



NEWSLETTER

Birmingham Sessions Spotlight Social Change

In keynote speeches, panels, workshops and roundtables, the 1993 Oral History Association meeting in Birmingham, Ala., Nov 4-7, 1993 turned a spotlight on the dramatic changes permeating American society and culture in the past 30 years.

From the spellbinding oratory of civil rights activist Julian Bond to the array of panels examining such disparate topics as health care, school desegregation and oral history in archives, the 229 persons attending the OHA 27th annual meeting could take their pick from a thought-provoking program.

The four-day conference, organized by program chair Kim Lacy Rogers of Dickinson College, with outgoing OHA President Albert S. Broussard presiding, featured more than 45 sessions, including OHA committee meetings, and tours of Birmingham, focusing on the city's Civil Rights Institute and the historic Sloss Furnaces that once cradled Birmingham's iron and steel industry.

Here are some conference highlights.

Visit Birmingham's new Civil Rights Institute, Julian Bond, civil rights activist turned college professor, told the Friday luncheon audience, and you will see in the visitor's book the story of the movement.

"A roll call of the movement's nameless and forgotten," Bond

called the Institute's visitor ledger. "The listings are their testimony to their contribution, their description of what they did, an inventory of the protest movement, a catalogue of what it took to make Project Confrontation work."

Now an adjunct professor of government at the American University and a lecturer in history at the University of Virginia, Bond read name after name and the accompanying description of each one's involvement.

"Got hosed in park." "Spent 15 days in jail." "Marched--Selma to Montgomery." "Lost job with Birmingham schools." "In jail with Martin Luther King."

The brief yet eloquent descriptions "provide excellent opportunity for historians to examine the Birmingham movement anew...from the heart of the movement's mass," Bond said.

"The writers of these testimonies," he added, "are rich sources for historians and should be heroes to us all."

"In their heroism, they do not stand alone. Most of those who made the movement were not famous; they were faceless. They were not the noted; they were the nameless--the marchers with tired feet, the protestors beaten back, the unknown women and men who risked job and home and life."

(Continued on page 5)



New OHA officers and council members gather for final good-byes after the annual business meeting that closed the Birmingham conference. Pictured, left to right, they are: Dale E. Treleven, vice president/president elect; Jan Dodson Barnhart, executive secretary; Al Broussard, past president/ex officio; Kim Lady Smith, president; and council members Anne Ritchie, Linda Shopes and Alphine Jefferson. Council member Art Hansen is not pictured. Also elected to serve on the Nominating Committee were Terry Birdwhistell, Sherma Berger Gluck and Lu Ann Jones. Photo by Tom Charlton, Baylor University



President's Column

By Kim Lady Smith
OHA President

At the 1993 Birmingham meeting, I was asked by several colleagues what I wanted the Oral History Association to achieve in 1994. A historian by education, I chose to reflect on the past before anticipating the future.

Since attending my first Oral History Association meeting in 1980, I have witnessed many important changes in the organization over the past 14 years. The annual meetings have grown more sophisticated with greater diversity in content and participation; women have assumed greater responsibilities within the association; state and regional oral history organizations have become affiliates of the OHA, further strengthening the movement; an endowment has been established; **The Oral History Review** has achieved a high degree of professionalism that advances both the theory and practice of oral history and "The Evaluation Guidelines" published in 1992 have provided practitioners with appropriate standards for oral history research. We also have published four pamphlets, restructured dues to achieve financial stability and expanded the committee system to meet the needs of the association and the continuing challenges of diversity. We have matured and successfully addressed many of the critical issues that plague similar volunteer-based professional organizations. However, many concerns that the OHA has been struggling to resolve for some time continue to require careful consideration, such as those related to multiculturalism and membership.

