

ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION



Volume VIII, Nos. 3 & 4 Fall/Winter 1974

OHA EXPLORES WESTERN HORIZONS

by Joel Gardner

The luck of the OHA, that ineffable quality of which colloquium veterans peak with almost mystical awe, proved itself again at Jackson Lake.

All the elements of disaster certainly were present: Frontier Airlines, for example, and cancellations by the speakers scheduled for both keynote and Saturday luncheon. Yet through it all, Program Chairperson Carlotta Mellon remained cool and unperturbed. And despite that extra night in Salt Lake City, she could return home with the satisfaction of having achieved, ultimately, a great success.

The theme was New Horizons in Oral History—subtitled Oral History in the West—and many were explored. Gentle Professor Robert Hine, suggesting Pete Seeger in his good-natured demeanor and his rapport with his audience, filled in for Merle Miller with communes as his topic instead of Truman; the tapes he played were as sensitive in the questioner's searching as in the responses.

And Alden Whitman replaced fellow Timesman Harrison Salisbury on Friday evening, discussing his own specialty—obituaries. Oral historians and obituarists have long battled for interview subjects, unfortunately; Mr. Whitman solves the problem by conducting his interviews long before they might reach the pages of his newspaper and by accumulating pages of material, largely based on personal contacts, to be used at an obviously indeterminate date.

The Ninth Annual Oral History Colloquium was launched by Alice Hoffman and her partner-in-interviews Karen Budd, who illustrated their series on the Chicago riots of 1937 with a tape, slide, and film presentation, pointing up many of the techniques available to the oral historian. The production occasioned the colloquium's first debate: Does a project director seek to analyze completely all sides of the issue at hand, or should special attention be given to those aspects least documented by other historical methods? This in turn gave rise to the standard: Does oral history qualify

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New OHA President Sam Proctor expounds to a colleague at the Friday evening cocktail party. One hundred sixty-one persons attended the meeting at Jackson Lake Lodge, Wyoming.

COLLOQUIUM 1974



Marcia Frumerman (left) and Gene Dickman describe their interview project on the Jewish community of Pittsburgh. The workshop was one of many that dealt with ethnic groups.

NEWS

AMERICANISTAS MEET IN MEXICO CITY

by Amelia Fry

This year, sessions on oral history were included for the first time in the Congreso Internacional de Americanistas, when hundreds of historians, anthropologists, and other social scientists met September 2-7 in the Museo Nacional de Antropología e Historia in Mexico City. Directed by Eugenia Meyer, head of Mexico's burgeoning nationwide Programa de Historia Oral, the oral history sessions spanned three days and in many ways seemed to be among the most well run of the entire conference: the chairpersons knew their job; questions from the audience were challenging and, when necessary, were supplemented by stimulating queries from Dr. Meyer; and gifted interpreters provided simultaneous translations via earphones.

Papers were heard from Canada, Mexico, Costa Rica, Argentina—and, of course, American scholars, whose numbers were embarrassing proof of the allusions to gringo academic imperialism. The usual variety of oral history habitats (sound programs, anthropological surveys, and historical research) was enriched by the additional variable of national culture. By the end of the Congreso, it was clear that the practice of oral history itself has become an anthropological phenomenon.

Biographical projects of political elites, represented by Ron Marcello's Texas politicians and Amelia Fry's Earl Warren Era figures, elicited some incredulous questions from a few Latin Americanists. In a discussion that followed, a picture emerged of the differences among countries' political processes creating great distinctions in oral history design and techniques. Conversely, one is struck by the similarities in interviewing problems encountered with native ethnic groups in any nation, be they Indians in Veracruz (Livia Garcia's study) or Indians in Arizona (Floyd O'Neil's).

North Americans who interview in Latin America were Peter J. Sehlinger of

Indiana (Chilean), Gary Shumway of Fullerton (Mexican), Calman Cohen of the Smithsonian (Mexican), and the Wilkies of UCLA (several Middle American countries). Mary Lee Nolan's Chicano project drew high interest from both sides of the border.

The final session searched for an international plan to exchange information, tapes, and transcriptions. OHA's publications, particularly the *Newsletter* and the *Directory*, were discussed as a possible first-phase system for such an effort. New national oral history associations, such as those forming in Canada and in England, and the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections were seen as additional frameworks through which international exchanges could be developed.

Whatever the vehicle, may it begin with publication and distribution of the papers from this Congreso in both English and Spanish, for the quality of thought and preparation was unusually high, and it would be an excellent beginning for the establishment of pan-American communication lines.

CANADIAN CONFERENCE ADOPTS CONSTITUTION

A constitution establishing the Canadian Aural/Oral History Association was adopted unanimously by delegates at the Canadian Aural/Oral History Conference at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, British Columbia, in October.

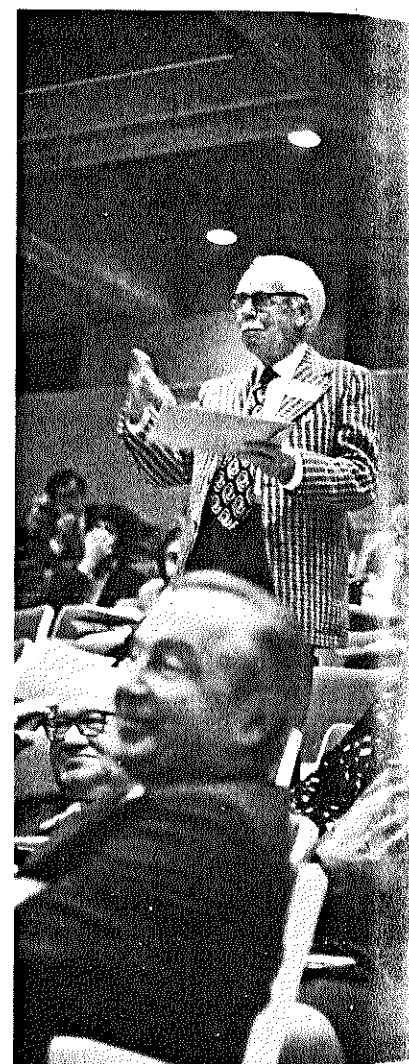
The constitution calls upon the association to encourage and support the creation and preservation of sound recordings which document the history and culture of Canada; to develop standards of excellence and increase competence in the field of aural/oral history through study, education, and research; and to work with and support any other association or institution whose objectives are consistent with those of the association.

