



FROM THE CHAIR



Chicago is just around the corner! The upcoming SAA meeting will be a great opportunity for learning new things, sharing ideas, and connecting with other archivists.

Of the programs and sessions offered this year, several are relevant to oral history. Fred Calabretta is teaching a pre-conference workshop on using oral histories in publications, programs, and other forms of outreach on Sunday, August 26. In session 101 on Thursday, August 30, Studs Terkel's impact on the practice of oral history through his conversations with America will be discussed (see page 10 of this newsletter for more information). Also of interest is the Privacy and Confidentiality Roundtable meeting on Wednesday, August 29, where the privacy issues involved in digitizing oral histories and publishing them online will be addressed.

For the Oral History Section meeting on Friday, August 31 at noon, the program will address the issues of interview methodology, technology and preserva-

tion, and the interviewer/interviewee relationship. Stephen Sloan from the University of Southern Mississippi and Mark Cave from the Historic New Orleans Collection will discuss their efforts to document the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina with oral history interviews. This will be followed by a presentation from Nancy Freeman of the National Wildlife Research Center and Janet Bishop of Colorado State University on the interviewer/interviewee relationship and other context issues associated with doing oral history.

We will also be holding an election for the steering committee. Three positions are available: Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect, and two members each with a 2007-2009 term. More information about the candidates can be found on pages 2-3 of this newsletter. We will distribute ballots at the meeting, so be prepared to vote.

Looks like we'll have a great meeting this year. I'll see you in Chicago!

Debbie Whalen
Eastern Kentucky University

IN THIS ISSUE

ORAL HISTORY SECTION CANDIDATES

Candidate Profiles 2-3

ORAL HISTORY SPOTLIGHT

Hurricane Stories from the Carville Leprosarium..... 3-6

ORAL HISTORY NEWS

Pryor Center Celebrates New Director and Board 6-7

New South Voices Database..... 7

Pearls of Wisdom – 30 Years of Medical Library Memories..... 7-8

Catholic Boarding Schools Project..... 8

The History Center Receives Award..... 8-9

Edmund S. Muskie Oral History Project at Bates College..... 9

Ball State University Libraries Create Middletown Digital Oral History Collection..... 9-10

Studs Terkel Center for Oral History..... 10-11

Daring to Resist: Jewish Defiance in the Holocaust at the Museum of Jewish Heritage..... 11-13

SAA ORAL HISTORY SECTION INFORMATION

2006-2007 Steering Committee Members..... 13

Oral History Happenings at the 2007 SAA Conference in Chicago..... 13

ORAL HISTORY SECTION CANDIDATES

Candidate Profiles

Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect:

Al Stein (MS, UIUC, 1997) is currently Chair of the SAA Labor Archives Roundtable and is a member of both the American Library Association, and the Oral History Association (OHA). He has been active on the OHA Program Committee and is serving a three-year term on the OHA Education Committee. He has also been regionally active with the Society of California Archivists, Northwest and Southwestern Archivists, and Greater New Orleans Archivists. He was newsletter editor for the Northwest Oral History Association (2000-2003), and is a contributor to the Oral History Review and regional newsletter correspondent for the Consortium of Oral History Educators online journal: www.umbc.edu/mrc/cohe/index.html. Stein also co-authored chapters for two major anthologies: *There Is No Such Thing As a Natural Disaster: Race, Class and Hurricane Katrina* (Routledge, 2006) and *Preparing the Next Generation of Oral Historians* (AltaMira Press, 2006).

Steering Committee Member:

Jennifer Eidson, MLIS, is a graduate of the Archival Studies program at the University of Pittsburgh. She lives in the Washington, DC metro region and has worked at the Library of Congress from 2004 to 2007, beginning in the Conservation Division and eventually transferring to work for the Veterans History Project (VHP). At VHP she has the opportunity to work with a wide variety of oral history interviews pertaining to individuals with military service. She also completed an internship from 2002-2003 at the Atlanta History Center in Atlanta, Georgia, organizing the 1996 Olympic Games Collection, which included a group of oral history interviews. She enjoys working in the archives field and is happy to be involved with the diverse collections at VHP. She has been a member of SAA 2001-2002 and 2005-present, and a member of the Oral History Section 2006-present.

