



## NEWSLETTER

## Variety Sparks Milwaukee Meeting

Milwaukee's elegantly restored Pfister Hotel played host to the Oral History Association's 29th annual meeting Oct. 19-22, 1995, as more than 330 gathered to participate in a wide variety of panels, featured speakers, off-site tours and the presentation of the first OHA awards for outstanding work.

Under the direction of President Dale Treleven and organized by program cochair Michael Gordon and Gwen Etter-Lewis and local arrangements chair Tim Ericson, the Milwaukee meeting included an array of sessions and workshops ranging from oral history in the classroom to

oral history in the federal government and in communities of all types. Among the special features of the program was a tribute to Studs Terkel, interviewer, author, radio host, listener, one-time actor and popularizer of oral history.

In introducing Terkel at the Friday luncheon, **Oral History Review** Editor Michael Frisch called Terkel's 11 books "a monumental record of our time."

Terkel lamented the lack of a sense of history in the nation's popular media today. "It's as though there is no past," he said. "We're suffering from a national Alzheimer's disease."

He said his books are his effort to show what it was like to live at a particular time and place in the past. "We're talking about people who are not celebrated,...people it's important for young people to know," he said, adding:

"Our challenge is to recover a buried past."

In a plenary session following Terkel's luncheon speech, a panel of scholars offered a varied critique of his work.

Ronald Grele of Columbia University said a continuing theme of Terkel's work is the tension between

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## First OHA Awards Presented

A focus on communities was a common theme among the first three Oral History Association awards for outstanding work presented Oct. 18, 1995, at the annual meeting in Milwaukee.

Awards in three more categories will be presented for the first time at the 1996 OHA meeting in Philadelphia. (See page 4 for details.)

The 1995 winners were:

+Book Award: "Portraits in Steel," with interviews by Michael Frisch and photographs by Milton Rogovin, published by Cornell University Press in 1993;

+Precollegiate Teaching Award: Michael Brooks of Suva Intermediate School in Bell Gardens, Calif., for his "Long, Long Ago Oral History Project;"

+Nonprint Award: the film "The Uprising of '34," George C. Stoney and Judith Helfand, coproducers/codirectors, and Very Rony, executive producer.

"Portraits in Steel" is a study of deindustrialization in Buffalo, N.Y., and through photos and interviews documents both continuity and change in the lives of Buffalo steelworkers and their families.

The book award jury said: "These nearly unforgettable photographs and these masterful interviews...add up to a total product that is well more than the sum of its parts: an edifying book that is a model of the oral history craft."

Intermediate school teacher Brooks has been doing oral history with his students for 20 years,

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## Editor's Note

By Mary Kay Quinlan

The 12-page format resumes with this issue of the **OHA Newsletter**.

And another change is in store. To provide OHA members with more timely information about the annual fall conferences, the third issue of the **Newsletter** will now be sent to members in early August, rather than early September.

As a result, the copy deadline to submit materials for that issue will be July 1. The schedule remains unchanged for the other two issues, with copy deadlines of April 1 and Dec. 1.

Please make note of the change.





## From Your President

By Anne G. Ritchie, OHA President

At the 1995 meeting in Milwaukee, the first Oral History Association awards were presented for outstanding book, documentary film and precollegiate teaching. Getting to this point was no small undertaking. Past councils and presidents have debated the issue of awards for years. Why, you might ask. There certainly were divisions of opinion. Some opposed awards in principle, but others had problems defining what types of awards would best reflect the full dimensions of oral history.

Most associations present awards for print publications. Yet many oral historians will never publish a book or an article. Oral historians often do their work in nonprint media, or in the classroom, or simply face-to-face with an interviewee and a tape recorder, conducting and completing a project that others will later use. No single award ever seemed appropriate to recognize these diverse endeavors.

While others tried before and failed, and others hesitated even to venture into the maze, one brave committee tackled the issue and succeeded. Their deliberations consumed many hours of discussion and many reams of paper. They consulted regularly with the council, talked with former officers and kept the membership informed. They considered every possibility and worked out endless details. And they produced a workable plan.

Who were they? Linda Shopes chaired the committee and was its moving force. Ably serving with her were Barbara Allen Bogart, Suellen Cheng, Gwen Etter-Lewis, Art Hansen, Richard Lothead and Marjorie McLellan. They were the oversight committee. Three separate committees then met to sift through this year's submissions and make a choice for each of the three categories.

The book committee, chaired by Howard Green, with Teresa Barnett, Art Hansen, Alphine Jefferson and Karen Olson, received more books than they ever anticipated. Jo Blatti chaired the nonprint format committee, with Ruth Hill, David Mould and Della Pollock. They viewed videos, films and slide-tape presentations. For the precollegiate teaching award, Steve Novak chaired the committee with Sylvia Arden, Karen Hirsch and Richard Williams. They reviewed curriculum materials and letters of endorsement. They all deserve our sincere appreciation for launching the program and for their excellent selections.

Congratulations, of course, to the winners. They represent oral history at its finest.

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## Executive Secretary's Report

By Rebecca Sharpless

Kezia Ruiz, our OHA staff assistant, and I extend our heartiest thanks to all who made the 1995 annual meeting a smashing success, especially: program co-chairs Michael Gordon and Gwen Etter-Lewis; local arrangements chair Tim Ericson and his entire outstanding committee, especially Julie Thomas, professional meeting planner turned archivist; and, of course, President Dale Treleven. On to Philadelphia! And beyond that to New Orleans, where planning is already shifting into gear.

