

TALKING HISTORY

Secondary School Edition - No 5

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Testimonies of Citizenship

The East Midlands Oral History Archive holds testimonies of active citizenship. In particular, the archive has lots of material which describes political and protest marches over the last one hundred years. Recordings range from memories of early twentieth century marches and demonstrations, like the one on Castle Hill in the photo above, to an audio diary of the demonstration on 15th Feb 2003 to stop the war with Iraq.

The following quotes offer some examples of the kinds of memories that we hold.

"I remember them...marching through to the Town Hall...they tried to break in there as they

held their meetings and raised their objections to unemployment, the police came running out of the police station and used their batons on many of the unemployed workers."

Memory of marches against unemployment at the start of the twentieth century. This recording is available as part of our loans collection (see over and cite ref LO/027/C27, 00407/03CA).

"I wrote to the blackshirt headquarters in Kings Road, Chelsea...and joined...paid a shilling, for like a trade union card, and they put a black stamp on for a shilling. I turned up as the first fascist member for Chelsea.

Memory of joining the blackshirts movement in the 1930's. This recording

is available as part of our loans collection (see over and cite ref LO/024/C24, 00404/03CA).

"I'll tell everybody I went, which is something I don't usually do after a demonstration... I'm usually embarrassed... and usually the coverage afterwards is embarrassing and it makes me look like I was somebody wearing a mask, throwing a brick through McDonalds, which this time it doesn't, it makes me look like a responsible citizen who's voicing her opinion, which is what I'd like to consider myself anyway."

Testimony of attending the Stop the War demonstration in 2003. This recording is available to consult in the archive (cite ref 01334, EM/064).

East Midlands Museums Libraries and Archives Council appoints Regional Archive Education Officer

Helen Ward has recently started as Regional Archive Education Officer at East Midlands Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (EMMLAC). Helen comes from a background of teaching, and most recently worked at an inner-city school in Derby, where she taught History across the 11 to 18 age range.

The Regional Archive Education Project aims to

promote and develop the use of archive materials for educational purposes. It will focus on Key Stage 3 History, and also on cross-curricular themes such as Citizenship and Literacy. The objectives of the project are to audit existing use of archives by teachers, and to develop archive education materials accordingly. The chief outcome of the project is likely to be a regional website which provides online archive education resources for teachers.

Oral History Collections Now Available On Loan

Oral history offers a unique insight into the everyday lives of 'ordinary' people, and is a valuable resource that enables students to learn about the past through the first hand accounts of the people who actually experienced it. For example, students can discover what it was like for local people to live through the Second World War, find out what it was like to be unemployed during the 1920's and 1930's, hear the stories of Oswald Mosely's blackshirts during the 1930's, or learn what life was like for



women working in industry in the first half of the twentieth century.

The East Midlands Oral History Archive will shortly be able to offer small loan collections for use in schools, initially comprising a selection of themed recordings from the Leicester Oral History Archive Compilation Series. Titles include:

- ⇒ World War Two
- ⇒ World War Two Evacuee
- ⇒ Public Health
- ⇒ Unemployment
- ⇒ The Women's Land Army
- ⇒ Crimes and Punishment

The recordings will be loaned for 4 weeks, and may be copied and used for educational purposes. To find out more about borrowing these interviews, contact Sarah Ferrier, Education Officer, at:

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Centre for Urban History
University of Leicester
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LE1 7RH
(0116) 252 5065
sjf17@le.ac.uk
<http://www.le.ac.uk/emoha>

New Collections In The Archive

The East Midlands Oral History Archive's catalogue is now online, and currently includes details of 300 recordings, with the recent addition of the Westfields Collection and the Leicester City Museums Collection.

The Westfield Collection comprises interviews of people living in the Hinckley area of Leicestershire, including Barwell, Burgage and Earl Shilton. Special events, people and places during the twentieth century are recalled, including memories of the bombing of Coventry during the Second World War, local entertainment, the growth of Hinckley, and work in the boot, shoe and

hosiery industries.

The Leicester City Museums Collection gives an insight into the different jobs of museum workers in Leicester, the views of visitors to the museums, and the people who have contributed to the collections, and memories of the 150th Anniversary Celebrations of New Walk Museum.

Other recent acquisitions to the Archive include some unpublished manuscripts by local historian Edna Smith. As well as recording her early life during the 1920's and 1930's, and her work as a Voluntary Aid Detachment (nursing service) during the Second

World War, she has written a detailed account of the experiences of World War Two French and German Prisoners of War in Leicestershire.

More entries are being added to the catalogue all the time, covering a wide range of topics. To view the catalogue, visit the EMOHA website on www.le.ac.uk/emoha/catalogue.html and search for the various collections we have in our archive. The EMOHA website also contains dedicated teachers' pages, online exhibitions, downloadable information sheets and bulletins. These resources can all be accessed from www.le.ac.uk/emoha/schools.html



Leicester Voices, by Cynthia Brown

Extracts from recordings in the East Midlands feature in a new book, Leicester Voices, edited by EMOHA Project Manager, Cynthia Brown. The book, part of the Tempus Oral History Series, is illustrated with a wide range of archive photographs and covers topics such as health and housing, childhood, play and pastimes, shopping, local political campaigns, and migration to Leicester. It is available from local bookshops, price £11.99, or by sending a cheque payable to the "University of Leicester" for £11.99 + £1.25 postage (£13.24 total) to the East Midlands Oral History Archive, University of Leicester, University Road, Leicester.