

ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPT

Interviewee: Ju Mackrell

Date: 30th October 2025

Interviewer: None

Location: At Ju's house

Other people present: None

Audio files: Ju Mackrell oral history



Note that the following is a verbatim transcript of what was spoken in the recording. Our best efforts have been made to capture and represent the interview in its entirety, though there is the possibility of error.

Thank you for your interest in how the Odd Down History Group first began. In the autumn of 2023, I found myself retired and looking for some interesting groups to join. I wasn't having much success and my particular interest was social history and genealogy. So I decided probably the best thing to do was try and establish a group of that nature.

I put a little message on Facebook, on the Odd Down Community Association Facebook page, and asked if there were any other people interested, and if they were interested to come along to the cafe, which was newly established at Odd Down. The idea was that if people would buy a drink, we could use the venue for free. And as you will know, I want to keep this group informal and free so that people can attend as and when they can, and with no cost to themselves. Later on, when we arrived at the cafe, I was quite overwhelmed with the number of people that actually turned up. There were in excess of 40 people at the first meeting, and it was quite clear that people wanted different things from the group. Some people were looking for something to be able to record the history and write it down and have a book published or something along those lines. And other people were just interested to see what it was all about. And they were chatting about their times in Odd Down as youngsters and very nostalgic about times gone by, which was also really interesting.

So as the group has developed, it seems to follow those two lines quite distinctly. I was unsure how to get something recorded because I didn't want anything that formal. And then, of course, Trudi came along and did our wonderful website. So there is a written form. The socials seem to be quite well established. There's a core group of people that come and different people come every time as well, which is really nice.

At the beginning of this year, so we're in 2025, Ezmy from Odd Down Football Club reached out and said, is there anything you'd like to do at the club? So I had a chat with her and found out that they had a PA and a sound system up there, which was really exciting as we were able to then introduce talks to the group. And we've had amazing volunteers come along and give talks for free. So they've also been able to be provided at no cost to the attendees. We've recently introduced films as well because there's a couple of really good history films, but I think that's going to run its course with about three or four films.

So let's see where it goes. I'm still enjoying it at the moment. If I don't enjoy it anymore, then I may not do it anymore. But it's fairly well established that it's on the third Thursday of every month at the cafe. And people know that. So people go along whether I do or not, which is really great. That was exactly how I intended it to turn out. I think it's been brilliant for bringing the Odd Down community together, and others. People are coming back to Odd Down because they grew up here and everybody's welcome at any of our meets.