

Story Machine  
Producer Resource

Telling our History on the Radio



Created as a Trent Radio Programmer Resource  
with funding from the CRFC  
Radiometres Program 2016/17



As a Producer Oriented Broadcast Facility, Trent Radio's mandate is not to create programming and content, but rather, our priority is to provide the services, training, assistance and technical resources required to support our volunteer membership - amateur radio producers - in the production of Community Radio Content.

Trent Radio is a distinct and valuable community resource, not because of the organisation itself, but because of the community it serves. We rely on our volunteer programmers and producers to shape and define the programming content that is broadcast through our facilities, and we provide them with the educational and technical support to help them produce a programme schedule that ultimately reflects and defines our community.

It is clear to Trent Radio that our region is a wealth of stories, people and histories that could weave a tapestry of connections and significant moments. It is a priority to us to develop and create the structures and methods that will afford us the time and resources to engage with our community, provide special skill building opportunities, support volunteer production projects, preserve and broadcast locally reflective content.

This document is compiled from resources used for the Story Machine Project delivered as a co-operative effort between Trent Radio and the Museum Management & Curatorship Program at Fleming College. The project was made possible with funding from the CRFC's Radiometres project.

## **SOURCES: YOUR BEST BETS IN RESEARCHING PETERBOROUGH'S HISTORY**

### Places to Research

- Peterborough Museum & Archives (PMA) – please make an appointment with Archivist Mary Charles as time and space are limited.
- Is the repository for city records
- The PMA has two very large collections of negatives (Balsillie Collection of Roy Studio Images and the Parks Studio fonds) as well as many other images located in fonds and collections throughout the archives.
- Call 705-743-5180 and ask for Mary. If emailing please give two date and time options [mcharles@peterborough.ca](mailto:mcharles@peterborough.ca)
- Trent Valley Archives (TVA) – use the online search and make a list of possible hits, including fonds numbers. Suggested files to search include but are not limited to:
  - Martha Kidd Collection
  - Counoyea Newspaper Collection
  - Electric City Collection

County land records are located at TVA

Please make an appointment before visiting the TVA

Research fees or memberships apply

<http://www.trentvalleyarchives.com>

- Trent University Archives(TUA) – use the online search engine, which is also available by category, to make a list of possible hits. You must book an appointment with Archivist Jodi Aoki. <http://www.trentu.ca/library/archives/index.htm>
- Trent University Library - has many Canadian newspapers on microfilm

- Peterborough Public Library (PPL) – examples of history related holdings include:

- Access to the library version of Ancestry is available
- local history books about the City and County of Peterborough
- local newspapers on microfilm

- City of Peterborough Heritage Preservation Office (HPO) – files on historic buildings and architectural resources. Please make an appointment with Kathryn Matheson.

kmatheson @peterborough.ca

- Kawartha Ancestral Research Association (KARA) – in addition to City of Peterborough land registry records, KARA holds a number of local history resources. Please call or email first to make an appointment.

Research fees or memberships apply. <http://www.karagen.org>

- Hutchison House/Peterborough Historical Society - the reference library of Hutchison House/Peterborough Historical Society has published material dealing with local (area, not just Peterborough) history. It also it has books about food and cooking, costume and dress, literature, furniture, glass, metalware, recreation and games, etc. To arrange to use this library, call Hutchison House (705-743-9710) and arrange a time (only limited numbers of researchers can be accommodated per visit).

## Types of Resources

- Local History Books – Available at the PMA, PPL, TVA
- Use these books as a starting point to gather associated names or events.
- Some suggestions include:
  - Township Histories
  - Illustrated Historical Atlas of Peterborough 1825-1875 (all townships)
  - Historical Society Papers and Publications
  - Historical Sketches of Peterborough – Martha Kidd

