

Electrifying Women Training: preparing a presentation on the history of women in engineering

- These suggestions are based on our experiences of public engagement in the Electrifying Women project, raising public awareness of the long history of women in engineering.
- Most of these were by invitation, but some opportunities arose by direct project advertising.
- Educational presentations involved integrating our materials into a broader event schedule.
- Most presentations were to primarily female audiences (although later life audiences were mixed)

Potential Audiences

- Primary school
- Secondary/ 6th form
- Engineering undergraduates
- Local history groups
- Professional groups
- University of the Third Age U3A
- Engineering/industrial History
- Researchers/H.E. students
- Creative Writing groups

Messages (examples)

- School - opening horizons for future careers
- Undergrads - reinforcement of identity as future engineers
- Local history - inclusion of regional stories of women engineers
- Professional groups - increased awareness for inclusivity

Electrifying Women Training
Presenting Handout
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- U3A - supportive awareness for career options among younger family members
- Engineering industrial History - include those women's stories!
- Creative Writing – opportunities for imaginative reconstruction for women's experiences

Techniques to use

i) Open questions to audience:

- School: 'which of these images is an engineer?'
- Undergrads: how long have women been doing Engineering?
- Local history: what do you know about these local women engineers?
- Professional groups: when did women join technical professions. And why?
- U3A: did you know there was a Women's Engineering Society? How old is it?
- Engineering history: why is the proportion of women in UK engineering so low (12%) despite having the world's first ever women's engineering society?
- Creative Writing: how can we recreate the lost voices of women in engineering?

ii) Points of familiarity for audience:

- links to suffragette movement
- First World War opportunities
- nationally famous individuals e.g. Amy Johnson
- local heritage – places, families, companies
- present day challenges of equitable access to employment
- comparisons of engineering with other professions e.g. law, medicine

Images to use (all to be available from our website, and or IET Archives/WES).

- Women's Engineering Society collective photographs
- Individual women e.g. Caroline Haslett, Amy Johnson

Example images



From the Women's Engineering Society Archives: 1938 trip to power station, and from the Caroline Haslett papers, the Women's Engineering Society 1929 conference

Example of activity for school children

Which of these were engineers?



Women engineers 100 years ago



Gertrude Entwisle:
Mechanical
engineer



Amy Johnson:
Aeroplane pilot &
ground engineer



Beatrice Shilling:
Mechanical and
electrical engineer



Verena Holmes:
Mechanical
engineer