

Oral History Association

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# NEWSLETTER

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## Third National Oral History Colloquium Attracts Big Crowd To The University Of Nebraska

Oral historians from states as distant as Vermont and Hawaii converged on the University of Nebraska on November 22, 1968, for the four-day annual meeting of the Oral History Association. This was the third National Colloquium conducted by the OHA: the first was sponsored by UCLA and held in 1966 at the Lake Arrowhead Conference Center in California; the second was sponsored by Columbia University and held at Arden House in Harriman, New York, in 1967.

At Lincoln, the Center for Continuing Education of the University of Nebraska served as conference headquarters. Local arrangements were in the hands of Professor Philip Crowl of the Department of History at Nebraska.

OHA members participated in several panel discussions concerning a variety of oral history programs and procedures. Main speakers during the meeting were William Manchester (author of **Death Of A President**), Joe B. Frantz (head of the Lyndon B. Johnson Library Oral History Project), James Berton Rhoads (Archivist of the United States), and Walter Lord (author of **Day of Infamy**, **Incredible Victory**, **The Past That Would Not Die**, and other books).

The meeting marked the conclusion of Louis Starr's term as OHA President, and the beginning of Gould Colman's tenure in the top slot.

Other new officers elected at Lincoln were Oscar Winther of Indiana University to serve as Vice President, and Alice Hoffman of Pennsylvania State University as Secretary.

### STARR HONORED AS HE COMPLETES HIS TERM AS FIRST OHA PRESIDENT

James Mink of UCLA introduced this resolution during the OHA business meeting at the Nebraska Colloquium: "Whereas, Dr. Louis M. Starr, Director of the Oral History Research Office at Columbia, in the city of New York, served as a member of the Steering Committee which formed the Oral History Association, and

Whereas, Dr. Starr in his capacity as member of this committee, secured articles of incorporation for the association, and

Whereas, he organized and sponsored the second National Colloquium of Oral History held at Arden House, Harriman, New York, November 18-21, 1967, and

Whereas Dr. Starr was elected first president of the Oral History Association, and

Whereas in this office he has rendered distinguished service to the cause of Oral History and to this association; therefore be it

Resolved that members express their appreciation for the service rendered by Dr. Starr, and that in recognition for these distinguished services he now be presented with a gavel, the symbol of the highest office of this association, this being duly inscribed, 'Louis M. Starr, First President of the Oral History Association 1967 and 1968'."

Starr accepted the gavel and the appreciative applause of the audience, which he eventually succeeded in gaveling to a conclusion. The ceremony occurred a few moments before Starr ended his term as President and Gould Colman of Cornell University began his term as OHA President.

### SECONDARY SCHOOL ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE WILL PURSUE IDEA OF RECORDING INTERVIEWS AS A TEACHING TOOL

A session about "Oral History As A Classroom Tool" at the Nebraska Colloquium has increased interest in developing this concept further. Much of this enthusiasm is due to a presentation by Harry Kursh during the Nebraska session in which he provided specific examples of how students can prepare and conduct their own tape-recorded interviews.

Kursh has agreed to serve on a secondary school oral history committee (his address: The Lakeland Middle School, Mohegan Lake, New York 10547). Others with him on the committee are William W. Cutler IV of the History Department at Temple University in Philadelphia, Penna. 19122; Bruce Odenbach of Lincoln Senior High School in Sioux Falls, South Dakota 57105; and Dan S. Harris, Jr., of the Department of History and Sociology at Walla Walla College, College Place, Washington 99324.

Members of this committee invite suggestions about student-recorded oral history interviews and interviews for classroom use that would assist students in understanding how historical information is obtained.

The Program Committee for the forthcoming 1969 National Oral History Colloquium at Airlie House in Virginia hopes to include on the agenda another session about the educational uses of oral history.

### NEW COUNCIL MEMBER

Peter Olch of the History of Medicine Division, National Library of Medicine, was elected as the newest member of the OHA Council during the Nebraska confab.

