

## 2006 POGUE AWARD GOES TO CHARLES "STU" KENNEDY FOR HIS ORAL HISTORY WORK WITH THE ASSOCIATION FOR DIPLOMATIC STUDIES

Charles "Stu" Kennedy, the recipient of the 2006 Pogue Award, was unable to attend presentation ceremonies in Baltimore. Here is an interview with Mr. Kennedy that was conducted by OHMAR President David Winkler.

**OHMAR:** First, give us a little background on "Charles S. Kennedy," including how you got into oral history?

**KENNEDY:** I was born in Chicago in 1928. Our family, hit by the Depression, moved first to California and then to Annapolis, MD, just before World War II. I was always a history buff. Living in Annapolis, with the Naval Academy around the corner and having access to its library's wonderful military history collection, was great. I learned a tremendous amount during the war years about military history.

I was educated first in the Pasadena school system, then at the Kent School in Connecticut, and at Williams College, from which I graduated in 1950 with a degree in history. I enlisted in the Air Force, studied Russian and served in Japan, Korea and West Germany. The Cold War dominated everything at that time. I took the Foreign Service exam and served for thirty years in West Germany, Saudi Arabia, Yugoslavia, South Vietnam, Greece, South Korea and Italy, almost exclusively as a consular officer. Shortly before my retirement in 1985, I attended the funeral of Burke Elbrick, my former ambassador in Yugoslavia and a man I greatly respected. As I sat there, I recalled the stories he used to tell about his early days in the Foreign Service, and I looked around at those fellow officers who had served with him and thought of all the stories they might have to tell. And that's how it started.

**OHMAR:** How did you obtain support for the program?

**KENNEDY:** Luckily, the idea of an oral history program did attract the attention of the history department of George Washington University. I and a colleague, Vic-



PHOTO BY HARRIET LYNN

OHMAR Past President Roger Horowitz presents 2006 Pogue Award to Jack Zetkovic, Executive Director, The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST) who accepted it on behalf of Charles "Stu" Kennedy.

tor Wolf, were invited to set up a Foreign Affairs Oral History Center there. We were given some seed money for transcribing, but no salary. Unfortunately, Wolf was killed in a traffic accident, and I was able to raise exactly \$0.00.

Just as I was struggling to set up a program, the Association for Diplomatic Studies was created by a group of senior retired Foreign Service officers. It was designed to duplicate in some measure organizations such as the Naval Academy Naval Institute and to be a professional body that would help the New Foreign Affairs Training Center (formally the Foreign Service Institute of the State Department), which was being built at Arlington Hall in the Virginia suburbs. Among the Association's goals was to establish an on-going modest oral history program. As the only retired Foreign Service officer claiming to do oral history, I was recruited to do some interviews of retired diplomats born before 1918 who had been ambassadors. These were relatively short interviews at first, but as I gained confidence the interviews grew longer.

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The **Forrest C. Pogue Award** is named for the military historian Dr. Forrest C. Pogue (1912-1996) who pioneered the use of oral history interviews to compile battlefield histories. Pogue taught for several years before joining the historical section of the United States Army during World War II. He later was appointed director of the George C. Marshall Research Center and then directed the Marshall Library and Marshall Research Foundation. In 1974, he was named director of the newly established Eisenhower Institute for Military Research at the Smithsonian and continued in that position until his retirement in 1986.

OHMAR was particularly helpful initially....Without the encouragement of OHMAR members, we would have been floundering.

We also had a program to train oral historians from the ranks of retired Foreign Service officers in cities such as Boston, New York, and San Francisco. This worked for a while, but it proved impossible to sustain momentum. I and several others here in Washington do most of the interviews, although we also have a cadre of excellent interviewers. The volunteer program has proved its worth in having colleagues read and edit transcripts to get them in good shape for public presentation.

The Association arranged for our program to be moved to Georgetown University. Our transcripts have since been deposited at the Lauinger Library there.

For me, the support of the Association has been key, since it has been able to raise enough money to sustain the oral history program along with its other projects. We are still a small organization, but through volunteers and part time staff we have been able to create a major collection on contemporary American diplomacy, ranging from the 1920s to our present situation in Iraq.

**OHMAR: How many volunteers does the program have and do they do things besides interview?**

**KENNEDY:** The number of volunteers varies. Right now, we have just two retired Foreign Service officers who interview from time to time. I have found that breaking in new interviewers takes time and for the first few interviews all of us tend to conduct short sessions and don't follow through on questions. I will be working on developing a new cadre of interviewers this fall. I need retirees who have just left the Foreign Service and have a more modern cast of mind. I left the service twenty-one years ago. We do use volunteers to review and edit the transcripts — about five do this. One man, now in his mid-80s has been making tables of contents of our transcripts for almost the life of the program and this has been of great advantage to us.

**OHMAR: What is the review process for your collection — is there much editing?**

**KENNEDY:** We send our tapes out to transcribers some of these are Foreign Service spouses living

abroad — I think we have one in Indonesia now — and they do the transcribing. Our transcribers often will use the Internet to fact check or verify proper spellings. When the draft transcript comes back, we send it to the interviewee for his or her edit. We stress that the interviewee can add incidents or expand on themes — this is their story and the tapes are not the final source. We are interviewing people who are used to writing and editing and we want to squeeze as much out of them as we can.

