Oral History Society Regional Network

Annual Report 2012

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Annual Network Report and Event 2012

Welcome to our 2012 annual report for the OHS Regional Network and thank you, not only for your input to this report, but also for your overall contribution as regional networkers, it really is invaluable. This is illustrated in the report by the detailed reporting of the oral history projects you've managed to find out about or are collaborating on yourselves. It's very uplifting to see what's been happening across the regions and I've noticed an increase in the way oral history projects are being 'stylised' and made accessible in digital format in a very professional capacity. It feels like we are quietly becoming digital media professionals as part of our roles!

This year's event in Leicester will share the experiences of our guest speakers across a variety of historical subjects focusing on the theme of *'Celebrating anniversaries using oral history: creative ideas & outputs'* and thanks to our hosts at the East Midlands Oral History Archive for providing the venue and everyone who suggested the topics. (The programme for 10th November is included at the end of this report, together with a summary sheet about the Leicester conference of 1972 which is for our afternoon slot.)

Some of the regional networkers have been members for many years and we also have several new members who've joined since last year. I sometimes receive queries from networkers about their roles and the various requests for information I send throughout the year so I'd like to take this opportunity to refresh all the members about what activities I carry out as the regional network co-ordinator.

The regional network is a way we connect with local oral historians across Britain and Northern Ireland. Over time we've developed a role description:

http://www.ohs.org.uk/public_docs/OHS_RN-Roles.pdf.

Anyone who wants to be a regional networker puts forward a CV and the contact details of two referees to the Committee of Trustees (via the co-ordinator). In doing so, applicants have agreed to the role description. The regional network coordinator also asks for the views of existing networkers in the locality and then makes a recommendation to the Trustees. That's the formal bit!

We always have our annual networker event in a different venue each year, quite often suggested by our members. This annual event is really to keep networkers up-to-date and is a mixture of self-support and continuous professional development. In addition, local oral history groups are encouraged to attend. The night before the annual event there's a business meeting. Attendance is voluntary to both meetings. There's a small budget for the event and for travel costs for those networkers who aren't supported by an institution.

Around late August/September every year I send a request to everyone for their annual reports for their region. The collated version is circulated at the end of October. Recently I've had some queries about what is the difference between this

report and Cynthia Brown's request for Current British News in the journal. There are some overlaps, but our report is an opportunity to provide more detail than the journal update.

Networkers are also encouraged to organise their own regional events/workshops for OHS members in their area to develop and promote oral history but this is optional.

I'm looking forward to seeing those of you who are coming to our annual event and will be in touch throughout the year with the network. Thank you for all your contributions this year.

Juliana Vandegrift, Regional Network Co-ordinator

Developing the Network

In the last twelve months seven new members have joined the regional network, some joined in the last quarter of 2011, so they're included in that figure. A warm welcome to our new members: Stefan Ramsden and Nafhesa Ali (both Yorkshire), Colin Hyde (East Midlands), Kath Smith (North East), Jo Palache (South East), John Burgess (South West), Alison Burgess (Scotland).

During the summer/autumn Kate Melvin conducted interviews with a selection of regional networkers as part of the OHS Committee's research about society membership. Kate will present her initial findings at our event and publish a full account early next year.

The CPD oral history workshops have continued this year. There was one workshop held at the People's History Museum in January, run by Steve Kelly and Clare Jenkins.

Finally, as in previous years the OHS Committee funds a limited bursary scheme to enable networkers without institutional support to carry out activities to support their Continuing Professional Development. Please do contact me for more details.

Juliana Vandegrift

Oral History Society Website and Yahoo Groups site

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

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

1) What happens when you click on (or cut and paste into your browser window) http://groups.yahoo.com/group/oral-history-network/files/ ?

   a) You get right in, and see a list of files. You're in, these instructions are not for you!

   b) You get a bumptious Yahoo! sign-in page. Sign in and try again.

2) If you don't have a Yahoo! ID to sign in with:
   Suspend disbelief, read 'Signing up is easy', and click on the link.
   Jump through the hoops. Billions of people around the world have already done it, so it must be possible.

3) Try again. The combination of a Yahoo! I.D. and email-address membership of the oral-history-network email group should be enough to get you in to the files, and you should be able to download or upload as you please - even bits of audio file, if you wish.

4) If you've done all that, and still can't get to the Files, then get in touch with me directly at craig@pettarchiv.org.uk.

Craig Fees

Reports from the Regions

East of England

Bedfordshire (Carmela Semeraro)

This year will go into history as the year when Bedford Museum building work came to an end; the builders have finally left! We have a new name: **The Higgins Art Gallery & Museum, Bedford**. The fitters are in now and then it will be our turn to move in and start to put up the displays in our fantastic new galleries…

Oral history will feature in a number of ways:

- Lace maker gallery: the 100s year-old local rural cottage industry which lasted up to the 20th century.
- Brickwork industry: the biggest in the world! From Changing Landscapes Changing Life Oral History Project at the Forest of Marston Vale
- Other Oral History recording from the local great industrial past
- New Communities: this from the latest recording I have done with the younger new migrants from former Soviet Union states.

Possible new Oral History projects from local groups that I am helping and supporting in delivering:

- The retired Nurses from Caribbean islands (awaiting funding); this could lead into a community Exhibition at The Higgins.
- Project by Save Your Rights: Tying the Knots - Past and Present, funding pending.

One of the exhibitions will be the "Peoples Gallery" which will reflect on the multicultural aspect of Bedford from the 1940s and '50s based on local Oral History recordings.

Norfolk (Jonathan Draper)

Enthusiasm for oral history interviewing in Norfolk continues. Advice on all aspects of oral history interviewing has been given to a variety of groups and individuals.

Following some basic training at the Norfolk Record Office, students at the University of East Anglia have begun a project to interview people with a connection with the University in preparation of its 50th anniversary in 2013. A project to interview those involved in the management of fenland around the Little Ouse on the Norfolk's border with Suffolk is nearing completion. Dragon Hall's King

Street Community Voices project has now come to an end. The resulting interviews reflect this road's importance as once being the location of several industries, including brewing, shoe making and milling. Support has also been given to Wymondham College in its efforts to create a heritage trail around its campus, which will be based on oral history interviews. The College has identified interviewees who remember the College's role as a military hospital for the United States Army Air Force during the Second World War. Basic training has also been given to volunteers at Swaffham Museum and the Aylsham Heritage Centre.

Support has been given to a group of young people who are making a documentary on Norfolk's Islamic community. During the early 1970s, a community of converts to Islam moved to Wood Dalling Hall in Norfolk before settling in Norwich.

Some interviewing has taken place as part of SeaChange Arts' Bread and Circus project which relates to the history of the circus in Great Yarmouth. Advice has also been given to the Wherry Yacht Charter Charitable Trust, who hope to interview people who remember wherrys being used for commercial purposes. Advice has also been given to an organization whose aim is to conserve wooden lifeboats. As part of this work, they are interviewing those who constructed, repaired and used these boats.

The Norfolk Sound Archive has received several collections of oral history interviews during the last year. These include extensive life history recordings of people from Great Yarmouth and Wymondham as well as several rural locations throughout Norfolk. The Norfolk Sound Archive also received a series of interview relating to Norwich's nightlife in the 1960s; Great Yarmouth and the North Sea oil and gas industries; council housing in rural Norfolk; land management in the Little Ouse headwaters area on the Norfolk and Suffolk border; and or archaeologists working in Norfolk. The Norfolk Sound Archive has received a large amount of interviews carried out by the Norfolk based Wise Archive who interview people about their working lives. Furthermore, the Norfolk Sound Archive has received large collections of oral history interviews relating to Norwich which were carried out by Norwich Living History group and the HLF funded King Street Community Voices project.

Suffolk (Juliana Vandegrift)

Palace Voices is an oral history and interpretation project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the National Horseracing Museum in Newmarket. Volunteers at the NHRM recorded living memories of people who have direct associations with the local racing industry and in particular with the historic Palace House Stables and former training yard. So far 16 people have been recorded, including former stable lads.

Legasee Educational Trust has received funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund for The British Berlin Airlift Project which is based in East Anglia. Led by veterans of the airlift and working with young people, the project will focus on capturing the stories of 50 veterans of the airlift on film, culminating in an exhibition celebrating the 65th anniversary of the airlift, which will open to the public in August 2013.

From time to time I receive enquiries for advice on setting up an oral history project and the budget required. However, these enquiries are most often nationally based and not from Suffolk and I've never received feedback if their funding applications were successful.

Essex (Martin Astell)

Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service and Epping Forest District Museum are working together on a project to record interviews with members of the Chinese communities in their respective areas. A touring exhibition of artefacts called *China in the East* will be used to prompt memories and stories from different generations of the Chinese communities. The recordings will be preserved at Colchester Castle Museum, Epping Forest District Museum and the Essex Record Office.

Essex County Council Arts Development and Heritage Teams have been working to deliver *Team Hadleigh*, an ambitious Heritage Lottery Fund project. The project was inspired by Hadleigh being chosen as the venue for the 2012 Olympic Games Mountain Biking event. It sought to engage a wide range of communities with their local heritage through several interlinked activities, and to provide resources relating to the history of Hadleigh for the many people visiting the area for the first time as a result of the Olympics. The results included a mobile web app and audio guide featuring local people speaking about the area and their memories of Hadleigh, and an interactive video booth at the Mountain Biking venue which allowed visitors to capture their experience of the event. The audio and video content created by this project will be deposited in the Essex Sound and Video Archive.

An oral history group has been established in the village of Littlebury with support and guidance from the Essex Record Office Archive Access Point in Saffron Walden. This is one of a number of active local groups in the north west of Essex.

The Essex Sound and Video Archive has received a collection of 42 cassettes of interviews with residents of the village of Castle Hedingham. The interviewer sought advice from me only at the stage of depositing the recordings, but was able to go back to the interviewees to discuss with them the future of the recordings and to ask them to sign copyright release forms. The Archive itself has been able to arrange the recording of two interviews: one with a lady who worked for Naval Control on Southend Pier during the Second World War; and one with a major figure in the development of Ju Jitsu in the UK.

