

Scottish Oral History Centre Activities, 2018

Report for the UK OHS

The SOHC operates as **an interdisciplinary research centre for oral history and as a knowledge exchange hub between academic and community oral history**. We have had another very busy, exciting and productive year supporting oral history projects, providing training, responding to a wide range of enquiries on aspects of oral history, and expanding our research activities and academic and knowledge exchange collaborations. The Centre currently has 7 affiliated staff and 16 postgraduate research students deploying oral history methodologies.

The SOHC has again been involved in an extensive programme of **training, CPD and support for local community projects** in Scotland delivered by David Walker, Alison Chand, Lorna Barton, Sue Morrison and Arthur McIvor. These events have included new oral history training for the Workers' Educational Association in Glasgow (Springburn). The SOHC was also **host to the UK OHS Regional Networkers conference in November 2017** where there was a terrific clutch of presentations, discussion and camaraderie amongst oral history colleagues from around the UK.

A highlight of the past year has been the organisation of our second **Oral History Summer Institute – a collaboration between the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling, Montreal (Steven High) and the SOHC**. The SOHC organised and hosted this, welcoming 12 Faculty and postgraduate participants from Montreal to the Centre for a series of 24 stimulating papers on all aspects of oral history over two days in June 2018.

The SOHC designed and delivered (in collaboration with colleagues Lynn Abrams and Erin Jessee at Glasgow University) **a three day oral history theory and practice training programme for the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Social Sciences in March 2018**. Podcasts have been produced from the presentations. The Centre is also running its innovative **Work and Community Placement in Oral History class** in 2018-19 which builds and extends collaboration between the Centre and Scottish museums, community groups and archives. This is taught by McIvor, Chand and Barton. Building on the work done previously by David Walker we have agreed oral history placements in a wide range of workplaces to gain practical experience of interviewing and the running of oral history projects, including at a number of Glasgow and Edinburgh Museums, the Scottish Mining Museum, Summerlee Industrial Museum, Clydebank Museum and the Scottish Jewish Archives. This third year and honours option class is one element in an oral

history pathway for students at Strathclyde University sandwiched between *Oral History Theory and Practice* and the Masters level class *Advanced Oral History*. A series of **other workshops and seminars** have been organised at the Centre over the past year, including the monthly SOHC seminar series, organised by SOHC postgraduates James Ferns and Ian Ferguson.

Research students: The SOHC has also added to a strong and growing cohort of Masters and PhD students this year and several SOHC postgraduates have recently graduated. A special mention should go to Jessica Douthwaite who was awarded her PhD earlier this year (on an oral history of the Cold War) and started a first post-doc job at Glasgow University (on an oral history of humanism). The wide range of oral history research projects currently being undertaken by students in the SOHC include James Ferns and Rory Stride (both working on aspects of deindustrialisation and memory), Kristen Hay (birth control and abortion in Scotland), Lorna Barton (transgender experience in Denver, USA), Stuart Bradwel (Diabetes and the consultative relationship), Alex Chandler (jointly with Glasgow University on masculinities and film in Scotland), and Marion Henry (a co-tutelle with Sciences Po, Paris working on music and social class in the British coalfields), Martin Conlon (memory and heritage in Glasgow), Lucy Brown (cultural representations of deindustrialisation), Helen Foster (Creative Writing), Rachel Meach (Diabetes in Britain and the USA), Iain Ferguson (a social history of Acne), David Evans (breakaway trade unions), Jan Brownfoot (women and gender relations in post-war in Malaya), and Anni Donaldson (domestic violence in Glasgow).

SOHC staff have continued to pursue innovative oral-history based research in the past year. **Matt Smith** completed his AHRC-funded project on the history of social psychiatry and has presented some of this research at several conferences. He is currently involved in a new Wellcome Trust Seed Award funded project on Sport, mental health and sexuality which incorporates a number of oral interviews. **Laura Kelly** has continued with her Wellcome Trust-funded research project (2016-19) on the history of contraception in Ireland, c.1922-92. This ongoing project involves a significant amount of oral history interviews with birth control activists and Irish men and women. Kelly's second monograph, *The making of the Irish medical profession: medical education, identity and student culture, c.1850-1950* was published by Liverpool University Press (2017). The final chapter in this book utilises oral history interviews with 25 Irish doctors who graduated in the 1940s and 1950s in order to explore the history of medical student life and culture in this period. **Arthur McIvor** spent much of 2018 on research leave working on a project on the occupational health crisis in the Second World War and continuing with oral-history based research on the health impacts of industrial work and deindustrialisation. He is currently collaborating with an international team of researchers (led by Steven High) investigating the impact of deindustrialisation transnationally.

In March 2018 our colleague **David Walker** retired. David was a key member of the SOHC family and one of Scotland's most experienced oral historians. His contribution to the Centre over the past ten years has been enormous. His energy, wit and infectious enthusiasm for all things oral history is deeply missed around here!

Arthur McIvor, SOHC Director, University of Strathclyde.

October 2018