

Oral Histories of Work & Leisure Abstracts

23rd – 24th June 2017, The Connacht Hotel Galway

Friday:

13.30 – 14.50 Panel Session 1

Panel 1A: Rural Lives [Inish Mor Suite]

'Life and leisure: memories of the 'big houses' of County Clare since 1930'

Paul O'Brien, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick

This paper explores the social experiences of 'big house' society in twentieth century Clare. Since the project's inception in 2015, a number of oral histories have been recorded and transcribed. The project is ongoing and to date has focussed on two landed families in the Clarecastle area, approximately five miles south of Ennis, County Clare. The individuals recorded are the owners of Barntick House, built circa 1630, and Carnelly Cottage, originally serving as the home farm to the much larger eighteenth century Carnelly House. This paper examines the position occupied by these individuals in their communities – frequently the source of intrigue and gossip, yet respected as employers. Their public appearance as 'gentleman farmers' was underpinned by their family's opinion of themselves: 'the O'Donoghues never worked, they always had people work for them and Daddy would say what to do, he was very much a gentleman'. However, their apparent position of privilege was masked by financial hardships endured behind the walls of their demesnes. Therefore, themes explored in the interviews include; religion and devotionalism; agricultural practices, death and inheritance; gender roles and work; marriage; education and leisure activities. As some of these families trace their lineage back to the early seventeenth century, the project has unearthed archival material including deeds, leases and personal correspondence. This material coupled with the oral testimony has facilitated the construction of a searchable database and the compilation of a spatial distribution map.

Brown Bread and Washing Machines: Nostalgia and Perspective in Irish Women's Experience of Rural Electrification

Sorcha O'Brien, Kingston University, London (in partnership with the National Museum of Ireland)

This paper will consider a set of interviews carried out as part of the Electric Irish Homes project, which focuses on women's experience of rural electrification and its effect on the home. These interviews of older Irish women have been carried out by mostly younger women within their local communities. They focus on the introduction, purchase and use of electrical 'labour saving devices', including electric cookers and washing machines, and have presented the interviewees with an opportunity to reflect on their domestic experiences as teenagers and young women, as well as those of their mothers. The paper will pick out key elements of these domestic experiences which prompt the presence (or absence) of nostalgia, and consider the ways in which the collective experiences of Irish women restricted to working within the home reflect a common pattern of hard physical labour, but also a sense of community and pride in that hard work. Svetlana Boym has called nostalgia 'a romance with one's own fantasy' (Boym, 1990, p. xiii), and the paper will consider the reasons why some elements of the pre-electric home, such as brown bread baking, have attracted nostalgic feelings, while others have not. This is particularly pertinent for interviews carried out in post-Crash Ireland, where 'vintage' and 'retro' objects and activities are increasingly valued, and the recession has introduced a new generation to living without luxury. This context will be considered in relation to the interviewees' perspective on changes in 'women's work' in Ireland over the last 70 years.

Work, leisure or life? The muddy lines of GAA membership

Arlene Crampsie, University College Dublin

As the largest amateur sporting organisation in the world, the Gaelic Athletic Association has always been dependent on the good will and volunteering spirit of individuals and communities across Ireland. Yet, the contribution made by the grassroots to the organisation remained almost entirely undocumented until the launch of the GAA Oral History Project in 2008. Established with the aim of recording the fullest possible picture of what the GAA had meant to Irish people in their own words, the project conducted interviews with GAA members from all levels (supporters, players, coaches, managers, administrators, fundraisers etc.) across every county in Ireland and in a number of overseas locations between 2008 and 2012. It became clear from an early point in our interviewing that for many life-long volunteers while membership of the GAA began as a leisure interest in their playing days, it gradually evolved to something more closely approximating an actual job, often eclipsing their actual employment. This paper seeks to investigate the narratives of these life-long GAA volunteers in order to illuminate the reasons for

this sustained commitment to their local sports club, many of which are bound up in issues of identity and community belonging. In doing so it will also examine the unexpectedly emotional responses that questions around this commitment can provoke.

Panel 1B: Changing Worlds [Oranmore Room]

(Irish) Dancing at the Crossroads of Work and Leisure – Utopia, Dystopia or Myopia?

