

Oral History Abstracts

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ABRAMS, Nathan

Date: 15 March 2022

Location: Bangor via Zoom

Total duration: 01:38:16.

Abstract:

In this interview, academic Nathan Abrams reflects on his relationship with his Jewish roots and his research into the Jewish community of North Wales. He begins the discussion by describing his upbringing in London, then his university experience at Oxford, and his move to North Wales, later in life. His discussion also touches on his memories of a visit to Israel; his children's relationship with their own Jewish roots; and his thoughts on the nature of a Welsh Jewish identity. In particular, he focuses in on his research, noting the portrayal of Jews in various forms of media, particularly the gendered dimension, and his important role in forming the *Jewish Film and Media Journal* and Bangor trail.

ABSE, Karen and Nathan

Date: 7 January 2019

Location: South Wales

Total duration: 01:35:07

Abstract:

Keren Abse was born on the first of December 1953 in London. She grew up in Golders Green, a community with a sizable Jewish population, and would visit her grandparents who lived in Wales. She has worked in a number of teaching positions, including as a Deputy Head teacher and then Head of a sixth form college. She retired in 2015. Keren has been involved with the National Union of Teachers, and her family is known to be politically active. During this interview Keren's cousin, Nathan Abse, is present as they discuss their family history. Keren and Nathan each share details about their families growing up, as well as what their parents were like. They share memories of member of their extended family, such as Keren's uncle Leo and their grandfather Wilfred. Keren considers her family's left-wing political affiliations and how they have affected her. She discusses her father, the author and poet Dannie Abse, and what it is like being his daughter, and both Nathan and Keren consider what their Jewish heritage means to them.

ADMON, Moshe

Date: 25 October 2022

Location: Israel via Zoom

Total duration: 01:55:56

Abstract:

In this interview, Moshe Admon covers a range of subjects varying from his childhood and adolescence in Swansea and his eventual move to Israel. As well as this, he reflects on his involvement with various Zionist youth groups and his family's involvement in the Swansea Jewish community.

ARRON, Bennett

Date: 25 January 2022

Location: Swansea via Zoom

Total duration: 1:49:12

Abstract:

Bennett Arron grew up in Port Talbot where his family was the only Jewish family before moving to Swansea as a child, then to London as an adult and finally back to Swansea. Bennett had a career as a writer in television before becoming a stand-up comedian. He also talks about the identity theft that he experienced.

BACKER, Dennis

Date: 17 May 2022

Location: Queensland via Zoom

Total duration: 02:06:14

Abstract:

In this interview, Dennis discusses a range of topics that vary from his paternal family's business in zip manufacturing and his maternal family's popper button business to how his parents came to settle in Wales and how his relationship with his faith has evolved over time.

BLACK, Ronald

Date: 28 March 2018

Location: Newport, Wales

Total duration: 01:48:49

Abstract:

The following is an interview conducted with Ronald Black who was born in Newport in 1944. Ronald is an only child and was brought up by his two Orthodox Jewish parents. Notably, Ronald was the only Jewish student in all levels of his education, however he does not identify any issues that arose from such a position. After secondary school, Ronald worked at Bollington's for three to four years. Once he obtained his driving licence, he took over running the family clothing business and eventually, adapting to changing circumstances, became a money lender. In addition, Ronald is well travelled and frequently visits Australia.

In the interview, Ronald reflects on his early responsibilities in helping his mother run the family business and care for his blind father. In addition, Ronald particularly focuses on the effects of the diminished Jewish community in Newport. Ronald is the guardian of the Newport prayer-house and is responsible in figuring out a use for the building now that there are only four members attending a service. Moreover, Ronald reflects upon his Jewish identity and remarks that he believes he is not as Jewish as he once was. In doing so, he comments on the difficulties of keeping kosher and going to synagogue, and he discusses his responsibilities at the Jewish cemetery which he perceives to be the last mark of his Jewish identity. Throughout the interview, Ronald discusses his involvement with Cardiff Maccabi and connections to Cardiff.

BLOOM, Doreen

Date: 26 November 2018

Location: Cardiff, Wales

Total duration: 1:30:59

Abstract:

Doreen Bloom was born in 1938 in Cardiff and grew up with two sisters. She attended school in Cyncoed and Llandaff and at age 16 joined a secretarial course at Cleves College; she then worked for her father, a car dealer. Her mother kept a religious household and was worked with WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organisation). Doreen was a member of several Jewish youth clubs growing up, where she met Melvin Bloom, whom she married in 1957. He worked as a furniture salesman. Doreen has been involved with several charity groups, such as CJYS (Cardiff Jewish Youth Society) and WIZO. She has a daughter and three sons. In this interview Doreen discusses her family, sharing memories of her parents and sisters as she grew up, as well as talking about her husband and where her children are now. She discusses her involvement with the synagogues in Cardiff (including the youth clubs she attended) and her charity work, particularly as a cook for a daycentre in Penylan. Doreen also considers the changes to the Jewish community in Cardiff over the years, and what being Jewish means to her.

BLOOM, Julian

Date: 29 March 2022

Location: Middlesex via Zoom.

Total duration: 01:57:16

Abstract:

Julian Bloom grew up in Merthyr Tydfil during the 1950s and 1960s. His father's family had lived in Merthyr from the 1800s whilst his mother's family lived in Cardiff from the 1850s. Julian left Merthyr to study law at Birmingham University and then moved to London to practise law.

BUSWELL, Cindy

Date: 16 November 2018

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 00:52:39

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Cindy Buswell who was born in Hammersmith in London in 1958. Cindy grew up in a semi-Orthodox household with her mother, father and older brother. However, Cindy claims that because of her mother's holocaust experience in the Second World War, her mother was more reluctant to fully follow Judaism. After finishing school, Cindy began work as a travel agent, and aged seventeen, married her boyfriend of two years, David, who she had met at a discotheque in Germany. Cindy moved to Cardiff thirty-two years ago, and has three children, two of whom follow Jewish customs.

In this interview, Cindy talks about her and her husband's fascinating journey of discovery into Cindy's family in Gelsenkirchen and their experiences during the holocaust. Due to a

lack of written records relating to their family history, certain elements of their story are missing, but David is planning to place a “Stolperstein”, golden plaques on the pavements in Gelsenkirchen in remembrance of Cindy’s uncle and grandparents who were killed during the atrocities of this period. Finally, at the end of the interview, Cindy discusses the role that she plays in the weekly luncheon club for senior members of the Cardiff Hebrew community.

CANTOR, Ralph

Date: 20 January 2019

Location: London

Total duration: 02:18:15

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Ralph Cantor who was born in Cardiff in 1939. Ralph grew up in an Orthodox household with his parents and older brother Dennis. After leaving Canton High School, Ralph studied at Cambridge University, doing medicine for two years and experimental psychology for one year. Ralph then worked in the North Middlesex Hospital in London, and Adam Brookes in Cambridge, before returning to Cardiff in 1966 to support his father after the death of his mother. Ralph worked as a GP in Ely, Llandaff and Newport Road and later worked as a portfolio doctor at Whitchurch Hospital before retiring fully in 2002. Ralph met his wife at a dinner-dance in London, and they have three children, Laura, Clare and Jonathan.

CAPLAN, Michael

Date: 22 November 2021

Location: Bristol via Zoom

Total duration: 01:57:41

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Michael Caplan who was born in 1965. Michael’s family ran a drapery business. They had shops in Weston-super-Mare, Cardiff and Newport, and as such, Michael has a good knowledge of the valleys and surrounding areas, despite now living in Bristol.

Regarding his family heritage, Michael reveals in the interview that he only recently discovered that his paternal family comes from Ozorków, whilst his maternal family moved to London in the early 1900s. Michael recollects a big community in Cardiff in his childhood, but that the Jewish community in Bristol was dwindling in the 1970s. Despite his strict, kosher upbringing, Michael has since moved away from the religion of Judaism in his adult life. He shares that whilst he feels he is a British Jew, he does not necessarily identify with being a practicing religious Jew.

CELNIK, Anita

Date: 3 September 2017

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 00:33:42

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Anita Celnik who was born in London in 1925. During the Second World War, Anita, along with her parents moved to Bletchley to avoid the Blitz, and from the age of sixteen to twenty, Anita was a clerical worker at Bletchley Park. In a strange twist of fate, Anita's husband Ivor, stationed in Bletchley as an Army Officer, had connections to Anita's father's family in Pontypridd, and so, Ivor was invited for a Friday night meal. After meeting for two further times, Ivor and Anita became engaged and were married happily. Sadly, Ivor passed away, and consequently Anita remarried Albert, a factory owner, with whom she also enjoyed a happy life. During her time in Cardiff, Anita was a member of the WIZO group at Cardiff United Synagogue and took parts in all aspects of Shul social life.

COHEN, Cyril

Date: 3 September 2017

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 00:27:18

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Cyril Cohen who was born in Cardiff in 1919. Cyril was brought up by his parents and older brother and sister but notes that he didn't have much contact with the local Jewish community. Cyril's father ran a chain of grocery shops in Cardiff and was affectionately known as the "Candle King" by many people because of his large stock of candles. During his time in school, Cyril attended Marlborough Road School, Cardiff High School and then went on to study at Cardiff Technical College. In later life, Cyril became actively involved in the Windsor Place Synagogue Council and the Building and Maintenance Committee and is described by Diana Soffa as being one of the "movers and shakers of the community".

COHEN, Hilda and David (son of Hilda)

Date: 5 June 2023

Location: Zoom with Interviewees in London

Total duration: 01:09:05

Abstract:

Here, Hilda and David discuss topics ranging from Hilda coming to the UK from Frankfurt on the Kindertransport, her childhood with the Sherman family, and career in Medicine to David's father's legal practise with Leo Abse.

DAVIS, Jessica

Date: 20 January 2023

Location: Monmouth via Zoom

Total duration: 01:00:29

Abstract:

During her interview, Jessica explores a variety of subjects ranging from her parents' relationship with religion, her family's military service, and her and her father's experiences as Jewish lawyers. In addition to this, she also discusses her time as a Jewish member of the Labour Party and her thoughts on the antisemitism scandal as well as her relation to David Baddiel and her thoughts on his work.

ELTON, Lionel

Date: 30 October 2018

Location: Abergavenny

Total duration: 01:33:09

Abstract:

Lionel Elton was born in Grangetown, Cardiff, on 3 March 1933 to shopkeepers Solomon and Edie (nee Kitchener) Erenberg. Lionel was the youngest of three children. His paternal grandparents were Polish migrants who had come to Britain in the late 19th century looking for work. His mother's family had fled Odessa at the turn of the 20th century, following the brutal beheading of his aunt's Cossack husband. Lionel attended synagogue on Cathedral Road until his Bar Mitzvah, after which time he stopped going to synagogue. Lionel describes himself as culturally Jewish, but not a believer. Throughout his teens and early 20s Lionel was a member of the Zionist youth club, Habonim; it was here that he met his wife of 48 years, Miriam (Mim). At the age of 18, Lionel was principal clarinettist with the National Youth Orchestra of Wales and set to take up a scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music. A freak accident on a Habonim camp, where he broke his jaw, put paid to his musical career. So, Lionel opted to study economics—in his words, “Applied bullshit,”—at Cardiff University, and upon completion of his degree moved to London, where he began a career in computing. After two years in the capital, Lionel and Miriam moved to Thornbury, Bristol, which is where their three children were born. Lionel was an active member of the Thornbury community, establishing a community centre in the Chantry, a film society, and the

Thornbury Arts Festival, which continues to this day. In 1977, after 22 years working for Honeywell Computers, Lionel set up his own firm. By this time, he was living in Amersham, Buckinghamshire. He retired to Abergavenny in 2010, six years after the death of Miriam. Lionel keeps himself “mentally alive and alert” in retirement, by teaching clarinet, saxophone, recorder, keyboard and musical theory.