- Peterborough's Architectural History – Martha Kidd
- Photographs – Available at the PMA, Trent University Archives, Trent Valley Archives
- Search for associated names and events and neighbourhoods
- Always remember to look in the background!
- Newspaper Articles – Available on microfilm at the Public Library, Trent University Archives. Also available in print and on microfilm at Trent Valley Archives.
- Local newspapers can be a very valuable source for information related to significant events
- PMA has an extensive vertical file of newspaper clippings by subject covering the 1960s to the present
- Trent Valley Archives has an online index for the Peterborough Examiner 1858 – 1887
- local newspapers are available on microfilm at Peterborough Public Library and Trent University Library
- Genealogy Sources – available at TVA, KARA, PPL and PMA
- These sources can be useful to trace family histories and connections.
- Be prepared to do searches from different words, especially varied name spellings.
- Census returns often record personal information such as age, occupation, ethnic origin, religious denomination and the place of birth for the persons listed. Pre Confederation Census data sets available include (before 1867): 1851, 1861. Post Confederation: 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901, 1911, 1921
- Library and Archives Canada has a searchable online database of microfilmed censuses  
<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/Pages/census.aspx>
- Automated Genealogy provides a searchable version of the 1852 (Canada West), 1901 and 1911 census <http://automatedgenealogy.com/>
- Family Search is a US organization dedicated to digital preservation and online indexing. A searchable database of census records. <https://familysearch.org/>
- Cemetery lists
- Upper and Lower Canada Marriage Bonds. Searchable online

database

The marriage bonds include information like: Name of the future husband, Name of the future wife, their place of residence, Date and place where the bond was issued. <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/marriage-bonds/001068-130-e.html>

- City Directories – Available at the PMA or Trent Valley Archives
- Available online <https://archive.org/details/peterboroughcity-directories>
- In addition to place of residence, usually lists occupation and sometimes place of employment
- An almost annual census containing information about the occupants of a property (not necessarily the owner) by name and by address.
- Note that street names and numbering can change so you may have to check for corresponding names / check maps.
- Land Records – City available at KARA, County available at TVA
- Land records in Ontario help to place a family at a location and during a time period. They also may contain important information on family relationships. Occasionally wills and other probate records are mentioned in the land records rather than in the probate records.
- Land records will provide chain of title to a property providing you have the legal description of the property
- Pay close attention to “Bargain & Sale” or “Grant” as these indicate that the property has changed hands.
- Check if the original documents for the transfers are also available.
- Assessment Rolls – Available at the PMA
- Assessment Rolls are created for property tax valuation and contain some or all of the following information: name of occupant and/or owner, occupation, religion, and age of the head of

the household; then the description (lot size, location), and the assessed value of property and buildings.

- Maps – Available at the PMA, Trent University Archives, TVA
- Fire Insurance Maps and Bird's Eye View Maps are particularly helpful. For example, they can show a building's shape and size, which can help determine if any additions were later made.
- Checking a variety of maps over a specific time period can provide insights into the historical development of the city. For instance, was a particular building the first on the block? How was the block subdivided? They may also indicate significant natural features that might have relevance
- Maps can sometimes help with the dating of buildings.

- Web Sources

- All Peterborough City directories have been scanned and are available on the City of Peterborough's website <https://archive.org/details/peterboroughcitydirectories>

- Many archives have websites with digitized material and online search engines. The Ontario Archives is a good place to start. <http://www.archives.gov.on.ca>

- Also useful:

- Dictionary of Canadian Biography <http://www.biographi.ca/index-e.html>

- In Search of Your Canadian Past: The Canadian County Atlas Digital Project <http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/countyatlas/>

- Internet Archive. The Internet Archive is a non-profit that is building a library of Internet sites and other cultural artifacts in digital form. Like a paper library, they provide free access to researchers, historians, scholars, the print disabled, and the general public.

<https://archive.org/index.php>

- Learn how to use the ‘find’ tool both in Adobe Reader and the Internet Browser. This tool is can be very helpful when searching through archival records.

- Library and Archives of Canada has a great deal of material relevant to Peterborough, the area, and Peterborians. Of particular interest might be military service records for all members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (WW I) and the Canadian forces in WW II, the Trent Canal (now the Trent-Severn Waterway), railways, politicians papers, settlement documents/accounts, etc., etc. The LAC website is excellent for searching what material is available — and a considerable amount of material (including photographs) has been digitized and is downloadable (good enough quality for reference use, reports, projects, PowerPoint, etc.) for no charge.

- Don’t hesitate to use non-archival sources as well. General internet searches can turn up some good leads.

