**Type**

Sound: WAV

**Duration**

01:32:30

**Project**

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

**Recording Date**

29 July 2013

**Recording locations**

Interviewee’s Home

**Interviewee**

Beryl Fleming (speaker, female)

**Interviewer**

Rib Davis (speaker, male)

**Abstract**

Beryl Fleming[BF] born 1933, Bermondsey. Mentions first theatre visit, aged 15, to see Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh in ‘The School for Scandal’ at New Theatre.(00:00:55) Remarks on first visit to Chichester Festival Theatre(CFT), soon after opening, impressions of building and local reaction to CFT.(00:01:25) Mentions attending performances in The Tent.(00:04:20) Remarks further on impressions of CFT building design.(00:04:50) Description of productions, including ‘Uncle Vanya’; ‘The Recruiting Officer’; ‘Macbeth’ with Patrick Stewart; ‘Coriolanus’ with Kenneth Branagh and Judi Dench; ‘Doctor Faustus’; ‘Pygmalion’ with Rupert Everett and Honeysuckle Weeks.(00:07:36) Brief description of memorable incidents during plays, including ‘The Chalk Garden’ and ‘A Patriot For Me’.(00:17:12) Remarks on meeting John Gielgud who was appearing in ‘Caesar and Cleopatra’ and his views on CFT thrust stage.(00:21:26) Comments on contrasting experiences when meeting actors, Charles Lloyd-Pack, Gordon Jackson and Omar Sharif.(00:24:16) Brief description of performing in ‘The Critic’ and ‘The Real Inspector Hound’.(00:28:03) Description of Minerva including early use as cinema in winter and BF’s reaction to plays, including ‘Six Characters In Search Of An Author’.(00:32:33) Comments on management of theatre since foundation of CFT.(00:42:39) Comments on membership of CFT Friends and involvement with fundraising events.(00:46:07) Brief description of chaperoning Chichester Festival Youth Theatre(CFYT) members and memorable CFYT productions, ‘Noah’, ‘The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe’ and ‘Toad Of Toad Hall’.(00:49:39) Comments on memories of CFT productions inculding ‘Doctor Faustus’ during management by Ruth Mackenzie, Martin Duncan and Steven Pimlott.(00:54:12) Description of involvement in community plays including ‘The Barchester Chronicles’.(00:57:27) Comments on sets and music in productions, ‘Uncle Vanya’, ‘Antony and Cleopatra’, ‘Macbeth’, ‘Beatrix’, ‘Separate Tables’ and ‘Enron’.(01:07:52) Remarks on meeting Keith Michell who starred in ‘Cyrano de Bergerac’ and compares that production with later version, starring Joseph Fiennes.(01:14:27) Description of memorable productions and actors, including Joan Plowright as Joan of Arc and as Edith Cavell; musical, ‘Valmouth’ with Bertice Reading; Omar Sharif in ‘The Sleeping Prince’; Harry Secombe in ‘Pickwick’; John Barrowman in ‘Rope’; Tom Baker as Oscar Wilde; Diana Rigg in ‘The Cherry Orchard’ and ‘Hay Fever’; musical, ‘Born Again’; Alan Bennett’s ‘Talking Heads’ with Margaret Tyzack and Maggie Smith; Laurence Olivier in ‘The Royal Hunt Of The Sun’; CFYT production, ‘The Firework-Maker’s Daughter’; musical, ‘Love Story’; ‘Bingo’ with Patrick Stewart; ‘Singin’ In The Rain’; ‘The Grapes Of Wrath’; ‘Oklahoma!’; Michael Feast in ‘Nathan The Wise’; ‘The Merchant of Venice’; community play, ‘The Devil’s Dancing Hour’.(01:17:13)