FACTOR, David

Date: 17 October 2018

Location: Swansea

Total duration: 01:43:43

Abstract:

The following is an interview with David Factor who was born in Neath in 1940. David grew up in an Orthodox household with his mother, father and younger brother. For the first five years of his life, David lived with his maternal grandparents and his mother as his father, Harry, was a soldier in the Second World War. After leaving school, David began his training to become an accountant, and after passing his final exams in 1962, David became a chartered accountant in an accountancy firm, rising up the ranks to become the senior partner in the business. He retired in 2004, aged 64, having spent 40 years working in the accountancy profession. David met his wife Jacqueline at a dance in Swansea Synagogue in 1962, and they have two daughters both of whom have married out of the religion but do keep Jewish households.

In this interview, David talks about the roles that he plays within Swansea Synagogue, for example within the Board of Deputies, and the issues that these committees face with a diminishing Hebrew congregation in Swansea. He also describes how, through bi-monthly deliveries from Cardiff, the Jewish community in Swansea are able to remain kosher without a kosher butcher in the city itself. Finally, in the course of the interview, David discusses a recent family reunion with his extended family, where he met relatives from Canada, America and Australia.

FINE, Jack

Date: 9 July 2018

Location: Mountain Ash, Wales

Total Duration: 57:20

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Jack Fine who was born in Mountain Ash in 1932. During the Second World War in 1941, Jack's family were forced to move to Penrhiwceiber after a bomb wrecked the village. After finishing up his education, Jack joined the RAF [Royal Air

Force] and did his National Service in Singapore between 1951 to 1953 to help with the Korean War. After finishing up his service, Jack returned to South Wales and worked in the wholesale business in Cardiff which afforded him the opportunity to visit Hong Kong 33 times. Jack never married and has no children. He is Vice President of the local golf club and a bridge player.

In the interview, Jack discusses the Jewish community in the valleys, particularly Mountain Ash, Penrhiwceiber and the surrounding areas, where he notes that there was not much of a community when he was growing up. The nearest synagogue was in Aberdare, and, in the interview, Jack recalls his memories of it being a house in Seymour Street with approximately 20 to 30 people. Notably, Jack also has memories of attending Cathedral Road Synagogue when he lived in Cardiff. Growing up, Jack notes that his mother had no interest in Jewish observances and did not attend synagogue; however, she did keep separate cutlery and dining sets. In contrast, Jack's father regularly attended synagogue; however, this was due to the fact that all of his family were there. Significantly, Jack has memories of the Second World War and in the interview he reflects upon memories of a bombing and the living conditions of people. Jack notes that he received no religious concessions or exemptions in school, but that there was one exception where he got Yom Kippur off purely by chance. Jack was active in the Cardiff League Table-Tennis team growing up. In the interview, Jack reflects upon the causes for the diminished Jewish communities in South Wales and what the communities now look like.

FINE, Rabbi Yisroel

Date: 01 December 2021

Location: London via Zoom

Total duration: 02:11:41

Abstract:

Rabbi Yisroel Fine grew up in Swansea, Merthyr Tydfil where his father worked as a Reverend and Shochet. He studied in Gateshead Yeshiva as well as in Jerusalem before becoming a Rabbi in Liverpool, Newcastle, Wembley and Cockfosters in London. Yisroel was in Israel in the months before and after the Yom Kippur War.

FONER, Henry (accompanied by his wife, Judy Foner)

Date: 03 February 2022, 07 February 2022

Location: Israel via Zoom

Total duration: 01:27:14

Abstract:

Henry describes his family's life in pre-war Germany, the events that led to his journey on the Kindertransport to Swansea, his life with his adoptive parents, the Foners, and growing up in

Swansea. He talks about Jewish businesses in the city, his Jewish education and social life, school and the experience of wartime bombing of Swansea. He recalls his National Service in Northern Ireland, Egypt and Sudan. He moves on to discuss his time at university in Leeds, his trip to Israel where he met Judy who became his wife, his employment, and then life in Israel, his involvement with the Yad Vashem Museum, and the role of religion in his life. Finally, he talks about his Welsh-Jewish identity.

FRANKS, Selwyn and Ruth

Date: 20 June 2018

JHASW Reference Number: jhasw_oh_franks.ruth&selwyn_01-02

Total Duration: 01:27:40

Abstract:

The following is an interview conducted with Selwyn and Ruth Franks who are members of the Swansea Jewish community. Selwyn was born in Swansea and has lived there all his life, in contrast Ruth was raised in North London and moved to Swansea after marriage. Selwyn sat exams to enter ICI and was an engineering apprentice for nearly seven years; however, he later became self-employed and eventually obtained a stall in Swansea Market selling toys. Ruth previously held a position at the BBC; she gave this up upon her move to Swansea. Selwyn and Ruth have two children together who both now live in London.

In the interview, both Ruth and Selwyn touch upon the causes of Jewish emigration to Britain – for example, pogroms in Russia. Selwyn interestingly details the amalgamation of the “foreigner” shul and the “Englischer” shul which contrasts to today, where the synagogue building has been sold to LifePoint church and a room is rented for services. The aforementioned is one of the examples that best illustrates the diminished presence of the Swansea Jewish community, a theme which is constantly explored throughout. In relation to this, the image of the synagogue as the centre of Jewish social life is detailed, with organisations such as WIZO being fundamental in maintaining a community spirit. Details of growing up in Jewish households are noted – for example, Ruth notes she was raised in a kosher household and Selwyn discusses concessions made to Jewish children in the education system. Significantly, neither can recall any serious incidents of antisemitism. Both mention anecdotal stories regarding the Second World War. Importantly, both Ruth and Selwyn are active in the burial proceedings of Jewish individuals and discuss the issues facing the upkeep of Jewish cemeteries in the future. In addition, the importance of Jewish and Welsh identity is noted throughout the interview, significantly with Ruth detailing that she does not identify as Welsh.

FREEMAN, Lee

Date: 10 November 2021

Location: Israel via Zoom

Total duration: 02:06:53

Abstract:

Lee Freeman, earlier known as Rosalie Gillian Lewis, was born in Swansea in 19(?). She spent the first 18 years of her life living in the Jewish community in Swansea. Then she moved to London where she attended the London School of Economics, studying Geography and where she also met her future husband. After marriage, they firstly lived in the UK, changing the location a couple of times, followed by 10 years in Netherlands. They returned to UK, however moved to Israel in their 50s, where they still live together now. Lee has given birth to two children and worked in teaching and volunteering sector. In this interview Lee discusses, apart from the above mentioned, the origin of her immigrant grandparents and explores the lives of her family members. She compares the Jewish communities she has experienced in Swansea, Netherlands, and Israel. She reflects on how her education shaped her life and influenced her life choices and concludes the interview by describing the effects that COVID-19 had on her local community in Israel. She wrote her dissertation on the topic of the decline of the Jewish population in Swansea. At the time of the interview, she is about to be named an honouree by the National Hadassah Israel Organization for her positive impact and work with the community.

GABA, Thelma

Date: 23 January 2022

Location: Israel via Zoom.

Total duration: 1:49:59

Abstract:

Thelma Gaba was born in Maesteg, Wales in 1922. She spent the first part of her life there, only moving to Cardiff in 1944. She worked in her parents shop as a teenager, as an ambulance driver during the war. After marrying in 1947 she became a housewife, raising two daughters while participating in the community life as a volunteer. In 1968 she and her husband moved to Jerusalem, following one of their daughters. In this interview Thelma, accompanied by her daughter Susan, recalls the life stories of their ancestors and the difficulties experienced during their immigration. She reflects on her own experience of the Second World War and working as an ambulance driver in a munition factory. She describes the lives of Jewish communities from several Welsh towns – Maesteg, Port Talbot, Cardiff, Swansea, and Tredegar. She highlights the difficulty of accessing education as a girl in her youth and shares adventurous overseas undertakings of her mother and uncle.

GABOR, Eva

Date: 18 February 2018

Location: Cardiff, Wales

Total Duration: 55:32

Abstract: Eva Gibbor was born in 1928 in Kemnitz, Germany. She came to the UK in 1939 and she was taken in by the Kay family in Cardiff. She has lived in Cardiff ever since, except for a short period when the family moved to a farm in Abergavenny due to bombing during the war. She met her husband at the Jewish Youth Club and had a son shortly after getting married. She has worked as a tobacconist, seamstress, and a pharmaceutical representative and she has also had an active role in the Jewish community. She has many interests, including classical music, sewing, stone and woodworking, and travelling. In this interview Eva talks about the changes she has seen in Cardiff and the local Jewish community. She describes what everyday Jewish life was like in her younger days, including attending the synagogue, keeping a kosher home, and socialising in the community. She also reflects on her relationship with the members of the Kay family, especially the mother, Marjorie, and the daughter, Philippa, who was four months older than Eva.

GEWOLB, Sheila

Date: 18 July 2023

Location: Zoom with Interviewee in Oakham

Total duration: 01:22:03

Abstract:

In this interview, Sheila tells us about her family history including class tensions, experiences during World War Two, and her father's involvement with CAJEX. In addition to this, she tells us about her experiences researching her family's history and leaving and rejoining the Jewish community.

GIBB, Margot

Date: 08 December 2021

Location: Llantrisant via Zoom

Total duration: 01:21:24

Abstract:

In this interview, Margot discusses her move to the UK—first to Scotland then later to Wales—as well as her conversion to Judaism after the birth of her children. In addition to this, she describes her role in Jewish funeral preparations, what it was like for her children to grow up

in a majority non-Jewish neighbourhood and tells stories about various members of the Pontypridd community.

GIBBOR, Eva

Date: 18 February 2018

Location: Cardiff, Wales

Total Duration: 55:32

Abstract: Eva Gibbor was born in 1928 in Kemnitz, Germany. She came to the UK in 1939 and she was taken in by the Kay family in Cardiff. She has lived in Cardiff ever since, except for a short period when the family moved to a farm in Abergavenny due to bombing during the war. She met her husband at the Jewish Youth Club and had a son shortly after getting married. She has worked as a tobacconist, seamstress, and a pharmaceutical representative and she has also had an active role in the Jewish community. She has many interests, including classical music, sewing, stone and woodworking, and travelling. In this interview Eva talks about the changes she has seen in Cardiff and the local Jewish community. She describes what everyday Jewish life was like in her younger days, including attending the synagogue, keeping a kosher home, and socialising in the community. She also reflects on her relationship with the members of the Kay family, especially the mother, Marjorie, and the daughter, Philippa, who was four months older than Eva.

GLASS, Norma

Date: 28 January 2019

Location: Swansea

Total duration: 01:33:22

Abstract:

Norma Maria Glass MBE was born in Swansea on the 6th of December 1938. Norma grew up over her parents' grocery store, which was located on farmland owned by her maternal grandparents. She attended Gendros primary, then went on to the local grammar school, where she was Head Girl. Not wanting to leave Swansea, Norma opted to train as a pharmacy dispenser with Boots, rather than go to medical school in London. In 1963, Norma married Martin (Mordecai) Glass, an architect. They had two daughters, Deborah and Judith. Norma has been a member of Swansea's Orthodox community all her life, and in this interview describes the changes the community has seen over her 80 years. She has been on Chevra Kadisha for 50 years, and sensitively describes the burial process as practiced in Britain. Norma has selflessly dedicated her life to promoting religious tolerance: as she says, "I break

down barriers by outreach, and I educate and illuminate.” Norma served on the Board of Deputies, SACRE, and the Community Security Trust, and was a founding member of Peacemala. Norma has been recognised for her good works. She was awarded with an MBE in 200), and the inaugural Carwyn Jones’ award in 2009.