#### PROJECT STAGES:

1. PICK AN OBJECT OR TOPIC/THEME

2. DO YOUR RESEARCH AND PREPARE YOUR METHOD (Story Board vs. Field Recordings)

3. GATHER TAPE (FIELD RECORDINGS, INTERVIEWS)

4. LISTEN TO YOUR MATERIAL, AND FIGURE OUT WHAT YOUR STORY IS

5. POST PRODUCTION/AUDIO EDITING - TELL YOUR STORY

6. BROADCAST IT ON THE RADIO & SAVE IT IN THE LCMP

## **Interview Techniques**

Interviewing seems deceptively simple because it is just two people having a conversation. But depending on skill and level of preparation, an interview can seem amazingly smooth and relaxed, or jerky, awkward and forced. The smooth kind seem simple, but require lots of preparation and information.

### **Interviewing**

#### **Open Ended Questions**

Yes or no is a conversation killer. The goal of any good interview is to have a great conversation, not an interrogation. So ask questions that will provoke the interviewee to speak at length about the desired topic. Let the conversation wander and become tangential because some wild, off the cuff tangents reveal some great insight. Conversely, get a sense of when an area of conversation is off topic, irrelevant or time consuming.

#### **Question Lists**

A list of questions helps a great deal. Draft a list of questions and talking points well before the interview, read them over, and then try not to look at them. The act of making a list will help you, but specific wordings of questions will bog you down if you read straight from the list. It is also is not the best when it comes to listening to your guest.

#### **Listen Carefully**

Take notes on what it is your guest is saying. This will not only assure them that what they are saying is important but it will also allow you to formulate questions on the spot. These on the spot questions are usually the ones that either clarify what it is your guest is saying or is something obvious that you overlooked by everybody wants to ask.

## The Goal or Aim of Your Interview

What is the goal or aim of your interview? Do you have a very specific piece of information that you are looking for? Or do you just generally want to get tape from a specific person? There is always a reason for why you wanted to talk to them in the first place. Recognize and keep in mind that reason.

This also involves knowing who your audience is for the interview. Are you assuming the audience has previous knowledge of the guest or issue? Or are you looking to provide an overview of who they are and what the issue is? Depending on the level of knowledge you are assuming on behalf of your audience will depend on the kind of questions you will ask.

## Know Your Guest and Topic

Since you chose that particular guest for a reason, make sure that you know them and/or the topic they represent before the interview. Establish a rapport before the interview by having some friendly conversation.

It is good practice to not only be informed about your guest but also to inform your guest about you. Send an email, or have a conversation to explain to them what you are doing, what the end goal is, and what the basic topic it – so they can be somewhat prepared. Some people like to send questions in advance, some don't. It is up to you, both ways are fine, and each have pros and cons associated with them.

## Body Language

You want to let your guest know that you are indeed listening to what they are saying. Resist the urge to say “yeah”, “uh-huh”, “right”, etc. On the radio this sounds extremely annoying and can throw your guest off of their train of thought. Instead, try to nod your head, smile and give silent indicators that you want them to

continue and that you are listening. Reserve making sounds for when you want them to stop talking.

## Questions

Keep asking the following questions, in an open ended manner, until you hear the type of answers that will help to tell your story. Sometimes this is simply part of the process of understanding the story itself.

WHAT?

WHO?

WHY?

HOW?

Continue to ask these questions in different ways, with different angles until you feel that you've heard the story. The person you are interviewing is likely nervous, and doesn't know how to tell the story either. These questions - while they might seem repetitive - will help both of you to figure out how to represent the story to be told.

## Wrapping Up

Sometimes people want to keep talking – and you may feel like the interview is done. This can be tricky, as you likely don't want to seem rude.

Be simple and specific – state that you feel like you have some great content recorded - ask them if there is anything they would like to say in conclusion.

*prepared by Anthony P. Gulston,  
edited for Story Machine by Jill Staveley*

## Story Machine - Digital Audio Editing Basics

To start recording you need:

(1) (a) A computer with a soundcard, microphone and enough free hard drive space to record your audio files: Most contemporary computers and laptops are already equipped with a soundcard, built-in microphone, speakers and sufficient hard drive space and RAM to record and produce simple spoken word recordings suitable for broadcast.

(b) A digital recording device that uses an SD card, or can be connected to a PC: In a pinch you can use your cel phone (note\*\*your headphones won't work during recording unless you download an app to enable headphone output during record mode)

(2)Audio Editing Software: If you do not already have access to Audio Editing software, you can download and install free multi-tracking software from the internet.

