

What's Your Trinity Story? Evaluation Report



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Introduction

Trinity Community Arts secured a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to deliver a oral and archival history project charting Trinity's history from 1960 to the present.

The primary aims of the project were to increase public awareness of Trinity and its surrounding area to provide training in archival research and to provide access and training around heritage to volunteers, staff and members of the public.

Increased awareness of the heritage of the space was to be achieved through engagement events, the creation of an on-line archive, the publication and dissemination of a booklet and an exhibition of images collated as part of the project.

Project Plan

The initial plan was for two Project Workers to be appointed to gather content for the exhibition, booklet and online archive. Engagement events were to be delivered in order to encourage contributions from the public and to promote the project.

As part of the engagement events, Trinity had also budgeted for a series of art workshops to design a stained glass window. The Centre Manager and appointed Project Worker envisaged that the events would lead to content for the archive, booklet and exhibition. Ideally, events would be held between April and September 2010 in order to ensure that the content could be incorporated in good time in the writing up of the booklet.

The following report describes the achievements, challenges and lessons learned from the *What's Your Trinity Story?* (WYTS) Project.

Recruitment

Project Workers

Project Worker, Dr Edson Burton was appointed in October 2009 and shortly afterwards Annie Berry (another interviewee for the project worker role) took up the six month role of Archivist for the project. Both Dr Berry and Dr Burton had worked on a range of oral history projects in Bristol. They brought with them a a range of contacts from the third, heritage and museum sectors. Dr Berry was particularly experienced with the cataloguing systems used by the Bristol Record Office which proved to be invaluable as the project went on.

Contractors

IT Development Worker Ryan Northey was contracted to set up Trinity's on-line archive. All other contractor roles were arranged by the Dr Burton in consultation with the Centre Manger.

Additional Staff

Separate to the HLF funding but in support of the project, Trinity was a partner with Bristol City Council as part of the Future Jobs Fund programme – a work placement scheme for long term unemployed people. Two placements were assigned to the project in May 2010 and in October 2010. Project & IT Assistant Andy Jeanes worked with the project for six months and was joined in October 2010 by animation graduate Catherine Bateman as a second Project Assistant. The Future Jobs Fund placements stayed in the project for a fixed period of for 26 weeks, twenty five hours a week.

Project Artist

In the application to HLF, TCA received funding to employ an artist to work with members of the public to produce a design for a stained glass window.

The WYTS project budget covered fees and materials for an artist to deliver a series of art workshops that would lead to the creation of a design for a stained glass window. The post was

advertised through professional artist networks, including arts umbrella organisations such as Arts Matrix. The initial response was not what we had hoped for, so the deadline was extended to the 18th December.

Bristol based artist Gloria Ojulari Sule was appointed in January to deliver the workshops in the summer. Gloria was selected on the basis of the quality of her individual work and her considerable experience in working with a diverse range of communities across multiple art forms.

Volunteers

Volunteers were recruited to the project via Trinity's existing volunteer pool and through advertisements on Trinity and the Community Volunteering Service website. In addition, individuals looking for general volunteering opportunities, were encouraged to participate in the project.

Volunteer numbers fluctuated throughout the duration of the project. In the first four months the project retained a pool of ten active volunteers. Owing in part to the recession, volunteers were mainly unemployed or underemployed young graduates. Other volunteers emerged when the project was advertised via CSV and through Trinity's website.

Steering group meetings gave the volunteers an opportunity to feed back on the project, to share information and to allocate tasks. Volunteer numbers fell in the New Year and fluctuated between 2-5 during the remaining life of the project.

The project also took on long term volunteers from the employment firm Prospects. Three of the four placements were highly skilled workers including a former media professional, a self taught historian and a illustrator and graphic designer. These more mature placements brought a different dimension to the research.

Volunteer Roles included:

- Research archive
- Research online
- Interviewing
- Transcription
- Editing audio files
- Publicity Design
- Distributing publicity
- Documentation: photography, film making
- Phone enquiries and phone research

The Project Worker worked with the volunteers and placements to develop a programme of tasks based upon their interests and the project's needs.

Team Support

In addition to her line management role, Centre Manager and fund-raiser Emma Harvey gave considerable time to promoting the project in meetings and informal encounters, reviewing work undertaken and supporting the employment of session staff.

The events team gave advice, administrative and practical support to the events organised as part of the project. IT Worker Ryan Northey contributed a vast amount of time and energy in devising and shaping the on-line archive from inception, beyond what was included in the HLF budget.

Organising the Project

The first three months of the project were spent planning the engagement events, deciding the remit of the work, building partnerships, and establishing training opportunities for the staff and volunteers. The two core staff worked closely on much of these early tasks, though Dr Berry took

the lead in working with the IT Worker on developing the archive.

It was agreed with Dr Berry that the fixed outcome of her work would be to write up her research findings as a draft of the booklet by the end of her contract. The draft would then be completed and redrafted by Dr Burton subject to the integration of the oral history.

Both Annie and Edson had worked with and for the Museum Service in previous years and recognized the importance of ensuring that the content complied with the museum's standards for recording, transcribing and cataloguing the content. It was therefore necessary to agree this on the copyright form.

By December 2010 the team agreed a formulae for the collection and passing on of hard copies of content to the Bristol Record Office and to pass on physical artefacts to them. Trinity would retain digital copies of the oral history content and pass on a copy and transcribe of each interview for the Museum Service. Edson and Annie, arranged meetings with museum staff to ensure Trinity's copyright documents covered the passing of materials to the new museum of Bristol the- MShed.

Promotion

Edson spent the first months in post defining and promoting the project to local organisations, on local radio stations such as Ujima, BCFM and BBC radio and to the printed press.

Edson worked closely with a designer to produce publicity for the project and produced and disseminated press releases and appeared on the BBC and community radio programmes promoting the project.

He also worked very closely with volunteer, designer and art student Jo Buttons, to create promotional material and organised volunteers.

Training

Oral History

We departed from the application of travelling to London for Oral History training and instead sourced training locally. UWE has an excellent oral history unit staffed by lecturers who have worked closely with project workers on past projects, so it was felt they would be more suited to delivering training to key project staff and volunteers.

Working with UWE brought the best value for the project - UWE offered training at a discounted rate, and helped to promote the project within the research community. It also helped to forge a new relationship between Trinity and UWE.

The key oral history training day took place on the 28th January. Training consisted of a series of hands on exercises including role that explored practical and ethical issues that arise when using oral history. A follow up session was organised for volunteers by Ryan Northey and Dr Annie Berry. This day consisted of a practical sessions on how to use the recording equipment and archive material (see Appendix 1 for details).

IT Training

Ryan introduced volunteers and staff to how to upload content to the archive. Training on the archive was repeated throughout the life of the project as volunteers moved on and new volunteers came on-board. Staff and volunteers involved in transcribing, editing and uploading interviews were given additional training by Ryan and Edson.

Research

Archival

Dr Annie Berry led and managed the archival research in the project. She undertook extensive

research using parish registers, the archives of other community groups such as Arts Opportunity theatre, newspaper and magazine reviews found in the Record Office, Bristol Central Library.