Carmel McKenna, An Comhdháil na Múinteoirí le Rincí Gaelacha faoi Theorainn Rathaíochta – An Comhdháil (Congress of Irish Dance Teachers)

The image of dancing at the crossroads is one which can be associated in Ireland with genteel ‘comely maidens’ participating in a leisure activity with their ‘menfolk’. Given that the Irish Constitution’s “Women in the Home” clause (Art. 41.2) suggests that women should work only in the home, what happens when these ‘comely maidens’ transition from participating in Irish dance as a leisure activity, to the teaching of it as a professional work activity? More specifically, what happens when these women become emboldened during 1960s Ireland and actively seek improvements in the terms and conditions of their work? This research paper reflects on an ongoing oral history project with An Comhdháil na Múinteoirí le Rincí Gaelacha faoi Theoirainn Ráthaíochta – An Comhdháil (The Congress of Irish Dance Teachers). The organisation was established as a stand-alone association of professional (predominantly female) Irish dance teachers in 1970, following a series of disruptive events in late 1969. The organisation’s primary aim was (and still is) to safeguard and improve the terms and conditions of work for its members. As the organisation approaches its 50th anniversary, this paper offers a timely opportunity to reflect on whether the decision to establish An Comhdháil enabled the founder members to realise their utopian dream or whether the decision was, in fact, a case of myopia which resulted in a dystopian nightmare.

Performing Testimony: Some Dramaturgical Permutations

Marina Ní Dhubháin, Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance, National University of Ireland, Galway

I got my terminal and I got my phone and I got my desk and I got my cubicle! No place in Ireland gives you that, back then, d’you know what I’m saying, right? Them things didn’t exist before Digital. This is dropped from outer space onto the west of Ireland. And it didn’t just affect Galway, it affected Ireland. It changed the whole workplace relationship rules.

Digital Oral History Archive, NUIG

The paroxysmal transformations of Galway's modern industrial and socio economic history offer a locus for my four year doctoral research project. In particular I consider the testimonial experiences of one set of workers, within one multi-national computer manufacturing company, in the 1972 – 1992 period. While the meta narratives of the Irish experience of the development of an IT industry have been meticulously documented across a range of disciplines including economics, history, geography and sociology, I am applying a range of interrogatory tools and methodologies from the field of theatre and performance studies. In this way I aim to excavate fresh and potentially productive critical approaches on the myriad of lived experiences of workers during this, what I consider a preparatory period, prior to the cultural and political shift towards neoliberalism in Ireland. The transition from transcript to play-script offers distinct, creative imperatives aimed at avoiding oversimplified ideological narratives in favour of playwriting strategies which underline complexity and contradiction. In my paper I will outline some of the dramaturgical decisions which contributed towards the shaping of a script which celebrates the occasionally irreconcilable realities of memories contextualised within a contemporary moment.

Performing Remembrance: History, Ethics, and Spectatorship in Irish Site-Specific Theatre

Nora Katz, Trinity College Dublin

History and theatre are both acts of creation: performed, negotiated, and altered by time and interpretation. In the past fifty years, history and theatre have grown more connected through the rise of site-specific performances in historic sites and other sites of memory. Works from ANU Productions, the Performance Corporation, and other companies have cemented site specificity as an important trend in contemporary Irish theatre. Increased interest from government funding bodies in the Decade of Centenaries has allowed for an expansion of these site-specific works and broader public awareness of the genre. This project relies on interviews with site-specific theatre makers, exploring the intersection between work, leisure, history, performance, and spectatorship. When a traditional leisure activity gains ethical complexity, both performers and audiences are complicit in the experience. What does it look like to have a job that requires intimate, personal connections with strangers? What does it mean to interpret and perform history outside of a traditional academic context? Site-specificity involves negotiating public memory, history, and contested heritage while maintaining an ethical relationship with marginalized communities and found spaces. Why does site-specific theatre work as a vehicle for processing and presenting the past? What challenges do contemporary site-specific theatre practitioners face? What is the experience of spectators at these non-traditional events? Site-specific theatre is an effective medium for the

exploration of history because of the intimate relationships it fosters between performers, audiences, and places. Performing the past – and talking about the process – is delicate, dangerous, challenging, inspiring work.

