

KAYE HALL INTERVIEW

Key:

EHdK: Dr Eve Hayes de Kalaf (Interviewer)

KH: Kaye Hall (Respondent)

Date/Location:

27th February 2023. The Mews Restaurant, Holetown, St. James, Barbados.

EHdK 00:01 I'm here with Kaye Hall who is the Education and Community Outreach Officer at the Barbados Museum and Historical Society. First off, thank you so much for agreeing to speak with me today. We're in a beautiful restaurant so there is some background noise. Just to note that will be on the recording. Kaye, can you tell me about your professional background?

KH 00:33 I've always loved museums. I've always loved working with people. I have kind of a knack for teaching people. I joined the museum in an administrative role about 11 years ago. And then my previous career ahead of me sort of led me into the education department. I've been teaching all along. I've done event management and a whole bunch of other stuff. Research, and so on. So, in 2017, I completed a master's in education policy. And I did as my subject utilising the museum as an education resource. So then when the vacancy opened up, it was a sort of a natural thing to apply for the job. Because coming out of that, I had a tonne of ideas about the types of things I would like to implement at a museum to make it more relevant to our community, to our public.

EHdK 01:37 Talk me through the work that you've been doing around the history of Windrush as well as the Windrush scandal. Where did those conversations start? And how did these ideas move towards the projects that you've been working on in your role?

KH 01:57 That came about as part of a larger EU-LAC museums project. EU-LAC is European and Latin American and Caribbean museums. So, it's a project looking at Caribbean museums and how they work and operate in the Caribbean. Part of the project was documenting museums. Another part of the project was talking about how the Caribbean exhibits migration and gender. So that's where we came in. We did do a little bit of work with the other parts of the project. But this was sort of a something that we could take and run with it because Barbados has a huge history with migration. In other Caribbean countries where they've got vast tracts of land in the post-emancipation period, people were able to move away from the plantations and settle elsewhere. In Barbados, there was literally nowhere else to go. So even apart from migration to Britain, we've migrated elsewhere throughout the Caribbean. Even before the end of slavery, we had people going back to Africa to places like Liberia. So, we have this history of forced and voluntary

migration that started...there's actually a saying, wherever in the world you go, you're going to butt up on a Bajan because we have literally travelled all over. So, coming back to this project now, in the post-war period, loads of Barbadians went to Britain to help rebuild after the war effort. This project really got going just before and around the same time that we had the Windrush scandal. We had access to lots of people here who would have come back home after that or who would be the descendants of people who left and came back. They don't necessarily talk about it. For example, I discovered that my great uncle, who is very much alive...he's going to be 96 later this year. He went and came back. And I found out after we'd done the exhibition, the lecture series and all that other stuff. A random conversation one day. And I'm like, "Where were you when I was walking all over the place asking where are these people?" But they touch on just about every part of our lives. There's not a single person I think that you'll come across in Barbados who has not got a relative or an ancestor who's been a part of this Windrush movement.

EHdK 04:28 Can you give us some a bit more background context for the people who are listening to this recording about specifically what the project was and what your role was within that? What the main project aims were?

KH 04:42 The main project aims included creating a virtual museum of the Caribbean migration and memory. We played a part of that. Doing a general exhibition on that which we did do on and which is currently travelling the world in various places. Also, to publish and publicise the experience but also to connect the people across the diaspora with this untold part of our history. That more so for us than anything else. There are lots of people who went through the experience, but it hadn't really been explored from the point of view of the Caribbean people. So, we wanted very much to tell that side of the story.

EHdK 05:21 Why do you think that story is not as widespread and not as well known?

