ABSTRACTS

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

SIMON ELMES is the creative director of BBC radios documentaries unit where he is responsible for the development of new programmes and supervises a number of major projects for BBC Radio 4. He was worked on the acclaimed documentary series Lives in a Landscape and was the launch producer for the Listening Project.

DOCUMENTING OUR LIVES. ORAL HISTORY, RADIO DOCUMENTARY AND THE LISTENING PROJECT

The past is another country: they do things differently there. The opening lines of novelist LP Hartley’s 1953 bestseller, The Go-Between, is perhaps today a rather hackneyed, if much-loved, quotation. However, its inherent truth is eternal. Finding out about the past – that other country – understanding and interpreting it, is the meat-and-potatoes of the historian, the oral historian and of course, very often the broadcaster too. Recent coverage on TV and radio of the First World War has sought to do just this, but now without the newly-gathered memories of any surviving British combatants. We have today to rely one hundred percent on the testimony of those whose memories were captured on the page, on tape and on film in a previous age. Already, the country of the past is receding beyond our immediate grasp. It’s slightly unnerving. And before the audio (and later video) recording era, the thread of contact with that ‘other country’ was of course entirely restricted to written sources. As I discovered when making a BBC Radio 4 series some time ago about ordinary people’s experiences of great historical upheavals (Voices of the Powerless), even those first-hand written testimonies are often very sketchy indeed, the past a terra evermore incognita the further back you go.

But today, in an age when our lives are documented as never before, with trillions of megabytes of testimony captured in image and sound on a daily basis, our problem is making coherent sense out of this tsunami of documentation. So it’s timely, perhaps, to examine the relationship between the testimony gathered by oral historians and that collected for broadcast by producers and reporters. What are the similarities – and perhaps more interestingly the differences – in aim, approach and achievement of the broadcaster and the historian? And how do we balance factual accuracy and emotional truth?

With reference to the ongoing major Radio 4 conversation-snapshots of contemporary Britain, The Listening Project, (developed in association with the British Library) and to the BBC’s 2005 oral history of dialect, Voices (a BBC/Open University collaboration), as well as to other historical-documentary work, Elmes explores the conjoined aims of broadcaster and oral historian in pursuit of that elusive other country …and when the two, perforce, part company.
COMMUNITY HISTORY: WHERE HAVE WE BEEN, WHERE ARE WE GOING

I have recently had occasion to read an article I published nearly thirty years ago, assessing a community based oral history project I had participated in a few years previously. Rereading it, I was struck by the currency of some of the issues I raised — about differences between vernacular and professional notions of what constitutes a community history, about trying to craft a coherent community story around a collection of biographical narratives, about cultivating working relationships across lines of education and class, indeed about differences in the very definition of certain key terms like “work,” and always, concerns about funding. At the same time, I was aware of ways my thinking then, reflecting the more radical, even confrontational politics of the time, are at variance with more recent approaches about collaboration in the development of community history projects. In my talk, I’ll use that article, as well as some of the observations of Alistair Thomson in a keynote before the Oral History Society a few years ago, as a launching off point for considering “where we have been, where we are going.”

These reflections, I hope, will lead to broader considerations of “community,” its assumption of commonality and comity, when, in fact, following Bernard Anderson, community is an imaginative construct, both restrictive and fluid, that we must wrestle with on the ground when doing community-based oral history. I’ll consider too some of the problematics of “sharing authority,” a term that has assumed mantra-like authority in community based work. And no talk today would be complete without some observations about the impact of new media on our work.

Of necessity, my comments are informed primarily with my understanding of oral history based work in the United States.
NORTH AEGEAN GREEK ISLANDER MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA - 1950S TO 1970S:
‘FOR A BETTER LIFE WE CAME…’
Melissa Afentoulis, University Of Melbourne, Australia

Post World War II mass migration decimated Greece’s population and its social and economic infrastructure with particular impacts on small island populations such as the island of Limnos (more commonly known as Lemnos). During the decades of 1950’s - 1970’s, a large number of Limnian islanders arrived as immigrants to Australia. More than sixty years later, this aging community appears to have integrated into the multicultural fabric of mainstream society with a degree of success. The focus of this paper is about the voices and stories of the first generation - the foundational generation of immigrants who paved the way for ‘a better life’ for future generations. This paper is part of a larger doctoral thesis that explores the community’s migration experience with a focus on inter-generational themes from a number of perspectives through the research question: To what extent is the pattern of return visits to the parental homeland a phenomenon that reflects identity consolidation for second generation immigrants in Australia? The research aims to address the gap in the Greek-Limnian migrant historiography that exists, through the oral history of the first generation and the narrative of the next generation to explore what informs their own sense of ‘belonging’, identity, the significance and meanings of ‘home’ and ancestral roots through the pattern of return visits to the ancestral homeland. The Victorian Lemnian Community organisation, Yphestos, established in 1939 by the early settlers provided the vital social infrastructure for an establishing community. This oral history project is the attempts to capture the experiences, traumas and highlights of individuals that echo resilience, personal strength and communal vibrancy that would otherwise be lost with their passing. The value of this community oral history project is not only about the potential loss of Australian migration historiography, but importantly it is about the legacy of the oral narrative which links the past with the lives and memories of the present and future descendants of this community.

STORIES OF THE CITY: PERFORMING THE INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE MEMORIES OF SAILORTOWN
Isobel Anderson and Fionnuala Fagan, The Sonic Arts Research Centre, QUB, Belfast

We are both sound artists and songwriters studying for a practice-led PhD. Our research combined investigates the use of sound art, performance and installation as modes for documenting and disseminating individual and collective cultural memories, and how these form relationships with, and constructions of, place. This in turn gives voice to stories that may otherwise be lost.

During our doctoral research, we collaborated together on a project commissioned by the MAC, Belfast, titled Stories of the City: Sailortown. Sailortown, once the bustling and multicultural dockside area of Belfast, underwent significant change since the building of the M2 motorway and urban regeneration of the early 1960s. The project documents the rich stories of people who once lived and worked in Sailortown, not only through oral history interviews and transcriptions, but also artistic interpretation. This includes: seven newly composed songs using words verbatim from interview transcripts; an interdisciplinary installation and performance piece originating from these interviews combining song, soundscape, objects,
images and text, exhibited at The MAC in May 2012; and subsequently, a website documenting the project through text, audio recordings and photographs. See www.storiesofthecity.co.uk

This project, for the first time, gives voice to the collective memories of Sailortown by re-telling the stories of this lost part of the city, which played such an important role in Belfast’s industrial past. The use of song and artistic exploration in delivering these narratives transforms the possibilities for public access and interaction with Sailortown’s past.

Our presentation will reflect on how Sailortown was temporarily brought back into consciousness using voice, stories and listening through artistic interpretation. We will consider not only the benefits of this platform, but the difficulties of ‘re-framing’ a lost community that is alive in memory, but not in place.

RECOGNIZING AND RECONCILING US SOLDIERS’ NARRATIVES IN THE MAKING OF THE DOCUMENTARY PLAY YARDBIRD
Sarah Beck, Goldsmiths College, UK

For six weeks in the summer of 2011, I returned to my hometown of Waynesboro in rural Pennsylvania as both a researcher and playwright to interview local veterans about their experiences at war in Iraq and Afghanistan and the difficulties negotiating the civilian world upon re-entry. Utilizing testimony from the interviews I developed Yardbird, a documentary play exploring the impact of these distant wars on the local community. On April 9th 2013, a rehearsed reading of Yardbird was presented by professional actors at The George Wood Theatre at Goldsmiths College to a London audience. The project began as the practical component of my PhD thesis designed to explore how combining Brechtian principles with Judith Butler’s concept of precariousness informed the making of a documentary play based on war experiences—to understand more deeply how the process of exchanging narratives through performance might encourage new understandings and ethical responsibilities amongst spectators, practitioners and documentary subjects.

Focusing on the revelations and limitations of performing soldiers’ narratives, this paper reflects on how engaging with members of the local community influenced my approach writing a play based on testimony and how at times my academic aims clashed with my approach as a playwright. This exploration examines how issues of proximity brought about concerns of mining personal turmoil for an audience’s consumption and the risk of overlooking the needs of the local community for whom the work was intended to benefit. Drawing from personal exchanges with interviewees, excerpts from the Yardbird playtext, clips from the recorded reading and post-performance discussions, this presentation confronts the contradictions and complexities making theatre from the experiences of those whose lives have been shaped by war for the purpose of academic research and how these ethical struggles inspired new modes of thinking in the play’s future development.

RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES THROUGH RECORDED MEMORIES
Margaret Bennett, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, UK

This paper reflects on the long-term effects of archived oral history recordings from two projects carried out in Canada between 1968 and 1976. The remit was to record Scottish Gaelic settlers in Newfoundland and Quebec who had oral testimonies and songs of 19th century immigration, to write a report and deposit fieldwork in the archives of Memorial University of
Newfoundland (St. John’s, NL) and The Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies at the Museum of Civilization (Ottawa).

