building regulations. In this project we speak to those who lived in the tower, those who were involved in the rescue effort and those who campaigned for the tower to be demolished, which it eventually was in 1986.

To coincide with Black History Month 2019, the **Trailblazers project** interviewed twelve women of colour who had been nominated by members of the public. Their inspiring stories were retold in an exhibition that debuted at Redbridge Library early in October and since then displayed at various locations.

Fortunes, documents the history of the Newham Chinese Association, founded in 1986, tying into wider themes of migration, community work and racial discrimination amongst Newham's Chinese community. We will interview committee members, volunteers, service users and trustees to uncover the history of a community whose existence has largely been ignored by the history

books. The findings of the project will be presented in an exhibition, whilst educational workshops will also be undertaken with local students.

Website: <https://www.hidden-histories.org/> Contact: james@ech.org.uk

Market research oral history group: Judith Wardle

The market research industry is now over 70 years old. A voluntary body, The Research Network, set about interviewing those 'movers and shakers' who were there – if not at the beginning – certainly were there when most methodologies were created and techniques developed. 27 interviews are now available on the Market Research Society website (www.mrs.org.uk/resources/oralhistory). Each interview is about one hour in length, edited down from roughly two hours. The work represents changes since the Second World War, as well as forensic detail on how those changes were decided and directed.

The Archive of Market and Social Research (www.amsr.org.uk/) has been set up and is currently collecting and digitising documents from market researchers across the various disciplines. It will eventually house the final interviews.

The two projects are entirely funded from voluntary donations from market researchers and the interviews are conducted and edited by volunteers. The Oral History Group has plans to expand its reach, roll out a scheme whereby individuals submit a short, spoken recording describing their careers, and to interview the 'foot soldiers', the interviewers and recruiters.

Contact frank.winter@ntlworld.com or judithwardle@btconnect.com

The British Entertainment History Project: Mike Dick

For nearly 30 years now the members of the British Entertainment History Project have been quietly, painstakingly recording interviews with working men and women from the UK film, television, radio and theatre industries. The project began in 1987 when a small group of workers in the British film and television industry in London, under the guidance of producer/director Roy Fowler, set about collecting and archiving the oral testimonies of retired co-workers. They called themselves the ACCT History Project.

The project is now a unique collection of more than 750 interviews and includes famous voices as well as the hundreds of other men and women who have worked in our industry over the last 100 years from the silent movie era, the birth of television to today's multimedia world. There are camera operators, film editors, hair and makeup artists, actors, projectionists, writers, electricians, dubbing mixers, costume designers - every craft is there. It is a vast audio/visual archive of not only knowledge, experience and skills, but also of social history. The interviews tell us about the challenges these workers had to overcome, the skills they employed, the enduring human relationships they forged as Britain developed into one of the world's major centres of the entertainment industries.

Over the last couple of years the volunteers have been digitising, uploading and transcribing the 750 existing interviews to our website. Our main driving force is to fulfil the vision of the original History Project pioneers - to make these valuable recordings accessible to future generations.

Website: <http://historyproject.org.uk> contact: mikedick@blueyonder.co.uk

Gestetner project. Alt Går Bra (AGB): Oscar Mac-Fall

The art group Alt Går Bra (AGB) have been pioneering research into the role of the Gestetner duplicator machine for 5 years, exploring how these machines performed a crucial role for numerous artists and political movements in the UK and internationally. This research also informs a larger theoretical investigation into obsolescence and the impact of dematerialisation carried out by AGB.

In 2018, the Heritage Fund and Arts Council England awarded AGB funding to carry out theoretical, field, and artistic research into the Gestetner duplicator. The project was based at Bruce Castle Museum in Tottenham, which holds the only archive related to the Gestetner factory which once stood in the local area. Working together with volunteers as well as oral historians, AGB has conducted oral history interviews with a wide range of individuals that used the machines, former factory workers and the Gestetner family. This research informed an exhibition consisting of more than 150 original publications produced on Gestetner machines and a conference discussing the impact of the duplicating machine.

Oral history interviews have been essential in bridging the gap in an area of British heritage that has been almost entirely overlooked. They have revealed the impact the machines had in democratising the printing medium, their role during WW2 in the production of underground publications and the importance of the factory as a major employer in the UK, as well as the legacy of the inventor, David Gestetner. Contact: oscarmacfall@gmail.com

'Signals and Signs': oral histories with community health practitioners:

Dr Ruth Beecher

I am a postdoctoral research fellow on the Sexual Harms and Medical Encounters (SHaME) research project at Birkbeck, University of London. The project I work on explores the role of medicine and psychiatry in sexual violence. Funded by the Wellcome Trust and led by historian Joanna Bourke, our interdisciplinary project seeks to understand the role played by medical professionals, including psychiatrists, in understanding and dealing with sexual harms. My research investigates the ways nurses, doctors, psychologists and psychiatrists have responded to the possibility that a child is being sexually abused by a family member since the 1960s in the UK and the US. How have their thoughts, behaviours, public utterances, and clinical practices changed over time? I am engaged in archival research and in gathering new oral histories with health visitors, psychologists, psychiatrists and paediatricians. The interviews will in due course be deposited in the Birkbeck repository.

Website: for Sexual Harms and Medical Encounters

(SH+ME): <https://shame.bbk.ac.uk>

Contact: r.beecher@bbk.ac.uk

ÚnaGanaGúna: Irish Women's Digital History Project Report on 2018/19: Dr Ruth Beecher

We are a collection of scholars and feminist citizens seeking to gather and share Irish women's stories to capture a fuller history of our experiences. We have set out to gather the stories, memories and opinions of Irish women born in each

decade of the twentieth century to find out how much their experiences and attitudes have changed or stayed constant over the decades.

The project involves gathering oral testimony from Irish women or those who are part of the diaspora to examine how their lives and attitudes evolved during each decade. The first stage is a qualitative study of a purposive sample of twelve to fifteen women born between 1930 and 1999. It is a work in progress, and we have interviewed twelve women to date. Interviews are facilitative and enquire about women's experiences in their formative years between the ages of 16 and 29. Themes emerging include gender, sexuality, domestic/professional, public/private, sexual/reproductive, children, religion, economic empowerment, personal fulfilment, mental/physical health, gender-based violence, citizenship, politics and leaving/returning to Ireland. The interviews will be deposited in the Birkbeck, University of London repository.

Website: <https://unaganaguna.org/> Contact: r.beecher@bbk.ac.uk

Discovering Documenting England's Lost Jews: Julia Pascal

In 2018 Pascal Theatre Company received a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to explore a little-known English history – the seventeenth century return of the Jews.

Our project has parallel strands. The Oral History element traces the descendants of the original immigrants who had fled Spain and Portugal for Holland and arrived in England. Known as Sephardim or Sefardim, they were exiles from or victims of the Catholic Inquisition.

We are also looking at archives and tracing the wider Sephardi and Middle Eastern diaspora that landed on British shores in the twentieth century. We have met with overlapping narratives as Jews fleeing Spain in the fifteenth century can be found in families fleeing Egypt, Turkey and Iraq in the twentieth.

We have discovered Jews whose Spanish roots have prompted them to seek Spanish, and in some cases, Portuguese, citizenship as Brexit approaches. Although this oral history project seems to be rooted in the seventeenth century our investigations have revealed how current the work is. In July 2020, we will be presenting a site-specific presentation, at the Sephardi graveyard in the grounds of Queen Mary University of London, using texts, interviews, archives and performance to dramatise the many areas that the project has unearthed.

Website: <https://www.lostjews.org.uk> and www.pascal-theatre.com

Memories of Door-step Milk Delivery in London: Maxine Beuret

As part of my practice-based PhD at Kingston University, I have been collecting memories of door-step milk delivery using Oral History, Photography and Film to capture working dairies and milk man. Working with three dairies, community organisation and heritage professionals, the research tests whether a specific methodology creates a more inclusive and dynamic representation of cultural heritage in the everyday. The photography is married with environmental sound and oral history to build short photo essay video pieces, while the images and text are also used in [multimedia displays](#). The material has been used in exhibitions and workshops at [Kingston Museum](#), local history library and in [Walthamstow](#). Contact: maxinebeuret@gmail.com
<http://ldoc-cdt.ac.uk/maxine-beuret/>

Art is no business? The problem of representing emerging artists in the commercial art world. Bruce M Haines

My PhD considers the anthropologies of art galleries and looks at how these 'businesses' make financial and strategic decisions based primarily on sense-making: that is, making key business decisions based on feelings, intuition and one's internal voices. My methodology includes the compilation of gallery narratives assembled from interviews I make with ex-gallerists.

In the interests of preserving contributors' anonymities while integrating their experiences into an historical context (quotes, anecdotes and previously published material from the 18th century to the present day), the final format of the PhD may take the form of a play. By turning edited transcripts of interviews into scripts, this emotive, qualitative 'data' becomes something that has agency, power and impact for its readers or listeners.

When I began my PhD, I hadn't really considered oral history as a specific methodological discipline or tool by which to make my research. Yet I appreciate how it has provided an appropriate structure for what has transpired to be a quite radical investigation of an elusive subject that in the end revolves around big personalities and the charisma of its protagonists.