On housekeeping matters, membership renewals will go out in very early January. Please save us time, postage and hassle by paying your dues on the first notice. Slackers, be warned: we're soon going to start a new system. No dues, no services!

In September, the OHA had its first-ever financial audit. I am pleased to report that we came away with a clean bill of health. Please let me know if you would like to see a copy of the audit. As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions. Thanks for your patience during our transition year.

## Multiculturality Group Meets in Milwaukee

By Alva Moore Stevenson  
Multiculturality Committee  
Chair

The OHA Committee on Multiculturality met during the OHA's annual meeting in Milwaukee. Led by OHA Council Liaison Alphine Jefferson, an enthusiastic gathering of old and new faces discussed a number of issues. Among them were:

- Naming new members. Darcie Iki of the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles and Valerie Grim of Indiana University were nominated for three-year terms. Ruth Wilson of the Humanities Council Project and Bernice McNair Barnett of the University of Illinois-Urbana were nominated for two-year terms. And Brenda Jones of the National Security Agency and Frank Harry Wilson of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee were nominated for one-year terms.

- Reviewing the committee's mission/goals statement framed upon its inception in 1988.

- Determining how to broaden OHA membership and attendance/participation at annual meetings by community/grassroots groups.

- Broadening the committee's participation throughout the structure of OHA, particularly on the various committees.

- The committee's role in the 1996 annual meeting especially with regard to submitting program proposals.

Veteran committee members were particularly gratified by the many new members who expressed enthusiasm and a willingness to participate throughout the coming year.

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*The OHA Newsletter hopes to increase coverage of OHA committee activities and welcomes contributions from committee leaders and members. Please note the copy deadlines listed on page 1.*



## Council OKs Plan For Site Selection

The OHA Council has approved the recommendations of an ad hoc committee on meeting site selection.

The committee was charged with considering members' concerns and the purpose of the annual meetings within the context of the association's financial and staffing realities. It recommended that:

1. The OHA maintain the regular regional rotation established by Council in 1982 to bring the annual meeting to the various geographic regions on a reasonable basis, allowing for some flexibility if necessary, and also to maintain the eight geographic regions as established by Council in 1988.

2. The OHA's executive secretary assume responsibility for organizing the site selection process. For each annual meeting, Council will appoint an OHA member to coordinate site selection in the region where the meeting is scheduled to be held. The regional appointee will coordinate activities with and report findings to the executive secretary as appropriate.

The current rotation system for the most part has worked, and the committee could not envision a better alternative. Establishing local arrangements will be a major concern no matter where OHA meets, under any arrangement. Shifting the overall coordinating responsibility for site selection to the executive secretary will provide more continuity from year to year, given the increasing necessity for planning meetings years in advance, in order to reserve sufficient space at ideal dates and reasonable costs.

Serving on the ad hoc committee were: Ron Marcello, Lois Myers, Anne Ritchie (chair), Rebecca Sharpless, Alva Moore Stevenson, Dick Sweterlitsch and Greg Thompson.



OHA officers and council members bid farewell after the annual business meeting that closed the 1995 conference in Milwaukee. Pictured, left to right in the back row, are: Kezia Ruiz, assistant to the executive secretary; Alphine Jefferson, council member; Dale Treleven, past president; Rebecca Sharpless, executive secretary. In the front row, left to right, are: Richard Candida Smith, vice-president/president elect; Anne Ritchie, president; Rose Diaz, council member. Not pictured are Cliff Kuhn and Pamela Dean.

In addition to electing Smith and Diaz, the 171 OHA members who cast ballots in the 1995 elections chose for the nominating committee Celia Alvarez, Lois E. Myers and Steven J. Novak. *Photo by Tom Charlton.*

## OHA Scholarship Fund Becomes Official

The Oral History Association has formally established a scholarship fund to broaden the diversity of attendance at annual meetings. The ad hoc committee that developed this program included Tom Charlton, Karen Hirsch, Rebecca Sharpless (chair) and Andor Skotnes.

To fund the scholarships, Council committed a percentage of the net profit from each annual meeting for scholarships for the succeeding year's meeting. Members may also make contributions to the fund on their OHA membership renewal forms.

A new three-person committee, Karen Hirsch, Rebecca Sharpless and Andor Skotnes (chair), will make the awards for the 1996 annual meeting.

Scholarship preference will be given to students, community oral historians and applicants from underrepresented groups. Scholarships will be available only for persons not on that year's program. Applicants will be asked to provide a statement of interest in oral history, of financial need and of the potential benefits to their community. The committee will have the discretion to decide the number and size of awards to make, depending on available financing. Deadline for applications for the 1996 meeting is Aug. 1. To receive an application form, contact the OHA, P.O. Box 97234, Baylor University, Waco, TX 76798-7234. Phone: 817-755-2764. E-mail: [OHA\\_Support@Baylor.edu](mailto:OHA_Support@Baylor.edu).

**Presidents Galore:** Fifteen former OHA presidents made their way to Milwaukee for the 1995 conference. They are: Terry Birdwhistell, Albert Broussard, Tom Charlton, Cullom Davis, Lila Goff, Ronald Grele, Sam Hand, Alice Hoffman, Ron Marcello, Charles Morrissey, John Neuenschwander, Donald Ritchie, Martha Ross, Kim Lady Smith and John Wickman.