Apart from one person, (b. 1876), who sailed to Quebec aged thirteen, most of those interviewed had never been to Scotland but all had parents or grandparents who had emigrated and had recounted their memories within the community. All were from Scottish Gaelic-speaking crofting-fishing families who settled in communities consisting of French, English and Irish. They integrated well, simultaneously sharing an ‘inner sense of community’ defined by language and cultural heritage.

On completion of the projects, there was no expectation to continue research or remain in Canada, though friendships forged during fieldwork would undoubtedly continue after my return to Scotland. During the first decade, letters reported deaths of elderly relatives, often adding appreciation that their stories and songs had been recorded. Publications of the research sparked interest among descendants and in 2009 twenty Newfoundlanders visited their ‘home communities’ in Scotland. In 2010 a group of Québécois toured the Outer Hebrides visiting local history societies, using the Quebec recordings as evidence of Hebridean emigration history. Visitors met descendants and were taken to places that gave their names to Quebec communities, such as Stornoway, Ballallan, Tolsta and Ness.

Anticipating Scotland’s Homecoming 2014, there is renewed interest in sharing memories that were recorded on both sides of the Atlantic. The paper will be illustrated by recorded examples.

USING AND CREATING ORAL HISTORY IN DIALECT RESEARCH
Natalie Braber Nottingham Trent University, UK

Oral history narratives do not simply provide convenient illustrations of the dialect of people from the same area but also offer a potentially rich discursive context for considering how these speakers appear to construct their own identities in time and place. However, this is not to say that the use of oral history data is problem-free when the focus is on gathering formal evidence of possible language change and variation, or that it is enough in itself to provide reliable data in sociolinguistic studies. As we will attempt to show in our talk, it is best viewed as one of several ways of collecting data that, ideally, need to be combined and compared if we are to draw clearer conclusions about certain findings.

NOW AND THEN: THREE DECADES OF HIV IN MERSEYSIDE
Elaine Brown, Liverpool John Moores University and Emma Vickers, Sahir House, UK

‘Now+Then: Three Decades of HIV in Merseyside’ is a two-year Heritage Lottery funded project being led by Sahir House. Over the last thirty years HIV has brought together people from diverse backgrounds in Merseyside but whose stories are largely unheard. This project will mark three decades of HIV in Merseyside by collecting oral testimonies from diverse groups including people living with and affected by HIV (PLWAH), community activists and people working in the HIV field.

In Merseyside, as internationally, the deaths of people from AIDS in the 1980s led to the construction of a community of interest comprising PLWAH, supporters and activists. This community provided practical, emotional and social support to PLWAH and engaged in HIV
activism. Activism included: awareness campaigns on HIV transmission/safer sex; challenging HIV-related stigma and; lobbying for the development of health/social care services.

The construction of the HIV community cannot be reduced to HIV status alone and must be understood as being influenced by multiple intersecting factors. Through the use of personal testimonies, this paper explores the construction of the HIV community in Merseyside from the 1980s onwards through its intersections with gender and sexual orientation. We will examine how these intersections were both unifying and divisive. In particular, we will look at the intersections between the HIV and LGBT communities both in terms of the support and activism of the LGBT community, but also the stigma experienced by positive gay men from within the LGBT community.

We will also explore the sense of connection/disconnection that women living with HIV felt to the HIV community in Merseyside and the role of women as activists and supporters of PLWHAH.

This paper will contribute to the wider aim of the Now+Then project of examining how communities in Merseyside responded to the challenges of HIV/AIDS from the 1980s onwards.

LOVE, WAR, BETRAYAL, TRUST: HOW THE SHOAH ARCHIVES UNITE THE HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR COMMUNITY

Linda F. Burghardt, Holocaust Memorial & Tolerance Center of Nassau County, New York, USA

Community creates power, often in surprising ways. This is as true in society as it is in nature. For example, in the natural world, the three elements carbon, hydrogen and oxygen are all practically tasteless, yet when they unite, they form sugar, a compound which has a characteristic taste possessed by none of them. In our society, the community created by sharing oral histories unites individual stories into a cohesive whole that speaks in one large transcendent voice, containing elements of persuasion, clarity and strength not necessarily expressed by any one narrator.

In this presentation, I will show how the individual Holocaust survivors who joined their voices through giving testimony to the Shoah Visual History Archives (http://sfi.usc.edu) constitute a community, a distinct, clearly bounded and unified group whose analysis offers a specific and sharply elaborated definition of a community of interest. I will also demonstrate how by creating an oral history of the Holocaust, the survivors achieved two significant goals, one universal, the other personal.

For the universal, I will demonstrate how they gained the ability to command attention, to speak in one unified voice and gain political power, respect and recognition beyond what any of them could do individually. This is surely one of the major strengths of oral history, one which enables people, organizations and even nations to see what they have not been able to perceive before, and thus learn and grow in ways that make possible the advancement of humanity.

For the personal, I will explain how joining a formal oral history program further enabled survival. I will trace the stages of becoming a community, show how each united the Holocaust survivors further and explain how joining together to contribute to the Shoah
archives ultimately added to their continued survival, both individually and as a historical group.

GATHERING UNHEARD VOICES: QUEER HERITAGE IN POST-WAR PLYMOUTH
Alan Butler, Plymouth LGBT Archive, UK

This paper refers to PhD research into the award winning Plymouth LGBT Community Archive, which also informs a dedicated accession within the city’s official archives and comprises of oral history interviews and memorabilia pertaining to the performance of LGBT identity in the city over a sixty year period.

The oral history interview is viewed as being at the intersection between the two forms of memory that have been identified by Diana Taylor as the physical and concrete manifestation of ‘archival memory’ and the repertoire of acts which are “usually thought of as ephemeral, non-reproducible knowledge”. Oral history interviews, as a method, provide a point where historians can endeavour to capture aspects of the repertoire for inclusion into the more traditional archive, providing access to knowledge which has tended not to be considered within historical discourse. Little archival material exists to represent the historical experience of many LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) communities due to the fact that diaries could fall into the wrong hands, letters could become a means of blackmail and photographs were treated with suspicion. Queer or LGBT identity has usually been forged in a shared moment and through interactions in places considered safe to perform in ways that challenged the hegemonic norms. As a result, much of the history of these lifestyles can only be explored through the repertoire of those individuals who have been, and continue to be, part of the communities in question. Historically, in Plymouth, the various LGBT communities have sought to remain underground and this paper explores the means by which the hidden histories of some very diverse communities of people (who are often viewed as one community despite their differences) has been accessed and explored to enable a pride in their place in the city’s history.

AN ISLAND PARADIGM: THE EXPERIENCE OF UNDERTAKING THE CREATION AND PUBLICATION OF AN ARCHIVE OF ORAL HISTORY RECORDINGS IN A HEBRIDEAN COMMUNITY.
Jane Carswell, Isle of Jura Development Trust, Scotland, UK

A presentation about trying to find a balance between protectionism and truth-telling in the oral histories produced by the ‘community-focused and led’ Jura Lives project. The project’s premise, and the basis upon which support was won from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the LEADER fund, is briefly examined (citing official aims, volunteer management structure, the focus on deliverables in a professional vacuum).

The idea of the island’s extended community as a microcosm is outlined, with discussion of whether an island connection creates a common bond and increased toleration or is the cause of status anxiety and division. Tropes of belonging, and the island’s iconic power for members of both the resident and emigrant communities, are illustrated through the playing of selected audio material from the Jura Lives archive.

The mechanisms that the project team evolved to encourage participation and de-sensitise contributions from members of the community before publication are explained; these being a strategy of on-location and public-context audio capture and an editorial policy including the
contributor's right to review recordings. The consequences, 'authenticity' and efficacy of these mechanisms is analysed. The dynamics of the researcher as insider-outsider are explored. An impression that the exercise of oral history highlighted a clash of cultures is given, with an example of particular sensitivities in the social media age.

The talk is concluded with reflections about how far a representative community oral history could be realised within the parameters of the project, and the anticipation of ongoing challenges in educating the audience about enquiring into the authority of the sources while respecting the integrity of each performance.

Andrew Clark, Scottish Oral History Centre, UK

This paper will offer a reflection of the Scottish Oral History Centre’s involvement in the Models of University-School Engagement (MUSE) programme between September 2013 and May 2014. Centre Director Professor Arthur McIvor and I devised a research project with pupils of Springburn Academy that would focus on the decline of the locomotive industry in the area during the period of accelerated economic contraction. The aim was to encourage pupils to consider the ways in which historians devise and conduct research projects, as well as offering insights into the uses of oral history.