The resolution emphasizes a major difference between the Canadian approach and that maintained in American counterparts: that is, the emphasis placed upon the aural as well as the oral for an understanding of Canadian history. Sounds are as important to the Canadian concept as the content of spoken documents to the American.

Approximately 170 persons attended the conference October 18-19, which was

organized by Simon Fraser University, the Provincial Archives of British Columbia, the Public Archives of Canada, and the Oral History Committee of the Canadian Historical Association's Archives Section.

All Canadian provinces except Prince Edward Island were represented at the conference, and delegates from the northwest United States attended.



Participants at the Canadian Aural/Oral History Conference hear author James Gray make a point from the floor.

Oral History Association Newsletter

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Bernard Galm, Editor
Joel Gardner, Associate Editor

well. The meeting was bilingual, a program, publication, and many tapes provided in both English and French.

Officers chosen to lead the fledgling organization include Léo LaClare, president; Janet Cauthers, vice-president; John Widdowson, treasurer; and Jane Cracken and Denis Gagnon, English-French-language secretaries, respectively.

LAUNCH ASSOCIATION

The initial meeting of the first regional oral history association was held at Assumption College, Worcester, Massachusetts, on November 23 at the invitation of John J. Fox of Salem State College. Approximately sixty people attended the day-long program that was developed by Louis D. Silveri of the History Department of Assumption College. Professor Fox sees the regional association as providing opportunities similar to those of the national association but expressly available on a local level for people who cannot afford the time or expense of attending national colloquia.

The program featured an opening talk by William W. Moss of the John F. Kennedy Library on the state of the art of oral history. Harvey Kantor of the University of Rhode Island described the taping project on the textile mills of Rhode Island. After lunch, George Abbott White presented a paper on interviewing.

LARGE TURNOUT AT ALASKA AFFAIR

The Alaska Historical Commission, Alaska Historical Society, Alaska Division of Parks, and Alaska State Libraries jointly sponsored a three-day workshop on oral history, October 29-31 at Anchorage, that attracted 116 registrants. Funding was provided by the Alaska Humanities Forum through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Robert A. Frederick, executive director of the Alaska Historical Commission, was workshop chairman. Willa Baum of the Regional Oral History Office, UC Berkeley, served as program chairman.

Other participants included Charles Morrissey, Eliot Wigginton, and Shirley Tanzer, Alaska historians William Hunt, Claus Naske, Robert DeArmond, and Herman Slotnick also helped prepare representatives of forty-five local historical societies, native groups, and small communities to begin oral history programs. The workshop was recorded on videotape for further use in the state.

AAAS CONSIDERS ORAL HISTORY

The Committee on History of Recent Science and Technology of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences held a two-day seminar on oral history in Boston, Massachusetts, on November 22-23. The gathering was called to consider oral history, its role in documenting the recent history of science, and ways the association can participate in and support oral history efforts in the field.

Department of Harvard University, chairman of the AAAS Committee, the gathering included Saul Benison of the University of Cincinnati, Nathan Reinhold of the Smithsonian Institution, William W. Moss of the John F. Kennedy Library, and John Heilbron of the University of California, Berkeley.

WORKSHOPS

IOWA COLLEGE OFFERS COURSE

The methods of oral history were introduced to students and social science teachers from several states at a workshop and credit course offered by Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa.

First, participants learned oral history techniques and uses at a teaching workshop June 17-21. Featured speakers included George Mills, author and veteran *Des Moines Register* reporter; Stanley Yates, director of the Sioux City Library Indian History Project; John Schmidt, Sioux City author and historian; and OHA member William Wyatt.

Three weeks were then allocated for the development of individual projects, guided and critiqued by James Miller and Michael Husband of the college's Department of History, who served as co-directors of the program. The department hopes to repeat the workshop next year, while utilizing oral history as a research activity within its undergraduate history program.

The Utah State Historical Society sponsored oral history workshops in July and August to train National Park Service personnel and local historians in the techniques of interviewing. Five workshop sessions were conducted at the Golden Spike National Historic Site, and a one-day seminar on oral history and historic preservation was held at Lewiston.

The South Texas Colleges Oral History Consortium, supported with funds from the Texas College Bicentennial Program, Inc., met at Pan American University September 28, in a conference sponsored jointly by PAU and Texas Southmost Junior College.

Hubert J. Miller of Pan American directed the symposium, which featured Thomas Charlton, director of Baylor University's Program for Oral History, as guest lecturer.

Edward D. Ives, director of the Northeast Archives of Folklore and Oral History, conducted a workshop entitled

October 12 in Camden, Maine, under the sponsorship of the Northeast Folklore Society and the Maine Historical Society.

A workshop on oral history was offered as part of the **Second Berkshire Conference on the History of Women** sponsored by Radcliffe College October 25-27. Panel members included Constance Ashton Myers of the College of Charleston, Jeannette Cheek of the Schlesinger Library, Louise Pettus of Winthrop College, Elizabeth Mason of Columbia University, and Amelia Fry of the University of California, Berkeley.

Indiana Oral History Roundtable presented its second annual program as part of the Indiana History Conference in Indianapolis November 1-2. Featured speakers included Peter Sehlinger of the University of Indiana-Purdue in Indianapolis, Susan Bell and Randall Jehs of the Indiana State Library, Tom Krasean of Vincennes University, and Roundtable president Linda Robertson.

John E. Wickman, director of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, addressed about 100 graduate students and faculty of Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, November 8. He discussed oral history techniques and the use of oral history transcripts in research.

Oral history was included in the program of the Museum Workshop of the **Idaho Historical Society** September 21, held in Boise. Annabelle Alexander discussed the interview process.

Thelma Peters, president-elect of the Florida Historical Society, addressed the tenth annual History Forum at Barry College, Miami, Florida, September 30. Her topic was "Be Your Own Historian."

Roger Welsch conducted a workshop on oral history, folklore, and family history at the Holdrege, Nebraska, Public Library, October 19.

The **Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference** in Newark, New Jersey, November 1-2, included oral history on its workshop agenda.

Benis M. Frank chaired a panel on Oral History and the Documentation of the Vietnam War at the San Diego State University meeting of the Center for Asian Studies. Panel members included Lt. Gen. Victor H. Krulak and Col. John E. Fahey.

