

Introduction

This project was set moving by simple curiosity. When watching Philip Donnellan's early films it is easy to start wondering what has happened to the people and places which he filmed. A second question followed quickly afterwards; what would the people in these places make of these films, forty or fifty years later? Landmarks was an attempt to answer both questions in relation to two key Donnellan films, and this booklet a way of recording these attempts. As we were concentrating on the subjects of *Joe the Chainsmith* and *The Colony* rather than the technique or approach behind them, this is more of a patchwork social history than a study of the filmmaker. But we hope it will help to spark more curiosity about his work, and restate the need for an archive which gathers some of this fascinating material in a coherent and accessible way for the students and amateur historians of the future. As Donnellan himself put it:

"...The BBC is not just a small entrepreneur producing short-term consumables; its product has been made with the public's money and should be made available to them. Much of it – even the trivia – has a political, cultural and historical significance which is part of their birthright. It should not be locked away out of reach."

Landmarks was made possible by all sorts of people who were willing to go out of their way to help us. These included: Veronica Taylor at the British Film Institute; Steve Chapman and Louisa Dempsey at ScreenWM; Paul Long at Birmingham City University; Max Simpson at Mac; Harry Palmer; Hector and Delores Pinkney, who provided many useful Handsworth contacts; Harry Bloomer and Warren Smith, who did likewise in Cradley Heath; everyone at Cradley Heath's big market; and above all the Crooke and Stewart families, Sheila Brayford and Jean Hingley who gave their time to be interviewed. We would also particularly like to thank Jill and Philippa Donnellan for their support throughout the project.

*A filmography of Philip Donnellan's work can be found at www.philipdonnellan.co.uk. Selected papers are kept in Birmingham Central Library's archive, and their Charles Parker Archive also contains a good deal of relevant material. Philip Donnellan quotations are taken from his unpublished memoir, *We Were the BBC (1992)*, by kind permission of Jill Donnellan.*



A brief introduction to Philip Donnellan

Philip Donnellan was born on 9 February 1924 in Reigate, Surrey. After leaving boarding-school at 16 he worked as a reporter at the Woking News and Mail, tracking down freshly-landed bombs and recently-bereaved war widows. After serving as a commando in Burma his impeccable accent landed him a job as a radio announcer at the BBC, and following a couple of months of induction at Broadcasting House he was shipped out to the provinces.

“Birmingham was awful... dilapidated, black, unbelievably raddled by war.”

At the time BBC Birmingham was on Broad Street, backing onto Gas St Basin, and the majority of its output was produced for the 8 million or so listeners in the Midlands Region. Donnellan soon became frustrated with announcing (“an awful fart-arse job”) and began to work on outside broadcasts and eventually as a radio features producer. Cycling the length and breadth of the Midlands in his free time, he developed a fascination for local folklore and a knack for getting strangers to talk to him. This skill became integral to his job with the arrival of lightweight tape-recorders, enabling producers to go it alone without the usual vanload of engineers and kit. One of the first to seize on the creative potential of this new technology was Charles Parker, a Birmingham colleague whose work on the Radio Ballads was to prove a major source of inspiration.

Donnellan, meanwhile, was being drawn to film, stirred up by the vigorous, personal approach of Britain’s ‘Free Cinema’ movement and discovering the joys of image and sound carefully spliced together so as to comment on one another. Based back in London for a time, he learnt the basics of television directing on the hugely popular Tonight programme before persuading his superiors in the Talks department to let him make a film for a new slot called Eye To Eye. Well-received by his bosses and by the viewers, *Joe the Chainsmith* (1958) was the first in a series of films on industrial subjects which Donnellan made in Sunderland, Corby, Coventry and the Potteries, followed by a number of portraits of eminent men including De Gaulle, Nehru and TE Lawrence.