KH 05:32 Well, I can tell you from our project experience that our people are a shy lot, so they go, they participate, they contribute to the community. If you engage them in conversation, they will share a story or two. When you say to them, can I record you? There's quite a bit of a backpedalling. So, for example, as a part of the project we did a number of events to encourage people to talk. When we did the lecture series, they came, they greeted one another, they shared their stories and we say, "Can we record you?" They clammed right up. We did a tea party, they came out, they enjoyed the tea. We had some people share some poems about the experience. They commented, we said, "Can we record you?" and they backed right off again. I think too that reluctance to talk about it. Even with my great uncle, whom I mentioned. I've sort of gotten him to promise that he will give us an oral history interview. But it has been about a good six months since the conversation. I have yet to pin him down. He would have worked on London Transport for sure. He worked somewhere else before London Transport. I forget where he told me. But there was an incident where he was accused of stealing which he did not do. And to quote him, he abused the people and left but he said it was not difficult to find work. So, if you found that one

workplace did not agree with you, it was not difficult to move on to somewhere else. But it was very, very hard to go about day-to-day life. There will be racist slurs or you would have difficulty in getting service. And there was always this expectation that you were not educated which was generally not the case in Barbados.

EHdK 07:31 In the Barbadian case specifically there were many skilled workers, educated people, who then who went to the UK to work in very different jobs.

KH 07:42 Very much a kind of “To Sir, with Love” [E.R. Braithwaite] kind of experience where they were well educated, but they could not get the jobs to grow with the experience that they had.

EHdK 07:51 Getting back to the project then. How many oral history interviews did you conduct as part of that project?

KH 07:58 Very few in the end. Less than 10. What we do have is on the virtual museum site so you can see that. We haven't hidden them. Most people they were happy to talk. They didn't mind you making notes. But they were very reluctant to be recorded.

EHdK 08:21 And that project took place in was it 2017?

KH 08:27 It ran for five years. And it was supposed to officially end in 2020. And then we got a bit of an extension into 2021. Just to finish up the publications and so on because of COVID.

EHdK 08:40 One of those publications was this fantastic book called “From Invitation to Deportation: 70 Years of the Windrush Generation” which was edited by Henderson Carter. Can you tell me a little bit about?

KH 08:53 Well, one of the things we do is whenever we have an exhibition, we try to do complimentary programming. So, what we did is we reached out to various people who had some sort of experience with the Windrush and we asked them to come and speak and share. So, as researchers, as people who themselves had other experiences with the Windrush. So, for example, Guy Hewitt who we have spoken to about this project. He was a part of a panel discussion and he contributed an essay. But basically, people who have worked in and around the Windrush Generation were invited to contribute to this. We tried to cover a little bit of everything but one of the things we discovered when we were doing the exhibition. We did a kind of a dry run. We did a set of panels. We sort of sent them around for comments and so on. But two things happened. When they went to Guy, Guy said, “But this is a story of things. It's not a story of people. Maybe you should talk to some other people or highlight some of the people.” So then out of that came a sort of an interactive digital part of the exhibition where we highlighted, well, coincidentally 70 people for the 70 years. But we didn't start out looking for 70. But 70 Caribbean people who made

some sort of impact on either British society or who, as a product of their migrating to Britain, made an impact in the Caribbean. So, they were highlighted as a part of the exhibition. And another part of this was to do this series where people could come and actually interact with the historians and share the stories.

EHdK 10:36 What response did you get from people who attended?

KH 10:39 Most of them, the people who actually went, they came on the mic, they shared their stories. We actually had more stories shared than people asking questions. Ordinarily, when we do a lecture series, the lecturer will get up and say what he's got to say. And then people will ask questions about the material. What we tended to get is a lecturer would share and then somebody would say, "I have a similar story," or, "Something happened to my father, something happened to me. I had a cousin who dah, dah, dah..." And the story would be more like that. We also had two panel discussions. And they sort of came out of that kind of a feedback loop where we asked people to share their stories. So, for example, somebody made the comment. I forget who right now but a lot of the stories that people were sharing sort of mirrored the literature that was written at the time and we were able to go into the books. People like V.S. Naipaul, George Lamming and share excerpts that they wrote as a part of their literature, but which could literally have been said by the people who experienced that Windrush movement.

EHdK 11:54 A lot of people who, at the time, weren't recognised for their contribution. It took many years for that to be appreciated.

KH 12:04 Exactly. And one of the panels was completely dedicated to literature, the culture, art. So, we had somebody talking about music, we had someone talking about literature about art.

EHdK 12:17 This sounds like a wonderful project. And the focus of the project was specifically to help people or to learn more about the kind of historical contributions of the Bajan community who had migrated to the UK.