Contact: k1704134@kingston.ac.uk

British Military Encounters with Italian Civilians. 1943-1946: Fabio Simonetti

I am a Doctoral Researcher currently working on PhD research on this AHRC funded project in partnership with the University of Reading and the Imperial War Museums (2017-2020). The purpose of this research is the analysis of the 1943-1945 Italian Campaign from a different angle. At the centre of the project are individual as well as collective experiences of both British soldiers and Italian civilians in key Italian areas – Sicily, Naples and Rome – selected as case-studies for the specific role they played, as well as the neglected memory of this encounter.

By mining this rich seam of social history for new understandings of wartime encounters, this interdisciplinary project focuses on a variety of sources spanning from personal diaries to songs and theatre plays as well as official archival documentation. A very particular attention is dedicated to oral history sources by both recording interviews with people who lived through this encounter and by using large oral history archives held at the IWM and in Italy.

All interviews recorded during the course of this project – nineteen so far – will be acquired by the IWM sound archive. For more information please contact: fsimonetti@hotmail.com or f.simonetti@pgr.reading.ac.uk

Military Musicians fo Kneller Hall - oral history education project

Martin Bisiker of the Legasee Educational Trust interviewed forty military musicians who shared their memories of Kneller Hall in Twickenham. Kneller Hall has been the home of Army music for 160 years but due to MOD cut backs it is to close it's doors permanently in 2020. Working in partnership with the schools'

museum Legasee undertook 40 interviews with veterans who had trained and played both in the school and around the world.

Bugles in Bosnia Tubas in China and French Horns in Germany – through our interviews we heard stories of musicianship camaraderie and bravery. From international tours and Top of the Pops to surviving bomb attacks and supporting victims of war the stories told were as varied as they were inspirational. Funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund allowed us to involve the local community with volunteers helping with research and working with the Veterans. Two local schools – Chase Bridge Primary and Twickenham Secondary partnered with us bringing year 3 5 and 9 pupils into the museum for fantastic days of activities including learning to read music marching in formation and interviewing veterans. As a result of the collaboration we created KS2 and KS3 learning materials available to UK schools. The completed project is now available to view on Legasee's website www.legasee.org.uk

European Reminiscence Network (ERN) (Pam Schweitzer MBE)

The European Reminiscence Network has had a worrying year, with Brexit threatening our survival as coordinators of Partnership projects and forcing a cut-back on wider-ranging action-research projects. However, we have succeeded in maintaining our biennial international conferences, and our training programmes in Reminiscence Theatre and in Reminiscence in Dementia Care, which have been in demand in the UK and overseas. Partners from previous EU-funded projects have continued to work with us and with one another, ensuring the continuation of our major reminiscence projects. In fact there has been demand from beyond Europe this last year, with trainees from the Far East, Canada and the USA. Pam Schweitzer has undertaken training work in Japan, Spain, Germany, Singapore, Boston and Scandinavia, where there is now an ambitious Reminiscence Theatre Network involving Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland.

The European Reminiscence Network held a major conference entitled "Theatre of Memory" in Dublin in May 2019. Over 150 people attended and 50 groups and individuals from around the world presented their work in talks, workshops and performances. This included reminiscence theatre shows, photographic and art displays, film, dance and music. We also show-cased the ERN-inspired work of partners from Australia, USA and Japan who were unable to attend. There was an amazing welcome from our Irish partners (Making Hay Theatre) with Irish music and dance performances and an extremely intensive programme for all concerned. The next international conference is now being planned for June 2021 in Amsterdam. A UK conference aimed at encouraging care staff to undertake life story work is planned for May 2020.

The Reminiscence Theatre Archive at the University of Greenwich:

This year has seen the Reminiscence Theatre Archive move from the Drama Department of the University of Greenwich into the University's permanent archive collection. This move has secured the future of the archive and the University has undertaken to preserve and maintain it, ensuring access as requested. There has been full cooperation from the Drama and History Departments and the Archivist himself. Over this last year, three drama students have worked on the organisation and transfer of the Reminiscence

Theatre Archive to its new home as part of their work placements (100 hours per student), and in the coming years, drama and history students will be able to undertake further work placements with the European Reminiscence Network

The Reminiscence Theatre Archive features hundreds of interviews conducted from the early 1980s to 2005 in connection with related reminiscence theatre projects, both professional and amateur. It also shows films of the theatre shows and responses from audiences, press coverage and tour schedules in the UK and across Europe. Hundreds of the interviews have been digitised and more will be completed in the coming year. Many interviews and related productions are now available on-line via www.reminiscencetheatrearchive.org.uk and the website has been reformatted this year into a more accessible and attractive site.

'Remembering Yesterday, Caring Today': Reminiscence in Dementia Care:

This year we have expanded this project of the European Reminiscence Network to cover three London Boroughs (Camden, Westminster and Greenwich). The project aims to support people with dementia and their family carers through reminiscence arts. Families attend 12 weekly sessions, revisiting different turning points in their lives in each session, exchanging experience and participating in expressive and visual arts as a means of sharing past and present. Families make friends during the sessions, undertake an informal life review together and rebuild the self-esteem and sense of identity of the participants. (see website www.rememberingyesterdaycaringtoday.com for more information on this project and EU partner organisations.

This project is supported by apprentices who undertake a 2-day training course and then attend the weekly sessions to learn the method and to observe its impact on the families involved. They write up in essay form their learning, and can become accredited facilitators of the project. This RYCT project is running across Europe and beyond, so reminiscence workers from other countries can come to London to train, and then deliver projects under supervision in their own countries. Apprentices from Japan, Singapore, Sweden, Denmark, Canada and USA have become so accredited. Our partners in the European Reminiscence Network run the same programme to support families living with dementia in Netherlands, France, Spain and Finland.

Open European Societies

'Open European Societies' is an EU-funded European partnership project under the Europe For Citizens programme. It brings together 8 countries and 11 partners, all committed to supporting migrant and refugee integration, community development, tackling xenophobia, discrimination and Hate Speech. The aim of 'Open European Societies' is to eradicate the stigmatisation of migrants and refugees, by helping the communities of the participating countries to overcome stereotypes and by developing counter-narratives through video campaigns and video recorded life stories of migrants that give more accurate insights into their situations and experiences.

The European Reminiscence Network is a partner in this project and hosted the first international meeting of the project at the University of Greenwich in March 2019. Delegates attended from all partner countries and described the situation regarding migration in their countries. Greenwich Drama students who had been

working on organising migration memories in the Reminiscence Theatre Archive, gave their impressions of the stories they had encountered and how this narrative approach had enabled them to understand a great deal more about the migrant experience of those aiming to settle in the UK.

The conference exhibition was a display of Memory Boxes made in different EU countries. These were made out of grenade boxes belonging to the armies of their countries. With the help of professional artists, the older people had made visual displays in their own individual boxes. The boxes had toured Europe for several years, and now they were being displayed for the last time in London.

Drama students from University of Greenwich had also been involved in a performance project based on the migration experience of people from China, the Caribbean, Germany and Poland. They had come to Britain in the years just after the war and had presented their experience of migration in personal Memory Boxes. The students who had been involved in the dramatisation of these migration stories gave a presentation to the international delegates of the Open European Societies project on how participation through performance in the lives of these older people had affected and moved them.

A Hip-hop company presented their personal stories of migration in a compelling dance programme and then shared their choreographic devising process with delegates. The famous dance group "Protein" also shared their process of making dance from the memories and direct experiences of migration, both many years ago and more recently in their well-travelled show "Border Tales".

The most dramatic piece of theatre was presented by a collective of women from Africa and the Caribbean dramatising their experience of struggling with the Home Office, Social Services and employers to try to find housing, work and the necessary papers to enable them to settle. Though officially non-actors, this group of women had made a remarkable piece of work entitled "I just put British....." Afterwards, they replayed their experience in a Forum Theatre style, so that delegates could participate directly in the performance. Altogether, this conference was immensely varied and stimulating. The follow-up meeting takes place in Thessaloniki on 22-25 November 2019.

NORTH EAST

North Tyneside Area (Kath Smith)

Regional Network Enquiries: Enquiries continue to come in, both from individuals wanting to record a family memory and groups involved in projects. People have commented favourably about the information on the OHS website. Out of 5/6 enquiries generally there has been little feedback as to successful delivery of the projects being planned. The exception to this has been a small local church celebrating its 90th anniversary with an oral history installation and photographic exhibition. It became clear that they had access to some high-level design and interpretation skills among the church membership and didn't need too much support in the way some other projects do. I have received a beautiful invitation to the launch of the exhibition and am looking forward to seeing how they've put everything together, especially the sound installation.

Remembering the Past Overview: 2018/9 hasn't quite turned out to be the calmer waters I had expected this time last year. Core funding for the organisation has been really difficult to secure and the search for funding takes valuable time away from getting on with the face to face work we should be doing. Despite this the volunteers have delivered excellent high quality work during the year.