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15.20 – 16.40 Panel Session 2

Panel 2A: Public Servants [Inish Mor Suite]

Private Lives, Public Work: Women Doctors at work and home in Post-Colonial India

Archana Venkatesh, The Ohio State University

Women doctors in post-colonial India were an integral part of the developmental regime envisaged by policy makers in the field of public health, especially in efforts to control overpopulation and regulate maternal and infant health in a newly independent nation. In this paper, I examine the life and work of women doctors in post-colonial India using data from twenty oral history interviews conducted with women doctors aged 75-95 years, active in the medical profession from 1950 to 1990 collectively. Oral history interviews provide a counter narrative to the ‘official discourse’. I demonstrate that while the state encouraged women to embrace the medical profession by deploying tools such as affirmative action and scholarships, this attitude did not always permeate the home and the workplace. Many women doctors note that medical colleges and hospitals were highly gendered spaces, something that was particularly apparent during the process of selecting specializations – many were shepherded into the ‘feminine’ fields of obstetrics and gynecology, or pediatrics. However, any expression of dissatisfaction was deemed to undercut their goal of ‘serving the new nation’ by participating in the medical profession. This paper examines how women doctors negotiated competing demands, between national service and individual goals, and between professional responsibilities and domestic expectations. Using oral history as a method, this paper sheds light on the ways in which everyday practitioners, i.e. women doctors, negotiated their participation in the creation and evolution of the developmental state in post-colonial India.

Resemblance Amid Rupture - The 1999 National Nurses’ Strike: New Insights from Oral History

Mark Loughrey, Irish Nurses’ and Midwives’ Organisation (INMO)

From humble beginnings and a membership of just twenty in 1919, the Irish Nurses’ Organisation (INO) grew to 27,000 members by 1999 – making it the largest trade union representing nurses and midwives in Ireland. Owing to concerns for patient welfare, the Organisation’s history was characterised by a de facto and, later, an actual no-strike policy. This policy was rescinded in 1978 and, in 1999, amid

disillusionment with members' working conditions, the INO found itself at the centre of a national nurses'/midwives' strike – the largest strike in Irish history. The strike garnered considerable public attention; media coverage was infused with emotive language and hypothetical scenarios in which the potential for patient morbidity and mortality were recurring themes. But what did the dispute look like at ground level and, almost twenty years on, what are the recollections of nurses, midwives and the strike's central protagonists? This paper triangulates a range of archival documentary primary sources with a series of personal and in-depth interviews with the INO's leaders, employees and members – many of whom speak formally on the topic for the first time. It shows that, although the dispute represented a significant rupture with the INO's historical opposition to strike action, it simultaneously represented a continuation of that position because, in 1999, as in 1919, the obligation not to harm others guided the strike's conduct with strikers providing unpaid labour in keeping with their service-obligation to patients.

Defence Forces Oral History Project

Noelle Grothier, Military Archives

In 2015 Óglaigh na hÉireann, through the Military Archives initiated an Oral History Project to interview serving and retired members to “ensure the experiences and personal testimony of our veterans are captured for historical reflection and to assist the Defence Forces to learn from their experiences and expertise.” (Chief of Staff's Introduction to Óglaigh na hÉireann Oral History Manual, 2016) With the assistance of Dr Tomás Mac Conmara an intensive training programme was prepared for individuals identified as potential interviewers from all across the country.

The first sets of interviews have now been returned to Military Archives to be catalogued and made available to the public. Previous interviews, conducted irregularly as opportunity allowed, are also being assessed for inclusion in the project. This paper will examine the first phase of the project – the value of having broad support across the organisation and a pre-existing network of contacts, the various methods employed to identify potential interviewees, and the development of a framework for the project. The next phase of the project will include cataloguing the interviews to an archival (ISAD(G)) standard and developing a user friendly means of access through our website. A number of ancillary projects are also being considered as a result of, or in conjunction with the Oral History Project.