Bonnie Gurewitsch is an Archivist and Curator at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City. She has conducted hundreds of interviews, developed a training program for interviewers of Holocaust survivors and other eyewitnesses, and developed one

of the first subject catalogs for Holocaust oral history. Using archival material and oral histories, she has curated several major exhibitions, including the prize-winning *Ours To Fight For: American Jews in the Second World War*, and *Daring To Resist: Jewish Defiance in the Holocaust*, currently on view. Her publications include *The Liberators: Eyewitness Accounts of the Liberation of Concentration Camps*, 1981, the *Oral History Manual*, 1990, and, *Mothers, Sisters, Resisters: Oral Histories of Women Who Survived the Holocaust*, 1998.

Lynda Kachurek: Archivist, Special Collections and Archives, Wright State University. Degrees: BA, Millikin University; MA, Purdue University; Certificate in Archives Administration, Wright State University. Member: Society of Ohio Archivists, Society of American Archivists, Midwest Archives Council, Miami Valley Archives Roundtable. Co-Advisor: SAA Student Chapter, WSU.

Currently a reference archivist in Special Collections and Archives at Wright State University, Lynda is also involved in her department's oral history projects. Having previously served as project archivist/oral historian for the Cold War Aerospace Technology project, she supervised the continuing work on that project and assisted with the Retirees Association, Huffman Prairie Aviation Historical Society, and Tuskegee Airmen oral history projects. Beginning this academic year, she looks forward to teaching oral history methodology as part of the public history program. The Oral History Section of SAA allows her to bring together those two components of her work and provides the opportunity for discussion and learning with others working in both oral history and archives. She looks forward to the possibility of serving on the SAA Oral History section steering committee.

Ed LeBlanc is the head archivist at the Institute of American Indian Arts where he is responsible for all aspects of the archival process and has begun an oral history project to preserve the history of the college and museum. Prior to his appointment at IAIA, Ed completed a term project with the National Parks Service to archive the records of the Pecos National Historical Park. Ed is a 2004 graduate of the MLIS program at Rutgers University.

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ORAL HISTORY SECTION CANDIDATES (continued)

In January 2007, **Cynthia (Cyns) Nelson** received her MLS from Emporia State University's distance program (Denver). Archival philosophy caught her interest, and a conference about oral history gave her specific purpose: collecting stories, preserving the integrity of voices, and connecting individuals with communal consciousness. She's worked on projects at the Estes Park museum, the Center for Digital Storytelling, the Colorado Historical Society, and the Boulder County Carnegie Library (Maria Rogers Oral History Program). Her studies and background as poet/writer/editor make her acutely tuned to

personal story and narrative voice, as artifacts of truth and information. She sees a necessary bridge between the progenitors of oral history—historians, sociologists, folklorists, linguists, citizens—and those who safeguard its collection. She plans to work from both sides of this bridge, documenting our human experience and applying standards for preservation and access. Most important, she hopes to listen carefully and steer the oral tradition toward diverse and creative applications.

ORAL HISTORY SPOTLIGHT

Hurricane Stories From The Carville Leprosarium

Submitted by Elizabeth Schexnyder



Four-House Collision in the 9th Ward, New Orleans, September 2005. Photo by Steven Singerman

[Ed note: this piece originally appeared in the August 2007 issue of *Southwestern Archivist*. Reprinted with permission.]

On August 28th, 2005, I was on my way north to higher ground, like so many others from the New Orleans area where evacuation was mandatory.

When I got the news that Katrina was bearing down and that my home in was in the path of the storm I froze. All I could think of is "I'll go to Carville, I'll be safe there". In hindsight, I would have been, but Memphis was higher and drier, and definitely more comfortable in light of what unfolded.

