

**Dame Stephanie Shirley CH
Oswestry & Henley-on-Thames**

Date of Interview: 15.12.21

Interviewer: Hugh Morgan

Material: audio recording, written description, photographs.

Description

Over the past thirty years Dame Stephanie Shirley CH has been a highly successful venture philanthropist supporting important and worthy causes. Within Wales, Dame Stephanie's spearheading of a cause particularly close to her heart, namely autism, proved to be highly significant; enabling Wales to be viewed over a period of several years as a leader in the field of autism throughout the UK and beyond.

Dame Stephanie's achievements as a champion of women's voices in the workplace, as a pioneer in the emerging IT industry of the 1960's-80s and of course, as a philanthropist, are all the more remarkable considering the traumatic upheaval of her childhood roots and escape from Nazi Germany in 1939.

Unaccompanied, and at just five years old she arrived with her nine-year-old sister on a Kindertransport to be taken in by foster parents who fortunately provided a loving environment in which to grow and develop. Here she became familiar with the border town of Oswestry, recalling the weekly market days of the 1940's when Welsh was the common language used by the traders and local population. In September 2021 Dame Stephanie was honoured by Oswestry with a 'Blue Plaque'. Truly wonderful recognition for someone who had given so greatly to wider society and especially to their local town.

Dame Stephanie was interviewed in December 2021 for the digital West Wales Veterans' Archive collection held on People's Collection Wales in the National Library of Wales. Dame Stephanie's collection consists of audio interview, written description and photographs. Dame Stephanie was interviewed by Hugh Morgan OBE who has had the privilege of knowing Dame Stephanie for over 25yrs.

For further information about Dame Stephanie's extraordinary life and current activities visit her website: [Homepage – Dame Stephanie \(steveshirley.com\)](http://Homepage – Dame Stephanie (steveshirley.com))