Panel 2B: Workers' Lives in England [Oranmore Room]

Strangers in the Shadows - The Hidden Housing Histories of Irish Men Living in Leicester's 'Boarding Houses' During the 1950s and 1960s.

Angela Maye-Banbury, Sheffield Hallam University

This paper will focus on the largely undocumented everyday life in the euphemistically named 'boarding houses' (also known as lodgings or digs) occupied by many Irish men during the immediate post World War Two period in Leicester, England. Drawing on detailed oral histories of twelve men who emigrated from Ireland to England in the early 1950s, the paper provides previously undisclosed insights into work and leisure in the boarding houses. The men who lived in the boarding houses, most of whom were from the West coast of Ireland, arrived with negligible possessions and little or no financial resources. Often the first form of housing occupied by the men on arrival in England, boarding house accommodation was minimalist, precarious and similar in nature to homeless shelters. Up to eight men shared a bedroom with beds laid out dormitory style. Some even shared a bed with one occupant getting up to go to work as the other came home to sleep after a night shift. Framed by Foucault's concept of heterotopia (a place of 'other'), I show how the quintessential vernacular landscapes represented by the boarding houses may be construed as 'non homes' and 'placeless places.' I consider how discourses of power and control were enshrined both within the spatial organisation of the boarding houses and the relationship between resident landlords/ladies and their Irish lodgers. I show how humour, hope and camaraderie mitigated the harsh daily regime of working (in invariably manual labouring jobs), eating (mostly food lacking in nutritional content) and sleeping (in shared bedrooms). I examine the distinctive existentialist form of temporality whereby the passage of time was accumulated but never recorded.

“Paddy does not die in vain”: Irish Builders in Post-war London - Health, Safety and Welfare at Work, Hegemonic Masculinity & Reckless Roguery.

Michael Mulvey, Maynooth University

Despite research indicating that the Irish are marked out for accidental workplace death above other ethnic minority and indigenous workers in Britain, cultural representations of the migrant Irish in the construction of post-war London have tended towards a fatalistic, tragi-comic perspective on the unregulated working conditions and practices of the time. The revivalist 'navvy' folksong genre of the 1960s and 70s, in particular, depicts the appalling record of fatalities and serious injury as the inevitable outcome of unfettered capitalist exploitation and stakhanovite inter-county tribalism in the workplace. The stereotypes which grew out of these depictions now dominate the historical narrative of Irishness in the British construction industry. This paper seeks to compare and contrast these representations to the reality of the lived experiences of Irish builders as deduced from primary source oral evidence – both pre-existing and newly researched – and from a variety of archival and documentary sources. The aim of the paper is to interrogate the notion of exceptionalism perpetuated by these stereotypical representations and to examine whether Irish construction-workers in London

suffered unacceptably high levels of fatal and debilitating accidents by comparison to the industrial averages, given the relative predominance of Irish labour in the construction process. After surveying the historical sources and findings concerning work-related accidents amongst the Irish who helped reconstruct post-war London, this paper then looks at specific issues related to the Irish migrant builders' apparent propensity for reckless and relentless working, briefly examining themes such as Irish attitudes to health and safety regulations, the bogus employment and self-employment practices known as 'Lump' labour-only subcontracting, hegemonic masculinity, aggression and issues of reckless endangerment and negligence.

'Smokestack nostalgia' or re-imagining a future? Deindustrialisation in North-East England

Sarah Campbell, Newcastle University

The term 'smokestack nostalgia', coined by Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott (2003) is useful when analysing oral histories of deindustrialisation to ensure that we do not sentimentalize the past. When researching working class lives and work, it could be very easy to overlook the problems inherent in it, and Cowie and Heathcott are right to warn against this. This paper will look at oral histories collected as part of an oral history project on working lives in Tyneside, North East England, examining how interviewees came to terms with the impact of deindustrialisation in a region that has suffered significantly in economic terms since the 1980s. While it may be easy to dismiss some of the testimonies as 'simply nostalgic', representing another manifestation of 'smokestack nostalgia', this paper suggests the need for a more nuanced understanding which accounts for why interviewees tend to reflect back and find value in an industrial past. It will consider testimony from former trade unionists, who lament the changing nature of work and the role of unions, as well as testimony that re-imagines a Brexit future through Tyneside's industrial past.