(3)Headphones: I strongly recommend wearing your headphones during all stages of recording and editing. It is especially valuable during the 'capture' (recording process) as your headphones will allow you to hear the quality and volume level of your voice or source sound, along with any other unwanted sounds or noises your microphone might be picking up during the recording process. Digital technology is truly amazing, but you must make sure that your recorded tracks are clean and free from unwanted noises for your finished product to be adequate for Radio Broadcast.

\* Some people do not feel comfortable wearing headphones during an interview. Make sure you check levels very well (start recording, do a couple minutes with headphones – then take them off – listen for significant background noise, and make sure your microphone isn't pointed directly at a fan/vent/window etc), and that your device is somewhere that you can see it (to monitor input levels periodically), and hope for the best.

If you are recording 2 voices (interviewer & interviewee) on a cell phone or a single mic audio recorder, you may wish to position both speakers on the same side of a table (etc) so that the microphone is pointing at both of you. If this is not possible - always point the microphone at your interviewee - as you can recreate/re-record your questions in post-production, whereas you generally only have one shot at recording your guest.

And, remember – your final product will directly reflect your experience and your gear. Do not worry about making the recording perfect – do your best, and aim for getting the best content you can. If your recording is boring – it doesn't matter how "great" it sounds...no one will want to listen to it.

## **Software**

Garageband: Garageband is one of the easiest programs to get started with, but is limited to Mac products only. If you have an apple device, you most likely already have the software/app installed.

Audacity: Audacity is the go-to free audio editing software for PC.

Audacity can be downloaded at:

<http://www.audacityteam.org/>

## Recording

Once you have your recording device set up in an appropriate environment (ringer turned off on the phone, doors or windows shut for a 'studio-like' space), your recording device up and running, and your mic and headphones wired up: You are ready to record.

(1) Check Your Levels: It is always a good idea to do a test run, and record a sample. If the levels are too low, get closer to the microphone and/or turn up the Input Volume on your computer. If the levels are too high, turn down the Input Volume on your computer, or create a small amount of distance between what you are recording and your microphone.

It's important to note that the 'sound' or quality of your voice will change depending on your proximity to the microphone. When you are closer, your voice will have a richer or deeper sound to it, while the farther you move away from the mic your voice will sound thinner and more distant. You cannot change this aspect of your recording after the fact, so do your best to get a good sound from the start.

(2) Select Your File Type: Audio recordings can either be done as Stereo (2 tracks, Left & Right) or Mono (1 track) files.. For spoken word or voice only recordings, you only need to record in Mono. This will save space on your device.

You will also likely have the option to record as a .wav or .mp3 file. The .wav file is larger file size, and has better sound quality. Your choice will depend on the length of your interview, the nature of the recording, and the size of your sd card/hard drive.

Digital recordings can be done with different sample rates and at different resolutions. When recording audio for general purposes, chose the following specs:

Mono / Sample rate 44.1k / Resolution 16 bit

(3) Record Your Material: Once you are set up and are getting the best sound quality possible, it's time to start recording.

- Make sure everyone is ready.
- Press record and wait a few seconds before starting.
- If you make a mistake, you don't have to stop recording, just take a deep breath, and keep going. You can start again from the beginning or go back to a natural pause in the script. It is easy to cut/delete unwanted parts from the recording after the fact.
- keep a copy of your Story Board around so that you have a good idea of the content/recording you need to gather.
- record 30 seconds of "Room Noise" in each environment. This may become useful when you are editing the clips – to pull the whole thing together. Better to have it and not need it, then to want it and not have it.

(4) Save Early, Save Often! Upon finishing the recording, make sure the file is saved before you turn the power off on your device.

Note: For Voice Only tracks, you can either save as a .WAV file (large file size, used for professional audio recording), or as a compressed file such as .mp3 (small file size, great for limited computer systems, and adequate for spoken word production).

Once you have gathered your tape, and any other audio tracks you want to use - you will need to transfer the files to your workspace (computer), and name the tracks so they are organised and easy to find/use in your audio project.

Make sure that you chose a NAME that will reflect each recording, and that you will remember and understand when you are searching for it at a later date. (eg//2011\_RedSled\_Intro.mp3)

## Editing

*After you have listened to your gathered material to confirm that you have everything you need and that the quality is good enough; and once you have made a production plan:*

(5) Edit Your File: With your notes in hand, listen to your audio files, and perform some basic editing functions to get the sound quality and specific content you want.