East Midlands

Leicestershire & Rutland (Cynthia Brown & Colin Hyde)

EAST MIDLANDS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVE

A series of interviews to mark ninety years of the British Legion in Leicestershire and Rutland has now come to an end. All the information gathered through the interviews will be kept at the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland (ROLLR) along with documentary material collected as part of the same project. There is more information at www.leics.gov.uk/britishlegion. Videos from the 'Migration Stories' project have been added to the EMOHA YouTube site and are

also presented on a map of the East Midlands on the Migration Stories website at www.migrationstories.co.uk/. The 'Village Voices' project to record Leicestershire accents and dialects has been extended to cover more ground and add to the recordings already collected.

EMOHA held its annual Oral History Day in June 2012 on the theme of 'Telling Stories', attended by delegates from across the region. Speakers included Sally Horrocks from the University of Leicester, who is also Academic Advisor to the National Life Stories 'Oral History of Science' project, and Ruth Page from the University's Department of English who spoke about narrative theory; Michelle Winslow on recording end-of-life stories in a palliative care environment in Sheffield; Helen Bates and volunteers from the 'On the Flats' project on Hyson Green in Nottingham (see Nottingham below for more details); Roger Kitchen on digital storytelling; and Pete Davis, a storyteller, who described his work with elderly people with dementia - as well as telling a story of his own!

Other work in Leicestershire and Rutland over the past year includes a one-year project by Mosaic, a Leicester-based organisation providing information and services to disabled people. It has been conducting interviews to document the lives of forty five people who were either born with a disability; have suffered a sudden trauma or stroke, or been wounded through war or accident; or who have acquired a disability through a progressive medical condition. At the end of the project the results will be shared through a DVD, magazine and travelling exhibition, aimed both at the general public and schoolchildren.

The three villages featured in Michael Wood's *Story of England* BBC TV series were awarded Heritage Lottery funding for a 'Heritage Legacy Project' through which volunteers have produced material for a series of heritage trails, interpretation panels and school study packs. The project includes memories recorded in audio and video, and these will also be featured in a new online Kibworth Archive alongside photographs and historical documents. See www.leicestershirevillages.com/kibworthbeauchamp. De Montfort Hall, a major music and entertainment centre in Leicester, has been appealing for memories of concerts and other events at the Hall to help celebrate its centenary in 2013. The Hall was designed by the local architect Shirley Harrison for the Corporation of Leicester, and completed at a cost of around £21,000. As well as hosting recitals by many distinguished organists, De Montfort Hall has been a regular venue for classical music concerts, pantomime and popular music – including the Beatles and Rolling Stones in the 1960s.

The Highfields Association of Residents and Tenants (HART) in Leicester has published a book based on memories of living or working in the South Highfields area of the city, which has attracted migrants from many different cultures over the years. It was supported by funding from Near Neighbours, a project administered through the Church Urban Fund to encourage people from different faiths to get to know each other better and establish initiatives to improve local neighbourhoods. A project celebrating thirty years of the Centre for Classical Indian Dance (CICD) in Leicester was also completed in June 2012 with the launch of an exhibition and book. Entitled 'Karman' - the Sanskrit word for 'works', 'deeds' or 'actions' – the project was funded by the HLF. Volunteers recorded over fifty interviews with past and present students, dance teachers, arts administrators and others who have been involved with CICD since its foundation by Nilima Devi.

Hundreds of students have studied at CICD over the years, some up to the level of a six year Diploma Course in Kathak.

The young people's performance group Nani Hathi, based in Blaby, Leicestershire was been awarded £23,300 to uncover the 'forgotten' stories of soldiers from the 4th Indian Division who fought at the Battle of Monte Cassino in Italy in 1944. The two year project will involve interviews with veterans who moved to Leicestershire after the war, or people in the Asian communities who have memories of fathers, uncles or other relatives who served there. Fifteen volunteers aged from fifteen to their early twenties are conducting the first interviews alongside research in archives at the Imperial War Museum, and it is hoped to involve a further forty volunteers over the course of the project. The Policy Research Centre at the Islamic Foundation at Markfield, Leicestershire is planning an oral history archive preserving the history of British Muslims. This aims to explore the process of settlement and experiences of the pioneering first generation who arrived in the UK from 1950-79. Volunteers have been recruited to make short films, conduct interviews in Arabic, Gujarati, Bangla, Urdu and Punjabi, edit video recordings, take photographs, and develop a website. The Policy Research Centre specialises in research, policy advice and training on issues related to British Muslims.

Nottinghamshire (Christina Raven-Conn)

Here at the Local Studies section of Nottingham Central Library we continue to support local projects, mainly with advice. We also continue to receive copies of oral history from local Nottingham and Nottinghamshire projects for archiving and copies for the library's collection where possible.

As to current projects, the Hyson Green 'On the Flats' project has now been completed and a book produced and launched in April 2012. The launch was at Nottingham City's Hyson Green Library on Gregory Boulevard, close to where the 'Flats' were located.

The Children of the Croft project has been successful with its bid to the HLF and has now started. This is the history of the Family First at The Croft, Nottingham from 1966 to 1975, managed by Now Heritage. Now Heritage is a Community Interest company formed to carry out oral history projects by Barbara Reed, based in Nottingham and her daughter Emma Golby Kirk, who lives in Bristol and has previous experience in media and oral history work. The Croft, Nottingham, a large house in Alexandra Park could house eight women and their small children at any one time. The project aims to interview the early members of staff of the Family First at the Croft. They have asked to deposit the results of the project, particularly oral history recordings with the Local Studies library. A group of their volunteers have had a short tour of the Local Studies library and commenced with their research there.

A group of Fine Arts students are currently working on a project about the Old Market Square, hopefully to create an audio guide, which includes oral history recordings from the present and the past. But this is still in its infancy so exact 'angle' not yet finalised. It sounds as though it could be really interesting.

Another project beginning in August this year, is to record the thoughts and memories of residents of the Lenton flats which are due for demolition shortly. The Dunkirk and Lenton partnership are carrying out this project.

London

European Reminiscence Network (Pam Schweitzer)

RTRT: Remembering Together: Reminiscence Training for families living with dementia, supported by the EU. This Reminiscence Arts project has an international and a local side.
It is a development of the original Remembering Yesterday, Caring Today project which began in 1997 and has been running ever since across the UK and in several EU countries, and which continues to evolve. Over the last 18 months, I have been coordinating 11 partners in different EU countries following a joint project involving people with dementia and their family carers. In each country, groups of families have met over a 3 - 6 month period on a weekly basis to explore through reminiscence and related arts activities their own life stories. They have worked on a one-to-one basis, in small groups and as a whole group on a series of sessions covering major events in the life course. Partners in the international project have then shared their results in international meetings (N. Ireland, Finland, Spain and Germany) of the partners and through a dedicated website: www.rememberingtogether.eu

The London-based part of this project is also recorded on the illustrated website mentioned above. There have been 3 London-based groups, as follows: In Greenwich (in association with Woolwich Memorial Hospital) a group of Asian elders and their family and paid carers, working in 4 Indian languages and making a wall-hanging for their day centre with an Asian artist (I reported briefly on this project in the previous network report.)

In Westminster (in association with Westminster Arts) a mixed group of local families who then worked with 2 local artists on the making of personal cushions (involving drawing, photography and sewing)

In Camden (in association with Camden Carers) families met for a number of groups reminiscence sessions and then went on to make artistic end-products with artists, including memory boxes, life story books and embroidered collages, all of which were displayed at the project's last international meeting in Kassel, Germany in June 2012.

Two further groups have run in Bradford and Carlisle and information on these is also available through the website www.rememberingtogether.eu

This project has just received a small amount of additional funding to further the work and train more group leaders. It is called RYCTT (Remembering Yesterday, Caring Today Training) and will run till June 2012.

We have started work, both locally and internationally, with a group of families established in Woolwich and an international meeting coming up in Prague to agree an international training scheme and an apprenticeship scheme to develop the work of reminiscence in dementia care in all participating countries.

Reminiscence Theatre Archive
Greenwich University accepts the archive of recorded and transcribed interviews and related theatre work: In May 2012, I transferred all the surviving material

relating to reminiscence theatre created during my years as Founder and Artistic Director of Age Exchange Theatre Trust (1983-2005) The archive consists of audio recordings on key themes in social history of 20th century, including women's war work. Working life on the River Thames, Inter-war housing estates round London, Health Services before the NHS, Jewish East End and Irish memories, plus many more. In many cases there are matching transcripts and accompanying photos. The scripts formed from these reminiscences are included, plus production photographs, tour schedules, press reports, etc.

The University is not only storing the archive, but actively working on it in various curriculum areas, including drama and media studies, creative writing, history and local studies, health and social sciences. For example, drama students have been exploring the archive as a source for new theatre productions. At the launch of the archive 3 of these short plays were performed by the students and will now be touring local sheltered housing units in the area and more are in preparation. Reminiscence Theatre will be incorporated into the curriculum and the oral history component will feature in the history syllabus. The University has recently launched its excellent oral history website reflecting wartime Greenwich memories. You can see it at www.memoriesofwar.org.uk

A website will be developed in the next few months, with support from the University history department, which will explain the website and describe its contents with short examples of oral testimony, reminiscence theatre scripts, photos and DVD recordings of shows. Students on drama and history courses will work on the site alongside assistants from Poland and Finland who are working with us through an EU scheme.

Museum of London (Sarah Gudgin)

We have continued to build our oral history collection, adding new interviews ranging from people talking about the Occupy Movement in EC4, to the Manager of the Olympic and Paralympics Village talking about another temporary community over in the newly created postcode of E20.

We are also in the process of acquiring two new digital collections from two very different oral history projects. One reflecting the working life and governance of the Thames, and the other documenting the experiences of a river community living on historic boats moored on the Thames. These two collections will compliment existing historic recordings from our Port and River Collection.

We are now closer to completing our target for digitalising the entire oral history collection, ensuring its long term preservation and offering greater access for the future. In addition we are now constructing a Digital Collections Policy which will inform our work with all forms of digital media and collecting.

Collections Online database

The Museum of London launched a project early in 2012 to develop its Collections Online database where over 90,000 records will be available online.

The main focus of the work of the oral history team during this year has been to create records for oral history to feature in the Collections Online database. This

will help to make the oral history collection more accessible to the public. At present researchers currently access the oral history collections directly via appointments, hand lists and analogue/ digital listening copies at the History Collections Department in the Museum.

Collections Online allows people to search across all our collections in one go. The content covers the 3,000 items on display in the Galleries of Modern London, but more will be added every month until the Museum's entire collection are accessible through Collections Online.