GLASSER, Louisa

Date: 8 February 2018

Location: Cardiff, Wales

Total Duration: 01:01:32

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Lulu Glasser who was born in Cardiff in 1921. Lulu has a younger sister and discusses their itinerant upbringing living in Cardiff, Porthcawl, and Belfast, with their later move to Ireland driven by her parents’ acceptance of an offer to run the Jewish Institute in Belfast. Lulu was evacuated from Belfast during the war and lived in Ireland during the period of sectarian violence. She married her husband in August 1974, after which she stopped working, assisted her husband with his business, and travelled to Israel several times. Importantly, Lulu has been actively involved in a multitude of voluntary and charity activities.

In the interview, Lulu explores being Jewish and the way her Jewish identity has evolved and developed. Interestingly, she reflects on the relationship between both her Jewish and Welsh identity. Lulu comments on the prevalence of the Jewish community in Cardiff today, and contrasts it with her own experience of the Jewish community throughout her lifetime. A considerable amount of Lulu’s interview focuses on her active involvement with Jewish associations including WIZO and JACS.

GOLDSTONE, Cyril

Date: 23 January 2018

Location: Swansea, Wales

Total Duration: 01:13:27

Abstract:

The following is an interview conducted with Cyril Goldstone who was born in Swansea in 1923. Cyril was the second of four children and was raised in a Jewish household. Although temporarily working for Swansea Guildhall, Cyril later attended university and acquired a BA in German and Philosophy. Following this accomplishment, Cyril enrolled for military service at the age of 22, he was deployed in West Africa where he avoided combat by working as a driver. However, Cyril also experienced the effects of war in Swansea, where he was actively involved in aiding with the casualties of the Blitz. Once discharged, Cyril obtained a Diploma in Social Science, and later found himself articled as a solicitor, a career

which he was committed to for over 60 years. Also, following his discharge, Cyril met his wife Maisie with whom he had two children with. In addition, Cyril touches on his involvement in a plethora of sporting activities, including swimming and table tennis.

In the interview, Cyril reflects on life within a Jewish household. Moreover, the presence of Jewish community is touched upon, as Cyril recollects that he attended school with only four or five other Jewish children. Adding to this, Cyril emphasises the declining presence of the Jewish community in Swansea, the changes it has experienced, and his own declining faith. Importantly, Cyril notes that he does not believe he has experienced any antisemitism throughout his life. However, Cyril does interestingly note that he has always felt inherently different to others, a feeling which he labels as a ‘Them and Us’ sentiment.

GOLTEN, Des

Date: 17 March 2019

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 01:21:32

Abstract:

Desidier (Des) Golten was born in Kostolla, a small village in Slovakia in 1922. One of two boys, he spent the first 10 years of his life in Žilina, living above his father’s and paternal grandfather’s engineering workshop. In 1932, his family moved to Prague, where his father established a manufacturing business. In 1939, Des and his family were sponsored by the British Board of Trade to emigrate to Wales, to set up an engineering works on the new Treforest Industrial Estate. The Germans had already invaded Prague, so Des recalls how the family had to hide their intention to leave the country, and how stressful their escape through Germany to Holland was. Once in Wales, Des spent a year at Whitchurch Grammar School, then did an engineering degree at Cardiff University. He was called-up in 1943-44 and spent the rest of the war making anti-aircraft guns in Newcastle. After the war, he worked at his father’s factory, Metal Product (Treforest) Ltd. A talented by “lazy” violinist, he played in the Pontypridd orchestra, and it was here that he met his future wife, Ina. They were married 63 years, and have one son, Danny. Des’s father was a founder of the Cardiff Reform Synagogue. Des used to attend synagogue regularly, though these days only goes on Holy Days and special occasions. He says of himself “I’m not a religious Jew”, instead he describes himself as a political Jew.

HAKIM, Estelle (with Sally Halon)

Date: 23 January 2024

Location: Zoom with Interviewee in Hertfordshire

Total duration: 01:38:46

Abstract:

In this interview, Estelle takes us from her childhood in Swansea and Sheffield and her memories of both during the Second World War, to her work helping people flee Russia and at the Jewish Museum in Manchester. During this time, she also discusses the impact of rationing, both during and after the war, as well as describing various businesses her family ran.

HALON, Estelle

Date: 23 January 2024

Location: Zoom with Interviewee in Hertfordshire

Total duration: 01:38:46

Abstract:

In this interview, Estelle takes us from her childhood in Swansea and Sheffield and her memories of both during the Second World War, to her work helping people flee Russia and at the Jewish Museum in Manchester. During this time, she also discusses the impact of rationing, both during and after the war, as well as describing various businesses her family ran.

HAMILTON, Stephen

Date: 9 November 2018

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 01:17:21

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Stephen Hamilton who was born in Merthyr in 1954. Stephen grew up in an Orthodox household consisting of his parents, Leslie and Tanya, and two sisters, Sharon and Susan. When Stephen was 10, his family moved to Cardiff where he attended Llandaff City Primary School and Cantonian High School. Stephen then completed a one-year foundation course in accountancy at the Glamorgan Polytechnic, now University of South Wales, and subsequently spent the rest of his working life as an accountant. Due to familial circumstances, Stephen married his wife Joanna twice, once in a Reform synagogue in Manchester and then in Cathedral Road in July 1978. They have two children, Jamie and Thalia who both follow in the Jewish traditions.

In this interview, Stephen talks about his time spent as a goalkeeper for the Maccabi team for Cardiff and, later on, for Great Britain. He also reminisces about his time spent in the charity ex-professionals' team, playing alongside former sportsmen such as Gareth Edwards and Tommy David, and of the embarrassment that he felt when being asked for autographs by fans who thought he was a famous person. During the course of the interview, Stephen also

discusses his father's time as the doctor in Cardiff City Football Club, and how he met and aided Ida Nudel, a famous refusenik, on a club trip to Moscow, something which, had he been caught, could have resulted in a banishment to the "salt-mines of Siberia" by the KGB. Finally, Stephen mentions his more recent involvement in the organisation and distribution of the Bimah magazine and of the difficulties that the Bimah magazine faces in organising advertising due to a lack of Jewish businesses in Cardiff.

HARRIS, Peter

Date: 15 November 2023

Location: Zoom with Interviewee in Cheshire

Total duration: 01:50:52

Abstract:

In this interview, Peter tells us about his family from Merthyr Tydfil, growing up in Salford, and his family's various careers in Law, Medicine, and Journalism.

HARRIS, Shirley

Date: 9 December 2018

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 00:46:42

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Shirley Harris who was born in Cardiff in 1927. After leaving school aged sixteen, Shirley moved to London during the midst of the Blitz to complete a year at RADA, The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. Following this, she returned to Cardiff to teach speech and drama both privately and in a number of schools. Shirley met her husband Louis, "over the garden wall", and married him in 1952 aged twenty-five. They have two children who both follow the Jewish traditions.

In this interview, Shirley discusses her war-time experiences of rationing and air-raids in Cardiff in the Second World War. She draws particular attention to her father's role in the Observer Corps, tracking enemy aircraft flying over Cardiff during the course of the war. She also speaks about her time spent organising three Hanukkah plays that took part as part of the Cardiff Reform Synagogue's celebration of this festival, and of her search for life-sized candles that could be used as props for the plays. Finally, Shirley reminisces about her father's chain of greengrocers that were located in a number of valleys towns and remembers how groceries like cheese, butter and sugar were packaged and sold.

HOFFMAN, Ian

Date: 3 March 2023

Location: Israel via Zoom

Total duration: 02:00:07

Abstract:

During this interview, Ian explores a variety of topics ranging from his family's various businesses across the years in Nelson, Ystrad Mynach, and Cardiff to his own family history journey and his discoveries in that process. In addition to this, he also discusses the Jewish community of Ystrad Mynach and his decision to move to Israel.

HYMAN, Maurice

Date: 03 December 2021

Location: Israel Via Zoom

Total duration: 02.24.24

Abstract:

Maurice Hyman was born in Swansea in 1947. He attended Dynevor Secondary school in Swansea, and was later awarded a place on a Physics degree at Essex University. Whilst at university he met his future wife Marilyn, who he married in 1969. Having lived and worked in varying locations, including London and Buenos Aires, at the age of 32 Maurice and his wife settled in Haifa in Israel, where the couple still live today. In this interview Maurice provides detailed information regarding his grandparents and extended family. Maurice also talks about his three sons and only daughter, who died at a young age, but whose untimely death led to the establishment of the Talia Trust which has helped over 2000 children to date. Maurice also offers detailed information about Hebrew practices, organisations, and buildings in Swansea, South America and Haifa, and touches upon the impact of Covid 19 on religious ceremonies. Maurice also speaks about his experiences of anti-Semitism, both in school and in Buenos Aires following the military junta's overthrow of the Peron government. Particularly poignant is an email that Maurice received from a boy who had administered a severe beating to him at school, 40 years after the event.

IGRA, Barbara

Date: 7 December 2021

Location: Farnham, Surrey via Zoom

Total duration: 1:26:25

Abstract:

An account of Barbara's parents' upbringing, her father in London, and her mother in Ebbw Vale, with childhood memories of her wartime relocation there, Jewish businesses, staying in Porthcawl, her subsequent life in London and her current life in Farnham, including coping with the Covid pandemic. She recalls her mother's family origins from Belarus, her grandfather's time in South Africa, and other members of her family who moved from Ebbw Vale to Cardiff, the USA and Australia.

JACOBS, Adrian

Date: 20th January

Location: London

Total duration: 01:13:09

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Adrian Jacobs who was born in Cardiff in 1961. Adrian grew up in a strictly Orthodox household with his parents and younger brother Martyn. After leaving Llanedeyrn High School, Adrian spent a year in Israel studying at a yeshiva, before returning back to the UK to study medicine at St Bartholomew's Hospital in London. After two years of studying medicine, Adrian transferred to study Animal Physiology and later took up accounting where he worked for BDO Stoy Hoywood for the rest of his working life. Adrian met his wife in London when he was 19 and they have four children, all of whom are strictly Orthodox. As well as his accountancy, Adrian plays an active role in the North-West London Jewish community, being the Police-Liaison Officer for the area and also the chairman of the Sage Nursing Home amongst other responsibilities.

JACOBS, David

Date: 30 November 2021

Location: London via Zoom

Total duration: 01:48:11

Abstract:

David Jacobs was born in Manchester in 1951 but has lived and worked in London for many years. He has had a varied career in the Jewish community and is currently President of the Jewish Genealogical Society. However, David has previously worked in Reform synagogues, been Chairman of the Jewish Historical Society and founded the Jewish Museum of the East End. One of David's key achievements has been his pioneering work recording Jewish oral histories, including his interviews of the declining Jewish community in Merthyr Tydfil. Throughout the interview David reflects on this work and his connection to Wales, emphasising the role that chance has played in his career. With one of the largest private collections of Jewish material in the country, David's role in the preservation of Anglo-Jewish history and memory is considerable. He discusses his own family history and involvement in wider historical events, like the First World War. In this interview David shares his

experience of Jewish identity and religion and how Jewish identity compares across the United Kingdom. He also touches on the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on himself and the wider Jewish community.