One piece of work that I'm extremely proud of (on behalf of the volunteers) is the '**Care Home Collection**'. This focused on recording stories with very frail elderly people who have become disconnected from mainstream society. The results the volunteers achieved were amazing including a series of wonderful books based on the interviews they recorded. Care staff and family members were delighted to be involved and to gain new insights about our interviewees.

Training: Training has been a big focus of our work this year, both intentionally and unintentionally. Thanks to support from local funders the existing volunteer team have increased their range of skills. The next step was to double the size of the team, incorporating peer mentoring into our method of work.

We also ran our first open training course over a five week period. This was great fun and I know that some of the participants have used their new skills out in the community. We benefit from being able to access high quality training rooms in the Linskill building which sets a good tone for the 'trainees'.

Finally, we went out to train a team of volunteers working on the restoration of a local park. They returned to us for training in post-production, using the facilities in our base. It is really enjoyable to work like this as you get a chance to tailor the training to their specific needs and feel a sense of participation in their project.

Heritage Lottery Fund: HLF (as I still call it) is now into its stride with its new strategic plan. The most noticeable difference is that the regional boundaries have changed and we're now in the 'North', which is a pretty big area. Locally there are a few big capital projects being developed which could be really exciting. One has actually got through the stage one process, which is reassuring. I've just signed up for an information event being hosted in Newcastle and am looking forward to finding out more about how 'wellbeing' fits into the grant criteria.

Getting paid for work done/Contracts: I thought I'd comment on this because I've come across difficulties with payment on several occasions this year and there can be serious consequences. In one case a consultant had a payment refused, in another a local authority paid a fee months after the invoice had been submitted, a cash flow disaster was narrowly avoided. There is a danger that we work on an informal/goodwill basis and occasionally it can come back to haunt us. A large organisation can cope with some late payments but most of us can't. In both of the cases I've mentioned the support of the local voluntary support organisation was really helpful and ultimately achieved results.

Newcastle University's Oral History Unit and Collective: The Oral History Unit and Collective are fully into their stride now more links are being made across the region with some interesting organisations. The 2018 Networker meeting was a great starter event and locally we've benefitted since then

meeting a range of guest lecturers and attending events, on top of the monthly drop-in sessions.

NORTH WEST

North West (Rosalyn Livshin)

Remembering Resistance: This project based at Lancaster University aimed to collect oral histories from women who have been involved in protest or activism over the last few decades. As a result 100 oral histories of women activists have been collected by 25 volunteers. An additional 20-30 Oral Histories collected by other projects are to be made fully available alongside those collected by the project on the website: www.rememberingresistance.com/100-years , (the OHs will be live by the end of November). The project has held an exhibition in Sheffield and 12 other community engagement events.

Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust and Race Relations Resource Centre (RRRC): In January 2018 the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust was awarded a grant of £351,100 to deliver a three year project entitled, Coming In From The Cold (CIFTC). The main aim was to 'increase the visibility of BAME heritage' by supporting communities to deliver and archive their history projects.

The Centre has given support to 39 projects including: advice on initial activity/ budget/ output ideas; practical help with funding applications project facilitation, research dissemination and archiving; training in oral history and creative reminiscence; loan of equipment; use of exhibition and event space and publicity.

Below is a brief overview of a few groups who recently completed their heritage projects funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF):

Unity, Community and Football March 2018 – August 2019, £29,900
Delivered by Ensemble (French Supplementary School), this project aimed to bridge the language divide between English and French speakers from Cameroon. Young people worked together to explore their shared heritage, using football as a starting point to explore aspects of language, culture and identity. Interviews with former professional footballers and older community members were filmed and the group produced a digital exhibition for the interactive computers in Archives+ based on their research. All of the films were donated to the RRRC.

Tracing the Heritage of Zimbabweans in Greater Manchester January 2018 – July 2019, £9,300
Delivered by ZIWO (Zimbabwe Women's Support Organisation): Volunteers recorded the life stories of 10 individuals from differing generations and ran a number of public events to share insight. The group then produced a small book based on the testimonies they had collected and donated their project archive to the RRRC.

Aratta: Armenians in the North West March 2018 – July 2019, £56,700
Delivered by Moss View Research: A small team of staff and volunteers recorded interviews with people of Armenian heritage. They also found existing archive material such as photos and documents relating to earlier Armenian settlers from 19th century. The group employed 2 professional photographers to take

contemporary portraits which were displayed alongside historic material and interview extracts in an exhibition at Manchester Central Library. Project Manager, Zara Hakobyan also delivered a paper (together with AIUET archivist, Jo Robson) at this year's Community Heritage and Archives group conference in Glasgow.

Manchester Markets, Sept 2018 – Jun 2019, £69,400

Delivered by One Manchester (Housing Association) working with three residents' groups to record the history of markets in Gorton, Moss Side and Longsight. They filmed interviews with current stallholders and shoppers, to produce a short documentary and also carried out historic research. The project led to an exhibition at Manchester Central Library and a permanent archive in the City of Manchester records.

Flames Heritage Malawi January 2019 – December 2019, £47,600

Delivered by the Apostolic Order of St Hadrian, volunteers have recorded 30 interviews on the subject of courtship and marriage, exploring a range of attitudes and practices influenced by English and Malawian culture. The group have also developed a website www.flamesheritagemalawi.co.uk and intend to donate research material to the RRRC at the end of the project.

Crossing the Borders July 2018- Sept 2019, £36,900

Delivered by the Wai Yin, life story interviews were recorded with people from China, Malaysia and Hong Kong, Vietnam and Macau now living in Manchester. Participants then worked with artist Julie Mosely to create artist books and a display for Manchester Art Gallery. The group intend to donate the resulting archive to the RRRC.

Home: Different Journeys, One Life Summer/ autumn 2018, internal funding
Delivered by Limelight Housing Trust, this project recorded 6 life story interviews with elderly residents of Caribbean heritage. The stories were compiled into an exhibition at the Housing Trust and the resulting archive donated to the RRRC.

North West (Stephen Kelly)

The Granadaland Project, collecting the memories of former employees of Granada Television, continues. More than 120 interviews have now been recorded and feature on the website www.granadaland.org. A principal aim of the project has been to interview as wide a range of personnel as possible and includes directors, producers, film operators, sound recordists, management executives, secretaries, production assistants and many others. The project has continued to raise finance from various sources and more interviews are planned for the future. Work is also being done in archiving the recorded material and there are ambitions to archive other material from employees, including photographs, scripts and letters. This however will require a substantial home and archive resource.

The **Lymm Heritage Centre** has received a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to pursue an oral history of the Cheshire town. So far training has been

provided and volunteers are now recording material from local inhabitants. The project operates from the very active Lymm Heritage Centre where there is a wealth of material appertaining to the area and which is open to the public most days.

Helena Sanderson writes: 'I'm working with the National Trust in a voluntary capacity at **Fell Foot Park**, Newby Bridge, nr Ulverston, Cumbria on their oral history project. The project seeks to hear the memories of people who have been connected to Fell Foot since the 1930s. Fell Foot became a National Trust property in 1948 and was leased out for caravanning and camping. From 1972 - 1992, alongside caravans, there was the precursor of modern day "glamping" with nineteen small, self-contained chalets. Our interviewees are the people who came to Fell Foot as holidaymakers and several current staff members who have had ties with Fell Foot for many years. In October 2020 we will launch a themed exhibition at Fell Foot. We received HLF funding for this part of the project (as part of a wider capital project) and National Trust internal funding for OHS training and recording equipment. Including myself, we have five volunteers interviewing and summarising. To find out more, please contact me at the National Trust: helena.sanderson@nationaltrust.org.uk

Jennie Vickers writes: I manage a programme, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, called **Coming in From the Cold**, which helps local BAME communities to develop and deliver their archives. We are a team of four, supported by volunteers and students from the University of Manchester. We provide a range of support including oral history training, reminiscence and archiving. We also support local authority services to archive BAME heritage and share learning within the sector. We currently have two long term volunteers plus a small team of student volunteers from the University of Manchester. We are currently supporting the following oral history projects:

Windrush Wonders by Migrants' Union (Manchester) – exploring the stories of second and third generation migrants affected by the Windrush scandal of 2018.

Music Cultures by Mahdlo (Oldham) – combines music making and heritage to explore the cultural and creative identities of young participants.

Voices of Kosovo in Manchester by Manchester Aid to Kosovo – building on their first oral history project and archive to share stories more widely. Commemorates the 20th anniversary of the end of the conflict in Kosovo.

Migration stories of Manchester's BAME LGBTQ community - led by Gaydio Academy Heritage Group (Manchester)

Black History in Stockport by Rising Stars – working with young people to capture the stories of African and Caribbean migrants who settled in the borough.

The Gardens of Babylon by Sheba Arts (Manchester) – capturing stories from Iranian artists, musicians, poets and dancers.

Bengali Folk Tales (Manchester) – working with Professor Aninindita Ghosh from the University of Manchester and local communities to capture the traditional folk songs of Bengali workers.

Black Nurses in the NHS by Our Heritage Group (Manchester) – recording the lives of women who migrated to work in the NHS

In addition to the personal archives of Anwar Ditta and Yvonne Malik Bahkt, we have also accessioned oral history collections listed in Ros Livshin's report above. For further information see: www.racearchive.org.uk/collections

Louise Bowden, Senior Lecturer, Department of Nursing, Faculty of Health, Psychology and Social Care, Manchester Metropolitan University.