A continuing concern previously addressed in this column is that of site selection for the annual meetings. Recent efforts to identify moderate cost locations other than hotels have proved disappointing

because the rental charges for appropriate facilities at selected sites were prohibitively high. Moreover, both the 1992 and 1993 annual meetings were affected seriously by limited local support. Past presidents Terry Birdwhistell and Al Broussard were required to spend an inordinate amount of their time managing conference arrangements, tasks never intended to be the responsibility of the OHA president. Despite their best efforts and two excellent programs, local participation was minimal.

With these concerns in mind, a committee is being established to look into the larger issues of site selection. I do not anticipate quick or easy solutions, but a thoughtful assessment of the purpose of our annual meetings and the realistic appraisal of our resources should guide us in directions that will avoid the obvious problems of recent years.

Fortunately, Albuquerque poses few such problems. We have on site an extremely capable and creative conference chair in Rose Diaz. Also on site, in what I suspect is a first for the association, is the local arrangements chair and executive secretary of the association, Jan Barnhart. Moreover, the University of New Mexico through its Center for Southwest Research and Center for Regional Studies have been especially supportive. We also benefit from the support of the Southwest Oral History Association. With all of these key elements for a successful meeting in place, Albuquerque provides us with the opportunity to assess the importance of local support and talent.

Now that I've placed the unnecessary burden of high expectations on my colleagues in Albuquerque, I'll conclude this column with an answer to those who asked what I hoped would be achieved this year. Thanks to the efforts of previous leadership and the willingness of members to

dedicate their time and abilities to the OHA, I anticipate that in 1994 we can move ahead with the business of the association unencumbered by the uncertainties of recent years. With an adequate budget and the appointment of a new executive secretary and newsletter editor, we now can turn our attention to issues that have been neglected due to these and other pressing concerns.

In 1994 we will see the establishment of a scholarship committee and an awards program, more aggressive promotion of oral history in general and OHA membership in particular and further consideration of issues related to diversity and multiculturalism. We also need to consider the implications of new technologies that are beginning to change the face of oral history and make issues of access and preservation more critical. There is much to be done and I look forward to working with members as we further define and move ahead the goals of the Oral History Association.

OHA Needs You!

To help the Oral History Association meet future needs and to ensure that we can continue to provide the highest level of services, OHA invites members and friends to support the endowment fund.

The OHA Endowment Fund is a special account, based on but not limited to life memberships, that accumulates a balance so that earnings may be used for special projects or for emergency needs.

For information or to contribute to the endowment fund, write to: Jan Barnhart, Executive Secretary, Oral History Association, P.O. Box 3968, Albuquerque, NM 87190-3968.

Joe B. Frantz (1916-1993): An Appreciation

By Thomas L. Charlton, Baylor University

Mentor to numerous American oral historians since the 1960s, Joe B. Frantz died Nov. 13, 1993, in Houston, Texas, his retirement home. A scholar/teacher on topics related to the American West, business history and his native Texas and author or co-author of more than two dozen books, Joe is perhaps best remembered by OHA members for his prodigious research and direction of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Oral History Project, one of the largest research collections in the LBJ Library.

Joe earned all three of his academic degrees at his beloved University of Texas at Austin, where he taught for nearly 40 years. He also found time to direct the Texas State Historical Association for 11 years. He served as a consultant to the Johnson White House, a work of love for Joe, whose long, close friendship with the Johnson family spanned several decades. When president Johnson decided not to seek reelection in 1968, Joe and a cadre of young historians conducted the ambitious oral-history study of the life and times of LBJ. Following Joe's retirement from UT-Austin in 1985 as Walter Prescott Webb Professor Emeritus, he remained active as Turnbull Professor of History at Corpus Christi State University until diabetes forced his second retirement last summer.

While he never held elective office in OHA, Joe was interested keenly in the association's development. He was instrumental in hosting the 1972 annual meeting in Austin--which many remember as the time we heard Alex Haley tell the exciting story that soon appeared in his book, "Roots." Joe personally addressed other OHA conferences. He was an advocate of oral history everywhere he traveled--as well as in the history graduate seminar with those of us who at first timidly wondered about its acceptance as a research method among traditional historians.