*Winners of the first Oral History Association awards, from left to right: Judith Helfand, coproducer/codirector of "The Uprising of '34," for the nonprint media award; Michael Frisch, interviewer, and Milton Rogovin, photographer, of "Portraits in Steel," for the book award; and Michael Brooks of Suva Intermediate School in Bell Gardens, Calif., for the precollegiate teaching award. Photo by Tom Charlton.*

## OHA Awards...

(Continued from Page 1)

in which he has brought together people of various ages, different cultures, and diverse ways of life to learn, interact and share experiences. Brooks' students have been involved in every stage of carrying out an oral history project, from initial research and selection of interviewees to publication and other public presentations based on their work.

"The Uprising of '34," a film about the general textile strike of 1934, integrates the views of mill workers and owners and of white and black residents of the textile mill towns. The nonprint award jury praised the film for "incorporating exemplary use of archival stills and footage with the oral histories." The jury noted that the filmmakers "accomplished their aims imaginatively within a limited but not limiting budget."

## Oral History and Memory on Agenda in Hawaii

Oral History Association members Alice and Howard Hoffman were among the presenters at an American Historical Association Pacific Coast Branch meeting last August in Maui, Hawaii. The theme of the symposium was "Memory, Psychology and the Historian's Craft." Various presenters focused on studies of how memories of events change over time. The Hoffmans described a study they had conducted with Bryn Mawr College students and alumnae of their memories of their first month at college.

Seven of the subjects were juniors at Bryn Mawr, seven were returning to the campus for their 25th reunion and seven were returning for their 50th reunion. After describing all they could remember of their first month at the college, subjects were given copies of the student newspaper appropriate to the time frame of their recollections. For subjects who were only two years away from the events, about 35 percent of the news reports stimulated recall of additional information while only about 15 percent of the news reports stimulated older subjects to provide additional recall. Alice Hoffman noted that the research offers "promising avenues for interdisciplinary evaluation of the accuracy and stability of memory over time and points to the need for oral historians to pursue further research in the study of memory."

## Deadlines Set For 1996 Awards

The Oral History Association will present three awards at its annual meeting in Philadelphia this fall to recognize outstanding work in the following categories:

- Published article or essay that uses oral history to advance an important historical interpretation or addresses significant theoretical or methodological issues;
- Completed oral history project that addresses a significant historical subject or theme and exemplifies excellence in oral history methodology;
- Postsecondary educator involved in undergraduate, graduate, continuing or professional education who has made outstanding use of oral history in the classroom.

All awards will be given for work published or completed between Jan. 1, 1994, and March 30, 1996.

For guidelines and submission information, write to: OHA, Baylor University, P.O. Box 97234, Waco, TX 76798-7234. E-mail: [OHA\\_Support@Baylor.edu](mailto:OHA_Support@Baylor.edu).

All nomination materials must be received by April 1.

## Kentucky Commission Celebrates 20 Years

The Kentucky Oral History Commission is celebrating its 20th anniversary with its 1996 Kentucky Conference on Oral History Feb. 8-10 in Louisville, Ky.

The conference will feature a variety of speakers, including civil rights activist Julian Bond, Archivist of the United States John Carlin and noted oral historian and former OHA president Charles Morrissey. Current OHA President Anne Ritchie and former president Donald Ritchie will conduct an oral history workshop.

For information, contact the Kentucky Oral History Commission, P.O. Box 1792, Frankfort, KY 40602. Phone: 502-564-3016.



## OHA Breakfast To Feature Judi Jennings

Judi Jennings, chair of the Kentucky Oral History Commission and director of the University of Louisville Women's Center, will present "'My Mama Told Me:' Reclaiming the STORY in Oral HiSTORY" at the Oral History Association's breakfast at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians.

The breakfast is at 7 a.m. on March 30 at Chicago's Palmer House Hilton.

Jennings' presentation will reaffirm the story-telling aspects of oral history, drawing on experiences with her stage production, "Hillbilly Women," a four-woman play based on stories told by her mother.

Anyone wishing to attend just the OHA breakfast can send \$18 to the Organization of American Historians, 112 N. Bryan St., Bloomington, IN 47408-4199. Phone: 812-855-7311. Deadline for breakfast registration only is March 7.

## Clinton Opens Conn. Research Center

President Clinton opened the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center at the University of Connecticut on Oct. 15, 1995, inaugurating a four-day conference on human rights and dedicating the building that now houses the Center for Oral History, the Center for Judaic Studies and Contemporary Jewish Life and the University Archives and Special Collections.

Conference highlights included panels of Nuremberg attorneys, Japanese-American internees and Holocaust survivors. The latter panel was moderated by Bruce M. Stave, director of the Center for Oral History and newly appointed editor of the **Oral History Review**.

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A Green Bay Packers jersey, museum memberships, books, wine an Oscar Mayer Weinermobile and a truly remarkable gigantic foam Wisconsin cheesehead were among the Wisconsin goodies that brought \$562 in the silent auction at Milwaukee organized by John and Lucy Neuen-schwander. Proceeds from the silent auction benefitted the OHA Endowment Fund.

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## By-Laws Revised At Annual Meeting

Voting on recommendations of the ad hoc committee on Council restructuring, chaired by Terry Birdwhistell, OHA members attending the annual business meeting in Milwaukee approved creation of a new OHA office--first vice president.