JACOBS, Zelda

Date: 17 January 2018

Location: Newport, Wales

Total Duration: 00:44:11

Abstract:

Zelda Jacobs was born in Cwmfelinfach in South Wales, in 1924. Zelda attended primary school in Cwmfelinfach and secondary school in Hengoed. After working for Northern Aluminium in Rogerstone from the age of 17 to 22, Zelda got married. Zelda met her husband in 1946 and moved to Newport, where she started her own family.

During the interview, Zelda discusses the synagogue she attended in Newport and the changes she has seen with a congregation of over 200 people reduced to around 24. Zelda also shares her memories of the festivals, celebrations and services that took place at the synagogue.

The interview gives an insight into the history of the Jewish community within South Wales, from Zelda's early memories of observing Sabbath with her parents and sister, to the festivals held in Old Tredegar and the continuation of Jewish traditions through her own children and grandchildren.

JOSEPH, Anthony

Date: 13 May 2018

Location: Cardiff Reform Synagogue, Moira Terrace, Cardiff

Total Duration: 00:26:13

Abstract:

The following is an oral history interview conducted with Dr Anthony Joseph. Anthony was born in 1937 in Birmingham, the elder of two sons, and qualified as a medical practitioner in 1961. He has married three times and has several children. Outside of medicine, Anthony's major interest has been in genealogy and conducting research into his own family heritage, and he is Emeritus President of the Jewish Genealogical Society, founded in 1992.

Throughout the interview, Anthony discusses his interest in genealogy – specifically, Jewish genealogical research. Anthony notes that his interest in genealogy was initiated from a young age and his research has been aided by those who took an interest before him. In the interview, Anthony reflects upon the difficulties and complexities he has faced tracing his

family history, naming the shortcomings of the English documentation system as one of the limitations. For example, several documents, such as birth certificates, are discussed throughout; however, the missing dates of births and failure to list descendants makes the English system ‘deficient.’ Moreover, Anthony draws attention to the length of the process, with his own family history still filled with gaps despite his own personal investment of 70 years into his heritage. Interestingly, in detailing how many of his relatives ended up in Australia, Anthony draws attention to Jewish immigration and pinpoints the cause of this movement as being a result of the gold rush of the 1840s. Some reflection on the extent of his family’s religious beliefs is included in the interview and Anthony personally states that he is not as religious as his ancestors might have been.

JOSEPH, Mervyn

Date: 3 December 2018

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 01:52:35

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Mervyn Joseph who was born in Merthyr Tydfil in February 1938. Mervyn grew up in an Orthodox Jewish household with his mother, Gertrude, father, Nathan, commonly known as “Nay,” and his older sister. After leaving school, Mervyn went to university in Cardiff to study BSc Botany and Zoology. Following his degree, Mervyn worked for a period of time in his uncle’s optometry business in London, and returning to Cardiff, obtained the relevant qualifications needed for him to become an optician. Mervyn met his wife Ruth at a party in Penylan, and they have two children, both of whom follow in the Jewish traditions.

In this interview, Mervyn recounts growing up in a kosher household in Merthyr, and he discusses how Jewish households were able to obtain kosher meat, either through a butcher which had a kosher counter, or through the ritual killing of individual animals by the “Shochet” of Merthyr, Reverend Grey. During the course of the interview, Mervyn also talks about his time spent redeveloping derelict buildings, and how he discussed one building project he was working on in Caerphilly with Prince Charles at Saint James’ Palace. Finally, Mervyn talks about his involvement in the Hillel House and Carmel Housing Association Projects, working alongside prominent members of the Cardiff Jewish community such as Harold Rubenstein and Gerald Rapport.

JOSEPH, Simon

Date: 08 May 2024 & 15 May 2024

Location: London via Zoom

Total duration: 01:26:47 & 00:40:34

Abstract:

Doctor Simon Joseph was born in Newport, during the Blitz in 1940 and attended non-Jewish primary and secondary schools in his hometown, but also attended Newport Congregation cheder for his Jewish education. After leaving school, Simon went to Oxford University where he studied medicine, and then went on to work as a House Surgeon at Westminster Hospital, and later in his career became a Consultant Cardiologist at several different hospitals. Later in his career, Simon worked with heart transplants and pacemakers. Simon married in 1969, and has two children, one male and one female, who are now both in their fifties. In this interview, Simon relates how he was present at the first ever UK heart transplant, and how he invented and patented the first implantable, mode-programmable, cardiac pacemaker. As well as talking at length about his parents and grandparents, Simon also discusses his teenage rebellion against his Jewish faith, along with his continuing struggle to synthesize the cultural and religious aspects of Judaism, converting from an Orthodox to a Reform faith. Simon further talks about his enduring connection with, and love for Wales.

KAHN, Laurence

Date: 22 August 2018

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 02:12:39

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Laurence Kahn who was born in Cardiff in 1945. Laurence grew up in Canton with his parents, Hyman and Sophie, in a non-strict Jewish household and after leaving Canton High School, aged 16, began training as an accountant under Benny Freedman in 1961. Soon after this, Laurence established his first accountancy practice in Park Place, Cardiff and in later years, took on the running of an accountancy practice in Aberdare. Laurence, now retired, lives in Penylan with his wife Suzie and has two grandchildren and many great-grandchildren.

In this interview, Laurence gives an interesting glimpse into his past, telling stories of his father's time in the Transport Regiment during the Second World War and giving fascinating vignettes of his grandparents. He also talks in detail about his experiences leading VCS, [Voluntary Community Service] alongside Robert Davies and his role in helping to organise summer camps which brought young people from around Europe to Cardiff, as well as his role in founding and running Butetown Carnival. Finally, he gives an eye-opening insight into some of the problems that the dwindling Jewish community in Cardiff face today, particularly in regard to the smooth running of Penylan House and issues that the Reform and Orthodox Jewish community face in attracting and retaining a Jewish celebrant community.

KATZ, Yitz

Date: 23 March 2022, and 31st March 2022

Location: London via Zoom.

Total duration: 00:58:35 and 01:22:28

Abstract:

Yitz Katz parents were both German refugees fleeing the Nazis during World War Two and arrived in Wales in 1942. They lived in Perth, where Yitz was born, and moved to Cardiff a few years later. Yitz returned to Germany in search of information about what happened to his family during the Holocaust. He has also been involved in a variety of charitable works.

KAYE, Philip

Date: 29 November 2018

Location: Cardiff, UK

Total duration: 1:57:56

Abstract:

Philip Kaye was born in Cardiff in 1955. In between trips to Israel as a young man, Philip worked in the family business MA Rapport and Company, qualified as a teacher, and eventually set up his own company, Kaye's of Cardiff which is still running today. In this interview, Philip discusses his early family life, as well as his broader family history. Philip reflects upon the Jewish community in Cardiff during the 1960s and 1970s and shares his own experiences as a volunteer in Israel during the Yom Kippur War, as well as at home in Cardiff for various community initiatives. Philip also describes his time as a delegate to the Maccabi Games in 1977, and his recent appointment as Honorary Consul to the Israeli Embassy in London.

KAYE, Sheila

Date: 5 December 2018

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 01:33:31

Abstract:

Sheila Kaye was born in 1930 in London. At the age of 16 she moved to Cardiff with her younger brother and, after finishing her education, had several jobs as a shorthand typist. She married Bernard Kaye, a man from a family of butchers, in 1950 and worked with him in their butcher shop on Frederick Street. Later they moved their shop to Caroline Street, and after they retired, Sheila and Bernard rented out property. They have four children. In this interview Sheila shares details, both of Bernard's family and her own. She recalls living with Bernard and their experience running a kosher butcher shop and discusses her lifelong experience with the Jewish community in Cardiff, along with what being Jewish means to

her. Finally, Sheila explores personal documents and photos relevant to her family and the Jewish community in Cardiff, sharing thoughts, memories and stories they bring.

KESSLER-HARRIS, Alice

Date: 27 March 2024

Location: New York via Zoom

Total duration: 01:08:53

Abstract

In this interview, Alice Kessler-Harris relates how her parents fled Nazi persecution in Prague during the Second World War, eventually ending up in a refugee camp in Kent, England, before moving to Leicester, where Alice was born in 1941. Alice also tells how from about 1946 to 1945 her parents resettled in Cardiff, where Alice spent her formative years, and her father worked as a shoe manufacturer, and Alice attended Cardiff High School for Girls. Following the death of her parents, Alice and her two brothers emigrated to the USA where Alice studied for a PhD in History. Alice reminisces about her days at Cardiff High School for Girls, speaks poignantly and movingly of her own mother's death in Cardiff, when she (Alice) was still a child, and relates how she and her brothers were fostered out to a Protestant family during her mother's long illness from cancer, which had a profound impact on Alice's Jewish faith. Alice further reflects on her time spent studying for a PhD in History at an American university, examines her own Jewish/Welsh identity, alludes to her maternal grandmother's death in Auschwitz, and also comments upon the current conflict in Gaza.

KIRBY, Nick

Date: 29 March 2021

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 00:44:22

Abstract:

Nick Kirby was born in 1955 to Eva Maria Lichtenstein and Herbert Sigmund Kirschbaum, who were refugees of the Nazi regime. Eva Maria, originally from Czechoslovakia, fled to Cardiff in 1934, while Herbert Sigmund was from Nuremberg, Germany and left for Cardiff during Kristallnacht in 1938. Later in Merthyr Tydfil, Nick's father would co-partner a business called OP Chocolates. While celebration of formal Jewish traditions was limited to certain holidays in Nick's family, he describes his mother and father as very spiritual and faithful people.

KOPPELL BROWN, Gabby

Date: 21 January 2022

Location: London via Zoom

Total duration: 02:13:34

Abstract:

Gaby Koppel Brown was born in Cardiff in 1957 but has lived and worked across the UK, now residing in London. She has worked as a television producer, journalist and has written a novel based on her own experiences growing up as a child of a Holocaust survivor. One of Gaby's key achievements was her role as a producer on the BBC's Holocaust Memorial Day program. Throughout this interview, Gaby reflects on her family history from both her mother's and father's sides. Both fled Europe because of the anti-Semitism they faced, and she notes the impact that this trauma had on all of their lives. She also discusses the entrepreneurship of her family and the various businesses that they set up in South Wales as refugees. Gaby recounts her childhood, including what it was like growing up as an ethnic minority in Cardiff and the fondness she holds for the city. She also shares her experiences with the Jewish faith, moving from a largely unreligious upbringing to becoming an active member of an Orthodox synagogue. She also touches on how the Covid pandemic has affected this community.

KROTOSKY, Arnold and Freda

Date: 4 May 2018

Location: Bournemouth, England

Total Duration: 01:32:05

Abstract:

The following is an oral history interview conducted with Arnold and Freda Krotosky. Born in 1922 and 1930 respectively, both Arnold and Freda note the long distances they had to travel to synagogue. During the Second World War, Arnold was a member of the Home Guard for 12 months and joined the Royal Air Force on his 18th birthday. However, his inadequate eyesight afforded him the position of a butcher. The importance of the Krotosky's family butcher business is highlighted throughout. Following the conclusion of the war, Arnold met Freda and courted her for several years before receiving permission to marry her in 1951. They had two children together and moved to Bournemouth in 1996 to live out their retirement.

In the interview, Arnold and Freda reflect upon what drove their families to immigrate to Cardiff. Both Arnold and Freda note that they do not believe they encountered many problems being the only Jewish family in their communities. However, Arnold fleetingly notes one isolated incident of discrimination, and Freda reflects upon her experience of being caned for deliberately missing morning prayers and excluded from games with other children. For the most part, Freda attributes these actions to ignorance. Regarding the Jewish

household, Arnold notes that there was some degree of equality in the gendered breakdown of chores. Throughout the interview, the decline of the Jewish community is discussed and perhaps best evidenced by the diminished presence of kosher butchers. In doing so, a comment on the relationship between the Bournemouth and Cardiff Jewish community is provided. Interestingly, the process of making meat kosher is outlined. Regarding volunteer work, Arnold highlights the role of Jewish ex-servicemen in relieving nursing staff in hospitals at Christmastime. Both Arnold and Freda identify as both Welsh and Jewish and do not believe these two identities are separate. Finally, Freda briefly mentions how they do try to support Israel yet do not wholly agree with all government policies.

