

March 2024 Report to Advisory Board by Boni Sones OBE

Our news

This will be the last year www.wpradio.co.uk will be broadcasting. We will be closing the site and hanging up our shoes as soon as the General Election 2024 is called. After 20 years of writing and broadcasting it seems a timely and clean end to our work.

Latest project – Groundbreakers

Before we hang up our shoes we have collaborated with the Churchill Political Archives Centre at the University of Cambridge to conduct 14 interviews with women politicians across party who were “Groundbreakers” in Westminster securing their seats before the 1997 Labour victory. These interviews will be held at the Churchill for watching and listening at a later date and we will be using the content to make our own documentary and podcast on this important political history for women.

The Team and our achievements – creating an educational resource

All the interviews www.parliamentaryradio.com has conducted as a team over 17 years (about 600) are now housed in one of three national audio archives at the British Library, The LSE, and the Churchill Archive Centre, University of Cambridge, too.

All our four books on women in parliament can be found in the National Libraries of Britain: The British Library, the Bodleian Library Oxford University, The Cambridge University Library, National Library of Scotland, National Library of Wales and Trinity College Dublin. The first was nominated for the Orwell Prize in journalism.

We continue to work with the archive centres on cataloguing and preserving our interviews for the history books. The technical requirements of the archives are high and the good news is that the History (of Parliament Trust) has agreed to let The Churchill Political Archives take over its content of ours so that it will soon in 2024 all become publicly available for the first time online. That means it can be used for educational purposes for schools, colleges and higher education institutions and their students. Or for bespoke party-political archives.

We have reported during a highly significant time in British politics and the impact of Brexit is still being debated while all parties have had a change of leadership and direction at the top which in turn impacts on public policy a theme of ours.

Our History

In 2007 we got out front with podcasting when audio archives such as these were still new to some. However, the Churchill has got across it and ensured we are in the national archive catalogues. We thank them. They will also link to our other Archives at the British Library and the LSE. This is the first time all our archives will be signposted in one place. It’s been a slow burn to gain this type of reputation in the archive World but one that is highly significant.

Thanks to our long standing Advisory Board of cross-party MPs who remain on call should we need them but rarely do these days: Vicky Ford MP, Conservative, Baroness Sal Brinton LD, Dr Lisa Cameron and Sharon Hodgson MP, Labour. And to Rich our web manager. Our books credit previous politicians for helping in our work over the years.

Thanks to the team and our journalists Jackie Ashley, Deborah McGurran, and Linda Fairbrother for their previous works. Deborah McGurran deserves special mention for her recent work on the “Groundbreakers” project.

Our National audio can be found here:

Churchill Political Archives

- <https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/news/2020/jul/13/interviews-boni-sones/>.
- [Interviews with Boni Sones OBE in the Centenary Year of Women's Suffrage - Churchill College \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

The LSE

- <https://archives.lse.ac.uk/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=SONES&pos=1> BL: From March 2004 to March 2005 (84 podcasts). Easily available through a search,

The British Library

- [Blair's Babes - Sound and vision blog](#)
- http://cadensa.bl.uk/uhtbin/cgisirsi/x/0/0/5?searchdata1=CKEY7012165&library=ALL&_ga=2.64408234.400880054.1628621377-1403776849.1628621377
- <https://britishlibrary.typepad.co.uk/sound-and-vision/2017/05/blairs-babes.html> and <https://www.bl.uk/press-releases/2010/september/hear-hear-the-truth-behind-blairs-babes-and-camerons-cuties> **Books**

<http://bonisonesproductions.com/books.html> <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Women-ParliamentSuffragettes-Boni-Sones/dp/1842751409> **Funding**

ww.parliamentaryradio.com continues to be funded in full by Boni Sones OBE, the Executive Producer. Costs are restricted to web services only, as Boni undertakes the production and sound engineering herself and takes no fee for these services. Accounts and associated payments over the years are fully audited by Mavis Driver. Copyright: Boni Sones unless otherwise stated.

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