PEOPLE & PROJECTS

STEPPING BEHIND THE BAMBOO CURTAIN

by Norman Morrison

On May 10, a dream became reality when I stepped behind the doors of Mainland China. The bridge from Shun Chun to the People's Republic of China had opened ever so slightly. Groups, or friends of China were to education in China, I applied and was accepted to the Graduate Society. I arrived from China on-again, off-again. After two years of negotiations, the Travel Service confirmed a schedule of negotiations. I was to go to People's China. The proposed reason for wanting to go was my long-term interest in the people who had worked in Canada, Dr. Norman Bethune. I was in Warsaw, set up in the about a Canadian people who had soldiers of the of China. I realized that the Chinese story

How had it been? On my return to Canada I found a book had been published by Allen and Sydney Bethune was a Communist. As Norman had received very little publicity. When I decided to set up diplomatic relations with the Republic of China, the bridge of friendship built by Dr. Norman Bethune was conveniently used and now

for a visa, I had asked for an interview and to bring equipment. I never received the tapes and recordings confiscated by customs, but the success of the interview was a relief. I felt a surge of my mission.

Three guides, whom I spotted, joined us at the hotel. (French and more time normally. I made my

After two weeks, I felt that, as an interpreter, my proposal had worked. I would not "embarrass" the friends of Dr. Bethune. The top-priority people requested an inter-

view were Mao Zedong, Sun Yat-Sen, widow of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, leader of the Kuo-Mintang; and Dr. George Hatem, an American of the Eighteenth Army at Yenai.

When we arrived at Peking, our Chinese friends made my wishes known to the local guide. I contacted the local Revolutionary Committee to find out "if it would be convenient." Although they never said yes. As I was leaving Peking for the next stop, Sensing my disappointment, I was assured that arrangements had been made. I was to interview someone at Shih-Chia-fu. Dr. Bethune's hospital, memorial and

We arrived at 11:00 p.m. at Shih-Chia-fu. After the usual cordial greeting—that always included tea and reference to the friendship between China and Canada and the internationalism of Dr. Bethune—I met the head of the Revolutionary Committee, who was to arrange the interview. I started all over again: purpose of oral history, importance of oral history, significance of the Oral Library at McGill. I went to bed not knowing whether I had even made a point with the local group. The next morning, our permanent guides said that arrangements had been made. I was to speak with a hospital administrator who had worked with Dr. Bethune and the People's Liberation Army.

That day was filled with activities, as usual, but the tentative appointment overshadowed even the visit to the International Hospital of Peace to see acupuncture used in tonsillectomy, and the official reception at Dr. Bethune's museum and memorial. With the disappointment of the last interviews at Peking still fresh in my mind, I was afraid to anticipate with too much pleasure the proposed meeting.

I slept fitfully. All the nightmares common to oral historians flashed through my mind: short supply of tapes, failures to push the record button, leaked batteries, broken microphone. Finally, it was apparatus and waiting!

My interpreter picked me up at the hotel at 9:15 a.m., and told me that the interview was to take place in the hospital as planned. Before I placed my recorder in position, through the interpreter I was told that the interview

preliminary remarks. He said that though he was honored and willing to talk about the great internationalist Norman Bethune, he did not wish to be recorded. To an oral historian, it was the same as refusing to be interviewed. I pleaded my case through the interpreter. It was a new experience begging, pleading, attempting to explain, knowing that even though you were choosing words for maximum effect, they would probably lose everything in translation. I could only rely on the desperation of the tone of my voice and the look of devastation on my face. After two minutes of this frustration, he apologized for his position and mentioned that his age, his memory may be faulty, changed the pace, comparing our families and anything that was political. The trivial exchange helped establish a person-to-person relationship.

Finally, I had to return to the unsolved problem of his resistance to tape recording. I insisted that the interview would be of no value to me unless it was taped. I suggested that he turn on the tape recorder, make the recording, and give him the cassette. At a later date, if he wished, he could forward it to McGill University. I would accept his decision. At this moment, he called out of the room. When he returned, I sensed a more relaxed feeling. After ten more minutes of small talk, I agreed to the latter proposal which he apparently "would be more convenient." When the interview, which lasted an hour, was ended, I handed over the tape immediately. He looked relieved. I brought along the new book on Dr. Bethune by Roderick Stewart, who is donating his tapes on Bethune at McGill. He beamed with pleasure when I showed him the pictorial section on the People's Liberation Army. I asked the interpreter if I could offer the book as a gift. (Chinese are very sensitive about accepting gifts in case they represent payment of some kind). I was assured that it was all right. He said that he would donate it to the museum, so all could share in the recent recognition of Dr. Bethune's greatness.

I went to lunch, reliving the interview with mixed emotions. At least, I had experienced one interview, even though I did not know if I would ever hear again.

At 1:30 p.m., I was asked to attend a meeting of the three interpreters and the head of the Revolutionary Committee.

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H. Jean Morrison poses ceremonially with interview subject Liu-Keng-Wang. She visited the Republic of China in the hope of recording associates of the late Canadian physician Norman Bethune.

seemed like a solemn group. I was asked if I was aware that I had obtained the interview against the doctor's wish. I answered yes. They then informed me that he had changed his mind, and that I could personally take the cassette home to Canada to add to my library of oral history at McGill University as a "bridge of friendship between Canada and People's China." I expressed my gratitude, behind concealed tears of tension and relief. I knew that I would not be assured of its existence until I had deposited it safely in Montreal. Until then, I could not enjoy the satisfaction of having completed a private interview behind the Bamboo Curtain.

China may be a long way from implementing an oral history program as we know it—open, frank dialog on any and every subject. Although group discussions are encouraged at every encounter, private conversations never seemed "to be convenient." The philosophy of the present regime is that no one is more important than his neighbor; even Chairman Mao owes his position not to innate leadership qualities but to the opportunity to serve China, afforded him by the workers, peasants and soldiers. It goes against the basis of political thought of Chinese Socialism to recognize the efforts of one individual.

At every opportunity, I tried to find out if oral history was being considered. I only succeeded once, at the University of Peking. To their knowledge, nothing was being done officially in the field. I hope that some unofficial oral record is being kept that will eventually be available to the students of the future. The transformation of China from a country where insecurity, exploitation, and disease were replaced by freedom from fear of the future, hunger and want in less than thirty years is surely one of the

miracles of the twentieth century. What a pity to lose the unique opportunity of recording the experiences of the architects of the People's Republic of China!