Fourteen days later, I returned to a changed world. The National Hansen's Disease Museum in Carville was fine, but over 25,000 National Guard personnel participated in Katrina relief efforts, and several thousand of them were now calling Carville home. Our sleepy little historic district was buzzing with helicopters, humvees, and military police carrying semi-automatic weapons. Temporary tents to house the troops sprang up across acres of once open pastureland. The GIs were doing 2-week stints in New Orleans, St. Bernard and Plaquemines Parish, performing search, rescue, recovery and law enforcement. Deprived of sleep in the field, everyone needed a few days to get shut-eye and eat hot meals. They came to Carville for some down time where everything became very basic--sleep, eat, regroup, then get back to work. Moreover, everyone needed to talk, to tell someone what he or she had witnessed, how their world had changed. My home was fine, but I was now playing hotel to three reporters from Tokyo TV who hired my friend Steven to shepherd them around New Orleans and environs as they filmed their documentary on the storm. There was not a hotel room to be found for hundreds of miles.

Before the storm changed our world, I had an oral history fair for former employees of Carville on the drawing board. The employees of the former leprosarium would have to wait—no, I'd have to wait, they'd all evacuated! And there was only one thing on everybody's mind anyway.

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ORAL HISTORY SPOTLIGHT (continued)

My museum, the National Hansen's Disease Museum is located in the Carville Historic District. Carville has a 100 plus year history as a haven to those diagnosed with leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease. In 1894, the Louisiana Leper Board, charged with creating a "place of refuge" for leprosy sufferers transported the first seven patients from New Orleans here to a deep and secluded bend in the Mississippi. Fear of contagion was so intense that they were not allowed public transit and were towed up the Mississippi on a coal barge.

The 350-acre sugar cane plantation was slowly transformed into "The Louisiana Leper Home". So far removed from any metropolitan area, the isolated patients pleaded for onsite medical attention--doctors from New Orleans visited bi-monthly—until the State negotiated with the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul to establish a mission on the site. The first four Catholic sisters arrived in 1896. They came to nurse, educate, and care for the spiritual needs of those early souls.

When the federal government took over the hospital in 1921 it grew to accommodate 450 patients. They built a complex of dormitories, an infirmary, a recreation center, even a jail. The US Public Health Service doctors lived on two avenues of residences built on the "staff side of the hospital". The 1940's brought a viable medical treatment and a successful drug therapy but quarantine for those diagnosed with leprosy did not end in Louisiana until 1957. The hospital subsequently relocated to Baton Rouge in 1999 and the property reverted back to the State of Louisiana who brought in the National Guard.

In September 2005 entertainment was slim picking in Carville, and the museum had the advantage of being open, free and within walking distance to the troops' tent city. Soldiers from all over the country were pouring into the museum with the same questions that the turn of the century residents of Iberville Parish asked when the first patients stepped off the coal barge...What is leprosy? (a disease of the skin and peripheral nerves caused by *Mycobacterium Lepae*) Is it contagious? (Mildly...95% of us are naturally immune) Is there a cure? (Successful drug

therapy renders patients non-contagious within days and arrests the progress of the disease). Are there still patients here? (Yes, a handful stayed on after the hospital relocated in 1999).

After quelling fears, giving accurate data on Hansen's disease and telling the Carville story it was only natural to ask the soldiers to share theirs. The stories began pouring out. Stories from MPs stationed at the Super Dome, search and rescue teams down in St. Bernard; eyewitness accounts of the wreck and ruin of familiar neighborhoods and streets still flooded. It became apparent that these stories were the oral histories that I would gather. It was unfolding all around me.

Second day home I returned to work with \$20 portable tape recorder, some blank cassettes and whipped up some audio release forms. As we continued our dialog it was clear that not everyone would go on the record. But many did. I gathered stories from MP's, Medical Reserve Corps, PHS doctors, nurses and engineers, Corps of Engineers, helicopter crews, FEMA personnel, animal rescue and even an evacuation bus driver strolled through the doors. And the words kept spilling out. One participant requested to take the tape recorder into a quiet room alone to reminisce about what she had been through in her role as a responder. The range of emotions coming from the interviewees swung from humor to tears within a few short minutes.