Annie and volunteers also assisted photographer Mark Simmons in cataloguing his collection in return for the copyrighted use of a selection of his photographs taken at Trinity. She was supported in these tasks by volunteers working on a rota basis. Annie had exhausted these local records by the time her contract had expired. She wrote up her findings in a draft version of the booklet and in a series of short essays on Trinity's history.

Volunteers such as Dr Debi Withers worked largely under their own initiative trawling through magazines for references to Trinity. Self taught historian and Prospect placement Tim Day joined the Project in April 2010 and continued the archival research at the end of Annie's contract in May, as well as conducting interviews.

Volunteers also conducted online research to find references to Trinity. They used social networking sites to search for people who have attended Trinity events. Volunteers also used the web to find band discographies, and contact details.

Oral History

Trinity has been central plank of Bristol's music scene since the late 1970s so we were not short of potential interviewees. Interviews were planned on the basis of where there were gaps in Trinity's history to date.

We felt it was particularly important to identify and interview contributors from the pre-90s, including Trinity's final decade of its life as a church and its first period as a community centre. These years are the least documented either in print, photographic or digital media. Reminiscence sessions were held for key groups, in particular, the West Indian Parents & Friends Association which increased the testimonies and available knowledge of this era.

Interviewing occurred throughout, as the archival evidence created new leads and new interviewees became aware of the project. As the content began to take shape, gaps also necessitated interviews that helped to strengthen and corroborate aspects of Trinity's history.

The final interviews were conducted in November 2011. All but two of the oral interviews were conducted by Edson. Few volunteers felt confident enough to conduct interviews, despite training. However volunteers were able to gain some knowledge of the challenges involved in conducting oral interviews through shadowing.

Volunteers Tom Fielding, Andreas Vanni, and Anita Hummel filmed a selection of interviews and events during the project. As well as providing an alternative form of documentation, this was also a more efficient means of capturing group interviews. These particular volunteers had come to the project with varying degrees of experience in filming. However, the project gave them the opportunity to develop their skills further. Permission was obtained from individuals prior to filming.

Images

The reminiscence sessions, project activities and publicity inspired image contributions from the public. It was particularly exciting to receive images of weddings from Trinity's last decade as a church.

The Project Worker worked hard to encourage professional Bristol photographers to contribute images to the project. This paid off, with renowned photographers Mark Simmons and Beezer donating images of Trinity's heyday as a live music venue from 1980-1995. It is fair to say these images raised the standard of the project and have encouraged further contributions to the archive.

Events

The first event *Rebel Music* event was intended as a way to galvanise interest from Bristol's punk constituency. The aim was to encourage cross generational attendance to an event that featured arts, film, ideas and music inspired by historical and contemporary punk culture.

The bands were a combination of mature and upcoming acts all of which had played at Trinity in the past. Trinity gave financial and administrative support to the event. Though the event was not as well attended as we had hoped, it helped us to engage more oral history testimonies from individuals remembering Trinity's original punk era (*images of flyer and performance below*).



Edson also met with and supported members of former reggae bands Black Roots and the Talisman, which helped to inspire a Black Roots relaunch night at the Centre in December 2010.



Workshops & Activities

Arts Workshops

The arts workshops in the summer of 2010 for six weeks. The workshops did not attract a regular attendance as was hoped, but instead attracted a range of local families and individuals who turned up to particular sessions. The final design mural for the stained glass window was produced by Gloria, inspired by the works created during the sessions.



Bristol Festival of Photography

In addition to the planned events, What's Your Trinity Story and TCA hosted an exhibition by locally based photographers as part of the Bristol Festival of photography. Participation was based on the idea that it would increase footfall through the Centre, promote the project, and stimulate memories and thereby content.

Tea Dances

The Project Worker approached Link Age to become partners in a Tea Dance event targeting Bristol's older people to try to generate more stories from local people. The event was promoted

through flyers distributed throughout Easton, St Werburgh's and through older people's on line website.



The project worker recruited ball room dance tutor to lead the event. Volunteer and self taught local historian Tim Day was asked to lead the older people in a tour of the Centre. This event also led to us securing further funding from Quartet Community Foundation to deliver an extended series of Tea Dances targeting both older people and adults with learning difficulties.

Stained GLASS WORKSHOP
2 October 2010
10am-4pm

FREE Stained Glass Window Workshop as part of What's Your Trinity Story? Led by artist Ruth Adams. Learn basic techniques, meet new people and create your own work to take away!

To book contact:
story@3ca.org.uk 0117 9351200
Trinity Centre, Trinity Road, Bristol

heritage lottery fund
LOTTERY FUNDED

TRINITY

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Stained Glass Sessions

The final engagement event was an introductory day long practical workshop led by stained glass artist and tutor Ruth Adams. This event was designed to promote the project and to give a new public experience in making stained glass.

The workshop was attended by a group of women who each created a single pane that they took home with them. At least two of the women in attendance had strong reminiscences that they were willing to share with the Project Workers.



Exhibition & Booklet

A 'preview' exhibition was displayed as part of our 2011 Garden Party, which also inspired a new graffiti installation in our upstairs "Graffiti Room". The full exhibition was held back in order to coincide with the launch of the booklet. The Project Worker felt that this would maximise the impact of the booklet and the exhibition.



The final process of completing the booklet took much longer than envisaged, partly because the designer and project worker were also working on new projects. They met on average once or twice a week. The text was substantially rewritten from the first draft in the first months of the year which meant that the proof reading had to be redone. Working between formats led a a number of problems which slowed the process of completion.

Content for the exhibition was agreed by the Project Worker and Centre Manager before Christmas. They also agreed the themes that should feature. After considerable enquiries local print firm Niche were contracted to produce the exhibition, based on cost, quality and additional support.

As previously stated the delivery of events and research occurred in parallel. After the final event, the Project Worker concentrated on closing gaps in the research with a view to writing up the booklet and preparing the exhibition. Between September and November the Project Worker conducted final interviews. Future Jobs employees worked through transcribing. The project

worker took extracts from these as well as writing up further extracts to use in the booklet.

At the close of the year, the Project Worker approached professional graphic designer Miki Kelford who had previous experience working on community heritage booklets. It became evident by the end of the year that complications with software, finalising text, and finishing other aspects of work meant that the project would not be completed within the original time frame. Having also amassed such a wealth of quality material, it was felt by the whole team, in particular the Project Worker and Designer, that the booklet should be of the highest standard – this meant both committed huge amounts of time voluntarily to ensure this was the case.

TCA was understandably concerned but supportive throughout. The Centre Manager was kept informed as to the progress through regular updates, emails and draft texts. The booklet was published on the 22 July and a private view launch event was held on 5 August to hold for contributors, artists, heritage bodies and local community groups. The exhibition was officially hosted at Trinity between 6-19 August where members of the public could come to view and pick up a free copy of the book. The images will remain on permanent display around the Trinity Centre and books were distributed by post to contributors, advisers, partner organisations, Bristol's libraries, local bookshops and art centres.

Project Legacy

Documentation

Documentation of all events and project activities was carried out Trinity project and core staff and volunteers. Documentation took the form of photography, film and or printed media. In addition monitoring forms were available at all events.