H. Jean Morrison is director of the Oral History Department at McGill University, Montreal.

FOXFIRE SPRINGS UP AROUND NATION

When Eliot Wigginton sent his students armed with cassette recorders and cameras into the hills of north Georgia, he could scarcely have guessed that he was launching a nationwide movement in teaching methodology. Today, eight years after the creation, Foxfire has already inspired two books by Wigginton, a dozen magazines produced by high school students in virtually every corner of America, and a host of offspring projects.

- In Polk County, Iowa, students will soon be undertaking interviews with the blessing of the Polk County American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, the Iowa American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, and the Des Moines Public School System. The only major project in Iowa which involves young people in observance of America's 200th birthday, Iowa Foxfire hopes to spread its activity throughout the state. Robert Dillon, chairman of the Iowa Bicentennial Commission, has appointed a Foxfire Oral History Committee to act as a clearing house for information; inquiries can be directed to Foxfire, IARBC, State House, Des Moines, Iowa 50319.

- The School for International Training of the Experiment in International Living, Brattleboro, Vermont, conducted a teacher training program based on the Foxfire concept this summer. Foxfire

ers to initiate Foxfire programs in their respective schools. The workshop, conducted August 14-28, was staffed by Vermont teachers and students familiar with the concept, staff members from the School for International Training, and outside consultants conversant with the Foxfire technique. Howard Shapiro is project director.

- *Sea Chest* is the publication of the journalism class of Cape Hatteras High School, Buxton, North Carolina. Backed by the Foxfire Project of Ideas, Inc., the magazine records and publishes stories, history, folklore, dialect, poetry, ballads, and information about the Outer Banks. Richard M. Lebovitz serves as faculty sponsor. For subscription information, write ATTENTION SEA CHEST, Box 278, Buxton, North Carolina 27920.

COLUMBUS GROUPS TAPE JEWISH HISTORY

The Ohio Historical Society, Columbus Jewish Federation, and Ohio State University Jewish Studies Program will sponsor the production of a book documenting the Jewish history of Columbus, Ohio, using extensive oral history interviews.

The Columbus Jewish History Project will document the lives, interests, and contributions of Columbus's Jewish community. Documentary material will be collected by the Historical Society and the Federation, while the Ohio State University Jewish Studies Program will supply the research background and experience to write the history.

The book will contain genealogical information, local history, ethnic studies, and documentation of religious life and contributions of the Jewish community to the city, the state, and the nation.

Robert Glick serves as chairman of the tripartite advisory board, which has chosen Marc L. Raphael, associate professor of history at Ohio State University, to author the history. David Rosenblatt of the Historical Society will be project director. Four Citizen Advisory Council groups will assist in the project.

The manuscript is scheduled for completion in 1976, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Columbus Jewish Federation and the U.S. Bicentennial.

UNIVERSITY TO RECORD PEOPLES OF CONNECTICUT

A "Peoples of Connecticut" Oral History Project has been established at the University of Connecticut to study the state's ethnic and racial groups. The project is funded—along with archival development, demographic mapping, analysis of survey data, and curriculum development for the state's public schools—by an initial grant of \$100,000

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COLLOQUIUM 1974

Continued from page 1

as more than a technique, or is it merely equivalent to other forms of documentation? As far as is known, no autos-da-fé were required, and colloquium participants will be permitted to carry on with their own methodologies.

Alice Hoffman's show was fittingly prefatory: Ms. Hoffman was to be voted president-elect at the colloquium, and the threads established during her presentation would wind throughout three days of give-and-take.

After cocktails and dinner, Alden Whitman stepped to the podium to keynote the proceedings, describing his contacts with Charles Lindbergh prior to the aviator's death last spring. Using the text of the lengthy obit, he pointed out the similarities in method and objective between his work and that of the oral historian, especially in terms of uncovering

unique perspectives on the events of a life.

* * *

As Saturday dawned bright and brisk, the colloquium moved into full swing, the conference rooms of the lodge as busy as railroad depots, complete with hand-printed schedules on the doors. Three sessions ran simultaneously after breakfast: oral history projects on women in the West, featuring Gwendolyn Safier, Clara Shirpser, and Willa Baum; preliminary report on the 1974 survey of oral history in teaching, including Tom Charlton, Johnye Mathews, and John Neuenschwander; and "Do oral historians exploit their subjects?"

In the latter, much-taped Horace Albright, in the familiar surroundings of the national park that he helped develop, traded ideas with Charles Morrissey and

Bill Moss. Here appeared the second thread of controversy, dubbed the Studs Terkel syndrome (i.e., interviewing with commercial exploitation in mind). In the quasi-academic groves of Jackson Lake Lodge, the ethical requirements of the interviewer-interviewee relationship were held foremost. This was especially emphasized in interviews with members of ethnic minorities, in which the taping is often treated with more consideration than the subject.

The second round of concurrent sessions, following a discussion period, engendered less debate, emphasizing instead exposition of lesser-known areas: conservation, led by Claus Naske and James Williams; the Mormon Church, featuring four church representatives; and mining, with Mary Ellen Glass introducing Eva B. Adams.

PRESIDENTIAL TAPES SPUR RESOLUTIONS

When Harry Jeffrey of California State University, Fullerton addressed the Saturday evening business session, he occasioned the fiercest debate of the colloquium, one that remains unresolved. What follows is a summary of the debate prepared by OHA Secretary Ron Marcello.

In its original form the Jeffrey Resolution read as follows: Whereas, the tape recordings and accompanying transcripts made of and by the Nixon Administration as a record of its activities are and should be a national resource; and whereas the recent arrangement between the Ford Administration and ex-President Nixon to turn these tapes and transcripts over to Mr. Nixon may jeopardize the future availability of this national resource to the American people and historical scholarship; be it resolved that the Oral History Association strongly urge the Ford Administration and ex-President Nixon to reconsider their agreement and make both the tapes and the transcript available to the American people as soon as possible.

Extensive discussion then followed in response to Jeffrey's resolution. Enid Douglass felt that the disposition of presidential tapes and transcripts is a key question for OHA and suggested that a Colloquium session should be developed on the subject. Louis Starr declared that OHA should make every effort to disassociate itself from secret taping such as Nixon carried on, and he felt that OHA should go on record as deploring the surreptitious taping of any conversations.

Bill Moss of the Kennedy Library gave a brief history on the disposition of the presidential papers. A congressional resolution in 1955 gave presidents the right to give their papers to presidential libraries. The key question, Moss said, is to determine which papers are public and which ones are private.