This paper will consider the benefits and pitfalls of participating in a project with the secondary education sector. It will reflect upon the necessity of good communication between the institutions and individuals involved, and the difficulties which arise when this is not a fluid as it could/should be. Significantly, it will assess the impact of the project on the participants, most primarly the school pupils, considering what benefits such a project can have for them. It is aimed that this will prompt discussion about the different ways in which the oral history community can work with schools, in their communities, to promote research, oral methods, and improve the educational attainment of those involved.

TALKING NEW TOWNS: AN ONLINE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT CAPTURING TALES OF THE EMERGENCE OF HERTFORDSHIRE’S NEW TOWNS
Grete Dalum-Tilds, Stevenage Museum, UK

Talking New Towns is a project seeking to publicise, activate and utilise the rich tradition for Oral History in Stevenage and other New Towns in Hertfordshire. With some of the oldest oral history tapes in the collection being interviews with key workers, planners and architects the project has a good chance to cover a broad range of experiences with building and living in a new town.

The key aim of the project is to gather the interviews as one resource and create an online resource accessible through mobile apps as well as regular web browsing. This will allow to tie excerpts to physical locations (using QR codes) or ‘playing cards with portraits of speakers.

Included in the final resource will also be AV projects made in collaboration with school colleges re-interpreting the interviews and the new town experience from a contemporary point of view. The visual packs accompanying the OH resources will be documents such as
council meeting minutes, budgets, old flyers and plans selected to support specific research questions for older kids. The museum is engaged with preparing for the new curriculum in schools and will seek to cover a range of possible topics. From writing a play based on the experiences of the first families – to creating 50’ arts projects based on the cartoons, flyers and artists impressions advertising the coming of the new town.

In my talk I hope to discuss how oral history archives may be engaged with across generations through use of digital media and open forums through you tube, vines, micro volunteering and bringing together shared experiences in a very spread out county, and further creating a resource for future planners as well as the local public.

Some of the ethical and editorial issues in this process will be to keep the intent of the original interviews when used in very short excerpts. And to have the web published material guide back to a kiosk based system of digitized interviews accessible in full. At each partner location.

The project is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, partner organisations are Welwyn Hatfield Museum Service and Dacorum Heritage Trust.

GENDERING ORAL HISTORY: WALLED CITY AND THE MUSLIM MARGINALIZATION IN POST-PARTITION DELHI
Anjali Bhardwaj Datta , Trinity College, University of Cambridge, UK

The proposed paper looks at the post-partition alienation and ghettoization of the Muslim communities in the capital city of Delhi. Through oral histories, personal testimonies and narratives, it tries to ‘locate’ the women in the walled city of Delhi amidst the dynamics of changing morphology and social and cultural and demographic milieu during the post colonial period. The city which symbolized the glory of Mughals, became a site of constant intervention, resulting in permanent degeneration and decay in the colonial period. Partition of the country in 1947 caused the final blow to the demographic, cultural and economic life of the city as the Muslim population of the city confronted violence, fear and insecurities, and the community came to feel marginalized with the arrival of Hindu refugee population from Punjab. This process while at one level produced the ghettoization of Muslim population in the city and at another has led to curious re-negotiation of domestic and norms around work, mobility and seclusion for the women of the community.

The paper then, intends to make the Muslim women of Delhi ‘visible’ despite the complex rules of veiling and protection. It is significant because these are the indigenous women of Delhi who were non actors hence forth, and silently witnessed post partition demographic, social and spatial transformation yet it would be interesting to see how they were in turn affected by this transition.

‘WE DON’T TALK ABOUT THAT’: CHALLENGING COMMUNITY SILENCE.
Maria DeLongoria, Suffolk County Community College

Who does not love oral history and oral tradition? It could be something as simple as a family member’s recollection about the “good old days” or a more formal interview with someone who was a part of a movement or the start of an organization? When it is the latter there is
preparation involved. Background research on the subject needs to be completed. Research on
the area or location; on the time period; and perhaps, even on any known people involved is
done. Questions are developed. “Facts” are checked and double-checked before the actually
interview is conducted. Once all the preliminary “stuff” is completed, the interviewer sets out
to conduct interviews and gather testimony. But what happens when the subject matter is one
that no one wants to remember? What happens when the people who should be interviewed
will not speak with the interviewer? When the interviewer is seen as an outsider coming
around causing trouble? When the story that is being investigated could change how the
community is identified or remembered by others? Or when what is being investigated might
change the community’s understanding of itself.

Navigating through two former slave states, one in the American south and one in the
Midwest, to investigate the lynchings of two Black women presented many unforeseen
challenges in collecting any oral information. This paper will discuss some of those challenges,
specifically those related to community memory and identity. The researcher will reflect on
the difficulties encountered in gaining access to the “keepers” of the oral narratives as well as
how race and gender may or may not have influenced the process.

THE EARLY PESTALOZZI CHILDREN PROJECT: RECOVERING A LOST COMMUNITY
William Eiduks and Len Clarke, Early Pestalozzi Children’s Project

The Early Pestalozzi Children Project is about using oral history and archives to recover the lost
story of a group of deprived European and Tibetan children who were taken into care between
1959 and 1965, and who later became estranged from their care community.

Our project was established in 2013 to recover a lost history and rebuild a community to which
we belong, as early Pestalozzi children ourselves.

This presentation describes: how and why we came to create the project; our approach in
general and, specifically, how we are encouraging our community’s involvement in oral history;
what we have experienced and what we have learned in the process so far; and the
consequences, issues, and outcomes for ourselves and the wider early Pestalozzi community.

The Pestalozzi Children’s Village was opened in 1959 in the village of Sedlescombe, East
Sussex, as a surrogate home for children from deprived backgrounds: European refugee
children still in German Displaced Persons camps following WW2, and a small number of
British children. In 1963, a group of Tibetan children was accepted from northern India.

By 1965, the Pestalozzi Children’s Village Trust had made the decision to focus its work
exclusively on children and young people from Third World countries, and the existing
European children’s program was phased out. In some cases these European departures were
managed with unseemly haste and insensitivity.

There was very little follow-up to check on their well-being. For many of them this separation
meant that they had, in effect, lost their home and surrogate family. Subsequent articles and
books mentioning the early years of the Pestalozzi Children’s Village compounded this loss
through inaccuracies and mistakes, distorting the history.
DOING ORAL HISTORY WITHIN A DIVIDED ‘COMMUNITY’: CHALLENGES FOR AN OUTSIDER
Romaine Farquet, University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland

How can an outside scholar conduct research within a divided ‘community’? This question stems from my PhD project that is mainly based on oral history interviews undertaken with 50 former Albanian-speaking activists from Yugoslavia who participated in the struggle to ‘liberate Kosovo’ in Switzerland in the 1980s and 90s. These interviews revealed important past and present tensions among the former militants. Because these antagonisms occupied such a central place in the interviews, they also occupy a prominent position in my work. Researching and writing about these conflicts, however, presents various problems to an outside researcher.

First, most interviewees generally expressed discomfort when speaking about past disagreements. While some regretted them, others still seemed to be living them out. Moreover, while the respondents often told me at great length about the past conflicts, they frequently wished them not to be largely publicised, and hence I face a dilemma regarding whether to render these findings public or not.

Second, my research has attracted great interest from members of the Albanian-speaking ‘community’ in Switzerland, many of whom have expressed a desire to read my writings. The question is this: where and how should these findings be disseminated apart from within the academic world? How is it possible to explore the past divisions in ‘community’ forums and what would be the consequences of such a performance?

Finally, conducting research among a divided population exposes me to the risk of being exploited by one side or the other. It seems, in particular, that several interviewees regarded me as a trusting outsider who could be easily manipulated. Under such conditions, how is it possible to conduct research without being exploited while at the same time maintaining relations with respondents from diverse orientations?

'NO FOUNDATION ALL THE WAY DOWN THE LINE' REVISITED: ANALYSIS AND REFLECTIONS ON 30 YEARS OF WORKING WITH AND BUILDING COMMUNITY PROCESSES THROUGH ORAL HISTORY
Craig Fees, Planned Environment Therapy Trust Archive and Study Centre, UK

In 1984 I was awarded a grant by the Folklore Society for a project entitled "Folk Memory in a North Cotswold Community", in which I was given licence to discover what it might mean to be a community folklorist in a small market town in rural England. Five years later the Planned Environment Therapy Trust gave me the opportunity to explore the role in greater depth in a different setting, when it asked me to establish from scratch an archive and study centre devoted to therapeutic communities, group therapies, and alternative education communities more generally. The work of that project was crystallised in the 2010-2011 HLF-supported "Therapeutic Living With Other People's Children: An oral history of residential therapeutic child care c. 1930 - c. 1980", which eventuated in two national awards.

This paper marks the 25th anniversary of the Planned Environment Therapy Trust Archive and Study Centre by looking at "Therapeutic Living" and examining what it means to be a ‘community folklorist’ - an archivist and oral historian - for a communities-based field which, by its nature, is defined by traumatic personal and family experience, dispersed and exploded
identities, obscured histories and heritage, huge humanities, and the immense possibilities in human being.

