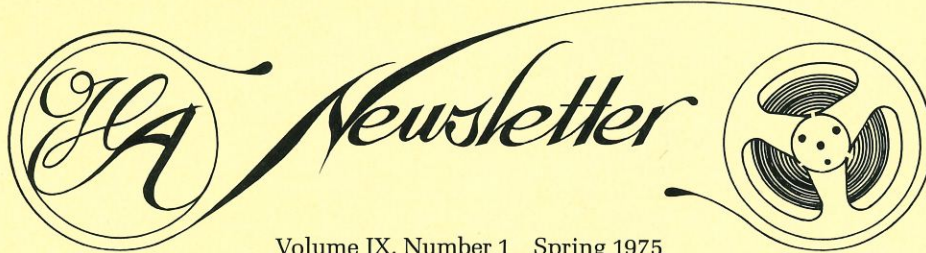
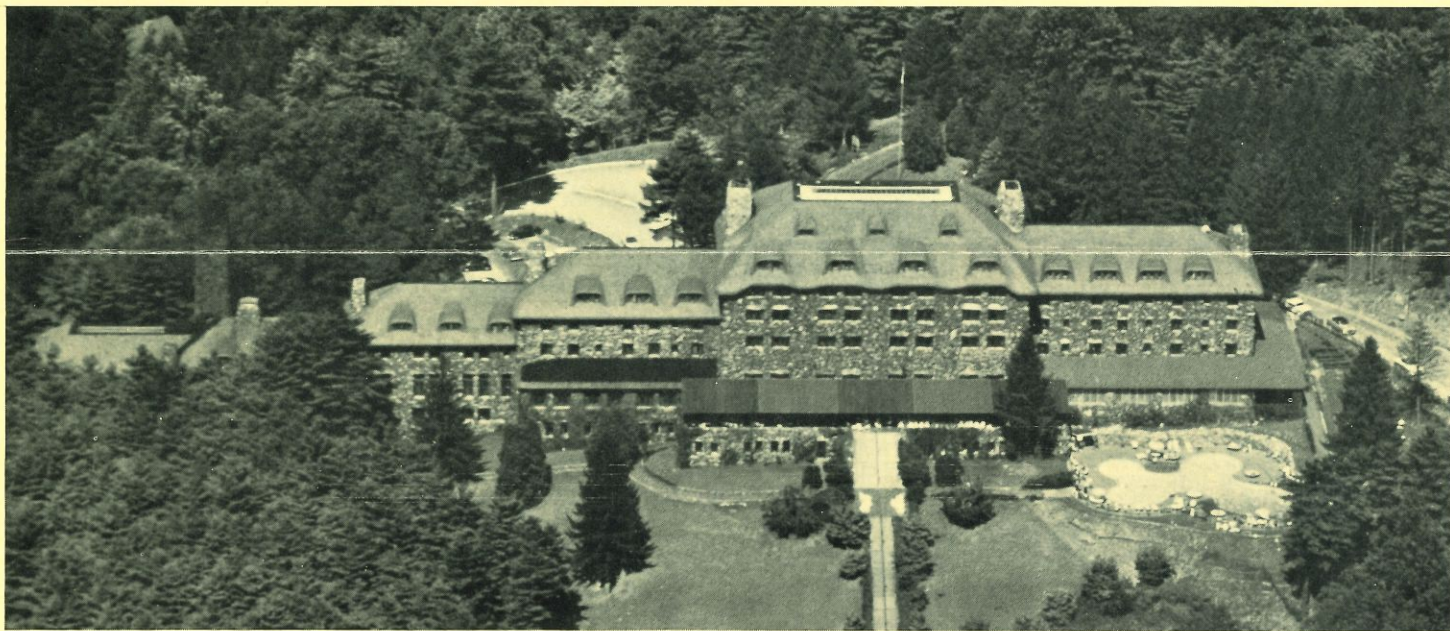


# ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION



Volume IX, Number 1 Spring 1975



## MOUNTAIN HIDEAWAY

### NORTH CAROLINA SITE OF TENTH COLLOQUIUM

This year's OHA Colloquium colors will be shades of autumn, the hues of the Great Smoky Mountains which overlook the Grove Park Inn, just outside Asheville, North Carolina.