**DO NOT EDIT YOUR ORIGINAL FILES - MAKE WORKING COPIES IN CASE YOU ACCIDENTALLY DELETE CONTENT YOU INTENDED TO USE. KEEP A BACK-UP OF YOUR ORIGINAL FILES IN A SEPERATE FOLDER/SD CARD.**

For our purposes, try to imagine that your recording is a word processing document. You will use similar tools (cut/paste/copy), and polish the file until it is clear, and at the right volume level.

- Listen back to the whole recording, and decide which parts you want to keep, and if there are any parts you would like to delete. (long pauses, phone ringing, ums, distracting noises – but don't feel that you have to 'sterilise' the track – noises that contextualise the space are usually a good thing.)

- Highlight and remove all unwanted parts – being sure that you do not cut off the beginning or ends of words. Zoom in to the place where you want to make the cut, and always listen back to that spot in the recording after you have made any changes. If you make a mistake, simple select 'UNDO' from the menu and try again.

- Save the file as a COPY once you have started editing the Audio File, it is a good practice to 'Save As' a working copy. Always keep an original copy of your audio file in a safe place until you have finished the editing, and have submitted your final piece.

- Once the content has been edited, you will need to Normalize the volume of the track. This function simply turns up the volume on the whole track, keeping it's relation to itself.
- \*Optional Fade In/Fade Out: Highlight the first 3 seconds of the recording and perform the Fade In function. Highlight the last 3 seconds (or a selection that sounds right to your ear) and perform the Fade Out function. This will get rid of any odd blips and make the track blend more smoothly into a session file. \*\*this can also be accomplished with non-destructive editing in the session file view.

(6) Create a Session File: Once all of your files have been transferred to your workspace you will need to create a Session File in Adobe Audition.

Your session file is a non-destructive platform where you can mix and modify your recorded files together to create a final audio piece.

Audio files (.wav, .mp3 etc.) are inserted into the session, and you can move them around and change the volume and create fade ins & outs without affecting the actual file.

(7) MIXDOWN: When you are satisfied with how your piece sounds, Save the Session and all content files, then select Mix-down – all tracks to Stereo (under Edit). The programme will build a stereo file of the Session. Save your mixdown file as an .mp3 or .wav.

**DO NOT DELETE OR ERASE ANY FILES FROM YOUR SESSION – YOU WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH A MENTOR FROM TRENT RADIO TO IMPROVE YOUR FINAL PIECE BEFORE BEING BROADCAST ON TRENT RADIO. THIS REQUIRES ACCESS TO THE SESSION FILE AND ALL OF THE AUDIO PIECES WITHIN.**

## CREATING AN OBJECT STORY

**\*based on curriculum developed for MMC audio story project.**

### **Educational and Interpretive Program Planning II**

Working in groups of 4-5, students will script, storyboard and produce a 2-3 minute radio spot that will showcase the history and story behind one of their dossier objects.

#### **Stage One: Brainstorming, Gathering Materials, Storyboarding**

1) Consider audience and tone

Do you wish your radio spot to be a serious historical piece, a lighthearted interview, a radio drama, and/or to have musical accompaniment. Be creative and feel free to incorporate a variety of different techniques that blend together to create your whole piece.

2) What sort of elements need to be gathered

- Taped interview or discussion between two or more people
- Write a play
- Book to be read from
- Scripted text
- Music (must be from creative commons)
- Sound effects

3) Storyboard the pieces that you wish to incorporate

Remember that crafting a cohesive radio spot is like writing a story. It needs a beginning, a middle and an end. You can storyboard in 30 second chunks planning what elements you will use in each section. This will help you see if you have all the material you need and how it will flow together.

These three elements may not necessarily be done in this order. You may produce a storyboard and then find you cannot get all the elements you wanted and have to redesign it. Or you might

start with gathering material and then create a storyboard to fit what you have acquired.

## **Stage Two: Production Phase**

Now that you have the elements that you need and a storyboard planned, the group will need to decide who is doing the various necessary production tasks. These include but are not limited to:

- Production Manager
- Script writing and editing
- Recording and editing of audio content
- Research and content editor
- Music and sound effects

You will be using Adobe Audition which is available on the classroom computers and in which you will be instructed by the representatives of Trent Radio. Sessions will also be available to go down to Trent Radio for further technical assistance if this proves necessary. The final product (due March 31) will be a 2-3 minute audio spot which will tell the story of your object in a thought provoking way that gives the object meaning.

*prepared by A.Barron for MMC 2017 program.*