Lt. David Stuever, (left) and Maj. Anthony Randall (right) of the 102nd Military History Detachment, Task Force Pelican HQ, Carville

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ORAL HISTORY SPOTLIGHT (continued)

Other visitors included the personnel running the temporary morgue hastily fabricated in St. Gabriel. They were also looking for an hour or two of relief from their long days of emergency work. I spoke to forensic specialists, nurses, dentists, social workers and funeral directors from around the country who came to volunteer their expertise in the sad process of reuniting the dead with their grieving families.

A hastily composed flyer I placed in the Carville armory and cafeteria about my OH project attracted the attention of an official Military History Detachment (MHD) deployed to take oral histories for the Army. When Maj. Anthony Randall, in charge of the 102nd Military History Detachment, walked into the museum we became fast allies. We decided to exchange oral histories on the spot. In addition to interviewing key personnel engaged in relief efforts, the MHD's collected artifacts, hard copy and electronic documents. They stayed in the field from two to four weeks at a time.

From my tour of the MHD's workstation, I knew that the military was using a more sophisticated digital recording system than my portable tape recorder. I panicked when I realized I had to turn my analog cassette tapes into MP3's with no budget and accomplish this quickly.

I found my solution online via a freeware program called Audacity. Audacity supports uncompressed audio standards such as WAV and AIFF in addition to OGG and MP3 files. A full complement of basic effects such as reverb, delay, and compression are included. That and a \$10 cable from Radioshack allowed me to dump the analog files into my laptop, perform some quick edits, and then burn the files to CD as MP3s. When the MHD went home to Topeka in mid-October, I felt good about sending along my contribution of 25 interviews--for a total of 64 interviews between us.

Taking over the military's OH project from that point on was Lieutenant Colonel Alan R. Koenig, a recent retiree of the Army Reserve, tapped by the Army to handle postproduction of the interviews. His team produced over 400 pages of transcriptions in preparation for this experienced historian to write an official history of the joint military response to

hurricanes Katrina & Rita.

The interviews attracted other attention as well. Hurricane Digital Memory Bank representative Sheila Brennan asked to include the interviews in their website collection. The Center for History and New Media (CHNM) at George Mason University and the University of New Orleans organized this project in partnership with the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History. Supported by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, it builds on prior work by CHNM to collect and preserve history online. In addition to the oral histories, I turned in several hundred photographs that I shot along with friend, Steven Singerman, documenting hurricane-damaged areas in St. Bernard and Jefferson and Orleans Parishes.



Curator Elizabeth Schexnyder at the "Katrina-Rita's Cantina", in Carville's tent city. October 2005. Photo by Maj. Anthony Randall.

POSTSCRIPT: I am now in the process of interviewing former Carville hospital employees, the oral history project originally intended to begin in September 2005. Carville has become the Military Response Center for hurricanes in Louisiana; the temporary morgue moved 2 miles down River Road and is now a permanent structure for disaster response. We have a couple hundred new faces around Carville, most are Louisiana National Guardsmen and women who lost their homes to Hurricane Katrina and their workplace at Jackson Barracks. My friends and family are back in their New Orleans homes. I will never forget the stories that still give me a thrill of pride when I listen to voices of those who volunteered unselfish aid and

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ORAL HISTORY SPOTLIGHT (continued)

care beyond the call of duty. Moreover, the Army recognized my contribution of oral histories with a Public Service award that was a surprise and an honor. The oral histories and photographs can be found on the Hurricane Digital Memory Bank website: www.hurricanearchive.org/browse/?collection=29

For more information, contact:

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The mission of the National Hansen's Disease Museum is to collect, preserve, and interpret the medical and cultural artifacts of the Carville Historic District, and to promote the understanding, identification, and treatment of Hansen's disease (leprosy) by creating museum displays, traveling exhibits, publications, and a web presence.

ORAL HISTORY NEWS

Pryor Center Celebrates New Director and Board

Submitted by Diane Worrell



The David and Barbara Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History at the University of Arkansas strives to put a human face and voice on Arkansas history. The Pryor Center, administered

by the Special Collections Department, University of Arkansas Libraries, convened its inaugural advisory board on April 27, followed by a reception honoring Kris Katrosh, the center's first full-time director. More than one hundred people attended the reception.