Olympic Collecting

We are in the process of creating a record of the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympics Games, looking at the impact of the Games and the legacy in the host city through oral history interviews and contemporary collecting.

In addition to reflecting the experiences and perspectives of Londoners from the Olympic Park area and its local communities, we aim to record the experiences and perspectives of people involved behind the scenes with the organisation of the Olympic Games and Paralympics Games as well as torch bearers, Games makers and elite athletes who have competed in the Olympic Games and Paralympics Games in London in 2012. The contemporary collecting will involve material objects such as an Olympic torch, costume items and ephemera relevant to this important event in the capital.

The Recorded Media Project

The Recorded Media Project continued apace at the Museum of London during 2011-2012. To date 70% of the cassette collection has been digitised which includes the London History Workshop Sound and Video Archive and the Museum's Core Collection. Prior to digitisation cataloguing of the non-accessioned oral history interviews was conducted from paper documentation relating to the interviews. Now with the digital audio accessible, data cleaning and completion of cataloguing the interviews are preserved and accessible for future generations.

Bill Lowry will continue the work started under the Recorded Media Project of digitising the oral history collection and making it accessible via the Museum's website.

Museum of London: Opening Up to Digital Environments

In April 2011 the Museum of London was delighted to be awarded a £13million Arts Council England grant, for a programme of work aimed at 'Opening Up' several strands of work across the Museum, including Archaeology, Communities and Partnerships and Volunteers.

Hilary Young has been appointed as the Museum's first Digital Curator, and will work with Bill Lowry on the Museum's Opening Up to Digital Environments. Hilary will conduct new digital collecting projects for the Museum exploring the potential to collect and display non oral history sound-based objects, film, social media and web based applications. It is an exciting time for the Museum as it explores a new area of collecting intangible objects that represent the stories and life of London.

Occupy Oral History and Creative Commons

Early in 2012 the Museum participated in discussions with Occupy Oral History at the Bank of Ideas in Finsbury Square and the Occupy Library at the St Paul's camp. Capturing Occupier's experiences of this contemporary protest presented an interesting challenge to the Museum who often works retrospectively with community groups to record their past histories. It also opened up debate within the Museum's oral history group around recording oral history interviews with participants in current events.

The Museum was offered material culture objects from both the Bank of Ideas site and the St Paul's camp including the Bank of Ideas banner and a woollen hat knitted by a pensioners group to keep Occupiers' heads warm in the chilling winter months. These objects presented opportunities to record their owners' stories and experiences of participating in the Occupy movement. The Occupiers have stated their wish for their interviews to be available under a Creative Commons licence. This presents a challenge to the Museum, which we are working through this at the moment. We hope to have records of the interviews available on Collections Online within the coming months.

Little Boxes of Memories

The Oral history department has been involved in creating Little Boxes of Memories. This is a multi-sensory story sharing experience for young people who have severe and complex disabilities at Greenvale School. The Little Boxes of Memories convey the experiences and memories inspired by recordings done with older Londoners using touch, smell, sound and visual stimuli. The boxes have been designed with young people with severe and complex disabilities, volunteers, and artists, and is collaboration between Entelechy Arts and the Museum of London.

'Little Boxes of Memories' will tour to 10 Special Education Needs (SEN) Schools in London to allow the children to learn from the experiences of the older generation.

#Citizencurators

#Citizencurators was the Museum's pilot social media collecting project that ran throughout the 2 weeks of the Olympic Games.

We invited 16 Twitter users to use the project hashtag #citizencurators to tweet about their experiences and reactions to life in London during the Games. The Museum made a pledge to harvest any tweets that used the hashtag, in order to explore the potential of capturing the immediacy of events around the Olympics as they unfold. The Museum harvested c.7000 tweets and retweets over a 2 week period, creating a document of small group of Londoners' lives during this time. As we begin to data-mine this material it is possible to broadly categorise the types of tweets that used the #citizencurators hashtag. These include daily experiences, documenting day to day experiences or a changing sense of the city. Debates reflecting on wider stories surrounding the Olympics. Community impact, documenting the impact of the Olympics on local communities or environments. For further information http://citizencurators.com/

Many East Ends gallery- Museum of London, Docklands

The consultation process and concept development for an exciting new gallery to replace New Port, New City Gallery at the Museum of London Docklands is under way.

Many East Ends is a working title, which encapsulates the starting point of this consultation, acknowledging that there will be multiple perspectives on the subject. The process for creating the new gallery involves a programme of research, consultation and collaboration, with a range of individuals and groups, whose contributions have stimulated discussions and debates around how the story of the East End could be told.

Oral history from our collections and video recordings will feature strongly within the new gallery. This will include recently digitalised oral histories as well as material from our Port and River Collection, made available as a result of the work carried out through the Recorded Media Project.

The War on our Doorstep: London's East End and how the Blitz changed it forever

By Harriet Salisbury (Author), and the Museum of London Group [Paperback: published by Ebury Press]

Over the past year author Harriet Salisbury has been a regular researcher at the Museum delving into the Museum's oral history collection whilst writing her book, *The War on our Doorstep*. The book is a fascinating history of the East End of London from the start of the 20th century to the late 1950s, as told by those who lived through this period and is based on the oral history recordings held within the Museum of London's oral history collection.

Read about the discoveries that Harriet made while delving into the Museum of London's oral history collections for her new book, in this blog.

http://www.mymuseumoflondon.org.uk/blogs/blog/still-lives-by-harriet-salisbury/

Oral History Blogs:

Catch up with some of our oral history blogs here:

http://www.mymuseumoflondon.org.uk/blogs/blog/being-proud-of-pride/

http://www.mymuseumoflondon.org.uk/blogs/blog/taking-a-trip-down-memory-lane/

http://www.mymuseumoflondon.org.uk/blogs/blog/listening-for-a-change/

http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/Collections-Research/About-the-collections/Recorded-Media-Project.htm

Research and Access to the Collections

The Museum continues to provide advice in response to a steady stream of enquiries from people from a range of backgrounds and sectors working on oral history collecting and display projects. We have seen an increasing number of

students looking at oral history as part of museum studies and migration studies courses among others, and an interest in our work with LGBTQ oral history and collecting.

The Museum welcomes researchers who wish to study its stored collections. An appointment must be arranged before your visit, and we have recently updated our research procedures. Information and a Research Request From can be found at: http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/Collections-Research/Access-enquiries/Research-Visits.htm.

North East

County Durham (Sheila Forster)

If You Were Mine: A story of the North East by Liquid Theatre in association with Northern Stage.

Members from the Liquid Theatre Company spent the month of July 2011 in the North East interviewing local residents who were in their twenties in the 1950s. These interviews were used along with songs from the dancehalls and playgrounds to bring 1950s Sunderland to life. The play which combines kitchen sink naturalism with stylish theatrical storytelling will tour the North East region later this year before coming to London.

Barnard Castle School

Barnard Castle School celebrates its 130th anniversary next year and is planning a 'memory lane' project in order to bring their archive alive by engaging and recording their present and former pupils. The school is hoping to receive funding from the Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership.

Toon Times

Toon Times is a new Heritage Project that will focus on the rich history of Newcastle United Football Club and the impact it has on the North East and around the world. Funded by The Premier League Professional Footballers' Association (PLPFA) Community Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund and in partnership with Tyne and Wear Museums, Toon Times aims to delve into the clubs past and capture history through the eyes of Newcastle United's passionate supporters.

North West

Greater Manchester (Rosalyn Livshin)

The OHS and the British Library training course on the *Introduction to Oral History*, was held again in the North West and is proving to be popular with full attendance and a waiting list. The course was held at the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre at the University of Manchester and this location, which is 5 minutes from Manchester's Piccadilly station, ensured easy access to attendees

from the North West and beyond. The Centre itself has made good use of the course and is partnering a project 'Yemeni Roots, Salford Lives', which is collecting life story interviews and documentation on the Yemenite community in Eccles. To date 17 interviews have been recorded with 21 people and recordings will also be undertaken with young people. The recordings will be archived at the Centre. A website has been launched www.yca-manchester.org.uk. and two exhibitions will be held, one in October focussing on women's memories and the other from Dec 15- Feb 17 showcasing the whole project.

The Caldwell's Nurseries Oral History Project, for which I held a training course last year has been progressing well. The project has recorded and processed 17 interviews to date and it advertised its work by putting together a garden display at the Tatton Park Flower show. The project held a volunteer feedback session (to be recommended for all projects) which highlighted the benefits and challenges of oral history for the volunteers.

I am currently undertaking work on the Oral History Collection of the Manchester Jewish Museum helping to make it accessible to a wider audience. The collection of 519 interviews, many of them conducted in the 1970s and 1980s, is being slowly digitised and their summaries or transcripts are being timecoded.

Manchester's 160 year old YMCA launched a sporting heroes oral history project in October 2011 to document the lives of members who have done well in sport through the YMCA sporting facilities. These include many British champions and Olympians over the last 50 years and players of the Manchester United Football team, who used the YMCA physical fitness training facility in the 1950s. Many of the athletes continue to train in the YMCA (some are in their 80s). 30 interviews have been undertaken to date. A mini exhibition was held in February/March 2012 during the Manchester Histories Festival and a full exhibition will be held in October 2012 and a book produced.

A short project incorporating oral history has been held from March – October 2012 on Worsley New Hall, a Victorian mansion which was demolished. Five interviews and other material are available on the University of Salford's online Archive repository http://usir.salford.ac.uk/archives/ and an exhibition was scheduled for September.

The Irish Diaspora Foundation has continued its oral history work, undertaken by a team of volunteers at the Irish World Heritage Centre. Twenty interviews have been conducted in the past year either on a specific theme or with people who had an interesting story. Some of the interviews were incorporated into the oral history exhibition, which was part of the Manchester Irish Festival in March and will form part of the exhibition at the new Irish World Heritage Centre premises due to open in December.

Manchester (Stephen Kelly)

In January a highly successful OHS Continuing Development Day was held at the People's Museum in Manchester. Some thirteen people attended, not only from the north west but from south Yorkshire as well. The sessions were run by Stephen Kelly and Clare Jenkins around the theme of legal and ethical issues and touched on subjects such as sensitive interviews, interviewees divulging more than they

had anticipated, libel and the Official Secrets Act. Attendees also talked at length about their own projects and debates that had arisen.