A city of 80,000, Asheville was earliest known as a health resort, best known as the birthplace and childhood home of Thomas Wolfe. The Inn, to be home for workshop and colloquium participants, has been host to renowned guests from William Jennings Bryan to Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

A new system of registration and colloquium fees will be in effect at Asheville. At the insistence of the Inn, each registrant

will pay hotel and meal expenses directly to hotel management; hence OHA's responsibility will not extend to details concerning room or meals.

OHA will be responsible for colloquium and workshop fees. Registration will be \$20 for the workshop, \$30 for the colloquium, and \$40 to attend both.

Check the dates—October 23-26—and reserve early. Full details of the program for the four days will be available shortly and will be mailed to all OHA members.

### COMMITTEE TO REVIEW OHA CONSTITUTION

A five-member committee has been appointed by OHA President Samuel Proctor to consider what (if any) changes should be made in the association's constitution. This committee asks OHA members to convey their suggestions about what should be retained or revised in the constitution in order to make this document more effective as the association's instrument of governance.

Chairman of this committee is Charles T. Morrissey, and suggestions should be addressed to him at the

Vermont Historical Society, Montpelier, Vermont 05602. Other committee members are Corrine Crow of Commerce, Texas; Benis Frank of Washington, D.C.; Mrs. Lewis Herndon of Springfield, Illinois; and John Wickman of Abilene, Kansas.

This committee was appointed shortly after the 1974 OHA Colloquium at Jackson, Wyoming. In announcing its formation, President Proctor explained that almost ten years have passed since the document was devised, and the growth of the associa-

tion to its present size of almost 1,300 members prompted a fresh look at its adequacy. In addition, association members have suggested revisions from time to time but without a formal mechanism for judging their usefulness.

This committee will report its findings at the 1975 colloquium in Asheville, North Carolina. Copies of the OHA constitution are available from the association's secretary, Professor Ronald Marcello, North Texas State University, Denton, Texas 76203.



# PEOPLE & PROJECTS

## ROSS MEDIATES LABOR INTERVIEWS

Martha Ross, lecturer in oral history at the University of Maryland, is conducting an oral history program for the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service in Washington, D.C. Under way since June 1974, the series of interviews supplements official records of the independent federal agency with personal recollections of longtime employees, associates, and observers, documenting the development, personnel and functions of FMCS since its establishment by the National Labor Management Relations Act of 1947 (Taft-Hartley).

Because of the confidential nature of the labor-management negotiation services the FMCS supplies to its clients, official records tend to be limited and primarily statistical in nature. The taped recollections of persons with long experience and significant knowledge of the functioning of such an agency will be of particular interest and value to scholars in a variety of disciplines.

As a result of the interview series, a history of FMCS, drawing in part on the edited transcripts, is being prepared for publication in time for the Bicentennial. The present director of the service, W. J. Usery, suggested and authorized both the oral history program and the resulting book. Stuart Kaufman, professor of labor history at the University of Maryland and editor of the Samuel Gompers Papers, and Jonathan Grossman, historian of the Department of Labor, will collaborate on the publication.

The interview series (projected at 100 hours) already contains sessions with all surviving directors, including David L. Cole, appointed by Harry S. Truman; William E. Simkin, who served Presidents Kennedy and Johnson; and J. Curtis Counts, Richard M. Nixon's first appointee. Mrs. Cyrus S. Ching, widow of the first director, has also been interviewed. In addition, a number of employees who originally served FMCS's predecessor, the U.S. Conciliation Service in the Department of Labor, have been recorded.

The tapes and transcripts will ultimately



Martha Ross, who is administering an oral history program for the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service in Washington, D.C., chats with two of her interviewees: William E. Simkin (center), who was director of FMCS from 1961 to 1969; and W. J. Usery, Jr., who has been director since 1973.

go with official FMCS records in the National Archives; in addition, the program has located additional interviews with several of these persons in such other collections as the presidential libraries and Columbia University. Where possible, copies of these interviews are being added to the FMCS collection.