Louis Starr then offered an amendment to the Jeffrey Resolution, and Jeffrey accepted it. The resolution, as amended by Starr, now read as follows: Although the Oral History Association deplors the surreptitious tape recording of those concerned without their consent, the tape recordings and accompanying transcripts made of and by the Nixon Administration as a record of its activities are and should be a national resource; and whereas the recent arrangement between the Ford Administration and ex-President Nixon to

turn these tapes and transcripts over to Mr. Nixon may jeopardize the future availability of this national resource to the American people and historical scholarship; be it resolved that the Oral History Association strongly urge the Ford Administration and ex-President Nixon to reconsider their agreement and make both the tapes and transcripts available to the American people.

General Theodore Mataxis stated that OHA was creating a political question, and felt that OHA should take an impersonal stand by eliminating specific names.

A vote was taken on the Jeffrey Resolution, as amended by Starr, and the resolution was defeated.

Next, another resolution on the same subject was offered from the floor by Hensch Mendelsund. The Mendelsund Resolution read as follows: That the Oral History Association go on record as requesting Congress to adopt legislation to make presidential papers a national property to be given to the National Archives or any other organization thus created.

Again, considerable discussion followed. Bill Moss commented that there is already legislation before Congress which would make presidential papers and the papers of any other national officer public property to be placed in the National Archives. The present law of 1955 permits, not orders, presidents to make their papers public. Karyl Winn claimed that if the papers of public officials are made part of the public domain, the result will be more papers being kept or destroyed.

Mendelsund then offered to withdraw his resolution if the Council would take up the matter and make a formal report at its first opportunity.

Mary Ellen Glass made a motion that the membership of OHA instruct the Executive Committee and Council to prepare for a vote at its next session a resolution regarding the matter of the disposition and preservation of presidential tapes and papers. The motion was seconded.

Tom Charlton offered an amendment to the Glass motion, calling for the publication of this Council resolution in the next issue of the Newsletter or the second issue thereafter so that the entire OHA membership would be able to study the issue completely. Glass accepted the amendment.

The Glass motion as amended by Charlton passed.

The luncheon session had been foreseen as a highlight, for Merle Miller had been enthusiastically anticipated. Even so, there was no letdown, so well did Robert Hine replace him. Dr. Hine, history professor at UC Riverside, has long studied the commune movement in America; interviewing techniques have expanded immeasurably the range of his research. He described these interviews and their application, summing up the historical relevance of communes to American history, finally sharing several of his tapes with the audience.

OHA members became outdoorspersons in the afternoon, rafting, hiking, playing tennis, even swimming in the hotel pool. It was an exhilarated crowd that gathered for cocktail hour, Sam Proctor exulting over the Florida-Cal football score, his colleagues celebrating a day healthfully spent.

At dinner Dr. Robert Menninger spoke engagingly on the topic of psychological aspects of oral history: the phenomenon of memory and the therapeutic aspects of oral history. He showed the benefit that can be derived from recollections, and that the elderly are often revitalized by plunging into their active past, even if only via tape-recorded memories.

Dr. Menninger then yielded to outgoing President Charles Crawford, who opened the business meeting on a note of surprise and contention: Harry Jeffrey's resolution on the disposition of the Nixon tapes and transcripts. After lengthy debate (see sidebar), a motion was approved that OHA Executive Council prepare a statement on the subject, to be published in the *Newsletter* and con-

sidered by OHA membership.

Elections, then, were almost an anticlimax. Alice Hoffman defeated Elizabeth Mason for the post of president-elect, and Waddy Moore was chosen over Warren Albert to replace Lila Johnson Goff on the Council. Knox Mellon and Ron Marcello were returned to their posts of treasurer and secretary respectively.

WHERE WAS WYOMING AT JACKSON HOLE?

Forty states and five foreign countries were represented at Jackson Hole—but not, alas, the host state, even though Wyoming boasts a number of active oral history programs. No evil inference is to be drawn: the Wyoming State Historical Society just happened to choose exactly the same dates, Sept. 13–15, for its annual meeting in Casper.

Sunday morning was filled with session activity, concentrating on oral histories within minority communities and areas. Marcia Frumerman and Gene Dickman of the National Council of Jewish Women's Oral History Project described the processes that led to the publication of *By Myself I'm a Book* (*Newsletter*, March 1973), an analysis of the Jewish community of Pittsburgh and its evolution.

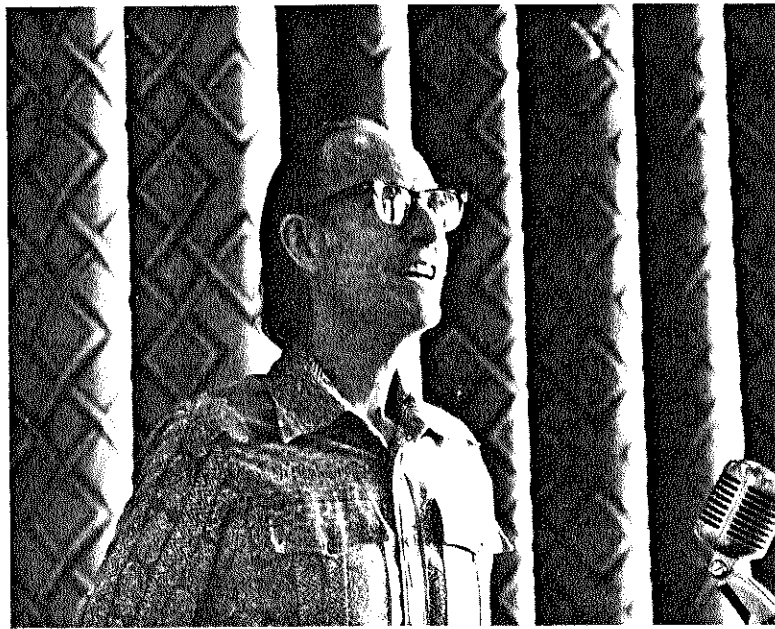
Asian studies was discussed by Arthur Hansen, Joseph Chen, Betty Milton, and Don Estes; problems of Spanish-speaking people were outlined by Eugenia Meyer; David Lachiando and Richard Elulain described study of Basque communities in the West and Northwest.

But the many threads that had entwined discussion throughout the packed forty-eight hours were tied together in a session entitled "The Use of Oral History in Documenting Indian History," in which Floyd O'Neil and Winona Holmes decried exploitation of the Native American subject. They pointed out the extensive care that must be exercised to understand that minority's point of view, and that oral history may be the only means by which Native American history may be developed, so small a role has written tradition played. The session was a fitting conclusion to a challenging series of seminars.