KH 12:33 Not just Bajan. Caribbean on the whole. We obviously had access to a wider range of Barbadians than other people. But, for example, when the exhibition travelled to Jamaica, they added content as well.

EHdK 12:46 How many countries did you travel to?

KH 12:49 Here [Barbados], Jamaica, not so much countries. We did a few different cities in the UK with Barbadian or Caribbean communities. We have had some interest from Canada, but that exhibition hasn't actually travelled yet. We're still negotiating terms and conditions. And we did have a conversation again with the people in Trinidad but they

haven't put on their iterations yet either. And also, with Guyana but they haven't done theirs either yet.

EHdK 13:19 That sounds really interesting. When you were in Jamaica, for example, did you have the same kind of engagement with the different audiences or was it a physical exhibition travelling?

KH 13:31 They had a physical exhibition. They also did a virtual tour. And then they did a few documentaries. And the documentaries are available online as is the virtual tour. They did some in house stuff as well. It was actually at the UWI [University of the West Indies] museum. So, they did some student seminars as well but those were not recorded. And the feedback we get from them is that the students were very, very interested. They were very engaged. And that has been actually the student response throughout. Like in Barbados, we did a collaborative project with the Barbados Community College and Theatre Arts Programme. And we invited the students to look at the material. We encouraged them to go home in the community and see who in their family might have had some sort of experience with the Windrush. And then they sort of workshopped a theatre performance which was performed at the opening night of the International Museums Conference but it was also recorded so that's also online. And the students themselves were interviewed about their experiences, interacting with the material as well as in developing the play.

EHdK 14:43 Were there any responses that were unexpected or anything that surprised you about how people either reacted to the material they're engaging with or any stories that caught your attention? What did you learn from carrying out the project?

KH 15:03 The one story that has stayed with me is perhaps the story of a gentleman [Buddy Larrier]. He's living in Barbados now. But he had a quite awful experience of being committed to a mental institution when he was not ill. And that is the story that stayed with me. I guess because I found it...if there is something that I would be afraid of happening to me, that would be it. The idea of being quite in charge of your faculties but unable to escape to be a part of society. So that one stayed with me. The surprising thing would be how many people were willing to talk but not be recorded. That's a kind of a bugbear to me now years later that lots of people shared these experiences, these little snippets, these little stories and then you would say, "Can we record it?" And they would say no.

EHdK 15:57 Why do you think that was?

KH 16:01 In Barbados? Barbadians are very retiring. Not just about this but just about everything. I'm an amateur photographer, as well, and if you go and you do a photo walk, and you're taking pictures, they will run away from you. They don't want to be recorded on camera either as well. And there is a kind of a phobia about that. There is a theory that is sort of related to African spirituality ideas with the idea that you don't want your spirit

captured. I've heard more than one person say that. And a lot of these people are, in fact, older. Younger people, like for example the community college students, they were much more willing to be engaged on camera and to be interviewed. So, we do have their stuff.

EHdK 16:49 I'm interested in the project as it was happening. The Windrush scandal began unfolding then as your project was taking off. What were the initial reactions in Barbados to the breaking of that story? Was it something that resonated with people? Was it something that came up in your discussions when you were carrying out oral history interviews?

KH 17:19 People were shocked, for sure. They were upset. They were angry. They were also quite unsurprised by the turn of events. Many of them have said that the casual racism expressed as a part of that is something that they've expected all along. So, as much as they were disappointed, they were not surprised.

EHdK 17:58 Before the scandal broke, did you hear of any stories of people having issues over documentation or problems, for example, with people who had come to Barbados and then found that they were unable to return to the UK? Some of the core themes you have already mentioned would be labour issues and people not having their skill set, recognise a bit and working in menial jobs, kinship ties you've spoken about as well. Strong family bonds. You've also mentioned about mental illness being a factor. What were some of the core themes that you took away from the work you were doing?