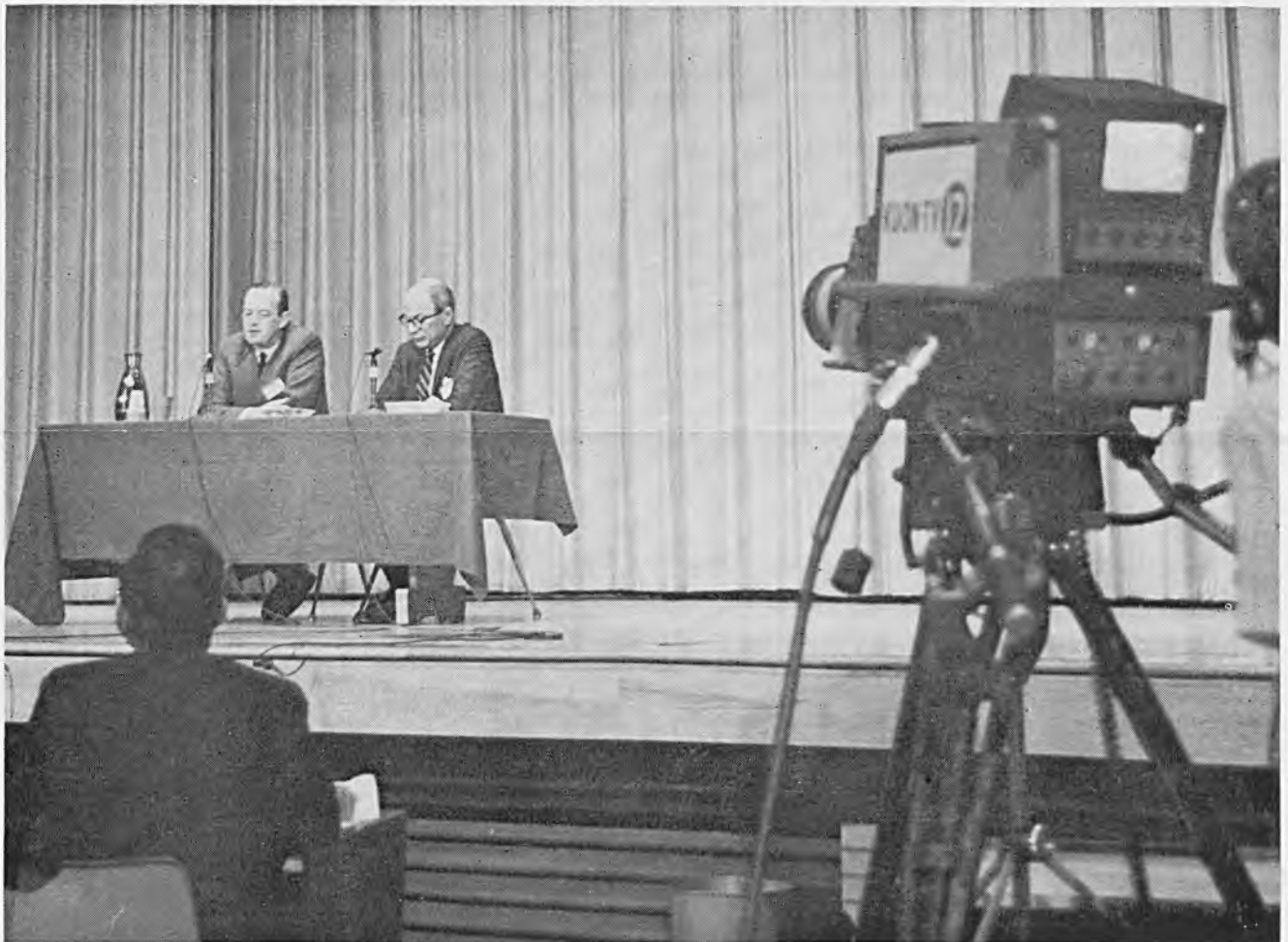
## Scenes from the 1968 Oral History Colloquium at the University of Nebraska



Philip Crowl (standing, left) prepares to get things underway on the first evening of the Colloquium by introducing panelists for a discussion of "Interdisciplinary Views Of Oral History."

The following night William Manchester (below, left) tells about his experiences as an interviewer while Columbia's Louis Starr (right) presides.

(Both photos by Royster Lyle of the George C. Marshall Research Library.)





President Gould Colman is photographed (above) by the entrance to the Colloquium headquarters while Saul Benison (left, below) of Brandeis University and Edward Stanford of the University of Minnesota exchange shop-talk in the lobby.

Photos at the left show other scenes during the three-day meeting.

(Photo above by Royster Lyle of the George C. Marshall Library; others by Richard Flemming of the University of Nebraska News Service.)