Online Archive

The online archive – www.3ca.org.uk/archive allows users not just to learn about Trinity's history but to dialogue with and define the website content. A call for content via the website and in Trinity printed media is ongoing.

Trinity staff and volunteers upload information to the site and disseminate information on new ascensions. Although a substantial amount of content was gathered by the project there is still much more content in the public domain that will enrich the story of Trinity even further.

Exhibition & Booklet

The booklet and exhibition are tangible legacies of the project. Visitors will be able to gain an understanding of the Centre's history long after the project has finished from the display of pictures from the exhibition.

In addition TCA will retain sufficient copies of the booklet for visitors to take. TCA are keen to explore possibilities of producing a second edition of the booklet, and initial contacts have been made with local publishers who produce books relating to Bristol's culture and heritage.

Skills

The project has equipped a number of volunteers and staff with skills that can be used on future heritage projects or can be transferred to a range of occupations. Volunteers have received high quality training in archival and oral history research.

For most of the volunteers working at Trinity this was also the first time they had used open source web software as part of the archive. Future Jobs Fund workers and Prospect volunteers also received extended training in uploading files, transcribing data and editing audio files. For most it was the first time they had engaged with archival research.

Resources

Project Workers Annie Berry and Edson Burton produced a guide to the project, containing information on conducting research, editing audio files uploading and editing content on the online

archive.

This will be of use to staff and future volunteers when adding to the archive. It is also a useful guide for other heritage projects in Bristol particularly showing the benefits of utilising free and open source software.

Equipment sourced for the project include the HN4 recording device and a new laptop which will be used for future projects involving oral research and heritage.

Partnerships

The project has brought Trinity into contact with new partners in particular UWE and Bristol City Council's Museum Service. The Project Worker, Archivist and IT Worker gave presentations at the Open Knowledge Conference in April 2010 and the Regional History Conference in July 2010 (see Appendix 2 for papers presented).

In addition, Annie Berry played a vital role in engineering meetings between TCA, UWE and the museum sector around a project to collate the content of past community projects and share these online via a city wide network (see Appendix 3). This discussion is ongoing and will gather momentum now that the MShed is complete. This would not have happened without this project.

The project has brought Trinity to the attention of the BBC and independent production companies that contacted the project during its duration. The project was also the first time that Trinity had actively worked with local media training organisation First Born Creatives. Since then Trinity has begun to plan a heritage project in partnership with First Born.

Also, Video Nation contacted us looking for local film makers and those with an interest in making film to produce short features on Stapleton Road. The Project Worker Edson was invited to be involved based on his knowledge of the local community and on the basis of the potential overlap between the WYTS project and the Video Nation film project. Edson and volunteer Anita Hummel produced a film on Stapleton Road during the week of the project, involving interviews with long established and more recent residents in Stapleton Road. The film made a valuable contribution to the project in terms of highlighting the cultural and environmental shifts that had occurred in the area since 1960.

Trinity's partnership with Link Age has grown from strength to strength over the last year. Link Age has organised on events both in partnership with and separately from TCA and the project has meant that older users have reconnected with the space and have begun to use the space for their own activities.



TCA are extremely pleased with the project and the outcomes, which we feel have well met the outcomes set during the application process. However in hindsight it is fair to say that some aspects of the project could have been handled differently and we have learnt some important lessons for future projects.

Capacity

The multiple roles of outreach, managing volunteers, organising events and conducting the research stretched the capacity of both Project Workers. Volunteer involvement did not substantially reduce the workload as there was a high volunteer turn over (a number of volunteers were graduates who moved on to employment or to new courses after a short periods of time) and volunteers require time commitment in terms of support, supervision and training. This often meant that time invested in training and meetings with volunteers did not reap any dividends in terms of creating content.

Project Workers also realised that preparing transcripts and editing files required a high standard of English along with at least intermediate level IT skills. In the final months of the project the slow progress with transcripts meant that the Project Worker had to take on much of these duties.

Inevitably volunteers were drawn to particular tasks due to personal inclination or time available. However these did not suit the needs of the project. Only three of the projects volunteers were willing to conduct oral interviews, for example - this being one of the more time-consuming aspects of the project.

The project worker accepts that the work of volunteers could have been better managed in light of their skills, and interests, in the interests of the project. However, volunteers themselves gained much in terms of developing their skills, experience and CVs.

Coordination

Communication between WYTS and Trinity staff could have been improved. There could have been greater coordination between the arts staff and the project particularly around events, marketing and resourcing. This was largely the case in regard to the Rebel Music event in April. However the low attendance at this event was not foreseeable as another event offering music of this genre served to split the audience for this type of event.

Of greater concern is the need for a more coordinated approach between the Project Worker and the IT Worker. The blueprint for the archive was discussed and agreed between the Archivist, IT Worker and Project Worker, but as the project progressed the work of uploading content was increasingly performed by inexperienced volunteers.

As a result the Project Worker and IT Worker had to rectify errors and redirect the focus of the uploads. Furthermore, as the project progressed and new content arrived it became clear that the original plans for the archive needed to be revised. It is fair to suggest that one of the difficulties has been the degree of technical and editorial proficiency required in uploading content, which has meant an over-reliance on the skills of the IT Worker and other staff more competent with the system.

Trinity is in the process of devising a timetable for the revision of the archive in line with the needs of the project to lead to a more accessible, and navigable site. We are advertising more for volunteer archivist and web editor roles with clearer job descriptions, which has meant that now we are attracting volunteers with specific experience who can add and develop the archive.

Digitization

While the project was meticulously planned, it is fair to suggest that TCA had underestimated the amount of work involved in transferring content from physical to digital content and raw interviews to edited files. This is understandable given that the archive and book were new ventures for Trinity and also that Trinity set very high standards in the production quality of the final outcomes.

