

OHMAR *Newsletter*

A Publication of Oral History in the Mid-Atlantic Region, affiliated with the Oral History Association
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M.L.KING, JR. LIBRARY HOSTS OHMAR FALL CONFERENCE

Friday, November 6, 1992 (Washington, DC)

President's Message July, 1992

I am pleased to report that our Spring meeting at St. Mary's College in Southern Maryland was a great success. Nearly one hundred people attended, many already members of OHMAR. Others joined OHMAR for the first time during the meeting. We were treated to a splendid spring day. The College, St. Mary's City, the countryside and waterfront were all very beautiful. Our program of events was excellent and concurrent sessions in the morning and afternoon allowed for coverage of a rich mix of topics. OHMAR's thanks go to Board member and St. Mary's professor, Andrea Hammer, for working tirelessly to design and host our meeting so successfully. Thanks, too, to the St. Mary's Library staff for providing excellent facilities and support.

Planning is now under way for our Fall meeting (Friday, November 6, 1992) at the ML King, Jr. Memorial Library in downtown Washington, D.C. Board member Patrick Carleton and OHMAR member Annette Palmer are assisting me in planning this meeting. We welcome ideas and suggestions from members and, of course, hope to see everyone there.

FALL MEETING, DC
NOVEMBER 6, 1992

LINDA SHOPES
POGUE AWARDEE

WOMEN MINERS

BOOK REVIEW

NEWS

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**OHMAR
OFFICERS, 1991-
1992**



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BUSINESS & BOARD TIDBITS

At the Spring business meeting (St. Mary's College), members unanimously approved an amendment eliminating the requirement that OHMAR officers be members of OHA.

At the Summer Board meeting, Past President Anne Ritchie presented the Board with the OHMAR BOARD MANUAL (June, 1992), a 23-page compilation of OHMAR history, officer and committee job descriptions, and current constitution and bylaws.

Treasurer Mary Kay Quinlan reports that:

1. attendance at the Spring meeting totalled 89, about the same as other recent conferences;
2. OHMAR's July 1, 1992 bank balance stands at \$4029.66 with no bills outstanding; and
3. membership totals 225, as of July 15, 1992.

If you wish to see the new manual or have questions, contact any officer or attend the fall business meeting.

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY & ORAL HISTORY Joe Kinner Gallaudet U.

According to Sunil Punoose, Director of Academic Computing, St. Mary's College, "Current revolutions in computer technology now enable us not only to transcribe and transmit oral histories more effectively; they potentially reconfigure the discipline." His lively presentation at the recent OHMAR Spring Conference opened a very clear window on how this can be accomplished. Using state-of-the-art NEXT computers, Punoose and his assistant, Frank Williams, demonstrated how oral historians can use the new technology to store written transcripts along with audio interviews, to play back video recordings alongside written transcripts, and to easily integrate a full range of contextual material--written documents, still images and photographs, and audio "sound scapes"--within any text.

Dividing the workshop into four demonstrations, Punoose first introduced participants to programs on Teaching Historical Geography and the rise of Naziism and and Holocaust developed by Professor Sam Lambroza of the History Department and Punoose which are used by students in Dr. Lambroza's courses. What was striking to this participant was the remarkable way in which video, photographs, and written text were integrated, and the ways in which the programs were designed so that students could interact with the material they were observing. Next, we were shown what the new computers can do interactively, ranging from video and still images to various audio components.

This demonstration was one of the most exciting parts of the workshop. Oral historians may now view and analyze videotaped interviews on a monitor and have text juxtaposed. Drawings, maps, letters, photographs, still and moving images, as well as an audio component, all may be integrated into the final presentation to different audiences in different parts of the world.

New computer technology offers oral historians today a great opportunity to analyze and present information in different and exciting new ways.

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The Freedmen's Bureau took over the task of physical aid and housing, allowing the AMA to concentrate on education. Blacks across the country rallied to support the Freedmen. Northern blacks poured Sunday school nickels and pennies into the task. The black community held social gatherings to earn cash and collect blankets, clothing, and books.

Realizing that the task of education could not stop with the primary grades, the AMA also established a web of colleges across the South. Educated blacks from across the nation swarmed into these colleges to become the fledgling faculties of Atlanta, Hampton, Howard, Fisk, Talladega, and many other universities. Work there was similar to curricula at other liberal arts colleges and many graduates went on to teach at AMA schools.

Southern resistance to black learning was fierce. Klansmen burned down Straight University in New Orleans. However, resistance also came from within the AMA. Richardson details racial prejudice among whites, some of whom came to resent black teachers recruited by the AMA. While the AMA did more than any other organization to help blacks, white paternalism blinded the organization to the strengths of black culture. This was most apparent in styles of worship. Those blacks who accepted the New England Congregationalism of the AMA found themselves at home. Those who could not give up the black style of worship were not so comfortable in the frozen silences of the AMA churches and consequently were not included in the AMA's education program.

Perhaps the most glaring weakness of the AMA was its insensitivity to the aspirations of the emerging black community. Bound by its missionary zeal, the AMA could not let go of control of the very people it hoped to help. Superintendents rigidly refused to bend to any semblance of black control of either curriculum or staff. The AMA could not perceive what was wrong or offensive.

I have only one suggestion. Richardson might have had more quotes from freed slaves. His pictures are superb and poignant. I look into the eyes of the eager learners on the dust jacket, gaze into the faces of the miserable wretches in the contraband camps, and marvel at the clean-cut students in the labs. What happened to them? I would have liked to have heard from some of them.

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NEWS FROM THE ARCHIVISTS

Because of the close working relationship between archivists and oral historians, OHMAR has asked Pamela Cassidy, Hershey Community Archives Archivist, to serve as liason between MARAC and OHMAR. Cassidy reports that:

MARAC (Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference) will hold its Fall 1992 Meeting, October 28-31, 1992 in Buffalo, NY. The theme of this conference will be "Outreach." For more information about the program and for registration materials, contact:

David Carmichael, Program chair

Westchester County Archives
2199 Saw Mill River Road
Elmsford, NY 10523
(914) 592-1925

MARAC will hold its Spring 1992 Meeting, May 6-8, 1993 in Long Branch, NJ. For more information about the program and registration materials, contact:

Tom Frusciano, Program chair
1 Halsey Road
Kendal Park, NJ 08824
(908) 932-7006

The Society of American Archivists will hold their 1992

Annual Meeting September 13-17, 1993 in Montreal, Canada.

For more information, contact:

SAA
600 S. Federal Street Suite 504
Chicago, IL 60605
(312) 922-0140

FINAL WORD: EDITOR'S MESSAGE

John S. Schuchman

At our most recent Board meeting, Andrea Hammer informed of us of her need to cut back on her activities and resigned as Book Review Editor. Many of you met Andrea at our Spring meeting at St. Mary's College and saw first hand the excellent program she put together for OHMAR. She will be missed.

If you are interested personally or wish to suggest someone to serve as the book review editor, please write or call me (202-651-5474).

I still wish to identify individuals who would like to contribute articles or edit this newsletter in the future. For more information, please contact me: OHMAR Newsletter Editor
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Washington, DC 22207