KH 18:40 There was a great deal of community. Lots of different organisations tended to band together as Caribbean people, as West Indians living in London, or wherever else, running wherever, where basically they would come together for financial support. They would come together and help one another out. Like people who had newly arrived would have somewhere to stay because they would look out for one another that way. So, there was a lot of community support. When they started to integrate with the society, there were also a lot of community organisations where they would have done Caribbean organisations in parallel with existing organisations for other things. So, when they couldn't necessarily join a British one then they would start their own cricket club and it would be like a West Indies team in Britain or from the various communities where they've settled. So, lots of them spoke about how these communities really helped to keep them grounded. Really helped to deal with the missing home, missing family. There are also a number of instances where they documented both sending for children they'd left behind but also sending children back. So, there was a pattern of bringing older children as they were able to fend for themselves but sending home infants and toddlers because they felt that regular caregiving could not be trusted when the children could not speak up and represent themselves. So, there's that back and forth movement of children.

EHdK 20:21 The theme of children and documentation is essential to the scandal because many of the children that came over with their parents came on their parents' passports which meant that people who essentially grew up from a very young age in the UK, identifying as being British, seeing themselves as British, in fact didn't have the documentation that they were then later told that they needed to be recognised for British nationals. Did that ever come up in conversation? Or those kinds of problematics?

KH 20:55 It was discussed but I don't think we actually met anyone in Barbados who was in that position. Most of the people that we've become aware of who had that issue with repatriation were in fact Jamaican. And I've wondered about that. Barbadians by nature are dot your i's, cross your t's persons. So, while I don't know whether or not there was in fact a move afoot to get people regularised it is something that we would have done as a matter of course, simply because that's what we do. Barbados now 2023 is very bureaucratic. Wherever you go, you've got to fill out forms. You've got to have receipts. You've got...there is that part of who we are that I think maybe that is way there were not as many of us who fell victim to this lack of documentation, this lack of regularisation. I do believe I've heard the story of one Barbadian woman. But I didn't have a very clear story of what happened there. But not very many cases in the same way how you had these ongoing stories of Jamaicans who were deported, sent back to Jamaica and they literally had no-one when the plane touched down.

EHdK 22:15 Did you talk about that? Did you go to Jamaica as part of the exhibition?

KH 22:19 Our relationship with them was merely a Zoom thing really because by the time the project got to the point where people would have travelled, we had pretty much stretched up in COVID. So, a lot of our programming activity...the exhibition itself was launched in...a small version was launched in November 2019 at the International Museums Conference and then the exhibition itself was launched... it was 2018 for the conference and then it was launched for Windrush Day in 2019. And then after that, we were basically looking at having it travel elsewhere. But then a lot of the other iterations would have been launched coming into that pandemic year or very late in the 2019 year. So, for example, when Reading did their exhibition, they did a digital exhibition rather than a physical exhibition because they were right in the middle of COVID. So, their programming took the form of an all-day radio broadcast which you were invited to log in. They did some interviews and stuff with us. And they had children's activities on the website. But they never did in the end. They were hoping to eventually do a physical exhibition as well, but they never did.

EHdK 23:36 How did that collaboration with Reading come to be?

KH 23:42 No, they reached out to us though I'm not sure how they learned about the project. One of the things about the project was that we were all to, as far as possible, publicise, disseminate, share the work wherever in the world. So, we've had lots of people reach out.

The Birmingham community. That was a case of somebody visiting Barbados, coming to the exhibition and saying, "Oh, we've got to have this," and then they put it up on their website.

EHdK 24:15 I'm sorry, just to reiterate. It was the University of Saint Andrews, wasn't it? And it was the Reading Museum you worked with? Is that right?

KH 24:39 Yes, and the University of Saint Andrews eventually did their own physical exhibition as well last year, I think. When things finally opened up again in Scotland. Oh, yes, that's true. We also travelled to Scotland.

EHdK 24:40 The context of our project is "The Windrush Scandal in a Transnational and Commonwealth Context". And you were talking about the importance and necessity clearly to talk about Windrush from a Caribbean perspective. What differences or what lessons were learned then from initiating a project like this? Why do you think it is so necessary, basically, to tell these stories? It's a rhetorical question but it would be nice to hear your input.

