

CORPORATE VOICES: INSTITUTIONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL ORAL HISTORIES



istock

**Fulton Building, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK, BN1 9RH
Friday 5th – Saturday 6th July 2013**



LIFE

- **What is the relationship between oral history and business?**
- **Why have so few oral historians explored the world of business and corporate culture?**
- **Why have institutions and businesses wanted to record their corporate histories? And how have they used that oral history?**
- **What are the ethical challenges for historians gathering personal testimonies in corporate environments?**

This conference opens up our traditional focus on community and domestic lives to explore the hidden histories of private companies and business, public institutions, hospitals, universities, museums, public utilities, local and national government, campaigning bodies and charities. What can interviews with those who work in businesses, institutions and organisations tell us about organisational history and memory?

This conference will bring together historians of business, education and health with oral historians who have been commissioned to work with and within institutions to create and document their oral history.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Bruce Weindruch (*Founder/CEO, The History Factory, USA*)

Founded in 1979, The History Factory is a US-based pioneer of 'heritage management': 'leveraging the collective memory of organisations – the stories told, the words used, and their commonly understood meanings – to help implement strategies and tactics that shape the future.' Working with clients as varied as Subaru, Campbell Soups, Prudential and Whirlpool, The History Factory offers a range of products and services from publications and exhibitions to archival services and oral history.

Abdel Aziz EzzelArab

(*American University in Cairo, Egypt*)

Professor Abdel Aziz EzzelArab founded and directed the American University in Cairo's Economics and Business History Research Center between 2004 and 2011, whose staff members have interviewed leading figures active in Egyptian business, industry, commerce, and government since the mid-twentieth century. He will introduce us to a unique oral history archive in Egypt, a land known for its business culture and also one which has been at the forefront of the Arab Spring.

http://www.ohs.org.uk/conference_intro.php

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS PROGRAMME MIGHT CHANGE: ALL SPEAKERS AND DELEGATES SHOULD RE-CHECK ALL SESSIONS WHEN THEY REGISTER

Registration and all plenaries, sessions and workshops take place in the Fulton Building

There will be two sign language interpreters available during the conference. Please email conference administrator Belinda Waterman (belinda@essex.ac.uk) if you would like to use this service

FRIDAY 5 JULY

09.30 **Registration opens: Fulton Building**

10.00-11.00 **Practical workshops** (parallel sessions)

Copyright and Ethics: the OHS's new guidelines (Rob Perks and Joanna Bornat)

Teaching and researching oral history in Higher Education (Graham Smith)

Audio equipment for oral historians (Nick Hayes, Inquit Audio)

Video for oral historians: to do or not to do? (Roger Kitchen)

11.00-11.15 Coffee break

11.15 Welcome and conference opening

Opening Plenary

The value of capturing living history: why competitive enterprises invest in oral history programmes

Bruce Weindruch, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, The History Factory, USA

12.30-13.45 Lunch

13.45-15.30 Parallel sessions:

University oral histories

Centre for Popular Memory (CPM): institutional dilemmas of oral history in the academy, Sean Field

'Voices from above': the Warwick Oral History Project, April Gallwey

'A very peculiar practice': the commissioning of a history of the University of Nottingham, Lorraine Blakemore

'The spirit of the confessional is here': law, ethics and the University and Life Experience Project at Girton College, Cambridge, Hazel Mills

Whose memory? Institutional versus individual memory

'Tesco: An Oral History': uncovering individual narratives in a corporate setting, Niamh Dillon
Personal-institutional identity at the British Antarctic Survey, Paul Merchant

'All these stories are personal stories in the end': An individual's voice within an institutional body at Cambridge University Press, Rosalind Grooms

Institutional history and the ownership of ideas: The Carnegie Corporation of New York Oral History Project, Sarah Dziedzic

Banking and finance

'An Oral History of Barings': enhancing a business archive, Katharine Haydon

One version of events: oral history at Barclays Group Archives, Maria Sienkiewicz

Don't bank on it: making the case for oral history in a business archive, Mike Anson and Sarah Millard

Best kept secrets: oral history at HSBC, Rachael Porter

FRIDAY 5 JULY continued

15.30-16.00 Tea break

16.00-17.45 Parallel sessions:

Oral history in cultural institutions

Making commemorations count: oral history and anniversaries at the National Gallery of Art, Anne Ritchie

Administration, creativity and scholarship: reflecting on the Association of Art Historians' oral histories, Liz Bruchet

Gendered science? Women and the Natural History Museum, Sue Hawkins

Working lives and employment practices

Bringing modern furniture to the provinces: the history of the British retail furnishing firm and oral history, Jon Brown

DuPont comes to Tobacco Road: oral histories of post-war industrialisation in the southern United States, Lu Ann Jones

Invisible histories: song and stories from Salford's lost workplaces, Neil Dymond-Green

Transformer lives. The life and death of a factory, Janet Bowstead and Robert Wilkinson

Whose memory? Institutional versus individual memory

The translators' role in the construction of the European Union, Siobhan Brownlie

Institutional memory and living memory in mining heritage: unravelling the complex construction of oral history narratives in an institutional context, Bethan Coupland

Working with a voluntary corporate body: The Gaelic Athletic Association 2008 – 2012, Regina Fitzpatrick and Mike Cronin

Refugees or aliens? The reception of refugees from Nazism before, during and after World War Two, Barbara Einhorn



The pre-computer world of the City of London.

FRIDAY 5 JULY continued

Archives

A shared history: enhancing a corporate archive with a little oral history, Gillian Cooke
Beyond board minutes and annual reports: exploring the oral history collection of the Australian Credit Union Archives, Ben Arnfield

The framing of institutional narratives: oral history and institutional memory, Aarthi Ajit
Cambridge University Botanic Garden: voicing a garden through time, Juliet Day and Pippa Lacey

19.00

Conference dinner at The Terraces, Madeira Drive, Brighton BN2 1AY
(www.the-terraces.co.uk)

SATURDAY 6 JULY

09.00

Registration opens (coffee available)

09.30-10.30

Plenary

The use of oral history in exploring Egyptian business history: an institutional experiment
Abdel Aziz EzzelArab, American University of Cairo, Egypt

10.45-12.30

Parallel sessions:

Organisational memory and culture

Oral history in the United Nations: a neglected dimension of international corporate history,
Richard Jolly

Hidden voices: American business boosters and twentieth-century business governance,
Elizabeth Tandy Shermer

Voices from a disused quarry: An oral history of the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT),
Allan Shepherd

Picture: Gareth McConnell



John Church
of Church's
Shoes,
Northampton,
2005.



Picture: thinkstockphotos.co.uk/

SATURDAY 6 JULY continued

10.45-12.30 Parallel sessions: (continued)

Politics and government

Measuring change in a traditional institution: oral history inside the US Senate, Donald Ritchie

Politicians tell stories: The History of Parliament's oral history project, Paul Seaward, Priscila Pivatto, Emma Peplow

'Doing it for Britain': service and duty in the scientific civil service from World War Two to the 1990s, Sally Horrocks and Tom Lean

Oral histories of post-socialist transformation. Privatisation as biographical experience, Karolina Mikolajewska

Family and community

Keeping it in the family: how oral history can provide unique insights into the running of family businesses, Mark Wong

Organisational history as cultural mirror: how the anniversary history of a family-owned business reflected social, regional and demographic change, Peggy Dillon

Whose Arnos Vale? – The challenges of representing a contentious institutional history in a community oral history project, Felicia Smith

12.30-14.15 12.30 Lunch starts

12.30-13.30 **Annual General Meeting of the Oral History Society** (all welcome)

An offshore oil worker and his safety and back-up team from the UK Offshore Operators' Association brochure *The North Sea Achievement* (1989) marking twenty-five years of oil and gas exploration in the North Sea.