Under the revised constitution and by-laws, the person elected as first vice president will serve as vice president/president-elect the following year and as president the third year. The office of past president was abolished. The changes were proposed to more evenly distribute responsibility for annual meeting planning, with the first vice president initiating planning for the annual meeting to be held during the year he or she serves as vice president/president elect.

Also at the annual business meeting OHA members:

--Heard the ad hoc committee on membership development report that it is putting together a survey to gather information on who our members are and what they want.

--Passed resolutions commending the Pfister Hotel and its labor unions, program committee co-chairs Michael Gordon and Gwen Etter-Lewis and local arrangements chair Tim Ericson.

## Milwaukee Highlights...

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inclusiveness and exclusiveness. "If there's one group of people Studs hates, it's excluders," Grele said.

Linda Gordon of the University of Wisconsin-Madison said a fundamental premise of Terkel's work is that "you can find intellectuals anywhere."

Albert Broussard of Texas A&M University called Terkel one of the most important voices in oral history in the past three decades, despite criticisms of how his work is presented, such as excluding the questions that were asked.

Nonetheless, Broussard added, Terkel "helped to legitimize the practice of oral history in the scholarly profession."

At the Thursday night dinner, Wilma Mankiller, recently retired as principal chief of the Cherokee Nation, described the importance of oral tradition in the daily lives of her people.

"One of the most pervasive problems native people have...is that we're trying desperately to hold on to our culture,...our language, our songs...in the fast-paced world of 1995," she said. "You can help not by doing it for us, but by showing us how to do it ourselves."

At the final banquet Saturday night, Ellen Bravo, executive director of 9to5, the National Association of Working Women, challenged oral historians to see themselves playing a broader role.

"You have a responsibility to be more than recorders...but to be allies and advocates of those whose lives you record," she said.

The process of ordinary people telling their own stories can make them understand their own lives and can begin the process of bringing about change, she said, adding:

"Regular people doing small, manageable things make change, make things happen."





*Photo from the Stanton Library, North Sydney Australia.*

## Words at Work: Australian Oral Historians Meet in Tasmania

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

A picture may be worth a thousand words but it may also leave much of the story unspoken. Take this photograph of Sid Barnett, smoking his pipe and surrounded by a crowd gawking at the 11-foot shark he had caught from a rowboat in Sydney harbor in 1922. When the North Sydney Public Library recently received the photo as part of a donation, librarians initially assumed that the press photographer had stumbled onto a dramatic, spontaneous event.

But when they conducted an oral history with Barnett's nephew, he revealed that his Uncle Sid had made an annual ritual of shark hunting on Christmas day. When he caught his shark "then would go the hue and cry, the waving of hands and all the rest of it. And everybody had to get in the dinghy--in the rowing boat--and go out and give him a hand once it was harpooned to tow this thing into the beach."

Margaret Park and Lianne Hall cited the shark hunt as an example of their efforts to record the oral history of their changing community. Located due north of Sydney, directly across the Sydney Harbor Bridge, North Sydney not long ago was a working waterfront of boatbuilding and repairs and commercial shipping. Today, that working class community has been supplanted by a maze of expensive high-rise apartments, restaurants, theaters and parks. The North Sydney Council--the local government--funded an oral history program with elderly residents who remain the last direct contact with the old community that no longer exists.

Uncle Sid's shark was one of many diverse subjects discussed when the Oral History Association of Australia met Sept. 8-10, 1995, at the Albert Hall in Launceston, Tasmania. An island off the southern coast of Australia, Tasmania is perhaps best known for the Tasmanian devil and for its origins as a British penal colony

(founded after the American Revolution stopped the British from exporting their prisoners to North America). In contrast to this devilish image, the island presents a pastoral panorama of sheep farms, country towns and rugged seacoasts. The meeting took place appropriately during the "Australia Remembers" year, officially commemorating the end of World War II, when oral testimony was employed in a great number of officially-sponsored public presentations.

Local councils in particular have supported much of Australia's oral history and determined its community-based nature. Government sponsorship has heightened concern over returning interviews to the community through museums, libraries, documentaries and other venues. The Australian Heritage Commission has also played a role in linking people and place through oral history, particularly with regard to Aborigines. In at least one instance, the Commission has



## Earth Science Oral History Project Starts at Columbia

To help commemorate its 50th anniversary in 1999, Columbia's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory has commissioned an oral history project to record the collective memory of the scientific institution that has revolutionized our understanding of the earth.

The project will be conducted by another of Columbia's pioneering post-World War II research institutions, the Columbia Oral History Research Office, the world's first and largest oral history program.

Announcing the project, John C. Mutter, Lamont-Doherty's interim director, said, "As an institution, Lamont hit the ground running in 1949, driven by a mission to learn about every component of the earth, from its inner structure to its oceans and atmosphere, and to understand all the processes that combine to create and maintain the planet we

live on. With every breakthrough propelling us forward, we've rarely looked back. Our anniversary is a fitting occasion to preserve the recollections of people who participated in an unprecedented era of exploration and discovery in the earth sciences."

Lamont scientists invented modern instruments and techniques to monitor earthquakes, probe earth's interior structure, investigate the seafloor and track ocean circulation.

In subsequent decades, Lamont scientists spearheaded an ongoing revolution in understanding global climate change and the ocean's role in regulating it. They pinpointed the orbital shifts that paced the earth's ice ages, discovered the global system of ocean currents called the Great Ocean Conveyor, and created the first computer model that could successfully predict El Nino.

