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Identifier: Nelson, Margaret\_Interview\_Complete  
Interview Date: June\_01\_2018  
Location: Fownhope, Herefordshire  
Source: Catcher Media Social CIC  
Interviewee: Margaret Nelson (speaker, female)  
Interviewer: Marsha O'Mahony (speaker, female)  
Camera & Sound: Richard Goldsmith (male)  
Producer: Julia Goldsmith (female)  
Language: English

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Type: Video  
Video Format: MPEG-4  
Bit rate: 29.9 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: 48.00 kHz  
Audio Bit rate: 220 kb/s  
Stereo/Mono: Mono  
File Size: 5.18 GB  
Duration: 24 min 50 seconds

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Type: Audio  
Audio Format: MP3 audio  
Audio Sampling rate: 44.100 kHz  
Audio Bit rate: 256 kb/s  
Stereo/Mono: Mono  
File Size: 45.9 MB  
Duration: 24 min 50 seconds

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## Summary Interview transcript

Margaret Nelson was born in Fownhope and has been involved with the Heart of Oak club walk since she was a young child and is known by everyone in the village. She recalls her memories and explains why she thinks the walk is important, what it means to her and her family and her hope for it to continue so future generations can appreciate the closeness and happiness of a village coming together to celebrate a tradition.

0.00

Margaret was born in Fownhope and has been involved with the Heart of Oak walk since she was about 6 years old; she compares the walk to Christmas. It was always a great get together with family and with folk who are like a family, there was a band, the fair, skittles, the 'greasy pole', games such as egg and spoon race and the three legged race. Many of her relatives have now passed on but in the 50's and 60's the whole village was like one big family and the club walk ensured that everyone came together for a big celebration, Margaret recalls spending time with all her school friends, she would hate for the tradition to finish.

It was the main event of the year, the New Inn would be packed and the men would get tiddly, probably quite drunk but she can't remember there ever being any trouble, everyone was happy and enjoying themselves no fighting.

Margaret recalls the walk itself, a nice spread that was laid on, people would be in the garden drinking cider or orange juice and the children would be playing.

Her Grandchildren are now involved and one of them won last year and this year two of her Grandchildren are taking part so she will have two sticks to dress.

5.00

As a teenager she always had a new dress for the walk but in the evening she would change into casual wear and go to the fair, there was a band from Lydbrook and Margaret recalls one particularly handsome band member named Bill, all the girls would walk alongside the band and they all wanted a date with Bill.

Everything about the day was great and Margaret although the main members are getting older, she hopes that others will take it on in the future to ensure the tradition is kept alive.

She is looking forward to this year's walk which is taking place the day after this interview, she explains what it will mean to her, she will attend church as she always has done because, she loves to sing the hymns and she has never missed a service. She is nearly 70 but has never missed a flower walk even when she moved away she returned for the flower walk every year.

Asked about her earliest memory she describes being exciting she lived a mile and a half away but she could wander by herself, she particularly enjoyed the fair because she never went to the annual May fair in Hereford, her favourites were the swinging boats but didn't like the bumper cars.

What did she think of the fact that girls couldn't stick when she was younger? She didn't feel she missed out as she always walked alongside.

Now she enjoys the dressing up and having family around her, her daughter is coming back for the walk tomorrow and her boys will be taking part, it will be a great family get together including the foster children her daughter looks after who call her Granny.

10.00

The flower walk has been a big part of her children's lives as well and although her son doesn't come every year now if he did live here Margaret hopes he would have been part of keeping the tradition alive.

Margaret then goes on to describe how she dresses the sticks, she was shown by Michael Andrews, the Master, so although she doesn't do it exactly the same it is similar. She seals the sticks with string but does cheat by using some tape, nails are put into the sticks so she can put the stalks and stems of the flowers through, then chop off the excess, the children hold them whilst she puts silver foil and ribbon round. They need to be arranged nicely so that the flowers don't slip through.

15.00

She always collects some oak and foliage from the woods but tends to buy flowers, last year she had a theme of red, white and blue but this year she will be using all sorts of colours.

To Margaret it is all about the tradition and she feels very lucky to have been involved. Years ago it was set up to help

the poor and the sick, there is nothing around the county like it and she is very proud of the people who are involved. They are usually lucky with the weather and everyone can sit outside and enjoy the drinks and pig roast but she does describe one year where the weather was awful and it was so windy the banners kept blowing over, it rained so much that the band had to tip out the water from where they were playing, but on the whole they have been lucky with the weather.

20.00

Asked about characters Margaret recalls several people like Clarence Sayce, Roger Wallace and Uncle Arch, they are all dead now and whilst everyone misses the old characters there are still a few around who keep the tradition going.

Was it a good place for young men and women to meet? Margaret says yes although a lot of the village youngsters already knew each other and many were related in some way to each other but she met her first boyfriend Bill, the band player, all the girls liked him and they were slightly jealous of Margaret, he was her first love. She met up with him again for a day out but he has since died.