Manchester YMCA has now almost concluded its project on Sporting Heroes associated with their institution. The one-year project, funded by an HLF grant and run by Christine Gibbons, has been focused around Manchester YMCA's Olympians and other major sporting personalities. These have included Manchester United players as well as world champion wrestlers, Olympic judo medalists and so forth. The project was formally launched a year ago at the YMCA's Castlefield site in Manchester by guest of honour Sir Alex Ferguson, manager of Manchester United. During the 1940s, 50s, 60s and even into the 1980s Manchester United regularly used the YMCA. Also among the guests was Jack Crompton, an honorary member of the YMCA, and the Manchester United goalkeeper in the 1948 FA Cup final. Other guests included former Busby Babe and United manager Wilf McGuinness, plus a host of Olympians going back to 1956.

The project, which was planned around the London Olympics, was also represented in the Manchester Histories fortnight earlier this year along with an exhibition stand in the Town Hall. Students from All Hallows Secondary School in Salford and Manchester Metropolitan University as well as YMCA volunteers helped conduct interviews. A website has been set up featuring interviews with many of the YM's sporting heroes, talking about their experiences of the YMCA as well as their sporting memories. A celebratory dinner is to be held in October to formally end the project.

The Swinton Lions Tales project continues to collect oral history recordings of players, fans and club officials as well as other memorabilia. The project, which was launched in 2011 and funded by the HLF, is expected to continue on a voluntary basis for a number of years.

The Chat Moss project which has been funded by an HLF grant, has also recently come to a close. The project focused on an area of land, close to the Trafford Centre in Manchester which was rich farmland for over 150 years but since the 1980s has gone into decline with only a handful of farms remaining. Memories of the area and the farms however remain strong and more than 20 interviews have been recorded capturing those memories. The project worked with local schools, producing a range of artistic endeavours around the recordings such as mosaics, paintings and even a puppet show. A book with the memories and photographs is due to be published shortly.

Another HLF funded project on the Bridgewater Canal continues. The canal, the oldest in the world, is celebrating its 150th anniversary. Volunteers have been collecting memories of the canal and a number of recordings have been made.

South East

Hampshire (David Lee)

There have been some changes since my last report: I now work three days a week, and we no longer organise a seminar on oral history at Winchester. We shall

concentrate upon providing a home for film and sound material within our region (central Southern England), lend equipment for oral history projects, whilst acting as a venue and conduit for training and advice. Meanwhile, Wessex Film and Sound Archive (WFSA) continues to flourish with the help of my colleagues in Hampshire Record Office, and we have been receiving some good recordings to preserve and make accessible during the past year. The highlights are presented below.

Southampton Oral History Unit (SOHU) collection: firstly, and most importantly for us, the highly significant SOHU collection of tapes and discs has been transferred from Southampton City Archives, where it has resided since the Unit's closure. A digital copy of many of the recordings (and information about them) stays in Southampton for local users to research, and we will be providing access in our own search rooms whilst completing the digitisation for both archive services. Enquiries should be directed in the first instance to Southampton City Archives (023 8083 2251; city.archives@southampton.gov.uk) with whom we are working closely to provide as wide an access to this remarkable collection as possible. You are probably familiar with its contents, SOHU having been a major local authority unit for over 20 years and reported regularly to oral historians like yourselves at conferences and in journals. Suffice to say that we are enormously proud to be preserving interviews concerning the *Titanic* disaster, Vosper Thornycroft shipyard, merchant navy crews, reconstruction of Southampton Docks, the Home Front and the various communities in the city. Once sorted and listed, WFSA can add value to the SOHU collection via its online catalogue, which is available at www3.hants.gov.uk/wfsa/wfsa-catalog.htm.

Gosport Women in the Second World War: we were delighted to receive the original interviews (on cassettes) from Jenny Bartlett's 1999 MA thesis 'The Wartime Lives of Civilian Women in Gosport, 1939-1945: a Typical or Extraordinary Experience?', along with a copy of the thesis itself. Jenny worked at the time as an education officer for the Royal Marines Museum in Portsmouth and was trained to use oral history in her work, so the interviews were recorded 'in the proper manner'. One of the consequences of waiting so long to deposit the recordings was that the transcripts were still on floppy discs! Luckily, we were able to transfer the information to modern WORD files and make them available to our users alongside digital copies of the tapes.

Petersfield Museum: every year, we receive oral history recordings made to support particular exhibitions at the old court house in Petersfield, where this private museum is based. This time it was for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the 50th anniversary of the town's outdoor swimming pool, respectively. Elderly residents remembered Petersfield 50-60 years ago, not just dwelling on the celebrations for those events, but also the attitudes and way of life back then. This is something that oral history can do really well, of course.

Solent People's Theatre: sadly, this publicly-funded group has now folded, but it has left behind a legacy in the form of its own records, including audio-visual recordings, which have now been deposited with Hampshire Record Office and WFSA. These recordings include interviews with local people, in order to find out about important events in their recent history, and to help inform the scripts of various plays which the group performed. This includes the experiences of migration*, nursing, Southampton Docks working, the Home Front and the Blitz. Once again, oral history is used for historical research in a direct sense, for use in

public performances in this case, but analogous to Petersfield Museum. (* There were a number of interviews recorded on video for later incorporation in the play 'Passage West', itself based upon the oral history gathered)

Kent (Jocelyn Goddard & Manda Gifford)

Kent History and Library Centre, Maidstone

The new Kent History and Library Centre opened on Monday 23rd April 2012. It has been purpose built and houses about 14 kilometres of historic material relating to Kent dating back to 699 AD. There is a community history area, archive search room, digital studio and a large space for displays and events.

http://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure_and_culture/kent_history/kent_history__library_centre.aspx

Kent Community History Network

Kent County Council's Libraries and Archives team report that they would like to work more closely with community history groups in the county, to support the important work they are doing and to make more information on history available locally. Some groups already work in partnership with libraries, for example at Marden, Meopham and Joyden's Wood. Others have set up their own heritage centres and community archives with advice, help and support from the History Services team, for example at Smarden, Ash and Kemsing. Many communities have expressed a desire to find out more about their local history and set up groups locally. Kent Libraries and Archives aim to continue to support them especially in areas that will benefit most from having access to their history. The aim is to do this by setting up a community history network linking all groups interested in history in the county and enabling them to support and encourage each other.

Paralympics Project – How It Used to Be

A project to revisit the records of two Maidstone mental health hospitals, Leybourne Grange and Oakwood Park, which began in 2010, is now nearing completion. Staff in the archives have been working with former hospital staff, members of MIND, Maidstone Museum and Time2Give volunteers to collect 'then and now' memories at reminiscence workshops and 'coffee and chat' sessions using archival documents, contemporary photographs and maps to stimulate discussion. This oral history material has been incorporated into a new guide to help bring the archive collections to life, put them into context and make them relevant to the present day. It also allowed project members with mental health issues to explore the different approach to mental health in the past.

Kent County Council also now has a link on its site to museums that are carrying out oral history work: http://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure_and_culture/museums/museums_in_kent/oral_history.aspx

Telling Whitstable's Story

Telling Whitstable's Story community memories group helped to create a highly successful exhibition at Whitstable Museum and Gallery about people and their sheds, which is now tipped to transfer to a central London venue. Visitors to the exhibition were able to listen to memories and enjoy photographs and the work of two artists, Lucy Steggals and Cathy Miles, inspired by the theme.

The group is now collecting memories of Peter Cushing, for an exhibition in Spring 2013 celebrating the centenary of his birth. It is also conducting an audit of all the previous local community oral history projects to inform the redisplays in the Museum.

Herne Bay Community Memories Group

Herne Bay Community Memories Group is collecting memories and photographs of the 1953 East Coast Flood, in preparation for an exhibition at Herne Bay Museum and Gallery planned for January 2013.

Brompton 200: Civilian Life in a Military Village

Brompton 200: Civilian Life in a Military Village has been set up and run by the Brompton History Research Group in association with the Royal Engineers Museum to record the history of Brompton from the past 200 years. The project has been part funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and aims to record historical and archival information about the village as well as personal memories and recollections. The oral history part of the project is open to anyone with a memory of the village; whether they lived there, passed through or visited. The Brompton History Research Group holds regular oral history sessions at the Royal Engineers Museum and also has the facilities to visit people wishing to share their memories who cannot make it to the Museum. The oral histories are being transcribed and edited and the final versions will be made available online at www.bromptonhistory.org.uk which contains all the research that has come to light as part of the project. Some of the oral histories already recorded are being used as part of an exhibition currently running at the Royal Engineers Museum. From January 2013 the exhibition will be touring the libraries of Medway.

Surrey (Janet Nixon)

Review of work in Surrey 2011 - 2012

There haven't been many new oral history projects in Surrey in the last twelve months. Some long term work to record memories around the county carries on but hasn't yet reached publication stage.

For Surrey Heritage, Mental Health continues to be a popular theme for oral history work. A series of interviews of ex-hospital staff and people still involved in the mental health community took place last winter to be transcribed and added to Surrey Archives catalogue. These interviews have added significantly to our understanding of life in mental hospitals from 1940s to their closure in the 1990s. There is potential to develop this work with a much larger number of mental health service users and professional care staff. An exciting prospect that could prove useful to both the general and the academic world.

A 'Memories' club run by Guildford volunteers at the Guildford Institute has been and will continue to record the life stories of people who live in the town and is now planning to create an archive of recordings with help from Surrey Heritage. I'm looking forward to hearing and seeing the collection when it's been prepared for cataloguing for Surrey's archives. It will be of great interest to local historians and residents alike.

In spite of the fairly low level of activity there is still a lot of interest in the potential of oral history from a variety of communities and I'm anticipating there will be more funded project work in the next year.

Hampshire (Sheila Jemima)

Apologies for my small contribution to the Network over the past year, mainly due to retirement and travel, and so have no exciting projects to report (unlike the rest of you)

I'm still receiving regular requests for information on Oral History, via phone or e-mail, mainly training requests, general information, funding and talks. I have also had several requests for people's relatives to be interviewed, I try and put them in touch with an oral historian, or, alternatively advise them to go on one of the O/H training courses and carry out the interviews themselves.

I always ask for feed back but it's rarely forthcoming, and I have no way of knowing whether the advice I am giving is followed up. It would be good to discuss with other networkers if they have some kind of feed back form they use to monitor the requests.

