

Title: Hart, Linda_Interview_Complete
Creators: Rick & Julia Goldsmith
Project: Herefordshire Life Through A Lens
Tagline: Films, stories and exhibitions inspired
by the photographic archive of the Derek
Evans Studio 1950s-80s
Subject: Autobiography, Derek Evans Studio,
childhood, Herefordshire, Heritage
Publisher: Catcher Media Social CIC
Tags: Linda Hart, Derek Evans Studio,
photography, oral history, heritage, PV,
participatory film-making, community
film, Herefordshire

Identifier: Hart, Linda_Interview_Complete
Interview Date: May_18_2018
Location: 50 Lichfield Avenue, Hereford
Source: Catcher Media Social CIC
Interviewee: Linda Hart (nee Evans)(speaker, female)
Interviewer: Julia Goldsmith (speaker, female)
Camera & Sound: Richard Goldsmith (male)
Producer: Julia Goldsmith
Language: English

Type: Video
Video Format: MPEG-4
Bit rate: 21.46 mbits/s
Frame rate: 25 FPS
Aspect ratio: 16:9
Width: 1920 pixels
Height: 1080 pixels
Scan type: Progressive
Audio Format: AAC
Audio Sampling rate: 48.000 kHz
Audio Bit rate: 192 kb/s
Stereo/Mono: Mono
File Size: 2.24 GB
Duration: 14 min 56 seconds

Type: Audio
Audio Format: MP3 audio
Audio Sampling rate: 44.100 kHz
Audio Bit rate: 259.59 kb/s
Stereo/Mono: Stereo
File Size: 29.1 MB
Duration: 14 min 56 seconds

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Records Centre

Transcript:

I'm Linda Hart and I'm Derek Evans' eldest daughter. There are so many different memories of my father, but I suppose one of the strongest ones are going out with him, going on his filming jobs when he went to the scrambles and... a lot of bike activity. And the other thing I also remembered was he sometimes, well he used to do a lot of photographs of parachutists and things, and I remember going to Shobdon with him and standing near the cross that they land on and the parachutists coming down, which was really exciting actually.

He was somebody who liked a bit of excitement in life really, and so he used to do a lot of filming of the SAS. And he used to go up in their planes and hang out the side of the plane and often wasn't even strapped in, a dare devil really. And he actually dropped one of his very precious cameras out of one of those planes one day, so that was pretty awful. But it didn't land on anyone fortunately, so no one was injured in that particular incident. So yeah, he was very into all the exciting things that went on but usually I wasn't allowed to go on those because I had to be you know, safe and things. Actually, with him he wouldn't have kept me particularly safe because he would just wander off and do whatever and come back when he was ready, so, you know that's how it was I'm afraid.

He wasn't there (home) a lot of the time, particularly in the day really, so I suppose when I was very young I was in bed when he came home. But there was often quite a lot of phone calls in the night and he would rush off to do various things. And one particular night I remember being quite scared by this phone call, it was probably about three o'clock in the morning or something and he rushed off. And I knew something awful had happened. It transpired the next day that I found out that our GP was murdered by a drug addict who broke into the surgery, held him at knifepoint and he didn't give him any drugs and he stabbed him to death. It was very sad because we knew him as well as the fact it was a horrible thing to happen anyway.

He worked mainly around the Midlands/South Wales area. He did go abroad to photograph the jazz festival in Nice every year and he went away. He used to play golf so he often went to golf matches, photographs of golfers. He liked travelling but didn't do too much of it because obviously his family and home was in Hereford so kept to that really. He was sort of taking lots of news film for HTV so he was a stringer there, I think that's what they were called. So that's where he rushed off to do

little pieces of news film at any time of day or night really. And then he'd rush the film to the station and it would go off on the train but it's not quite like that anymore. Certainly, in those days it was quite primitive.

I guess it was quite unusual [to have a father as a photographer] I didn't really quite know what it meant. For me it was much more about him taking photographs, perhaps of us quite often because we'd have the Christmas photos of us and things. So, I didn't really think about the films he took particularly but of course he did a lot of that. And I suppose as a child you don't really know what someone does, you know they're called something, a doctor or whatever, but actually you have no clue what that means. It just means, well it meant to us, that he wasn't there often really, but we always had nice holidays abroad and things so we saw a lot of him then. I suppose that made up for the time when he wasn't around.

