



# NEWSLETTER

## Speakers Galore Scheduled for St. Louis

Ten featured speakers and performances will illuminate the theme "Bearing Public Witness: Documenting Memories of Struggle and Resistance" at the 35th annual meeting of the Oral History Association, Oct. 17-21 in St. Louis.

The conference is expected to draw oral history students and teachers, researchers, theorists and practitioners from the arts, sciences, social sciences and humanities, including scholars with international perspectives from Africa, Latin America, Asia, Australia, the Middle East and Europe.

In addition to its interdisciplinary and international focus, the conference will examine the rapidly changing technological issues that affect oral historians. Several presentations, for example, will deal with the ethical issues of setting standards for collection and dissemination of narratives of trauma and oppression in digital environments, in film and on stage.

Conference co-chairs Leslie Brown, Anne Valk and Jessica Wiederhorn also have scheduled new "workshop sessions" for conferees who want to focus in depth on

specific subjects. Those sessions will include: therapeutic uses of oral history interviews in clinical practice; teaching through storytelling and drama drawn from oral history; making video oral history interviews accessible and fund-raising strategies for oral history projects.

OHA members should receive full program and registration information soon.

Turn to pages 6 and 7 for details about the array of featured speakers and dramatic presentations scheduled for the St. Louis meeting.

### Endowment Needs You

The Oral History Association Endowment thanks Eleanor Stoddard and Roy A. Rosenzweig for their recent contributions to the Martha Ross Teaching Award fund.

The biennial award for exemplary precollegiate teaching, for the first time this year, will include a cash prize.

To make your tax-deductible contribution to the Ross Fund or the general OHA Endowment Fund, send a check to: OHA, Dickinson College, P.O. Box 1773, Carlisle, PA 17013-2896.

### OHA *Newsletter* Plans Expansion, Schedule Change

More pages of oral history news will be on their way to Oral History Association members' mailboxes beginning in December.

At their midwinter meeting in St. Louis, OHA Council members approved plans for a modest increase in the size of the thrice-yearly OHA **Newsletter** and a modified publication schedule.

Beginning with your next issue, the **Newsletter** will boast 16 instead of 12 pages in its annual post-conference, Dec. 1 edition. The

other two issues will remain at 12 pages each.

Here is the new publication schedule, with the copy deadline dates in **bold**: April 1 (**March 1**), Aug. 1 (**July 1**) and Dec. 1 (**Nov. 1**).

The larger post-conference **Newsletter** will allow more space to cover the annual meeting and to feature news about oral history projects, state and regional activities and issues of interest to OHA members.

Please submit your stories, photos and ideas to: Mary Kay Quinlan, Editor, 7524 S. 35th St., Lincoln, NE 68516. Fax: 402-420-1770. E-mail: ohaeditor@aol.com. Please do NOT send articles as e-mail attachments but as part of your main message.



## From Your President

By **Cliff Kuhn**  
OHA President

The 2001 annual meeting in St. Louis promises to be extraordinary. Program chairs Leslie Brown, Anne Valk and Jessica Wiederhorn, along with their committee and OHA Vice President Mary Marshall Clark, have pulled together a stellar, jam-packed array of sessions, workshops, featured speakers and presentations organized around the compelling and timely theme of "Bearing Witness." Major thanks also are due Jacquelyn Dace and the members of the local arrangements committee. I have no doubt that the 2001 meeting will significantly advance OHA and the practice of oral history.

### IRBs and Oral History

In May 2001, the American Association of University Professors issued its report, "Protecting Human Beings: Institutional Review Boards and Social Science Research." Don Ritchie, representing OHA, and Linda Shopes, representing the American Historical Association, were on the panel that prepared the report.

The report is the latest in a series of developments dating back to the mid-1990s, when universities across the country began to place oral history work in the category of potential human subject risk research, and which, therefore, had to be approved by institutional review boards (IRBs). While certainly recognizing the ethical dimensions of oral history and the responsibilities of the interviewer, within the oral history community there was considerable opposition to this development as having a chilling effect on the practice of oral history.

Representatives of the OHA, the American Historical Association and the Organization of American Historians met with federal officials and surveyed their members and history departments about the matter.

The result was that in late 1998, the government changed its policies to place oral history among those activities that IRBs can review under an "expedited" procedure. The AAUP report builds upon these earlier efforts to offer a number of recommendations, including: better representation of social scientists on IRBs, clarification of what constitutes research exempt from government regulation and that which can be reviewed under an expedited procedure, and the possibilities of history departments themselves determining oral history review procedures and of IRBs granting blanket exemptions for oral history. Turn to page 4 of this **Newsletter** for a report from Ritchie on this important and controversial issue.

### Veterans History Project

As mentioned in an earlier column, last fall Congress unanimously passed legislation authorizing the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress to collect and preserve oral history interviews with military veterans. At some level, this act signifies recognition of the value of oral history at the highest national level. The OHA has been involved in the planning of this initiative from the outset and will continue to lend assistance as a partner in the project concerning interview guidelines, content and techniques.