The reference in the title is to a 1998 paper entitled "'No Foundation All the Way Down the Line' History, memory and 'milieu therapy' from the view of a specialist archive in Britain". Written at a time of sweeping closures of residential therapeutic communities for children and young people - which continued, and extended to communities for adults; and which, in fact, has a long history for children in care generally - I remarked there:

"What makes the closure of a therapeutic community even more devastating is that a therapeutic community is the locus of more than simple community or belonging for people to whom identity by definition is itself problematic, and for whom belonging is both the start of therapy and sometimes its greatest triumph. The 'continuity of care' of a community which survives all that a disturbed child can throw at it, and which a growing young person and adult knows is there and can continue to refer to as needed throughout their life, is one of its greatest therapeutic assets and an incomparable therapeutic tool. When a community is closed this asset and this tool go with it, with consequences which continue to unfold during the lifetimes of all of the people involved and into future generations."

In my experience oral history and the doing of oral history has a role it can play. I discuss this, situating the discussion in the context of the history of the Archive and Study Centre.

**WHOSE PROJECT IS THIS? WHOSE STORIES DO WE TELL? PARTICIPATORY FRAMEWORKS FOR COMMUNITY-BASED ORAL HISTORY PROJECTS**

Andrew Flinn and Julianne Nyhan, University College London

Our paper examines some of the community-related research incorporating oral history practice being undertaken by staff at UCL in the Department of Information Studies with the view to exploring the relationships between the interviewer and interviewee, between 'academic' researchers and community-based participants, and the extent to which collaborative and participatory approaches to community—based oral history practice can share control, authority and ownership equitably between the partners in such research, and further identify what are some of the challenges to such a approach. A focus of much current research within UCL:DIS is participatory and collaborative approaches to knowledge production which seek to overcome the traditional barriers between academic and other knowledge professionals and different publics, but in particular this paper will draw upon and contrast the experience of working on two different projects with very different communities. First with HLF-funded community-based heritage oral history as part of the AHRC's Connected Communities Research for Community Heritage 'Dig Where We Stand' project ([http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/dig-where-we-stand/](http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/dig-where-we-stand/)), and second, 'Hidden Histories: computers and the humanities 1949-1980' ([http://hiddenhistories.omeka.net/](http://hiddenhistories.omeka.net/)) which records the diverse stories of an international community of pioneers, radicals, leaders, and discordant voices to capture the birth and evolution stories of the emergence of the ‘revolutionary’ and ‘transformatory’ discipline of digital humanities. The speakers will describe and compare these projects so as to examine questions of what is ‘community’, where power and authority lies within different communities, how key community stories are developed and authenticated within the community, what is the relationship between the researchers and those interviewees, and whether these relationships can be developed so that interviewers and
interviewees can share authority over the framing of the research, the stories told and their subsequent use and reproduction.

20 YEARS ON THE GROUND: LESSONS LEARNT AND SHEDDING A TEAR!
Judith Garfield, Eastside Community Heritage

Over the past 20 years Eastside has worked with over 10000 individuals, 900 organisations, produced 85 exhibitions, published 17 booklets, 30 video documentaries and undertaken a total of over 300 community heritage based projects. In 1999 Eastside establish the London Peoples Archives which now hold over 2000 oral histories and 28000 photographs. Much of the organisation’s work relies on intergenerational and intercultural practice.

Our methodology incorporates education and training, with schools, families and adult learners. Eastside’s products namely the exhibitions, publications and multimedia stimuli are an opportunity for all cultures and age ranges to engage in a proactive discovery of their own and their community’s history, culture and heritage.

This paper will explore a variety of different projects that ECH has worked on over the past 20 years, comparing and contrasting – how oral history can enable an understanding between communities, work with new communities, young people, volunteers and in different community spaces. Specifically the presentation will include video and sound clips of interviews from agencies and individuals who have campaigned for equality, and so will include oral histories from Northern Ireland with ex British soldiers and members of the Troops Out Movement, Anti racist campaigners, Ugandan Asian Community, and the LGBT community in Redbridge.

In sharing the histories of such ‘grass roots’ movements and their unique histories, we shall aim to show exactly how oral and community history can be used as an aid to community development and organising

BEYOND THE MAP: MEMORIES OF LEISURE AND PLAY IN THE OUSEBURN
Alex Henry, Curiosity Creative, and Colin Green, The Ouseburn Trust

Everyone has a story, or two, or three to tell. Beyond the Map was a local history and digital storytelling project, delivered through a partnership model, which engaged with local community groups and members of the public, who came together to share memories on work and play in the Ouseburn Valley, Newcastle upon Tyne. The location was chosen because it is a dynamic creative cluster located in central Newcastle and attracts many different communities of interest, who interact with the area in a number of ways.

Digital Storytelling is a community engagement and participation technique which enables individuals and communities to have their life experiences and personal stories heard. It is a process where groups work together, provide peer support, share experiences with one another to create their own personal digital stories.

Memories were stimulated by looking at old artefacts and photographs, story circles, listening and group reminiscences that created new positive personal relationships. Using iPad technology they were then enabled to create their own digital story. Which is usually composed of a personal audio recording and personal photographs, photographs of personal
objects or personal artwork lasting for 2-3 minutes.

The key theme was to record memories of leisure and play in the area. In the same way individual people are different, all the stories-created were different, but crucially were individual and personal to each story creator.

The finished stories have all been archived for the future. Digital Storytelling is one way heritage organisations can collect personal stories and also engage and build positive relationships with diverse communities. It is also a technique which heritage organisations can adopt to help ensure their collections remain relevant and reflective of these communities.

The project was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund All Our Stories fund and led by the Ouseburn Trust in partnership with Curiosity Creative, the North East Digital Story Centre.

PERFORMING CONTROVERSY: ORAL HISTORY AND A COMMUNITY-ENGAGED THEATRE PROCESS WITH, FOR AND ABOUT TORONTO’S JEWISH LEFT
Ruth Howard, Jumblies Theatre

I will tell the story of Oy di velt vet vern yinger (Oh the world will grow younger), a theatre production deriving from a three-year process at Camp Naivelt: a still-existing secular socialist Jewish summer community founded in 1925 by Yiddish-speaking immigrants.

This play, created and performed by 70+ community members and a professional artistic team, was informed both by written source material and by oral histories conducted several decades earlier by Professor Ester Reiter of York University and others collected more recently. The production explored the persistent belief in creating Utopia, heaven on earth, against all odds. It featured live performance, choreography and music set to an audio script of assembled voices. In order to explore the theme of social hope, we had to pass through a chapter of disillusionment: the Community party split of the 1950’s, which had torn apart this community and which the remaining members almost never talked about, and never in public.

This subject matter was, thus, terrifically controversial. As both the lead artist with a sense of artistic integrity and as a member of the community motivated to help it survive not destroy or expose it, the issues that arose - of censorship, official versions and whose voices (literally) should be included or not – were almost derailing, and eventually lead to an approach that contained more not fewer conflicting voices and views, and that invited ongoing interactive disagreement.

This presentation will serve as a case study to raise questions and reflections on the ethics and aesthetics of unearthing and expressing conflict in a combined art-making and oral history process and product.

COMMUNITIES OF STIGMA? EXPLORING THE ORAL HISTORIES OF COMMUNITIES OF PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY AND MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS
Lee Humber, Oxford Brookes University

The paper will explore the extent to which a shared sense of stigma unites and divides people from two stigmatised communities: those with intellectual disability and those with mental
health problems. Examining an extensive and wide ranging body of interview data drawn from over 100 interviews it will compare and contrast the testimony of the two groups in order to consider issues such as intra-community dynamics, stigmatised and non-stigmatised community relations and carer-stigmatised group relationships. Crucially the paper will ask how and to what extent do stigmatised groups define themselves as communities?

The paper will consider the unique contribution oral history makes to the analysis of stigma and stigmatised communities. Drawing on a broad body of literature the paper will analyse the ways in which the subjectivity of oral history testimony supports an exploration of cultural norms, how, as Anderson and Jack argue, the ‘idiosyncratic interaction between self-image and cultural norms’ illuminates the power relationships between self, group and culture (Anderson and Jack, 2006: 137).

The paper will re-evaluate Goffman’s classic work in light of the interview data gathered. It will investigate the continued relevance of themes developed by Goffman such as ‘passing’ (how stigmatised individuals may attempt to hide that which stigmatises them), how and to what extent group identity – or a sense of community – impacts positively and negatively on stigmatised individuals and others.