Nurse Education : Preparing for the future by listening to the past.

I have interviewed five senior nurse lecturers in one department of nursing in one northwest University who have delivered nursing education for at least a thirty year period. Some of which are still in post and some have recently retired. The interviews were life histories from the 1960s as children through to the present day. We explored many issues including the culture of nurse education, their experiences as women and the changes experienced during the thirty years. I am at the point of analysis and writing up. I am particularly interested in the power of the voice and how the stories are told.

Adrienne Wallman, PhD Researcher, Department of History, Lancaster University, writes: I am a mature student doing a part-time PhD on ***The Impact of Jewish Genealogy***. I am carrying out recorded interviews with a range of people researching their Jewish family history - some of them always knew they were Jewish, others only discovered their Jewish ancestry when they themselves were adults. Some interviewees have East European Ashkenazi ancestry while others have Sephardi ancestry. Genealogy has also enabled some interviewees to discover they had ancestors who were murdered in the Holocaust. I am hoping eventually to deposit the interviews in relevant museums and archives. I have just begun my sixth year and am self-funded. I am carrying out all the interviews myself and also doing my own transcription so no volunteers are involved.

“You’d hear them jingle”: Nigel Ingham writes about oral histories of large long-stay institutions: Referencing the sound of keys carried by institutional staff, the quotation comes from an interview with a nurse at what was Brockhall Hospital in the Ribble Valley, Lancashire. It can be heard on www.lancslearningdisabilityinstitutions.org.uk - a growing online resource of oral histories, photographs, documents and historical information relating to three former Lancashire based long-stay institutions for people with learning difficulties - the Royal Albert, Calderstones and Brockhall. Indeed, the latter two, at one time had a combined total of nearly 5000 people labelled as having what we now call a learning disability or difficulty. In addition, all the institutions were massive local employers, with generations of families working within their walls.

The website primarily represents work carried out on two completed HLF projects in which volunteers in conjunction with educational, local authority and NHS partnerships were crucial.

- a Community Service Volunteers (CSV) one, on what was the Royal Albert Hospital, Lancaster, ran between 2005 and 2007, producing an exhibition, website as well as educational and training projects with Central Lancaster High School, learning disability nursing at the University of Cumbria and the History Department at Lancaster University.

- From 2015 to 2018, Pathways Associates/NWTDT ran a similar project on the former institutions of Calderstones and Brockhall and produced a local exhibition, as well as working with a local school, Blackburn Central High School.

The outcome of these learning disability history projects, especially when combined with oral histories going back to the 1980s, is a wealth of recordings mainly of former institutional residents and staff, but also with a selection of family stories. The memories extend as far back as 1910. These testimonies are enriched by digitised historical and contemporary photographs, documents and

reports. Portraying and sharing this often sensitive and conflicted history is challenging. However, the website, curated by myself on a voluntary basis, endeavours to keep it alive through the voices of those who experienced institutional life first hand. www.lancslearningdisabilityinstitutions.org.uk

SOUTH EAST

South East Region (Padmini Broomfield)

Over the past year there have been peaks and troughs in the number of inquiries I have received from projects with the majority relating to training and equipment advice.

In my freelance role, much of the work coming my way has been training and supporting volunteer-led projects. So the occasional opportunity to actually record an interview is a welcome treat! With more museums now installing sound posts to support exhibitions, there has been some increase in audio editing to produce compilations. Some recent projects I worked on:

SeaCity Museum Southampton: Trawling through archival interviews, recorded in the 1980s-90s by the former Oral History Unit, I produced compilations for the D-Day Voices display marking the anniversary. The wealth of material held in the archives – with memories going back to the turn of the last century – makes it a rich source for re-use and I produced edited clips for public talks on Ocean Liners, a seminar on music in the city, and the [Southampton Stories](#) displays. The eventual digitisation of this archive under the Unlocking Our Sound Heritage project will make this collection so much more accessible with exciting potential for future re-use.

Ford Transition: This project, focusing on the memories of former employees of the Ford Transit Plant Southampton (detailed in [last year's report](#)), led to further spin-offs after the main project ended. A small grant from Hampshire County Council enabled us to run a mini project, 'Made For Making', with reminiscence and craft activities to celebrate the manufacturing and craft skills in the local area. Artworks, craft items and 'homers' (personal items made in factories using scrap metals) were displayed with our [touring exhibition](#). Development funding commissioned local artist, Sarah Filmer, to create [Portal](#), a public art installation at the former factory site incorporating two sound posts, for which I produced compilations from the oral history interviews.

Rustington Museum: As part of its National Lottery Heritage Fund redevelopment, the museum initiated the collection of oral histories of local people by trained volunteers. Editing to produce clips for the sound station was interesting on many levels – fascinating insight into the village's WW2 history (of Fascist activity and Canadian troops), sense of identity and community, rapid changes from fields to flats; volunteer interviewers' focus on what should be recorded or not; and the connection visitors felt when listening to the audio.

The following are reports sent in from other local projects:

Gillian Edom writes: 'In June 2020 **St. Paul's Church in Chichester** will be celebrating the anniversary of its successful amalgamation with a neighbouring

church, St. Peter the Great. A number of long-term members of the church are currently being interviewed and their oral histories will provide stories for an exhibition at the celebratory Heritage Festival which will be held next year. The interviews are already capturing interesting memories and perspectives about the changes the church has been through in living memory, the personalities who have influenced this, and the evident impact that the church has progressively had on its local community in Chichester. As the oral history interviewer, I just hope I can do it justice!

Website: www.stpaulschichester.org/heritagefestival2020

Lisa Kerley sends an update on projects on the **Isle of Wight**:

“Out on an Island” is a National Lottery funded Oral History project that focuses on the untold heritage of the Isle of Wight LGBTQ+ community, reflecting their social involvement, contributions, personal struggles and triumphs, breaking stereotypes and historical context for the past 100 years. The project is being delivered by StoneCrabs Theatre and will produce recorded audio interviews, visual material, staged readings at local libraries, theatre stages, cultural institutions and community halls throughout the island. The interviews will be archived at Carisbrooke Castle Museum and the Wessex Film and Sound Archive. The project will culminate with a two-week public exhibition at the Clayden Gallery in Quay Arts Centre, Newport in September 2020, including oral histories on live playback, community and artist’s responses, specialist talks, educational and community workshops. More information <https://outonanislandco.uk/> and <https://stonecrabs.co.uk/out-on-an-island-lgbtq-heritage-on-the-isle-of-wight/>

The New Carnival Company (NCC) based in Ryde, Isle of Wight has received a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant of £54,000 for an exciting new project. **‘A Rather Bewildering Spectacle’** which will focus on the Island’s rich carnival heritage, which has never been well documented or curated, and spans from 1887 to the present day. The unusual title was how the IW County Press described the first Island Carnival held in Ryde in 1888. NCC will be working with Carisbrooke Castle Museum, who hold carnival memorabilia in their collections, and Lisa Kerley of InspirEd who will help to capture and record memories of Isle of Wight carnival in the past through reminiscence and oral history activities led by school children and adult volunteers. The project aims to engage young people across the Island to learn about its carnival traditions and discover new stories which will be saved for posterity and added to Carisbrooke Castle Museum’s oral history collection. A documentary around the project and a bespoke Island Carnival Memories website will also be created, with selected parts reimagined and presented at 2020’s Mardi Gras parade. For more information on the above, please contact Chris Slann, executive director at the New Carnival Company on 01983 716095 or chris@thenewcarnivalcompany.com

Carisbrooke Castle Museum in partnership with Down to the Coast are thrilled to launch a new website which curates the 23 interviews conducted as part of their **Farming Memories** oral history project during 2018. The recordings have resulted in a wealth of material relating to continuity and change in agriculture on the Isle of Wight since the Second World War. The interviews are a fascinating insight into the Island’s farming community over the past 70 years - people, places, events and day-to-day life. The recordings also capture the unique dialect and colloquialisms on the Isle of Wight, many of them linked to farming and the countryside. Website: www.farmingmemories.org

For more information contact Carisbrooke Castle Museum on 01983 523112 or Lisa Kerley - lisa.kerley@hotmail.co.uk

Patricia Simpson sends this report: [Bishop's Waltham Museum Trust](#), a small volunteer-run museum housed within the grounds of the Bishop of Winchester's Palace, Hampshire. An active team of volunteer oral historians have interviewed for 3 projects, providing a rich source of contemporary detail to our temporary summer exhibitions.

Our recent project, **The Time of Change**, has been examining everyday life in the 1950s, 60s and 70s for our 2020 exhibition. What was it like for youngsters, as Bishop's Waltham changed from a village where everyone knew each other, to a town full of newcomers? We have a wealth of detail coming through about farms, schools, homes and children's lives as the 2nd World War became history and the modern age of cars, plastics and pop music began. A retired local electrical shop-owner has just donated a 1950's wireless to convert into a sound delivery system from blackboxav.co.uk, so we hope to have real voices recalling their memories next year in the museum.