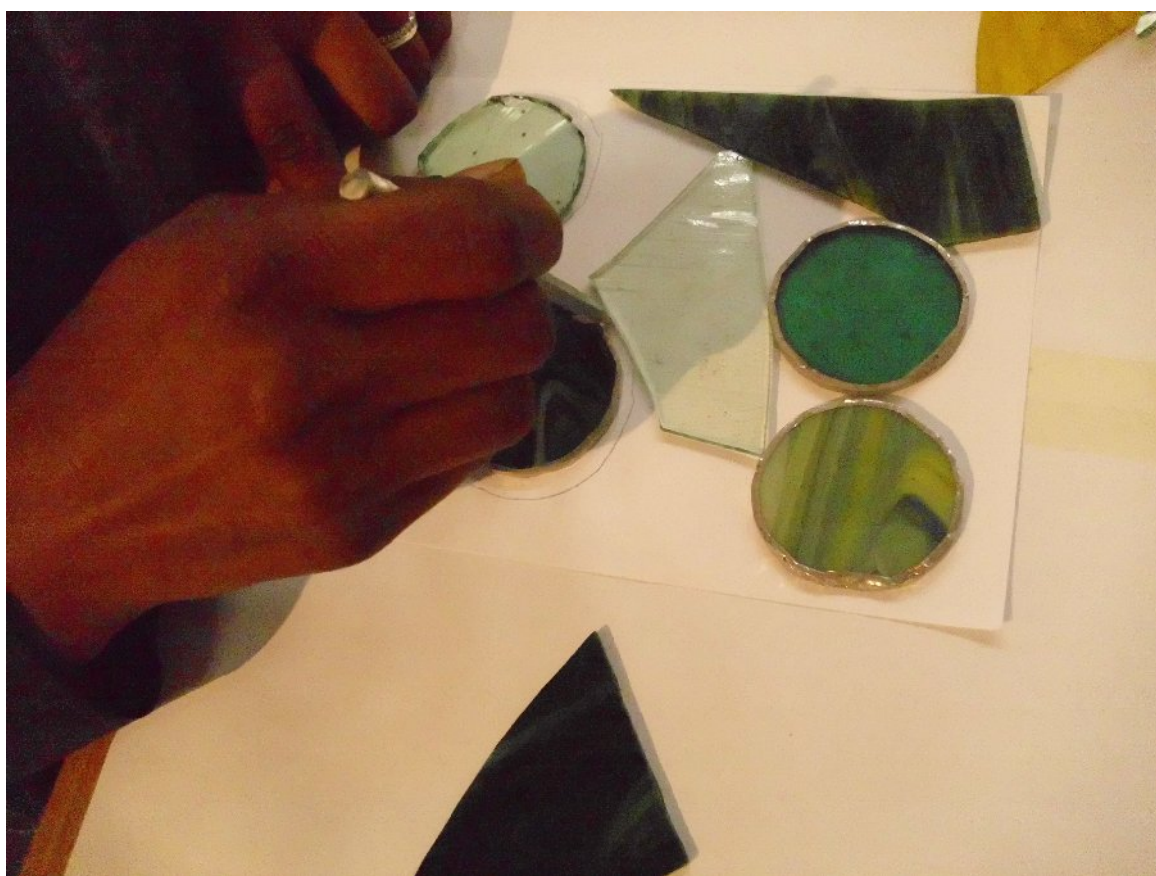
Art Project

On reflection, the selection of a visual artist working in paint to produce the stained glass window design may have been a factor in the poor uptake of the workshop as when the stained glass sessions were offered the uptake was more immediate. The difference in uptake is partly because the public has had less exposure to working in stained glass. It therefore remains an attractive medium for both experienced artists and those experimenting in the arts.

Suggestions for Future

The following bullet points succinctly suggest what Trinity has learned and what the Project Worker advices would enhance future projects:

- Reduce outcomes – more focus on delivering fewer outcomes more extensively than a greater number of outcomes with less time to commit to them
- Reduce number of events – again, focus more on promoting a few set engagement events and workshops and publicising these heavily rather than running a more spread out programme with less participants, in order to give these momentum and create a buzz around the project
- More selective and clearer volunteer policy – clearer job roles defined at the start of the project with key person specification (this has already been incorporated into Trinity's current volunteer job roles)
- Better time management by staff – clearer tasks, when required and delegation
- Clearer coordination between core staff – more regular 121s and meetings of staff to keep project progressing at pace required to meet funding requirements.





Dr Edson Burton – Project Worker

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Archive Day Training Content

- Recording interviews:
 - Recording devices and formats
 - Practice using recorders in pairs on different machines
 - Asking for release/copyright
- Preparing items for the Archive:
 - File types and parameters scanning, quality, where to file original document
 - Editing and converting audio in Audacity
- The Trinity Archive:
 - What it is and nuts and bolts of how it works
 - Follow-up after interviews downloading interviews, naming files
 - Uploading to the archive step by step practical

Guide to interview skills

Good interview practice – think about:

- Arrival etiquette – be on time, introduce yourself
- Length of interviews – agree a length and try to stick to it
- Confidentiality – explain procedures and possibility of editing etc
- Body language
- Listening skills
- Be aware of how you use open and closed questions
- Following up questions
- Trauma and distress on the interviewee
- Therapeutic effects on interviewee
- Effects on interviewer – be aware of how it's affected you
- Debriefing the interviewee (and you may need to debrief with the project coordinator)
- Letter of thanks
- Recording interview details and notes, backing up tapes

Interview question tips:

- Questions need to be simple straightforward and in familiar language.
- Don't ask two questions at once - you'll only get the last half answered.
- Try not to put questions so that they can give you a yes or no answer eg Did you often go out with the your work-mates after work? Rather ask: how often did you go out with your work-mates?
- Ask questions which encourage your informant to describe their experiences: eg Tell me about. Can you describe that? What did you think/feel about that?
- Try not to ask questions which call forth vague responses. eg "How did you get on with your neighbours?" might get an answer "We all helped each other out". Be more specific. eg ask: "Who looked after you when your mother was ill or was at work?" It is important to get behind stereotyped generalisations.
- Try not to ask leading questions which suggest your own views or seem to prejudge a response? eg rather than asking: "Did you like your boss?" rather ask: "What was your boss like?" or "Tell me a bit about your boss"
- Dates can be difficult to remember? Work out dates by asking questions in relation to a specific event or period in their lives. eg Ask "How old were you when you married. Then ask "how long before or after you were married did that happen?"

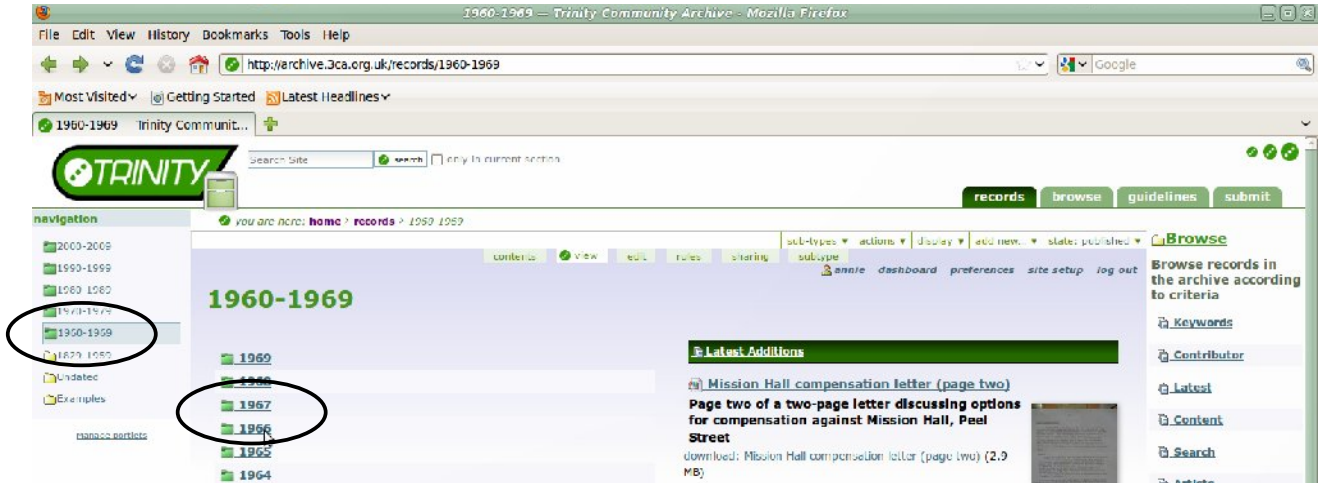
Archive Guidance Notes

Open the archive in Firefox, by typing in the address [/archive.3ca.org.uk](http://archive.3ca.org.uk)