But it was the challenge of capturing the thoughts and feelings of ordinary, non-eminent people which excited Donnellan, and before long he was at regular loggerheads with BBC management over his choice of subjects, his liberal use of folk-song, and his loose, associative style of filmmaking. Nevertheless, he was given the chance to set up his own documentary unit in anticipation of the BBC’s new second channel, and from 1963 onwards he produced or directed over twenty films from Birmingham. Most were shot on 16mm with tight budgets and schedules, and explored a huge range of people who were not generally given a voice on national television – from runaway teenagers to gypsy travellers, from the blind community to Irish road-builders. Many who worked with Donnellan talk of his commitment to those he filmed, whether through personal contact or work with the likes of West Midlands Gypsy Liaison Group and the Shropshire Talking Newspaper, and he would even on occasion invite his interviewees into the edit room.

His unconventional approach became increasingly at odds with the BBC and many of his 1970s films were arts programmes tucked away in the schedules. Before leaving the corporation after 36 years, however, he was able to realise one long-cherished project; *Gone for a Soldier* (1980). This ambitious two-part history of squaddies in the British Army was greeted with fury from some for its anti-war, anti-colonialist outlook, and has not been screened again since its first broadcast. Philip Donnellan and his wife Jill eventually settled in Cork, Ireland, where he died on 15 February 1999.

Joe the Chainsmith

Dir: Philip Donnellan. Tx: 7.11.1958, BBC 1

The seeds for *Joe the Chainsmith* were sown by the late Phil Drabble. The factory-worker-turned-broadcaster (later presenter of 'One Man and his Dog') introduced Philip Donnellan to the pubs and alleys of Cradley Heath as they researched a 1954 radio series about the Black Country called 'Men, Women and Memories'. What struck Donnellan was the contrast between Birmingham a few miles east and this "cluster of villages which suddenly grew" as Drabble put it.

It was the local abundance of coal, iron and lime which enabled this growth, and as the 'New Iron Age' gathered speed with every new advance in technology each village developed its own specialism. In Cradley Heath from the 1820s onwards it was chains, from delicate watch-chains to the huge beasts used on ships across the British Empire, each link demanding unearthly resources of strength, concentration and skill, and paying a pittance. These unique conditions spawned a unique culture: a pub on every corner; a dialect and accent specific to each community; a rich vein of songs and stories; and a passion for fighting dogs and cocks which persisted well beyond the Humane Act of 1835.

When Donnellan had the chance to make a documentary portrait for the Eye to Eye series he thought immediately of one of their radio interviewees, a man emblematic of this vanishing world. Joe Mallen's legendary status in the local area was already sealed, not just for chain-making but for his stewardship of the Cross Guns pub, his enthusiastic role in Black Country blood sports, and the victory of his Staffordshire bull terrier Gentleman Jim at Crufts in 1936. "Everyone said Joe was a villain, but a very nice one if you were on his side," wrote Donnellan, remembering how Mallen initiated him by asking him to hold a cockerel in the back-yard while he chopped off its comb with a big pair of scissors.

The film begins in this yard, with our hero addressing the audience directly - an unusual technique for the time. It goes on to describe a couple of days in his life, from work at dawn to songs in the pub at night, on to whippet-racing on Porters Field on a Sunday morning and then back to work on Monday. There are



beautiful shots of the area's canals and winding roads at dawn, a chain-bashing sequence held just long enough to become mesmerising, and poetic touches like the dissolve from a chalk circle to a ring of beer. The film was entirely scripted, an approach which Donnellan would soon reject. One of the whippet-racers Joe Gill remembers returning to Porters Field on four consecutive Sundays in the same clothes just to complete that one sequence, and the crew spent a long, painful night in the Peartree pub trying to film Tommy Jasper's poker-snapping trick - with the loss of one tooth.

Joe the Chainsmith remains a rich social document and the work of a talented young filmmaker feeling his way. The Daily Mail's critic described it as "an honest and affecting essay of the kind that television can do so well, as rough and nourishing as a mug of strong tea. The world it revealed was as foreign to most viewers as the banks of the Amazon."