# Oral History Association Adopts Statement About Goals And Guidelines During Nebraska Colloquium

By unanimous vote on November 25, 1968, members of the OHA adopted this statement about oral history interviewing:

## ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION Goals and Guidelines

The Oral History Association recognizes Oral History for what it is—a method of gathering a body of historical information in oral form usually on tape. Because the scholarly community is involved in both the production and use of oral history, the Association recognizes an opportunity and an obligation on the part of all concerned to make this type of historical source as authentic and as useful as possible.

### Guidelines for the Interviewee:

1. The person who is interviewed should be selected carefully and his wishes must govern the conduct of the interview.
2. Before undertaking a taped interview for the purpose stated above, the interviewee (or narrator) should be clear in his mind regarding mutual rights with respect to tapes and transcripts made from them. This includes such things as: seal privileges, literary rights, prior use, fiduciary relationships, the right to edit the tape transcriptions, and the right to determine whether the tape is to be disposed of or preserved.
3. It is important that the interviewee fully understand the project, and that in view of costs and effort involved he assumes a willingness to give useful information on the subject being pursued.

### Guidelines for the Interviewer:

1. It should be the objective of the interviewer to gather information that will be of scholarly usefulness in the present and the future. The interviewer who is collecting oral history materials for his own individual research should always bear in mind this broader objective.
2. In order to obtain a tape of maximum worth as a historical document, it is incumbent upon the interviewer to be thoroughly grounded in the background and experiences of the person being interviewed, and, where appropriate and if at all feasible, to review the papers of the interviewee before conducting the interview. In conducting the interview an effort should be made to provide enough information to the interviewee to assist his recall.
3. It is important that all interviews be conducted in a spirit of objectivity and scholarly integrity and in accordance with stipulations agreed upon.

### Guidelines for Sponsoring Institutions:

1. Subject to meeting the conditions as prescribed by interviewees, it will be the obligation of sponsoring institutions to prepare easily usable tapes and/or accurate typed transcriptions, and properly to identify, index, and preserve such oral history records for use by the scholarly community, and to state clearly the provisions that govern their use.

Unanimously adopted by the Oral History Association, November 25, 1968.

Members of the OHA "Goals And Guidelines Committee" that prepared preliminary versions of this statement and submitted a draft to the members at the Nebraska meeting for further discussion and revision were Oscar Winther (Chairman) of Indiana University; Professor James Harvey Young of Emory University; Dr. Philip C. Brooks, Director of the Harry S. Truman Library in Independence, Missouri; and Mrs. Amelia Fry of the Regional Oral History Office at the University of California at Berkeley.

Approval of this statement concluded a two-year effort to formulate a position paper about the general concerns of oral historians.

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## LOOKING AHEAD: WHERE TO MEET AFTER AIRLIE HOUSE IN NOVEMBER, 1969

The Future Colloquium Sites Committee of the Oral History Association has recommended to the OHA Council that forthcoming national meetings of the OHA be scheduled in this way:

1970 — Carmel, California (near San Francisco)

1971 — Vermont or Indiana

1972 — Yellowstone National Park or the Great Smokies National Park (as part of the observance of the centennial of the National Park system)

1973 — Indiana or Vermont

1974 — Hawaii

The Committee emphasizes that these recommendations are only tentative. OHA members who wish to suggest other locations are invited to submit their recommendations to the Committee. It consists of Willa Baum (U.C., Berkeley); Oscar Winther (Indiana University); and Charles Crawford (Memphis State University).

Committee members do stress, however, that national colloquia should be held near one or more oral history offices which can host the meetings and supervise local arrangements. Some feel that ideal locations should be able to accommodate about 200 persons in pleasant surroundings that are somewhat isolated from conflicting activities.

To date the OHA has followed a pattern of meeting in conference centers in different sections of the country as a convenience to members from various regions.

# Keeping Posted: News About Oral History Projects

## WAR AND PEACE

The U.S. Army Military History Research Collection at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, includes oral history memoirs among the materials in its archives. Its first oral history interview was with a retired Colonel who recalled his boyhood experiences on Army posts in the American West while his father, a Civil War veteran, was on active duty in various Indian campaigns. Its current project is a survey of the 8,000 remaining veterans of the Spanish-American War, the Philippine Insurrection, and the Boxer Rebellion in order to collect letters, diaries, written memoirs, photographs, and other documentary items, including tape-recorded interviews with those veterans who indicate in the questionnaire and by subsequent correspondence that they have recollections that deserve to be recorded on tape. Colonel George S. Pappas, Director of the Military History Research Collection, reports that he and his small staff are working rapidly because the average age of these veterans is 90 years.