Ronald J. Grele, director of the Oral History Research Office, said: "The history of Lamont is the history of some of the most

profound scientific developments of our century and includes many colorful and forceful personalities. This project will secure unique opportunities for future scholars to examine the social, intellectual and institutional frameworks in which breakthrough science has been done. Equally exciting for us is the chance to work with another research center of the University."

During the three-year project, interviews will be taped with an array of former and current Lamont scientists, technicians and staff and then will be transcribed and archived.

Conducting the interviews will be Ronald E. Doel, a historian of 20th century science, specialized in astronomy and the earth sciences. As part of the research, Doel will seek out personal correspondence, laboratory notebooks and other artifacts. The American Institute of Physics will help maintain and preserve materials that are uncovered or donated.

intervened in the development of land after oral histories recorded evidence of the land's identification with "sacred women's business."

Demonstrating how Australian oral historians have been exploring areas that traditional historians had previously neglected, speakers described programs focusing on women scientists, orphans, Eastern European immigrants, gays, the environment and Aboriginal oral traditions. Other speakers recounted the use of oral history in Australian schools, from primary grades to the university. Freelance oral historian Jenny Hudson reported on her problems working on a project commissioned by a grocery chain that wanted a "warts and all" history but found that the warts were more than they had bargained for. Several speakers debated methodology--whether

to transcribe and the uses and abuses of transcripts--and the resemblance of the spoken word to poetry. Public historians also complained of the aloofness of many academic historians from oral history.

Interested in comparisons with oral history outside Australia, the program featured an international component that included greetings from the Oral History Association by Anne Ritchie and Don Ritchie's paper on "Oral History's Third Wave: New Directions of Public Presentation in the United States."

Donald Hyslop, community history officer of the Southampton City Council, reported on current trends in oral history in the United Kingdom, and John Roles of the Brighton Museum and Art Gallery in the UK discussed the use of oral history in CD-ROM form for museum exhibits.

The program was ably chaired by Jill Cassidy of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in Launceston. Showing remarkable efficiency, many of the conference papers were made available immediately at the end of the meeting in **The Oral History Association of Australia Journal 1995**, edited by Anne Barlett, also of Launceston. The Australian association will meet next in the heart of the outback, Alice Springs, Sept. 5-7, 1997. That meeting's theme of "Crossing Borders" will emphasize the value of recording the traditions and experiences of indigenous peoples and cultural minorities in Australia, the Pacific, Southeast Asia and beyond.

For further information contact Rosemary Block, Oral History Program, State Library of New South Wales, Macquarie Street, Sydney, NSW 2000, Australia.



# STATE AND REGIONAL REPORT



## Chicago Roundtable Sets Monthly Programs

The Chicago Oral History Roundtable (COHR) monthly program schedule includes sessions on an oral history of the Cook County Hospital, interviewing tips from a talk radio host, discussion of a film about African-American aviatrix Bessie Coleman, oral history aspects of the Jazz Institute Archives and problems of collecting and archiving oral histories in small museums.

For information, call Victoria Haas, 708-681-3696.

## MOHA at State Fair; Program Videos Available

Michigan Oral History Association (MOHA) members participated in Michigan State University's Country Life Exhibit at last fall's Michigan State Fair in Detroit. MOHA members interviewed exhibit visitors to help preserve the story of Michigan's agricultural heritage.

MOHA also has videotaped nearly 30 presentations from Michigan oral history meetings since 1992. They cover a wide range of topics, including Michigan and World War II, agriculture and rural life in Michigan, Michigan sports, early days of radio and oral history practice and applications.

For information or to order tapes, at \$10 each, plus \$3 shipping and handling, write to: Michigan Oral History Association, 5580 W. State Road, Lansing, Michigan 43906.

## NOHA Meeting Set in April

The Northwest Oral History Association will meet in Seattle at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, April 10-14, in conjunction with the National Council on Public History and the Pacific Northwest Historian's Guild. The conference theme is "History and the Public Interest."

## SOHA Meeting Set in May

The Southwest Oral History Association will hold its next annual meeting, "Mining the Riches of Memory," at the Boomtown Hotel, Las Vegas, May 3-5. For more information, write to Barbara Hall, SOHA Program Chair, 450 N. Genesee Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036.

## TOHA Meeting to Focus On Texas Cowboys

"Traditions of Southeast Texas Cowboys" is the theme of the 1996 Texas Oral History Association annual meeting, scheduled for Austin Feb. 29-March 2. Three major papers will focus on black cowboys in Fort Bend County, Bolivar Peninsula cowboys and cowboy lore from two ranches in Chambers County.

## New England Group Plans April Meeting

The New England Association of Oral History (NEAOH) will hold its spring meeting April 27 at the Dodd Center, University of Connecticut-Storrs.

For more information, contact John J. Fox, NEAOH Executive Secretary, Department of History, Salem State College, Salem, MA 01970. Fax: 508-777-4754. E-mail: [jfox@mecn.mass.edu](mailto:jfox@mecn.mass.edu).

## SOHO Meeting in Atlanta

The Southern Oral History Organization (SOHO) will hold its third annual conference April 19-21 at the Jimmy Carter Library and Museum in Atlanta. Theme of the conference is "New Directions in Southern Oral History."