References:

iii. Penny Johnston and Cliona O’Carroll, Cork Folklore Project/ University College Cork

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR DIGITAL AUDIENCE: A CASE STUDY FROM THE CORK FOLKLORE PROJECT
Penny Johnston and Cliona O’Carroll, Cork Folklore Project/University College Cork

The Cork Folklore Project is a community-based urban public folklore project that incorporates folklore and oral history collection with job training and support. Established as in 1996, the Project is singular in Ireland in its nature and longevity. This paper explores issues relating to the Project’s role as a site of engaged enquiry generating vivid, textured accounts of everyday life in the past and present, and explores the challenges of maintaining an openness of outlook in engagement, collection and dissemination. It outlines the process of balancing expectations regarding the activities of a ‘folklore’ group with the desire to engage with the question of who our communities of contributors and resource users might be, and how they might be meaningfully represented, served and/or challenged. Exactly who our ‘parish’ should and might be is a question that demands constant review, particularly when the reach and potential applications of online dissemination are considered in conjunction with increased business, academic, artistic/creative and media interest in material generated by listening to the everyday.

We are currently exploring issues around how we get to know our online audience and this paper will present some usage results from website and social media metrics. It will also discuss how (and whether) these have been helpful in gaining an understanding of the way people use, share and promote the digital material that the Project has developed and promoted. The aim is to allow the Project to adapt to user expectations and interests, encouraging users returning to web sites and social media pages over and again.
The insights gained from this work will be useful for other oral history projects that would like to use similar techniques to encourage participation and feedback, and it is particularly relevant to oral history projects that operate on a long-term and ongoing basis.

GRANADA TELEVISION: ‘THE FINEST TV COMPANY IN THE WORLD’ (NEW YORK TIMES)
Stephen Kelly, Chester University and Judith Jones, Liverpool John Moores University

Granada Television was formed in 1954 by Lord Bernstein and after winning the franchise began transmitting to the north of England two years later. It has been broadcasting to the nation ever since and is now renamed as ITV. Its heyday was probably in the period between 1960 until 1990 when the Broadcasting Act led to significant changes in the shape of British broadcasting. During this period Granada produced some of the finest television of its day including Brideshead Revisited, World In Action, What the Papers Say, Seven Up, Coronation Street and The Jewel In The Crown.

Stephen Kelly and Judith Jones, in association with the Manchester Centre for Regional History at Manchester Metropolitan University and the Granada Foundation, have been collecting the memories of those who worked for Granada at its Manchester, London and Liverpool offices between the early days of the company up until 1990. So far interviews have been recorded with presenters, producers, researchers, camera operators, film editors, secretaries, production assistants and others. The interviews have highlighted a company with many traditional and paternalistic values though not without its challenges in some working practices. And also a company that has strongly identified with its region to the extent that the north west became known as Granadaland. But foremost has been the privilege of working for such a company and being involved in some of the most innovative programmes ever made for British television.

A CYBER CULTURE HERITAGE CENTRE FOR THE BRITISH CHINESE
Chungwen Li, Ming-Ai (London) Institute, UK

Culture heritage is intangible and therefore oral history is one of the best tools to collate facts and memories among the communities, especially within the ethnic minority groups. The speaker will use the Chinese community in the UK as a case study, and showing the oral history projects she directed since 2008 on how to build up own culture heritage archives, and most importantly how to bring it forward for the future generations. The presentation will look back on how the project ideas were generated and stories collected from the British Chinese individuals and community groups; with the emphasis on how to engage them, the difficulties encountered, and how to sustain the culture heritage by creating education material and further pathways.

In order to preserve and promote the intangible culture in an accessible pathway, a cyber culture heritage centre is created to collate and deposit the oral history for the British Chinese communities; also a unique history timeline is created to reflect the history and the oral histories collected.

Examples will be used from the past and current oral history projects of Ming-Ai (London) Institute:
- The British Chinese Workforce Heritage (www.britishchineseheritagecentre.org.uk)
The History and Evolution of British Chinese Workforce (www.ming-ai.org.uk/chineseworkforce)
- British Chinese Food Culture (www.britishchinesefoodculture.org.uk)
- East West Festive Culture (www.ming-ai.org.uk/eastwest)

YORK REMEMBERS ROWNTREE- CONSTRUCTING AN ORAL HISTORY IN AN URBAN ENVIRONMENT
Suzanne Lilley, The Rowntree Society, York, UK

The Rowntree family of York is best known for well-loved confectionery products such as KitKat, Black Magic and Smarties. However, within the city of York, the Rowntrees are equally memorable as benevolent employers and benefactors. In fact, it is said that within York everyone has a connection to Rowntree’s.

The Rowntree Society’s HLF funded oral history project, “York Remembers Rowntree”, seeks to understand the city’s relationship with this much loved Quaker family. Reflecting on all elements of Rowntree history and using a combination of oral history, archaeological and historical approaches, the project aims to identify and capture memories of a unique urban community. Project staff and a team of dedicated volunteers have spent the last nine months collecting and investigating the lives of York residents who wish to have their voice heard. By exploring four themes; factory life, transportation, housing and leisure, a distinctive picture of communal identity and workforce loyalty is emerging from the stories.

Both Rowntree and chocolate manufacturing are popular areas of interest within the city of York, this paper seeks to examine the role of oral history approaches in augmenting the established narrative. Through the use of community engagement initiatives, issues surrounding the construction of collective identity and challenges to conventional history are considered. Ultimately this paper explores the issues of project longevity and asks whether “York Remembers Rowntree” will itself be remembered as part of the Rowntree story.

LISTENING TO THE VOICE OF OUR ANCESTORS: A TIN EMBROIDERY CULTURAL STUDY BY TEACHERS AND STUDENTS IN AN ETHNIC MIAO AREA IN CHINA
Yongli Lu, Kaili No. 1 High School, China and Elaine Dong, Florida International University, USA/Evergreen Education Foundation

The paper explores the development of an oral history project, tin embroidery cultural study, conducted by a team of teachers and students from the Kaili No. 1 High School, Guizhou, China. The project, sponsored by the Evergreen Education Foundation, studied a unique traditional handicraft of the Miao ethnic group. Team members visited a Miao village, interviewed two tin embroidery masters and villagers, and recorded the production process of tin embroidery. During the process, they not only learned about the culture and history of the Miao community around them, but also developed skills of interviewing and using documentary media, as well as analytical abilities and historical awareness and understandings. For these adolescents, the strengthened connection with the ethnic communities around them will also make a positive impact on their social and emotional growth.
OUR HUMBLE ABODES: MEMORIES OF LIVERPOOL’S COURT HOUSING
Kerry Massheder-Rigby, University of Liverpool, UK

This paper forms part of a wider PhD project exploring whether there can be an informative research relationship between oral history and archaeology. Its focus is on the working class housing experience in England from the Industrial Revolution Period onwards.

Oral history as a discipline applied within archaeological investigation is growing in popularity and in application in the UK as a form of ‘Public Archaeology’. Experience suggests that there is potential for combining oral history testimony with physical archaeological evidence to enhance our understanding of community and place.

The ‘Our Humble Abodes’ project aims to fill the gaps in knowledge of Liverpool’s court housing by undertaking oral history interviews and archaeological investigations. Court housing was a form of low quality, high density ‘slum’ housing, arranged around courtyards and constructed back-to-back with adjacent houses of the next court. ‘Slum clearance’ programmes of the 1960’s have resulted in few extant remains and so oral history is an important source of evidence to fill the gaps in our knowledge of court housing and challenge the ‘official’ narrative.

This paper will explore the value of community engagement in ‘Public Archaeology’ and discuss the significance of the memories the ‘Our Humble Abodes’ project has collected.

BEYOND THE ACADEMY: COLLABORATION, HOUSING PATHWAYS AND THE IRISH COMMUNITY IN LEICESTER AND SHEFFIELD
Angela Maye-Banbury, Sheffield Hallam University, Rionach Casey, Sheffield Hallam University and Lynda Callaghan, Leicester City Council and Emerald Centre

This paper demonstrates how collaboration between two community groups and the academic sector has been instrumental in revealing the housing pathways of Irish migrants in Sheffield and Leicester. The paper begins with a critical account of how the research methodology was negotiated between academics at Sheffield Hallam University, Leicester’s Emerald Centre and the Irish Association in Sheffield. The skills, knowledge and experience of staff in both sectors and the extent to which these skills served to enhance the respondents' experiences as participants in the oral history project are reviewed. Extracts from previously unpublished oral testimonies alongside audiovisual material notably a DVD and blog, will be used to highlight the distinct sociocultural context of Irish residents in the two cities over space and time. The changing housing situations, housing careers and life-course events which impact on the interviewees' reconstruction of their housing histories are explored. Emerging geographies of residential patterns for different Irish groups (such as single men/women; families and young people) are considered. Convergence and divergence of experiences in the two cities will be critically analysed and relevance to Irish migrants in both cities considered.