Above: Whippet-racer Joe Gill in 1958 and 2005. Below: scenes from *Joe the Chainsmith*.



Nearly 50 years later...



The Big Market – as distinct from the Little Market a few doors down – has served Cradley Heath since the 1930s, and it's the place where Lil Mallen goes shopping in *Joe the Chainsmith*. The manager there was kind enough to let us cover an empty stall with black-out material, and over two steaming hot days in June a steady stream of people popped their head into our makeshift filmtent to see their town in crisp monochrome nearly half a century before. Many emerged with eyes shining or goose-bumped arms, dredging names or places from their memories, stories spilling out. One of our first customers sat for a good half an hour after the film, reliving the thrill of being allowed to sit out on the garden wall in her pyjamas with a hot chocolate to watch the Speedway. Like many others she talked sadly of how the area had changed, and felt she'd had to 'tone down' her accent in order to get work. A retired policeman spotted old colleagues on their beat and described patrolling a town lit by gas, when the sergeant was the only one with a bike and passing cars would have to be commandeered in an emergency. "On really foggy nights a constable would stand at the top of the high street with a lamp, like a lighthouse."



JOE THE CHAINSMITH is a film about Cradley Heath, made by the BBC nearly 50 years ago. It will be showing for free in the Big Market, Cradley Heath High St, on **Friday 9 June and Saturday 10 June, from 9am-2pm.**

The screening is part of a project exploring some of the stories behind the film. If you have any memories or questions please call Ian Francis on 0121 449 7432, or 07815 970 432.



"It's a pity they don't put more of these on the TV. Bad memories and good memories. Neighbours was neighbours then. Neighbours today, they wouldn't know if you were dead. I'm glad I was born when I was."



"I remember playing on Porters Field where the whippet-racing was filmed, there were cast-iron pipes lying around... literally hundreds of them, massive pipes that you could almost stand up in, or crawl through like a submarine. You'd stay out in the morning from half seven till eleven at night, and it was just the darkness that brought you back."



Memories of Joe Mallen



Many of the people who visited us in the market at Cradley Heath remembered Joe Mallen, whether as a work-mate or a canny dominoes opponent. “He could be very dry, and funny,” said one. “He always had an answer for everything.” Towards the end of our second day a woman appeared who knew him only as ‘me Uncle Joe’. Her name was Mary Jean Hingley (known as Jean), and her memories were so sharp and personal that she barely needed to look at the screen. I took her phone number and a few days later went to see her at her flat in Old Hill.

Joe and Lily Mallen virtually adopted Jean during the 1920s and 30s. “Dad died when I was two, and they used to help my mum out. My mum was over the road from the Cross Guns in a shop, with 3 of us. They’d lost their son, and May [their daughter] was grown up by then. I had my teen years with him. Auntie Lil’d sit me on the counter when I was little, while they were pulling the pints. I’d come from school and they’d be playing dominoes and they’d have to hold their hands on their pints because I’d swig anybody’s. When Uncle Joe used to come in from work he’d call in at my mum’s and have ice cream and milk, cause her used to make her own ice cream. I remember him helping me with me school-work. He’d stand with me at Five Ways and get me to count all the pubs.”

The reputation of the pub as a centre for dog-breeders and -fighters began to spread. “Sunday morning it was woeful – barking, talking, you couldn’t hear

yourself think. It was open house. Ten o’clock in the morning till two, and six till ten at night – but it never closed at night.” A mostly silent presence in the film, it was clearly Lil who held things together. “They was as different as chalk and cheese, but the love was there. And as long as he was happy doing what he was doing... She used to say to me – go with him, then I know he’ll come back on time.” Jean acknowledges that the dogs were often mistreated, and is still smarting over the loss of a bull terrier called Bomber: “Uncle Joe told me he was killed getting out of a car... but months later I found out he’d died fighting.”