I first met Joe in 1959 as I enrolled in graduate study in Austin. It was in his American business history seminar during 1960-61 that Joe gently nudged me into oral history research and I nervously interviewed for a seminar paper Walter Flavius McCaleb (retired in Austin) about his direct involvement in labor banking in Cleveland, Ohio, during the 1920s. Financially impoverished by my new Webcor reel-to-reel recorder, that same year I plunged into oral history activity that extended into several more taped interviews for my M.A. thesis on the history of Texas law enforcement.

Joe Frantz was more than a regional historian. Eclectic almost to a fault, he loved to travel and teach abroad, including stints in Chile, Peru, Ecuador and Mexico. At home, Joe enjoyed puncturing Anglo superiority by reminding audiences that Spaniards were in the American Southwest 300 years before *los Americanos* arrived. Joe loved to fraternize with graduate students, activity often punctuated with Longhorn baseball, bowls of chili and country music. His nasalized Texas twang and aw-shucks boyishness turned heads, but these traits could not disguise the depth of his intelligence or his grasp of ideas.

A standing-room crowd gathered in Austin Nov. 20, 1993, to hear selections of Joe's favorite jazz recordings and warm tributes by family and friends. Many of the speakers characterized Joe's oral history work as among his greatest. Joe Frantz' remains are interred in the Texas State Cemetery, near the gravesite of his own mentor, frontier historian Walter Prescott Webb, from whom Joe originally had learned the research value of a personal narrative.

Executive Secretary's Report

By Jan Dodson Barnhart

The organization is to be congratulated for an outstanding meeting in Birmingham. After all figures are complete (some of the bills have not yet arrived), I will summarize a report for the information of the membership.

In my last article, I indicated that publications could be ordered directly at the following telephone number: 505-265-3838. Using this number saves a lot of valuable time because I do not have to transfer the order to Barbara Daniels, the

OHA assistant. It goes right to her answering machine and the order obviously can be sent more quickly. Please use this number, which will answer to Owl Editing, Barbara's company.

Please plan to attend the Albuquerque conference next Oct. 27-30. We already have had inquiries about this annual meeting and have had several local organizations volunteer time, talent and people to the effort. Judging from the numbers who have indicated they will attend, the turnout should be high. We will be ready!

Meanwhile, best wishes for the New Year.

Pamphlets Available

You may order the following pamphlets from the OHA for \$7.50 each:

- "Oral History and the Law," Second Edition
- "Using Oral History in Community History Projects"
- "Oral History in the Secondary School Classroom"

Copies of "Oral History Evaluation Guidelines" are available for \$5 each.

Add \$1.50 for shipping and handling on all orders.

STATE AND REGIONAL REPORT



Chicago Oral Historians Hold Monthly Lectures

Oral historians in the Greater Chicago area have a monthly menu of evening programs on an array of topics thanks to the Chicago Oral History Roundtable (COHR).

Vicki Haas, COHR chairperson, said the group lined up monthly programs for the second consecutive year to attract persons interested in varied aspects of oral history throughout the metropolitan area.

Upcoming programs include lectures on projects related to the Jewish and African-American communities, a tour of the Motorola Museum of Electronics and presentations by former OHA presidents Cullom Davis, on interviewing, and John Neuenschwander, on oral history and the law. All lectures are free.

Haas said COHR has about 40 paid members and a mailing list of about 100 persons interested in oral history in the region. For more information about COHR or the lecture series, call Haas at 708-681-3696.

NOHA, SOHA Plan Joint Spring Meet

The Northwest Oral History Association and Southwest Oral History Association will team up with the National Council on Public History for a joint meeting March 15-18 at the Sacramento Downtown Holiday Inn.

The theme of the meeting is "Public History and the

Environment."

NOHA President Linda Morton-Keithly said the two oral history groups will hold separate business meetings during the four-day conference.

For further information about the conference, write to the National Council on Public History's program chairperson, Alan Newell, HRA Inc., P.O. Box 7086, Missoula, MT 59807.