KH 25:15 I think the biggest lesson learned for us really is the need to take on board projects that the community can relate to and give them the opportunity to tell their stories. What has been striking about this and a few other projects that we've brought online since then is that the people whose history was being documented were, some of them still alive, or their children or grandchildren. Their recent descendants were still alive, so it was a very personal history. History in schools, for example, it's very much still, to a certain extent, especially in the O-level and A-level sections, still very much a kind of a Western-centred telling of what things have happened. So, this is the opportunity to tell more recent stories that have been experienced by people who are living. More personal histories. And what we have discovered is that it also improves and increases the relevance of the museum itself. So, we are actually in this very nice loop now where the community is feeding us. And we are feeding the community. And they're more willing to approach us with projects because we've included them in our programming but also because we're telling their stories which are also our stories. We're about to redevelop our core galleries. Right now, the museum is going to celebrate its 90th anniversary. So, our oldest galleries are dating quite far back. So, they're divided into like the natural history of Barbados because we started out as a natural history museum.

EHdK 26:55 I had a wonderful visit there this morning.

KH 26:57 Right. And then the early social history of Barbados but it pretty much, sort of, dries up after independence which was 50 years ago. So, what we did, and it's coming out of this project, instead of just deciding for ourselves, this is what we think people were interested in. We put out a public call and we asked our citizens, what is it you want to see when you visit the museum? It's actually still going on and they're seeing our stories, our

museum. And it's been from then till now, the project has been postponed because of COVID. But from then till now, we've been reaching out and getting people to tell us which stories they want to see. What they want to. They want to see a bit more of our literature and arts represented. They want to see a more integrated history of Barbados. So, how the people affected the land, how the land affected the people as opposed to...these are the plants and the animals. And it's just like a catalogue. So, they want to hear, for want of a better way of putting it, they want to hear more human-interest stories because they want to see how, basically, in whatever part of the museum you are, they want to hear the stories of our people. So that much for sure.

EHdK 28:06 Barbados has a really strong history of oral tradition. And there are many different oral history projects that have taken place. Can you just tell me a bit more about your experience with oral history?

KH 28:28 Beyond the basic difficulty of getting people to agree with these subjects, once you find a subject, they're usually very willing and happy to share their stories once they've agreed to do it. The average Bajan is very talkative. So, you will get anecdote after anecdote. You know, one more thing, one more story. You often don't very much have to ask for leading questions. Once you've asked question number one, there's very little guidance required after that. At least, that has been my experience. So, we did an oral history a little while ago with some folks with the Barbados Landship. And any guiding or steering would have been to ask for bits of the story that would have been missing. So, you've told your story, what about your parents and so on? But from the point of view of willingness to talk, once they've agreed to talk, they were literally...

EHdK 29:26 Is there anything from the stories about people's migration [stories] that was unexpected?

KH 29:39 Not terribly but from my point of view, it might have been my background as well. My first degree is actually not history of museology but literature. So, a lot of these books that would have been written from when the Caribbean started producing its own homegrown literature was done via these people who migrated to Britain. So, my first year reading at university was V.S. Naipaul and George Lamming and people like that. And a lot of what was in those books is what people then turned around and shared. So, for me, there was not a lot that was surprising.

EHdK 30:20 Were you surprised by the scandal itself? And how it erupted? How did you find out about it? Was it in the newspaper or from a colleague?

KH 30:33 Mostly on the internet. Once the scandal broke, it was all over Facebook, Instagram. People streaming, you know. It gained legs very much, for example, like Black Lives Matter did a little while later. People just shared very casually what they felt, what they thought. It was sort of like watching a slow-moving train wreck to a certain extent. What I

found a bit telling was the sluggishness with which the British government and the British institutions responded to the scandal. I think they did a very poor job of damage control, of public relations. I think the scandal could have been much faster contained if maybe they weren't distracted with Brexit and other things.

EHdK 31:30 Which is a huge theme in terms of the scandal as well. Did you have any interaction with the British High Commission at all? I know that you were funded by the EU.