Appropriations for the project are included in the pending federal budget. In the meantime, the Veterans History Project (VHP) is asking organizations and individuals who have done oral history interviews with veterans to identify themselves and to provide a description to the VHP of their veterans-related oral history collections.

In this way, the VHP will be able to get a better sense of what's already out there, publicize existing efforts, giving them the recognition and visibility they merit, and send prospective interviewers and narrators to people and institutions that are already doing work in the field.

To contact the project and its director, Ellen McCulloch-Lovell, please consult the VHP Web site at: <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/vets/>.

I look forward to seeing you in St. Louis at "2001: A Time and Space Odyssey." (I've been waiting to say that for years!)

## Special Reminders For OHA Members

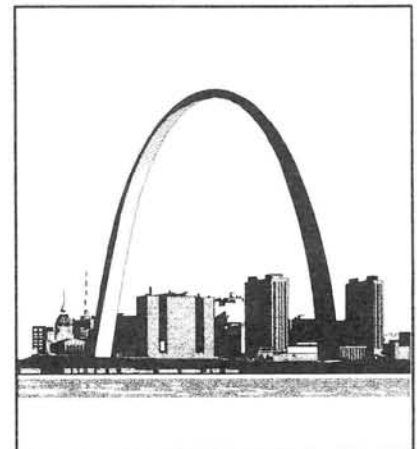
+ The Millennium St. Louis, OHA's convention hotel for the Oct. 17-21 annual meeting, will offer special rates to OHA members.

Book your room early and request the OHA rates: \$117, single; \$127, double. These rates--and the OHA block of rooms--will expire Sept. 20, or sooner, if the block is filled before then.

Avoid disappointment by booking your room now. Call: 800-325-7353 or 314-241-9500.

+ Remember to vote for OHA officers, Council members and Nominating Committee members when you receive your mail ballot this summer.

+ See page 1 for new deadlines for the OHA **Newsletter**. Sending information to the editor is a great way to share information about your project with other OHA members.



# *Underground Railroad Center Relies on Oral History*

**By Orloff Miller, Director  
Freedom Stations Program,  
National Underground Railroad  
Freedom Center**

The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, located in Cincinnati, Ohio, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to educate the public about the historic struggle to abolish human enslavement and secure freedom for all people. The Freedom Center is past the half-way mark in a \$110 million capital campaign and has broken ground for a museum on the Cincinnati riverfront scheduled to open in 2004.

Since the Underground Railroad was by its very nature a clandestine activity, oral history is often the only starting point we have, and the community of speakers is often limited to fragmentary traditions trotted out at family reunions by keepers of the flame. This poses a challenging problem for assessing the literal accuracy of information received. For many, researching local or family Underground Railroad activities has become a process of identity formation, serving to retroactively illustrate cherished values of self-determination in the face of oppression or altruistic sacrifice to alleviate social injustice.

Powerful symbolic messages of empowerment are embedded in the stories of the Underground Railroad, regardless of their literal accuracy. Our challenges are often exacerbated by the politics of race relations, whereby any professional critique of African-American oral traditions--like accounts of secret codes embedded in quilts and songs or hiding places built into historic structures--is seen as elitist or, worse, a personal or ethnic affront. Add to these concerns a rapidly growing heritage tourism industry willing to accept any story that illustrates what we want to believe, and we find ourselves faced with a volatile situation ripe for myth-making and a

potential schism between professional scholars and avocational or self-described grassroots researchers.

At a recent conference on regional Underground Railroad sites co-hosted by the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, the National Park Service and Northern Kentucky University, Dr. Milton Sernett of Syracuse University asked a panel: "Driven by commercialization, boosterism or enthusiasm, honest and true, is this revival in danger of generating stories about sites, personalities or events which, 25 years from now, will be part of the oral tradition but have little or no historical grounding?" The short answer is yes. This has probably already happened repeatedly over the past 140 years. In response, we have to be unafraid to establish standards of historical association for assessing a site or individual's role in the Underground Railroad. The National Park Service's Network to Freedom Program is in the process of establishing such standards.

How oral narrative addresses the needs of the modern speaker and audience may be at least as important as its literal accuracy. Rather than fending off avocational enthusiasm, both the Freedom Center and the Park Service seek to embrace that personal need by empowering the story-keepers to research their own traditions. The Freedom Center's Family Ethnography Project is intended as a tool for avocational research and will include online briefing handbooks for cross-checking family oral histories working with several distinct kinds of data.

The project is based on the idea that individual identity is formed in part by the ethnographic traditions imbedded in historic family practices, many of which are never explicitly recognized until examined. Family genealogy is seen as a necessary first step in establishing a pool of

informants to be examined either through oral history interviews, or, if the informants are deceased, through letters, diaries and other avenues.

The second line of inquiry is the reconstruction of family oral tradition, taken in its largest sense to mean not just a single anecdote of family history, but an oft-repeated story preserved in several versions by an entire community of storytellers.

The third data set used to build a family ethnography are folkways. Folkways might include common dietary motifs, old family recipes, seasonal traditions, heirloom tools, colloquialisms, professions shared by multiple generations or the common behaviors at family reunions. Taken together, these data provide a rich portrait of family traditions and shared meanings and record traditions that might otherwise be lost.