## SOCIETY LOOKS AT MINNESOTA MINORITIES

The Minnesota Historical Society has appointed Ramedo J. Saucedo director of a special project to collect historical data relating to Minnesota's Mexican-American community and to the state's migrant Mexican population. Saucedo will direct the intensive summer effort being undertaken by the Minnesota Historical Society with the help of grant funds from the Northwest Area Foundation (formerly the Louis W. and Maud Hill Family Foundation).

The project will involve extensive oral history interviewing, as well as the collection of historical materials such as letters, diaries, and reminiscences of individuals; church records; organizational records; membership lists, scrapbooks, and literature; records of social and cultural agencies; photographs; tape recordings; films; and publications.

It is anticipated that the work will be concentrated on St. Paul's West Side during the coming summer. A second phase, planned for the summer of 1976, will focus on outstate Minnesota regions with Mexican migrant populations.

A similar project to document the history of blacks in Minnesota, also sponsored by the society and funded by the Northwest Area Foundation, began last summer and will be continued this summer. David V. Taylor, director of minority

studies at St. Olaf College, again will serve as director of that effort. During the summer of 1974, twenty interviews were conducted on the early history of the black community in Minnesota.

Upon completion of the special collecting projects, the society will publish a guide to its holdings of Mexican-American and black history materials to stimulate research in these fields. Little had been done on the history of blacks and Mexican-Americans in Minnesota prior to these special projects.

## IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM REPORTS ON PROJECTS

The Department of Sound Records of the Imperial War Museum, London, has announced the initiation of two new recording projects, the completion of two others, and the cataloging of yet another.

Director David Lance will conduct more than sixty interviews concerning the life and work of the lower deck of the Royal Navy from 1900 to 1930. Main themes will include recruiting, training, work, mess room life, discipline, customs and traditions, dress, foreign and home service, religion, and post-service experiences.

Margaret Brooks plans forty interviews with civilians who will discuss British industry during World War I. Recruitment, working conditions, women workers, wartime technological developments, industrial relations, and government control of industry will be covered.

A project comprising forty recordings with civilians on the subjects of pacifism and medical welfare on the Home Front has been completed, as has another of forty-five interviews on life and operations in the British Army before 1918.

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### Oral History Association Newsletter

Published quarterly by the Oral History Association, Inc., a nonprofit, international organization of institutions and individuals interested in advancing the practice and use of oral history.

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# BOOK REVIEW

## *Invincible Summer: An Intimate Portrait of the Roosevelts, Based on the Recollections of Marion Dickerman*

by Kenneth Davis; assistance of Mary Belle Starr. New York: Atheneum, 1974. 176 pp. Hardbound \$12.95.

*Reviewed by Alfred B. Rollins, Jr.*

Publishing a readable popular biography from the rough stuff of oral history tapes necessarily involves some edgy gambles. Memoirs are episodic and fragmentary at best. There must be considerable stuffing drawn from previously published materials. Sometimes the new light created hardly justifies the publication of yet another book.

But sometimes old stories can be retold with profit because of the insights of the memoirist and the creative skills of the editor/author. This is, indeed, the case with *Invincible Summer*. Marion Dickerman recorded much intimate observation and comment on the Roosevelt family and team. She was as close to their secrets as any person of the pre-White House years. She and Nancy Cook were close friends of Eleanor Roosevelt,

partners in Democratic Party and women's rights activities, in the furniture business, in the building of Valkill Cottage, in the entertainment of the Roosevelt children and the comforting of the lonely wife of the governor and President.

