

FOR THE RECORD

Oral History in the Mid Atlantic Region (OHMAR) Newsletter

Winter 2002



Make your plans now to attend the exciting OHMAR 2003 conference this March 28 & 29 in New York City. The conference will have a component of workshops (Friday, March 28) and a component of papers plus OHMAR business (March 29).

First, take part in the either or both workshops offered on Friday, March 28. The day is called "Oral History from ABD to CD-R" and is co-sponsored by the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. The morning session is a beginners' workshop led by Elly Shodell, Director of Oral History, Port Washington Public Library, Port Washington, NY, and Susan

Kraft, Coordinator of the Dance Oral History Project and Archive at The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. The afternoon workshop will focus on the technical aspects of recording and archiving sound. This session will be lead by Adrian Cosentini, audio engineer of Vidipax, a media restoration company, and assisted by Daniel Sbardella, audio engineer for the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archive of Recorded Sound. Both workshops close with a tour: see the newly renovated research divisions of the Performing Arts Library; in the afternoon, tour the

Details on page 3 . . .

Oral History Association's National Conference in Mid-Atlantic this Fall

The Oral History Association will hold its 2003 meeting on October 8-12, 2003 at the Hyatt Regency in Bethesda, Maryland. The meeting theme is "Creating Communities: Cultures, Neighborhoods, Institutions." The conference invites paper proposals that consider how oral history can illuminate the ways people weave the cultural mosaic of society by creating communities in diverse settings and locales. *Proposal deadline extended through FEBRUARY 15, 2003.* *Continued on page 9 . . .*

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OHMAR Spring Conference Continued . . .

library's sound preservation studio and oral history recording room (for details, see page 4).

On Saturday, March 29, listen to, and then join discussions on, provocative papers concerning oral history's central role in documenting extraordinary events, like 9/11, as well as the everyday life of communities whether defined by geography or shared work, or the special places which merit preservation. "From the Ground Up: Oral History for Commemoration and Preservation," is the theme of the day, and co-sponsored by the Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute of Hunter College (for details, see page 5).

As a co-sponsor of the conference, it is worth noting here the especially appropriate background of The Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute. The Institute seeks to support the programs and values advanced by Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, which include the New Deal efforts to promote social and economic justice, revive the economy through public works and support for practitioners of the arts and humanities. Origins of this conference may be traced to innovative projects of the New Deal era. Contemporary American oral history projects have roots

in the interviews with former slaves conducted under the aegis of the WPA programs during President Roosevelt's first two terms, and to the battlefield interviews undertaken by Forrest Pogue during World War II. Serious historic preservation documentation began with the Historic American Buildings Survey inaugurated during the New Deal. OHMAR is proud to partner this conference day with the Institute.

In addition to giving your attention to the papers on Saturday, congratulate the winners of the OHMAR elections.

Since the conference days have different formats and are meeting in different locations, it has become necessary to use TWO registration forms (see page 7). Please note that the registration forms are going to different people, and require separate checks. For your convenience, you can also download these registration forms from the OHMAR website: www.ohmar.org.

All in all, this spring conference promises to bring attention to critical projects, advance technical expertise, bring awareness to special issues, and mix authorities with newcomers in the promotion of the practice of oral history. We look forward to seeing you there.

Treasurer's Report Continued . . .

Expenses

Bank	\$6.00	Membership	
Board		Postage	\$12.75
Copies	\$10.37	Printing	\$698.55
Meals	\$223.65	Supplies	\$87.33
Postage	\$4.45	Newsletter	
Supplies	\$100.00	Postage	\$62.90
Conference		Printing	\$270.63
Donation	\$100.39	TOTAL	\$3,352.96
Printing	\$61.65		
Site Rental	\$981.39		
Marketing			
Brochure	\$171.77		
Website	\$561.13		
		NET INCOME 2002	\$2,942.72
		CASH ASSTS	\$8,505.20 (as of 12/31/02)

Income

OHMAR Conference	
Registration	\$300.00
Workshops	\$3,015.00
Donations	\$125.00
Interest	\$10.68
Memberships	
Renew	\$2,175.00
New	\$670.00
TOTAL	\$6,295.68