I was involved (in a very small way) with the Basque 'Ninos' project and very impressed at the successful outcome, with a publication, exhibition, and more recently an animated film, centred on the oral testimony of the Ninos, which has its premier in San Sabastian at the end of September.

On a personal note, I am about to interview a Holocaust survivor, who has been a friend for over 50 yrs, and whom I have been meaning to interview for over 50 yrs!! but have finally got around to it.

Unfortunately, I will not be attending this years Network meeting as I'm in Australia, but I hope it's as successful and enjoyable as these events usually are, and I hope to catch up with you all in 2013

Sussex (Jo Palache)

As a new member of the network, I am still gathering information about the oral history projects in Sussex this year. Here are some that I have been told about, although I am sure there were many more which I look forward to being able to let you know about next year.

Speaking up for Disability

This is a two year HLF project based in Worthing with the Independent Living Association. The project has been collecting recordings by disabled people living in West Sussex and extracts will soon be uploaded to their website at

www.speakingupfordisability.org.uk/. They are also planning an exhibition 'Re-framing Disability' for next summer.

Sussex Deaf History

Sussex Deaf History launched a new 'Hidden Histories' exhibition on their website this September entitled 'Deaf Education in the Seventies'. These interviews are an excellent example of the diversity and the possibilities of oral history. See www.sussexdeafhistory.org.uk.

Screen Archive South East

SASE are now a third of the way through an HLF project to collect memories of some of the seaside towns in West Sussex. Interviews are currently being recorded and extracts will be used as commentary for the archive film compilations.

Brighton Museum

And finally, I have recorded interviews for the exhibition 'Barbara Hulanicki: Biba and Beyond'. These interviews with shoppers and staff reflected different aspects of the Biba experience in the 60s and 70s.

South West

Gloucestershire (Craig Fees)

Gloucestershire is a big county with much going on, as will be evident from the sample of activity below. There is certainly more, and it would be good to hear news of other oral history-related developments and projects.

This report is grouped into four main sections in order to indicate both how diverse the activity is within Gloucestershire, and how fortunate it is to have three active and interactive centres of oral history within the County. Section 1 is on General Activity Around the County; Section 2 is on activity related to the University of Gloucestershire; Section 3 is on activity related to the Planned Environment Therapy Trust Archive and Study Centre; and Section 3 is on activity related to Gloucestershire Archives.

1. GENERAL ACTIVITY AROUND GLOUCESTERSHIRE

The Great Gloucester Story

In July the BBC and Gloucester City Museum collaborated to host a day of interactive events and exhibitors celebrating the history of Gloucester over the last 1,600 years, with BBC Learning "exploring place names, surnames, hidden landscapes and recording oral history provided by local residents."

Yate District Oral History Project book launch

The Yate Oral History Project has published its *Photographic History of Yate,* "the largest assembly of local images put together and comprises many hitherto unseen images", with over 290 photographs. See: www.yateheritage.co.uk

"Cashes-Green-on-the-Map"

This ongoing oral history project, established to record the history and recollections of the Cashes Green area of Stroud, has a Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/pages/Cashes-Green-on-the-Map/254829625936

"All Along the Cotswold Canals"

Following training by West Midlands Regional Networker Julia Letts, this exciting project of the Cotswolds Canals Restoration Project recorded memories and created a 22-point audio trail which can be accessed on smartphones while walking the canal, or downloaded from the website: www.alongthecotswoldcanals.co.uk

Ashton Keynes School Jubilee Project

Assisted by community artist Kathryn Gray, Year 5 and 6 pupils from Ashton Keynes School used a £1,600 grant from the Malmesbury Area Board to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee by recording interviews with twelve Ashton Keynes villagers about life in the 1950s, and translating their memories into works of art.

"Back to the Future"

Running from June 2011 to December 2012, "Back to the Future" is a Heritage Lottery Funded project of the Black Southwest Network which looks at the impact on and contribution to the cultural landscape of Southwest England by Black and Minority Ethnic organisations, using oral history interviews with members of the three most prominent BME organizations in Gloucester and other Southwest communities.

2. UNIVERSITY OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE

"You Asked Me So I'm Telling You"

In April, University of Gloucestershire PhD student Christian O'Connell gave a paper entitled '"You Asked Me So I'm Telling You:" Oral History and Photography in Paul Oliver's Conversation with the Blues' at the 57th Annual British Association of American Studies (BAAS) Conference at the University of Manchester.

"The Ethics of Oral History and Memory Studies"

In September, Melanie Ilic, Reader in History at the University of Gloucestershire, co-organised a conference on 'The Soviet Past in the Post-Soviet Present: the Ethics of Oral History and Memory Studies' in Lithuania. Her book, Life Stories of Soviet Women: the Interwar Generation, drawing on her life history research, talking to women about their everyday lives during Soviet times, is due to appear from Routledge in 2013.

***"*Land, Cultural Heritage and Identity in the Scottish Highlands"**

Dr Iain Robertson, Course Leader and Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Gloucestershire has been awarded a Research Grant by the University as part of a broader project on the 'Glasgow Gaels', using oral history to look specifically at the construction of visual cultural identity within the crofting communities of Lochs and Harris on the Isles of Lewis and Harris. In September the project's fieldworker, archaeologist Dr. Mary MacLeod, herself a crofter, gave the first in a new series of staff History seminars at the University, in a stimulating and well-received presentation called "Memory, Cultural Identity and Landscape: the perils and pitfalls of oral historical work in the Outer Hebrides".

3. PLANNED ENVIRONMENT THERAPY TRUST ARCHIVE AND STUDY CENTRE

The Planned Environment Therapy Trust (PETT) now has an active Facebook Page, a thoroughly renewed website, and a Twitter account *@pettconnect.!*

"Therapeutic Living With Other People's Children"

PETT's 18-month Heritage Lottery Fund-supported project, "Therapeutic Living With Other People's Children: An oral history of residential therapeutic childcare c. 1930 - c. 1980" reached a successful conclusion, producing 282 audio and video recordings and 119 transcripts as well as 8 websites presenting 130 documents, 5 digital stories, 428 photographs, 38 audio/video selections, 23 transcript selections, and 19 personal written accounts.

In recognition of the achievements of the project, the Community Archives and Heritage Group awarded PETT its first "Most Impactful Archive of the Year" award. The award was received at the University of London with the help of students from Trinity Catholic School in Leamington Spa, who had both recorded interviews and worked with former 'maladjusted' children to produce a successful theatre production. A detailed report on the project's history, development, design, outputs and outcomes was uploaded to the project website, www.otherpeopleschildren.org.uk.

There have been several recording-fest "Archive Weekends" since the end of the project, and oral history recording has continued elsewhere, with digital stories and other material continuing to be developed and uploaded to the "otherpeopleschildren" website by volunteers. The Archive continues to make other recordings, loan equipment, and to offer support, encouragement and guidance generally.

In July Project Oral Historian Gemma Geldart, Project Administrator/Transcriptionist Chris Long, and Trinity Catholic School Assistant Principal Stephen Steinhaus all gave papers relating to the "Therapeutic Living" project at the Oral History Society's annual conference in Southampton. In September, at the invitation of the organisers, Gemma Geldart gave a paper drawing on the project at the "Understanding Parenting: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives" Conference at the Centre for the History of Medicine at the University of Warwick.

Craig Fees, Regional Networker:

As Archivist, I continue to be based at the Planned Environment Therapy Trust Archive and Study Centre. During the past year, alongside my duties as Regional

Networker for Gloucestershire, I was Project Manager for PETT's "Therapeutic Living With Other People's Children" project, continued as a Trustee/Committee member of the Oral History Society, co-organised and chaired several sessions at the Oral History Society's annual conference "Displaced Childhoods: Oral history and traumatic experiences", consulted on Dr. Iain Robertson's "Land, Cultural Heritage and Identity" project at the University of Gloucestershire, conducted a seminar for history students on oral history at the University and, as course author and tutor on the "Sound and Vision" distance learning module for the Centre for Archive and Information Studies at the University of Dundee, thoroughly rewrote the Unit on oral history.

4. GLOUCESTERSHIRE ARCHIVES

"Hidden Lives of Barton and Tredworth"

Launched in March 2011, and managed by The National Archives Skills for the Future Trainee Ollie Taylor, this Heritage Lottery Fund-supported project between the Gloucester Theatre Company, Gloucestershire Archives, and the University of Gloucestershire, has resulted in an attractive and richly informative website, a series of Reminiscence Theatre performances by a group of young actors from the Gloucester Theatre Company, over 60 interviews, and a Youtube channel with 10 Digital Stories and excerpts from the "Hidden Lives" theatre production.

"The Fielding and Platt Community Archive Project"

Led by Gloucestershire Archives and Gloucester City Centre Community Partnership, directed by project officer Ollie Taylor, and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, this oral history-based project kicked off in June 2012 to record, preserve, and celebrate major international engineering firm Fielding and Platt's history and impact on Gloucester. There have been over 20 interviews to date, there is an attractive and growing website, and considerable outreach and development activity.

"History of Gloucester Rugby Club"

Awarded a three-year 'Your Heritage' grant by the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2008, and supported by Gloucester Rugby Club, Gloucestershire Archives, and the Friends of Gloucestershire Archives, the 'History of Gloucester Rugby Club' project continues to add recorded interviews to the rich and active project website.

West Midlands

Birmingham & area (Helen Lloyd)

In November 2011, the Heritage Lottery Fund in Birmingham invited me to play audio extracts from my ethnic minority interviews to around twenty participants at a Diverse Heritage Workshop. In March 2012, I addressed another conference organised by the HLF, to celebrate ten years of their Young Roots programme, and it turned out that most of the sixty representatives of Birmingham youth organisations in the audience were also from ethnic minorities. It's clear that there's a growing interest among minority groups in recording their history, to

make younger generations aware of their heritage and to celebrate the contribution they've made to British society.

During the past year I've been involved in four projects that aim to record and celebrate minority histories. The most complex was called **Guess Who's Coming to Dinner,** a project run by the Common Ground Foundation at Aldridge School in Walsall. Pupils aged 11 to 13, who described themselves variously as mixed race, dual heritage or multiple heritage were given time off from their usual classes to record the memories of their relatives and others in the community who had experiences of mixed heritage. During their training, they took it in turns to interview a white teacher who recalled the prejudice she'd encountered when she first went out with her black husband and they listened to the project organiser describe his childhood memories of having a Muslim father from Pakistan and two white uncles who were members of the National Front. Only a few of the young interviewers said they'd experienced much prejudice themselves, so they were interested to hear about prejudices in the past and to learn that their interviewees felt their struggles were outweighed by the benefits of understanding different cultures and being able to choose the aspects of each culture that they liked best.