KYIET, Derek

Date: 26 October 2018

Location: Cardiff, Wales

Total duration: 01:16:00

Abstract:

Derek Kyiet was born in Chalfont St Peter, Buckinghamshire, in 1942. He was brought up in an Orthodox household in Stamford Hill, North London. Every sabbath Derek spent Friday night, Saturday and Sunday afternoon at the local synagogue. Derek went to a Jewish grammar school and spent four afternoons a week and Sunday mornings learning Hebrew. When Derek was 11 his father, a tailor in the East End of London, died. Derek left school at 15 and after a brief stint as a hairdresser and working in a menswear shop became a market stall trader. In 1962 he moved to Cardiff. Derek worked the markets around South and West Wales until 1982, when his voice gave out. Derek's recollections of life as a market stall holder are peppered with humorous anecdotes. Derek then went into the life assurance industry and took up public speaking as a hobby. He retired in 2006. Derek married Maggie in 1971 and has two daughters. Derek attends the Reform Synagogue in Cardiff and is an active member of the congregation: he's a warden, lay-reader and since 1986 has headed the Chevra Kadisha.

KYIET, Margaret

Date: 14 November 2018

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 00:52:02

Abstract:

Margaret Elizabeth Kyiet was born in 1945. The eldest of three children, she grew up in Tonypany in the Rhondda Valley. Margaret was brought up a Methodist, but when she met Derek she chose to convert to Judaism. Under the tutelage of Rabbi Gerhardt Graf, Margaret went through an intense process of training. She learnt to read Hebrew and studied the

festivals and history of the Jews. In this conversation, Margaret describes the anxiety she felt on the day of her interview at the Beth Din in London. Margaret and Derek married in a London synagogue with more than 200 guests. Following her conversion, Margaret became an active member of Cardiff Reform Synagogue (CRS). In the interview, Margaret outlines the work she does at the synagogue: she hosts school-groups, cleans the religious silverware, types up weekly readings, sends birthday cards to older members of the community, makes burial shrouds, and is part of the catering group. Margaret jokes that it is her husband Derek who volunteers her for all the work. Margaret and Derek have two daughters, neither of whom attend synagogue on a regular basis, and a grandson who did his Bar Mitzvah at the Cardiff Reform Synagogue. Margaret explains that the synagogue's congregation has dwindled over the years as members age or move away.

LANE, Marian

Date: 25 January 2019

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 02:10:58

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Marian Lane, who was born in London in 1940. Marian grew up in a semi-Orthodox household in London, Llwydcoed and Aberdare before moving to Cardiff when she was 12. After leaving Cardiff High School for Girls aged 16, Marian, alongside her friend Enid completed a one-year secretarial course at Cardiff Technical College before working for a number of years in Cadbury Brothers. Following this, Marian travelled to Argentina where she visited relatives in Río Tercero and Buenos Aires, working at English Electric. Marian met her ex-husband Geoffrey at a Reform youth meeting held at Rabbi Graf's house, and they have two children together, one of whom lives in Jerusalem and is a strictly religious Jew, and another who is a solicitor who lives in London and has married out of the faith. Marian has contributed greatly to the Jewish community in Cardiff, helping to run the reform cheder at Moira Terrace in the 1980s, and also organising Schnipps, a Jewish youth club held in her home, during the same period.

LATTE, David

Date: 24 September 2017

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 00:38:41

Abstract:

The following is an interview with David Latte who was born in Cardiff in 1935. David was an only child and was brought up by his parents who ran a series of tobacconist shops and kiosks in the City. David lost his father and mother at a young age, and was forced to live

with an aunt, meaning that his education was cut short as he had to find paid employment. Much of David's working life has revolved around cars, first working for car retailers such as Len Dovey and Leo Black, and later starting his own car business. David has been married twice and has a total of three children.

LAWRENCE, Ray

Date: 25 April 2022

Location: Cardiff via zoom

Total duration: 01:27:08

Abstract:

Ray Lawrence was born in Leeds in 1948 and currently resides in Cardiff. He had lived in several UK cities due to his career in the nightclub business, before settling in Cardiff after marrying his wife in 1976. He currently works as an administrator for the Cardiff United Synagogue and has also sat as a magistrate in recent years. Throughout this interview Ray reflects on this work, discussing how he balanced his Jewish faith with his unsociable work hours and the enjoyment of his current position. He shares his thoughts on how the Jewish community in Cardiff has changed over the years and the challenges it faces in the future. Throughout, he touches upon the need for religious pragmatism and adaption in the contemporary world. Ray also highlights his family experiences over the years, including raising his children Jewish and the loss of his wife. He recalls the Covid pandemic, and the measures put in place by the synagogue to protect and support its members. He also recounts his parent's experiences in the East End of London, such as the antisemitism exposed during the march of Oswald Mosley and his supporters.

LEE, Alison

Date: 13 December 2018

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 01:26:25

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Alison Lee who was born in Cardiff. She grew up in a household with her parents, two sisters and brother. Alison was brought up as a Christian, her mother was a Baptist, but she says that she always had a "niggling" that something wasn't right, and a curiosity about Judaism. After attending many different churches, and still not feeling completely right, she decided to take up her study of Judaism, starting off with attending an O-Level Judaism Class at Coleg Glanhavren. She then began to have lessons with the then Reform rabbi, Elaine Rothman and after passing the Reform Beth Din, became a member of the Cardiff Reform Synagogue. However, Alison still didn't feel completely certain, and so started to have lessons with the Orthodox rabbi, realising that her "thinking was more on-par", with this branch of Judaism. As part of the process of becoming an

Orthodox Jew, Alison was required by the Orthodox Beth Din to spend time living with an Orthodox family in Manchester, which she greatly enjoyed. Alison is now part of the Cardiff United Synagogue and is a rep on the Council for the Jewish Community, and takes part in shomering for the United Synagogue.

LENCZNER, Alistair

Date: 11 May 2021

Location: London via Zoom

Total duration: 1:27:33

Abstract:

Alistair describes his childhood in Cardiff as the son of a Polish Engineering lecturer – who came to Britain as one of ‘The Boys’ – and how his father not only shaped his perspective on Jewish and European identities but also his work as an engineer. Other notable topics include reflections on his travels with work in France, Spain and Italy as well as his visits to Buchenwald and Tereinstadt which were made in an effort to further connect with his late father.

LEVI, Michael

Date: 26 June 2024

Location: Cardiff, via Zoom

Total duration: 01:34:18

Abstract:

Michael Levi was born in the north of England in 1948, and since 1963 has lived in Manchester, Oxford and Cambridge, finally settling in Cardiff in 1975. Michael’s maternal Grandparents emigrated from Koenigsberg in East Prussia, and his father’s parents who were from Westphalia died in Sachsenhausen concentration camp, from where Michael came directly to the UK. As a child Michael attended Barrow Grammar School and Carmel College where he received his Jewish Education. Michael continued his religious education in Carmel College in Manchester, where his parents moved into the Morris Feinman care home when he was 15 years old. Michael studied for degrees at Oxford, Cambridge and Southampton, finally attaining a PhD in Criminology, which he now lectures in at Cardiff University. Michael takes an interest in prejudice within the judicial system and has played an active role as a volunteer and advisor, especially relating to counterterrorism. In this interview Michael speaks at length about antisemitism and prejudice, and his father’s and paternal Grandparents’ experiences of persecution under the Nazis. Although Michael identifies as culturally Jewish, he regards himself as an atheist and does not involve himself with the religious aspects of the Jewish Community in Cardiff.

LISS, Alan

Date: 30 May 2018

Location: Cardiff, Wales

Total duration: 01:47:22

Abstract:

The following is an interview conducted with Alan Liss who was born in Bridgend in 1948. Alan comments that his father was from Glasgow but had connections to Warsaw and his mother was from Berlin and moved to Cardiff in 1933. In the interview, Alan talks about his experience with academia and his chequered employment history which led him to hold various roles, including a teaching position. Moreover, Alan reflects upon his identification as a Zionist. In 1976, Alan wrote a history on the Cardiff Reform Synagogue. Alan has been married twice, divorced once, and settled down with wife, Laura, with whom he has three children, all of whom reside in Israel.

In the interview, Alan explores the divergences between the Reform Synagogue and Orthodox Synagogue and how these divergences drove him to join the Orthodoxy when he was 26. In doing so, the causes of Aliyah are discussed. Alan reflects that he was committed to Judaism in his youth, attending cheder until he was 16 and contemplating becoming a Rabbi; however, in later years, Alan has no absolute belief in God. Throughout his life, Alan recalls only a handful of antisemitic incidents which he chalks up to ignorance and insists that this has not negatively impacted him, for 95 percent of his friends are non-Jewish. In the interview, Alan notes the importance of both his Welsh and Jewish identity and an importance that he attempted to instil within his own children who are all Welsh speakers. Alan's interview is also important in its delineation of context, for example, Alan notes how, in his early 20s, he bought a house for a mortgage of £8 a week. Despite the political and military situation, Alan considers Israel to be of great importance and describes his experiences in Israel.

Interestingly, Alan draws a contrast between the friendliness of strangers in Cardiff to that in Israel. Alan has played a crucial role in the archiving of South Wales Jewish documents. Finally, Alan has an extensive background of voluntary work from participation with the CND [Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament] to involvement with the Plaid Cymru and Grassroots.

LISS, Laura

Date: 26 February 2018

Location: Cardiff, Wales

Total duration: 01:15:25

Abstract:

The following is an interview conducted with Laura Liss who was born in Sutton in 1957. Laura is the youngest of two children brought up by a mother of Polish origin and a father of suspected Dutch heritage. As a child, she received a place at a local grammar school before later going on to attend Hatfield Polytechnic, now the University of Hertfordshire, for a

biology degree. After obtaining her degree, Laura obtained her postgraduate teaching certificate and moved to Hull to be closer to her mother's family. In her 20s, Laura went to Israel as part of a course exploring Jewish heritage, where she met her husband-to-be, Alan Liss. In 1984, Laura moved to Cardiff and married Alan, after which they had three children together, all of whom attended a Welsh language school and who now live in Israel. In recent years, Laura has been involved with voluntary work at Penylan House, and she also teaches cheder lessons for Orthodox Jews.

In the interview, Laura contrasts her Jewish upbringing to that of her children. Throughout the interview, we learn that Laura's Jewish identity has become increasingly more profound over the years. Notably, Laura does not believe her Jewish identity has affected her relationships with non-Jewish individuals, and she can only recall one anti-Semitic incident in her life. Laura discusses the declining Jewish community in Cardiff and reflects upon reasons for this decline – for example, she names an ageing population as one cause. Subsequent to the discussion on the declining Jewish population, Laura notes the difficulties obtaining kosher products. Interestingly, Laura identifies herself as having a Welsh identity, albeit less profound than her children's.

MANSON, Michael

Date: 11 March 2022

Location: London via Zoom

Total duration: 01:50:45

Abstract:

In telling us his family history, Michael covers topics ranging from the local histories of Bangor and Llandudno as well as his family's experiences in the jewellery industry and his own in publishing. In addition to this, he details the life of his great grandfather, Moritz Wartski, founder of the Llandudno Hebrew Congregation, a synagogue in Bangor and Wartski Jewellers.