--Submitted by Kelly Feltault, treasurer

OHMAR Conference--(Panels, Business) Saturday, March 29

ORAL HISTORY IN THE MID-ATLANTIC REGION (OHMAR) and
ROOSEVELT HOUSE PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE OF HUNTER COLLEGE, CUNY

From the Ground Up: Oral History for Commemoration and Preservation

8-9 a.m. **Registration and continental breakfast** (West Building, Hunter College--58th Street and Lexington Avenue)

9-9:15 a.m. **Welcome and Greetings**
Donita M. Moorhus, president, OHMAR
Jennifer J. Raab, president, Hunter College

9:15 a.m.-12 p.m. **"Oral History and 9/11"**
Moderator: Roger Horowitz, Hagley Museum & Library
"Documenting the Memories of 9/11"--Mary Marshall Clark, Director, Oral History Research Office, Columbia University
"The Maritime Evacuation from Manhattan on 9/11"--Steven Jaffe, Special Projects Historian, New York Historical Society
"In the Shadow of Disaster: The Corps of Engineers in 9/11"--John Lonquest, Historian, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
"Oral Testimony in the Death Certificate Process for 9/11 Victims and Families"--Marjorie Landa, General Counsel, New York City Dept. of Investigation

12:00 – 1:30 p.m. **Lunch** (OHMAR Business Meeting will be 12-12:20 p.m.)

1:30 – 4:30 p.m. **"Oral History and Historic Preservation"**
Moderator: Susan Turner-Meiklejohn, Associate Professor, Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, Hunter College
"Interviewing Pioneers in the Preservation Movement"--Anthony C. Wood, Chair, New York Preservation Archive Project
"Oral Testimony and Historic Preservation: Designation and Regulation"--Mary Beth Betts, Dir. of Research, New York City Landmarks Pres. Commission
"Oral testimony in Fostering Community Identity and Preservation" Laura Hansen and Marci Reaven, Co-Directors, Places Matter (A project of the Municipal Art Society and CityLore)
"Commemoration and Preservation: the Role of Interviews and Memory."--Edward Linenthal, Professor of Religion and American Culture, U. of Wisconsin, Oshkosh.

4:30 – 5:30 p.m. **Reception**

Directions: No. 6 train (Lexington Avenue local) to 68th Street and Lexington or F train to 63rd Street and Lexington (walk 5 short blocks north to 68th Street)

Support for this conference has been provided by the Office of the President, Hunter College, CUNY. It has been organized by Dr. Deborah S. Gardner, OHMAR Board Member and an advisor to the Office of the President.

For more information, contact Dr. Gardner by email: <deborah.gardner@hunter.cuny.edu.

OHMAR Fall Workshops Day 2002--Review

OHMAR's day-long series of workshops, organized with the joint sponsorship of the Library of Congress's Veteran's History Project last September 27, drew nearly 70 participants, and OHMAR gained almost two dozen new members as a result of this effort to reach out to practitioners beyond the circle of its members.

Participation was very balanced among the two morning and two afternoon sessions; the afternoon workshop on "Transcribing, Editing, and Publication," organized by John Lonnquest, outdrew the next most popular by a margin of three. The workshops and the common buffet lunch all took place in the Jefferson Building of the Library of Congress. Attendance might have been slightly higher without the much publicized protests against the meeting of World Bank executives, which dissuaded some registered participants from showing up.

One morning workshop covered "the basics" of oral history interviewing with Brien Williams. The other morning workshop was on "new electronic options" for recording and storing oral interviews organized by Dave Winkler. The afternoon workshop addressed advanced practices. Don Ritchie and Donita Moorhus conducted this session.

The general buzz in the hallways between sessions and at lunch suggested that participants found the sessions worth their time and money. Pre-registration for the workshops helped to maintain a good balance in attendance, avoided the hassle of dealing with money at the door, and facilitated navigation of the enhanced security controls for entry into the building. OHMAR's spring conference in New York will also feature practical workshops (see elsewhere in this issue).

--Robert Grathwol, program chair

OHMAR Partners with Veterans History Project

OHMAR's board recently voted unanimously to become an official partner in the Veterans History Project (VHP), a national effort managed by the Library of Congress to collect and preserve the memories of veterans of military engagements involving armed combat undertaken by the United States since entry into World War I in 1917.