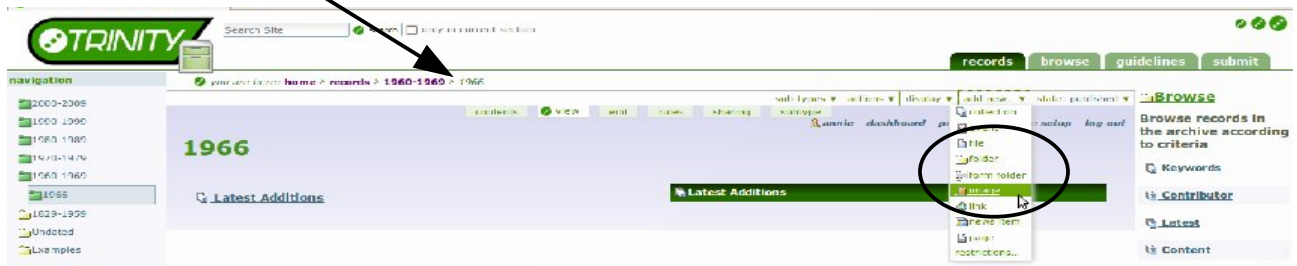
Log in using your Trinity login name and password.

Navigate to the year that you are entering content into.

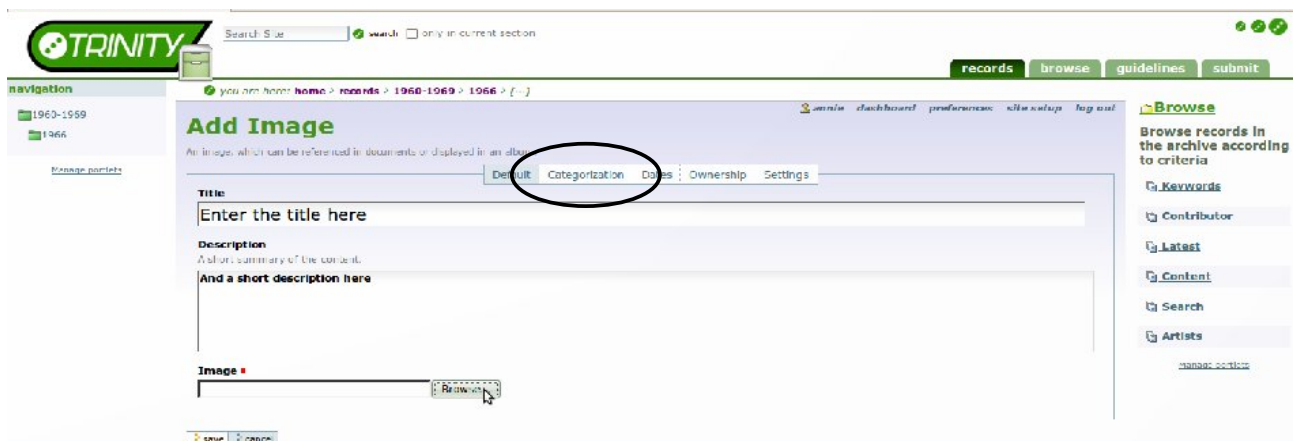
Go to 'add new content' in the top right of the menu bar and select 'folder', 'image' or 'file'.



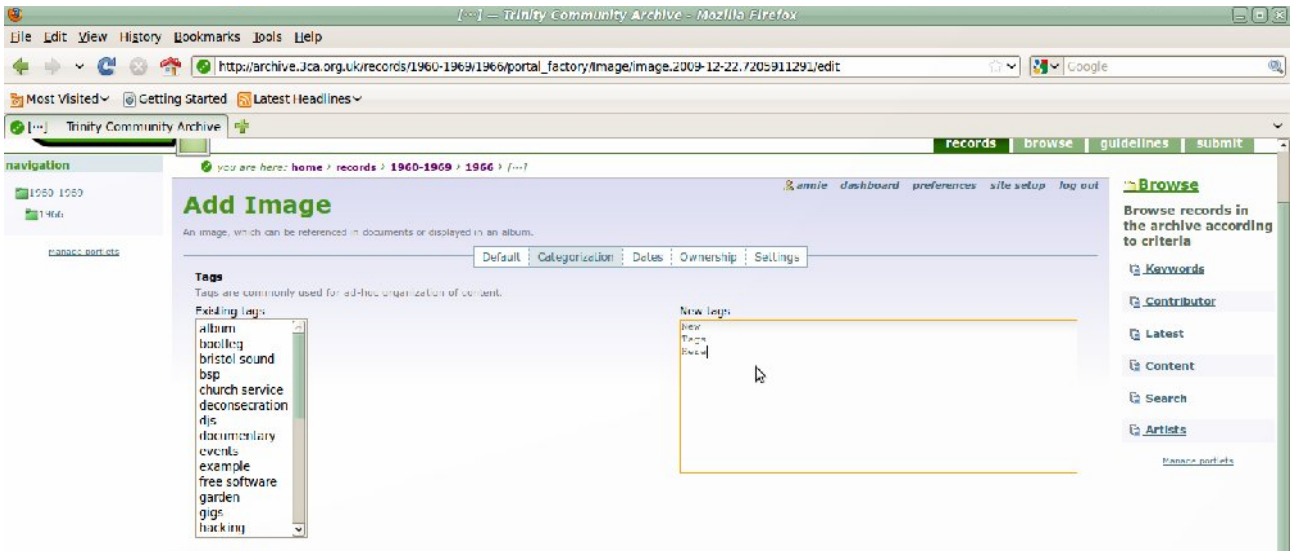
All individual images, whether photographs of documents, scans or digital photographs are to be uploaded as an 'image'. Other documents – pdfs, audio, etc – are to be uploaded as a 'file'. Items with more than one page need to be entered into a 'folder'. Check that you are in the folder for the correct year.



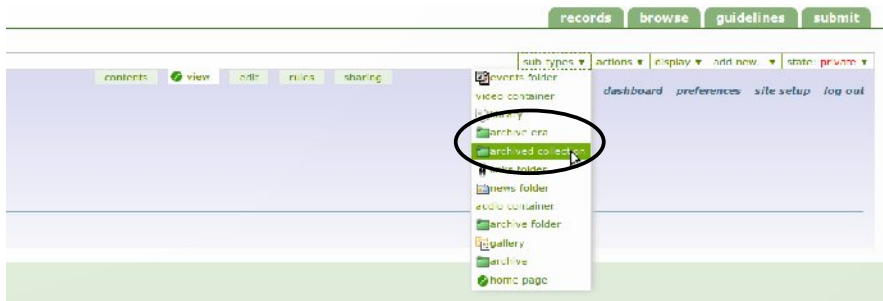
Enter a title and description – remember to follow the appropriate format for this. For files or images you also need to browse for and select the item you are uploading. Then move to the 'categorization' tab.