KH 31:37 Not really. We did actually invite them to have interaction with the project both at the personal level and, of course, we did approach them for funding. But there was very little interest. I cannot tell you if it was because they'd been instructed to be hands off or if they just decided to be hands off. In all fairness to them, quite a few of the diplomatic agencies that used to be very supportive of museum work have been telling us that the funding has to a large extent dried up. So, they haven't got as much in the way of their financial resources to support cultural products projects as they would have in the past. So, it may very well have been that too. But even something as simple as inviting them out to the lectures and things like that. Very little response, very little interaction engagement.

EHdK 32:30 That's interesting to hear. You said that you had engagement with other UK universities. You also said that a group in Birmingham was interested in contacting you?

KH 32:42 Birmingham, Community and Friends. I may have the name slightly off but somebody from the community was on a vacation visit to Barbados, saw the exhibition up and asked us if they could have an iteration of it. We gave them some of the digital content and they did do it up on their website. They've reached out again. I think they now want to do a physical exhibition and travel it around Britain. We've got quite a few communities in and around England, so I tend to mix them up. We had Birmingham and the Reading community has now come. Reading Museum came first before the Reading community which has now come. There was also the folks at Saint Andrews, obviously. And Vodafone of all things reached out. An employee from Vodafone reached out and they did a digital iteration of the exhibition on their company-wide intranet all over the UK to mark Windrush Day in 2020 I think it was. I tend to run time together. A very poor habit from a historian! [laughs].

EHdK 33:55 What do you think about Windrush Day? Because I know the book that you released was also around 70 years of the Windrush generation. We're about to reach 75 years. What do you think about talking around those dates especially in your area of education and working with museums?

KH 34:19 I was a little sceptical when they first started. But I think it is a useful way to engage people and have a specific date for people to reflect and to do things. Because without the

day, there is always every possibility that after the initial furor, so to speak, it will die down and be forgotten. But if every year now you're commemorating Windrush Day then it means that you continue to pay attention. And that is actually something UNESCO has been doing all along. They've got different international and national days that they bought. So, although this is itself not a UNESCO holiday, it is a national commemorative day. I think it is very much a page that they've taken from the UNESCO playbook as it were. That if you commemorate something, you continue to give it attention and it continues to be celebrated. Also, it gave us in the Caribbean a kind of a point with which to interact with people. So, for example, I got a call for papers last month for a conference for the 75th anniversary of the Windrush. And we submitted a paper. We haven't heard back as yet. But that's not necessarily something that would have happened without the commemoration of the Windrush Day because people are now planning activities to commemorate that occasion. And for us too... we do something every year. So, last year we launched the exhibition to travel around to the various branches of the National Library Service in Barbados. It's now at our Tamarind Hall Branch which is in Saint Joseph. The year before that, we did online activities with Reading where we did an exchange. So, there was a transnational poetry competition where we had three age categories but people were able to submit poems from both Barbados and from the UK. And the UK winner in the children's division was in fact a little girl from a school in Reading.

EHdK 36:22 And the Reading connection as well. I was speaking about this today...there's a really strong Barbadian connection with Reading. Do you know why? [nb Many people from the Caribbean, particularly Barbados, went to Reading to work at the Huntley & Palmers biscuit factory].

KH 36:32 There are lots and lots of Barbadians settled in Reading. It is quite large community. It is one of the reasons why Reading Museum reached out to us because they wanted to do something with their local community. But that's not something that's happened overnight. It's been so for a number of years. So, for example, when Claude Graham was documenting it for his series, he did, I think, an entire two episodes on Reading. He did Reading, he did Birmingham. But Reading was a very specific part of the UK where Caribbean people have settled and they have you become a part of the community in a very big way.

EHdK 37:13 I was just wondering about how much. I mean, we talked about this at the beginning but how much the theme of the word Windrush as in how that's associated, basically, and then how that word is also being painted post-scandal. And I was just wondering, what do people associate with the word Windrush, when you meet them and when you talk about this? And also, for the oral histories. Was Windrush really a word that was common, that they were using? Where has that come from?