For a copy of our catalogue, email trish.simpson-davis@outlook.com

Nicola Benge of Strike a Light – Arts & Heritage sends this update:

Royal Sussex County Hospital: A People's History from the 19th to the 21st Century: We are delivering the heritage and oral history provision of this [Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals Trust](#) project through [Nimbus](#) in Brighton in 2019 and 2020. The historic Royal Sussex County Hospital is undergoing a massive redevelopment This project will collect memories and stories about the hospital, to capture its heritage and share the role it has played in the lives of Brighton & Hove residents, including staff, patients and the wider community. <https://strikealight.org/projects/current-projects/brighton-hospital-3ts-oral-history-project/>

Shalom Sussex – Jewish People In WW1: profiles the contribution Jewish people in Sussex made during the First World War – both on the home-front and abroad on the battlefield. Jewish people make up a small part of the Sussex demographic, and with partners and participants we have realised how little information is available about this topic. We seek to research, explore and share this hidden history. <http://shalomsussex.co.uk/>

Making Memories - Brighton Dome and Brighton Festival: Strike a Light is delivering oral history training to staff and volunteers for the Making Memories project in 2019 and 2020. We will deliver new skills and support for the collection and archival of 30 oral history interviews about the rich entertainment history of [Brighton Dome](#) as part of a wider capital project funded by the National Heritage Lottery Fund.

WEST MIDLANDS

Birmingham & area (Helen Lloyd)

I've done much less work this year for domestic reasons, so will write in more detail about a few projects rather than giving my usual list!

In April I resigned after 10 years as a Trustee of the **Charles Parker Archive** in the Library of Birmingham and my last responsibility was to help organise the annual [Charles Parker Day](#) on the 100th anniversary of Parker's birth. Next year's Charles Parker Day will be held on 3rd April 2020 in Birmingham and I recommend it to anyone interested in connections between radio and oral history. Charles Parker worked as a radio producer for the BBC in Birmingham from 1954 to 1972 and is noted for recording lives that might otherwise have gone unrecorded and for putting working class voices on the radio at a time when BBC English was predominant. His best-known programmes, the Radio Ballads, included extracts from interviews with boxers, fishermen, polio sufferers, travellers, miners and the builders of Britain's first motorway. The [Charles Parker Archive](#) contains more than 5,000 hours of sound recordings as well as written material saved by Parker and these have all been digitised and catalogued under two Heritage Lottery projects. There are rare recordings of the early experiences of immigrants and the whole archive is an invaluable resource for the study of the second half of the twentieth century.

The Library of Birmingham also houses another oral history archive of 150 life-stories which I collected in 2000 and 2001, as part of what was known as the **Millennibrum Project**. During the past year, the Library has put the [catalogue and summaries](#) online and it is hoped that the complete transcripts and audio will follow. The interviews last around 1½ to 2 hours each and are with people from a wide range of ages and backgrounds, with around one third from ethnic minorities. Their memories of the twentieth century in Birmingham and elsewhere were recorded at a turning-point in history, as the project was completed just before the September 11th attacks.

Since I co-authored with Julia Letts the **Guide for Schools and Youth Groups** for the OHS website last year, (<http://www.ohs.org.uk/advice/how-to-do-oral-history/>), I've worked with Year 5s in two inner-city schools, as part of an oral history project about the adventure playground movement in Birmingham, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. They were both good schools less than two miles away from each other and both had mainly Muslim pupils, but were otherwise very different from each other. One was a Church of England school in Sparkbrook and as the children did practice interviews with each other about their memories of outdoor play, it emerged that most of these memories were from other countries in Africa and Europe. The other school was a secular academy in Balsall Heath where the children and their parents had mostly been born in Birmingham, though many grandparents were from Pakistan.

In the 1960s, large numbers of **Balsall Heath residents** moved en bloc to an outer-city council estate in Druids Heath and were glad to leave behind the inner-city slums to live in newly-built tower blocks. Now that these tower blocks are due for demolition, another project funded by the NLHF has recorded the memories of the residents who saw the area decline over many years and were involved in several community campaigns to improve their lives. When I attended the launches of the project exhibition and of the resulting book, I

talked to residents who told me that the project had made them feel proud of their history.

When I began recording life-stories 20 years ago for the BBC radio series '**The Century Speaks**' and for Birmingham City Council's '**Millennibrum**' project, I was struck by how very different were the memories of people who had lived only a few roads away from each other. This might not be so marked in a rural area, but in a densely-populated city, vastly different lives are lived side-by-side. The two inner-city schools and the outer-city estate are all less than 3 miles from where I live, but are very different from my locality and from each other. One of the things I love most about oral history projects is that they help us to understand and empathise with the lives and memories of people very different from ourselves. As more oral histories become accessible online, I hope they may play a small part in uniting our divided society.

West Midlands area (Julia Letts)

The theme of this year's network meeting is being creative with oral history, and certainly some of the projects I've worked with in 2019 have ticked this box. Two Worcestershire Wildlife Trust projects are near-completion. One has involved the collection of 35 interviews with volunteers who've been with the Trust for many decades and who tell their story in a downloadable podcast here **WWT 50th Anniversary**. The other has involved a tiny rural school, situated near unique floodplain meadows recently purchased by the Trust. As part of the community engagement programme, older members of the community were invited into the school to share their memories and several were recorded for the project. The interviews were turned into a play called **Where the Meadows Flower** which was performed by the Year 3 and 4 children in June. They will never forget this experience.

Another group of youngsters who had an unforgettable experience earlier this year were 40 students from two secondary schools in the Black Country. Their project, **Bostin Fittle** (which means 'good grub' in Black Country dialect) resulted in a very smart recipe book, filled with memories as well as recipes from the children, their relatives, friends and communities. I was involved in the oral history training for this project with the Ormiston Trust Academies in Sandwell and Wolverhampton. It was rewarding to see how motivated the groups were, turning up every week after school for more than a term, recording dozens of interviews and delivering an amazing final event at the Black Country Living Museum, complete with a Black Country Buffet and a star-turn on the BBC local news programme Midlands Today.

Staying on the theme of creativity, in the spring I worked with a group of Herefordshire Wildlife Trust volunteers at **Queenswood Country Park** near Leominster to create an audio trail called **Lyrics Leaves and Lives** around the wood. The trail is a wonderful mix of audio – some of it is oral history, some poetry, some birdsong, some conservation information and there's a children's trail, developed and delivered by children in the Trust's Wildlife Watch Group. To our astonishment, two weeks after being launched, the 56 audio tracks which are on seven outdoor audio players along the 1.5 mile route had been accessed 22,000 times! The walk was recently featured in a Times newspaper travel article. It has something for everybody – such as the memories of a 90 year

old who watched Queen Mary plant a tree in the 1930s to the current ranger talking about his childhood delight in nuthatches or the 'upside down bird'.

Across the year I have run an average number of tailored oral history courses for the BL/OHS training team. These have included a challenging but exciting day in Birmingham with 40 young people from the YMCA which is currently celebrating its **175th Anniversary**. The history and heritage of the Association is being recorded by dozens of young volunteers across the UK, many of whom are recording oral history interviews with founders, long-serving staff and volunteers. In Coventry, I trained volunteers who are recording stories about the City's swimming baths, opened in 1966 in an iconic glass building. The site has now closed but the memories will live on in the form of an underwater dance based on the recordings and filmed by an underwater artist. In Wolverhampton I am working with **Alarum Productions**, a theatre company which is turning the stories of women involved in clearing the Black Country's canals into a play and podcasts called 'I Dig Canals'. In Oxford I have been working with a group of volunteers from the **Wesley Memorial Church** who have recorded moving interviews with members of their congregation.

Much of the training work that I do involves small community groups that have been awarded 'Sharing Heritage' grants of up to £10k from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The community in Sea Mills, Bristol celebrated the 100th anniversary of its foundation as a 'garden suburb' by creating one of the UK's smallest museums - in a red phone box, complete with a wind-up audio unit that plays extracts from oral history interviews - **Sea Mills 100**. In Wednesbury, I trained members of the local history society to do some audio and video oral histories which they have used to create a booklet called **Preserving and Sharing Wednesfield's Heritage Through Oral History**.

More recently, two projects have taken me to the beautiful Upper Severn Valley in North Worcestershire and South Shropshire. **Severn Valley Country Park** run by Shropshire County Council is a beautiful wooded swathe of land on either side of the River Severn, between the villages of Highley and Aveley. It is hard to believe that it was once the site of two coal mines and that the parkland used to be a vast spoil heap spread across farmer's fields. There's now a new Visitor's Centre retelling the history of the area and the stories of the people that lived and worked there. I am training a team of volunteers to record oral histories for an audio display. Further south, in Kidderminster, I have just started working with volunteers from **Severn Valley Railway** who are recording interviews with those involved in the line since its restoration in the 1960s. There's some cross over between these two projects, as the coal from the mines at Highley and Aveley was transported on the Severn Valley Railway and there's still a request stop at Highley for passengers who want to visit the Country Park.

