

Roots to Rugby

Teachers Guide



Mohammed Hanif with his family in the 1970s.

What is the Redding Collection?

The Redding Collection is a large collection of photographic glass plates and negatives owned and housed by Rugby Art Gallery and Museum. It was produced between the mid- 1950s and mid-1970s by Redding photographic Studios, a local family business, which had been in existence in Rugby since the late 19th century. The collection holds over 26,000 plates and negatives.

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The collection reflects a unique and detailed view of community life in Rugby during the period with the following themes and subjects having already been identified;

- **People and portraits** - includes images and portraits of a people from a diverse range of communities in Rugby including people of Pakistani and West Indian origin who were relatively new communities in Rugby during this period

- **Local trade and industries** - factory and working life scenes, local retail businesses, retail products and working life events
- **Local cultural events** - sporting, social, musical
- **Buildings and architecture** - internal views of local churches and schools. Views of local farms, which have since been developed on, and the development of new housing and industrial estates are recorded.



Who took the pictures we're looking at today?

Rodney Huntingford was born in Gloucestershire and took an interest in photography from an early age. He did an apprenticeship at a photographer's studio in Penzance and purchased Redding Photographer's studio and business in Church Street, Rugby from George Redding in 1936.

Rodney took an active role in community life. He was president of the Rugby Rotary Club in 1953-4 and secretary to Rugby Music Union for 25 years. He took many photographs and cine film outside of work.

The core business of the studio was portraiture and weddings and he also took photographs for local businesses and schools. He ran the studio until his retirement in 1977.

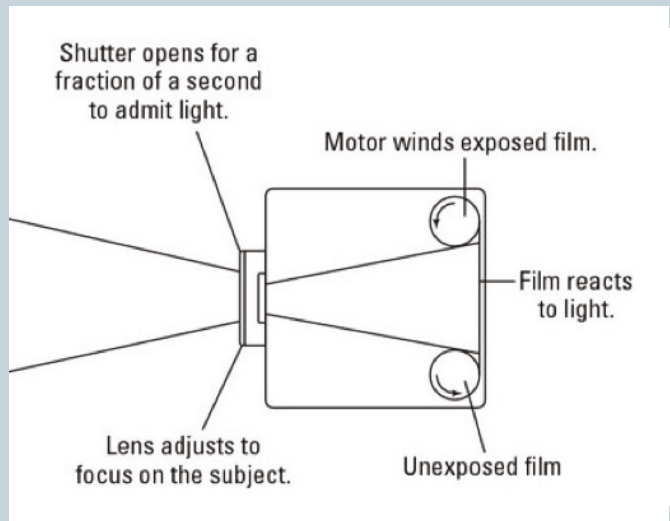


Rodney and Dora outside the studio, 1941

How does a camera work?

- Light must pass through the lens and directs from an object to the film when the shutter opens.
- When you push the button on a camera, it opens a **shutter**, which is a lid that protects the film. It works a bit like your eyes so when it opens light comes in.
- The film is stored in the camera's body and has special chemicals on it that cause the film to change colours when light touches it.
- The image on the film is the opposite of what you see.
- This is called a **negative** film which is the strip of plastic that captures the image through a chemical process in opposite colours.
- Once the film is processed in other chemicals, then the colours reverse and the image appears as it did when the button on the camera was pushed.

- By the 1950s and 1960s colour photographs were becoming more popular.



- *How do you take photographs?*
- *Do you print photographs?*
- *Where do you see photographs?*
- *What/who do you take photographs of?*

What do you notice about these portraits compared to 'selfies'? Are they different?

Portraiture is a very old art form that dates back to at least ancient Egypt. The desire to record someone's appearance dates back to at least ancient Egypt. Portraits were first captured through paintings, drawings and sculpture. The invention of photography brought what used to be an expensive and luxury product to being affordable for almost everyone. Photography became the most important type of portraiture. Our collection of items from this studio contain around 26,000 glass plates and cellulose acetate negatives of local people, scenes, geography and industry.



Mohammed Hanif and his wife, 1966

Why did people come to Rugby?

People came to Rugby for many different reasons, each coming with their own personal stories and journeys; they looked for better opportunities for themselves and their children, some had been recruited because Britain was in short supply of workers and others were returning soldiers from World War 2.