Note that the Family Ethnography Project is not solely aimed at site verification, but instead is designed to inspire and inform research and to produce a multi-disciplinary portrait celebrating family heritage. This approach emphasizes the value of family-held narratives while encouraging their analysis. From this bedrock it then becomes possible to move from genealogy, oral history and folkways studies to more traditional techniques of local archival history, such as map analysis, property title, tax and census work.

The Freedom Center's ultimate goal is to use the lessons of history to promote racial healing. By training our informants in multi-disciplinary research, we serve the hunger for a heritage of self-determination and resistance while ensuring a critical analysis of the surviving evidence.

*Editor's note: For more information on the Freedom Center, its research institute and Freedom Stations program, call or write Orloff Miller at 513-412-6913 or via e-mail at [orloff@nurfc.org](mailto:orloff@nurfc.org)*

# *Institutional Review Boards and Oral History*

**By Donald Ritchie**  
**U.S. Senate Historical Office**

+ A doctoral dissertation that has cleared its department is turned down by the university administration because the candidate did not obtain prior approval for its interviewing methodology. (After much anguish the university later relents and awards the degree.)

+ Students in an oral history class cannot conduct any interviews during the first half of the semester while awaiting official sanction.

+ Oral historians are asked to submit in advance lists of all the questions they intend to ask and the people they intend to interview--and some are disapproved.

All of these are real situations that have occurred as university Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) extend their jurisdiction into the social sciences and humanities.

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has issued a report on "Protecting Human Beings: Institutional Review Boards and Social Science Research," which

was published in the AAUP bulletin, *Academe* (May-June 2001).

The report was drafted by Jonathan Knight of the AAUP, working with representatives of the American Anthropological Association, the American Historical Association, the American Political Science Association, the American Sociological Association, the Oral History Association and the Organization of American Historians. Former OHA presidents Don Ritchie and Linda Shopes represented the OHA and AHA, respectively, on the committee.

The report surveys the history of the IRBs, which were originally established to review medical and behavioral science research on human subjects, but which in recent years have concerned themselves with all forms of interviewing in every discipline.

Because most IRBs remain oriented towards biomedical and behavioral science methodology, their members tend to think in terms of questionnaires directed toward anonymous individuals rather than of

open-ended questioning of identified interviewees.

Their sometimes heavy-handed approach has triggered a rising number of complaints from faculty and students whose interviewing projects have been delayed, dissected and even rejected by their universities' IRBs.

The report surveys these problems--and their potential threat to academic freedom. It also suggests means of improving the process, including expedited review, better representation of the social sciences on the IRBs, campus-wide dissemination of information about IRB requirements and making each academic department responsible for the initial blanket review of research in its own field.

These findings should be useful to all oral historians who submit their work to IRB review.

The report is available online at: [www.aaup.org](http://www.aaup.org). Copies also can be obtained from the American Association of University Professors, 1012 14th St., NW, Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20005-3465.

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## **OH Repository Sought**

Personal oral history/Oral History Association collection available to donate, preferably to a library associated with an institution where oral history theory and methodology are being taught. Collection includes: OHA Colloquium Proceedings and Reviews (1966-present), OHA newsletters (1970-present), various OHA publications, directories, conference programs, etc., some 300 books on the practice of oral history and based on oral history interviews, many inscribed, and an extensive collection of college oral history course materials, including syllabi, forms and assorted reference materials.

Interested? Send a message to: [ohaeditor@aol.com](mailto:ohaeditor@aol.com). Your inquiry will be forwarded to the donor.

## **Morrissey Workshop Set for Oregon**

OHA past president Charles Morrissey will present a three-day oral history workshop Sept. 6-8 at McMenamin's Kennedy School in Portland, Ore.

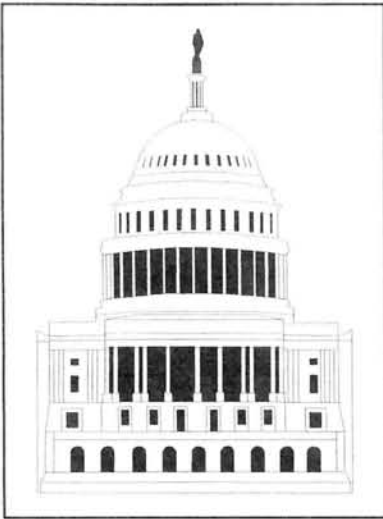
The workshop will offer tips and techniques for setting the stage for a successful interview, asking the right questions, perfecting interview skills and transcribing and editing. The Morrissey workshop also will cover ethical dilemmas, transcription problems, emotional encounters, project management and fund-raising strategies.

For information about registering for the workshop, call Paula Slavens at 503-526-0904 or toll-free at 877-526-0904.

## **OHA Member News**

OHA *Newsletter* articles by members **Janie Weaver** and **Linda Shopes** recently were reprinted, with permission, in *The Historiographer*, the newsletter of the National Episcopal Historians and Archivists. Weaver's article was about assessing the commercial value of collections while Shopes' piece summarized testimony before a federal bioethics advisory panel.