I run radio clubs each week in three primary schools, regularly taking pupils to a local care home where they record interviews with residents about their lives. Watching the children, some as young as 8, questioning and carefully listening to their elders, some as old as 100, is the most rewarding part of my job.

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service at the Hive (WAAS) (Maggie Tohill)

The Hive

I am working on an 18-month externally funded archive cataloguing project at present, so things have inevitably been less busy for me on the oral history front. That said I have continued to give advice to local groups and organisations who are thinking of undertaking projects and to answer enquiries about our audio holdings. We have also had several enquiries from people thinking of depositing with us.

Something slightly different for me has been giving a talk on oral history and family history to the Birmingham and Midland Society for Genealogy and Heraldry in the summer. Usually I am asked to talk about how to do oral history, so it was a nice change to focus on how our oral history collections might be used by people in their research and it was good for me to stop and consider this aspect of our work too. With this in mind we have also continued to try to incorporate clips from sound recordings into our social media output when we can.

One task for me this year has been to sort out and despatch the first sets of recordings to be digitised at the University of Leicester as part of the **Unlocking Our Sound Heritage** Project. The collections we sent were mainly those we had had direct involvement with such as our World War II and life stories projects as they were likely to be the most straightforward ones to tackle in terms of ownership, copyright etc. I also had the opportunity to pop across to Leicester for one of the team's outreach activities to promote the project, which was very helpful to us for thinking about how we in turn will promote the project. It also linked quite nicely back to talking to groups who want to use oral history recordings rather than create them.

We continue to respond to requests to record interviews of local people for whom there is no suitable ongoing local oral history project. This year for instance following the D-Day commemorations we were approached by a lady who wanted to have her experiences as an evacuee recorded. One of our volunteers was happy to call in to see her and we have added her recording to our World War II collection.

Over the summer the Hive hosted the exhibition from the **Rock Around the Hills** project which my fellow networker Julia Letts talked about last year in her report. The exhibition featured display boards and a touchscreen with images of posters, tickets, flyers and fanzines collected, plus a specially converted 1970s jukebox playing the recorded memories of audience members, musicians and promoters who were all part of the rock music scene at Malvern Winter Gardens 1961-90. It was great to host such an exhibition and it attracted quite a lot of attention.

Much of the 'external' work undertaken by staff has again centred round providing advice and training. I provided advice and support to the Council's Countryside service team as they embarked on a range of activities to mark the 40th anniversary of the **Worcester Woods Country Park**. This included an oral history project to capture stories about the area, with drop in sessions and more in-depth recordings of individual recollections. Our outreach team also continued

activities and training as part of the **Moving to the City** and **Heritage of Home** migration themed projects mentioned in last year's report.

One project we are also helping with is **Sound & Art at St Swithun's**, a NLHF funded project which aims to conserve, repair and adapt Worcester St Swithun's church to create a distinctive arts and cultural space in the heart of the city. As part of this the Friends of St Swithun (FOSS) are researching people memorialised in the church and recording stories from local people about the church. We are providing a range of training for them including research skills, oral history interviewing techniques and some workshops on selecting, cataloguing and looking after their archives, the latter being a completely new venture for us, which is allowing us to broaden what we can offer to groups in the future.

And finally, **Market Gardening Heritage** is a two-year NLHF and Historic England funded project which started in earnest earlier this year. It is focused on the Vale of Evesham and is being run by WAAS in partnership with Cleeve Prior Heritage Trust, Vale Landscape Heritage Trust, Worcestershire Farmsteads Project and Cleeve Prior Parish Council. As well as capturing memories of market gardening, volunteers are also surveying the physical remains of buildings such as 'hovels' which used to be at the end of allotments which are at risk of being lost. We have run both research techniques and oral history training for the volunteers, with 11 interviews already done and more in the pipeline.

YORKSHIRE

South Yorkshire (Sam Smith & Michelle Winslow)

The Living History oral history project is a seven month National Lottery Heritage Funded project which aims to train young people (aged 16-24) in oral history skills to capture and articulate the life experiences of displaced migrants, so they are retained for posterity. The project has been organised by Element Society, a non-profit youth charity based in Sheffield, delivering development, social action and enterprise programmes to young people and vulnerable adults. The project partners are the Storying Sheffield project at the University of Sheffield, who specialise in producing stories and other creative representations of Sheffield people's lives and identities.

So far young people have conducted 12 audio interviews to record people's experiences and stories of their heritage, including moving countries, settling in the UK, folk music, food memories and themes of home and belonging. The interviews will be archived at Sheffield Archives and are being used as content to create zines and an online learning resource for informal learning with other young people. A final exhibition showcasing the work is currently being planned. For more information please contact Uzma Kazi: uzma.k@elementsociety.co.uk

The oral history in palliative care project at the Northern General Hospital, Sheffield, continues to offer opportunities for people with life-limiting conditions to record their life stories, and has extended its reach to people in the wider community. The project runs with the Division of Nursing and Midwifery, University of Sheffield. Further palliative care projects using the same model are running successfully at St. Luke's Hospice in Sheffield and Ashgate Hospice care,

Chesterfield. For more information please see:
<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/health-sciences/our-research/nursing-themes/palliative/oral-history>

Mariam Ahmad Khokhar has recently completed her PhD in oral history within the School of Dentistry at the University of Sheffield. She collected oral histories of women with oral cancer in Pakistan. She found that if you are a woman belonging to low socioeconomic status group, excluded from health, education and wider social participation, have strong religious beliefs and resort to spiritual healing and alternative medicine, you are likely to present late for the diagnosis of oral cancer in Pakistan.

The Great Place Wentworth and Elsecar project, based at Barnsley Museum's Elsecar Heritage Centre, is working to reveal the hidden histories of Wentworth and Elsecar with oral history. For more information please see: <http://wegreatplace.com/>

Also in Barnsley, **Telling Cannon Hall's Stories** is a community oral history project exploring the history of the Cannon Hall site within living memory. Oral histories are being collected with a range of people including former garden and park staff, former curators of Cannon Hall Museum and local residents. Interviews will feed into interpretation of the site and a history trail. Recordings will be deposited in the Barnsley Archives collections.

WALES

Wales (Beth Thomas)

This has been a busy year for us in Wales, mainly because the OHS' Annual Conference was held in Swansea this year. The theme **Oral History@Work** proved to be very popular, drawing 177 delegates. It was encouraging to see a number of contributions from oral history projects in Wales in the programme. Some of them were already known to us e.g. *Women's Archive Wales' Voices from the Factory Floor*, the Royal Mint's oral history to mark 50 years of its moving to Wales, the Cefn Coed Hospital project and Swansea University's anniversary oral history project. But there were other interesting oral history collected in Wales that had not previously been on my radar, such as Sean Aeron Martin's work in Trawsfynydd, and the interviews done by the 'On Behalf of the People' research project regarding Point of Ayr and Tower Collieries. It just highlights really what a challenge it is to keep abreast of exactly what is being done across the whole of Wales. Setting up a **Welsh oral history network** has not been as straightforward as hoped, mainly because of people's existing commitments, but there is still a need for a better mechanism to log what oral history is being recorded and where.

On the same theme of oral history and working lives, Swansea University History student Carlie Andrews has conducted interviews with **former miners** to examine the experience of injury, disability and rehabilitation in the South Wales Coalfield, 1945-1984. The interviews have been deposited at the Richard Burton Archives, Swansea University.

Once again, the National Lottery Heritage Fund in Wales has been a key funder of oral history projects. Mencap Cymru, following on from their successful *Hidden Now Heard* initiative, received funding for ***Our Social Networks***, a project to collect the stories of friendships and relationships experienced by people with learning disabilities in Wales. The National Lottery Heritage Fund has also funded a community project in the Elan Valley in mid Wales and the participants have received OHS training.

An organisation with an excellent track record in delivering oral history projects – Archif Menywod Cymru Women’s Archive Wales – has just started on a new Lottery-funded project, called ***Setting the Record Straight: capturing women’s records and voices in Welsh politics***. This project will focus upon celebrating the contribution women Assembly Members have made to the National Assembly for Wales (NAW) as it reaches its 20th anniversary. During these years female AMs have made a huge contribution to the devolution process and to democracy in Wales. In 2003 NAW achieved the status as the first legislature to achieve a 50:50 gender balance. However, research at both county and national archival level has shown that women AMs' records are poorly represented. Hopefully, this project will redress the balance.

The Lottery Heritage Fund has also funded Race Council Cymru’s ***Windrush Cymru Project – Our Voices, Our Stories, Our History*** which directly responds to a call from elders of the Windrush Generation who wanted to capture their legacy for posterity. The recordings will be archived at St Fagans National Museum of History. In recent years, there has been a welcome increase in the number of projects highlighting the diversity of people and experiences which make up the history of Wales. A year-long volunteering project led by the ***Jewish History Association of South Wales*** collected over 70 oral histories and 6,000 images. This resulted in a touring pop-up exhibition celebrating the heritage of Jewish communities in Wales.