KH 37:51 Well, the Windrush was a reference to one of the ships that brought people up after the World War. But most of the people that we spoke to, in fact, were not on that original ship. Some of them did not even go on a ship. Some of them went on a plane. So, the scandal is what made the Windrush popular. And there is that very iconic photograph of the Windrush which was splashed all across the press. There are lots and lots of pictures of the original Windrush. The original Windrush, I think, touched on quite a few countries...Jamaica and so on before it actually landed in Tilbury Docks. And it's because of that iconic series of photographs that were taken that people, I think, make the link back to that particular boat. But there were a number of other boats. It was not the first. It was not the only. There were other boats that had more people. And quite a few of the people who settled in the UK, which we refer to as the Windrush generation, which comes all the way down to the 70s...more of them went by plane than went by boat in the end. So, the word is, people like to have something to concretely hold on to so Windrush is short, it's punchy. There were pictures.

EHdK 39:14 Is that what you initially went to use the word Windrush for the project?

KH 39:19 No. The working title was just Caribbean migration to Britain. As a matter of fact, the exhibition does not, in fact, reference Windrush at all. It's called the Enigma of Arrival after V.S. Naipaul's book because he does spend a lot of time in that book talking about the conundrum of not really being a Caribbean person any longer but not really being accepted as a British person however much you might want to be. Or however much you've given to the country. So, for us, it's always been an enigma. We call it enigma, enigma, enigma. Windrush is what the students named to play but they are social media. So, they would have done a lot of their research online and seen all the scandal. And so, Windrush is what comes to them. And, of course, our very first or second panel I think does have that big iconic picture for sure. The poster does of the Windrush. It's not that we're divorced from it. We certainly recognise its importance in the story. But it was not the focus of the exhibition when we started. The ships get mentioned right up in the introduction and then they are never a part of the story again when we talk about all the other things that happen. And we cover a wide range of things. There's the rioting, the carnival, our contributions to art, literature, sports.

EHdK 40:53 Talk to me quickly about the archives please because I know that there are a number of archival materials that mentioned.

KH 41:01 Well, the West Indies Federal Archives, they have a number of documents which would have been going back and forth between the colonial offices here. Because they don't just have documents pertinent to Barbados, by the way, they also have... Barbados was sort of representing a few other islands as well. And it was more or less coming around the time of the West Indies Federation. So, there are quite a few documents pertaining to other Caribbean countries as well. And discussing the situation of people in Britain. People are still here in the Caribbean. So, their documents which talk about wanting to stem the flow of Caribbean people, And documents saying we cannot possibly do that because without these people living in Britain, the Caribbean would starve because a lot of them were repatriating significant funds which were propping up quite a few economies in that very tough post-war period. So, there is also documentation of people going up to the UK to represent the interests of Caribbean people living in the UK with the British government, with the parliament of the time because they understood that the migratory movement needed to continue but also the conditions of the people living in the UK needed that representation, needed humane conditions in order to thrive. It was a very, very funny thing too because it also makes mention, for example, of the fact that the Caribbean people were initially invited to come to the UK. They didn't just get up one morning and decide, okay, we're going to go off to the UK. It was after the war, there was lots of rebuilding to be done. Vast parts of London were, you know, reduced to rubble. So, they needed to be rebuilt, their rebuilding needed to happen. They also needed people to work in the National Health Service, in the railway and transport. But there were lots and lots of jobs for which labour was seriously required. Lots of Britons had themselves died in the war. Families had been decimated. There was a need of bodies and we had plenty of bodies to offer. So, there were recruitment programmes. We've, I think, still got a couple of books in our library sort of like leaflets on what you need to do to come to England. But, basically, the whole information packets about migrating to the UK as a part of these work programmes. Lots of people didn't intend to stay. We've got, I think, the transcript of an oral history interview with a guy who was planning to initially go, I think, for like five years and then come back home and then he just never went back.

EHdK 43:56 What about post-Brexit. Have you spoken to people about the impact of Brexit?

KH 44:02 Not very much, no.

EHdK 44:05 Where next with the project? What plans have you got on the horizon?

KH 44:12 Well, I'm still continuing to present at conferences. One of the things actually that has come out of this is a community of practice model for Caribbean museums which we've been invited to speak about on a number of occasions. So, I'm doing a presentation on that

in Belfast. For Belfast, I'm logging on online. In March. We've also got two shared island stories projects being done almost simultaneously. One in one part of Scotland, that's been going since last year, and another one that's coming online with Harris Island, also in Scotland. where basically it is supporting the opportunity for young people from both sides of the Atlantic, as it were, to share the stories that have come about from our shared experiences of, you know, the colonial movements, the Caribbean, the migratory movement back and our vulnerabilities as island states, island nations.

