

Dr Angela Maye-Banbury Emeritus Fellow Oral History Sheffield Hallam University

Founder & Chairperson: Achill Oral Histories

Founder Oral: History Made Easy

From when she was eleven years old growing up in Coalisland Co Tyrone, Dr Angela Maye-Banbury has been recording stories. Her first recordings were with members of her family in the mid 1970s and were done on tape recorder using cassette tapes. During the school holidays aged 11, Angela worked in her brother John's fancy good shop in Coalisland where in lieu of monetary payment, she asked John to make her wages a steady supply of cassettes from John's shop. He agreed to her request. Angela has remained faithful to the practice of recording oral histories ever since.

Angela immigrated to England to study in 1984 and for the last thirty-five years, she has worked as a university Senior Lecturer and latterly Principal Lecturer specialising in oral history and research methods leadership, notably on the memories of people and place. Over the course of her career, Angela has recorded over two hundred oral histories in many countries including China, France, and the USA. She has documented the immigration stories of Irish women and men in Britain (particularly Leicester, Sheffield and Manchester) and in the USA (specifically New York). Her oral research published in peer reviewed journals was submitted in each round as part of her university's Research Excellence Framework exercise. Her oral history work with the Irish community in Britain has also been featured on BBC Radio 4. She has provided consultancy on oral history for a wide range of organisations including the National Trust; Just Heat (Arts and Humanities Research Council); the Emerald Centre in Leicester and the New York Irish Centre amongst others.

In 2016, Angela founded Achill Oral Histories, one of only two not for profit organisations on Achill Island. In addition to gathering the stories of Achill from the Achill people past and present, Achill Oral Histories seeks to promote key skills and competencies associated with oral history through training and mentorship to boost employability opportunities for the community, especially young people. Her lifelong contribution to the academic sector was recognised in September 2023 when, upon her retirement from full time academia, she was appointed as Emeritus Fellow in oral history, people and place by Sheffield Hallam University's research leadership team.

Following her retirement last autumn for full time research and teaching, Angela moved to Achill Island where she now lives with her writer and composer husband Stuart and their 1971 VW Beetle called Ollie. Sadly, Angela no longer has neither the tape recorder nor any of the cassettes given to her by her brother John all those years ago. But her commitment to recording the 'everyday extraordinary' stories of others has remained constant over the decades. Angela believes everyone should have the opportunity to do oral history. So in addition to Achill Oral Histories, she promotes the practice of oral history nationally and internationally through 'Oral History Made Easy – Six Steps To Success', her dedicated online training and mentorship programme designed to transform people from novice to proficient oral historian in easy to follow actionable steps.

We hope you enjoy being immersed in oral history and storytelling today so you can marshal your memories of being with us on Bere Island today for many years to come.