Enter any relevant tags for the type of item it is (if appropriate – e.g. newsletter, magazine, photograph, interview) or the subjects it deals with (e.g. deconsecration, redevelopment). Think about the types of items that people will want to search for. Also tag any artists or people it involves; and the places it is relevant to. New tags can be typed into the right-hand box (one per line), but think carefully about whether it is needed!



After adding tags, save the item or folder you have added. Immediately afterwards, you need to change its sub-type, if necessary. Images are automatically 'archived images' and folders are 'archived folders' but you need to change this for files.



...and then publish it.



Then you can start adding content to a collection, using the same steps as for uploading images.

Audacity Help Sheet

Download Audacity from <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/download/>

The image shows the Audacity software interface with several callout boxes providing instructions:

- To Open and Export files.** (Points to the File menu)
- To play around with amplification, remove noise and add silence.** (Points to the Effect menu)
- To search for help!** (Points to the Help menu)
- Buttons to Go to Start of track, Play, Stop and Go to End.** (Points to the playback controls)
- Dark grey area is highlighted for selection.** (Points to the selected area on the waveform)
- Click on these to Zoom In, Zoom Out or to Fit whole Track in the viewing window.** (Points to the zoom controls)
- Hold the cursor on this bar to scroll left to right across the track.** (Points to the horizontal scroll bar)
- Time marker indicating the times selected.** (Points to the selection time markers at the bottom)
- Click on these to Cut, Copy and Paste.** (Points to the edit controls)

Open Knowledge Conference Paper
From real to digital communities:
Building a software archive for Trinity Community Arts

Abstract

Through the collation of oral, archival and digital content, the Heritage Lottery funded project, *What's Your Trinity Story?* documents the history of the Trinity Centre in St Phillips, Bristol from the 1960s to today. Trinity embodies and reflects the social and cultural changes that have taken place within and around it. Since its de-consecration from being the Holy Trinity church in 1976, the Trinity Centre has passed through the hands of a number of groups and owners, whilst developing into a major music and community arts venue for the city.

One aim of the project is to establish an online archive as a future resource for Trinity and its past and present users. In so doing, the archive provides a window into local history and narratives, but in some senses also helps to define those communities as remembered. By allowing people to submit and share their own memories and historical artefacts, and providing open access, a digital archive can offer a more accessible way to engage communities than a traditional physical archive might. Moreover, it creates links between different items, eras, ideas and cultures and provides a way to challenge physical, temporal and cultural divides. It further provides the opportunity to situate academic knowledge within its cultural and historical context, allowing feedback from its subjects.

By using and developing free software and adopting open standards in the development of the archive, it is hoped that we will allow wider inter-operability and re-use of content, as well as allowing replication of the infrastructure by other groups. It also means that ownership of the 'means of archiving' is kept within the archived community. As a shared community resource, we wish to be un-restrictive in the way we license content held within the archive for use and re-use. However, we also have to balance the rights of contributing copyright holders, and the reasonable expectations of privacy by research subjects.

We believe that digital archiving provides many new possibilities for communities to use and reuse their own history. It empowers its users with the knowledge to learn about their pasts, to have a role in constructing representations of the present and to create new possibilities for their futures. This paper will therefore discuss some of the challenges that have arisen in building this archive and how we have attempted to resolve them.

Introduction

First opened in 1832 as the Holy Trinity Church, the building was de-consecrated in 1976. From this time, it has been in use under a covenant for the service of 'youth, community and the arts,' with its success ebbing and flowing under each change of management. Amongst varied community and arts activities, Trinity has consistently been used since then as a music venue, and played host to many artists who went on to become very famous. U2, The Wailers, Crass, Echo & the Bunnymen and Prodigy all cut their teeth at Trinity. Significantly, Trinity was a key venue in the locally inspired and internationally exported 'Bristol Sound' of the 1990s, with regular appearances from the likes of Roni Size, Massive Attack, and Portishead.

Following the building's most recent closure in 2001, the centre was re-opened by Trinity Community Arts (TCA) in 2004. The building has since undergone substantial refurbishment downstairs for use as a music venue and for community events and meetings; and upstairs for IT and music technology training, playing host to a number of heritage-based community projects. The HLF project, *What's Your Trinity Story?* is a one-year project to document the history of the Trinity Centre from the 1960s to today.

Given the wide range of uses and of users' backgrounds, it is challenging to define Trinity's communities: Is it the people living around it; is it the people using the building; is it the group who

manages or owns the building; or maybe it is those who live in its shadow? Furthermore, Trinity lies at the juncture of a number of inner-city districts and communities. The boundaries of these, as well as the cultural backgrounds of their constituents, has developed and changed with time. In a subjective sense, these communities emerge through the stories and artefacts that the archive holds, as do many cleavages and changes that have taken place over time. These in turn reflect broader changes in a national context, demonstrating the wider relevance of this archive.

Our approach to software development

One of our aims as an organisation is to use and promote Free Software, and we develop resources and provide training to that end. Code that we develop is committed to a public repository and licensed under the GPL. We adopt open standards wherever possible, and avoid the use of proprietary ones such as Flash. We also promote and use creative commons licensing for other types of creative content.

The software and coding used for our online archive is Python/Zope/Plone on the GNU/Linux operating system. We use this software for our existing systems and projects in order to enable ease of content and code re-use. It is highly extensible, scalable and extremely secure, integrating well with other systems and services, and easily deployed. This software is widely used in commercial, public and third sectors, particularly due to its strong emphasis on indexing and cataloguing; and its tight integration with a caching framework. It provides workflow-based permissioning to allow review of content and nuanced publishing, thus offering a system with the capacity for multiple users and complex roles within the site.

Working with open standards

The entry schema follows the Community Archives and Heritage Group guidelines (see <http://communityarchives.org.uk>) as closely as possible. This in turn is guided by ISAD(G): General International Standard Archival Description, thus ensuring the data we create provides a useful and transferable reference source. A further design goal was to allow interoperability with other online archive specifications such as that provided by the Open Archives Initiative.

We take the long-term view that accessibility is best served by adopting open standards, which has influenced the design of the archive and our approach to working with the content. In particular, we use HTML with CSS and javascript, and avoid the use of Flash or other proprietary elements.

In practice, however, adopting 'open' standards is often not the same as adopting 'common' standards or even 'working' standards. Flash provides probably the easiest way to embed multimedia content within a web page, and it could be argued that this is more accessible as it is so widely implemented.

It is hoped by many that HTML5 will provide an open standard for working with multimedia, so we have adopted that for rendering multimedia elements. As this would break the compliance of the page markup, we add them dynamically using javascript.

The actual specification of HTML5, and in particular for multimedia codecs, has been disputed by the browser-makers. Some of the specification has therefore been left open, much in the way that it is for image elements in x/html currently. However, this leaves the browsers natively supporting different multimedia codecs.

While we always keep the original files as submitted, we decided to use the Ogg Vorbis and Ogg Theora codecs for online presentation as they are open standards and are therefore implemented by 'open' browsers. If we were to adopt a proprietary codec such as mp3 or H264, we would effectively mandate to our users that they must legally buy a license from the patent-holders of those technologies in order to use any of our archive. In practice, buying such a license is transparent to users as it is embedded in the cost of their hardware or software.