After a long and colourful apprenticeship, Jean went on to run her own pub but kept in close contact with the Mallens. “He gave me away at my wedding. I was down my mum’s and he came down and I was sitting there crying. He says what’s the matter, and I says I don’t want to go through with it. So he says well I don’t want to to tek you neither, we’ll stop here. I says Mother’ll kill thee. He got the sherry down him, y’know - I don’t want to gi’ yer away. But then we went down the church. We go into the vestry after the service, and no sooner he’s signed his name in the book the vicar says, So you’re the famous Joe Mallen, and they was there for ages.” Jean was with Joe, too, on the night that he died in 1975. “He said, I’m glad you’ve come our Jean. I said, what for? He said, you will listen to me won’t you? And I said Yeah, I suppose I will... and I laid him out as well. He was one on his own. I loved the sight of him.”



Opposite: Joe in later years, living on Mucklow Hill.
Above: Jean as a child with Gentleman Jim; and Lily and Joe’s grave in Cradley cemetery.

House of Friends

Dir: Philip Donnellan. Tx: 10.01.1965, BBC2

The years between *Joe the Chainsmith* and *House of Friends*, filmed a mile away in Brierley Hill in 1964, was a period of enormous change for television documentary. In the second film, we can see the liberating impact which portable tape-recorders and lightweight 16mm cameras had on the filmmaking of Philip Donnellan, no longer working from a script with a small army of technicians in tow. The distinctive accent and speech patterns which had “gone missing” from *Joe the Chainsmith* – in the words of one member of our market audience – are to be found in full flow in *House of Friends*. (So much so that some of our Birmingham audience felt it needed subtitles.)

The programme was part of a six-part series called Landmarks which began in a maternity hospital and ended up in an old people’s home. Donnellan shared directing duties with young talents Charles Denton and Richard Marquand, who went on to direct *Return of the Jedi*. The fifth episode was an opportunity for him to return to the Black Country, and to capture the legendary pub culture which was already beginning to peter out. The most striking moments are frank and funny monologues by men facing the end of their days, some revealing the arduous and miserable aspects of this life which the earlier film tended to gloss over. There is also a cameo by Joe Mallen, no doubt lured by the presence of cameras. “Alright, Joe?” says one Turks Head regular sardonically, “we ain’t seen you up here in a while.”



“I believe there’s a mighty man above me, and I believe that man has sent me ‘ere’ll take me *from* ‘ere. That’s the only one I’m afraid of – he calls for me when I don’t want to go.”

The Colony

Dir: Philip Donnellan. Tx: 16.06.1964, BBC1



“I thought I was going to travel, and that England was a beautiful place. But when we got on the train and saw some of the smoky buildings, as if they were frowning, and the sun wasn’t very bright... I thought I wouldn’t be able to stay in England. I wanted to cry but I was ashamed to do so.”

In early 1963 Philip Donnellan wrote a letter to Huw Wheldon (the BBC’s Head of Documentaries) in which he outlined his beliefs about television’s vital social role, and argued passionately for the establishment of a Documentary unit in Birmingham. By the end of the year Donnellan and his small team were producing single films and series on a huge range of subjects from their base at Carpenter Road, with levels of autonomy unthinkable for TV producers today. One programme idea mentioned in the letter – “Let’s find a West Indian who’d do a truthful film about West Indians today” – grew into *The Colony*, researched and shot in the winter of 1964 and broadcast on the 16th of June.

Since the mid-50s levels of immigration to the UK had been rising steadily, with growing numbers of workers from other Commonwealth countries – in particular the Caribbean, parts of Africa and the Indian subcontinent – drawn by the promise of abundant employment. The majority of these new arrivals became concentrated in British cities, generally in areas with poor housing and infrastructure, and problems of integration became a consistent and contentious topic for discussion. In 1964 this debate had yet to reach the violently polarised levels epitomised by Enoch Powell’s ‘Rivers of Blood’ speech in 1968, and anti-immigration campaigning tended to be fragmented and localised. Nevertheless, *The Colony* was made at a crucial time in Britain’s racial politics. A few months later in the General Election the Tory candidate Peter Griffith’s use of slogans like ‘If you want a nigger for a neighbour vote Labour’ successfully won him the formerly safe Labour seat of Smethwick.