The second project is called **Out of Africa** and involves teenagers from Sandwell and Birmingham in recording the memories of African footballers, to celebrate their contribution to professional football in England through a DVD, an exhibition, an educational school pack and an archive for the Professional Footballers' Association. Some of the teenage interviewers are from deprived backgrounds, but all are talented footballers themselves, so they are highly motivated to discover more details about the daily lives of professional footballers than can be learnt from media interviews.

Media interviews rarely report on any aspect of Somalian culture, so some of the Somali volunteers, aged 18 to 25, who are taking part in the **Discover Your Roots** project know little about their own heritage and are not completely fluent in the language. However, they are attempting to do some interviews in Somali (for later translation) as well as some in English, with older members of their community in the Small Heath area of Birmingham, with the aim of discovering more about their culture and rural traditions. During training (interrupted by breaks for prayer), they took it in turns to interview a 60-year-old man in Somali and, though I don't know the language, it was possible to tell which interviewers were doing well i.e those who appeared to concentrate most on what was being said and those who allowed the interviewee to pause without jumping in with a question.

If there's time at the end of the project, I hope the interviewers will record each other, as their own stories deserve to be archived. In brief practice interviews, one recalled how his uncle guarded his tent against hyenas – a far cry from inner-city Birmingham – and another recalled her puzzlement when she arrived at Heathrow on 11th September 2001, to find police everywhere and people staring at her hijab with undisguised hostility.

After the riots of summer 2011, members of a largely Nigerian church in Perry Barr reflected that their young people lacked roots, in that they knew little about Nigeria and even less about the history of the people who lived around them. So they've begun an oral history project called **Reach Out** in which both adult and young

volunteers will record the memories of older church members and also the memories of their neighbours – for example the Muslim man from Pakistan from whom they rent their hall. If this works well, it could become a model for future projects, to encourage people from different cultures to understand each other better through recording each other's memories.

In summer 2012, adult and junior members of Montgomery Cricket Club completed an oral history of their club, using a Welsh Heritage Lottery grant to record memories of past and current players, from the 1940s to the 1990s. The interviewees recalled memorable matches, teams and individual players, personal and team rivalries and changes in the ground and in the game itself. The oral history project also involved the local community, by providing some oral history training for the local primary school and taking older club members into the school to be interviewed. The complete archive of audio and transcripts will be lodged in Montgomery's Old Bell Museum, along with a DVD and two books of newspaper reports compiled by one of the club members and funded by the lottery grant, one covering the first hundred years and one covering 1940 to 1999. The full interviews will be available on the 'People's Collection Wales' website.

Extracts from the interviews can be heard on the club website, www.montgomerycricketclub.co.uk/audiohistory and selections will also be placed on the 'Taking the Field' website of the England and Wales Cricket Board.

West Midlands (Julia Letts)

As a Networker, I have found that things have got quieter as the year has progressed, with fewer emails and calls from people seeking advice or starting projects. However, I have delivered a number of training courses this year to various groups including primary schools, community groups, university students and people working in dementia care.

I have been directly involved in a few projects in Worcestershire and the West Midlands and have also contacted a few other organisations who are currently running projects in this area. Some of these are listed below:

Black Country Stories – Multistory, West Bromwich

'Black Country Stories' is a unique four-year project to document the working and personal lives of ordinary Black Country people through photographs, films and oral history interviews. The project, created and produced by Multistory based in West Bromwich, began in Sandwell in 2010. Last year the focus moved to Walsall, and this year Wolverhampton, before finishing in Dudley in 2013. The completed archive will contain at least 75 oral history recordings, available to the general public in each of the four Black Country boroughs. Extracts from the interviews can also be found, along with a vast selection of photographs, on Multistory's website www.multistory.org.uk .

Shelton Heritage Project

This oral history project is collecting interviews and memorabilia from people connected to Shelton Hospital, Bicton Heath, Shrewsbury. The hospital, built as a lunatic asylum in the 1840s, is closing this year. A team of volunteers (who have

had Oral History Society training) are now enthusiastically gathering material which will eventually be displayed in the new hospital and shared with the Shropshire Archives.

Project Pigeon - Birmingham Pigeon Archive

Project Pigeon is working on the Birmingham Pigeon Archive, an archive which charts the fascinating history and culture of pigeon fancying in Birmingham. So far the team has collected more than 30 oral history interviews with Birmingham based pigeon fanciers and has produced several short films. A writer is also creating radio plays with the material. The archive will be housed in Birmingham Library and some material will go to Bletchley Park.

Warley Woods, Smethwick

This is an HLF project to collect oral history interviews about Warley Woods in Smethwick, a well loved public park for over 100 years. For many years people have been popping into the Community Trust's office wanting to share a story about their experiences at Warley, bringing photographs and half stories about things that modern visitors have never seen or known about and other than just listening for a little while, we could do nothing with these recollections. Now twelve volunteers at Warley Woods have had OHS training as interviewers and are planning to record over 30 stories and to create a book, CD and schools resource pack.

Oral history at The Hive, Worcester

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service has recently completed a number of interviews with people local to Worcester who have lived or worked, from the 1930s onwards, in the area of The Butts in which the new joint County and University Library and History Centre (The Hive) will open in July 2012. The generated oral history archive will be available in audio form at the new Centre and edited clips and slideshows will be on display in exhibition spaces, in sound domes, on easy to use touch screens and on public computers.

Regal Cinema – Online Oral History Project, Tenbury Wells

Interviews from 20 people (locals and visitors) talking about their memories and experiences at the Regal Cinema in Tenbury Wells have been recorded for a new website. This 1937 art deco cinema, owned by Tenbury Town Council is currently undergoing restoration funded by the HLF.

Voices through Corridors: This is an HLF funded project by Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust, following major redevelopment of the Walsall Manor Hospital site. A group of volunteers were OHS trained and have been interviewing people with memories of the hospital, which was a central part of this community for many decades. Some of the recordings are already on the Trust's website.

Hallow History Group is recording oral history interviews with local people who've lived and worked on farms and mills in and around the village of Hallow (just north of Worcester). The group has also worked with Hallow Primary School who created a CD of interviews with 4 people who were at school in the village several decades ago.

Bedworth School

Bedworth Primary School got HLF funding for the pupils to record oral history interviews with local people talking about their working lives in the town. Bedworth was once famous for ribbon-weaving and hat-making, as well as mining and later making cars and car parts. The year 5 students had 2 mornings of oral history training before undertaking audio and video interviews and creating a DVD and CD Rom.

Cotswold Canals

Volunteers and project staff received OHS training to record oral history interviews with more than 20 people connected to the Cotswold Canals. The interviews were then used to create about 20 podcasts which can be downloaded at various points along the canal towpath. They are also accessible from a website and the original interviews will be stored with Gloucestershire Archives.

I am currently working with a few groups outside the West Midlands who have just received funding and are at the outset of oral history projects. These include: **Outstories Bristol,** who are collecting interviews with gay lesbian bisexual and transsexual people in the Bristol and Bath area, **Food Stories Llandrindod Wells**, who are collecting memories and experiences of growing, preserving, cooking and creating food in their local area, the **Centre for Alternative Technology in Machynlleth**, who are celebrating their 40th anniversary with a series of interviews with people who've been involved in the centre since the 1970s.

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service (Maggie Tohill)

In January of this year Worcestershire Record Office merged with the Worcestershire Historic Environmental and Archaeology Service to form the Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service ahead of their relocation to the new Worcestershire Library and History Centre, now renamed the Hive. A complete restructuring of the service and the physical move of the staff and holdings from their various locations to the new building gave no time for any oral history work be undertaken or for any direct involvement in any projects. The volunteer work on transcribing and summarising recordings was also suspended. Now that the move is complete and new systems and procedures are bedding in, staff from the collections team are about to undertake a review of oral history work to look at how it will fit into the aims and objectives of the new service and what shape future oral history work will take.

The Hive: The new Library and History Centre in Worcester City centre was opened officially in July 2012 by Her Majesty the Queen. The first major exhibition at the Hive is entitled 'Beyond the City Wall' and includes audio visual material from and about people who used to live in the area where the Hive is situated, collected as part of a HLF funded project relating to the City, its archives and people. It is planned to use audio visual material in future exhibitions based around particular themes. The current six month theme is 'Memory' and the next theme is likely to be 'the River Severn'.

On the History Floor there are three sounds pods where visitors can dip into selections from our audio collections as part of their general visit to the building. These will be refreshed at intervals. The old Record Office CD jukebox containing

selections of World War II reminiscences has also been moved to this floor to give it a more prominent place. It is hoped to broaden the selection of material available in the jukebox to cover other collections now held by us.

Kays project: The University of Worcester have now deposited the interviews they had undertaken as part of their six month project to create a web archive of fashion images from the Kays of Worcester catalogues held by them. As well as interviews with former workers the deposit includes themed CDs on topics such as fashion, the Kays brand, advertising and photography. Linked to the project a fashion show and arts events will be held at the Hive at the end of the year.

Yorkshire

South Yorkshire (Michelle Winslow & John Tanner)

South Yorkshire

Many oral history projects are underway in South Yorkshire and here we report on a few, particularly reflecting a growing body of work taking place in universities.

In July of this year we held a 13th Regional Network meeting in Sheffield; this annual event is free to anyone with an interest in oral history in the region. The day was a mix of discussion and project presentations. Gary Rivett (University of Sheffield) began the day with an excellent presentation about his project 'Stories of Activism in Sheffield. 1960-2012'. Alison Twells (Sheffield Hallam University) followed with a community history session in which she sought views and ideas for a new website; Michelle Winslow (University of Sheffield) presented work taking place in palliative care; and Elizabeth Carnegie (University of Sheffield) facilitated a session on oral history in museums. Plans for next year's event are underway; if you are interested in taking part please contact Michelle (m.winslow@sheffield.ac.uk).