For information, contact Cliff Kuhn, History Department, Georgia State University, University Plaza, Atlanta, GA 30303. E-mail: [hiscmk@gsusgi2.gsu.edu](mailto:hiscmk@gsusgi2.gsu.edu).

## N.Y. Site for OHMAR Meet; Workshop Applicants Sought

Oral History in the Mid-Atlantic Region (OHMAR) will hold its spring meeting at the Port Washington, N.Y., Public Library April 20. Presenters and commentators will include Long Island scholars and oral history practitioners and others from the Mid-Atlantic region.

For information, contact OHMAR President John Schuchman, 202-651-5474.

OHMAR also is seeking applications from state and local groups in its region for two pro bono oral history workshops to be offered in 1996.

The Wilson College Alumnae Preservation Committee of Chambersburg, Pa., was the first recipient of an OHMAR pro bono workshop last fall. The college, which has been in existence for 125 years, has a rich tradition of educating women, but until 1976 it had no archives.

The college was threatened with closure in the early 1980s, but efforts by the Preservation Committee helped keep it alive. The group wanted to learn oral history skills to interview older alumnae and document the college's history over the past 60-70 years. The workshop application deadline is Jan. 31. Write to: OHMAR Workshop Committee, Gallaudet University, P.O. Box 2351, Washington, D.C. 20002.



## Beijing and Beyond: A Traveler's Tale

By Gwendolyn Etter-Lewis  
Western Michigan University

My journey to the 1995 Non-Governmental Organizations International Forum on Women in Beijing last summer began in several places at different times.

It began in 1989 when I realized that I could travel throughout the world alone, safely and without fear. Also, it began in Zambia in 1993 when I learned first-hand that African women must play essential roles in solving world problems. Some of the women I met there I would see again in China. Thus, my growing awareness of women's connections on a global level and my own place within these connections prepared me for the challenge of Beijing.

Some memories are especially vivid. I recall the sense of unreality as I stood in the middle of the street in Huairou mesmerized by the amazing diversity of women from all parts of the world. Some traveled to the forum uneventfully, but others told heart rending accounts of sacrifice and dangers just to get there. Most women also remembered those who could not attend, especially women who were detained by their own governments at the last moment, clearly an acknowledgment of the power of our coming together.

As with any gathering of human beings, there were disagreements and conflicts. There was constant surveillance by the Chinese; biased news reports; unbearable heat, humidity, rain and mud in Huairou and heavy pollution in Beijing. Despite these obstacles, we maintained a strong sense of purpose guided by our commitment to action-oriented strategies that will ensure the advancement of women in all parts of the world.

*Editor's Note: Etter-Lewis was part of a Western Michigan delegation to Beijing supported by the Majority People's Fund.*



*Participants in the India Association of Minnesota oral history project gather for an official photograph at the completion of the project's first phase. Photo from the Minnesota Historical Society.*

## Asian Indian Experiences Told in Minnesota Project

By James E. Fogerty  
Minnesota Historical Society

Sparked by the interest of its members and aided by a research grant from the Minnesota Historical Society to interviewer Polly Sonifer, the India Association of Minnesota completed a major oral history project last June. Planned to document the immigration, settlement and experiences of a cross section of the Asian Indian community, the project has become a great success.

With the inspiration and guidance of Godan Nambudiripad and Ram Gada of the India Association, Sonifer selected narrators who represent a variety of perspectives and come from widely different areas in the vast nation of India--from Bengal to Gujarat and from the Punjab to Hyderabad and Kerala. Several narrators were born outside India, in areas such as East Africa, which have important Indian communities. And they represent a variety of professions as well, including physicians, engineers, business people and educators.

The interviews outline the experiences of growing up, reaching the decision to come to the United States and the myriad adjustments they made in adapting to the American environment while retaining important aspects of Indian cultural, social and religious practice. The project is a valuable example of a partnership among the Society, a dedicated interviewer and a community with strong commitment to documenting its history and its contributions to its new home in the United States.

The project's first phase concluded with a gala celebration at the Minnesota History Center on Sept. 23, 1995. The event drew more than 200 people from the Indian community in Minnesota. Special guests included the Consul General of India and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. K. R. Sinha. Planning is underway for a second phase of the project. For information, contact: James E. Fogerty, Minnesota Historical Society, 345 Kellogg Blvd. West, St. Paul, MN 55102. Phone: 612-296-9989.



# BULLETIN BOARD

## Meetings

### OHA in Philadelphia

Mark your calendars for the 1996 Oral History Association meeting in Philadelphia Oct. 10-13. Conference theme is "Oral History, Memory and the Sense of Place" and will feature visits to special sites in this historic city, presentation of OHA awards and headline-making speakers. Look for more information in upcoming issues.

### Association for Living Historical Farms and Agricultural Museums

The agrarian South meets the Wild West in Houston May 19-23 when the 1996 conference of the Association for Living Historical Farms and Agricultural Museums meets to examine the changing nature of the frontier. For information, write to the Gov. Bill and Vara Daniel Historic Village, Baylor University, P.O. Box 97154, Waco, TX 76798-7154.

## Calls for Papers

### Rural, Farm Women Conference

Proposals are due Aug. 1 for sessions, papers and panels for the National Conference on American Rural and Farm Women in Historical Perspective, set for Sept. 18-21, 1997. The conference is sponsored by the Center for Agricultural History and the Women's Studies Program at Iowa State University. Send proposals by e-mail to [rdhurt@iastate.edu](mailto:rdhurt@iastate.edu) or in triplicate to Deborah Fink, Program Chair, c/o Center for Agricultural History, 618 Ross Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011.

