

We hope you might consider sharing your memories of Cambridge Arts Theatre as part of our current National Lottery Heritage Fund project 'Behind the Scenes: Saving and Sharing Cambridge Arts Theatre's Archive'.

As part of the project the Theatre has committed to undertaking at least 50 oral history interviews. With these sound recordings we hope to capture a wide variety of perspectives on the Theatre's history and we would love to add your voice.

Outlined below is what you might expect from the interview and we would be very happy to discuss the process further if you thought it might be a possibility.

Rachel Osborne

rosborne@cambridgeartstheatre.com

What to expect from an oral history interview:

- Oral history is 'the recording of people's memories, experiences and opinions'. [Source: Oral History Society]
- An oral history 'interview' is really, more of an informal chat. You will sit with a facilitator and discuss your memories of Cambridge Arts Theatre. The facilitator will ask questions designed to help you remember all the interesting stories and anecdotes you have about the Theatre. You do not need to prepare anything beforehand. Often the best interviews are those which are most spontaneous and led by the memories of the person being interviewed.
- Oral history is all about hidden stories, so we are very keen to speak to a wide range of people, who all have different perspectives on the Theatre's history.
- It is usual for the interview to follow a chronological structure, so the interviewer might start by asking how you first came to be involved with the Theatre...
- Oral history interviews are not like journalistic ones. You and your memories lead the process. The facilitator is not trying to trick you into saying something you do not really think. It is fine to pause a recording or forgot a name or date.
- Recordings tend to last around 1 hour.
- Most of our recordings will be undertaken at the Theatre but if you cannot get to us, we will try to get to you.
- These are sound recordings – recorded on solid state, hand-held recorders – we may ask you to wear a lapel mic to help with sound quality, but otherwise we aim to make you forget about the equipment.
- As part of our oral history project ten sixth-form students are being trained – alongside two members of staff- as oral history facilitators.
- At the recording you will be asked to sign a recording agreement - this outlines what we are allowed to do with the material we have recorded.