MOHC Takes Look At Rural Life In Michigan

By Geneva Kebler Wiskemann
Michigan Oral History Council

The November annual meeting/conference of the Michigan Oral History Council (MOHC) ushered in Jeffrey G. Charnley as president, following the leadership of Gordon Olson. Charnley has sparked thousands of Michigan State University freshmen's enthusiasm for studying history and applying oral history to writing.

Gwendolyn Etter-Lewis, Western Michigan University, moved from the board of directors to vice president. Saralee Howard-Filler, research and development historian at the Michigan Historical Museum, joins the board for an initial term.

Other officers are William R. Gulley Jr., treasurer, and Geneva Kebler Wiskemann, secretary. Members of the board for 1994 also include Nancy E. Dunn, Philip P. Mason, Glenn Ruggles and Margaret Ward.

The fall conference, "Agriculture and Rural Life: Oral History and Michigan's Past," offered panels and lectures by oral historians whose work focuses on changes in living and traditions, the role of farm women, ethnic enclaves, fairs and preservation of barns. Workshops for 4-H youths and leadership were included. The

conference took place at Gull Lake, site of the summer home and experimental farm of W. K. Kellogg, now operated by MSU as the Kellogg Biological Station Education Center. A video record of the program is available from MOHC for \$20.

The board's agenda for its Jan. 24 meeting includes a proposed name change, revision of duties of the vice president, by-law and constitution update, a membership campaign plan, awards and the schedule of meetings and workshops.

New Southern Group Plans Atlanta Meet

The inaugural spring meeting of the Southern Oral History Organization (SOHO) is scheduled for April 29-30 at the Atlanta History Center.

Highlighting the meeting will be a screening of the recently completed documentary film, "The Uprising of 1934," on Piedmont mill workers and the textile strike of 1934. The meeting also will feature workshops on oral history and the classroom, media and oral history, community-based oral history and the oral history of Georgia's carpet industry.

In addition, participants will be able to tour the new Atlanta History Museum, one of the country's largest. The 83,000-square-foot building includes exhibits on Southern folk crafts, Atlanta's black upper class, the Civil War from the common soldier's perspective and the rituals and holidays of immigrant communities in Atlanta, as well as an overview of the city's history. The center is near restaurants, shops and entertainment and also includes 32 acres of gardens, a farm house from the 1840s, the Swan House Mansion and other attractions.

SOHO was formed in November 1992 to advance oral history efforts in the South. SOHO members

attending the OHA meeting in Birmingham voted to affiliate with the OHA.

Elected to SOHO's interim steering committee were: Connie Curry of Atlanta, Charles Lowery of Mississippi State University and Mel Steeley of West Georgia State College. For information about SOHO or its 1994 spring meeting, contact the interim coordinator, Cliff Kuhn, History Department, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA 30303. Phone 404-651-3255.

Texas Journal Available

The first issue of the Texas Oral History Association's annual journal, **Sound Historian**, will be available in January. To order copies, call TOHA at 817-755-3437, or send a check or money order for \$5 to TOHA, P.O. Box 97271, Baylor University, Waco, TX 76798-7271. The journal is free to TOHA members.

Conference Notebook

Oral History Review Editor Michael Frisch offered a good excuse for failing to attend the Birmingham conference. He and his wife, Jo Freudenheim, became the parents of Miriam Kate Freudenheim Frisch on Oct. 19, 1993, a first for both of them.

Frisch said she weighed 7 lbs., 5 oz. and so far, looks exactly like her mother.

The **Review** was, however, represented at the OHA conference by Mike Di Virgilio, a graduate student at SUNY-Buffalo.

For the second consecutive year, Jeanne Suchanek of the Kentucky Historical Society and Jeffrey Suchanek of the University of Kentucky Oral History Program handled the conference registration desk.

The Suchaneks welcomed OHA members to the Birmingham conference and helped keep the operation running smoothly and congenially.

More Highlights...

(Continued From Page 1)

"Let no one tell us their movement did not succeed."

