

TELLING OUR STORIES, FINDING OUR ROOTS ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW SUMMARY FORM

Date of interview	21st September 2020
Location of interview	
Name of interviewee	Christine Star
Name of interviewer	Callum White & Greta Button
Length of interview	01:04:27
File format, storage format	WAV, hosted on Soundcloud. Digital copy obtainable from DDE.

Tags:

Germany ; Plymouth ; Okehampton ; Language ; Language Learning ; Food ; Music ; Astrology ; Complementary Therapy ;

Interviewee's wishes regarding use of interview

None.

Interviewer's notes / any issues on recording

None.

Linked objects/photographs.

Christine begins the interview by talking about two items of jewellery belonging to herself and her partner

Key themes and topics covered in the interview

Theme / topic	Timecode on recording
Christine's Jewellery and Her Name	[00:00:00 - 00:03:04]
Moving to the UK	[00:03:04 - 00:04:02], [00:40:39 - 00:45:37]
Plymouth	[00:04:02 - 00:05:30]
Differences Between Germany and the UK	[00:05:30 - 00:07:22], [00:11:45 - 00:19:49]
Learning English	[00:07:22 - 00:11:45], [00:45:37 - 00:48:30]
Working Life	[00:19:49 - 00:35:15], [00:59:47 - 01:01:57]
Okehampton	[00:35:15 - 00:40:39]
Food	[00:52:28 - 00:55:16]
Personal Reflection	[01:02:00 - 01:04:10]

Interview highlights

" I see Germany as the fatherland, and if you see a father is the authority , it's discipline, it's structure [...] I call England a motherland and that is that the caring for other people is more important than the discipline -00:06:40 -00:07:22).

"I like the culture more, I like the people more, I like the opportunities more. What I could do in my work I could not do in Germany [00:19:42].

"I have found a lot of safety and security in my own little space" [01:03:10], "I am a happier person, I am a rounder person, I am a much, much more relaxed person [01:04:10].

Interview summary

Christine Star is originally from Bavaria, Germany. She moved to the UK 31 years ago at the age of 37. Christine has lived most of her time in Plymouth but for the last 6 years has spent weekends in Okehampton with her partner Cilla and has recently been starting to make plans for a permanent move to Okehampton.

The interview begins with Christine sharing her memorable objects, two identical bracelets. She says “these two objects are more or less a reason that I’m in England” (00:00:30). She goes on to explain the significance of the bracelets in the very beginning of her relationship with Cilla, she says whilst holding up the bracelet: “without this one we wouldn’t have that interview today (00:00:57)

She then explains more about her surname and her decision to change it to Star. She explains that she made the decision to change it as people had trouble pronouncing her German surname. She says being an astrologer led her to the name Star and she concludes “I have to say that name brought me a lot of luck, it was the best choice I could ever have done” (00:03:03)

Christina talks about how she came to move to the UK 31 years ago. She explains that initially her partner first tried to live with her in Germany “but for Cilla it did not prove to be a very happy experience and so I thought let’s try to start in England, and believe it or not it was like coming home” (00:04:02)

Christine goes on to say how she has now lived nearly 30 years in Plymouth and talks about her love for the city.” I see all the beautiful sides of Plymouth, the Hoe, the Barbican, I mean I just have such a lovely rapport with the people” (00:05:30)

Christine then shares that she sees it like this “ I see Germany as the fatherland, and if you see a father is the authority , it’s discipline, it’s structure”(00:06:40). She then goes on to compare that by saying “I call England a motherland and that is that the caring for other people is more important than the discipline (00:07:22).

On learning the language Christine talks about the support she received from Cilla, who encouraged her to enrol on courses. She says “Cilla helped me a lot in learning English because she spoke very clear and very slow” (00:11:45)

Christina talks about cultural differences and how she felt she fitted in here in England and the freedom she felt, without any fear of being judged.” She says: “I like the culture more, I like the people more, I like the opportunities more. What I could do in my work I could not do in Germany (00:19:42).

Christine goes on to describe some of the differences between German and English people socially (00:22:32-00:24:49).

Christine then shares in some detail about her 30 years of working life in England, describing: the support she received setting up a business; her work with the HIV and Aids association; and her executive role at the British Complementary Medicine Association. Christine describes her work life in the UK as full, rich and happy (00:28:22-00:32:40) and goes on to speak about the differences between practicing complementary medicine in the UK and in Germany (00:33:25-00:35:15).

Interview summary

Christine shares her thoughts on Okehampton, and reflects specifically on the time she has recently spent there during lockdown. She says "I don't know whether it's right-but it's my- I find it a little bit, just a little sort of paradise, special people" (00:37:17)

She goes on to describe her love for Plymouth, but her ultimate decision to potentially now settle and live full time in Okehampton (00:39:01-00:40:39).

Christine moves on to discuss her astrology and tarot readings (00:44:20-00:46:52) and explains how she felt she could not have succeeded with this in Germany. The expectation was to work against these things in her job. She says: "It was time for me to go, because this was not my place anymore" (00:45:37).

Christine then shares her love of singing, explaining that despite early language barriers "Cilla and I couldn't talk so very much, what we always did, we sung together (00:47:09). Christine says "I think that the first song Cilla sung to me is the wind in the willow (she sings) *"oh the wind in the willow and the birds in the sky"* (00:48:30).

Next Christine talks about food, describing the good food in Bavaria and how it compares to some British dishes (00:52:28-00:55:16). There is a lot of humour in her reflections!

Christine then returns again to speak about her work with the HIV and Aids association, and working with the dying in hospitals and hospices (00:59:47-01:01:57).

Christine concludes her interview by reflecting on how changed she is by coming to England. In summary, she says: "I have found a lot of safety and security in my own little space" (01:03:10), "I am a happier person, I am a rounder person, I am a much, much more relaxed person (01:04:10).