Finally, St Fagans National Museum of History and Cardiff University have received AHRC funding for a collaborative research project: ***Refugee Wales: the Afterlife of Violence***. The aim is to understand how refugees’ sense of identity is shaped by memories of their original home, their journey and their experiences in the nation of arrival. Interviews will be recorded with two groups at different stages of being refugees in Wales. Sri Lankan Tamil refugees arrived in waves between the 1980s and 2010, when the civil war ended in Sri Lanka. Syrian asylum seekers have been claiming refugee status since the start of the civil war in 2011. Both groups are well represented in South East Wales. The vulnerability of the interviewees and the sensitive nature of their testimonies will make this a very challenging project. Hopefully, the project will enable refugee communities to tell local communities, educational institutions, policy makers, community workers and the government about their migration stories, settlement in Wales and struggles to succeed.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Belfast (Dr Anna Bryson)

Securing funding for oral history work remains a significant challenge. Dozens of projects were facilitated by virtue of EU investment in the peace process (the

PEACE III programme included a dedicated stream for 'acknowledging and dealing with the past'). Whilst some oral history work has been supported under the 'Understanding Our Area' strand of Peace IV (e.g. Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council's oral history training work with the Coleraine Ulster Scots Group) many of the groups previously funded under Peace III have struggled to sustain their projects in the absence of adequate resources. The commitment of the Heritage Lottery Fund to oral history and storytelling work is all the more important in this context. Professor Sean O'Connell (QUB) and I have also provided assistance to the NI branch of the NHS70 oral history project.

In my capacity as regional networker I have provided assistance to numerous groups who wished to scope out an oral history project in preparation for application to the HLF. These include organisations such as Ulster Rugby, Coiste na nÍarchimí and the Dundrum Village Association. The Armagh Observatory and Planetarium has also recently been in touch regarding its plans to develop an oral history of the Observatory as part of its bid to secure museum accreditation status.

A number of members of the security services have set about developing oral histories of their respective organisations. The **Royal Ulster Constabulary George Cross Foundation** is not currently collecting stories from former serving officers due to funding issues but the archive is publicly available to researchers and students and the Foundation is currently exploring creative ways of ensuring that the stories collected can reach a wider audience. The **Warders Archive Group** - which has the ambition of telling the story of the Northern Ireland Prison Service from the point of view of operational officers - has just completed a pilot study and is now extending its reach to include family members and retired staff. A new oral history group titled '**Exiles**' seeks to help with the co-ordination of oral history research across the various security organisations. Under the guidance of the peace and reconciliation NGO, **Diversity Challenges**, oral testimonies from former police officers on both sides of the Irish border, formed the basis for a play titled *Green and Blue* written by Dr Laurence McKeown and produced by [Kabosh Theatre](#). The play has been performed in venues across the island of Ireland and has also toured in Great Britain and Europe. Most recently it was performed at the Edinburgh fringe festival and won the Lustrum award at Summerhall for the 'greatest festival moment'. In another innovative adaptation of oral testimonies, Diversity Challenges is utilising a technique called 'applied heritage' to enable participants to engage in role plays regarding a specific historical event and to subsequently discuss conflicting viewpoints and perspectives (<http://www.cacd.org.uk/peace-iv.html#>).

Other projects, such as the **Prisons Memory Archive** (PMA) focus on the experience of former prisoners. This project holds a collection of 175 filmed walk-and-talk recordings with those who had a connection with Armagh Gaol and the Maze and Long Kesh Prison. Thanks to a major award from the HLF, this project has been able to attend to the 'Preservation, Accessibility and Engagement' of the 300+ hours of audio-visual recordings contained within the PMA archive.

In academic work, students across the arts and humanities are developing oral history projects. For example, I currently have a PhD student working on an oral history of the transgender equality movement in Ireland. I'm also co-supervising a PhD study based on oral history interviews with members of the local nursing

profession. A student at the University of Edinburgh was also recently in touch with regard to his planned oral history research on the LGBT+ community in Northern Ireland in the 1970s and 80s. The Queen's University Oral History, Technology and Ethics hub (**QUOTE**) was launched in 2017 and since then has organised numerous symposiums and seminars and have provided advice and support to a wide range of oral history projects. As well as drawing together the many academics across Queen's who engage with oral testimony, the hub has provided a focal point for collaboration with organisations such as the Ulster Museum, the Heritage Lottery Fund, the local BBC and the Dealing with the Past NGO, Healing Through Remembering.

Healing Through Remembering continues to host the 'Stories Network' which aims to bring together people and projects who are interested in or involved with sharing stories and personal narratives relating to the conflict. I have included below updates from just a couple of the projects that are represented within this group:

Northern Ireland Mixed Marriages Association:

Having collected dozens of interviews with couples from 'mixed' marriages who left Northern Ireland, NIMMA is about to publish a book titled *Exiles for Love*. It plans to circulate the book widely within schools in the hope that it will become an important educational tool.

Border Roads to Memories and Reconciliation

Funded under Peace IV, this oral history project set out to increase awareness among younger people from both sides of the border communities about the impact of the closed border roads of the past and the effects that this had on border residents and communities. Through a sequence of facilitated workshops, young participants listened to, worked with, interviewed and recorded older people who had experienced a closed border. The twenty interviews recorded cover a wide range of subjects from childhood memories and socialising on both sides of the border, to experiences of violence and the impact that the border had on individuals and their communities. These interviews together with past recordings of one hundred and eighty other interviewees, photographs and paper clippings relating to the border can be viewed at: borderroadmemories.com

Oral History Archive proposed under terms of Stormont House Agreement

In the course of the past year I have continued to closely monitor and contribute to debates concerning the Oral History Archive proposed as part of a package of measures designed to deal with the legacy of conflict in Northern Ireland. Together with colleagues at QUB and the human rights NGO, the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ), I have contributed to ongoing discussions on the agreed legacy mechanisms. Following on from our publication of a 'model bill' for the implementation of the Stormont House Agreement, we produced a 160pp response to the Northern Ireland Office's public consultation. The Healing Through Remembering Stories network has also lobbied intensively on proposals for the proposed Oral History Archive and submitted its own detailed response to the consultation. With regard to the Oral History Archive there is widespread agreement amongst oral history practitioners that the Archive must be independent and free from political interference and that its model of governance should be flexible enough to ensure that the commitment made in the Stormont House Agreement to 'work with and through' existing oral history organisations

is upheld. We have also consulted with a range of Victims and Survivors organisations to explore how existing oral history training programmes might be adapted to meet the specific needs of our post-conflict society. Brexit has not surprisingly interrupted progress on legacy issues but our efforts will continue in the new year as we hopefully progress from the public consultation phase to the passage of legislation at Westminster.

Conclusion

It will be clear from this snapshot that a wealth of oral history work is under way in Northern Ireland – within, across, and between universities, community groups, the museum and archives sector, and the creative arts. Funding for community and voluntary groups nonetheless remains a major challenge, as does the resolution of outstanding concerns relating to the Oral History Archive proposed under the terms of the Stormont House Agreement.

SCOTLAND

Scottish Oral History Centre, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow (Dr. Alison Chand)

This year I have mostly been on maternity leave, so have dealt with fewer queries than normal in my role as regional networker, but those that I have still dealt with include the following:

April 2019 – Rachael Thomas

Assistant curator of Auchindrain Township project, which is looking at the rural history of this area near Inveraray. Rachael was looking for advice on equipment she could have volunteers using to conduct oral history interviews.

May 2019 – Jill McWilliam

Videographer in Cruden Bay embarking on project to film elderly residents and record the stories of their lives and their memories of the history of the village, in the north east of Scotland. Jill was looking for advice on training for volunteers and archiving of oral history interviews.

In my personal oral history related work this year, before going off on maternity leave, I continued to teach at the Scottish Oral History Centre, as well as the University of the Highlands and Islands. I am also continuing to work on an article for publication in the *Oral History Review* on different interviewers conducting oral history interviews on the same subject area with the same interviewees, and have submitted an article for consideration to the *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* about women working in reserved occupations in Clydeside during the Second World War. In addition, I have worked on various projects, undertaking freelance transcribing, summarising and interviewing work, including the History of Parliament Trust (conducting interviews with ex-MPs), the University of Roehampton and the British Library.

2020 ORAL HISTORY SOCIETY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Oral History Conference 2020

Oral History and the Media

Venue: Bournemouth University

Date: Friday 3rd and Saturday 4th July 2020

Oral history and the media have an important but complex relationship. The media has long been a significant producer of, and outlet for, oral history. Since the 1980s, there has been growing use of oral history in TV and radio documentaries and storytelling, with oral histories now forming an important and popular dimension of history and factual programming and broadcasting. This conference aims to consider the relationship between oral history and the media, both historically and today, by exploring similarities, differences, opportunities and challenges between media practices and oral history practices, from interviewing to editing, audiences to ethics.