**Mary Kay Quinlan** and **Barbara W. Sommer** are co-authors of "The People Who Made It Work: A Centennial Oral History of the Cushman Motor Works," based on more than 50 oral history interviews. The parent company, Textron, Inc., assigned it Part No. E503160 Rev. 1. Check your Cushman dealer catalog for details.



## Washington Update

By Bruce Craig  
National Coordinating Committee  
for the Promotion of History

*Editor's Note: The National Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of History (NCC) serves as a national advocacy group in Washington, D.C., for historical and archival professions. It is a consortium of more than 50 organizations, including the Oral History Association. Here are selected excerpts from recent "NCC Washington Update" columns.*

### Bills With History Themes On Congressional Agenda

Bills covering a wide variety of history-related topics have been introduced in the first six months of the 107th Congress. Here is a brief description of some of them:

+ The National Park Service would be instructed to identify sites and resources for commemorating and interpreting the Cold War under a bill introduced by Rep. Joel Hefley, R-Colo.

+ A Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African Americans would be created under a bill introduced by Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., and numerous other co-sponsors. Among other charges, the commission would determine whether compensation to descendants of African slaves is warranted.

+ Studies of four possible additions to the National Historic Trails System would be authorized under a bill introduced by Rep. Doug Bereuter, R-Neb. Areas to be assessed include: several routes related to the Oregon National Historic Trail, a 20-mile segment in Kansas considered for possible addition to the Pony Express and California National Historic Trail (NHT), a variety of routes in the Missouri Valley related to the California NHT and several routes associated with the Mormon Pioneer NHT.

+ Legislation requiring the Secretary of the Army to designate Fort Belvoir, Va., as the site for the planned National Museum of the United States Army was introduced by members of the Virginia congressional delegation, joined by numerous others.

### Library of Congress Told To Fix Fire Hazards

The congressional Office of Compliance, Congress' health and safety agency, issued seven citations to the Library of Congress and Architect of the Capitol in connection with fire hazards in book stacks, stairwells, conveyor systems, electrical switch boxes, rare book areas and the storage area for audio recordings. The collection in greatest danger was said to be the 30,000 item collection of turn-of-the-century cylinder recordings that are coated with highly flammable cellulose nitrate.

The citations came on the heels of a 20-page compliance office report that identified various fire hazards in the Library of Congress' Adams, Jefferson and Madison buildings. While many of the conditions documented in the report can be remedied relatively quickly, safety hazards in the library's Jefferson Building, the 103-year-old domed structure that houses the Main Reading Room, may take years to bring up to modern fire code standards. The Main Reading Room, for example, lacks both sprinklers and modern smoke-removal systems.

The report also noted that smoke detectors in the miles of book stacks are 35 years old and, for the most part, are untested.

Library officials said they had already attended to more than three-fourths of the problems.

### Freedman's Bank Records Available on CD

The Mormon Church has published records from the post-Civil War Freedman's Savings and Trust Co., a bank established for newly freed slaves in 1865. The records of 480,000 black Americans that are now available in a searchable database have been available through the National Archives for years, but not in any organized form.

The Mormon Church's 11-year project links the names of former slaves who made deposits in the bank with other family information, such as birth locations of freed slaves and names of former owners. The records are expected to help up to 10 million African Americans research their family histories.

The records are available on CD. For information, call 800-346-6044.

### Byrd an Eloquent Champion Of History Education Funds

Sen. Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., has continued to champion funds for history education in the nation's schools. A Byrd amendment in last year's Education Department appropriation earmarked \$50 million for history programs, and the senior West Virginia lawmaker served notice earlier this year that he intends to continue pressing for more money for programs that focus on American history, not social studies or civics.

Byrd told Senate colleagues that the nation's failure to adequately teach American history will "ultimately mean a failure to perpetuate this wonderful experiment in representative democracy....The corridors of time are lined with the mistakes of societies that lost their way, cultures that forgot their purpose and nations that took no heed of the lessons of their past."

# Tales of Resistance, Political Activism, Trauma Underscore OHA Conference Theme: "Bearing Public Witness"

## "Through the Eyes of a Child: Coming Home"

A one-act play, "Through the Eyes of a Child," based on the Missouri Historical Society's oral history research project is scheduled as a featured theatrical performance Oct. 18 at 8 p.m. following the presidential reception at the Missouri History Museum in Forest Park, site of the 1904 World's Fair.

The performance is drawn from interviews with residents of four historically African-American neighborhoods in the St. Louis metropolitan area: Kinloch in St. Louis County, Carr Square and the Ville in St. Louis City and the south end of East St. Louis, Ill.

Written and directed by Lee Patton Chiles, artistic director of Historyonics Theatre Company, the play is produced by the Missouri Historical Society with major funding from the Whitaker Foundation.

## Temma Kaplan

Scheduled to speak Oct. 19 at 1:15 p.m. is Temma Kaplan, distinguished professor of history at Rutgers University, New Brunswick. Kaplan is an activist, historian and feminist scholar who has worked in decentralized grassroots movements of women in the South Bronx, South Africa, Chile and Spain. She will discuss gender issues in oral history and testimonial literature and examine the role of oral history in cultural and political resistance struggles.