When the interviewee returns the transcript, we have one of our volunteer editors look it over and pick out any obvious errors in spelling or fact. About twenty percent of the interviewees do not edit their transcripts. We warn them that we will do some light editing and so far have not had any complaints.

The transcript is then finalized. A copy is sent to the interviewee, another to the State Department's Foreign Service Institute's library and one to the Lauinger Library at Georgetown University. We have already given the Library of Congress most of our completed transcripts on CD.

**OHMAR: What sorts of product is produced and have diplomats/students made use of the materials?**

**KENNEDY:** The collection is used extensively, but not to its potential, because it is hard to gain access — Georgetown is not easy to get to. We have sold a number of CDs with most of the collection on them to universities and individuals, but this is not a satisfactory method of getting our product out to scholars and others. When we get on the Internet via the Library of Congress's website, we will have reached our goal of universal access. The subject of our collection, America's role in world affairs, will find a vast public. We have already been used in a number of books — for example Prof. Nancy Tucker of Georgetown has published a book "China Confidential" which uses our collection exclusively. The book has been also published in Chinese in the PRC. Another book "American Diplomats: The Foreign Service at Work" collected by William Morgan and myself has excerpts from



about fifty interviews covering the 1920s to the 1990s. This book is given to all new American ambassadors and is sold commercially.

We are working with the Foreign Service Institute to use the oral history transcripts as "lessons learned." Also, the Association is preparing a website for new Foreign Service officers on all aspects of diplomatic practice and excerpts from the oral history program will be part of this.

**OHMAR: How has OHMAR helped your program?**

**KENNEDY:** OHMAR was particularly helpful initially, as I suspect has been the case in many of the programs that have sought the advice of Don Ritchie and others. Without the encouragement of OHMAR members, we would have been floundering. We do keep up with the themes that OHMAR explores that will help us make the collection more valuable.

Since our program is dealing exclusively with the

experiences and perceptions of American diplomats there is concern that this is a one-sided presentation. I have worked with a colleague, Malcolm McBain, a former British ambassador for over 15 years as he has created a British Diplomatic Oral History Programme. It is housed at Churchill College, Cambridge University and has turned into a major collection. Together we have created a huge Anglo-American source for those interested in foreign policy. We have both worked with the Japanese and while there are cultural problems there may sometime be a Japanese oral history collection. I have contacted the foreign ministries of France and Germany but there was not much interest, but their absence is the Anglo-American gain.

**OHMAR: Thank you for your time, and congratulations again!**

**KENNEDY:** You are most welcome. ■

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## NEWS FROM THE MID-ATLANTIC REGION *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

An updated Biographical Directory of the United States Congress 1774-2005, recently published, provides biographical profiles of each of the nearly 12,000 individuals who have served in the Congress of the United States from 1789 through January 2, 2005, and of those who served in the Continental Congress between 1774 and 1789. The volume also contains rosters of the state congressional delegations, elected congressional officials, and cabinet officers from 1789 to 2005. It is a valuable resource for all those interested in the Congress. Copies are available from the Government Printing Office, [www.bookstore.gpo.gov](http://www.bookstore.gpo.gov)

### NEW YORK

The Brooklyn Navy Yard, having recently launched an oral history project, is looking for people who have lived/worked at the Yard, or who know someone who did. Please contact the Yard archivist at 718-907-5993, or e-mail [oralhistory@brooklynnavy](mailto:oralhistory@brooklynnavy)

[yard.com](http://yard.com). Provide your name, current address, what you did at the Yard and when you did it, and how best to get in touch with you.

Visit [www.pwpl.org](http://www.pwpl.org) to view "Sand and City," a new electronic resource produced by the Port Washington Public Library's Oral History Department (click on "Local History"). Under the direction of Elly Shodell, this digital presentation traces the history of sand mining, an industry that flourished on Long Island from the 1870s to the 1980s. Based on the narrative of retired sand miners and their families, "Sand and City" contains photographs, indexed transcripts, audio-taped excerpts from oral history interviews, video clips and narrative text.

### PENNSYLVANIA AND NEW JERSEY

The History Press is seeking historians, archivists and historical societies interested in publishing books that tell stories, through

oral history, about towns and regions in these states. For further information, contact [Maureen.Benes@HistoryPress.net](mailto:Maureen.Benes@HistoryPress.net) or at 866-223-5778.

### MARYLAND

OHMAR's own Harriet Lynn, producer/artistic director of the Heritage Theatre Artists' Consortium, organized "Anonymous Requiem II," a project about love, loss and remembrance, in May of 2006. Eleven older adults presented their original performance pieces in memory of loved ones in a meaningful and thoughtful program titled "Love Eternal/Loss Expressed."

The College of Southern Maryland's South Maryland Studies Center recently placed online the catalog of its archival collections, including manuscripts, rare books, oral histories, ephemera and photographs. For information on the online collection, visit [www.csmd.edu/Library/SMSC](http://www.csmd.edu/Library/SMSC) or phone 301-934-7262, ext. 7107. ■