My first camera was a box camera that he gave me and, yeah, I didn't need too much tuition with that, kind of learnt how to use it. I wasn't bad at it. And then he gave me his Rolliflex, which had been kind of, it had been damaged somehow as well and he'd got it sorted out again, and he did teach me how to use that. And I loved that camera it was really nice but he decided he wanted it back to do some other photography with so he had it back and then he gave me something new something like a Canon or something, which was never as nice as the Rolliflex. But I do have the Rolliflex now in my possession because I love it. I don't know if it works because I haven't tried it for ages, but I like it, it's a really nice camera. And I do remember when I was quite young going into the dark room, which was always a fascinating place because it's dark obviously, but the main thing I liked was the fact that when you developed the photographs and they appear magically. I still think that's quite magic. But obviously you don't get to do those things now unfortunately, but it was fantastic, and they'd have all the stills on the line there. it's really nice, really really nice.

[Julia's question inaudible] He used to do a contact sheet for me and I could choose which ones I wanted to develop. I never actually managed to do that. I don't think he liked me doing things for myself. He didn't mind helping or showing but I don't think he would have trusted me to that really. It's a shame really but yeah.

He said it didn't matter what sort of camera you had, anybody can take a good photograph on any camera if they've got a good eye for it. And I believe that to be true actually because I've seen some really bad photographs that people have taken with really easy point and shoot cameras and obviously phones. I'm always quite pleased with my phone pictures so I must have picked something up at some point.

I think men at that stage liked pretty much being in male company, going to the football and sort of stuff. He was a great Hereford Utd fan as well, I had forgot to mention that before. And he also used to have this jazz evening and all these blokes that came around. They kind of drank wine together and listened to jazz. They all took little bits of jazz to play throughout the evening. So, mum and I would take food into them but they didn't really want women in there at all. It was like you crept in and your crept out. And I think that's what was expected of women at that point. They sort of tended to serve the men and men thought of women in that way really. But hopefully things have changed a bit since then!

I wouldn't have thought he would ever have thought about anyone particularly wanting all have all those photographs afterwards. I think he enjoyed sort of doing the exhibitions and things like that because he had a lot of.....we've got a few of his pictures that were just on boards and he just liked doing that kind of stuff. He enjoyed the work so much, I don't.....it was the actual doing of it, not the product of it in the end. I mean there are some fantastic photographs but I don't think he was that conscious of people thinking how brilliant they were. I think he just loved doing the work and loved meeting people, talking, and, you know, just finding out about people. And my husband always says that he was quite charismatic and perhaps he was. I probably wouldn't have known what that meant at that stage and perhaps he was, he was quite charismatic yeah. I believe it is true, he did engage people. He was able to get things out of people if he wanted a story about things, then he was able to ask the right question and get it, because he was quite a relaxed person and he always wore quite weird rather very overly casual clothes. So that you never felt in awe of him in anyway whatsoever. But I think photographers are quite relaxed. Certainly, he was quite relaxed.

I always really liked going out with him. He used to meet lots and lots of people when we were out and talk incessantly to various people and as a child that's pretty boring. You kind of get left somewhere you know and he'd go off and do whatever. But it was still quite exciting because you were actually left to do what you wanted to do and you could go and watch what all the adults were doing, kids were doing without being told what to do really, which is always quite good as a child, isn't it? So yeah, it was good fun, very good fun going out with him. And I don't ever remember my sisters coming so that was always nice, having him all to myself really.

He was quite quiet at home really, he was probably exhausted actually because he worked very hard. I should think most of the time he was sitting and watching telly and stuff, snoozing in the chair, that sort of thing, what people do at home. Because you know, he played golf, he played that any time he had some spare time, so he was out a lot of the time doing stuff, so when

he was at home he was probably exhausted as I said.

[In later years] Keith was always in touch with him, he would come and see him and they'd talk about work together, but it was a very gradual process, whereby he gave up doing the photography. But Keith always kept in touch with him and always was, well I think they were very good friends really, think they got on well together and... they had very different personalities so it was a good match.

[Value of preserving the archive] well it's a great part of living history, isn't it really? It's fantastic having people that actually lived in those photographs to come and talk about it. I just think that's amazing. It's a lovely idea and I just hope it continues and you get funding. Again, because these things are really important. Otherwise the stories are lost and it is just such a lovely way of doing it really. I'm not really quite sure what Derek would make of this. On some levels, he was quite a private person, I'm not sure what they would think. I think he'd be happy that his photographs were being used in some useful sense, and some historical sense, so yeah, I think he would probably be ok with it.