## Ann Cvetkovich

An associate professor of English and women's studies at the University of Texas at Austin, Ann Cvetkovich is scheduled as a featured speaker Oct. 19 at 4 p.m. She will discuss interviews she conducted with lesbian AIDS activists who were involved with ACT UP/New York (AIDS

Coalition to Unleash Power) in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Her work focuses on how activists remember their experience and how it continues to affect them after the fact.

## Gertrude Fester

A commissioner on gender equality in South Africa, Gertrude Fester also boasts credentials as an artist, performer and scholar. She was imprisoned in South Africa in the 1980s and held in solitary confinement for her activities in the anti-apartheid movement and her membership in the United Women's Congress.

Her presentation, also set for Oct. 19 at 4 p.m., will deal with the challenges of collecting and documenting memories of trauma, including her own experiences in solitary confinement and the collective memories of women's struggles against apartheid.

## Stevan Weine

Also on the Oct. 19 afternoon program is Stevan Weine, a psychiatrist, researcher, teacher and clinician in the Department of Psychiatry and the Health Research and Policy Centers of the University of Illinois at Chicago. As co-founder and co-director of the Project on Genocide, Psychiatry and Witnessing, Weine has used in-depth narratives of genocide survivors' historical and personal memories and has conducted ethnographies of Bosnian families.

Weine's book, "When History is a Nightmare: Lives and Memories of Ethnic Cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina," is based on oral history interviews with Bosnian survivors.



Actors Robert A. Mitchell, Eric J. Conners, Peghee Calvin and Lisa Colbert Bandele present a one-act play "Through the Eyes of a Child: Coming Home," written and directed by Lee Patton Chiles of the Historyonics Theatre Company.

*Photo from the Missouri Historical Society*

## **Cynthia Allen**

Program coordinator for the New York University's Center for Advanced Technology in Digital Multimedia, Cynthia Allen is the producer of seven digital archive Web site projects dealing with Jews and Judaism, which have been integrated into the Virtual Museum of Jewish Experience. The Web site projects include: Anti-Semitism Throughout the Ages, Jews in Sports Online, Jews in Comedy Online, Jews in Magic Online, Jewish War Heroes Online, 2nd Avenue Online: The Yiddish Theater Digital Archives Project and Synagogues of Europe Online.

Her presentation, set for Oct. 20 at 9 a.m., will examine digital media technical and ethical issues, including protecting online materials and preventing their misuse.

## **Sam Gustman**

Joining the digital discussion will be Sam Gustman, executive director of technology for Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation. Gustman is responsible for the development, production and support of the technology used to collect, catalog and distribute the more than 50,000 videotaped testimonies of Holocaust survivors.

Gustman will discuss lessons oral historians must learn in the digital age, including how the digitization of oral history collections affects everything from interviewing to cataloging to distribution. Issues of quality, cost, access and audience for online dissemination are also part of the mix.

## **Lisa Lipkin**

Following the annual awards banquet Oct. 20 at 8 p.m., New York storyteller Lisa Lipkin will present "What Mother Never Told Me...Reminiscences of a Child of a Holocaust Survivor." The one-woman show, which Lipkin wrote and performs, is based on her own experiences growing up as the child of a Holocaust survivor. In a performance both humorous and poignant, she examines the legacy of

fear and mistrust she inherited from her mother. The show has toured throughout the United States, Canada, Israel and England.

## **Manning Marable**

A Columbia University history and political science professor, Manning Marable also is founding director of Columbia's Institute for Research in African-American Studies and is author of 13 books and hundreds of articles about African-American leadership and resistance movements.

At a session scheduled for Oct. 21 at 10:45 a.m., Marable will discuss a new research project on the biography and times of Malcolm X and Betty Shabbaz. The project draws on oral history interviews among other sources to uncover new perspectives on these central figures in 20th century American history.

## **Alessandro Portelli**

Joining Marable in the Sunday closing plenary session is Alessandro Portelli, who teaches American literature at the University of Rome and is the author of several books dealing with oral history and with American literature and folk music.

His presentation will examine myths and memories, based on his examination of the Fosse Ardeatine, a Nazi war massacre committed in 1944 in Rome. Portelli's book on the issue is not yet available in English, but his OHA presentation will describe the complex forms of memory that have arisen about the massacre, from gender and generational-specific forms of remembering to the myths and wrong narratives generated by ideological prejudice and political struggle.

Special film showings and presentation of OHA awards for outstanding use of oral history in a book and in a non-print format and the Martha Ross Teaching Award for distinguished precollegiate teaching are also featured on the St. Louis program, as are workshops and off-site tours.



*Ann Cvetkovich*



*Lisa Lipkin*



*Sam Gustman*

## STATE AND REGIONAL REPORT



### New England Meeting Focuses on War Stories

By Mehmed Ali  
New England Association of Oral  
History

The New England Association of Oral History held its annual meeting April 14 at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center on the campus of the University of Connecticut at Storrs. The theme of this year's conference was "Documenting the Homefront and the Warfront in Recent America," and the presenters each related how oral history has made a difference in their projects.