Picture: thinkstockphotos.co.uk

SATURDAY 6 JULY continued

14.15-15.45 Parallel sessions:

Health and medicine

Compensating a medical disaster: the experience of thalidomide, Anne Borsay and Ruth Blue

'Look at our hands': The unwritten history of veterinary practice, Sue Bradley

Producing an holistic and policy-relevant history of Guy's and St Thomas' hospitals (1970s-2000s), Julian Simpson and Stephanie Snow

Building a new regional city: corporate oral history, archives and theatre in a fast-changing Peterborough

Panel includes: Tina Bramhill, Ivan Cutting, Richard Hunt, Ben Rogaly

Relationships between the individual and the institution. Four case studies of French oral history projects set up in a public-private context

Panel includes: Aline Angoustures, Myriam Fellous-Sigrist, Arthur Mettetal, Marie-Noëlle Polino

Exploring the British Deaf Association Film Archive: the representation of individual deaf lives within institutional histories

Panel includes: Jemma Buckley, Roger Kitchen, John Walker

15.45-16.00 Tea break

16.00-17.30 Parallel sessions:

University oral histories

Who are we? The oral history of the University of Sussex, Margaretta Jolly and Dorothy Sheridan

Another commemorative history: the University of Limerick Oral History Project, my role?, Catherine O'Connor

The institution changes but the memories live on: alumni voices on higher education, Andrea Jacobs, Camilla Leach and Stephanie Spencer

Working lives and employment practices

Working lives in a newspaper industry: the end of a golden era, Ida Milne

'Rumbling and grumbling'? Culture, practice and the BBC in Yorkshire 1945-1990, Christine Verguson

The British Studio System 1927-1960: the impact of vertical integration on below-the-line film workers, Will Atkinson

Method: the business of oral history

Oral history and the making of business and economic history in Sweden, Per Lundin and Gustav Sjöblom

Learning from the experience: executives interviewing entrepreneurs, Beatriz Rodríguez-Satizábal

From faith to food: using oral history to study Canadian manufacturing firms, Janis Thiessen

17.30

Conference ends



Letter coding desks 1981.

Picture: Royal Mail Group

CONFERENCE VENUE

The University of Sussex is located at Falmer on the outskirts of Brighton, with easy reach of London and major international airports at Gatwick and Heathrow. Location and campus maps are online at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/aboutus/findus>

Travel from the UK:

The University of Sussex campus is well served by public transport with Falmer train station on the south side of campus, and frequent buses on campus to and from Brighton. The adjoining A27 also gives good access by car.

Train

Falmer train station is directly opposite the University campus. Pedestrian access is through a subway under the A27 - follow signs for the University of Sussex (the University of Brighton has a campus at Falmer too). Falmer is on the line between Brighton and Lewes, about eight minutes' travel time in each direction. Four trains an hour go there during the day time. Visitors travelling via London and the west should take a train to Brighton and change there for Falmer. The journey time from London to Brighton is just under an hour. You can also change at Lewes for Falmer, if you are coming from the east.

Coach

National Express Coaches to Brighton depart from London Victoria Coach Station and arrive at Pool Valley in the centre of the city. Services are every hour during the day and take about two hours. Coaches also run to Brighton from Gatwick and Heathrow. From Pool Valley you need to walk 100 metres to the Old Steine where you can catch a bus direct to the University (see Local buses section below), or you can take a taxi.

Taxi

Taxis are available at both Brighton and Lewes train stations and at many places in the centre of Brighton. It is about four miles (six kilometres) from central Brighton to the University. (There is no taxi service at Falmer station itself.) It is often quicker to catch the train direct to Falmer from Brighton or Lewes.

Car

The University is at Falmer on the A27 between Brighton and Lewes, about four miles (six kilometres) from the centre of Brighton. (Please follow signs for University of Sussex on the north side of the A27; the University of Brighton also has a campus at Falmer on the south side of the A27.) Visitors from London and the north should take the M23/A23 road towards Brighton. Before entering the centre of Brighton, join the A27 eastbound signposted Lewes. Drivers from the east or west take the A27 direct to the University.

Parking on campus

Parking on campus is limited and visitors are required to pay the standard charges using the pay and display machines (£2.50 for two hours). This is only applicable on the Friday as it is free of charge on weekends. There is designated visitor parking which is signposted on campus. Car parks are not attended and objects of value should not be left in vehicles.

Local buses

The 23, 25, 28 and 29 buses run between the centre of Brighton and the University, bringing you directly to campus. You can catch a bus from the Old Steine in Brighton; the 25 also runs from Churchill Square. The 28 and 29 go from the Old Steine and stop right outside the University campus on their way to Lewes and beyond. Travel time is about 20-30 minutes.