Much of the value of this book is in Kenneth Davis's narrative. He is a master at the integration of memoirs, letters and published sources; he is a fine storyteller. It is sometimes difficult to tell when Dickerman ends and Davis begins. Yet this is clearly Marion Dickerman's book—and indirectly Nancy Cook's. By revealing much about them, it enlightens our view of Eleanor Roosevelt's special and demanding relationship with them. It tells things from their point of view, and it adds—bluntly sometimes—to our increasingly critical view of Mrs. Roosevelt. There are many helpful anecdotes of Eleanor's personal frustrations with Franklin and anxieties over her children, of her long memory for injuries to her and spontaneous compassions for the injuries of others, of squabbles about Valkill Cottage, and of the chilling separation of Eleanor and her friends after 1938. There are many new, technically bad but interesting photos. There are no surprises; there is only a small cache of new material for the specialist. But this is a significant and interesting book for the general reader, and perhaps a model of the way oral history can be made to bring familiar stories to life.

*Alfred B. Rollins, Jr., is vice-president for academic affairs, University of Vermont.*

## PEOPLE AND PROJECTS

*Continued from page 2*

The department's first project, dealing with civil, military, and naval aviation from 1909 to 1920, has been cataloged, indexed, and selectively transcribed. A printed catalog is available from the department.

The **Oklahoma Historical Society** is launching oral history programs in connection with historical museums at Altus and Waurika. Interviewers will be trained at special workshops conducted by Pendleton Woods and Mary Roberts of the Oklahoma Living Legends oral history program.

The tapes will provide material for the state's oral history archive. Copies of the Altus tapes will be collected by the Museum of the Western Prairie, and copies of the Waurika tapes will be held by the Chisholm Trail Museum.

## WORKSHOPS

### ILLINOIS MEMBERS GIVE LABOR PRESENTATION

Bobbe Herndon and Nick Cherniavsky of Historical Researchers, Inc., OHA members from Springfield, Illinois, took part in the Southwest Labor History Conference held April 24-26 at the University of the Pacific, Stockton, California. Their presentation was entitled "Ambush at Mulkeytown: a living history of the first battle in the Illinois coalminers union war, resulting in dual unionism."

The hour-long program was compiled from oral history interviews conducted by Historical Researchers, Inc., with retired coalminers and their wives.

Historical Researchers, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation for oral history research, was formed because of a strong interest in labor history and a concern that unless labor history research was begun without further delay much vital data would be lost.

### MOSS KEYNOTES NEW JERSEY WORKSHOP

More than 100 New Jersey oral historians gathered at Brookdale Community College in Lincroft, New Jersey, April 12 for a workshop focusing on interviewing and administration.

Cosponsored by the New Jersey Historical Commission and the Oral History Committee of the History and Bibliography Section of the New Jersey Library Association, the Second Oral Workshop featured William W. Moss, Ronald J. Grele, and Elizabeth B. Mason.

Moss's keynote remarks will be published this fall in *New Jersey Libraries* and the New Jersey Historical Commission Newsletter.

### CONNECTICUT GROUP HEARS HAND, MORRISSEY

More than one hundred persons attended an oral history conference conducted by the Oral History Project of the University of Connecticut and the Connecticut League of Historical Societies. The day-long session was held at Storrs, Connecticut, December 14.

Featured speakers were Charles Morrissey and Samuel Hand. A panel on case studies included Morton J. Tenzer and Bruce Stave of the University of Connecticut, John Sutherland of Manchester Community College, and Herbert Janick of Western Connecticut State College.

### ANGELENOS DISCUSS CALIFORNIA'S LIVING PAST

Three Southern California oral historians were featured on a panel at "The Living Past in California, a Conference on Historic Preservation" at the University of California, Riverside, February 22.

Bernard Galm of the UCLA Oral History Program, Raul Escobedo, a Los Angeles community planner, and David L. Clark, free-lance writer and UCLA graduate student, described their oral history activities.

The conference was sponsored by the Program in Western American Studies of the UC Riverside Department of History and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Oral history was prominent among topics discussed at the Annual Spring Conference of the **Southwest Research Center and Museum**, Bishop College, Dallas, held April 3-5. The center specializes in the study of African-American life and culture, under the direction of Harry Robinson, Jr., who served as conference coordinator.