The first keynote speaker was Peggy Bulger, director of the American Folklife Center at the

Library of Congress, who related details about the new congressional mandate to preserve veterans' stories.

Todd Moye, director of the Tuskegee Airmen Oral History Project in Atlanta, was the second speaker and provided insights into this major National Park Service initiative.

The keynotes were followed by a panel discussion on the creation and growth of several wartime oral history projects, including those of Steven Showers of the University of Connecticut, Amy Beaulieu of Wethersfield, Conn., High School, Michelle Thies of Glastonbury, Conn., High School and Joan Craig of the Morse Institute Library in Natick, Mass.

Following the conference, annual elections for the association were held, and the following were elected as officers:

- + President--Mehmed Ali, Lowell National Historical Park, Mass.,
- + Vice President--Sarah Boyer, Cambridge, Mass., Historical Commission,
- + Secretary--Betty Hoffman, Central Connecticut State University,

- + Treasurer--John Fox, Salem (Mass.) State College, emeritus;
- + Executive Secretary--Martha McCormick, University of Connecticut.

Elected as directors were:

- + Pamela Dean, Maine Folklife Center,
- + R. Stuart Wallace, University of New Hampshire,
- + Linda Wood, oral history consultant, Hope Valley, R.I.,
- + Bruce Stave, Center for Oral History, University of Connecticut,
- + John Sutherland, Manchester, Conn., Community College and
- + Steve Showers, University of Connecticut.

### Willa K. Baum Wins Honors in California

Longtime OHA member Willa K. Baum, who retired last year after more than 45 years of service at the Regional Oral History Office at the University of California-Berkeley, received two of the university's highest honors late last year at ROHO's "California Living History" event, a reception in her honor.

University officials presented Baum, ROHO's director emerita, with the Berkeley Citation and the Presidential Award of Excellence. The Willa K. Baum Oral History Endowment also was created in her honor to support ROHO's work.

### Reindeer Herding Subject Of Alaska Project

A joint project by the University of Alaska-Fairbanks Rasmuson Library, Institute of Arctic Biology and School of Agriculture and Land Management focuses on the history of reindeer herding on the Seward Peninsula. Reindeer herders have been interviewed about the history of their industry and about the economic impact of a growing population of caribou that are recolonizing the peninsula.



Presenters at the New England Association of Oral History meeting included, left to right, Joan Craig, Michelle Thies, Peggy Bulger, Todd Moye, Amy Beaulieu and Steve Showers.  
*Photo from Mehmed Ali*



# BULLETIN BOARD

## **Pennsylvania Invites Scholars in Residence**

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission invites applications for its 2002-03 Scholars in Residence program, which supports full-time research and study in the manuscript and artifact collections maintained by the Pennsylvania State Archives, State Museum and 26 historic sites and museums around the state. Residencies are open to anyone conducting research on Pennsylvania history and are available for four to 12 weeks, beginning May 1, 2002, at a rate of \$1,500 per month. Application deadline is Jan. 11, 2002. For more information, see the PHMC Web site: [www.phmc.state.pa.us](http://www.phmc.state.pa.us). You may also call the history division at: 717-787-3034 or e-mail Linda Shopes at: [lshopes@state.pa.us](mailto:lshopes@state.pa.us).

## **Appalachian Ethnicity, Gender Fellowships Available**

The Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Gender in Appalachia at Marshall University in Huntington, W. Va., invites humanities scholars to apply for a resident fellowship funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. Candidates must have a doctorate or equivalent professional experience. The maximum stipend is \$17,500 for a semester plus housing stipend, travel allowance and health benefits.

Scholars are encouraged to use oral history as a primary research methodology, and preference will be given to scholars who focus on ethnic and gender aspects of identities that have been most invisible--African Americans (especially women), persons of alternative gender identities and persons of Native American ancestry.

For information, e-mail Mary Thomas: [csega@marshall.edu](mailto:csega@marshall.edu)

## **NIH Web Site Recalls Early Days of AIDS**

The National Institutes of Health History Office has launched a Web site titled "In Their Own Words: NIH Researchers Recall the Early Days of AIDS" to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the first publication about AIDS. The Web site features some of the oral history interviews NIH historian Victoria A. Harden and her colleagues have done since 1988 with physicians, scientists, nurses and administrators whose work comprised the NIH's response to AIDS between 1981 and 1988.

The Web site features voice clips and complete texts of the interviews as well as selected published articles, unpublished documents, press releases and selected images. Plans call for adding more interviews, documents and images, making the site an archival resource on the history of the biomedical response to AIDS. Visit the site at: <http://aidshistory.nih.gov>.

## **Workshop Papers Invited For American Studies in France**

Paper proposals are invited for a workshop on "Research Methods in American Studies: Oral History Technique and Visual Culture Analysis" to be presented at the European Association of American Studies conference on "The United States of/in Europe: Nationhood, Citizenship, Culture," to be held March 22-25, 2002, in Bordeaux, France. The workshop will address how teachers and scholars can use the spoken word and visual image most effectively as an "American Studies" method. Organizers especially want papers that conduct crosscultural comparisons of how oral and pictorial sources are interpreted by American Studies scholars in the United States and elsewhere. Proposal deadline is Oct. 15.