MANUEL, Jane

Date: 3 September 2018

Location: Cardiff, Wales

Total Duration: 1:21:22

Abstract:

Jane Manuel was born in Hampstead, London in 1951. Her mother was involved in Ralph Reader's WAF Gang Shows as a performer, and Jane grew up familiar with musical theatre. In 1976, she married and moved to Cardiff, where she joined Cardiff Ziona and began producing charity musical shows with members of the community. They were held in the local synagogue, but soon were moved to other venues such as St David's Hall. Jane's

productions have continued with consistent quality over the years and she has raised money for a number of charities. In this interview Jane shares her memories in growing up in London, how she moved to Wales and her experience in the theatre. She expresses her love of the Jewish community in Cardiff, and the significance of theatre productions on her life and the lives of the members of the community.

MARS, Leonard

Date: 28 January 2019

Location: Swansea, UK

Total duration: 01:27:33

Abstract: Leonard Mars was born in Manchester in 1941. After working for the Civil Service for two years, he went on to study social anthropology at Edinburgh University. As a doctoral candidate, Leonard worked on a project led by anthropologist Max Gluckman which took him to Israel. While there, Leonard met his wife Agi, whose family had immigrated to Israel from Romania following the end of the Second World War. In this interview, Leonard discusses his doctoral fieldwork in Israel, his and Agi's experiences of living in a border village during the outbreak of the Six Day War, as well as their subsequent move to Swansea. Leonard also discusses his grandfather Moses Abel who was taken to court for bigamy in the late nineteenth century, Leonard's later academic work, and the declining Jewish congregation in Swansea today.

MCFARLANE, Annette

Date: 2 July 2024

Location: Zoom with interviewee in Swansea

Total duration: 01:38:59

Abstract:

In this interview, Annette Mcfarlane talks about growing up in the Jewish community in Porthcawl, and different Jewish businesses set up there. Her mother's side of the family emigrated to Wales from Poland while her father's side of the family possibly emigrated from Odessa. She discusses her parents' background. Her father from Merthyr and her mother from Swansea and how her parents met. She discusses how they ran their own businesses with her father running a credit drapery in Porthcawl before buying a shop in Swansea named Sherman fabrics. She discusses her father's work during the war in the RAF and how he developed his passion for aeroplanes and flying, having his own aeroplane. She discusses religious observance growing up and what parts of her Jewish faith she has kept up, for example although she does not attend synagogue, she has stuck very strictly to kosher food. She discusses her marriage to someone outside of the religion and how he became accepted in the family and the community. She discusses how her family spread out with some moving abroad and some moving to larger cities such as London. She also discusses friendships formed and how she kept them up through the years.

MERTON, Raymond

Date: 21 August 2018

Location: Pontypridd.

Total duration: Recording 01:28:48

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Raymond Merton who was born in Stoke Newington, London in 1948. Raymond grew up in a relatively observant Jewish household with his parents, older sister and younger brother. Raymond attended Birchgrove Junior School, before attending Heol Hir School which later became Cardiff High School. After leaving school at 15, Raymond became a clerk at Wine Holdings, a firm dealing with heavy machinery, which played a prominent role in the clear-up of the Aberfan disaster. In 1967 and again in 1973, Raymond worked on a kibbutz in Israel, where he worked in the fields and in factories. Following this, Raymond returned to Wales where he found work in the Post Office, and he worked for them for the next 20 years. Unfortunately, aged 42, Raymond suffered a crippling motorbike accident, which left him unable to walk easily and this meant that he was retired early. However, since then, Raymond has developed a keen interest in genealogy and currently has 13,000 members on his family tree. Thanks to the help of his carer, Raymond has been able to develop his interest in model railways and has been on a number of visits to model railway fairs and other historic sites. Raymond met his wife at the Top Rank Dancing Club; they were married for 40 years until her death in 2016.

MINKES, Leonard

Date: 27 August 2017

Location: Penylan House

Total duration: 00:39:39

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Leonard Minkes who was born in Cardiff in 1924. Interviewer responsibilities are split equally between Diana Soffa of the Jewish History Association of South Wales, and John Minkes, Leonard's son. Leonard's early family consisted of his parents and two sisters, and he notes that Yiddish was often spoken within the family home. Leonard attended Splott Primary School and Cardiff High School, and later studied PPE at Balliol College in Oxford.

In this interview, Leonard remembers various prominent members of the Jewish community in Cardiff, including Reverend Grey and Reverend Jerovitch. He also discusses the variety of Jewish shops that existed in Cardiff in previous years and gives a unique perspective on how the South Wales Jewish community is changing.

MORRIS, Anthony

Date: 27 June 2018

Location: London, England

Total Duration: 01:39:01

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Anthony Morris who was born in Newport in 1939. Anthony grew up in Newport with one brother and both of his parents in a semi-observant Jewish household. Anthony had his Bar Mitzvah in 1952 and continued to attend cheder classes until he was 16, from which point he taught classes for a couple of years. In 1958, Anthony moved to London to become a solicitor and this is where he remained. Anthony and his wife, Patricia, have family connections that go far back; however, the couple did not officially become involved until 1961. In 1964, Anthony and Patricia got married and they had three children. Anthony is a member of the Jewish Burial Board.

In the interview, Anthony discusses his family connections to South Wales and provides an insightful look into the Brynmawr Jewish community delivered through a plethora of stories, personal experience, and knowledge regarding the area. For example, an interesting reference to the Tredegar Riots of 1911 is noted, alongside how the Brynmawr Cemetery came into existence. In addition, Anthony provides an anecdotal description about the Brynmawr Synagogue which is no longer in existence. As a member of the Jewish Burial Board and a trustee, Anthony discusses the administration and changes being made to Brynmawr Cemetery. The dispute between the Cardiff and Newport Jewish communities is reflected upon. Moreover, Anthony recalls some vivid memories of the Second World War and what it was like to grow up in Newport during this period. Regarding growing up as Jewish in Newport, Anthony notes that he was one in five Jewish boys out of 500 boys in secondary school and that the majority of his friendships were with non-Jewish children. Significantly, Anthony tells that he has never experienced any antisemitism. The interview discusses the declining Jewish presence in both Brynmawr and Newport. To Anthony, there is no parallel between his Welsh and Jewish identity; however, he does reflect upon the relationship between the two communities. Notably, all of Anthony's children and their children have carried on the Jewish tradition.

MORRIS, Patricia

Date: 27 June 2018

Location: London, England

Total Duration: 30:57

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Patricia Morris who was born in 1943. Although Pat grew up in London, her mother was Welsh and therefore she spent a lot of time visiting her

maternal grandparents in Wales. During the Second World War, Pat briefly lived with her mother at her grandparent's home in Cardiff.

In the interview, Pat notes that she does feel a strong connection to Wales given her family's connections there and her frequent visits ever since she was a child. In discussing her Welsh identity, Pat reflects that she believes religious and national identity to be distinctly separate, and therefore does not identify any differences between these two identities. Regarding her family heritage, Pat reveals that her maternal family settled in Wales from Austria during the 1880s and her paternal family moved from Russia in the early 1910s. Although Pat has never permanently lived in Wales, she has a lot of knowledge regarding Jewish communities in South Wales. Significantly, she recollects stories she has been told about the valleys and Brynmawr and how Jewish communities operated there. The depth of her knowledge rests in Cardiff where her grandparents lived and in Cardiff she can recall memories of attending Cathedral Road Synagogue.

OATES, Mary

Date: 17 December 2018

Location: Treharris Library, Merthyr Tydfil

Total duration: 00:38:55

Abstract:

Mary Oates is not Jewish herself, but growing up in Merthyr Tydfil during the 1960s, she was friends with a young Jewish girl named Judith Goldbloom, giving Mary an insight into the Jewish community at that time. During the interview, Mary discusses her friendship with Judith, and Peter, a Muslim boy, as well as prominent members of the Jewish community in Merthyr, and the eventual decline of Jewish businesses in the Valleys. Mary also talks about the inclusive nature of the community in Merthyr and the perceived lack of antisemitism, and the contribution of the Jewish community to life in the Valleys.

ODEY, Melody

Date: 12 December 2018

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 01:42:45

Abstract:

Melody Odey was born on the 28th of April 1957 and grew up in Cardiff. Both her parents worked as traders in the markets of South Wales, and they later started a successful greeting card business, which they sold in 1966. In 1969 her mother suffered a brain haemorrhage and Mel began caring for her young brother. She left home at 21, and in 1979 Mel started a law degree at Cardiff University which led to a career as a lawyer. From 2012 to 2015 Mel was

the chairperson of Cardiff Reform Synagogue and is currently the vice chair for the South Wales Jewish Representative Council. She has one son. In this interview Mel recalls details of her family when she was a child, including her parents work, and her attendance of school and cheder. She shares her experiences of both the Orthodox and Reform Synagogues in Cardiff, and the ways in which the relationship between the two communities have changed. She considers the effects of her mother's brain haemorrhage on her and her family, as touching on her family history.

ÖSZTREICHER, George

Date: 25 October 2018

Location: Cardiff, Wales

Total duration: 01:28:58

Abstract:

George Ösztreicher was born in 1947 in Miskolc, Hungary. In 1957, he, his mother and his father emigrated to Cardiff. His father made a living selling textiles in the markets, eventually buying their own property. At 15 George left school to work the markets due to his father's ill health. The family opened a number of shops in Cardiff and South Wales, which George owned and worked in. As the textiles industry became less viable, he chose to go into business with two of his friends making and selling guitar strings, for which he owned a factory in Caerphilly. In time he changed to the distribution of guitars, working with a kibbutz in Israel and factories in East Germany. George is married and had three children, and still works in the guitar industry. In this interview George recalls the lives of his family in Hungary and their experiences once they arrived in Cardiff. He shares his memories of living and working in Cardiff and considers the trajectory of the Jewish community in South Wales over the past 60 years.

PENSLAR, Talia

Date: 12 March 2024

Location: zoom with interviewee in Pontypridd

Total duration: 01:00:32

Abstract:

In this interview, Talia Penslar discusses a range of topics from her childhood and growing up in Bloomington, Indiana and Toronto, Canada and being exposed to people who practiced Judaism in different ways. She talks about her experience of different Jewish communities moving to smaller Jewish communities in Bristol and south Wales and her interest in becoming a Rabbi and her interest in going to Rabbinical School in the future. She talks about her work in the community and reaching out in particular to newer members of the community and making them feel welcome.

PETERS, Philip

Date: 16 November 2022

Location: Israel via Zoom

Total duration: 01:58:56

Abstract:

During this interview, Philip Peters discusses topics ranging from his maternal family's life in Tredegar to his family's move to Israel during Aliyah. In addition to this, he also shares his thoughts on the importance of volunteering, his family's history in Odessa, and his experiences of marginalisation.

PHILLIPS, Helen

Date: 15 July 2022

Location: Zoom with the Interviewee in Cardiff

Total duration: 02:42:50

Abstract:

Here Helen Phillips covers a variety of topics which vary from her childhood in Cardiff to her mixed heritage and mother's conversion to discussions of the history and future of Cardiff's Jewish community. Helen also discusses the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Cardiff Jewish Community. Helen served in Cardiff Police Force being one of a handful of female officers before leaving to study at Cardiff university. After university, Helen worked in the Crown Prosecution Service and as the chair of the board for a charity that helped disabled children and their families.

PINS, Janet

Date: 3 June 2018

Location: Bournemouth, England

Total duration: 00:37:05

Abstract:

The following is an oral history interview conducted with Janet Pins who was born in Bournemouth in 1939 into an Orthodox Jewish family. Janet attended university in Cardiff to obtain a diploma in pharmaceuticals before returning to Bournemouth where she got married and had two sons.

