

February 2023

Report to Advisory Board

by Boni Sones OBE

The Team and our achievements

All the interviews www.parliamentaryradio.com has conducted as a team over 15 years are now housed in one of four national audio archives at the British Library, The LSE, the History of Parliament Trust and now 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.

Recently we have focused our production efforts on twitter keeping up with the work of women MPs across party in Parliament and our audio archives. 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 this year 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 2023 all become publicly available for the first time.

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.

In 2007 we got out front with podcasting and audio archives such as these are 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 the team and our journalists Jackie Ashley, Deborah McGurran, and Linda Fairbrother for their previous works.

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 SNP and Sharon Hodgson MP, Labour. And to Rich our web manager.

Our four National audio archives soon to become three

The Churchill Archive Centre (110 podcasts) accepted all of our 80 podcast interviews conducted throughout 2018 as part of #Vote100 year and a further 30 interviews in subsequent years.

During the 2020 and 2021 Covid lockdown the Churchill Archive used its time wisely putting all our podcasts online and writing a blog about them. They can be found here: <https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/news/2020/jul/13/interviews-boni-sones/>.

The Churchill will in 2023 take over our audio archive at the **History of Parliament Trust** (110 podcasts). This collection houses all our podcast interviews from May 2014 to Jan 2018. They had written a nice link but had not the funds to make them live which the Churchill will now do. <https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/news/womens-parliamentary-radio-archive-deposited-history-parliament>

Thanks to Dr Paul Seward at the History and Allen Packwood at the Churchill and Chris Knowles..

We also have created archives at the LSE and BL.

LSE: Links here: Recordings from March 2007 to 2014. (Approx 350 podcasts). They are on the site but marked private and need us to authorise viewing which we are happy to do.

<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,

http://cadensa.bl.uk/uhtbin/cgiisirs/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

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.

<http://bonisonesproductions.com/books.html>

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Women-Parliament-Suffragettes-Boni-Sones/dp/1842751409>

Funding

Wpradio and www.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 fifteen years are fully audited by Mavis Driver. Copyright: Boni Sones. Where journalists have kindly done interviews unpaid they keep copyright to these handful of podcasts and it is noted in our recent book.

End.

Further note on our Archives

The Churchill Political Archives

<https://archivesearch.lib.cam.ac.uk/repositories/9/resources/1846>

Audio podcasts for Women's Parliamentary Radio, conducted by Boni Sones with contributions by Jackie Ashley, Deborah McGurran and Linda Fairbrother

Fonds

Reference Code: **GBR/0014/SOBA**

- Audio podcasts for Women's Parliamentary Radio, conducted by Boni Sones with contributions by Jackie Ashley, Deborah McGurran and Linda Fairbrother

- [Collection Overview](#)

Scope and Contents

The first set of 76 interviews contributed toward Sones' fourth book which coincided with Vote 100 Year 2018, entitled 'When There's a Woman in the Room' covers a range of issues from the centenary of women's suffrage to Brexit debates. These interviews also cover issues which have

a profound effect of women's lives and give MPs a chance to discuss openly issues that impact their constituents. The second set of interviews cover May - November 2019...

[See more](#)

Dates

- 2017-11-15 - 2019-11-14

Creator

- [Sones, Barnard \(Boni, b 1953, journalist\)](#) (Person)

Conditions Governing Use

Researchers wishing to publish excerpts from the papers must obtain prior permission from the copyright holders and should seek advice from Archives Centre staff.

Biographical / Historical

Boni Sones is a broadcaster, writer, producer and journalist. Born on 6 July 1953, she started her career in local newspapers, radio and TV in the East of England, before helping to establish the BBC 24 hour news channel, and working for the BBC as a special correspondent and freelancer. She has created one of the first broadcast online podcast channels: Women's Parliamentary Radio (www.wpradio.co.uk) (www.parliamentaryradio.com). Women's Parliamentary...

The History of Parliament Trust (now housed at the Churchill)

<https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/news/womens-parliamentary-radio-archive-deposited-history-parliament>

Home

Women's Parliamentary Radio archive deposited at the History of Parliament

The History of Parliament is pleased to be the repository of the archived interviews collected by Boni Sones, Jackie Ashley and others for Boni's [Women's Parliamentary Radio](#), as well as other interviews collected by Boni for projects including a series of interviews around the general elections of both 2015 and 2017 in Cambridge. They include many with women MPs leaving Parliament in 2015, who talk about the challenges they faced in establishing themselves as strong and independent voices in Parliament, and with MPs from all sides on moves towards equality within politics. The election interviews provide a comprehensive picture of roles and activities in an election, from the candidates to the canvassers to the election administrators.

www.parliamentaryradio.com has collaborated with Dame Caroline Spelman, Barbara Keeley MP, Jo Swinson MP and former MP Gisela Stuart and journalists Deborah McGurran and Linda Fairbrother and others to create this archive. The History of Parliament has agreed to become the repository of the archive because the interviews very well complement our own interviews, carried out for our [oral history project](#) in partnership with the British Library. We are delighted to have this important collection alongside our own.

