

**Oral Historians – Job Description** updated October 2024

**Roles**

The oral historians are responsible for recording interviews with Friends and processing them to make them available to the interviewees, to the Yearly Meeting Library and Resource Centre, and to any other repository named by the Friend concerned in the standard recording agreement form filled in at the time of the interview.

The selection of the Friends to be interviewed and the number and spread of interviews is made by the oral historian, who should seek advice from Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups as appropriate. The current policy is to interview Friends whose present or past contributions to society have been influenced by their Quaker commitments. Those interviewed may be of any age, though there has usually been a weighting towards older Friends whose stories should not be lost. There is also a case for interviewing younger Friends who might be re-interviewed later in their lives.

The abstracts compiled of each interview are timed indexes which can identify for future researchers the topics being spoken of in each segment of the recording. (The abstracts take considerably more time to produce than the recording itself).

**Responsibilities**

The oral historian produces a physical file for each interview and interviewee and each repository which includes:

- A title page which includes a photo of the interviewee (usually taken by the interviewer at the time of the interview);
- The recording agreement filled in and signed by the interviewer and interviewee;
- A biographical information form;
- The abstract of the interview, checked and agreed with the interviewee;
- Reproductions of any additional photos or documents provided by the interviewee;
- An electronic copy (currently on 8GB flash-drives and in the Oral Historian Quaker Google Drive) of the interview recording and the accompanying documentation. Digital only copies are also held by the oral historians for archival purposes.

The oral historians have an annual allocation from the Yearly Meeting budget, managed by the Yearly Meeting Treasurer, which can be used for such things as travel and accommodation, consumables such as flash-drives and stationery, any training undertaken, and any professional assistance required.

The oral historians report to Yearly Meeting via Documents in Advance and include in that report an account of the use of the Yearly Meeting funding allocation.

The oral historians are responsible for keeping their website page up to date and edited when required.

**Preferred knowledge, skills, abilities and experience**

Oral historians should be someone who has undertaken the interviewing training and abstracting training provided through the Turnbull Library and will need basic computer skills and access to a computer. He or she will use and maintain the digital recording equipment to produce high quality recordings. The current equipment is a Zoom H5 Portable digital Recorder with separate individual mikes. This is owned by the Religious Society of Friends Trust Board.

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**Expected time required**

This varies considerably with each interview and also determined by the number of interviews undertaken and the administration work involved-

**Length of appointment**

The appointment is made by Yearly Meeting through Yearly Meeting Nominations Committee. The length of the term is three years with the possibility of further terms.