Oral historians who participated in the conference included Wayne Watson of Shaw University, Raleigh, North Carolina; Ronald Marcello of North Texas State University; and Roland Hayes of Austin (Texas) Community College.

The second Oral History Conference was held at **La Trobe University** in Bundoora, Victoria, **Australia**, February 6. Speakers included Clive Moore, Mollie Missen, Michael Clyne, and Brian Bullivant.

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## WORKSHOPS

Continued from page 3

**Thomas Charlton** introduced oral history to more than 200 members of the San Antonio, Texas, community at a seminar February 7. The event was sponsored by the Heritage '76 Committee of the San Antonio Bicentennial Committee, with the aid of the Historical Commission and the Institute of Texan Cultures.

**Gwendolyn Safier** presented a paper, "Oral Life History With The Elderly," at the Society for Applied Anthropology meeting March 20 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

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## NEWS

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### BRITISH SOCIETY BROADENS BASE

by David Lance

*The annual meeting and conference of the British Oral History Society took place April 11-13 at the Institute of Dialect and Folk Life Studies of the University of Leeds. The following is based on a report submitted by David Lance of the Imperial War Museum.*

The program reflected the strong interest of social historians (particularly those concerned with working-class communities) and folk-life scholars on the development of oral history in Britain. There were, however, indications that the historical base of the society is broadening. This was apparent by the inclusion of a very competent survey of oral history and African studies, and by the program planned for the society's autumn meeting, at which Dr. David Edge will be discussing his work with prominent scientists.

### OHA EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

The OHA Council, at its Mid-winter Meeting in San Francisco, unanimously approved the appointment of **Ronald E. Marcello** as executive secretary, thus combining the offices of secretary and treasurer.

Transferral of treasurer's records will proceed gradually until the 1975 Colloquium at Asheville, at which time the decision will be submitted for the approval of general membership.

In the year since the society was formally constituted, its membership has increased from eighty-six to nearly three hundred; all signs indicate that the rate of growth will continue to be vigorous. The Leeds conference was particularly valuable in cementing relations between the increasingly diverse individual and institutional members of the society. A developing sense of identity among British oral historians was apparent.

At the annual general meeting, an executive committee of twelve members was elected along with the following principal officers: Theo Barker, University of Kent, chairman; John Saville, University of Hull, vice-chairman; Paul Thompson, University of Essex, editor; Colin Bundy, Manchester Polytechnic, secretary; Mary Girling, University of Essex, treasurer.

The society will next meet on November 1 at the London School of Economics. Meetings for 1976 have been scheduled for Manchester in April and London in November. The 1977 annual meeting will be in Edinburgh.

The first volumes of the *Journal of Latin American Lore* (JLAL) and the *Latin American Lore Monograph Series* have been published by the **UCLA Latin American Center**. Both draw heavily upon oral history theories of James W. Wilkie as developed in *Elitelore*. Johannes Wilbert is editor of the UCLA Latin American Center studies in lore.

A fragment of the "soon-to-be-published" memoirs of **Big Flo Guinness**, Chicago speakeasy matron, appeared in *The New Yorker* March 17. Ms. Guinness recalled her origins in the business, famous customers such as Babe Ruth and Man O' War, and how Nick the Greek acquired his monicker. The interview, entitled *Fine Times: An Oral Memoir*, was concocted by Woody Allen.

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## CALENDAR

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A Bicentennial symposium on agricultural literature entitled "Proud Heritage—Future Promise" is scheduled **September 24-26** at the **National Agricultural Library**, Beltsville, Maryland.

For information, write the Associates of the National Agricultural Library, 10301 Baltimore Blvd., Beltsville, Maryland, 20705.

The first **Conference on Baltimore History** will be held at the Maryland Historical Society, **November 21-22**. The conference will feature scholarly papers on Baltimore history and panels and workshops on such topics as historic preservation, oral history, ethnic history, and immigration history. For program information, write Conference on Baltimore History, Maryland Historical Society, 201 W. Monument Street, Baltimore, Md.

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