EHdK 45:22 You've mentioned young people a lot. And I think that's really important when thinking about the scandal and its impact because it's very much something that centred on an elderly population who were treated in such an appalling, unthinkable way by the state. What is the reaction of the schools that you're teaching? The people that maybe don't have such a strong grasp of the historical context but that was really something that was such a hugely important...I think, at one point, I think it was at least 10 per cent of the whole Caribbean population were emigrating...were leaving to the UK specifically. I just wondered how they see that?

KH 46:12 It varies. For example, one of the students is literally a returning Windrush descendant in that same Windrush play I told you about. So, he had only at the time of the play been back in Barbados for about two years. So, his grandparents went up. And his parents brought him back. They came on vacation and decided to stay. So, for him, that Windrush thing was today, real, now, my family. The rest of the students were his friends and colleagues. So being in touch with his experience made them, I think, ask more questions. So, we've had students who were like, we thought this was something that happened to somebody else and we now understand this happened to us because they would never have asked their parents or grandparents questions. If he hadn't said, "No, man. I just came back." He's still got a British accent. So, they've all actually...it's not as distant as they thought it was when they first started the project.

EHdK 47:19 I was recently in Jamaica and one of the strong things, I think, that was very clear there is that people, so Jamaicans now who are leaving, they're heading to the US, right? The UK is like a past memory. It's not seen as some kind of ideal journey for people to take. It's very much very old people's past memory. And it's very difficult as well to actually travel and to be able to get a visa and to actually stay in the UK because that's the system that the UK has purposely built to make this fortress. To make it very difficult...Theresa May...to make it very difficult, very negative, not very pleasant place to be. I just wondered, if people in Barbados are seeing that situation as well.

KH 48:13 My daughter, for example, is more interested in Canada than either the US or the UK. She did spend one year in the US, but she didn't really like it. So, yes, Windrush has turned him off of the UK, but Black Lives Matter has definitely turned them off of the US. So, everybody's talking about Canada and Europe. A couple of her friends have gone to

Japan to do the work as an English teacher while learning Japanese thing. That's also quite popular here. Japan and China both for that but it is really broadening their horizons to not just thinking of things in terms of the US and the UK. Quite a few people are exploring like Australia as well.

EHdK 48:58 Is there anything else you would like to share before we end the interview?

KH 49:04 For us, it's been exciting to learn as you go along. When we first started, I don't think we could have really envisioned where we ended up. For example, even the whole idea of the community of practice where you are in lockstep with your community and what you are working on is an expression of what they need. Any activism your museum does is on their behalf and representing their position. We had done community-based projects before, but they tended to be top-down. Here's an interesting idea. Let's reach out to this specific part of the community that's doing what we're doing. And that's sort been a bit flipped on its head now. We've had interventions into our galleries, for example. And we'll just sort of throw ideas out and they'll come back to us. We've had an exhibition on activism in Barbados which has come all the way down from rebellions during the period of enslavement to Black Lives Matter, or another movement called Life in Leggings which is about gender-based harassment. So, I've seen the museum become a great deal more inclusive than when I joined it. It's always been inclusive in its institutional presence. So, our documents, our mission, our vision. It says that we are inclusive, but I've seen the staff become person by person more inclusive as we work more closely with the museum. So, I'm looking forward actually to continuing to share that idea community of conscious that was developed during this process because I think it is an excellent way for Caribbean museums to both connect with their community and to connect with that tradition of oral history which is more a part of who we are than that written, documented history. And now that we're having more access to technology to digital means and so on. I think it was really a model that can work for maybe not just the Caribbean but literally anywhere else that there's a small island developing states (SIDS) or anywhere else in the Global South where resources are limited but the people are many and they have stories to tell.

EHdK 51:28 Thank you so much.

KH 51:29 You're welcome.

[END OF AUDIOFILE].