Ogg is not currently supported by all browsers, and has limited hardware support, which can be frustrating for users if they, for example, want to listen to an entry in their car. It is, however,

becoming more common, and it is hoped that Google's controversial takeover of On2, the company controlling the licensing of more recent versions of the standard, is an indication of their long-term support, meaning that it will become more widely implemented.

Archotyping real-world artefacts

Although we tried to keep closely to the standard schema definitions, we made some extensions in order to meet our requirements. This is to allow for digital presentation and online referencing, and to accommodate some of the significant information we held about our content.

The software we used provides basic 'types' such as Page, File, Image, Link, Folder, Event. We defined a number of archive 'subtypes' based upon these basic types, allowing us to adapt the ways in which they are viewed, indexed and managed.

A key issue we had to deal with was disambiguating namespaces. A 'collection' or a 'contributor' can mean different things to the software or the specification, and even to us. We had to settle on some names early on, and in some cases compromise between the specifications.

In developing an information architecture there is often a tension between keeping data structures simple, against providing a richer dataset or more complex functionalities that might limit accessibility, or make meanings ambiguous. We therefore tried to limit the number of subtypes that we created for the sake of simplicity. New subtypes were generally only created according to information storage requirements, rather than to reflect the intentions of the author. The software has definitions to model most of the cultural items that Trinity stores, such as reviews, interviews, flyers, photographs, audio and video.

Data mining and making the content accessible

We want to enable as many people as possible to locate and access our online archive and its content. The software that we use provides for relatively semantic content, therefore making it well understood by search engines. Internally, the site indexes and catalogues significant fields, and provides search functionality and a number of systems to list and facilitate finding relevant content. We also developed some software to make the content more visual by generating images from files and associating images in listings. Furthermore, we use a number of AJAX technologies to speed up the users' site experience and allow the content to be browsed more quickly.

In terms of its practical functioning, it has been very important for the archive to enable new connections to be drawn between the past and present communities and groups who have used the building. The linking of related content is crucial to this, and we have developed a system for relating items and tagging content according to subject, places and related artists. This allows us to generate tag 'clouds' or other custom listings, providing a more visual representation and making the content easier to navigate. RSS and other web services are also available, enabling automatic syndication of content.

While the archive is physically held at Trinity, we created a copy of the published content within our website, which is updated as the content in the archive changes. This allows us to store all the original content and perform the resource-intensive activities, such as converting files, on servers at Trinity. At the same time it also allows for the content to be served to the public from an internet server with higher bandwidth capacity.

Identifying and working with archive users

We identified and implemented several roles within the archive, such as administrators, editors, reviewers and submitters. Key amongst these is the reviewer, as they are responsible for checking that content meets our guidelines, is authoritative and properly sourced, and is not legally infringing. As these users have significant responsibilities and access to confidential material, we are developing a training system for inducting new reviewers.

We also created a number of different levels of access and categories of users. In order to hold content in cases where we have been asked not to release it publically, or where we feel that we

cannot publish it for some other reason, we created a category of content which is restricted to 'research' access, and have set out a policy for granting access. Research access may be given to academic or community historians, journalists or other local people on the recommendation of a higher education establishment, or at TCA's discretion and according to the policy. We also created a 'restricted' level where no access is granted to anyone other than the archivists, for a set period of time.

Attribution, copyright and permissions

We have had to strongly consider the licensing of content to enable its use beyond the archive. With new oral interviews conducted within the What's Your Trinity Story? project, this has meant facing the challenge of negotiating consent with interview participants. In particular, we have to be careful not to make public defamatory or incriminating content. Generally, for this type of content we hold the copyright ourselves, according to the wishes and any conditions set down by the participants.

Likewise, we want public contributors of other items such as flyers and photos, to be included in choices about whether their stories and artefacts can be shared online. As a shared representation of Trinity's history, we want to enable users to fully draw from the archive and even create new cultural artefacts from it; to reuse and recreate Trinity's past, into the future. We therefore license the content that we hold under a creative commons license, and actively encourage those using content from it to permit the same.

By default we have opted for a non-commercial, share-alike license, which means that any derivative work must carry a similar license and further permission must be sought for commercial use. We adopted this in part to protect contributors from commercial exploitation and in part to make the license seem more reasonable to contributors who are unsure about open licensing.

Summary

There are similarities between a community archive such as ours, and sites such as YouTube. Both sites host users' content, allow feedback, and build communities with an affinity based around their use or enjoyment of particular content. The community archive is, however, a fundamentally different locus of knowledge: It is owned and constructed by its communities and it reflects a specific theme or locality through the histories of its constituents.

In order for a community archive to be successful and valued by its communities, and to host quality contributions, it needs to gain the trust of potential contributors. They must trust that their rights will be respected and the content will be managed appropriately. Software is 'disinterested' to a greater degree than many other cultural artefacts, and is therefore easier to license liberally. Licensing a photograph, for example, can have greater implications for its subject than for its author. We have therefore tried to find a balance between our role in making the content accessible and our role as legal and moral guardians of what can be sensitive content.

By hosting well-researched and authoritative content, making the content widely accessible, and providing references to other information stores, we have tried to develop a model for peer archiving. It has already proved to be a vital resource for compiling and researching Trinity's history, giving insight to Trinity's local and national significance. We also hope that these discussions around artefacts, users, access and permissions will open discussions and possibilities for other cultural and community archive projects, long into the future.

Regional History Conference Paper
Panel proposal for A Second City Remembered: Rethinking Bristol's History
Exploring the theme 'the nature of community'

Edson Burton, Ryan Northey and Annie Berry (Trinity Community Arts)

Real, Imagined, and Digital Communities:
Constructing Trinity's History

Panel overview

Through the collation of oral, archival and digital content, the HLF funded project, *What's Your Trinity Story?* documents the history of the Trinity Centre in St Phillips, Bristol from the 1960s to today. Few buildings in Bristol present such an excellent example of the social and cultural change that has taken place within and around it. Since its deconsecration in 1976 the Trinity Centre in Bristol has passed through the hands of many groups and owners, developing into a major music and community venue for the city.

The building and its wide range of usage, however, challenges the very nature of 'community' and what this means in a historical context. Is Trinity's community the people living around it; is it the people using the building; or is it the group who owns the building? Can people clustered together only through their shared taste in music be called a community? Can the social or ethnic make-up of a management team be identified with a specific community? Furthermore, Trinity lies at the juncture of a number of inner-city districts and communities, the boundaries of which have developed and changed with time. While the building is an exemplar of multiculturalism within Bristol, does that really constitute cohesion?

As historians, we need to identify specific groups or eras to study, but to limit our project to a particular group or era would detract from Trinity's unique and diverse past. These questions have all impacted upon the work of the project, from its archival searches, to contemporary interviews, to our creation of a digital archive for the future. Within this panel of three presentations, *What's Your Trinity Story?* researchers will present three linked discussions to interrogate the notions of community that have arisen.