More than 60 interviews have been recorded with Mennonites who were conscientious objectors during World War One, and the tapes have been deposited in the Mennonite Oral History Library at Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas. Dr. James Juhnke, Assistant Professor of History at Bethel, is in charge of this three-year project, and support for it has been provided by The Schowalter Foundation. Most of the interviews already recorded were conducted in Kansas, although Professor Juhnke has taped Mennonites in the Rocky Mountain and Pacific Coast states who were drafted in 1917-1918 and subjected to harassment in military camps for their pacifist views. He is assisted in the interviewing by other faculty members and by senior history majors. Oral history at Bethel actually started in 1951-1952 when its library director, Cornelius Krahn, received a grant from the Social Science Research Council to interview a large number of Mennonites who had migrated from Europe to Canada after the Second World War. These interviews were recorded and transcribed and have been valuable for studies of the experiences of ethnic Germans in Stalin's Russia and Hitler's Germany.

## INDIANS: ALASKA AND ARIZONA

An oral history project for recording Tlingit Indian stories in the native language, with translations, is being conducted in the village of Kake in Alaska. Tapes will be placed in the Alaska Division of State Libraries with copies to be retained in the village.

The personal histories of thousands of Indians are being compiled by the Department of Anthropology at the University of Arizona. Supported by a grant of \$109,000 from the Doris Duke Foundation, these tape-recorded interviews preserve the memories of the oldest members of several tribes—Apache, Papago, Rio Grande Pueblo, Acoma, Yavapai, Walapai, Lower Pima, Chontal (Mexico), Navajo, and Yaqui. Project Director Bernard L. Fontana, an ethnologist at the University of Arizona, is assisted by a staff of 15.

## BUSINESS AND LABOR: IBM AND THE NLRB

More than 100 persons involved in the development of computer technology have been interviewed as part of an oral history project sponsored by International Business Machines, Inc. Transcripts of these interviews, totaling 7,000 pages, have been deposited in the IBM Archives. The project has been conducted by Lawrence Saphire under the direction of William L. Rofes, Manager of Records Creation and Disposal in the IBM Records Management Department, which includes the company's historical records program. Indexes, summary extracts, and an overview of the project are being prepared by Saphire. "The objective," says Rofes, "was to record the environment, motivations and methods concerning technical working and thinking of key IBM people. The project covers the past thirty years in which electronic computers went from virtual non-existence to the present world-wide total of more than 50,000."

A series of interviews about the National Labor Relations Board is being conducted by Professor James A. Gross and Mrs. Judith Seidman for Cornell University's Program In Oral History. These interviews concern the staffing of the NLRB to implement the Wagner Act (1935), the activities of the NLRB prior to the Taft-Hartley Amendments (1947) to the Wagner Act, and relationships between NLRB and such institutions as the A.F. of L., the CIO, employer associations, federal departments and agencies, and Congress. David Saposs, the first and only head of the NLRB's Division of Economic Research (this Division was abolished in 1939 after a Congressional investigation) was recorded a few months before Mr. Saposs died. Charles Fahy, first general counsel of the Board, has been interviewed, and interviews are underway with Judge Warren Madden (first chairman of the 3-member Board), Edwin S. Smith (also an original member). Plans are complete for interviews with Nathan Witt (secretary of the original Board), Lee Pressman (CIO General Counsel following the break with the A.F. of L.), and Ida Klaus (NLRB attorney during the 1930's).

## THE SEA AND THE FOREST

The Regional Oral History Office of the Bancroft Library, the University of California's historical manuscript library on the Berkeley campus, is beginning a San Francisco Bay Maritime History series to document the early days of tug, launch, barge, and other forms of coastal and intra-Bay water transport. The first phase of the series will be interviews with retired tugboat captains. The transcripts will be deposited in both the Bancroft Library and the San Francisco Maritime Museum. Ruth Teiser, ROHO interviewer in charge of the series, will be joined by Director Karl Kortum of the Maritime Museum in capturing reminiscences of this colorful bit of western history. Actually the series continues a program that started with the recorded memoirs of Tom Crowley, Sr. (often called the "dean of the tugboat industry") whose career on San Francisco Bay dated from the 1890's.