Among its lessons, Bond said, the civil rights movement "provides a lesson of hope, found as surely in Martin Luther King's famous dream as in the anonymous actions of the nameless many and in the testimonies written in the Institute's ledger here."

Dan T. Carter, noted historian of the South, regaled the Saturday dinner audience with accounts of his experiences researching his current project, a biography of former Alabama governor and third-party presidential candidate George Wallace.

Carter said his initial interviews for the project were useless, which "had a lot to do with the fact that they were politicians."

Later, responding to questions, Carter said he never has interviewed Wallace and doesn't plan to do so for two reasons. First, he said, after reading thousands of pages of Wallace interviews by good interviewers, he is not convinced there are any new facts to be learned. And second, Carter said he has seen even people who hate Wallace "totally melt after they've interviewed him for an hour...because of pity for him....I don't trust myself."

New York author Mickey Pearlman recounted some of her experiences preparing her collections of interviews with writing women.

Speaking at the Thursday evening dinner, Pearlman sparked a lively discussion when she told the audience: "I'm not too happy with the notion of hyphenated people."

"I'm kind of afraid of the increasing Balkanization that I see," Pearlman said, adding:

"I don't think it celebrates anybody. I think it trivializes people....It's a kind of intellectual slavery."

E. Culpepper Clark, author of "The Schoolhouse Door: Segregation's Last Stand at the University of Alabama," opened the conference Thursday afternoon to a standing-room-only crowd, describing some of his experiences researching his book, published early last year.

"Innermost truths were coming from archives," he said. "In the '50s, people did not yet know to destroy records."

Clark is executive assistant to the president of the University of Alabama and also is a professor of speech communications and history.

Carl G. Ryant, 1942-1993

Carl Ryant, history professor at the University of Louisville and co-director of the University's Oral History Program, died Dec. 2, 1993. A long-time member of the Oral History Association, Ryant headed the International Committee from its inception in 1985 through 1993. He participated in several international oral history meetings and presented papers in Canada, England, France, Spain, Italy and The Netherlands as well as the U.S. Ryant was an adviser to the Kentucky Oral History Commission from 1976 through 1993.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio, on June 28, 1942, Ryant earned a B.A. from Case-Western Reserve University in 1964 and a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin in 1968, the same year he began teaching at the University of Louisville. The University's College of Arts and Sciences gave him its Distinguished Service Award in 1993.

Ryant's survivors are his wife, the former Mary Lou Neville, and his son, Neville G. Ryant.

The family suggests contributions be made to the American Cancer Society. Contributions also may be made in Ryant's honor to the OHA's Endowment Fund.

BULLETIN BOARD

Conferences/Meetings

1994 OHA Meeting Set in Historic Albuquerque

The complex mix of traditions from the Native American, Hispanic and Anglo cultures of the American Southwest provides the setting for the 1994 annual meeting of the Oral History Association in Albuquerque, N.M.

Scheduled for Oct. 27-30 at the Sheraton Old Town, the conference offers an opportunity to examine intercultural antagonism as well as efforts at better understanding across cultures.

"Crisis and conflict exist in all cultures," said conference chair Rose Diaz of the University of New Mexico. "One of our goals is to stimulate interdisciplinary and comparative debate."

The conference hotel is within walking distance of historic Old Town Albuquerque, with its museums, restaurants, art galleries and specialty shops. Albuquerque International Airport is about 15 minutes away, and the hotel provides courtesy vans for transportation.

Look for more details of the conference program and agenda in upcoming issues of the OHA Newsletter.

National Oral History Association of New Zealand

NOHANZ and the New Zealand Historical Association will hold a joint conference Aug. 19-22 in Auckland, N.Z. Conference themes include: land rights, medicine and health, gender, constructions of Maori history, work, migration, New Zealand's relations with the wider world and the presentation of history.

For more information, write to:

NZHA Conference Organiser,
History Department, University of
Auckland, Private Bag 92019,
Auckland, N.Z.