Saturday:

11.30 – 12.50 Moments [Inish Mor Suite]

Crafts and Trades – A Dublin City Master Tailor crafting men's attire for over six decades: An Oral History

Lynda Dunne, National College of Art and Design, Dublin

While researching my Master Degree in Design History and Material Culture, I interviewed a tailor, Des Leech, and discovered hidden stories of a master tailor working in Dublin City from the 1940's for over six decades. Des at fourteen years of age, wishing to get a bicycle that his father wouldn't buy for him, was faced with the

option of becoming an apprentice hairdresser or an apprentice tailor, Des chose to be a tailor, as it sounded more interesting. Des describes his early years as an apprentice tailor under a deaf-mute master, who used to turn his back on his young apprentice and not let him see what he was doing. Most masters in those days did that, because it was a guarded secret how to tailor difficult parts of a coat. As soon as you got to know, the master feared risk of being sacked. Cute as Des was, he used to stay back at night and examine what his master was after doing that day. Des in time became the master tailor and a noted expert in riding breeches and hunt ball coats. Interesting stories included an alcoholic tailor who would come into work after pawning his sheers, the tailor would draw a chalk circle on the floor, signifying he was hard up and anyone that wanted to help him out threw money into the circle. Nicknames were commonly associated with Dublin tailors, such as one chap called 'velvet paws' or the father and two sons "tap on, tap off". This memorable individual brings to life the work of a tailor craftsman in a nearly forgotten part of Dublin's society and culture.

Anyone wearing false teeth? I'd advise them to take them out now! Oral Histories from Day Centre Clients at St. Brendan's Community Hospital, Loughrea, Co. Galway

Christina Cassidy, Former Project Manager, Loughrea History Project.

Clients, from a variety of backgrounds, provided a rich tapestry of life experiences encompassing early life, hobbies, relationships, work and general life experiences. Stories ranged from poignant tales of loss to hilarious escapades involving wakes, drunken pigs, UFO sightings, 'micro surgery' on rabbits, and hair-raising bus journeys amongst others. It was a privilege to have been part of this project, and I would love to share their stories with a wider audience.

The Arrival of the 'Electric' in County Offaly

John Gibbons, Alternative Visions Oral History Group

Rural Electrification was the catalyst for change in Ireland in the mid-twentieth century, Michael Shiel named his book well. 'The Quite Revolution' and it was indeed a revolution of change. This presentation is a collection of approximately one minute sounds bites and slides from a project carried out in conjunction with members of the Offaly Historical & Archaeological Society. The Rural Electrification Scheme in Offaly started in 1947 and was completed in about 1962. Beginning in December 2014, I have met and recorded over twenty people talking about the memories of those systemic changes in the Offaly of that time. From talking about how the project was presented to them and to the effects and changes that occurred. An example from one of the Interviewees is:

'Anyway there was talk at Christmas (1952) the Electricity was coming and it was all talk in the air and people saying, for example, I remember my mother saying, so and

so said 'you have to be very, clean up the house because it will show up dirt that would not really be seen at all', and this was a bit of a worry. When we, I know all we got at the time was a light in each room and a sacred heart, one red light under the sacred heart picture and one plug'.

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14.00 – 15.20 Panel Session 3

Panel 3A: Working Women [Inish Mor Suite]

Challenge and opportunity: The Irish woman at work in London and New York 1950 - 1970.

Rita McCarthy, University of Limerick.

The 1950s saw with an estimated 400,000 men and women emigrating from Ireland mainly to Britain but emigration to the United States also resumed albeit in much smaller numbers. Of that number, slightly fewer than 200,000 were women. The 1960s began a period of economic growth which saw a decrease in net emigration. Even so, many still choose to leave with annual female emigration averaging 7,215.