The website referred to above will provide an online community presence for South Yorkshire and is currently being developed by Alison Twells, Michelle Winslow and John Tanner (Barnsley Museums). The site will bring together community and oral history organisations and activities in the region; it will showcase and publicise community history events and projects, and gather groups and activities in South Yorkshire 'under one roof' (virtually speaking). It will offer opportunities to gain knowledge from other groups about, for example, writing a funding bid, buying equipment, and developing books and exhibitions. The website also aims to make available an extensive archive of digital resources relating to South Yorkshire's history.

Alison Twells sends a report about work at Sheffield Hallam University with students who took part in oral history interviews as part of a new third-year module, 'C20th Women: life stories and social change'. Most focused on the Sixties, interviewing family, neighbours and acquaintances about their experience of that decade, while others focused on women's experience of work and domesticity during World War Two and after. They also enjoyed getting their teeth into oral history theory, via Lynn Abrams' recent book of that title. Students undertook oral history interviews for their work on a 'Community History' module

and one of them, Alexander, developed a KS2 teaching resource on the Sheffield Blitz, using as a centrepiece his interview with his grandmother.

An oral history initiative taking place at the University of Sheffield is now entering its second year. Charles West writes that 'Witness: Preserving Sheffield's Past' is a project run by students from the Department of History who will be conducting interviews on topics relating to living in Sheffield in the 1980s, and the Second World War in Sheffield. Last year's interviews, and the report that came out of them, can be viewed at http://www.witness.group.shef.ac.uk/ If you'd like to find out more, or are interested in helping out, please contact witness@sheffield.ac.uk

In the Sheffield Macmillan Unit for Palliative Care, an oral history project continues to offer a service for people staying in the unit with the support of the Northern General Hospital Charitable Trust. The project began in 2007 under the auspices of the Academic Unit of Supportive Care, University of Sheffield. Michelle Winslow, the project lead, Sam Smith, and a team of volunteers make life history recordings with people diagnosed with life-limiting illness. This year Michelle is working with St Luke's Hospice to establish a second service in the city. The new service recently featured in a Radio 4 documentary, 'Dad's Last Tape', produced by Clare Jenkins, who explored why people record their life stories and what impact those stories have on other people. Michelle is also pleased to announce a new partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support; this national charity has agreed to fund both a pilot study of oral history in palliative care and a project to explore the impact of oral history with participants and bereaved family and friends. Regarding the first study, five project pilot sites in the north of England will be confirmed shortly, after which volunteers will be recruited to work as oral historians. A call for volunteers will appear on the OHS volunteer page in the coming months: www.ohs.org.uk/volunteers/index.php For more information contact Michelle Winslow: m.winslow@sheffield.ac.uk

In Barnsley, an opening date of May 2013 has been set for the opening of Experience Barnsley, the new, and first, Barnsley Museum with an associated Discovery Centre. The Discovery Centre incorporates Barnsley Archives together with a new Sound and Film Archive, and an opportunity for visitors to see and touch museum objects in an archival environment. Oral history is a major focus of the new Museum, both in the collation of existing collections and in carrying out new interviews. A number of very important collections have been brought together, news of which will be shared soon. There will be a host of different types of audio interpretation in the new galleries, and a Voice section of a Making History Gallery, in which younger visitors will be able to carry out interviews with characters on a life-sized screen.

Elsewhere in Barnsley, a host of groups of organisations are starting up new projects involving oral history, including a number of sports-based projects, and some very innovative ideas being developed with older members of the community and sheltered accommodation across the borough. Excellent work is taking place around industrial archaeology in the East Peak, which is hoped to provide a model for future work. A number of heritage sites are using oral history extensively in major reinterpretation projects, to share the stories of those sites in their original form, but also as public heritage sites valued by local communities and as visitor attractions through the 20th century. These include a country house, art gallery, water-mill and a large Victorian industrial heritage complex.

Doncaster Sound Archive has continued to run small-scale projects in the community, working with elderly people in reminiscence sessions and also engaging volunteers from third-sector organisations in work-based learning. In addition, Real-to-Reel Media and Doncaster Sound Archive have pooled their audio-visual and sound-editing equipment and made it freely available to other local groups. Dave Angel reports that this has proved worthwhile, as some people often want to initiate oral history work, but have limited access to such resources. The archive also offers help in using equipment, and so far, this practice has worked well. Anyone interested can contact the archive at: doncastersoundarchive@gmail.com

Grace Tebbutt, Community History Project Officer, send news from The Manor Castle Village community which represents a lost heritage. In the shadows of a grand Tudor estate grew a small village settlement on the outskirts of Sheffield city centre. This community thrived and adapted, lasting for two centuries. Although the Manor Castle Village area is now situated in an increasingly urban district, its position in a relatively rural enclave on the outskirts of the city originally allowed a 'village' type environment to evolve. Activities focused on the Methodist Chapel encouraged a communal spirit between residents and many occupants stayed in the area for much of their lives. Family ties are evident throughout the village's history, allowing a rich heritage of inherited memories to build up which are still very much alive today. Since the demolition of the Chapel in 1982 the story of the Manor area has changed significantly. The Manor Castle Village Group has been meeting frequently during the past year: it consists of ex and current residents of the area, many of whom have witnessed huge changes in the district, from rural village to one of the country's biggest municipal housing estates. Their memories will contribute to the 'Hands on our Heritage' project at Manor Lodge where a 1940s living cottage farm is in development. Many of the residents experienced events during the Second World War and have been able to help build up an accurate and insightful picture of the immediate area in the interwar and post war period. Finally, several members of the group will be involved in a film to document their stories. It is hoped that this film will be used for a local screening and to build up awareness of the fascinating hidden heritage of this area of Sheffield today. For more information please contact: G.Tebbutt@greenestate.org

East Yorkshire (Stefan Ramsden)

I became the Regional Networker for East Yorkshire in Spring this year, and it has been a quiet one so far, partly because I have been busy working on amendments to my PhD thesis. The thesis utilises oral histories to tell the story of working-class community in Beverley, East Yorkshire, relating personal experiences to broader theories about community and to particular discourses about changes in working-class life in the post-war 'age of affluence'. I plan to archive the recordings (over 100) made for this project in the East Riding Archives in the Treasure House, Beverley. In my capacity as Regional Networker, I have had two email enquiries thus far, one about oral history relating to mining in Yorkshire and the second about Land Army memories, and I was able to point the enquirers towards relevant material in each case. In terms of oral history projects taking place 'in my patch', the only active collecting I am aware of is that undertaken by the East Riding Museums Service, whose rolling programme of temporary exhibitions on rural life

and the regions market towns involves collection of testimony from local residents. Recent subjects include circuses, Beverley's ancient common pastures, almshouses and workhouses in the East Riding of Yorkshire. I look forward to becoming more involved in the work of the society after seeing off my thesis amendments, and therefore aim to have more to report next year.

West Yorkshire (Nafhesa Ali)

Centre for Visual and Oral History Research (CVOHR)

History at the University of Huddersfield has two research students working in the oral history: Jo Dyrlaga has just started her PhD on oral history and performance and identity in the Manchester drag scene, and Simon Bradley is in the third year of researching the location of oral history within the environment as augmented reality, based on the regeneration of Holbeck in Leeds. Both are AHRC-funded. While the MA Oral History was closed as a response to government changes in higher education funding, the University of Huddersfield still runs an MA in Oral History by Research, with some fee waivers available. Current students are involved in an oral history of Huntington's Disease and developing software relating to the intersection of oral history, sonic art and locative media. Past Masters students have conducted projects on urban space and immigration in Huddersfield, POWs in East Yorkshire, the oral history of Yorkshire TV, mining in the north-east and waste-pickers in India. The Yeoman Warders Oral History project, funded by the university and led by Paul Wilcock and Paul Ward, has interviewed more than 15 Beefeaters at the Tower of London. Paul Ward also conducted an oral history interview with Margaret Lister - the winner of the National Coal Board's 1972 Coal Queen Competition as part of an artist project called Mining Couture: A Manifesto for Common Wear by Barber Swindells.

The University of Huddersfield's Centre for Oral History Research (COHR) has now been renamed Centre for Visual and Oral History Research (CVOHR), under direction of Stephen Dorril, Director of CVOHR. The centre is host to several projects including Asian Voices, the 'Up and Under' Rugby League project, Two Minute Silence and Greenhead Stories. Projects and oral histories can be accessed via the University of Huddersfield's CVOHR website http://www.hud.ac.uk/cvohr/. Current projects include the Centre's Sound, Craft, Vision and Place project, managed by Dr. Rob Light.

The Centre for Visual and Oral History research (CVHOR) presents two new publications:

Asian Voices book: Ali, Nafhesa. *Asian Voices: First generation migrants*. Riley Dunn & Wilson Ltd: Huddersfield, 2010.

'Up and Under' rugby league book: Light, Robert. *No Sand Dunes in Featherstone*. London League Publication Ltd: London, 2010.

Steve Burnip is a Senior lecturer at the University of Huddersfield, and his recent MA project and website archives oral histories of key people involved in the *History of Yorkshire Regional Television.* Memories of Yorkshire TV can be accessed on http://memoriesofytv.weebly.com/. Steve Burnip gives his seminar on YTV on the 24th Oct at 4.15pm at the University of Huddersfield.

Local History Society: Asian Voices

The Local History Society continues it collaborative work with local history groups in West Yorkshire and presents my Asian Voices talk '*From South Asia to Springwood*,' South Asian migration in Huddersfield post 1960, at the Huddersfield Town Hall on Monday 25th March, 2013. For further details and booking please contact John Rawlinson, Chair of the Huddersfield Society JohnRawlinson@aol.com.

Kirklees Heritage Forum

2012, has seen the development of the Kirklees Heritage Forum, chaired by Bill Roberts. The Heritage Forum brings together oral historians, archivists and community organisations who are jointly developing a Heritage Lottery Fund pre-application.

The Oral History Company

The Oral History Company, based in Leeds, is a network of full-time freelance professionals with a common interest in producing high quality oral history. Recent projects include Leeds City Varieties Music Hall (2010-2011). Further details of The Oral History Company can be found at http://theoralhistorycompany.com/?page_id=142.

Scotland

Scottish Oral History Centre (Angela Bartie & Arthur McIvor)

This has been a very productive year for oral history in Scotland and for the SOHC. An important development has been the move of the SOHC to purpose-built facilities at the University of Strathclyde (a formal re-launch is planned for January 2013). This includes a training lab, archive, and Special Projects, interview and editing rooms. This substantially improves the capacity of the Centre to deliver oral history training and will operate as a hub for community and academic oral history projects, as well as our seminar series.