### North East Popular Culture

The deadline is June 1 to submit proposals for the North East Popular Culture Association's next annual conference, scheduled for Nov. 1-2 at Quinnipiac College in Hamden, Conn. Submit proposals in writing to David Cole, Quinnipiac College, English Department, Hamden, CT 06518.

## Announcements

### Columbia Summer Institute

The Columbia University Oral History Research Office's annual summer institute in oral history is scheduled for May 27-June 7 in New York City. The institute will offer seminars in oral history method and theory, community history, media applications of oral history and fieldwork methods.

For information and applications, contact Ronald J. Grele or Mary Marshall Clark at: Oral History Research Office, Box 20, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York, NY, 10027. Phone: 212-854-2273. Fax: 212-854-5378. E-mail: [mmc17@columbia.edu](mailto:mmc17@columbia.edu).

### Vermont College Workshops

Charles Morrissey's 1996 oral history workshops at Vermont College have been scheduled for Aug. 12-16 and Aug. 26-28. For information, call Vermont College at 802-828-8802, or Morrissey at 713-798-4501. According to Morrissey, "Newt-free moose sightings are likely, even though not promised."

### Mid-Winter Morrissey Workshop

The Fort Mason Center in San Francisco is the site of a three-day intensive oral history workshop scheduled for Feb. 17-19 conducted by Charles Morrissey. Designed for experienced oral history practitioners, the workshop will focus on mastering interviewing techniques for obtaining spoken recollections of historical credibility and usefulness.

For information, call Gail Kurtz at 510-525-7050 or Elizabeth Wright at 415-928-3417.

### Sangamon State Name Change

A recent reorganization of higher education in Illinois resulted in a name change for Sangamon State University, which has a large collection of oral histories. The institution is now known as the University of Illinois at Springfield. Inquiries about its holdings should be directed to Thomas J. Wood,

University Archivist, Brookens 144, University of Illinois, Springfield, IL 62794-9243. Phone: 217-786-6520.

### Mississippi Collection Indexed

The Mississippi Oral History Program of the University of Southern Mississippi recently completed a general index to the program's interview collection. The 220-page index summarizes each of more than 700 interviews and lists hundreds of subject categories under which interviews are cross referenced.

The interviews cover a wide variety of topics pertaining to Mississippi history and culture, including the civil rights movement and race relations, regional and ethnic history, state government, agriculture, early 20th century life and work, Mississippians and World War II, natural disasters and many more.

For more information or to purchase a copy, call 601-266-4574 or e-mail [cbolton@whale.st.usm.edu](mailto:cbolton@whale.st.usm.edu).

### Idaho History Collections

The Idaho Oral History Center has updated and expanded its "Directory of Oral History Collections in Idaho." It includes the latest information on oral history collections available in Idaho museums, historical societies, public and private libraries, private collections and state and federal agencies.

For information, contact the Idaho Oral History Center, Idaho State Historical Society, 450 N. Fourth St., Boise, ID 83702.

### Maryland Book Published

The Maryland Historical Trust Press announced the release of "You Should Have Been Here Yesterday: A Guide to Cultural Documentation in Maryland," by Elaine Eff, administrator of the Maryland Historical Trust's cultural conservation program. The book is a how-to-do-it workbook for individuals and community groups that want to collect and promote living culture.

For information, call Eff at 410-514-7653.



### **Interviews of the Dying**

Former New York City lawyer Michael Shima has published "Looking Back: Thirty-two People Facing Death Teach Us How to Live," a book of oral history interviews with hospice patients who have terminal illnesses. The book focuses on what the interviewees say makes life most meaningful and fulfilling. The interviewees range in age from their 30s to their 80s and represent a broad cross-section of Americans, including a Catholic nun, a musician, a social worker, veterans of World War II and Vietnam and many others.

For information, call BookMasters at 800-247-6553.

### **Folk Culture Finding Aids**

The Archive of Folk Culture at the Library of Congress' American Folk Life Center has issued several new finding aids for material in the archive's collection. They are aids to finding: traditional music and folklife in Alaska; supernatural-related narratives; traditional music and folklife of Puerto Rico and of Puerto Ricans in the United States.

For information, contact the Archive of Folk Culture, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540-8100.

### **Guide for Writing Lifestories**

Soleil Press has published "Turning Memories Into Memoirs: A Handbook for Writing Lifestories" by Denis Ledoux, who has included practical information on writing family lifestories.

For information, contact Soleil Press, RR 1, Box 452, Lisbon Falls, ME 04252. Phone: 207-353-5454.

### **Focus on African Women**

California Newsreel's Library of African Cinema releases for 1995-96 include three documentaries by African women directors from Tanzania, Nigeria and Togo focusing on the role of women in economic and political development.

For information or a copy of the 1995-96 resource guide contact: California Newsreel, 149 Ninth St./420, San Francisco, CA 94103. Phone: 415-621-6196.

### **Minneapolis Teamsters Book**

Michigan State University Press has published "The Minneapolis Teamsters Strike of 1934" by Philip A. Korth, who relies on interviews with more than 40 participants in one of the pivotal labor conflicts of 20th century American labor history, which led to adoption of the Wagner Act of 1935, a set of national standards for resolving industrial disputes.