* * *

Some OHA members will testify that the climax of the colloquium—indeed of the entire weekend—occurred Sunday on the highway between the lodge and the airport, when the bus carrying about fifty oral historians, including two Mellons and a Goff among OHA leaders, ceased to run. There's really no other way to put it: even the driver deserted it after a feeble attempt to motivate its sputtering engine. The good fellowship and unselfishness of some passing drivers salvaged a potentially unwieldy situation and turned it into just another anecdote for OHA annals.





COLLOQUIUM SCENES: top left, Robert Hine captivating the Saturday lunch gathering; center, Charles Morrissey (right) discussing exploitation of interview subjects with much-interviewed Horace Albright; bottom left, Alice Hoff opening the colloquium with a multimedia review of her work in labor history; bottom right, Eugenia Meyer defining the problems facing the interview in Latin America.



Continued from page 5

awarded under the Ethnic Heritage Program of the U.S. Office of Education.

Bruce M. Stave of the university's history department will direct the oral history project. William V. D'Antonio, head of the Department of Sociology, is director of the overall study.

The study will encompass Irish, Italians, Jews, blacks, Puerto Ricans, Poles and other eastern European groups, with initial emphasis placed on the first two. The foreign-born will be emphasized as interviewees, with efforts made to include several generations of a family.

The program will be linked to interviews conducted by the WPA during the 1930s which are on file in the Connecticut State Library, in order to place today's pluralism into historical perspective and assist in identifying patterns of change and continuity in the ethnic experience.

Members of ethnic groups will participate in interviewing along with university staff and students. Both audio and visual recordings may be incorporated into the instructional material.

Fifty-five tapes documenting the history of Lander College, Greenwood, South Carolina, and Greenwood County have been completed as part of an oral history program established by the college.

Under the direction of William F. Ricketson, Jr., head of the social sciences department, the program was initiated to aid in preparing a history of the college to mark its 100th anniversary in 1972. Three former presidents of the college have thus far been interviewed, along with a U.S. congressman and several elderly residents of Greenwood County.

Interviewing is conducted by students, who analyze previous tapes and receive instruction on the art of interviewing. An index prepared for each interview is keyed to a master question list in the college library, and indexes as well as transcripts are available as guides to the tapes.

The University of South Florida, Tampa, has inaugurated an oral history program, under the directorship of Martin M. LaGodna, assistant professor of history and former assistant director of the American Association for State and Local History.

Initially, Tampa's living ex-mayors and others prominent in the city's growth will be interviewed as part of a coordinated effort with the Tampa Sesquicentennial Committee. USF and the University of Tampa have each received grants from the committee for the recording.

The committee has awarded a sum to the University of South Florida to record its own history. According to LaGodna, the Cuban culture of Tampa and its Ybor City Cuban section are also receiving priority for oral history treatment.

The Chinatown Oral History Project of New York has joined with the Old Photo Collection to form the Chinese Historical Society of New York.

The Oral History Project has been gathering primary historical materials for the past two years through interviews with elderly immigrants who were deeply involved with the evolution of Chinatown.

A main emphasis of the Historical Society will be the development of educational materials, including slide shows, video tapes, film strips, and historical pamphlets.

The Utah Historical Society cooperated this summer in oral history projects as diverse as rural life, labor, and the Pony Express.

Oral interviews were conducted in Moab as part of the Kellogg project study of the quality of rural life, jointly supervised by the society and Utah State University.

The society also participated in two separate projects sponsored by Brigham Young University. One used oral history to document a study of Utah labor; the second project involved BYU and Bureau of Land Management personnel in an archaeological dig at a Pony Express site in addition to oral interviews.

The California State Legislature has appropriated funds to complete the Earl Warren Oral History Project of the Regional Oral History Office, University of California, Berkeley. Begun in 1969 with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities matched by local donations, the project when finished will encompass interviews with 140 persons prominent in California politics and state government during the Earl Warren years, 1925-53. Amelia Fry is project director.

The career and legacy of Massachusetts Congressman William Bates will be documented in an oral history project conducted by the Bates Center at Salem State College, Massachusetts. Dr. John R. Hennessey, director of the center, announced that John J. Fox of the college's history department will act as coordinator. Information about primary source materials relating to the life of the Republican lawmaker should be sent to Professor Fox.

Military history has become a new subject at the University of Singapore. Courses will deal with the specific mili-

tary and strategic needs of Singapore as separate from its participation in the affairs of the British Empire. As an outgrowth, an oral history program has been established within the Ministry of Defense, under the advisement of Theodore C. Mataxis, for the purpose of interviewing senior Singaporean officers.

Dr. Forrest C. Pogue, past OHA president, has been named director of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Institute of Historical Studies of the Smithsonian Institution. He will remain affiliated with the George C. Marshall Research Foundation as a member of the Advisory Council of the Marshall Library. He will retain his Arlington, Virginia office and research staff to continue work on the Marshall biography.

William and Mary College will collect memories of Williamsburg, Virginia and its college in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as part of an oral history project tied into the Bicentennial.

The project, supported by gifts, will be conducted by Emily Jane Williams, a graduate student in history, under the direction of John Selby, graduate dean of arts and sciences at the college.

Ernst Loewy is attempting to locate voice recordings of German exiles who immigrated to the United States during the Nazi era. His project is sponsored by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. Mr. Loewy may be contacted at the Deutsches Rundfunk Archiv, Bertramstrasse 8, Frankfurt am Main 1.

The Jewish Community Council of Ottawa is collecting archival documents including oral histories with the encouragement and advice of the National Ethnic Archives of Canada.

James V. Mink, head, Department of Special Collections, UCLA Library, has been appointed chairman of the Society of American Archivists' Committee on Oral History.

PUBLICATIONS

NEWSWEEK SURVEYS ORAL HISTORY

Oral history, called "that peculiarly contemporary homage to Clio," made its biggest splash yet in a major feature in *Newsweek*, August 5, 1974. Entitled "The Pen vs. the Tape Recorder," the article emphasizes the non-elitist approaches of oral history and their fulfillment of needs not included by traditional historical methods. The history of the technique is described, and programs ranging from Columbia to *Foxfire* are discussed.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Charles Ives Remembered: An Oral History

by Vivian Perlis. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.
237 pp. Hardbound \$12.50.