The archive may be accessed at the History of Parliament by arrangement with us - please contact Sammy Sturgess at ssturgess@histparl.ac.uk. No material may be published without the prior permission of both the copyright holder and the History. All applications for copying and publication must be made to Boni Sones in the first instance.

For more on our oral history project and to listen to clips from our interviews, see the project's [Research Pages](#).

The LSE

<https://archives.lse.ac.uk/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=SONES&pos=1>

Record

- [SONES - The Boni Sones Archive of Women's Parliamentary Radio and Parliamentary Radio broadcasts](#)

Discrete Collections	Politics, economics and social science collections
Title	The Boni Sones Archive of Women's Parliamentary Radio and Parliamentary Radio broadcasts
Ref No	<u>SONES</u>
Level	Collection
Date	2004-2011
Extent	1 box; digital files
Admin Biographical History	<p>Women's Parliamentary Radio was founded in 2007, growing out of the publication of 'Women in Parliament: the New Suffragettes' by Boni Sones, Margaret Moran and Professor Joni Lovenduski. In the book women talked about the nature of life in Parliament for women, the difficulties they faced and the achievements they made. After the project Sones et al realised that despite 90 years of women having the vote, only 1 in 5 MPs were female, prompting them to consider how the voice of female MPs could be better heard.</p> <p>Boni Sones, a former political editor for BBC TV and Radio in the Eastern Region, consequently set up Women's Parliamentary Radio as a mechanism of broadcasting audio and video interviews with women MPs of all parties. Taking advantage of the changes to broadcasting law and new internet technologies, Women's Parliamentary Radio pioneered the first "as live" online broadcasts. Broadcasting as radio, rather</p>

	<p>than as TV or film, also ensured that Sones and her colleagues could record all over Westminster without requiring formal permission. Since 2007 over 350 interviews and 30 documentaries have been broadcast, all with the stated aim of being "the Woman's Hour of Westminster, reporting fairly and accurately on policy issues of concern to women and their families".</p> <p>Other people who collaborated on the WPR project include journalists Jackie Ashley, Deborah McGurran and Linda Fairbrother, and MPs Gisela Stuart, Barbara Keeley, Caroline Spelman, Eleanor Laing, Penny Mordaunt, Baroness Susan Kramer, Jo Swinson and Anastasia de Waal.</p>
Description	Archive of Women's Parliamentary Radio, an online broadcast service run by Boni Sones. Contains audio files of interviews with female MPs, and related administrative files (digital and paper). Also recent material from parliamentaryradio.com, also run by Sones, and various other works produced by Sones.
Related Material	The British Library houses the "Harman Shephard" collection of 82 interviews conducted by Sones.
Access Status	Closed
Copyright Type	Copyright is held by the depositor

The British Library

http://cadensa.bl.uk/uhtbin/cgisirsi/x/0/0/5?searchdata1=CKEY7012165&library=ALL&_ga=2.64408234.400880054.1628621377-1403776849.1628621377

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Harman-Shephard collection of interviews with women Members of Parliament

SHELFMARK: [C1182](#)

Collection title: [Harman-Shephard collection of interviews with women Members of Parliament](#)

Collection inventory: 95 mini-discs, 1CD-R

Collection descripti: Interviews with 83 female and 3 male Members of Parliament, most of whom entered the House of Commons at the 1997 general election (Labour 61 women, 1 man; Conservative 12 women, 1 man; Liberal Democrat 7 women, 1 man; Ulster Unionist 1 woman). The interviews were conducted by Boni Sones, Deborah McGurran, Eva Simmons, Linda Fairbrother and Angela Lawrence as part of the research for the book 'Women in Parliament : the new Suffragettes' by Boni Sones, with Margaret Moran and Joni Lovenduski, London, 2005, and for the BBC Radio 4 broadcast 'A monstrous regiment', 10 Sept. 2005. Interviews were conducted on the basis of a list of standard questions (seen by interviewees beforehand), with further ad hoc discussion in certain cases. Also included is a CD-R recording of the BBC broadcast 'A monstrous regiment'.

Documentation: correspondence with donor, documents on conduct of the project

Product copyright: BL (content copyright); recording copyright retained by donor

Access restrictions: Private research only. For publication or broadcasting of this material refer to curator.

Copy note: Playback CD-R dubbings of mini-discs also supplied with the donation.

Acquisition date: 2005-08-20

Terms of deposit: gift

End.