More information and Call for Papers:

www.ohs.org.uk/conferences/conference-2020/

Submission of proposals: Deadline 20th December 2019

Email conference administrator, Polly Owen at polly.owen@ohs.org.uk

REGIONAL NETWORK ANNUAL EVENT 2019

Programme

Date Friday 22nd - Saturday 23rd October 2019

Theme Creative Uses of Oral History

Location The British Library, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB
The Foyle Room, Centre for Conservation

Note: Friday evening OHJ@50 event (RSVP only): Eliot Room, Knowledge Centre

Friday 22nd November 2019

Regional Network Business Meeting 15:30 – 17:30	
15:30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apologies 2. Minutes of the 2019 meeting and Matters Arising 3. Update from Co-ordinators <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Networkers – new, resigned, vacancies ii. OHS Committee changes, vacancies iii. Regional Network Meeting 2020 iv. Training and CPD v. Regional meetings/workshops vi. Special Interest Groups – activities vii. OHS Annual Conference 2020 viii. Website / Yahoo Groups update 4. Issues for discussion <i>(as proposed by networkers either before the meeting or raised during the meeting)</i> 5. Regional Networkers' Updates (round the table) 6. Any other business
17:30	<p>Meeting ends</p> <p>Networkers move to the Eliot Room, Knowledge Centre, British Library</p>
17:45	OHJ@50 Event 17:45 – 20:30
20:30	Dinner 20:30 Pizza Express, Euston Road King's Cross, Clifton House, 93-95 Euston Road London NW1 2RA

Saturday 23rd November 2019

Networkers CPD Event 10:00 – 13:30	
9.45	Arrivals (Please note, there may be a queue to clear security)
10.00 – 10:45	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Melissa Strauss, lead Policy Advisor on oral history policy at the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This is opportunity to hear about NLHF oral history vision and to ask questions or raise concerns. (Please submit your questions to juliana.vandegrift@btinternet.com in advance)</p> <p>10:45 – 11:00: Q+A (Chair Rob Perks)</p>
11:00 – 11:15	BREAK
11:15 – 11:20	<p>CPD 1: Room to Breathe: Sue McAlpine talks about curating Room to Breathe, an exhibition at the Migration Museum which told the stories of new arrivals to Britain, presented in a series of rooms in which the struggles, joys, creativity and resilience of living in a new land were brought to life through audio, films, photographs and personal objects.</p> <p>11.45-12.00 Q+A</p>
12.30	<p>LUNCH BREAK (All to provide own lunch)</p> <p>Please note, we are asking delegates to provide their own lunches and there are several cafes nearby. There will be time to network and view student installations from the Royal College of Art, MA Digital Direction Course as well as use 360 VR headsets from the Coldharbour 360 Project (tbc)</p>
<p>Public Session</p> <p><i>Networkers are joined by local OHS members</i></p> <p>13:30 – 16:00</p>	
13.30 – 14:15	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Coldharbour 360 Project: Charlotte Knowles from The Independent Film Trust, reflects on creating Coldharbour 360, an oral history project that explored the history of the market running along Coldharbour Lane in Brixton. The project was a collaboration between the University of the Arts London, Lambeth Archives and Brixton Library, and enabled the local community to take part in</p>

	<p>the production of a 360° documentary based on oral history testimony</p> <p>2.00-2.15 Q+A</p>
14.15 – 15:00	<p>CPD3: The Other Voice: Based in both the British Library and the Royal College of Art, students from the MA Digital Direction course participated in an elective module entitled 'The Other Voice'. The students made creative responses to selected extracts from the British Library oral history collections using sound art, textile and holographic art, film, soundscapes, virtual reality and 3D installations. Two of the students- Karthika Sakthivel and Giulia Brancati, will present their work and we will also hear reflections from RCA tutors Dr Eleanor Dare and Dr Matt Lewis & BL Oral History Curator Mary Stewart.</p> <p>2:45-3.00 Q+A</p>
15:00 – 16:00	<p>Discovering & Documenting England's Lost Jews: Julia Pascal, Artistic Director of Pascal Theatre Company, discusses Jewish return to England after the 1290 expulsion. Jews arriving secretly in 17C were mainly Spanish and Portuguese-speakers known as Sephardim. Their descendants are being interviewed as part of this National Lottery Heritage Funded project. On 5 July 2020, One Lost Stone, a site-specific performance around the Novo Cemetery, will highlight this rich legacy using the geography of the Cemetery to illuminate the histories of those buried under the stones. It will also reveal elements from archival narratives as well as the oral histories of Sephardim living in England today.</p> <p>3:45-4.00 Q+A</p>
16:00	Close

About our Speakers:

Giulia Brancati

Giulia Brancati was born and raised in Italy and has lived in London since 2013. She has previously studied BA Graphic and Digital Design at the University of Greenwich in London. Giulia's practice involves photography, illustration, video-making and sound collage. She is currently completing her MA in Digital Direction at the Royal College of Art, where she is exploring the future of storytelling through immersive installations, VR, 360° film and mixed media. Giulia is interested in people's voices and aims to find ways to translate the stories she hears into something that can be experienced by others, through a combination of visuals elements, sound, light and objects.

Dr Eleanor Dare

Dr Eleanor Dare is Reader in Digital Media at the RCA's School of Communication. She is also the Acting Head of Programme for MA Digital Direction, a 15-month Master's programme addressing the future of storytelling. Eleanor Dare has a PhD in Arts and Computational Technology from Goldsmiths Department of Computing.

Her doctoral thesis and MSc at Goldsmiths were concerned with artificial intelligence and storytelling. She continues to research ways in which emerging technologies can support narrative practices. Eleanor has worked on a number of AHRC, EPSRC and British Council funded projects, including Japan UK VR for location, Art Fair Innovations and Crafting Futures.

Charlotte Knowles

Charlotte Knowles is a factual film producer with experience working in film and television in the UK, France, Brazil, Italy, and China. She has produced work for the BBC, ITN, and Arte. Her work has been featured by the national press as well as international film festivals and broadcasters.

In her current role as Chief of Operations at the Independent Film Trust, Charlotte produces a wide range of film projects and advocates for a more diverse, dynamic and sustainable film industry in the UK.

Sue McAlpine

Sue McAlpine is a curator at the Migration Museum, London. The Migration Museum Project is shining a light on the many ways that the movement of people to and from Britain across the ages has shaped who we are as individuals, as communities, and as a nation.

The Migration Museum has staged an acclaimed series of events, exhibitions and education workshops at venues across the UK since 2013, shedding light on the central role that migration has played in making us who we are today. Their exhibitions and events have been attended by over 170,000 visitors, and more than 7,500 school and university students have participated in their education workshops.

Dr Julia Pascal

Dr Julia Pascal is a playwright and theatre director. She was the first woman director at the National Theatre. Her stage plays have been produced internationally and have won prizes.

Current scholarly roles include Visiting Research Fellow in the Department of English within the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at King's College London. Julia also works part time in London as a Writing Professor at New York University and Theatre Professor at St Lawrence University.

Her awards have included a NESTA Dreamtime Fellowship, an Alfred Bradley BBC Award, Moondance Award and she was a finalist in the Association for Theatre in Higher Education Award of Excellence in Playwriting. Julia was nominated for the 2017 Gilder/Coigney International Theatre Award.

Karthika Sakthivel

Karthika Sakthivel is a Media Artist and Storyteller from Bangalore, India. Coming from a multidisciplinary background, she situates her work at the intersection of art and technology. By interweaving the tactile with the virtual to tell stories, she seeks to blur the boundaries between the real and the imagined. She explores the extent to which this can be expanded by experimenting with materiality along with interactivity.

Her practice, greatly informed by Indian narrative structures, involves crafting interactive and immersive experiences that encourage one to pause and listen - if only for a brief moment. Her recent works adopt non-binary, non-linear and decolonised approaches to reimagining, rewriting and retelling timeworn stories in novel ways. Exploring the act of storytelling in an embodied manner is at present, the core of her investigation.

In the past she has worked with Art in Transit - a public art initiative in partnership with the Bangalore Metro Rail corporation. She has a Bachelor of Creative Arts (BCr.A) in Digital Media Art from Srishti Institute of Art, Design and Technology, India and is currently pursuing an MA in Digital Direction at the Royal College of Art, London.

Mary Stewart

Mary Stewart is the Curator, Oral History & Deputy Director of National Life Stories at the British Library. Mary works across a diverse range of projects at the British Library and liaises with external partners depositing their interviews into the Library collections. She is also a Trustee of the [Oral History Society](#), a member of both the Oral History Society Archives Sub-committee and the British Library/Oral History Society Training Liaison Group.

Her research interests include family histories and narratives and their use as a tool for academic research and oral history and its reception by family members of interviewees.

Melissa Strauss

Melissa Strauss is the Policy Advisor, Participation and Learning at the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and has worked in various roles for the NLHF since 2008.

The NLHF sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage through innovative investment in projects with a lasting impact on people and places. As the largest dedicated funder of the UK's heritage, with around £300million a year to invest in new projects and a considerable body of knowledge, it is a leading advocate for the value of heritage to modern life. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, the NLHF invests in every part of Britain's heritage. Since 1994, NLHF has supported just over 42,000 projects allocating more than £7.7billion across the UK

Links

Oral History Society: <https://www.ohs.org.uk/>

Regional Network Reports: <https://www.ohs.org.uk/regional-network/>

Regions:

East of England: <https://www.ohs.org.uk/regional-network/east-england/>

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List of Networkers: <https://www.ohs.org.uk/about/regional-networkers/>