Church and Change (Annie Berry)

With Holy Trinity's closure as a church, the building has become a symbol of social change occurring at both local and national levels. In its final years, Trinity battled with a reduction in its congregation size and redevelopment of the land surrounding it. This included the need for some of its land to be purchased for the Easton redevelopment area and for adjoining parishes to be merged and rearranged. Questions were raised both locally and nationally about the future use of disused church buildings. What new spaces would (and could) be carved out of these old places: Should they be used by non-faith groups; how should decisions be made about which groups were preferred; how much should they pay for the buildings; how would they maintain them; and how did people react to the use of their church as a centre for the community? Through these questions, this section examines how such changes impacted on Holy Trinity's churchgoers and the community that they struggled to maintain.

Multiculturalism on the Margins (Edson Burton)

Trinity provides a fascinating barometer of the social and demographic shifts taking place in East Bristol and across Bristol generally. Over time, it has served different ethnic groups. Also, the centre and events it has hosted have been managed by an alliance of people from differing backgrounds and sexual orientations. Many of these are linked by the common theme of groups on the margins or in conflict with 'authority,' including reggae and punk from its early days as a music venue, to the free party scene of the 90s.

Ostensibly, the centre has always been multicultural, in the broadest sense, but on closer examination one can question what links were genuinely forged between and within groups using the centre. Did punks and reggae heads at joint anti-racist events actually form cohesive

'communities?' Did punks drawn from across the southwest constitute communities? Situated at the juncture of a number of Bristol's wards, Trinity stands outside and on the margins of definable geographic communities. Questions therefore arise about which community it serves or represents. The fact that it is owned by all, but claimed by none, is perhaps part of its enduring appeal.

Constructing an Archive (Ryan Northey)

This final presentation examines the online archive under construction within this project, as a future resource for Trinity and its users. The online archive offers a more accessible way to engage various communities from Trinity's past than a traditional archive, allowing people to share their own memories and historical artefacts. It also creates links between different items and eras and challenges divides by bringing together people who are now in different places.

By enabling online contributions, we intend for access to and construction of the archive to be a more democratic and shared process. This raises questions about the relationship between historians and the public and the extent to which this can be fully democratic. The archive has been constructed by Trinity using Free Software. As such, we have had use some organising and categorising principles in order to build it, as well as using editorial decisions to manage content loaded onto our site. This presentation provides an opportunity to reflect on our construction of an 'online community' and to evaluate whether this supposedly democratic process really has challenged previously dominant narratives. Or have the categories created only reified groups that were previously not self-aware?

Technology is constantly evolving, spurring greater possibilities for digital archiving. We have had to reconsider the way we hold or 'own' digital information, and how others can access and make use of it beyond the archive. As a shared representation of Trinity's history, we want contributors to be able to make full use of the archive and even create new things from it; to reuse and recreate Trinity's past, into the future. This has meant facing the additional challenge of negotiating consent with participants, to include them in choices about whether their stories and artefacts can be shared online.

Appendix 3 - Community Archives Network Proposal Meeting

Tuesday 20th July 2010, 2.30pm

City Museum (Queen's Road, BS8 1RL)

Present:

Tim Corum, Ray Barnett, John Williams, Gareth Salway, Vicky Chappell, Emma Harvey, Ryan Northey, Edson Burton, Miki Kelford, Madge Dresser, Kath Holden, Annie Berry, Mandy Donoghue, Vanessa Luk

1) Funding proposals

EH explained the HLF bid proposed by Trinity Community Arts to develop a Bristol Community Archives Network. AB explained the potential AHRC knowledge exchange bid that UWE would like to develop to complement Trinity's bid. Both potential partners would like to work with the Museums and Archives service to supplement their work in this area and develop links between community history resources across the city.

The question was raised of what 'digital resources' we are looking to archive. It was agreed that this could be any digital artefact, including audiovisual material, audio, digital photographs (or scans), or scanned documents – not solely oral history.

EB and RN gave an overview of the Trinity Centre's history, which emphasised its unique ability to engage the diverse populations who have used the centre, or who live and work in the area around it.

The following issues were discussed:

TC and RB emphasised that although M-Shed is very clearly about stories and testimony, the Museum and Archives curators, archivists and catalogues have to manage a vast array of other related (physical) material. Different media – including community-related material – would all potentially be placed in different collections and interlinked, rather than grouped as one separate collection.

GS indicated that the issue of smaller catalogues linking into larger networks was an ongoing area of work, and the project proposed presented an interesting opportunity for Bristol. The data being handled in the proposed projects would be relatively unique and involve specific permissions management and access requirements. Any standards developed must feed into national work being undertaken in this area. GS discussed the Collections Trust Culture Grid, which aims to bring together cultural collections and JW pointed to Access to Archives, which has successfully overcome this challenge.

TC and GS felt that they do have a standard for managing digital community material such as oral histories and audiovisual material, which would go on the EMu system currently used by the Museums. It was agreed that it would be helpful for the standards and systems used to be presented in a more user-friendly way for community groups, so that their resources could be integrated more easily. This development and training could potentially be offered through UWE's knowledge exchange activity.

It was agreed that an important piece of groundwork (before funding? or at the start of and funding?) would be to audit the numerous individuals, small history groups, local enthusiasts etc, who would potentially have material to contribute. RB mentioned the audit conducted by the Museum during Real Objects Real Lives (2005/6?). Although the Network proposed by Trinity could hold details of numerous groups and projects, EB emphasised that we would need to work with a smaller but realistic number of groups whose materials we could digitise or load onto the archive e.g. five former projects.

The sustainability of data and resources was questioned. If this collaboration would allow community projects to have their data hosted by Trinity or the Museum, e.g. full interviews, who pays for the large data capacity required? Do we follow a commercial model and charge groups to

host their project data and then store it for them longer-term? Some market research would be needed to investigate whether, and how much, people would be prepared to pay. EH stipulated that this would form part of any bid.

2) Funding possibilities

MDo and VL emphasised that any knowledge exchange activity needs to have a very clear and established starting point. Without the HLF bid confirmed and in place, it could be difficult to secure this funding. MDr asked if the HLF bid could include some funding to enable UWE to provide training. What are the HLF's limits as to how money is spent, and could a figure be allocated to UWE without putting that work to tender?

It was suggested that the AHRC bid could follow on from the start of the HLF bid as a second stage, once background research had taken place.

3) Strategy for collaboration

Museums and Archives were positive about the proposed projects and recognised their ability to offer valuable skills and resources. However, they are currently over-loaded with work towards M-Shed. They also need to discuss how the proposed bids fit in with their new service structure. They may have some capacity within the service to more actively collaborate in such projects after spring 2011, after M-Shed's opening.

GS explained that EMu and CALM are both web-enabled, but costs would need to be budgeted for writing scripts for web implementation.

4) Plan of action

EH to provide clarity of timetable, potential budgets for project and circulate to group.

All to consider possible sustainability models that can be explore as part of the project.

TC to provide a letter of support – consideration to be given as to exactly how they can support further down the line.

TC/RB to appoint key point of contact for any future correspondence regarding the bid development.

UWE and Trinity to meet up once the HLF bid is further developed (September) in order to discuss their collaboration/an AHRC bid.

KH/MD to also be able to provide a letter of support for the Trinity project in any case.