Fulton Building

The conference will take place in the University of Sussex's new Fulton building which is located at the heart of the University campus. The Fulton building was opened in June 2010 and houses a ground floor containing social space alongside two 160 seat lecture theatres. Registration will take place on the ground floor of the Fulton building and all coffee/tea breaks will be held there. Displays will also be located in the Fulton entrance hall. The parallel sessions rooms are on the two upper floors and have full a/v facilities. A full hot and cold lunch will be served a short walk away. For more information about campus facilities go to <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/aboutus/campus/>

Conference hotels and accommodation

If you require overnight accommodation please go to VisitBrighton and book online using the following dedicated web address: <http://resweb.passkey.com/go/OHC13>

Brighton is a lively, busy city 24 hours a day. The hotels and guests houses have been selected to offer those coming to stay in Brighton a wide choice of accommodation in different locations to suit all budgets and requirements.

The hotels located in the centre of the city will be lively and probably a little noisy, especially if they face the seafront. This will be great for some visitors but others may wish to request a quieter room (to the rear of the hotel) or choose a hotel away from the city centre.

Staying on in Brighton

<http://www.visitbrighton.com/> provides comprehensive information about what's happening in and around Brighton. Brighton has long been an active regional centre for oral history projects. The award-winning oral history-based website <http://www.mybrightonandhove.org.uk/> is a living history of Brighton and Hove. Through the site, people share their memories, photos, knowledge and opinions about the city - as it is today and as it was in the past. There are over 11,000 pages to explore. Oral histories play an important role in Brighton Museum's displays: well-worth a visit. Details at: <http://www.brighton-hove-rpml.org.uk/HistoryAndCollections/aboutcollections/communityhistory/Pages/home.aspx>.



The Oral History Society is a registered charity which publishes a twice-yearly journal, *Oral History*; organises conferences and workshops; operates a comprehensive regional advice and information network for members using oral history in schools, further education, libraries, museums and communities including reminiscence work with older people; offers a range of training courses and maintains a comprehensive website. Individual membership costs £20 per year and benefits include reduced rates for conferences, the illustrated journal, access to specialists and regional networkers, advice and regular mailings of activities of interest to members. For further details contact Rob Perks, British Library Oral History Section, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB; tel 020 7412 7405; www.ohs.org.uk

Corporate Voices conference organisers

OHS: Kate Melvin, Rob Perks, Juliana Vandegrift.
Sussex University: Margaretta Jolly, Jo Palache, Ben Rogaly, Dorothy Sheridan.

BOOKING FORM

I would like to register for the 'Corporate Voices' Conference and have ticked the appropriate boxes below and provided the necessary payment (one copy of the form per person)

Name:

Organisation:

Address:

.....

Email: Tel:.....

Please tell the conference administrator if you have any special access, mobility or dietary requirements or if you require any further information: Belinda Waterman, belinda@essex.ac.uk, tel +44 (0)1206 872313

Please tick the appropriate category:

Conference Fee

£.....

New Membership Fee

£.....

Dinner

£.....

Total Payment

£.....

Conference Fee: Your conference fee covers all the conference sessions, the conference pack including an abstracts booklet, and lunch, tea and coffee on both days.

£140.00 standard fee

£110.00 fee for Oral History Society members. Joining now entitles you to the reduced conference rate and saves you up to £30, in which case please include the appropriate additional payment (see subscription rates below*)

£65.00 concessionary fee for full time students/ unwaged/ pensioners (please provide evidence)

Conference Dinner at The Terraces, Brighton *Pre-booking essential*

£30.00 for Conference Dinner on Friday evening (not included in the conference fee)

Please tick if you want a vegetarian meal

I enclose payment of £..... Cheques made payable to the Oral History Society,
OR

Charge the above total payment to my credit card: Visa Mastercard American Express

Name as it appears on card.....

Card No:.....

Expiry date:..... Signature:.....

Please return this form by Friday 14 June 2013 to the conference administrator:

Belinda Waterman, 'Corporate Voices' Conference, Department of History, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ

Please retain a copy of this form. The final programme will be available on the conference website at the end of June 2013: **www.ohs.org.uk/conferences/2013.php**

***Subscription Rates** Individuals: United Kingdom £20.00, International £30.00;

Institutions/Groups: United Kingdom £30.00, International £40.00.

All subscriptions to run yearly from 1st January.