FELLOWSHIP OF CONTROVERSY: MULTI-MEDIA PRESENTATION OF SOUNDS FROM THE PARK; AN ORAL AND VISUAL HISTORY OF SPEAKERS’ CORNER, HYDE PARK:
Laura Mitchison and Rosa Vilbr, On the Record CIC

Speakers’ Corner is a geographical place, a traditional practice, a symbol of free speech, but our oral history project revealed that it is also a rather eccentric community of interest,
sustained through memory. Of the 100 open-air oratory sites established in London between 1885 and 1939, Hyde Park is the only survivor. It is often depicted as a vanishing relic of authentic communication, whose importance has been superseded by new technologies. We think this opposition between the real and the recorded, and the narrative of decline, is too simplistic.

First, we will explore the different types of memory operating at Speakers’ Corner. Orators and hecklers learn their craft from observing veterans in the flesh and keep the tradition alive through storytelling. But these “incorporating practices” have always been refracted through “inscribing practices”: chronicles of last dying speeches at Tyburn’s scaffold, books, photographs and, more recently, YouTube and Wikipedia. Oral history – because it is both embodied encounter and inscribing practice – echoes the logic of this unique Sunday performance, so it is a perfect medium to understand it.

Second, we will explore Speakers’ Corner’s significance within the divergent life histories of orators, hecklers and other regulars. Speakers’ Corner is what Doreen Massey refers to as an extroverted place, connected with global processes and innumerable ideologies, which broadens the range of available meanings. It is “an open air lunatic asylum,” “an intensely political forum,” “a bare knuckle fight”, “a kind of extended family” and much more besides. Somehow, these disparate meanings and individuals co-exist in what pacifist stalwart Donald Soper called “the fellowship of controversy.” Third, we will reflect on the project’s impact on the living community of Speakers’ Corner. We worked collaboratively with an opinionated steering group of regulars and project volunteers throughout, creating a new dialogical space to debate the past and the future.

Notes:
1 Paul Connerton, in How Societies Remember, 1989 distinguishes between “incorporating practices” (memories sedimented in the body and transmitted through live interaction) and “inscribing practices” (textual or visual representations that store information).
2 Pierre Bourdieu, The Logic of Practice, 1980, makes the argument that the logic of a methodology should be consistent with the practice it studies.

INTRODUCING THE ‘COLLABORATIVE STORIES SPIRAL’: A PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGY FOR CREATING TRANSFORMATIONAL ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH
Niamh Moore, University of Manchester; co-authors: Paul Gilchrist, Claire Holmes, Amelia Lee, Neil Ravenscroft

Working as a team comprising academics and a research-experienced Community Partner, LGBT Youth North West, we have been collaborating on a range of participatory research projects. Our experience of using oral histories has generated rich data through which to understand (food growing) communities. It has however, also encouraged us to reflect further on how to take into account (a) situating the stories that are told, and (b) understanding the processes and impacts of remediating these stories once they have been told. In an attempt to address this we have developed the CSS as a conceptual framework which guides and supports collaborative teams through the recursive three stage spiral process of (i) situating stories (ii) generating stories and (iii) remediating stories. Oral history projects often tend to focus on the second phase, paying less attention to: questions of situating which stories are to be told; what happens once community stories are remediating (in a range of forms from academic report, to website and community artwork); and how the iterative relationship between these processes can be understood through the practice of spiralling stories. We have
been conceptualising the CSS as a ‘boundary object’ (Star 2010), which allows for flexible structures, including models which do not involve (so much) academic mediation. We also draw on Haraway’s work on story transmission as a game of ‘cat’s cradle’ (1994) and King’s attention to ‘transmedia ecologies’ (2012), to offer a model of research which allows ‘interpretative flexibility’ about the shared project. We will draw on a range of our projects, including creating a film of a Young Women’s Allotment Project in Manchester; and creating storyboards for Tablehurst Farm, an organic, biodynamic farm in Sussex. Our aim is that this methodology will be transferable, and that others will take it up and find it useful.

AN EFFECT OF ORAL HISTORY – CORRECTING THE RECORD
Ernest Benjamin Morris, University of Wollongong, Australia

Official view espoused by politicians, Department of Defence, and military historians overturned by using oral histories of soldiers

My research examines the correlation between war veterans’ oral histories, national myths and legends, and traditional military history. The work examines oral history’s long held status as a means to give voice to those whose experiences have been largely left off the historical record.

The research has recorded and interpreted memories of a marginalised group (Australian Vietnam war veterans). I was an Australian Regular Army officer and commander of an infantry platoon some of whom became my narrators. My work delves into the issues relating to the challenges and problems involved with an insider conducting interviews, and the additional insights and dangers of assuming a collective narrative, and the intricacies of the past hierarchy impacting on the structure and the content of the interview.

The main emphasis features the challenge of disagreeing with the established official government histories of the Vietnam War, and questions the way in which published Vietnam War oral histories have been insufficiently interrogated. My research shows the power of oral history, the skills involved, and the methodological and conceptual challenges in presenting the results of my study.

In 1976, an Australian politician, Doctor Jim Cairns, claimed that Australian soldiers had killed civilians and declared them as enemy killed in action. This claim brought into play the various views of other politicians, official and unofficial historians and the public memories of soldiers who declared that the Army had always acted properly, and with the highest standards of ethical behaviours.

The ensuing media discussion over ten days presented a number of allegations. Two of my soldiers appeared on ABC TV, confirming Cairns’ claim. I will use oral histories to show that the official view denying Cairns’ allegation is overturned by using oral histories of the soldiers involved in an ambush which resulted in the deaths of unarmed civilians.
COMMUNITIES OF EXPERIENCE: RECREATING A HIDDEN COMMUNITY AND GIVING A SENSE OF VALIDATION TO THOSE WHO BELONGED TO IT.

Katherine Onion, The National Trust, Nottingham, UK

The oral history project at the Workhouse Southwell has gathered testimony from nearly 80 former inmates, visitors and staff from this public assistance institution (PAIs). PAIs were made up of people who had not otherwise been catered for in new welfare legislation after the war and who did not have people championing their cause until the 1970s, 80s and 90s. They are unmarried mothers, the elderly mentally infirm, the homeless and evicted families. The stigma of the workhouse building is strong and former inmates have often never spoken about their experiences to anyone before. For staff they fight the prejudice and preconceptions of people unaware of the PAI history and again have often never spoken clearly about a role seen at the time as a public service. The Workhouse was bought by the National Trust in 1997 as a national example of such a building. Our purpose therefore in collecting testimonies and research is to interpret this building and others, to provide a context for visitors both locally and nationally and to let our school groups and visitors know what happened most recently in what is in fact to them the most inaccessible period of history. Our interviewees are connected with Southwell or somewhere like it maybe only for that short period. The building is empty of furniture but filled with our research about the people who were here - the virtual community of our 20th century staff and inmates is real and is meet by 70,000 visitors every a year. Although they do not meet in person and do not express a desire to do so most of our interviewees agree to speak only because they know they are adding their voice to others and that those combined voices will be heard by communities today.

GENDER PROPAGANDA AND COUNTER-CULTURE: THE WOMEN’S LIBERATION AND AFTER IN NOTTINGHAM ORAL HISTORY PROJECT AND NOTTINGHAM’S WAYWARD DAUGHTERS.

Natasha Picôt, Nottingham Women’s Centre/University of Nottingham, UK

The WoLAN (Women’s Liberation and After in Nottingham) Oral History project has collected over 40 stories celebrating local women. The project interviews activists, artists, writers, musicians and women involved in politics. The inter-generational focus of the project has attracted a volunteer body of over 100 people ranging from the ages 16-96. This paper explores some of the community collaborations and the impact of these stories on the volunteer body as well as ideas of self definition and changing identities through ‘consciousness raising’ and role models.

The interweaving links between the local and global aspects of women’s experience are considered as the narrative picture of Nottingham women’s second-wave Women’s Liberation history emerges. Woman’s voices emerge through a historiography which goes against the grain of a history of individual heroes and leaders and considers the community focus of Nottingham women’s collective activity.
HOW COMMUNITIES FUELED BY THEIR PASSIONS CREATE ORAL HISTORY: THREE REFLECTIONS
Mary Kay Quinlan, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Barbara Sommer and Nancy MacKay, Independent Oral Historians, USA

Communities of place and communities of shared experiences often create oral history projects out of a desire to document their own lives. But they also encounter challenges that differ from those faced by projects based in institutions. This presentation reflects on the experiences of three disparate communities in the USA that endeavoured to adopt best practices in planning and executing their projects while at the same time fulfilling unique community needs.

The projects are: an Oakland, California, group’s passion for preserving Negro spirituals; community activists in Minnesota who are deaf, blind, deaf/blind (both deaf and blind), and hard of hearing; and factory workers in Lincoln, Nebraska, who documented a company’s history from the viewpoint of those on the factory floor.

