

Type

Sound:, WAV

Duration

00:35:15

Project

Pass it On – Oral History Project for the Chichester Festival Theatre

Recording Date

29 January 2014

Recording location

Interviewee's Home

Interviewee

Gerard Soothill (speaker, male)

Interviewer

Alex Habgood (speaker, male)

Abstract

Gerard Soothill (GS) anecdote of father a keen actor founding the Chichester Festival Theatre Society in 1950s. GS Mentions being involved with fund raising events for the building of Chichester Festival Theatre (CFT) (3:00) in particular a cocktail party in Mr Evershed-Martin's garden. Comments that in evening dress he and his family attended first nights in the first year of CFT, dining in the restaurant with actors. (6:00) Comments on involvement with sound systems at Bognor theatre with summer entertainment and comedy shows. Mentions wife an amateur actress who performed at CFT in the community production 'The Devil's Dancing Hour' as a cook. (15:00) Anecdote of moving to another area where he was involved with the amateur dramatic society as a sound technician with limited equipment. Described initial damping sound problems in early CFT where it was difficult to hear the performance in some parts of theatre. Mentions remembering performance of 'The Tempest' with a real thunder storm outside the theatre which lifted the sound of the storm in the performance. (24:00) Anecdote of father as founder of Chichester Festival Theatre Society, fund raising and encouraging members to attend theatre performances. Commenting that smaller theatres audiences have a closer relationship with actors. Mentioning that Chichester has an amazing reputation with audiences travelling large distances to see performances, with actors performing close to audience in front rows. (35:00)