The 50s and 60s saw many people from outside the UK, such as the West Indies and Pakistan, choosing to make Rugby their home. In 1957 only 43 people are recorded as being from ethnic minority communities, this number increased rapidly over the following years. In the 1960s the town's first Community Relations Council (Rugby West Indian Association) was founded. It wasn't until 1962 that migration from the West Indies to Britain began to slow. The introduction of these communities brought a new diversity to Rugby culture.



Mr Gorski and family, 1964



Mr Brown and family, 1967

- Studios like Redding allowed people to capture moments of their life story through photography. Portraiture has always been more than a just a record, it also is a way of telling a story about the sitter.
- A professional photograph can impart confident messages of success.
- Sitters would dress would smartly, sometimes they would dress in uniform. They would sit as a happy family group.
- Then these images were sent home to show their loved ones how they were prospering in a new land.
- Many friends and family were encouraged to follow in their footsteps and make their own journeys to a new life.

"It was a time that we dressed up, taking photographs and sending photographs back home. We sent them back home to say 'this is me now'."

Elfreda Nembhard

How was the town of Rugby different in the past?

The biggest employers were big industrial companies. The success or failure of the works would have had huge repercussions on the fortunes of the town. But not everyone worked at the big industrial companies.

What jobs did people have?

The Rugby that they experienced was very different from today with many people in the town being employed by the big industrial companies. Roles included engineering, catering, secretaries, production staff, train drivers, apprentices and nursing.



Nurse White, 1967



Bill Hipwell, dustman

At the height of operations in the 1960s the works employed around 22,000 people out of a town population of around 51,651 to 59,372 and therefore the scale of these numbers was significant.



Revd Julius Adoyo, 1963

Activity One

Ask the children to bring in photographs or objects from home that represent their families' roots. Use these to start a discussion.

- Were you or anyone's parents born in a different country?
- How old were you/they when you/they arrived?
- Why did your family come to Rugby?
- How did you/they feel about moving to a new place?
- What does 'community' mean to you

Or *(if parents and their family have been in Rugby for many years)*

- Why have you stayed? Work? Family? Community?
- Do other family members live in other town/cities/countries. Why did they move?
- What does 'community' mean to you?

Now, as a class create your own community.

Using photocopies images, drawings, maps, newspaper clipping and stories from your family, decorate cardboard box.

Then add windows and doors.

These boxes will be your homes that you will create mini town with (this could be floor based, you could add cars and buses) or this could be a 3D wall based piece.



Mrs Jones and family, 1965

Activity Two



Mohammed Hanif

Give the groups a photograph and ask them to create a character profile.

- How old are they?
- Are they a parent?
- What do their clothes say about them?
- What did they do for a job?

Now put yourselves in their shoes. Write a letter or postcard back home.

Remember you have just moved,

- *Who are you writing to?*
- *Where did you come from?*
- *Did you travel alone?*
- *How did you get to Rugby?*
- *Why did you come to Rugby?*
- *What was it like living in Rugby?*
- *Have you made any friends?*
- *How is it different from home?*
- *How do you feel?*



David Henriques



Mayor Gibson, 1955

Activity Three

Redding Loans Boxes

Create your own class studio using the clothes and props provided.

Clothing - These clothes are all original from the 50s - 80s. Discuss the changes in fashion. Look at fabrics, styles, colour. In the images, are they dressed casually or smart? Why do you think they choose these clothes?

Camera - Discuss the changes in technology and advancements in printing. How would you share images to family on the other side of the world? Technology? Social media?

Images - Use these images to discuss what you want to say in your photograph. Are they serious or smiling? Standing or sitting down? Are you going to do a group shot or a person on their own? Discuss what that person's story might be.



Copyright in the Redding Collection

The copyright to most of the collection rests with the individual who commissioned the photograph in the first instance, normally the sitter or the member of the sitter's family who paid for the photography.

These were photographs that were not intended to have been seen outside of a privately determined network of family and friends. This raises questions about how we can display and publish this anonymous material in a responsible way.

We have published these images in a transparent way that acknowledges the absence of copyright and the difficulties of tracing individual owners. We hope that we have also done this in a way that is both respectful and celebratory in its selection, description and treatment of the photographs and that will be supported by the local community.