Although widely separated in time, place, and experience, all three projects, like many home-grown oral histories, faced obstacles:

- The deaf, deaf/blind and hard of hearing community struggled to deal with the reality of “deaf” as a physical description versus “Deaf” as a description of culture.
- The Friends of Negro Spirituals faced the challenge of creating broadcast-quality video interviews to preserve the historically significant musical form for scholars as well as the general public.
- In the factory project, union members and retirees were the driving force behind an oral history project commemorating the company’s centennial.

The projects illustrate the strengths communities bring to an oral history endeavour and the challenges associated with such organic efforts. Certainly projects based in museums, academia, or business enterprises also face challenges. But unlike projects crafted and managed by professional oral history curators, projects that emerge from the passions of a community rely on that dedication to bring an oral history project to fruition.

LIFELINES: NARRATIVES ACROSS THE GENERATIONS
Sharon Rapaport, Sephardi Voices UK

This paper will discuss the transmission of memory, heritage, and identities in two projects that I am involved currently: Sephardi Voices UK and Jamaican Hidden Histories

I will discuss my personal interest in researching the following aspects:

- How interviewees give meaning to their personal life stories, and to the chain of their life events that forced them to leave their country of origin and settle in London.
- What was especially important for them when looking back on their life story, and what was for them especially significant in their personal journey in retrospect.

How did the interviewees and their families engage with the projects outputs (a filmed DVD of their interview that was sent to them after the interview), and what were the emotional challenges that they faced in the process.
THE EVOLUTION OF PHYSIOTHERAPY: A PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY
Barbara Richardson Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Retirement Association, London, UK

Physiotherapy started in the UK in 1894 as the Society of Trained Masseuses. It now comprises the third largest group of UK health care professionals with 50,000 + members. Following some interviews archived by the British Library at the Centenary in 1994, the Retirement Association was invited to bring the history of the community, the profession, up to date. A shared agreement between the British Library and the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Library gives permanent public access to digitised interviews.

The project aims to capture the unique characteristics of development of the profession, much of which has occurred ‘bottom –up’ through dedicated endeavours of individuals of this community working for the best health of their patients. There are many differing perspectives of a journey from being “hand maidsens”, to autonomous professionals, to participating members of multidisciplinary teams. Interviewee selection procedures have been clearly reasoned to gain a broad picture of the profession in all contexts and levels of work. A rich tapestry is revealed of physiotherapists’ diverse activities, their daily interactions, their strategies and techniques which have led to the community of the physiotherapy profession remaining a dominant force in health care over many years.

The voice of members talking about their professional lives offers valuable historical evidence and many opportunities for exploring views of health, skills of working with patients, qualities of leadership and teamwork, strategies of organisational management and behaviour within the community. Along with researchers and historians of physiotherapy, rehabilitation, health and social care disciplines and the general public it is hoped that through the interviews, students today, trained largely in an academic environment away from health and social care contexts can appreciate the continuing overt and subtle challenges to the principles and practice of physiotherapy in the development of clinical specialities and can recognise the importance of professionalism in the continuing growth of the profession.

‘A BIT BRUTAL, SCARY, BUT KINDA NICE’: USING ORAL HISTORY AND PERFORMANCE TO EXPLORE THE COMPLEX IMPACTS OF REGENERATION
Polly Rodgers, Ministry of Stories, Brighton and David Roberts, University College, London, UK

Oral history has informed communities and practitioners of regeneration in a variety of ways; as a mechanism to preserve the past; as a tool to shape the future; and as a critical voice to evaluate this process of urban change. This joint paper explores the promise and pitfalls of using oral history and collaborative performance to involve the community of an East London housing estate in the act of researching and documenting their difficult period of transition.

In 1968 Hungarian Socialist architect Erno Goldfinger and his wife Ursula moved from their home in Hampstead to a flat at the top of Balfron Tower in Poplar for two months to demonstrate faith in his new building and to gather empirical evidence by hosting meetings and champagne parties with his council tenant neighbours. Our work uses community oral history practice to feed into site-specific reenactments of these encounters on the estate 45 years later, while the tower is being emptied, refurbished and privatised as part of an urban regeneration scheme.
Our paper examines the role of oral history in bringing soon-to-be-displaced residents together in conversations about the complex impacts of regeneration. We consider the imaginative and ethical dimensions of this practice in challenging dominant narratives alongside the potential threat it may pose to collective community action.

**CHANGING NATURE: REFLECTIONS ON COLLECTING STORIES FROM THE EDGECOMBE HALL ESTATE**

Diana Salazar, University College London and Neil Cheshire, London, UK

This session shows the experience of Groundwork London in developing and undertaking an oral history project that explored the social and natural history of the Edgecombe Hall Estate in Southfields, London.

Working with local residents, members of the resident’s association, local schools and community volunteers, we documented the restoration of the site’s Victorian Pond. We used individual interviews and group sessions, to capture people’s reactions to the project, and explore the social history of the site. The end result was a short film document entitled “Changing Nature: Stories from the Edgecombe Hall Estate”. Through participatory design workshops, the residents and school children produced two outdoor signs displaying information collected during the project about the estate’s biodiversity and some of the shared memories from the estate’s past.

In this session we analyse how oral history was used as a tool for promoting social interaction, raising environmental awareness, and facilitating intergenerational communication amongst this community. It also presents some of the difficulties we encountered, such as achieving a broad spectrum of participants, and some of the limitations of working with multiple stakeholders. Finally, we discuss the use of media in presenting the results of the oral history project and the relevance of all these physical legacies to the local and wider community.

**STROLLING IN VIRTUAL SPACE: HISTORY AS A ‘DRAMA OF OF HUMAN ACTIVITY’**

Achim Saur, Kulturhaus Walle and Christine Spiess, Germany

Two workers remember their fight against asbestos on a shipyard; a mother tries to protect her child against the bombs raining down on Bremen and the great fire devastating her neighbourhood. These are two stories collected in the “Digital Heimatmuseum” [Digital Museum of Home] of Bremen. Most of the topics people speak about are from everyday life. You can access their stories through tracking dots on a map guiding you to the places the eye witnesses speak about.

In “History as Dialogue” eye witnesses relate what they remember from the past. We are no academic institution. The history workshop in the Cultural Centre of former working-class Walle is financed by the Department of Culture. We announce our programme through the media; often we present the findings of our research in an attractive way, like a “talk show on history”. With music, a discussion with eye witnesses, specialists and a professional moderation. Thus we receive more and more life-stories which are the stock of our “oral history archive”. And from there they find their way into the “Digital Folk Museum”.

One consequence of these wide-ranged topics and issues is that the sheer amount of information being presented obscures differing assessments and perspectives as long as they are not linked together or commented upon. This form of presentation encourages people to stroll at leisure through the history of their city and demonstrates the ‘entertainment value’ of history. Marc Bloch said that history shows the ‘drama of human activity’ and in that way helps people to broaden their powers of imagination. However, the literary and narrative form also imposes limits on the communication of history. We are currently engaged in reorganising the website to create groups of topics with a more concentrated focus. At the congress, we would like to discuss some initial ideas in that respect.

**IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE A CHILD: LIFE STORY WORK AS A MEANS OF CREATING AND SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES.**

Pam Schweitzer, European Reminiscence Network, London, UK

A drama created and performed by African elders based on their own memories of Nigeria and the development of an inter-generational oral history project and performance: This project involved elders in a local area of south-east London who had recently formed a community group, Ajoda, but were having difficulties functioning effectively as a group, consisting as they did of Nigerian elders from very heterogeneous backgrounds and current life situations. I shall report on how we worked together as a group, developing a piece of music theatre from their memories which they performed locally and which they then adapted to take into local primary schools with a high ratio of African children, with whom they improvised and performed. With our professional help, they were able to develop a script they could all subscribe to, and play at a festival for ethnic minority elders in the local area and at a series of inter-generational, inter-cultural days in local schools and community venues. I shall trace the increased sense of group identity of the elders, and their sense of pride in their cultural heritage as witnessed by the wearing of national dress and undertaking higher profile activities in the local community. I shall also show how the children who participated in the project gained in self-esteem and mutual understanding across ethnic and generational barriers.

I have footage of the project in operation. I think this project was an example of oral testimony building a sense of community enabling social cohesion and a sense of belonging.

**TEACHING THEM TO FISH: BUILDING A SOUND COMMUNITY IN NEW ZEALAND**

Lynette Shum, Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand

In this paper I will discuss my role in helping community groups and individuals to record and archive oral history, and to find their own voices and empowerment in doing so.

The Alexander Turnbull Library is part of the National Library of New Zealand and houses the nation’s published and unpublished documentary heritage. The Library’s two Oral History Advisers respond to requests and work with the community or individuals by providing training, advice and support to enable them to record their own stories. We also hire equipment and promote standards, and offer the community a place to archive and make available their precious recordings and other items so they can be accessible for future generations.