Reviewed by Steven Lowe

Students of the insurance business know the name Charles Ives from his association with Julian Myrick in their thriving agency for Mutual Life during the first several decades of the twentieth century. Ives was a pioneer in insurance, developing the concept of estate planning, and responsible for many other now-standard techniques in this field.

Ives had chosen insurance as a proper field for an industrious and humanistic Yale graduate to embark upon. Like many of his day, the young Ives looked to insurance to protect the livelihood and well-being of Americans, particularly those unable to draw upon the resources of inherited wealth.



Harmony and Charles Ives. Photo Halley Erskine.

Charles Ives was born on October 20, 1874, and his centenary is being celebrated this year—but not by devotees (if there be such a thing) of life insurance. Ives's real legacy derives from an activity that he carefully reserved for his nonbusiness hours. Ives wrote music, music that confounded his contemporaries even among the many professional musicians he confided in. His music was audacious and startlingly original, making inroads into the areas of polytonality and polyrhythm in advance of such seminal figures as Igor Stravinsky, Arnold Schoenberg, and Paul Hindemith.

A new book by Yale musicologist Vivian Perlis marks a major addition to the still scant Ives bibliography. Ms. Perlis has interviewed family and friends that reach back to the last years of the nineteenth-century Danbury, Connecticut, where Ives grew up. She has filled out these personal reminiscences with often probing interviews of important musicians with whom Ives shared his music and his thoughts, and with a host of people who knew him through his insurance business.

The composite portrait that grows out of the disparate interviews is one of a complex and obviously brilliant man who remains in the face of diligent inquiry a virtual pillar of personal virtue, a Wilsonian Democrat with a Yankee heritage, an opponent of war and drafter of surprisingly radical constitutional amendments, a man of strongly held opinions, yet of almost childlike shyness in his dealings with people.

Ms. Perlis's editorial commentary is simply and directly written. She has been careful not to impress her own interpretations upon the body of material before her. The many interviewees disagree on occasional points, and sometimes (among the musicians) over the merit of Ives's music itself, yet no book I've seen comes as close as this one in projecting a sense of the whole man. Ives is a fascinating subject, partly for the way in which he balanced the seemingly (though not to him at all) contradictory pulls of selling life insurance and writing serious music. It is to Ms. Perlis's credit that she leaves this question—and others besides—for the reader to decide.

In addition to the invaluable interviews, Ms. Perlis has gathered many hitherto unpublished photographs donated or lent by many of the interviewees. In sum, this is a highly engaging, thoroughly professional example of biographical writing within the methodology of oral history.

Steven Lowe, past director of the University of Wisconsin Oral History Project, has written freelance music criticism for the past eight years, contributing to High Fidelity/Musical America, Stereo, and the Los Angeles Times.

Oral History Program Manual

by William W. Moss. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974.
110 pp. Hardbound \$13.50.

Reviewed by Maclyn P. Burns

In his preface, William Moss reminds his readers of the rapid growth of oral history in the past decade, a flowering of the art which is reflected in Gary Shumway's directory of projects (1971), and in Manfred Waserman's oral history bibliography (1971). Citing the value of Willa Baum's manual for local oral history projects (1971), and the usefulness of articles which have appeared in the *Proceedings* of various Oral History Association colloquia, Moss then tells his readers that his own book "supplements these efforts by describing some of the concepts and practices of an oral history program in a Presidential library, and by presenting some of the lessons learned by one interviewer. Although the example may be specialized, the concepts, practices and problems are instructive and may help in the planning and conduct of other programs."

The book contains 110 pages of text, appendices, a glossary—but no index, and one is probably not needed—all assembled in a slim, hardcover format, to which Praeger has attached a price of \$13.50. This cost, which has caused more than a few oral historians to sink into an uncharacteristic speechlessness, quite naturally generates the question: Is the book worth the price? In my opinion, indeed it is. The Moss book deserves a place with that small, select body of oral history literature to be found on the shelves of both veteran and neophyte oral historians.

Newcomers who have determined to launch an oral history project, or have had that decision made for them, indeed will

and the Moss book "instructive." His first chapter briefly discusses the background of his own project in five pages, thus establishing Moss's qualifications and providing the reader with an insight into his particular viewpoint. Seven subsequent chapters address themselves to the full range of activities commonly found in most oral history projects. Three chapters, for example, are given to "Some General Observations," "Starting an Oral History Program," and "Techniques for Interviewing." These forty pages admirably reflect the author's long experience as both interviewer and director in a major program; but, beyond this, they demonstrate as well that Moss has thought about and fully understands how his own work relates to the broad scholarly community it serves. Four more chapters, 31 pages, concentrate upon the practical aspects of the daily routine tasks to be encountered in any project: "Processing Interviews," "Research Use of Oral History Tapes and Transcripts," "Processing Records," and "Staffing and Equipping a Major Project."

Scattered throughout the work one finds samples of Kennedy Project report and processing forms, while the appendices contain much material which will surely benefit any beginning program. For instance, Mr. Moss has included such useful documents as a transcribing manual, a statement as to the nature and goals of his project which is sent to potential donors, an outline of processing steps, and a preliminary questionnaire which the Kennedy Project sends to donors to assist them in settling the vexing problems which surround the ultimate use to which tapes and transcripts may be put.

Veteran oral historians will not be prepared to accept all of Moss's views, nor will they always accept the particular methodologies of the Kennedy Oral History Project without reservation. Some will note that it requires a sizeable staff just to do the records-keeping which Moss describes, while other project directors may pause to consider thoughtfully the degree of control which thorough records might assure. Still, as Mr. Moss has pointed out, his book is intended only to serve as a point of departure for those who are beginning an oral history enterprise. Most of us, I think, will agree that expeditions which carry the Moss manual as a navigational aid can explore the *mare incognita* of oral history profitably and with far more knowledge in hand than we ourselves possessed when we set forth into this fabulous and exasperating sea.

Maclyn P. Burg is head of the Eisenhower Oral History Project, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

From Jamestown to Coffin Rock: A History of Weyerhaeuser Operations in Southwest Washington

by Alden H. Jones. Tacoma, Washington:
Weyerhaeuser Company, 1974. 346 pp. Paperback \$5.00.