Oral History in the Mid-Atlantic Region

OHMAR will hold its spring meeting in Arlington, Va., at the new Arlington County Central Library on April 22. For more information, write to OHMAR, P.O. Box 2351, Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C. 20002.

Announcements

California State University, Sacramento

The History Department at California State University, Sacramento is seeking to fill a tenure-track position in oral history and public history, at the assistant or associate professor level. The position requires a Ph.D. in history, ability to administer oral history projects and teach in a graduate public history program. Oral history experience, a strong record in administration of oral history projects and obtaining oral history contracts preferred. Experience teaching public history and other college/university courses preferred. Teaching assignment includes oral history, survey courses and possible specialized courses in U.S. history. Review of applications begins Feb. 21 for the position, which begins in the fall 1994 semester. Apply to Margaret Goodart, Chair, History Department, California State University, Sacramento, 6000 J St., Sacramento, CA 95819-6059. AA/EEO

Vermont College Summer Workshops

Upcoming this summer, Charles Morrissey again will offer two oral history workshops at Vermont College in Montpelier. Dates for

the workshops are Aug. 1-5 and Aug. 15-19. Call Sandra Joslyn at 802-828-8802 for information about lodging, meals, registration and other logistical details. Call Morrissey at 713-798-4501 for information about course content.

Native Alaskan Interviews

Western Washington University history professor Chris Friday is seeking information about individuals or existing oral histories of Native Alaskans who were active in the Alaska Native Brotherhood and Sisterhood during the 1930s and 1940s and who were associated with the commercial salmon fisheries during those years. Friday may be reached at the Department of History, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA 98225-9056. Telephone 206-650-4862.

Calls for Papers

New England Historical Association

The New England Historical Association will hold its 1994 fall conference Oct. 22 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge. Papers or proposals on any historical topic, area or period may be submitted by July 15. For proposal or membership information, write to Peter Holloran, NEHA Executive Secretary, Pine Manor College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02167.

Rural/Farm Women in Historical Perspective

The Fifth Conference on Rural/Farm Women in Historical Perspective is planned for Dec. 1-4 at the National 4-H Conference Center in Chevy Chase, Md.

The purpose of the conference is to provide a forum for shared discussion of the immediate issues facing rural/farm women and policy makers and the historical and social science context of those issues offered by researchers. Of

particular interest will be sessions on issues of current concern that combine both a contemporary and historical perspective. Such sessions offer an ideal opportunity for including both academic and nonacademic presenters and for encouraging interdisciplinary cooperation. Sessions also should address the diversity of rural and farm life in the United States.

Proposals for single papers/presentations and complete sessions should be submitted by April 30 to: Anne B.W. Effland, ERS/USDA, Rm. 932D, 1301 New York Ave., NW, Washington D.C. 20005-4788. Fax 202-219-0391. Call with questions: 202-219-0787.

International Annual of Oral History

The Greenwood Publishing Group's International Annual of Oral History (formerly the International Journal of Oral History) offers a forum for introducing readers to worldwide

developments in oral history, which raise major theoretical, methodological and interpretive issues.

The IAOH is seeking articles for forthcoming volumes that will focus on the intersection between oral history and work being done in folklore, women's studies and disability studies and in those areas welcomes papers on theoretical, historiographical and methodological issues, substantive case studies and review essays.

For more information about publication requirements, contact Jerrold Hirsch, Editor, IAOH, Division of Social Science, Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville, MO 63501. Telephone 816-785-4690 or 816-627-1810. Fax 816-785-4181.

International Yearbook of Oral History and Life Stories

The International Yearbook of Oral History and Life Stories will devote its fifth volume to issues

concerning the influence and significance of genre in different forms of autobiographical narrative, both oral and written.

The special editor and author of the introduction for this volume will be Alessandro Portelli, who teaches American literature at the University of Rome.

The volume will be interdisciplinary, and the editors will be looking especially for articles that compare different forms of oral and written life stories.