Although *The Colony* was not made by a black filmmaker – a move which would have been truly radical at the time – its central aim was to demystify, to present the unvarnished thoughts and feelings of first-generation Caribbeans in Birmingham about the new lives which they had made for themselves.



The film's desire to upset preconceptions is signalled from the start. Over a shot of Birmingham Town Hall we hear a well-spoken woman talking on the topic of adoption, the camera whipping round to her as she says "being coloured myself". The proper BBC voice is that of Pauline Henriques, one of the first black actresses to appear on British TV (in *All God's Chillun Got Wings*, 1946) and a broadcaster with the West Indies service.

Other speakers in the film were found during a few weeks of pavement-pounding around Birmingham and West Bromwich: Stan Crooke, a railway signalman from St Kitts living in Balsall Heath; Bernice Smith, a Jamaican teacher working at St James' Primary School in Handsworth; Victor Williams, a bus-conductor in West Brom; Polly Perkins, a nurse from Barbados; and the preacher Pastor Dunn, who had recently established his Bethel Apostolic Church on Gibson Road in Handsworth. Each main interviewee is listed at the end of the programme along with their occupation and island of origin – a nod to a very particular Caribbean heritage which many felt had begun to erode the minute they stepped off the boat. The montage of voices and impressions on the film soundtrack was gathered and edited by Charles Parker, whose run of

"What I've noticed nowadays is that the West Indian is no longer considering himself a Jamaican, a Trinidadian, Barbadian, Kittitian, Antiguan – we are all subtly but inexorably considering ourselves as... 'coloured people'."

- Stan Crooke



NEW TV FILM ON B'HAM 'A WASTED HOUR'

—LORD MAYOR

Staff Reporter

THE B.B.C. film documentary, "The Colony," describing the integration problems of coloured immigrants in Birmingham, was "virtually a wasted hour," the city's Lord Mayor, Alderman Frank Price, said today.

"It showed only one side of a problem which in Birmingham has many sides," he added. "In this respect, last night's programme failed lamentably."

The Lord Mayor's criticism follows his strong protests five days ago over the showing of another B.B.C. film on Birmingham, "The Second City."

With "The Colony," said Ald. Price, there was "no misrepresentation or travesty of the truth" on the scale of that in "The Second City."

DUAL PROBLEM

"In fact," he said, "I do not want to appear over-critical about last night's programme. However, I must say what I feel, and I feel this time, too, the B.B.C. did not meet the full responsibilities involved in a study of this kind."

"Integration is a dual problem with dual responsibilities, but the B.B.C. dealt with only one side of it. In fact, they dealt with only one side of one side of the problem."

"I mean by this that they did not even recognise in the programme the problems that exist, and the differences between the coloured races in this city."

MULTI-RACIAL

Birmingham was a multi-racial city, he said, and as such it posed not only the question of relationships between the

native citizen and the immigrant.

It also posed the relationship between the immigrants themselves—West Indian, Pakistanis, Indians and others.

Ald. Price continued: "If television sets itself out to examine in a constructive way the problems of a multi-racial society, as I believe it is entitled to do and should do, then it must do it in a proper way."

"Last night, it showed us only the side of the West Indians, a warm, cheerful and friendly people. In this way, the programme fell short of what it should have been."

A party of students and workers with Balsall Heath Association said after watching the film: "It was a contribution to better race relations. It showed the West Indians as people and personalities and not just as a problem."

THREE GENERATIONS

"One point we agree with particularly in the film is that it is going to take about three generations before real integration. Integration is personal contact between immigrants and Birmingham people."