There were many 'push and pull' factors at play but a major factor was the need to seek employment, better working conditions and opportunity for progression. The pull factors included a demand for young women to work in the burgeoning labour market in Britain with the setting up of National Health Service and also to work as domestic servants and in the hotel industry. The United States, still a preferred destination for many, was again seen as a place of opportunity when in the 1950s, advertisements began to appear seeking young women to work mainly as nannies but also in other domestic spheres. This paper will use oral testimonies from women who emigrated from Ireland to London and New York in the 1950s and 60s to take up employment in the expanding labour markets of both cities. What were their first experiences of working life in these cities and were their hopes of a better future realised? This paper is part of a PhD thesis and the work is ongoing.

Wrens of HMS Caroline: Recording Women's Experiences of Serving in the Royal Navy

Victoria Millar, HMS Caroline, National Museum of the Royal Navy

Since the Second World War, women have played a significant role on HMS Caroline, which has been moored in Belfast for over ninety years. In mid-2016 HMS Caroline's curatorial and community engagement teams embarked on a HLF-funded project to record the memories of women who served on the ship initially as part of the Women's Royal Naval Service during the Second World War, and later as part of the Women's Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve which was established on HMS Caroline in 1952. The project coincides with the centenary of the formation of the Women's Royal Naval Service, which is being celebrated this year. In partnership with students

from the Northern Regional College, sixteen women were interviewed between December 2016 and February 2017. Their contributions have now been featured in a documentary, launched in March 2017, which examines a range of themes including their views on the changing role of women in the Royal Navy, as well as the challenges some of the women faced during the 1970s at the height of the Troubles. The sixteen interviews amassed during the project form the beginnings of an oral history archive for HMS Caroline which will be expanded upon in future years. Memories collected as part of the project will also be featured in a travelling exhibition which is due to be launched later this year at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.

Nurses to Nannies: Irish Women's Working Lives in the United States after the Second World War

Sara S. Goek, Illinois Mathematics & Science Academy

In the years after the Second World War the American economy flourished, though inequalities persisted. Irish migrants arrived into this context with their own goals, in which making money featured prominently. The workplace constituted one of the key sites where they encountered the many diverse Americas of the post-war period and negotiated their place within it in. This paper will use oral history interviews to examine the nature of Irish women's working lives in American cities. In particular, it will focus on how their family background and education prior to their emigration from Ireland affected the types of work they undertook and how they perceived the skills and status of their occupations. I will argue that in narratives of Irish women's working lives, threads of gender, class, and ethnicity intertwine. This paper forms part of a larger interdisciplinary study (being undertaken in partnership with an economist) that uses both quantitative and qualitative analyses to compare Irish women's participation in the American labour force across generations and in relation to native-born and other foreign-born groups in the twentieth century.

Panel 3B: Ordinary Lives [Oranmore Room]

A job for life: Using oral history to examine job security and stability.

Paul Carroll, Maynooth University

The paper will look at jobs in places like Guinness and the Civil Service, workplaces well known for their job security. Using oral history, it will examine the perception people had of these workplaces from outside and inside these organisations. The paper will also analyse the broader context of job stability. There was a general trend across Ireland, not just in these select organisation, of people staying within in companies and rising the ranks. It was not unusual to spend your entire life working with only a few companies perhaps even just one. This has changed over time. Employers no longer feel loyal to their employees, and employees no longer feel

loyal to their employers. Automation has made many jobs obsolete and lead to layoffs. Technology enabled the creation of the gig economy, companies like Uber view themselves as a service and the people who use their service as contractors. Ireland has become increasingly dependent on foreign direct investment, either through companies moving to Ireland or M.N.C.'s buying Irish companies, these international companies have a different attitude towards their employees. Unions are no longer as strong, they can no longer effectively protect their members' jobs. All this has contributed to the culture of a job for life declining.

Cinema Memory in Post-War Belfast: Reflections and Insights

Sam Manning, Queens University Belfast

This paper reflects on the practice of recording oral history interviews to investigate historical experiences of cinema-going in Belfast from the end of the Second World War to the early 1960s. It discusses the challenges in gathering testimony and the major themes that emerged from the interviews, such as audience behaviour, film preferences, cinema-going habits and the relationship between work and leisure. Even in the study of a seemingly uncontroversial subject such as cinema-going, sensitivity to local circumstances is vital in gathering testimony in a post-conflict society. This paper assesses the extent that memories of cinema-going link to aspects of participant's wider social and work lives, and explores the extent that religious and political divisions impacted everyday leisure habits. The discussion then turns to the timing of these interviews and the ways in which pre-Troubles memories of leisure activities are filtered through subsequent political events. It also examines the use of oral history testimony alongside traditional archival sources and the challenges of linking memories to broader social, cultural and political developments. Finally, the paper reflects on my interaction with community groups and the benefits and drawbacks of outsider status when researching in local communities.