In the interview, Janet explores her connection to south Wales Jewry as deriving from her father who was born in Cardiff in 1907, yet who moved to Bournemouth in the late 1920s to

set up his own pharmacy. In doing so, Janet is able to invoke a comparison between the Jewish community in Cardiff and the Jewish community in Bournemouth. For example, from stories of her father's memories and her own experience in Cardiff, Janet notes that both Cardiff and Bournemouth were once thriving Jewish communities. However, these communities have diminished and thus, in Bournemouth, there is no longer a cheder as there are no children. Janet highlights that her family are Orthodox Jews and that her children have continued to follow Jewish traditions, and her grandchildren all attend Jewish school in London. Moreover, she recalls that her father had a profound sense of Welsh identity.

POLLOCK, Julian

Date: 27 October 2021

Location: Hertfordshire via Zoom

Total duration: 02:01:37

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Julian Pollock who was born in 1962. Julian's family ran a business called Apollo, that produced leather goods and distributed them internationally. The factory was based in Tonypandy, and as such, Julian has a good knowledge of the valleys and the communities within them, despite now living in Hertfordshire. Regarding his family heritage, Julian reveals in the interview that he never met his maternal grandparents as they were killed during the Holocaust, but he has fond memories of his paternal grandparents who escaped Austria and came to Wales. Julian recollects that there was a strong sense of community in his childhood, but his Jewish identity flourished at Clifton College and Manchester University. Julian notes that he identifies as a Welsh Jew, and is very proud to be Welsh, as are his two sons. He shares that COVID-19 has had a big impact on the Jewish community and that synagogues have had to make considerable changes to the way they operate, which he hopes will engage more youth moving forward.

PRUCHNIE, Mamie

Date: 09 May 2023

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 02:34:56

Abstract:

In this interview, Mamie along with her son Michael, discuss a range of topics including her childhood in Manchester. She discusses growing up in Manchester and her family in the Second World War and the prominent role her father played in the Jewish community. She discusses her marriage to Ellis and their decision to move to Cardiff. She goes on to discuss her work at Pearl Paints and Apal. She also discusses the different ways the family got

involved in the Jewish community in Cardiff, from charity and volunteer work and how the community came together in reactions to Soviet Jewry, the war in Israel and Aberfan.

PRUCHNIE, Michael

Date: 27 April 2021

Location: Zoom

Total duration: 1:06:36; 01:44:32

Abstract:

This interview details the life of Michael Pruchnie, his family and their relationship to the Pearl Varnish Company and its subsequent names throughout its existence. The company was originally founded in the 1930s in Fulda, Germany by a Jewish Orthodox family named, the Sterns. The Sterns moved to London in the late 1930s when it became increasingly dangerous for them to continue business in Germany due to the Nazi party's increasing antisemitic activities. Once in Britain, the Sterns were asked to relocate their hat varnish company, they chose Treforest in South Wales. This interview discusses periods in which the company expanded, changed hands as well as discussing the relationship of the Sterns with their workforce and the wider south Wales community in both Jewish and non-Jewish settings.

ROCKER, Thelma

Date: 07 February 2018

Location: Cardiff, Wales

Total duration: 01:38:27

Abstract:

Thelma Rocker was born in Penylan, Cardiff, in 1929 and attended Our Lady's Convent School and later an art college. Thelma met her husband in Cardiff and, after having two children, moved to Newport, where her husband took up a consultant appointment. Later in her life, Thelma and her husband moved back to Cardiff but remained members of the Newport Synagogue.

In this interview, Thelma discusses her family's role within both the Jewish and the local community. We learn about Thelma's father who was a very active and well-respected member of the Jewish Board of Guardians in Cardiff. Thelma also shares memories of her husband's role within the Jewish community in Newport and of her own voluntary work, from being a member of the Ladies' Committee at Newport Synagogue to working as a Magistrate for 15 years.

Thelma also touches on her memories of growing up during World War II, including the bombing of her school and a summer spent in Llandrindod Wells to keep them safe from the threat of air raids in Cardiff.

ROSE, Michoel and Aidele

Date: 6 January 2019

Location: Cardiff United Synagogue, Cardiff

Total duration: 00:52:49

Abstract:

Rabbi Michoel Rose was born in Leeds and emigrated to Israel for around six years before moving back to the UK to attend high school in Manchester. Subsequently, he attended the Rabbinical College of America in Morristown, New Jersey, US. Rebbetzin Aidele Rose was born in Tucson, Arizona, to Israeli parents and grew up in Massachusetts. Upon completing her teaching degree in Montreal, Aidele moved to New York where she met her husband through a Shidduch. Living back in the UK, Michoel and Aidele worked in a variety of jobs before accepting a position at the Cardiff United Synagogue. Michoel and Aidele discuss job hunting, the role of rabbi and rebbetzin, their experiences of antisemitism in the UK, and the decline of the Jewish community across South Wales today.

ROSENSTOCK, Michael

Date: 18 January 2022

Location: Toronto via Zoom

Total duration: 00:53:01

Abstract:

In this interview, retired head librarian of the Department of Book Selection at the University of Toronto, Michael Rosenstock, reflects on his childhood experience of emigrating to the UK from Berlin in May 1939. He touches on his memories of his extended family, particularly his maternal and paternal grandparents; his parent's experience of living in London, notably his father's internment and role in the Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR); and his memories of living in London during the Blitz. In particular, his interview focuses on his experience of evacuation to Wales, where he stayed with foster parents and brother. He reflects on his memories of the various places he lived with his foster family, the chapel he attended with them every Sunday, and his experience of attending an evacuee school.

SALAMON, Steven

Date: 23 January 2019

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 01:48:27

Abstract:

Steven Salamon was born on the 27th of July 1963 in Cardiff. His family owned a grocery shop that largely served the immigrant community in the mid-20th century. After leaving school he studied accountancy in Sheffield University and worked as an accountant in London. Steve then moved back to Cardiff with his first wife, where he started working in the family shop. Over the years, Steve has expanded his business, opening shops in other locations, and a café with an Austrian theme. Steve has become a leader in the Jewish Lads' and Girls' Brigade [JLGB], a youth club that he himself was part of as a child. He has also been involved with the synagogue on Moira Terrace as treasurer since the late 1990s. In this interview Steve discusses his family and the issues they faced in owning a grocery shop, and the direction he's taken it in. He discusses their attendance of synagogue, and his experiences of both the Orthodox and Reform communities.

SAMSON, Debbie

Date: 19 October 2021

Location: Hertfordshire via Zoom

Total duration: 01:55:09

Abstract:

This is an interview with Debbie Samson that focuses on the following topics: her family—both her mother's and father's sides—Cardiff's Jewish Community, manufacturing in Cardiff, how being a second-generation immigrant affected her identity, reflections on her evolving view of religion and its role in families.

Some of the most significant parts of her interview revolve around Nicholas Winton who rescued many children—one of whom was her mother—and her visits to Theresiedstadt and Czechia (??) with her mother to reflect on her childhood and family.

More briefly, Samson also discusses the relationship between the Reform and Orthodox communities in Cardiff, the intergenerational views of Judaism and her time as a nurse.

SAUNDERS, Mike

Date: 14 December 2021

Location: London via Zoom

Total duration: 02:05:33.

Abstract:

In this interview, Mike Saunders, a retired civil servant, reflects on the trajectory of his life by describing his early childhood in Breslau; his journey as a young boy with his parents, in the late 1930s, to London to escape Nazi persecution; his experiences of living in Llanvaches

and Carmarthen in Wales as a Jewish German refugee; and his return to London as a young adult. Drawing on his mother's memoirs and the photo album left by his father, Michael discusses his family history, notably the experiences of his parents in Germany during the rise of the Nazi Party and his maternal grandparents move to Palestine. The discussion also touches on his parent's desire to integrate into the British culture and local Welsh community; the lack of support offered by the Welsh Jewish communities in Llanelli, contrasting sharply with the help and support offered by individual Jewish families working in Carmarthen market; his attempts to learn the Welsh language; and his own Welsh identity. Notably, Michael also reflects on his early childhood experience of attending a Roman Catholic school whilst living in Carmarthen; he considers how this has shaped his religious identity, which prompts him to discuss his Jewish faith and how this interacts with his Roman Catholic experiences. He concludes the interview by discussing his involvement with freemasonry, and how freemasonry supports his belief that as long as one is a good person, it is of little importance what religion one follows.

SCHAFFER, Jeffrey

Date: 5 April 2024

Location: Hertfordshire via Zoom

Total duration: 01:02:15

Abstract:

In this interview, Jeffrey Schaffer shares his experiences and insight in his family history in Merthyr Tydfil. He discusses a range of topics from his mother's family and background in Merthyr Tydfil and how she met his father. He discusses the family background and businesses in Merthyr Tydfil and the role his family played in the Jewish community there. He talks about the reasons why they evacuated to Merthyr Tydfil during the Second World War and his father setting up a metal works factory in the Treforest Industrial Estate to help with the war effort. He goes on to discuss his experience at Synagogue to his bar mitzvah.

SCHOENMANN, George

Date: 20 September 2018

Location: Penarth

Total duration: 01:41:02

Abstract:

The following is an interview with George Schoenmann who was born in Vienna in 1934. George grew up in Vienna until when, aged six-years old, George left Austria for Wales as a result of increasing antisemitic tension brought on by the rise of the Nazi party in Austria and Germany. George's father, a prolific businessman, who had owned a cigarette paper factory in Vienna, set up General Paper & Box on the Treforest Industrial Estate in 1938. After finishing high school in Christ College Brecon, George passed his intermediate BSc in Engineering at

Cardiff University, where he met his wife Jill. After not successfully completing his exams over the course of two years, George dropped out of university and began his National Service during the duration of which he spent time in places such as Northern Ireland and Wiltshire studying radio engineering. George then gained business experience in various Jewish businesses based on the Treforest Estate, and in 1979, set up his own company Electrical Spare Parts which he then led until he retired aged seventy.

In this interview, George gives an interesting glimpse into the day-to-day running of his father's various businesses on the Treforest and Bridgend Estates and of some of the challenges that these operations faced. He also gives information about several ex-refugee Jewish businesses based in the Treforest Estate, many of which he worked in. Finally, George talks about how and why he decided to write many books during his retirement years, ranging from his own personal history, to books on collecting cameras and cars.

SCHWARTZ, Anthony Alan

Date: 29 October 2018

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 01:58:59

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Anthony Alan Schwartz who was born in Cardiff in 1937. During the Second World War, Anthony lived with his mother and sister in his grandmother's house whilst his father was away in the RAF. After the war, the family lived in Brook Street for six years, and then moved to live in Heath. Anthony attended Severn Road Primary School, and then went to Canton High School, before completing his articles for David Kuritz, a Jewish accountant, consequently becoming a member of the Chartered Institute of Accountants. After qualifying, he worked for R. H. March, and eventually went on to set up his own practices in Cowbridge and Llantwit Major. Anthony met his wife, Judie, through the Cardiff Jewish Youth Society, of which he was chairman and she was secretary. They have three children together.

Anthony feels privileged to have been the only Welsh boy chosen to attend the first Habonim Israel Camp in 1953, and recounts in detail his experiences during this period in the interview. He also mentions many charitable activities that he has helped to organise including a Rotary-sponsored visit for a number of Irish schoolboys from both sides of the divide to South Wales, and his responsibilities in the Care Committee, a service which provides help to South Walian Jews.