"There were many more aspects of the colour situation the programme could have covered, the group said, but it set out to examine only the West Indian community."

"To examine the whole problem of race relations in Birmingham would need a great deal longer than one hour," they added.

"The Colony" was given a country-wide showing on B.B.C. TV. "The Second City" was screened last week only in the Midland Region.

acclaimed Radio Ballads had recently been halted by the BBC. "During that period," Donnellan later wrote in his memoirs, "I encountered more vivid language – powerful oral music – than I have ever found or heard in any other situation."

Donnellan's willingness to give space to the conversations that were going on within the Afro-Caribbean community was clearly shocking to many at the time – including Birmingham's Lord Mayor. The cutting on the left is taken from the Birmingham Mail, dated 17 June, 1964, with teacher Bernice Smith interviewed in the same issue. "Mrs Smith said she enjoyed the programme but thought more attention could have been given to the problems of integration. 'There is no such thing as a colour bar among children in primary schools. It is a pity they change later on,' she said." (pictured on back cover.) Mr Valentine Cato from the West Indian Federation Association is also quoted: "It was a very mediocre film and gave a completely false picture of the way West Indians live in Birmingham."

Audience response to *The Colony* at Rookery Road Community centre in Handsworth forty years later was a real mixture; nostalgia and regret, hope and disappointment. There was a sense that things had improved vastly from the experiences of alienation described in the programme, but that the black community and north Birmingham in general face a new and more complex set of challenges today. At the same time people were relieved to see a film which portrayed local people as complex, fully rounded characters. Below are some reactions we recorded during the post-screening discussion.



“A lot of people from the colonies who came as teachers and held a reasonable position back home, when they came here they had to work as bus-drivers, railway-porters, cleaners, you name it. They weren’t able to stand at the same level as in their home country - their qualification was devalued because of the colour of their skin. That was a really sad time.”

“I think it’s really important to show that there was discussion and thought within black families. Some went the integration route, and others didn’t, and that’s had consequences for us as the next generation and even our children.”

“The school where we went, you were encouraged to go into the factory. Women had a choice between office work or being a nurse. Now it has changed so much - you can be whatever you want. Opportunities are there if you’re determined. But it’s not easy for the kids. We have a generation now that is lost, and God help us... But this film shows where we have come from to where we are today; we’ve come a hell of a long way, and there’s still a long way to go.”

Opposite, top: an unnamed interviewee in *The Colony*. Middle: Victor Williams at Birmingham Science Museum. Bottom: Soho Road, Handsworth in 1964 and 2006.



“Love - Love - Love - I love you but the majority you don’ love me. Between a black man and a white community, a black man accep’ you, where you don’ accep’ me. Because you can walk with me, talk with me, have a drink with me, buy me a drink in the pub, the fact remain while you live you have a little something in there, a little complex that you’s better than me. I come pure heart, with my heart pure for you - love you, never harm you, never do nothing that’s wrong, feel that you’s just a man like me, but the fact still remain that you have something in here against me.”

“John Akomfrah found a print of *The Colony* at the BBC and took extracts from it for his famous documentary film *Handsworth Songs* [1986]. He credited the BBC, but not the programme and not Philip. When Philip attended a screening of the documentary, someone in the audience enquired about the ‘old’ footage, and John confessed he didn’t know the source, so Philip jumped up and explained where the ‘old’ footage came from.” - email from Stephen Bourne, writer and film historian



“Take no notice of the living, we can elevate ourselves learning from the dead” - Victor Williams



Stan Crooke

One of the most memorable interviewees in *The Colony* is Stan Crooke. With large, piercing eyes and carefully chosen words he gives a blunt account of the divisions and disappointments he has encountered since arriving from St Kitts in the 1950s. Filmed in discussion with other men at a cafe in Handsworth and talking directly to camera at the signal-box at Selly Oak station where he worked for fifteen years, Crooke's stated belief that integration will take "at least another two or three generations" resonates through the film.