Oral history as a method for researching the topic of working history in Ireland prior to 1990

Tracy-Ann Mahady, Maynooth University

The paper that I am submitting takes a look at the working history of people in Ireland it compares interviews on eight individuals from different backgrounds. Some of them worked in what was referred to as 'jobs for life' such as Guinness, Dublin Corporation and An Garda Siochana, while the others had different careers throughout their working lives. The main focus is on the recurring themes that arise throughout the interviews. The three main themes that arose were Loyalty and Pride in the Workplace, Voluntary Work and Women in the workplace. Loyalty was evident throughout most of the interviews as many of the interviewees worked the majority of their lives with the same company and spoke of the pride that they had

for the work that they did and the company that they worked for. A number of the interviewees did voluntary work within their communities and abroad. These jobs varied from local parish work to helping to set up a school in Africa. Another clear theme in the interviews was women in the workplace, most of the interviewees recall their first encounter with women in the workplace and how the introduction of women to the workplace brought about a number of changes to their working life.

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15.40 – 17.00 Panel Session 4

Panel 4A: Leisure in Troubled Times [Inish Mor Suite]

'Justa Nother Teenage Rebel': Belfast punk remembered

Fearghus Roulston, University of Brighton

This paper will draw on an interview with Gareth Mullan, a former punk from south Belfast, to consider punk as a cultural form in 1970s and 1980s Northern Ireland. In Gareth's account, his engagement with the punk scene allows him to negotiate the boundaries of class and ethno-sectarian division intersecting his experience of the city, while never quite transcending or negating these boundaries. Following the oral historian Lynn Abrams, Gareth's discovery of punk as a teenager will be described as epiphanic, as a moment that generates an important charge and a sense of self-discovery, both at the level of narrative or telling, and at the moment being described within the narrative. It will argue that the epiphany in Gareth's narrative is bifurcated, with the first crucial moment occurring when he discovers punk as a teenager, and the second when he begins to collect records, write for websites and position himself as someone engaged in recording and remembering parts of the punk scene. Reading Henry Glassie and Guy Beiner's work on folk history and memory along with Raphael Samuel's work on heritage and Catherine Nash's important essay on local history in Northern Ireland, the paper will conclude by arguing for an understanding of this second moment as constituting a form of historical practice. Doing so can both answer Nash's call to expand the local beyond the parochial and suggest new ways of understanding division and violence in Belfast during the conflict.

"We started to live a normal life": stories of work and leisure in displaced persons camps after the Holocaust

Nancy Cooley, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

My paper will focus on the importance of work and leisure for individuals living in displaced persons (DPs) camps immediately after World War II. Using USHMM oral history interviews conducted with Holocaust survivors and DP camp administrators, I plan to explore how the DPs began to rebuild their lives through employment, education, and recreation. I will focus primarily on community participation via work

and leisure activities and its fundamental role in helping survivors move forward with their lives after the war. To illustrate the work and leisure communities in DP camps, I will cite oral histories that discuss the nature of courtships and friendships within the camps; the role of the World ORT in occupational training; the influence of Zionism; and the creation and consumption of publications (newspapers, books, etc). I will also examine the work-related interactions and conflicts between the DPs and the camp administrators, which will shed light on how the DPs regained the personal authority that was lost to many of them during the war. While DPs may not be immediately associated with the theme of work and leisure, the experiences described in oral histories tell another story. The sense of community found in daily occupations and recreations healed many survivors and it remained in their memories decades later. I hope this paper will spark a conversation about the universal creation of community through work and leisure regardless of background and circumstance.