Reviewed by Amelia Fry and Willa Baum

Taken largely from fifty-seven oral histories, this paperback is a folk-history view of a giant corporation in one section of its development—the operations around Longview, Washington. Alden Jones, a forty-three-year employee of the company, sets the background and context of each topic by research mainly in house organs, in-house magazines, and local

newspapers. He then proceeds to the major material: skillfully interwoven excerpts from oral histories, the recording of which began in 1967.

As a workers' eye view of company operations, this is a tour de force in personalizing an industry and in memorializing the exploits of the early Weyerhaeusermen, from the axe artists in the woods to the log pond crewmen to the planers in the mills. The book stands as an example of using oral history to build a local group's own self-identity through publication. It probably crases some of the anonymity that befalls the average worker. In this way—by creating a sort of in-group immortality—the craft of oral history has been pitted against the increasing impersonalization of modern industry, at least for the little pocket of people around Longview.

As a well-organized, amply illustrated, and nicely printed history, it can be recommended to other community oral historians as an example of how oral history can be gathered and then used effectively. It is laid out in chapters chronologically, with topical headings. The photographs are fully and carefully captioned. To emphasize individuals, it is indexed only by persons' names; and, similarly, every person who helped with the project in any way is fully identified.

A heavy tome it is not. It is not a study of the economic impact of the industry of the region, nor a scrutiny of corporate policies and practices. There is little space devoted to views of top executives—mainly a seven-page section entitled "The High Command," which is based on others' recall of the brass. Because it is a workers' view of the corporation, it fits in with current revisionist historiography, but only accidentally and incidentally. The general historian might glean some human examples of such themes as women workers in wartime, or ethnic groups in lumbering, or the growth of a corporate sense of conserving the forests; but he will glean it only by reading the whole book.

Nor was the book designed to shed light on any of the major questions that concern historians. As Jones writes in his introduction, "... we have placed emphasis on the things which they remembered—the personal experiences and accomplishments which were important to them. Perhaps the historical thread of time-marching-on is faint but it is there nonetheless in the changing of methods in the mill and in the woods, and in the coming and going of depressions and wars, and in the changing attitudes of men at work."

As an eloquent justification of this sort of folk history, the author quotes Admiral Hyman Rickover at the city of Longview's 50th anniversary in 1973: "Work is performed, not by organizations, but by people."

Perplexities that accompany the creation of a book largely out of the memory cells of old-timers include some stories that emerged which were, in Jones's words, "brutally honest ... critical or even unkind." Very few of these were printed, and in the rare instances when they were, Jones "took the liberty of tempering the tone of the narrator." Of the usual transcribing difficulties, Jones says they "... taxed the patience and the skill of a half-dozen typists. Unfamiliar with logger and millman names, machines, and lingo, they did a remarkable job." But he could not resist immortalizing how "... a 27-ton shay" became "a funny 7-ton shay," a skidder leverman became "a 7-11 man," and Frank Bertanelli was always "Frank, Bert, and Ole."

*Amelia Fry and Willa Baum are on the staff
of the Regional Oral History Office,
University of California at Berkeley.*

PUBLICATIONS

Continued from page 9

AUDIOPHILE BERATES TAPE RECYCLERS

Writing in *Audio* of October 1974, Edward Tatnall Canby takes the Columbia University Oral History Collection to task for destroying tapes of early interviews, including lengthy sessions with his father, the late Henry Seidel Canby, writer, editor, and founder of *Saturday Review*.

"Columbia University!" he exclaims in print. "When I think of the miles of tape thrown out in the average studio today . . . Beyond belief. But they did. I got it by phone and I might be wrong, but as I understand it, they erased, and erased, the entire documentation of the project, all the way through until 1961. . . . They made transcripts of the oral recordings—then junked them. Some oral history! As an audio man, you will share my flabbergastation. I could not believe it."

Canby also argues that written documents arising from oral history cannot be considered primary material—or even the important material: the voice, the speech patterns, the tapes themselves are essential, and too often underplayed.

SUFFRAGE HISTORY KIT AVAILABLE

The Feminist History Research Project has produced *The Struggle for Woman's Suffrage*, first in a series based on its collection of oral history interviews. The

twenty-four-minute tape/slide presentation combines the voices of former suffragists, ranging in age from 77 to 105, with old photographs and engravings which create a moving chronicle of the lengthy struggle for the right to vote.

The program package, including cassette or reel-to-reel tape, projector carousel of eighty coordinated slides, and a study guide, is available at a purchase cost of \$80 or a rental fee of \$25 from the project, PO Box 1156, Topanga, California 90290.

Oral History: Basic Techniques is available from the **Heritage Inventory of the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature**, 190 Rupert Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

The booklet was developed as a result of a grant to the museum from the National Museums Policy of Canada to make an inventory of oral history resources in Manitoba. Research, preparation, interviewing, and storage and utilization of the tapes are all discussed, as well as types of equipment available.

The first Canadian book composed entirely of oral history, **Ten Lost Years 1929-1939**, documents the struggles of the Canadian with the collapse of the economy and the disillusionment with traditional leadership that characterized that era.

Written by Barry Broadfoot, Vancouver journalist, the book is based on four cross-country research tours. *Ten Lost Years 1929-1939* is published by Doubleday Canada Ltd. at \$9.95.

A directory of oral history projects having Latin American or Chicano emphasis is being compiled by **El Meyer**, head of Mexico's Program Historia Oral, and **Peter J. Sehl**, member of the history department, University of Indiana-Purdue at Indianapolis.

American Indian Oral History Collection, selections from interviews gathered by Dr. Joseph A. Cash, will be available on audio cassettes as part of the Library of American Indian Affairs of the Water Publishing Company, New York.

"Studs Terkel and Oral History" is the topic of an article by Louis M. . . . director of the Columbia University History Research Office, in the Fall issue of **Chicago History**, the publication of the Chicago Historical Society. Individual copies (\$2.25) are available through the Society's office, Clark Street at North Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

CALENDAR

The role of oral history in the coming of black local history will be discussed at the annual Spring Conference of the **Southwest Research Center Museum for the Study of Negro Life and Culture** April 3-5 at Bishop's University, Dallas. Harry Robinson, Jr., is coordinator of the conference, which is entitled "Black Local History and General Problems and Prospects."

1975 COLLOQUIUM—OCTOBER 23-26—ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

Oral History Association Newsletter
136 Powell Library
University of California, Los Angeles
405 Hilgard Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90024

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY
THE TEXAS COLLECTION
WACO, TEXAS 76798
ATTN: DR. THOMAS L. CHALTON
DIRECTOR OF ORAL HISTORY