The project began formally when President Bill Clinton signed legislation on October 27, 2000, to fund the endeavor (PL 106-380). Organized and managed by the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, VHP focuses its collection on World Wars I and II, the Korean, Vietnam, and Persian Gulf wars. The project seeks to document the contributions of all participants, including military support staff, civilian workers and volunteers, and those directly engaged in war industries.

The Veterans History Project is the

largest oral history endeavor supported by public funding, including as it will audio- and video-tape oral history interviews as well as documentary materials such as letters, diaries, photographs, maps, and even home movies of America's war veterans and those who served in support of them.

As a partner organization, OHMAR supports the project through publicity, co-sponsoring workshops on oral history (such as the OHMAR Workshops Day on September 27, 2002), and by urging members to support the project. Members have begun using their professional expertise to conduct interviews with appropriate subjects under the guidelines circulated by the American Folklife Center. For specific information on how to contribute through OHMAR, contact Donita M. Moorhus, <rpgdmm@bellatlantic.net>, or contact the project directly at <vohp@loc.gov> for a Project Instruction Kit, complete with guidelines and release forms for interviews.

--Donita Moorhus, president

OHA Fall Conference Continued . . .

The program committee welcomes proposals from oral history practitioners in a wide variety of disciplines and settings, and encourages a broad definition of "creating community": whether by geography; through ethnicity, race or cultural connections; or within an institution, business, the military, or a labor organization.

As the the OHA-affiliate in the Washington area, OHMAR is playing a major role in organizing the 2003 meeting. OHMAR Vice President

Roger Horowitz is serving as program chair and many other OHMAR members are volunteering in various capacities--from programming to local arrangements--in this important national gathering. If you are interested in providing your services to this event, or have questions about submitting a paper proposal, please contact Roger Horowitz at <rh@udel.edu> or at 302/658-2400. Final conference details will appear in the OHMAR August 2003 newsletter.

Presenter Profiles Continued . . .

Dr. John Lonnquest is the director of the oral history program in the Office of History, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and the leader of the Corps' September 11 Documentation Project. The project collected approximately 75 oral history interviews, plus thousands of documents, photographs, and artifacts to document the Corps of Engineers role in relief operations following the September 11 attacks.

Edward Linenthal is the Edward M. Penson Professor of Religion and American Culture and Chancellor's Public Scholar at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. His work is focused on the relationship between memory, preservation, and commemoration in the stories of important places and events. He is the author of *Unfinished Bombing: Oklahoma City in American Memory*, *Preserving Memory: The Struggle to Create America's Holocaust Museum*, and *Sacred Ground: Americans and Their Battlefields*; and an editor of *History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past*, *American Sacred Space*, and *The Nuclear Age*.

Daniel Sbardella is a sound engineer at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts where he specializes in restoration of historic recordings. He earned his Bachelor of music from Moravian College, and has a diploma in audio engineering from the New School.

Elly Shodell has been the Director of Oral History, Port Washington Public Library, Port Washington, NY since 1980. Library projects have focused on Long Island's great estate workers, aviation pioneers, Italian sand miners, and Baymen and yachtsmen. New projects highlight medicine, Latino heritage, and 9/11. With over 300 interviews, the Library represents the only formal oral history repository in Nassau and Suffolk counties.

Dr. Susan Turner-Meiklejohn is an associate professor in the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning at Hunter College. Prior to teaching, she worked for ten years in the field of historic preservation and planning. Using extensive interviews, she is the author of *Wages, Race, Skills and Space: Lessons from Employers in Detroit's Auto Industry*, and is completing a book of how experiences with racial discrimination impede the search for work.

Anthony C. Wood is the chair and founder of the New York Preservation Archive Project whose mission is to preserve and promote the history of preservation in New York. He has served on the governing boards of the Partners for Sacred Places, the Preservation League of New York State, and the Historic Districts Council, and was the chief program officer at the J.M. Kaplan Fund. In addition, he has taught in the historic preservation program at Columbia, and published articles and interviews about the historic preservation movement.