The Forest History Society at Yale University reports that its inventory of tape-recorded interviews is approaching the 200 mark. Recently completed, in cooperation with ROHO at U.C., Berkeley, and funded by a grant from the Hill Family Foundation of St. Paul, Minnesota, are interviews with Walter McCulloch, former dean of the School of Forestry at Oregon State University, and with Thornton Munger, former director of the Pacific Northwest Forest and Range Experiment Station. The McCulloch interview is entitled "Forestry and Education in Oregon, 1937-1966" (145 pages; \$22.25), and the Munger interview is entitled "Forest Research in The Northwest" (254 pages; \$27.70). Copies of both may be ordered from ROHO, Room 486, Bancroft Library, U.C., Berkeley, California.

## ORAL HISTORY HOLDINGS IN NUCMC?

Should oral history holdings be reported to the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections at the Library of Congress? James Mink of UCLA had conveyed the OHA's desire to enter oral history sources in NUCMC, but Arlene Custer, head of NUCMC, noted that several policy questions need to be resolved before the Catalog could accept such accessions. At the Nebraska Colloquium Mink and David Larson of the Ohio Historical Society were appointed a two-member committee to negotiate further with NUCMC and report to the Colloquium this fall.

## TO REPRINT LAKE ARROWHEAD PROCEEDINGS?

The OHA Council has asked James Mink and Knox Mellon to estimate the cost of reprinting the **Proceedings** of the First National Colloquium sponsored by UCLA and held at Lake Arrowhead, California, in 1966. Demand for copies of this volume has been steady.

## TREASURER'S REPORT ON FUNDS AND MEMBERSHIP

OHA Treasurer Knox Mellon reported at Lincoln that receipts to date have totalled \$4,567.03, and disbursements have totalled \$1,879.93, leaving a balance of \$2,607.10. The disbursements were mostly for the brochure about membership in the Association; 3,500 of these have been circulated to date.

Mellon reported that membership in the OHA stood at 277, with 15 members being delinquent in their dues at that time. 32 student members were also on the OHA roster.

## JOINING THE OHA: THE MATTER OF DUES . . .

Individual members pay annual dues of \$7.50; Institutional Members pay \$25.00. Non-voting student and library memberships are \$5.00 annually, and these members receive publications of the OHA that are sent free to other members.

Life memberships are available at \$150. Institutions who generously choose to become sustaining members pay between \$100 and \$500 each year.

**Coming in the OHA Newsletter: A complete list of all OHA members.**

## 1969 NATIONAL ORAL HISTORY COLLOQUIUM SET FOR NOVEMBER 7-10

Airlie House in Warrenton, Virginia, near Washington, D.C., has been selected as the site of the 4th National Colloquium on Oral History.

The meeting will begin on Friday afternoon, November 7, with a meeting of the Executive Council. After dinner and keynote remarks by President Gould Colman of Cornell University a panel will review oral history projects in the Greater Washington area.

Program chairman Peter Olch and his committee promise more lively and informative panels and talks on Saturday and Sunday. The George C. Marshall Research Library has graciously agreed to serve as local host.

The conference will adjourn after lunch on Monday, November 10. Because the following day, November 11, is a holiday for many conferees it is expected that attendance from distant parts of the nation will be high, and will not decrease as the colloquium nears completion.

Details about the meeting will be published in forthcoming issues of this newsletter. All OHA members are urged to suggest November 7-10, 1969, for this annual get-together.

"It might be in the national interest for the new Administration, or the Congress, to organize an orderly project, while memories are still fresh, to interview the chief Johnson policy-makers, in depth and **in camera**, on why we did what we did in Vietnam, and on what can be learned from what happened. 'The past is prologue,' and such a record could provide useful guidance for President Nixon, and for his successors too."

—Stewart Alsop in **Newsweek**  
February 17, 1969

## OFFICERS OF THE ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION, 1968-1969

President: Gould Colman, Cornell University

Vice President and

President-elect: Oscar Winther, Indiana University

Secretary: Alice M. Hoffman, Pennsylvania State University

Treasurer: Knox Mellon, Immaculate Heart College, Los Angeles

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