Tracking down this man (or his descendants) became a priority and a bit of a challenge. After much trawling through electoral rolls we found a Stanley E. Crooke residing at 71 Brighton Road, Balsall Heath in the early 1960s, right across the park from our office. The death records had a Stanley Earl Crooke dying in Bromsgrove hospital in 1977, and there were traces of Crookes living locally up to the 1990s. The Redditch Advertiser printed a small piece about our hunt and the following day I had a slightly stunned phone-call from Samantha Crooke, Stan's youngest daughter.

The following week I went to see Samantha and second-youngest Gloria at their house in Redditch, where they live with Samantha's partner Robert and a white yorkshire terrier. They were both excited and a little bemused that some stranger was taking all this interest in their dad, and when asked what exactly I was looking for I had to confess that I wasn't really sure. Nevertheless we spent a very enjoyable evening delving into family folklore, and despite having broken one of Donnellan's cardinal rules (get everything on tape) it felt like this was the moment when our little project really came to life.



Stan at work in the early 1970s

Right: Lylith and Samantha in 1971 documentary *Where Do I Stand?*



Far right (from left to right): sisters Sandra, Samantha and Gloria in 2005

After getting involved with *The Colony* Stan became good friends with Philip Donnellan and declared him "the most intelligent white man I ever met". The families took occasional holidays together and the Donnellans were even godparents to Gloria, although they had lost touch in recent years. Samantha and Gloria were the youngest of eight, and when you imagine them packed into a terrace on Brighton Road it isn't surprising that Stan saw his signal-box as a refuge in the absence of a shed. In 1971 the family moved to a larger house in Redditch, where Stan died a few years later. "He dug up all the vegetables from the garden that morning, as if he knew what was going to happen."

Stan's wife Lylith survived him by nearly thirty years, overseeing the growth of a large empire of grandchildren. While she was a big fan of England and Princess Diana Lylith kept strong ties with the Caribbean, even hanging onto the trunk which she travelled with on her first voyage over. (Gloria remembers an ongoing argument between their parents over whether Enid Blyton books should be allowed in the house.) Stan was not keen on returning to St Kitts, but both daughters wonder whether the asthma which contributed to his death would have been alleviated by a Caribbean climate.

The England Stan and Lylith arrived in half a century ago is vastly different from the place where their children and grandchildren have grown up. The family is now spread across the country, many of them with white partners. A couple of months after my visit to Redditch we showed *The Colony* at the mac in Birmingham, with Gloria, Samantha, brothers Earl and Roy and various partners and children amongst the audience ("a gaggle of Crookes", as Robert calls it). After the screening we all ended up in a balti house on Ladypool Road with Philip Donnellan's daughter Philippa, just around the corner from the terrace where the family had started out.

Credits

Landmarks was produced by 7 Inch Cinema, a Birmingham-based organisation who create fresh contexts for films that you might not otherwise get to see - especially shorts, animation, music-based work and archive material. Other recent projects include an excavation of cult crime drama Gangsters, a regular residency at the Hare and Hounds in Kings Heath, collaborations with Compton Verney, Ikon Gallery and Capsule, and the annual Flatpack Festival. For more information or to obtain a copy of this booklet, please write to info@7inch.org.uk. (Large-print version also available.)

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**7 INCH
CINEMA**

www.7inch.org.uk

In 2006 mobile film outfit 7 Inch Cinema spent a number of weeks in Handsworth and Cradley Heath, retracing the steps of documentary filmmaker Philip Donnellan. They screened his BBC programmes *Joe the Chainsmith* (1958) and *The Colony* (1964) in the places where they were filmed, and as well as hunting for people who featured in the films they recorded some of the memories and stories stirred up by these screenings.

This booklet is a record of their research.



**7 INCH
CINEMA**