In this presentation, which will include images and sound excerpts, I will describe the ongoing process and relationships, and to illustrate this I will discuss the Pakaitore Oral History Project.
In 1995 the nation was gripped as a site in the provincial centre of Whanganui known to locals as Moutoa Gardens was occupied (or reclaimed, depending on your viewpoint) for 79 days in a protest by the local Maori over land claims. The occupation drew both support and opposition as it continued.

Now, nearly twenty years later, a group including both Maori and non-Maori are working on an inclusive project, looking both back to how the event changed the individuals and groups concerned, and forward to how they relate to each other.

Participants speak of the hope that acquiring these skills and working on this together gives them, and say that this work has the ability to heal and transform the community and the participants, across groups and cultures.

'ORAL HISTORY, MAKING LIVES LAST' HOW ONE SECONDARY SCHOOL HAS ATTEMPTED TO BRING ORAL HISTORY TO THE CLASSROOM.
Doug Smith, Swanshurst School, Birmingham, UK

In 2009 we hosted our first veterans' day at school at which veterans from the Second World War and beyond have come to school to talk to our Year 9s. This is direct oral history with the pupils learning a great deal. One thing became obvious from this and that was though it was a wonderful event the number of veterans would diminish as the years went by and their testimonies would vanish. As a result of this we started the oral history site which now contains nearly 50 interviews. The site is divided into two main sections: the Second World War and Post Second World War. My talk will be about our work. I will talk about some of the great stories such as Len Owens MM who was parachuted into occupied France and escaped from the Germans as trees exploded around him. There is Brunhilde Behrendt who was working in East Prussia when the Russians invaded or Anna Cooke whose father was imprisoned by the Nazis for his left wing beliefs. From the Holocaust Ruth Barnett who escaped on the Kinder transport. Post war we have the wonderful Tommy Godwin who won a bronze medal at the 1948 Olympics, and George Saunders who acme to Birmingham from St. Kitts to become a tailor. History can never just be about the rich and famous but should acknowledge that we all have a story to tell. Like all oral history there are limitations as the events told happened a long time ago but what cannot be disputed is that the interviewees were there! They saw the events they mentioned and experienced them first hand. I will do my best in this talk to do justice to these wonderful people.

'I COME FROM': DIVERSIFYING ETHNIC ORAL HISTORIES THROUGH CREATIVE WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE
Siobhan O’Neill and Fiona Smith, Irish in Britain, London, UK

A multimedia presentation of video, sound and performance which showcases how young people use creative approaches to reinterpret community based oral histories. Using a number of artistic forms, the Irish Voices project worked with young people of multi-ethnic backgrounds in two East London schools to reimagine oral histories collected from the Irish Diaspora in the city.

Through the use of thematic approaches and creative techniques, the project used the practise and performance of oral history as a way to challenging notions of identity within communities and to question the ways a migrant community tells its story and speaks to other communities.
Irish Voices is a community oral history project with the Irish diaspora in London based around narratives of the city’s St. Patrick’s Day Parade and Festival.

COMMUNITY INSIDER / COMMUNITY OUTSIDER: REFLECTIONS FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE FENCE
Amy Tooth Murphy University of East London, UK

‘Well you know all about that.’
‘I can’t possibly explain what it was like.’

Both phrases have been said to me during oral history interviews due to my status as either ‘insider’ or ‘outsider’. This paper will reflect on the methodological and theoretical implications of being inside or outside a community with whom you are conducting oral history research. As a historian of sexuality I have conducted research projects with lesbian women about their experiences of lesbian life in post-war Britain, and with LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) people who live or have lived in Edinburgh about LGBT life in the Scottish capital. In both these projects my identity as an out lesbian woman had a significant impact on interviews in terms of rapport, establishing trust, and the qualitative depth of the interviews. However, this paper will also reflect on the potential drawbacks inherent in being ‘an insider’, such as the researcher’s agenda in depicting a community with which one is closely affiliated.

In stark contrast, my current post as co-ordinator of the Bethnal Green Memorial Project (focusing on the Bethnal Green tube disaster of 1943) sees me as an outsider, both geographically as a Scot in East London, and as someone with no pre-existing relationship to the disaster. This outsider status is further compounded by the project’s partnership with the Stairway to Heaven Trust, a small voluntary group who have done much groundwork over several years in creating a community of survivors and family members. Entering this close-knit community as an academic has brought very different benefits and challenges, leading me to develop new methodologies to turn my outsider status into a strength.

Drawing on these case studies I will consider the impact of insider and outsider status on the intersubjectivity of the interview scenario, proposing that vigilant self-reflexivity is essential in making the most of whichever identity our community of research bestows on us.

VOICES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK: INSTITUTIONAL HISTORIES AND CONFLICTING COMMUNITIES
Richard Wallace, University of Warwick, UK

This paper will address the ‘Voices of the University: Memories of Warwick, 1965-2015’ oral history project currently running at the University of Warwick, which aims to chronicle the memories and experiences of around 400 individuals who have worked, lived and studied at the university or in the surrounding area during the last 50 years. In particular I will explore some of the challenges involved in undertaking an institutional oral history project that, by necessity, must engage in a network of overlapping and competing communities. Whether interviewing current and former student, senior administrators, local residents or clerical and ancillary workers, the issue of ‘community’ become a significant factor in the way such a project is shaped, conducted and presented. Any attempt to identify a coherent ‘university community’ is destined to be problematic, and will necessarily open up issues relating to
aspects such as sample selection, and how one adequately represents the inhabitants of a community that is, to use Benedict Anderson’s famous formulation, inherently ‘imagined’.

The paper will also draw on the issues faced in conducting an institutional oral history project in parallel with an anniversary celebration, given that the project is due to end in 2015, the University of Warwick’s 50th anniversary. In particular, I will explore the ways in which discussions about how the various project outputs could be utilised as part of the celebrations reflect the tensions between different institutional communities, each wishing to portray the institution’s history in a particular way, whilst also reflecting and maintaining the project’s integrity as a research project in its own right.

“I KNOW IT’S A BAD ILLNESS BUT I’VE HAD A GOOD LIFE”: CREATING ORAL HISTORY COMMUNITIES IN PALLIATIVE CARE
Michelle Winslow and Sam Smith, University of Sheffield

In the past two years, five new projects have established oral history services in community palliative care settings in the north of England and Northern Ireland. The projects are volunteer led, funded by Macmillan Cancer Support and based on a service that began in the Sheffield Macmillan Unit for Palliative Care in 2007.

A further study has explored the impact of oral history in palliative care and carried out research with participants in oral history interviews and bereaved family.

Oral history in palliative care complements clinical services by offering a means for interviewees (patients) to reflect on their life, from their perspective, whilst creating a historical record for family and engaging in a process that is validating, dignified, satisfying and social. Research study participants have told us they enjoyed the opportunity to talk with no time limit or medical agenda, with an interested listener. Bereaved family and friends told us that a voice recording is a precious outcome, and that creating the recording gave the interviewee “power or autonomy at a time when they’ve got the least power they’ve ever had in their life.”

However working with oral history in such a sensitive environment brings many challenges. A particularly significant challenge is gaining the trust of community partners e.g. in-patient units, community services and support groups. Other issues include: reaching interviewees before advanced illness; managing family involvement; differentiating oral history from therapy whilst acknowledging therapeutic impact; ‘gatekeeping’ by health professionals; interviewer/interviewee relationships; coping with distressing interviews; managing funders expectations; making archives available to history researchers.

This presentation will discuss these and other practical and ethical issues that arise on a daily basis, and consider our greatest challenge, that of sustaining and developing volunteer led palliative care services into the future.
THE LIMITS OF ORAL HISTORY: CRISIS AND PRIVILEGE AMONG ETHNIC MINORITY REFUGEES FROM BURMA IN THE AMERICAN MIDWEST
Keith Yanner and Katie Gaebel, Central College, Iowa, USA

In response to a request from Ethnic Minorities of Burma Resource and Advocacy Center (EMBARC), we created an oral history project in June 2013. The purpose was advocacy for resettled refugees in Iowa communities. EMBARC’s board wanted oral histories to inform Iowans about this fastest-growing immigrant group in the state and to provide testimony for officials of the dire need for resources in resettled refugee communities. Since 2008 more than 6,000 ethnic refugees from Burma have resettled in Iowa. Language and culture barriers inhibit their adaptation and threaten community cohesion. The refugees represent eight major ethnic groups comprising more than 130 subgroups divided by language and religion. Oral history work among them provides an opportunity to reflect on key themes identified in the call for papers. Initial interviews have generated a few tentative conclusions. First, the lack of resettlement resources here leaves almost all refugees with no time to participate as interpreters or narrators in oral history. Second, participating in oral history can revictimize narrators recalling recent trauma from ethnic cleansing or displacement camps. Third, oral history may compromise refugees who gave false statements on resettlement documents about ties to resistance groups back home. Our panel explores the challenges of oral history for communities without privilege, whose members lack the time or material, cultural and psychological resources to narrate and translate their memories.