**A child's play: remembering infancy in Enniskillen during the Troubles
Maria Clara Mendes, Trinity College Dublin**

November 1987. As the people from Enniskillen, County Fermanagh gathered in the cenotaph in the city centre, nobody could predict that that cold autumn morning was about to become history. It was around 11 o'clock when two IRA bombs went off, painting the colourful town in grey and red. Only civilians, all protestants, were killed in the Remembrance Day Bombing, setting rage not only across Northern Ireland, but through the entire world. However, despite of the outrageous event, another circumstance caught people's attention: the response to the bombing was, in some level, the path to the peace process that led to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, as cross-community relations set the tone that brought people together to ensure that the Troubles would come to an end. But what was different in Enniskillen that turned that possible? This research aims to tell the history of cross-community relations in the 1980's in Enniskillen, undertaking by narrating the conflict from an infant-perspective. This paper is written from a Social History standpoint, and uses Oral History as its main methodology. By collecting people's memories about childhood in Enniskillen during one of the most violent decades of the conflict, I intend to explore the perception of peace and war among the youngster, connecting to their reactions to the bombing in that happened 30 years ago.

Panel 4B: Moving beyond the interview [Oranmore Room]

Writing *Irish Soccer Migrants: a Social and Cultural History* and the use of oral sources,

Conor Curran, Dublin City University

This paper discusses the use of oral history in my forthcoming book, *Irish Soccer Migrants: a Social and Cultural History*, which will be published by Cork University Press later this year. This book has its origins in a FIFA Havelange Research Scholarship awarded in January 2013 to investigate the migration of Irish-born footballers to Britain in the 1945 to 2010 period. This book utilises information gathered through interviews with twenty-four former and current professional footballers with experience of league football in Britain with a focus on initiation into the game; early careers; getting spotted; moving to England; homesickness; the playing experience; injuries; competition; post-career advice; returning home and post-playing careers. In examining the lives of Irish born football migrants within the context of Irish emigration and the historiography of academic sports, this research is the first of its kind to be undertaken. Academic publications using the views of professional footballers as an oral source are relatively scarce and have generally been written by sociologists rather than historians. This paper highlights how many retired players are actually keen to tell their stories and to discuss a culture and lifestyle which is generally inaccessible to the public. It also addresses a number of challenges faced in completing research of this nature. It will focus on the rationale for undertaking this work along with the methodology, interview process and results.

Oral Histories: The Linguistic Perspective

Chris Fitzgerald, University of Limerick

The Irish Bureau of Military History was established by the Irish Minister for Defence in 1947. Over the subsequent ten years, 1773 witness statements were collected by the Bureau staff. They were given the task of travelling throughout Ireland to gather as much information as possible from those involved in the independence movement. This resulted in one of the largest oral history collections of its kind ever undertaken, comprised of over 36,000 pages of statements. Since becoming available publicly in 2003, these oral histories have been used as valuable sources of historical data relating to the 1916 Rising and War of Independence, but have hitherto not been investigated linguistically. This paper looks at the statements from a linguistic perspective, using methods of corpus linguistics and discourse analysis to evaluate their significance as sources of linguistic data. Though oral histories have been investigated from a linguistic perspective (Schiffrin, 2003), there remains to be a thorough examination of how they can be utilised within the field of narrative inquiry and how that may bridge the disciplines of history and linguistics. This presentation will outline the potential contribution of oral histories to this field while establishing oral history as a genre of language.

'I thought I was home in Ireland again': Irish emigrants' recollections of life in Mayo and Cleveland during the interwar years

Gavin Wilk, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick

In 1995, six interviews were conducted with Mayo emigrants living in Cleveland, Ohio who were between the ages of 84 and 101. These interviews, which were eventually edited and placed on a VHS tape entitled, 'Cleveland's Irish Blessings', offer interesting insight into the activities of Irish emigrants in a midwest American city during the early twentieth century. The interviews also provide a glimpse into the strong transnational ties between Cleveland's Irish community and county Mayo which remain through today. This paper will discuss the recollections of these emigrants' and in particular, it will describe the work and leisure experiences that they recalled partaking in during the 1920s and 1930s. It will in particular delve into where these emigrants worked, what associations they became involved in, and the experiences that impacted their young lives.