For information, e-mail Michael Willam Doyle, History Department, Ball State University at: [mwdoyle@bsu.edu](mailto:mwdoyle@bsu.edu).

## **Conference Set For Australian Oral Historians**

The National Library of Australia in central Canberra is the site of the Oral History Association of Australia's national conference Aug. 30-Sept. 2.

The conference theme "Voices of a Twentieth Century Nation" recognizes Australia as a new nation still defining itself, its history and who it is as a people. The program also explores sense of place and includes sessions on reconciliation with Australia's Indigenous people.

For information, see: [www.geocities.com/oha\\_australia](http://www.geocities.com/oha_australia).

## **British Library National Sound Archive Site of Conference**

The Association for Recorded Sound Collections and the International Association of Sound and Audio-Visual Archives have scheduled a joint conference Sept. 23-27 at the British Library Conference Centre in London.

With the theme "Why Collect?" the conference will feature presentations from audio-visual archivists, curators, collectors and enthusiasts from around the world. Presenters from Eastern Europe, Australasia and Africa will show how their collections help preserve or re-establish national and cultural identity, while others will discuss transferring large and important collections into institutional care. All forms of AV collecting are represented, from cylinders to CDs, oral history to orchestral music, film and TV soundtracks, language and dialect, traditional music, country music and jazz, record companies in Nazi Germany and record collecting in Soviet Russia.

For information, e-mail Robert B. Perks, British Library National Sound Archive at: [rob.perks@bl.uk](mailto:rob.perks@bl.uk) or visit the conference Web site: <http://www.bl.uk/collections/sound-archive/iasa.html>.

# Call for Papers "Global Linkages: The Internationalization of Everyday Life"

Oral History Association Annual Meeting

San Diego, California  
Oct. 23-27, 2002

The Oral History Association invites proposals for papers and presentations for its 2002 annual meeting in San Diego, Calif., Oct. 23-27, 2002. The meeting theme is "Global Linkages: The Internationalization of Everyday Life."

This conference welcomes presentations on oral history projects that investigate the relationships between regional cultures and economies and the larger processes of globalization. Situated on the border of Mexico, at the edge of the Pacific Rim and in the nation's most ethnically diverse state, the city of San Diego offers a vantage point from which to examine the ways international processes affect individual locales and the ways local and global forces interact.

Papers may deal with such questions as: How have international economic, political and social forces affected local regions? How have local landscapes, economies and cultures welcomed, accommodated or resisted these larger forces? In what specific ways do communities seek out cultural or economic connections with the peoples and economies outside their region? What is the impact of globalization on the formation of gender, ethnic and class identities? What effect has it had on larger social and political structures?

Topics could include: the experience of immigration and its impact on the social structures of immigrant communities and on the larger culture; political and legal attempts to control immigration and the effects of such policies on immigrant communities; the culture of borderlands and their relationship to national entities; the export of jobs from industrialized areas to the developing world; corporate restructuring and downsizing; effects of e-commerce; the role of the Internet; effects of a global economy on the environment; the world-wide diffusion of American and Western cultural products and consumer goods; the impact of non-Western food, fashion, music and other cultural products on the United States and other Western countries; the effects of NAFTA and such organizations as the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization; the role of the military and the effects of American foreign policy and military interventions; and topics that provide perspectives on the historical context of globalization.

The program committee invites proposals from oral history practitioners in a wide variety of disciplines and

settings. In addition to proposals from historians, we encourage submissions from anthropologists, sociologists and other scholars who use qualitative interviews. We also encourage contributions from museums, historical societies, archives and libraries, community organizations, precollegiate teachers, media professionals and independent historians. We particularly seek sessions that address the many uses of oral history in media, such as film, video, radio, exhibitions, drama and electronic media. While sessions may be organized in the customary panel format, we strongly encourage proposals for roundtables, workshops, poster sessions, media and performance-oriented presentations, offsite sessions and formats other than conventional conference presentations. We also encourage proposals on issues that particularly affect the Southwest and Southern California and welcome papers that deal with areas outside the United States, especially with issues in Mexico, Central and South America and the Pacific Rim countries.

Applicants must submit three copies of their proposals. For full sessions, submit a title, an abstract of no more than two pages and a one-page vita for each participant. For individual proposals, submit a one-page abstract and a one-page vita or resume of the presenter.

Proposals must be postmarked by Nov. 30, 2001. They may be submitted by mail or fax. No e-mail attachments will be accepted. Each submission must be accompanied by a cover sheet, which can be printed from our Web site: [www.dickinson.edu/oha](http://www.dickinson.edu/oha)

Direct queries to: Teresa Barnett, 310-206-2454  
[tbarnett@library.ucla.edu](mailto:tbarnett@library.ucla.edu)

Jane Collings, 310-267-4754  
[jcolling@library.ucla.edu](mailto:jcolling@library.ucla.edu)

Send proposals to: Madelyn Campbell  
Oral History Association  
Dickinson College  
P.O. Box 1773  
Carlisle, PA 17013-2896  
Fax: 717-245-1046  
Phone: 717-245-1036

**Proposal deadline: Nov. 30, 2001**

# Oral History Interviews: Does Age Make a Difference?

By Charles T. Morrissey  
Baylor College of Medicine

In 1963, as a newly hired oral historian for the Harry S. Truman Library, I was 29 years old. My interviewees were former members of President Truman's White House staff, and some were men in their 70s and 80s. They were older than I by 40 to 50 years.

