



Britannia Museum Oral History Project

Crib sheet

Please start every recording by asking the contributor to give their full name, title / rank, date of birth, and years they attended BRNC. It would also be useful to know what they are doing now.

Areas to cover

Theme	Possible questions
Lead-up to arriving at BRNC	<p>Tell me about how you came to go there</p> <p>Background – how would you describe yours (e.g. working class / grammar school / prep school)</p> <p>Parental influence / siblings</p> <p>Entrance exam</p> <p>How did you know you'd got in</p> <p>Buying uniform, getting measured up</p> <p>Feelings about going there</p>
The first day	<p>First impressions of people / building</p> <p>Smells, sounds</p> <p>Feelings as you arrived</p> <p>How you got there (some would have arrived on a dedicated train, esp older intake)</p>
Routine	<p>Wake-up / bedtime</p> <p>Dormitories (were there rules? Quiet? Noisy? Comfortable bed?)</p> <p>Washing yourself / personal care (who helped you, if anyone? Esp. important for the older intake, 13 yr olds at the time)</p> <p>Mealtimes</p> <p>Chapel</p> <p>Which house / term</p> <p>Salutes</p> <p>Passing out</p>

Food	Favourite meal Least favourite Where? Comparison with home food
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Lessons and training	What did you learn (e.g. seamanship) Models Knots Semaphore Flags Favourite subjects Least favourite How hard was training Where did it happen Marching – how difficult Parades (inspections? Feelings?) Pep talks Shouting orders Skylarking
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Staff	Favourite member of staff Least favourite Ticks, quirks Jokes played Any difference between naval and civilian staff Were you afraid of anyone Pastoral care – anyone you could turn to Health – what happened if you were ill Female staff?
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Discipline	Rules Values Hierarchy How strict (comparison with elsewhere?) Punishments (were you punished, or do you remember sb who was) Rewards Did anyone run away? Did anyone get expelled? Influence in later life on habits
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Sport	Describe range of sports Favourite Least favourite
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	Where? In all weathers?
Leisure	Spare time Allowed outside the College? Songs [encourage them to sing if poss] Music Games Pocket money Clubs
Relationships	Homesickness Contact with family & friends back home (letters? Telephone calls? Visits?) Going home in the holidays – how was it Relationship with cadet captains Friendships (did these continue post-BRNC? Just with your entry or others? How many?) Who was popular or not Bullying Relationships with staff Relationships outside the college Dating?
Atmosphere	Feelings about being there How much were you made to feel special Likes Dislikes Traditions
War	News of Bomb at college, Sept 1942 Expectations you were going to be sent to conflict zone (feelings?) Were you serving with your former colleagues? If so, need examples, feelings etc. Was there any element of training at BRNC that you put into practice in wartime
Influence on subsequent career	How well did your BRNC training equip you in what you went on to do examples of when you put your training into practice

	<p>Did BRNC prepare you well enough What did it do well. What didn't it do well. Gaps. Examples of involvement in combat situations with BRNC peers – feelings about this (casualties?)</p>
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International students	<p>Relationship with foreign students (friendships maintained post-BRNC?) Attitude of staff and peers towards them</p>
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Questions only for international students	<p>How did training compare with back home Why BRNC</p>
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And finally... what would you say was the most important thing BRNC did for you?