SCHWARTZ, Anthony Harvey

Date: 8 November 2018

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 01:29:32

Abstract:

Anthony Harvey Schwartz was born in Cardiff in 1946. After finishing school, Anthony studied dentistry at the University College Hospital London, and then returned to Cardiff where he eventually opened his own dental practice in Tonyrefail in the South Wales Valleys. In this interview, Anthony discusses his family history, his career in dentistry, his battle with depression, his volunteer work as a Marie Curie driver, and his brother, the late Alan Schwartz MBE. Anthony also discusses the death of his wife Suzanne, and how he came to compile commemorative mementoes for the families of members of the Jewish community in Cardiff who have passed away.

SHEPHERD, Richard

Date: 26 November 2018

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 52:28

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Richard Shepherd who was born in Porthcawl in 1944. Richard grew up in an Orthodox household with his grandmother and mother during the Second World War, before moving to Newport when his father returned from the RAF. He attended Rougemont School in Newport until the age of nine, before moving to Saint John's Preparatory School in Chepstow, and later Clifton College, Bristol, where he was a member of the Jewish Polack's House. After leaving school, initially Richard became articled to a local solicitor, but later went on to have a career as a broadcaster for BBC Wales, covering Football League Matches as well as the Welsh International Team. Richard met his wife in 1990, whilst on a cruise in the Caribbean, and is happily married.

SILVER, Irene

Date: 2 February 2022 and 9 February 2022

Location: London via Zoom

Total duration: 01:07:29; 01:19:22

Abstract:

Irene Silver was born in Cardiff in 1923 and is now residing in London. She briefly worked for the Civil Service in the 1940s but has worked in teaching for the majority of her life. Throughout this interview, Irene reflects on her childhood in Cardiff and her family. Irene remembers both her father and father-in-law's businesses in Cardiff, highlighting the significance of textiles and clothing in her early life. She reflects on World War Two,

discussing her family's roles in the war but also her own experiences as a student at Cardiff University. Irene also shares memories of her and her husband's early relationship, including their marriage and her wartime wedding dress shopping. She recalls Jewish life and institutions in Cardiff during her youth, including the Jewish shops available at the time. She also touches upon her family's German and Polish ancestry.

SOFFA, Stanley

Date: 12th November 2018

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 02:51:13

Abstract:

Stanley Soffa was born in Cardiff in 1947. After qualifying as a lawyer, Stanley worked for a number of law firms in Cardiff and Newport before embarking on a career with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). In this interview, Stanley discusses his family history—particularly his grandparents who emigrated from Eastern Europe in the early twentieth century—as well as his role in establishing the Interfaith Council, his extensive volunteer work, and the importance of maintaining a dialogue with the different faith communities in Cardiff. Stanley also discusses playing football for Cardiff Maccabiah Football Club, and his work with the South Wales Jewish Representative Council.

SOLOMON, Sefton

Date: 20 January 2019

Location: London

Total duration: 01:04:52

Abstract:

Sefton Solomon was born in Willesden, London, in 1936. He spent his early years in Aylesbury, then at the age of 13 his family migrated to California. Sefton finished his schooling in the USA, and studied for a BA at UCLA, before returning to England. He married his first wife, Angela Goldstein, in 1966, and they had three children. Widowed in 2003, he married Rachel Ollech in 2004. Sefton comes from a very rabbinic family. His grandfather was the first minister of Llanelli, his father was a rabbi, and as Sefton notes, 'Most of all my relatives, uncles, cousins, etcetera, even my, my own children, are all part of the Jewish Orthodox rabbinate'.

TOBIN, Judith

Date: 17 January 2022

Location: London via Zoom

Total duration: 02:06:39

Abstract:

Here Judith reflects on her memories of her childhood in Pontypridd and her move to Cardiff as a child. Specifically, her memories centre around her father's pharmacies in the Pontypridd and Treforest areas. In addition to this, she also discusses her family history, her medical training, and her move from Cardiff to London after university.

WALDEK, Stephen

Date: 19 January 2021

Location: Cardiff and Sale, Manchester

Total duration: 01:56:36

Abstract:

Stephen Waldeck was born in Cardiff in 1947. His mother arrived in the UK from Vienna on the Kindertransport and his father escaped from Czechoslovakia to Palestine, where he served in the British Army. His paternal grandparents settled in Porth in 1939, where they set up a business. Stephen's parents met and married in London, eventually moving to Cardiff where his father joined the family business. Numerous other relatives are now scattered across the world. After leaving grammar school, Stephen studied medicine, eventually obtaining a consultant post in Manchester where he continues to live. He retells something of his family history as well as home life with his extended family. The early days of the Jewish Reform Community at the Temple of Peace, later at the Moira Terrace Synagogue, are recalled as are his memories of the various Rabbis. Stephen talks about attending Cheder as well as the social life for both children and adults in the community. In addition, he recalls his many friends and some of the businesses that were set up in Treforest and surrounding areas. Stephen regards himself as an observant Jewish Welshman.

WEIL, Julius

Date: 21 November 2018

Location: Cardiff

Total duration: 01:32:13

Abstract:

Julius Weil was born in Dortmund, Germany on 11 October 1925. He lived in Cologne with his parents and younger brother until 1938; on 9-10 November that year, his school was destroyed in Kristallnacht. Julius' headmaster successfully organised to get the whole school transferred to London. Julius was on the first 'Kindertransport' train to leave the country. He never saw his parents or brother again. Julius and his school colleagues were initially sent to

Cricklewood, London. With the outbreak of war, Julius was sent to Bedford, where he was billeted with a non-Jewish family. After leaving school at the age of 15, Julius went to work for the Ministry of Supply (MoS) in its catering division, first in Bedford then in Egham, Surrey. He left the MoS at the end of the war and worked in a factory in Staines, Surrey. In 1956, Julius was invited by the first friend he made in England, another Jewish refugee, to go and work for him; his uncle owned the Standard Box and Carton Company, which relocated from London to Pentrebach, near Merthyr Tydfil. Julius spent the rest of his working life with the company, eventually becoming a director. Julius initially attended Orthodox synagogues in Merthyr Tydfil and Cardiff, but moved to the Reform Synagogue in 1968, at the time of his first marriage. He is still a member of the Reform community.

WESTON, Marilyn

Date: 19 August 2018

Location: London

Total duration: 00:38:51

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Marilyn Weston who was born in Cardiff in December 1944. Marilyn grew up in a prominent Jewish household in Cyncoed with her parents, David and Cornelia Shane, and her brother, Brian. After leaving Lady Margaret's High School at seventeen, Marilyn went to Llandaff Tech, where shortly afterwards she got her first job with the South Wales Echo. She then gained a scholarship allowing her to study in America for a year, and, after returning back to Cardiff and failing to settle, she moved to London with a group of friends where she worked for The Jewish Chronicle and The Times. She married her husband in the Cathedral Road Synagogue in Cardiff, and has two children and two grandchildren, who all follow in the Jewish tradition.

In this interview, Marilyn talks in detail about the role her father, David Shane, played in setting up CAJEX and AJEX, and also his importance in wider Jewish cultural organisations including the Council of Christians and Jews and B'nai B'rith. She also discusses how the Youth Club in Cathedral Road Synagogue helped to play an active role in the social life of many young Jewish children growing up during the 1950s and 1960s in Cardiff.

WESTON, Paul

Date: 19 August 2018

Location: London

Total duration: 00:01:12

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Paul Weston who was born in Merthyr Tydfil in 1944. Paul grew up in an Orthodox family with his brother and parents, but had a large extended family living within the Merthyr area. After leaving Howardian High School at 18, Paul began a degree at the Welsh National School of Medicine but dropped out after three years and took a degree in Optics at the Llandaff Tech College, during which time he became the president of the Optical Society. Shortly afterwards, he, alongside his wife Marilyn, moved to London to begin his career as an Optician, and alongside his business partner, Alan Rustin, went on to open several practices in the London area.

In this interview, Paul talks in detail about his early childhood memories of growing up within the Jewish communities in Merthyr and Porthcawl, and of the characters that he remembers growing up with. He also gives an insight into his Jewish social life, particularly in the youth club in the Cathedral Road synagogue, and of his sporting activities, including playing on the synagogue football team in the Maccabi League, and also playing for his high school's rugby team. Finally, Paul gives an interesting perspective on how his paternal family's wartime experiences in Czechoslovakia have helped to influence his perspective on life.

WOOLF, Renee

Date: 09 June 2018

Location: Cardiff, Wales

Total Duration: 01:27:56

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Renee Woolf who was born in Llanelli in 1941. Renee grew up in a family of six children and both of her parents above her mother's shop in Llanelli. After finishing school, Renee went to work with her father at Swansea Market and held posts at Boots chemist and C&A; however, she has now been a market researcher for the majority of her life. After marrying her husband, David, Renee moved to Cardiff in 1965 and had three children. Alongside her job as a market researcher, Renee has been active in the Jewish community of South Wales. Not only has Renee been the Chairman of WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organisation) for 18 years, but she is a very active figure in Penylan House as Entertainment Officer.

Throughout the interview, Renee explores in detail what it was like to grow up in Llanelli as Jewish and the atmosphere of the Jewish community there. Despite it being a small town and perhaps closed off from other places, Renee considers herself exceedingly lucky to have grown up there. Renee has a strong Welsh identity and believes that the relationship between Jewish people and Welsh people has always been a good one. For example, non-Jewish individuals are members of WIZO and are involved with the fundraising efforts of the Jewish community, but perhaps more importantly, Renee has never experienced any antisemitism. The interview also reflects upon how the Jewish communities in both Llanelli and Cardiff have changed over the years. Although the membership has drastically declined and there are no longer accessible Jewish amenities within South Wales, Renee discusses how initiatives such as 'Applause', a fundraising group she organised within the community that put plays

on, has fostered a togetherness that has allowed for the community to carry on existing. Regarding her three children, two are religious, with her daughter now living in Israel and living a very orthodox lifestyle; however, one of her sons is no longer religious, a choice which does not alter her perceptions of him.

ZARUM, Gitta

Date: 27 June 2018

Location: London, England

Total Duration: 34:27

Abstract:

The following is an interview with Gitta Zarum who was born in Tredegar in 1935. Gitta spent the first eight years of her life in Tredegar before moving to Manchester with her parents and younger sister. After finishing school, Gitta went on to the College of Commerce for Secretarial Education. Gitta spent 10 years living in Israel and obtained a position transcribing for the Adolf Eichmann trial. Gitta has several children across the world, including places such as London, Israel, New York and New Orleans. Additionally, Gitta has done several fundraising events for Israel, including a bungee jump in the Olympic Village in 2017.

In the interview, Gitta reveals that her maternal family originate from Russia. Here, she tells the story of a common misconception that her grandfather had thought he had landed in New York, hence how her family came to be in South Wales. Moreover, she discusses the causes for their emigration to this country, including antisemitism and starvation which had killed two of three children before moving to Wales. Gitta notes that she has pleasant memories of Tredegar and recalls a memory of going to Cardiff to use the mikvah, where she was treated to going to the public baths by her mother. Similarly, Gitta notes that maintaining a kosher lifestyle in Tredegar probably meant travelling to Cardiff for kosher goods. As a child during the Second World War, Gitta notes that they had a German Jewish refugee come to stay with them. Significantly, Gitta was a transcriber at the Adolf Eichmann trial in Israel and in the interview, she explores how she got the job, what happened, and her thoughts and feelings on the matter. Regarding Welsh identity, Gitta does identify as Welsh and she believes that there is a similarity between Welsh and Jewish identities in that they are both small communities trying to maintain their identity in the face of larger communities. Gitta notes that her children all maintain Jewish practices; however, they do so to varying extents.