Early in 2001, as an oral history consultant for a project about the Hall family of Hallmark Cards, I interviewed a fourth-generation descendant of J. C. Hall, founder of the firm. My interviewee was 25; I was 67. In May of 2001 I conducted a brief filmed interview with three teen-age members of the Hall family, all born in 1984. The age differential between the cousins and myself was 50-51 years.

In effect, I was like a grandson, age-wise, for some of my earliest interviews as an oral historian, and recently I was equivalent to a grandfather when interviewing three youngsters of high-school age.

Does disparity in ages make a difference in oral history relationships?

Admittedly, when a neophyte in oral history, I probably behaved like a student interacting gingerly with a senior professor, deferring to authority. Through the years I have likely become more assertive as a questioner. But to the best of my reckoning, the three teen-agers and the 25-year-old didn't seem discomfited by a graybeard (literally!) asking them questions. If problems afflicted our interactions, I did not detect them.

By coincidence, in my bookshelf browsing I recently encountered "The Practice of University History Teaching," edited by Alan Booth and Paul Hyland and issued in 2000 by the Manchester University Press. Chapter 12 is "Teaching Oral History to Undergraduate Researchers," by Alistair Thomson of Sussex University and editor of the British journal "Oral History."

"It has been suggested," he writes, "that some younger or less

mature students may struggle with the interpersonal and ethical issues of the interview, and that they may find it difficult to empathise with older interviewees. My own experience is that an interest and enthusiasm in other people's lives and stories tends to be more important than the age of the student interviewer. Some students of all ages develop an impressive and effective affinity with their interviewees; others do not."

Upon reading Thomson's heartening comment I smiled and promptly decided to categorize myself among his "students of all ages" who conduct oral history interviews and not think of myself as a youngster who has become an oldster in the oral history profession. Likewise, I will rely as he suggests on "interest and enthusiasm" to subdue any tensions arising from age differentials.

My experience to date confirms his viewpoint. Turst us both: affinity trumps age.

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## OHA Pamphlet Order Form

Add to your professional reference library the Oral History Association's pamphlets. OHA members get a 10 percent discount for orders of 10 or more copies. Clip and mail this coupon, with your check made out to OHA, to:  
Oral History Assn., Dickinson College, Box 1773, Carlisle, PA 17013.

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All prices include shipping via domestic mail. Inquire for costs of Federal Express delivery. International shipping by surface mail at no extra charge; add 30 percent to your order if you prefer international airmail delivery.

Pamphlet	Price	Quantity
Oral History and the Law, 2nd ed., by John A. Neuenschwander, 1993	\$8.00	_____
Oral History in the Secondary School Classroom, by Barry A. Lanman and George L. Mehaffy, 1988	\$8.00	_____
Using Oral History in Community History Projects, by Laurie Mercier and Madeline Buckendorf, 1992	\$8.00	_____
Oral History Evaluation Guidelines, 2nd ed., 1991	\$5.00	_____
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# Nominating Committee Seeks Candidates for 2002 Election

**By Rebecca Sharpless and Sherna Berger Gluck, Co-Chairs, OHA Nominating Committee**

Several OHA members responded to a recent call from the Nominating Committee seeking interested, well-qualified people who are willing to be considered for candidacy for election to the OHA Council in 2002, and the committee would like to continue to increase its pool of names of members willing to serve.

Please take this opportunity to submit nominations for this important and interesting service to our organization.

There will be one position for election in 2002, that which is currently held by Tom King of the University of Nevada at Reno. OHA policy is to have two nominees for each Council position. The OHA

seeks a Council that is balanced with regard to gender, ethnicity, geography and affiliation.

Service on the Council is for a three-year term. The 2002 election will be for the period October 2002 through October 2005. It entails meeting twice a year, once immediately preceding the annual meeting and once in February or March, usually at the location of that year's upcoming annual meeting. The first Council meeting for the 2002 Council vacancy will be February or March 2003.

Council members work with the officers to set OHA policy, and they act as liaison between Council and OHA committees.

There is no remuneration for serving on Council, but OHA pays travel to the midwinter Council meeting and half of travel to the

annual meeting if the person's institution cannot. All Council nominees must be OHA members in good standing at the time of nomination.

If you are interested in being considered as a candidate for election to the OHA Council in 2002, please send your curriculum vitae to: Rebecca Sharpless, P.O. Box 97271, Baylor University, Waco, TX 76798, or e-mail it to: Rebecca\_Shapless@baylor.edu.

You may nominate yourself or you may suggest other people. The Nominating Committee will begin its work in October 2001 and must have its slate of candidates ready for presentation at the time of the midwinter Council meeting in 2002.

And please remember to vote when you receive your ballot for this year's elections.

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