The editors would welcome general comments, specific proposals and suggestions for books to review. Proposals of up to two pages should be sent before April 1 to **both** of the following addresses: Selma Leydesdorff, Belle van Zuylen Onderzoeks Instituut, University of Amsterdam, Rokin 84-90, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Fax 20-525-2219. And to Alessandro Portelli, via Cassia 1415, 00141 Rome, Italy. Fax 6-8632-0369.

SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH

New Jersey Historical Commission

The New Jersey Historical Commission is offering grants of up to \$8,000 to help projects that deal with New Jersey history. Eligible activities include research, writing, publication, exhibitions, oral history, teacher training, curriculum development, classroom projects, public events, the conservation of historical collections and the production of film, video and radio/television programs.

Application deadline is Feb. 1.

The commission also offers minigrants of up to \$1,000 to help smaller-scale projects. Applications for minigrants to support public events must be submitted at least 90 days before the event. There is no application deadline for other minigrants.

For application forms, guidelines or more information, write to Grants and Prizes, New Jersey Historical Commission, CN305, Trenton, NJ 08625-0305 or

call 609-292-6062 Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

U.S. Army Center of Military History

The center offers two dissertation fellowships annually to support scholarly research and writing among qualified civilian graduate students preparing dissertations on the history of war on land, as broadly defined. The fellowships carry a stipend of \$8,000 each and access to the center's facilities and technical expertise.

Application deadline is Feb. 1.

For more information about eligibility requirements and application forms, contact the Executive Secretary, Dissertation Fellowship Committee, U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1099 14th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20005-3402, telephone 202-504-5402.

Editor's Notes

At the suggestion of several persons at the OHA conference in Birmingham, the OHA **Newsletter** would like to run a regular feature on how state and regional organizations have tackled and solved problems that may be common to many.

"The Experience File" will draw from the true life stories of state and regional groups, focusing on how these volunteer-dependent organizations can improve their operations.

If you have an experience that works--an idea for putting on conferences, building membership or maintaining contact in geographically dispersed areas--pass it on through "The Experience File." To fax an article to the **Newsletter**, dial 703-379-4381.

OHA Business Meeting Has Lively Discussions

Occasionally lively discussion sparked the OHA annual business meeting the last morning of the Birmingham conference.

On issues related to OHA membership and governance, members at the meeting:

-- Heard former OHA president Ron Grele report for the International Committee on plans for an International Conference on Oral History scheduled for Oct. 18-23 in New York City. Members also approved a resolution thanking International Committee Chair Carl Ryant, who was ill, for his long stewardship of the committee. [Ryant died Dec 2, 1993. See the obituary on page 5.]

-- Heard Membership Committee Chair Jay Haymond report his committee's recommendation that the OHA Council consider a "Newsletter only" membership category.

-- Approved a resolution calling on each OHA member to bring a

new member to the 1994 annual conference.

-- Urged the executive secretary to include minutes of the annual meeting in future issues of the OHA Directory.

-- Heard Multiculturalism Committee Co-Chair Celia Alvarez report her committee members' commitment to seeking institutional resources to help them bring students to the next OHA conference and to maintain contact with each other during the year through electronic mail.

-- Heard Council member Linda Shopes report that an ad hoc committee on awards is developing proposals for Council to consider on awards recognizing use of oral history in publications, public presentations and teaching, among other categories.

Also approved at the business meeting were two resolutions dealing with oral history and the academic community. They were:

-- A resolution by Vice President/President Elect Dale Treleven to work with officials at the National Endowment for the Humanities to improve NEH support for oral history.

-- A resolution by Rina Benmayor of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at New York's Hunter College to support the proposed appointment of Rutgers University Professor Maria Josefa Canino as new director of the Puerto Rican Studies Center.

Russians Visit OHA

Russian historian Victor A. Berdinskikh and his wife, Marina, principal of a private school in Kirov, attended the OHA conference to learn how oral history is practiced in the United States. An article by Berdinskikh about oral history in the former Soviet Union will appear in the May issue of the Newsletter.

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