

talking history



Talking Hosiery

An on-line exhibition on the hosiery industry in Leicestershire.

<http://www.le.ac.uk/emoha/community/resources/hosiery/>

Did you or your relatives ever work in the hosiery? Would you like to find out about the hours people worked in Leicestershire's hosiery industry during the twentieth century? Or hear about the Bedaux strike at the Wolsey factory, or a hosiery employee's first day at work? If so, you should visit the East Midlands Oral History Archive's first on-line exhibition at www.le.ac.uk/emoha/community/resources/hosiery/.

The exhibition recalls the time when hosiery made Leicester into a boom city and attracted workers from all over the country to move to Leicestershire. Using oral history extracts, and photos from the archive, the exhibition gives interested

'So of course it got to a breaking point, and, er, we had a meeting and then we, we decided it was no-go and we came out on strike...We used to go on picket - there was some girls went in to work but they went in by coach and we used to shout at them, but that was all there was...After the trauma of the seven week strike it was agreed that we was re-timed, and this is what it was - re-timing of the job. Then they was more moderate, they reasoned things out more. From that day on I never looked back.' - a factory worker remembers the Bedaux strike at the Wolsey factory, which lasted for 8 weeks from December 1931 to February 1932.

web surfers an insight into the working conditions and lives of those who worked in "the Hosiery". Hear how to "link a toe" and learn about the smell of a hosiery factory first hand, from those who actually

worked in the industry.

The East Midlands Oral History Archive is using new technology to tell the story of one of Leicestershire's traditional industries. The archive contains dozens of interviews with the county's hosiery workers gathered over the last twenty years. Some of those interviewed were able to recall back to the start of the twentieth century, and it is now possible for anyone to visit the website and hear a century of history.

The hosiery exhibition is one of a number of projects undertaken by the East Midlands Oral History Archive to make the recorded history of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland available to the people of the city and the two counties. The archive also produces a regular newsletter available on request that features excerpts of oral testimonies.

I left Wales in 1923. My brother couldn't get a job and I, I was working in a shop at 3/- (15p) a week. My aunties lived here, and they came to live in Leicester in 1913 because of the depression - there was no work in Wales then. And one of my aunties made a friend of a Leicester girl, and she came to Leicester for a holiday and she liked Leicester so much she got a job, there was plenty of work in Leicester at the time. So they came to Leicester. - A Welsh hosiery worker.