For information, contact Michigan State University Press, 1405 S. Harrison Road, Room 25, East Lansing, MI 48823-5202. Phone: 517-355-9543.

### **Oral History How-To**

"Record and Remember: Tracing Your Roots Through Oral History" by Ellen Epstein and Jane Lewit describes how to conduct oral history interviews to preserve family traditions. It includes information on how to research background information, questions to ask and how to ask them and how to use recording equipment and transcribe tapes.

For information, contact Madison Books, 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, MD 20706. Phone: 301-459-3366.

### **Long Island Sandmining**

"Particles of the Past," about the history of sandmining on Long Island from the 1870s to the 1980s, is the latest in the Port Washington, N.Y., Public Library's oral history series. Produced with the support of the New York Council for the Humanities and the New York State Council on the Arts, the publication tells the story of the mines that yielded sand for the concrete that built New York City and of the immigrant workers who mined it.

For information, contact the Port Washington Public Library, One Library Drive, Port Washington, NY 11050. Phone: 516-883-4400, Ext. 168.

## **Personal Notes**

OHA member **Vivian Perlis**, director of Oral History American Music (OHAM), has received a two-year grant from The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation to support the updating of interviews with major composers and to continue the Young Composers Series. OHAM, a project affiliated with the Yale School of Music and Library, is the only ongoing project in the field of music dedicated to the collection and preservation of oral and video memoirs directly in the voices of those who make American musical history.

Founded in 1971, the archive is an extensive repository of unique source materials in 20th century American music. Highlights of the collection include oral histories on Eubie Blake, John Cage, Aaron Copeland, Duke Ellington, Paul Hindemith and Charles Ives. For more information, call 203-432-1988.

Dutch scholar **Gertrud Blauwhof** of the University of Amsterdam Graduate Center for Comparative and Multi-Cultural Gender Studies is conducting an oral history research project on women pioneers in Dutch aviation.

Commissioned by KLM, the Netherlands' largest airline company, the project will result in a study to be published next year that focuses on female pilots and women in higher management positions from early in this century until today. Blauwhof wants to compare the situation of women in Dutch aviation with those in other European countries and the United States and would like to communicate with historians and other researchers who have studied women in aviation.

Blauwhof can be reached through e-mail at: [blauwhof@psecw.uva.nl](mailto:blauwhof@psecw.uva.nl).

**Bruce M. Stave**, new editor of the **Oral History Review**, has received the 1995 Homer D. Babbidge Award from the Association for the Study of Connecticut History for the book he co-authored with John F. Sutherland and Aldo Salerno, "From the Old Country: An Oral History of European Migration to America."



## NEH Panel Reviews Oral History Proposals

By Rebecca Sharpless  
OHA Executive Secretary

In October, I had the privilege of serving on a review panel at the National Endowment for the Humanities Division of Preservation and Access, which funds archival projects and oral history projects. A review panel constitutes the second step of the process of evaluating grant proposals, following an initial review by someone with expertise in the subject matter.

A five-person review panel then comes together in Washington for a day-long meeting to rate all of the proposals in their particular group.

Our panel, consisting of two archivists, two academic historians and myself, reviewed 25 proposals, and other panels will review similar numbers. Archivists seek funding from NEH much more vigorously than do oral historians. Out of about 225 proposals submitted for this cycle, only six were for oral history projects. How many of those will be funded will be determined in the spring, when the

NEH staff will present the review panels' results to the National Council on the Humanities, which makes the final decisions.

Despite massive reductions in force due to budget cuts, NEH staffers seemed upbeat and determined to carry on their work. They are eager to get the word out: the NEH has been cut significantly, but *it is not dead*. They urge all of us to continue to submit proposals. They have, however, been reduced to one funding cycle annually, with a July 1 submission deadline. To receive the guidelines for submitting a proposal, call the Division of Preservation and Access at 202-606-8570 or e-mail: [preservation@neh.fed.us](mailto:preservation@neh.fed.us).

It was very gratifying to see OHA members heavily involved with the peer review process. Most of the oral history proposals were evaluated by one or more persons active in the OHA, and their opinions carried considerable weight with the review panel. Under the leadership of Dale Treleven, the OHA has worked with the NEH to ensure that qualified oral historians review the proposals. If you would like to serve as a reviewer, call or e-mail the above address to apply.

## Endowment Grows

Project 30, a campaign to increase the OHA Endowment to \$50,000 in time to celebrate the association's 30th birthday in 1996, continues to roll along. Boosted by generous gifts and by funds raised at the silent auction and the sale of Studs Terkel books in Milwaukee, the amount of the endowment stands at \$33,537. Outstanding pledges of \$8,726 bring the total, pledged and received, to \$42,263.

The OHA gratefully acknowledges donations and pledges from: Terry and Janice Birdwhistell, Thomas L. Charlton (in memory of Joe B. Frantz and Walter Prescott Webb), Ora L. Cooks, Samuel Hand, Charles Hardy, Pamela M. Henson, R. Thomas King, Rhoda G. Lewin, David G. McComb (in memory of Joe B. Frantz), Ronald E. Marcello, Lynwood Montell, Waddy Moore, Charles Morrissey, Barbara Holly Ornstein, Don and Martha Ross, Rebecca Sharpless, Kim Lady Smith, Shirley Stephenson, Brit Allan Storey, John E. Wickman (in memory of O.O. Winther and Peter Olch). Thanks go also to Barbara Trachtenberg for her donation to the Scholarship Fund.

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