We were delighted to welcome Dr David Walker to the post of Research Coordinator, Dr Susan Morrison as a Research Associate and to see Dr Angela Bartie secure an open-ended lecturing contract. These colleagues bring a wealth of oral history experience to the Centre. Another staff member, Dr Andrew Perchard, was appointed to a permanent lectureship in the Business School at the University of Strathclyde. The Centre also hosted Professor Steven High, Director of the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling, as a Visiting Professor, for two months in March-April 2012.

Amongst ongoing research work at the SOHC are projects on youth gangs (Bartie), the arts scene in 1960s Scotland (Bartie, with Eleanor Bell, English Studies), on working lives (Walker and McIvor), on the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (Pattinson) and on Forensic Science (Walker). Andrew Perchard's work on the Aluminium communities in the Highlands has culminated in the publication of the impressive *Aluminiumville* in 2012. The Centre recently completed AHRC-funded work in collaboration with Glasgow Museums on work-life oral histories in the city (Walker and McIvor), including the digitisation of the *2000 Glasgow Lives* collection. This

wonderful resource has now been made much more accessible. Pattinson (PI) and McIvor (CI) have also recently been successful in securing a major AHRC Research Award to undertake a large-scale oral history project on the wartime Reserved Occupations in the UK. Dr Linsey Robb has been appointed as Research Associate and work will start in earnest on this project in January 2013. The Centre was also awarded money from the Hudson Trust to host 'Our Secret War', a collection of interviews conducted by Martyn Cox with resisters and Home Front personnel, whilst Pattinson and Prof. Rod Kedward (Emeritus Professor at Sussex) are currently compiling an inventory of Anglo-French Resistance oral testimony.

Our postgraduate community also continues to grow – and there have been three outstanding PhD submissions in the past year by Fiona Frank (on the transmission of Jewish identity through close study of several generations of the Hoppenstein family), Linsey Robb (cultural depictions of British working men, 1939 - 1945) and Alison Chand (Glasgow in wartime, 1939-45). Our teaching of oral history has also expanded, with two new oral history theory and methodology courses at Third Year and Honours levels introduced in 2012. The latter is an innovative 'Work Placement in Oral History' class which locates students trained in oral interviewing in local museums and archives.

Outside the SOHC, oral history has also been thriving, with a vast range of local, community and academic oral history projects up and down the country. For example, the Scottish freemasonry movement has a major oral history project underway, whilst the Scottish Council on Deafness finished its HLF oral history project in 2012 on the deaf community, with the production of four outstanding DVDs. A Stakeholders Group has also been established to investigate the viability of a National Sound Archive for Scotland and they are currently undertaking an audit of oral history resources across the country. New community oral history projects have also been initiated at Govan and at Govanhill in Glasgow. The latter (coordinated by Dr Susan Morrison) is a major HLF project ambitiously aiming to interview over 200 local residents from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds (over 50 different languages are spoken in Govanhill). The SOHC are providing extensive oral history training for the local volunteers. With the new SOHC facilities at University of Strathclyde we are looking forward to developing these community-academic links and expanding our activities even further in the years to come.

Scottish National Sound Archive (Howard Mitchell)

The most important activity in oral history in Scotland this year has been the announcement of government funding for a Scottish National Sound Archive Pilot scheme.

First Minister, Alex Salmond, announced in July that the National Library is to receive £100,000 for sound archiving development.

NLS will work on an archive pilot with Skye-based digitisation project, Tobar An Dualchais/Kist O Riches. This is a collaborative project which was set up to preserve, digitise, catalogue and make available online several thousand hours of Gaelic and Scots recordings. The website contains a wealth of material such as folklore, songs, music, history, poetry, traditions, stories and other information.

The material has been collected from all over Scotland and beyond from the 1930s onwards.
The recordings come from the School of Scottish Studies (University of Edinburgh), BBC Scotland and the National Trust for Scotland's Canna Collection.

Martyn Wade, National Librarian and Chief Executive of NLS, said of the funding announcement:

'The National Library welcomes this support from the Scottish Government and looks forward to working with Tobar an Dualchais to pilot a national sound archive for Scotland. The Library's work already includes the popular Scottish Screen Archive collections and therefore we are excited at the opportunity to expand the national collections to cover sound as well.'

Stakeholders are meeting regularly at the moment to develop the project.

Some interesting oral history projects include: **Celebrating Potential**

Breadmakers Rise To The Occasion: Provost Approves

Garvald Edinburgh, well known in the Lothians for its Bakery, run with workers with learning disabilities, launched an exciting new initiative in August.
With finance from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Celebrating Potential Project will enable Garvald's Members and Tenants to research and record their own histories and that of the organisation.

In an endeavour to blend their traditional arts and crafts, such as pottery, glasswork, joinery and puppetry, with the recorded histories and modern technologies, Garvald's project will create an ambitious legacy to communicate with the wider public.
The Lord Provost of Edinburgh, the Rt. Hon. Donald Wilson, who officially launched the project at Orwell Arts Centre, commented,
"I've been familiar with the work of Garvald Edinburgh and the vital service they provide for many years and I'm delighted that, through this innovative project, the wider public will have an opportunity to see just what a wonderful job they do.
"As someone with a strong interest and background in technology, I was fascinated to learn about the plans to use contemporary technology to communicate the outcomes of the project."
After recruiting volunteers and recording histories over the next year, the subsequent outcomes will celebrate the individual experiences that make up the story of Garvald Edinburgh.

- An exhibition of art and craft work where each piece contains a QR code. When scanned with a smartphone, the object will act as a portal to see a video of the people who made the object and hear their stories.

- A web based archive, to preserve and store the material generated by the project and have the audio, video, photographs and transcriptions available in an easily accessed online format.

- A publication documenting Garvald Edinburgh's history, distributed to Primary Schools and contributing to the Curriculum for Excellence Scheme.

- A film, edited from material collected and recorded over the year, building on the organisation's award winning Breadmakers documentary.

Noting The Tradition

The National Piping Centre has received support from the Heritage Lottery Fund to undertake an oral history project called "Noting The Tradition". This will involve undertaking oral history interviews with people who have been involved in piping at all levels and all over Scotland in the past 50 years.

The project is looking to recruit volunteers from all over Scotland to undertake at least one interview to contribute to the project. Volunteers will receive training in oral history methods and protocols, as well as handling digital recording equipment and formatting the files for upload to the Noting the Tradition website.

The National Piping Centre Principal, Roddy MacLeod, commented, "This is an exciting project which will add to the historical and heritage resources available to researchers and members of the public interested in the history of piping. It also offers the opportunity to become involved in the creation of an important and lasting resource telling the story of Scotland's iconic instrument, the Great Highland Bagpipe. We hope that you will be inspired to join us in this vital heritage work."

Identity

This is an HLF funded project looking at migration to and from the Inverclyde area over a 200 year period. Working closely with schools and local volunteers, the project has produced a number of exciting outcomes, but at its core is a web archive, holding oral histories, audio, video, images and documents which have been collected over the past year.

Wales

(Andrew Edwards & Beth Thomas)

This year's report from Wales is testimony to the continuing support given to oral history projects by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Devised to celebrate Disability Wales' own 40th Anniversary, Story at 40 is an oral history film project supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, capturing the memories and experiences of disabled people born around 1972 and living in Wales. The aim of the project was to reflect changing policy and attitudes towards disabled people over the past four decades, and to represent the different experiences of disability and the diverse community of disabled people in Wales. Disabled volunteers of all ages took part in this project either by becoming part of the production team or by becoming interviewees. All volunteers were provided with training including learning about interviewing techniques, filming, editing, and cataloguing as well as disability equality and the history of disabled people. The film premier will take place in early December.

Mencap Cymru have also been awarded a first-round pass from the Heritage Lottery Fund for their oral history project, Hidden Now Heard.

The Aber Valley Heritage Museum in Senghenydd near Caerphilly has received Heritage Lottery Funding for a project relating to next year's 100 year anniversary of Britain's largest mining disaster at the Universal Colliery, Senghenydd, in which 440 people were killed. Part of the project is to record stories passed down through generations regarding the 1913 explosion and its aftermath. As the explosion is no longer in living memory the interviews would also deal with general life in the Aber Valley in the years following the closure of the mine and how life has changed since 1913. These stories (or some of them at least) will then be uploaded onto an audio post to be based at the site of a new Memorial.

The Committee of the Arandora Star Memorial Fund in Wales has now deposited recordings from their Arandora Star Oral History Project at St. Fagans: National History Museum. The ship, carrying Italian internees to internment campls in Canada was torpedoed in July 1940. The material recorded includes 9 interviews with the relatives of the victims and survivors of the sinking together with a short transcript both in Welsh and in English.

Another Lottery funded oral project which has come to completion is the Hineni Project that tells the life stories of 60 members of the Cardiff Reform Jewish community. From those who grew up in Wales and the UK, to refugees and holocaust survivors, from Welsh speakers to business people to political activists, the exhibition, book and website give a picture of how these people have lived their lives and formed their identity.

The Reform community, which follows a more liberal version of Judaism than the Orthodox community, grew in Wales in the 1930s as the number of Jews fleeing the Nazis increased.The only progressive - as opposed to traditional - Jewish community in Wales, it numbers around 250. Cardiff Reform Synagogue was awarded over £33,000 from Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in 2010 to provide project volunteers with specialised training in oral history, archiving, interviewing and the digital technology skills needed to document the stories. The Reform community worked in partnership with Glenn Jordan of the Butetown History and Arts Centre (BHAC), experienced in portraying minority communities in Cardiff.

Finally the Heritage Lottery Fund have also been generous in their support of St Fagans: National History Museum. The HLF's £11.5m grant from HLF has enabled us to embark upon a £25.5m project to turn the museum's aspirational title National History Museum into a reality. Over the next four years we will transform St Fagans into a new and unique kind of museum where national collections of archaeology amd history will displayed together in an open-air museum. Visitors will be inspired to explore the history of the peoples of Wales from the earliest times to the present day through dialogical exhibitions, authentic historical buildings and archaeological reconstructions. The plans include giving greater prominence to our long-standing archive of oral testimony, exploring how history is constructed and how some people's voices become part of the national story while others remain silent.

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