"The mission of the Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History," Katrosh said, "is to document the history of Arkansas through the collection of spoken memories and visual records, preserve the collection in perpetuity, and connect Arkansans and the world to the collection through the Internet, television broadcasts, and educational programs." The Pryor Center will record interviews with people from all walks of life and from all areas of the state, focusing on the lives of Arkansans and their work, families, ancestors, and communities.

The center, established in 1999, was initially funded with a generous gift from former U.S. Senator David

H. Pryor and his wife, Barbara. Administered by the History Department within the Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences, it originally focused on traditional oral history. In 2005 the center was transferred to the University Libraries Special Collections Department, and the University Board of Trustees renamed the Center in honor of David and Barbara Pryor. That same year the Tyson family of Springdale made a generous gift to help the center embark on an expanded mission of capturing historical memories in video, as well as audio, formats. Tom W. Dillard, head of the Libraries' Special Collections Department, served as interim director until a staff could be hired.

Oral history transcripts are currently available on the Pryor Center web site, including the Arkansas Democrat, Arkansas Gazette, Arkansas Governors, Arkansas Memories, and the William Jefferson Clinton history projects. However, the focus of the center's program is changing. The center will continue to conduct traditional oral history interviews with selected subjects, transcribe the interviews, and post the text on the center's web site. Greater emphasis will be placed on conducting interviews in high definition digital audio and video formats, which will facilitate a wide variety of distribution methods, including video and audio Web streaming for research and classroom use. Producing the interviews in digital video format will enable the Pryor Center to partner with public broadcasting as well as community cable access channels to reach an audience far beyond the academic community. Shifting the center's emphasis

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ORAL HISTORY NEWS (continued)

to digital video requires a substantial outlay for equipment, and this process is already underway. The upgrades include camera, lighting, audio, and editing equipment, software, and expansion of the server system.

The next phase of development will focus on outreach. The Pryor Center will establish partnerships with school and community groups by providing high-quality digital audio equipment, as well as the training necessary to use the equipment and conduct oral histories. This will enable these groups to conduct their own oral histories, which will ultimately be deposited with the Pryor Center. Such outreach projects provide a fun way for the public to engage in collecting and connecting with history. The center will partner with the Arkansas Educational Television Network and others to develop broadcast opportunities for Pryor Center programming, and selected programs will be made available to libraries on DVD. All of its programs will eventually be available as streaming video on the center's web site.

In addition to producing oral and visual histories, the Pryor Center will collect irreplaceable films, video tapes and audio tapes from sources across the state, transfer them to electronic files, and provide permanent archival storage for them. The files will one day be available for downloading on the Pryor Center Web site. The center aims to become one of the largest state repositories of archival footage in the United States.

The Pryor Center seeks nominations of interviewees through the center's web site. Fundraising is critical to sustainability of the program. Individuals or organizations interested in supporting the Pryor Center may fund programs, upgrade equipment, provide vehicles for mobile video production, or fund a vehicle for a "storymobile" rolling history laboratory. Donors may also endow a single interview or an entire community's history.

Additional information is available on the center's web site, <http://libinfo.uark.edu/SpecialCollections/pryorcenter/> or by contacting Special Collections at 479-575-5577 or specoll@uark.edu.

New South Voices Database

Submitted by Katie McCormick

The Atkins Library Special Collections Department at UNC Charlotte is enhancing its New South Voices oral history database (www.newsouthvoices.uncc.edu). The grant will allow Special Collections to add digitized transcripts and audio of more than 200 oral history interviews related to Civil Rights, Education, the African-American experience, and the Native American experience in North Carolina to the publicly available database, which already contains some 600 interviews. Additionally, to provide further historical context for the interviews, supplemental material from manuscript collections will be digitized and integrated into lesson plans designed by Middle and High School social studies teachers as part of a two week hands-on institute to utilize oral history materials in the classroom.

This project is supported by \$48,680 in grant funds from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the State Library of North Carolina, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources and 10% in matching funds from UNC Charlotte.

Pearls of Wisdom – 30 Years of Medical Library Memories

Submitted by Dee Jones, Head of Cataloging, Medical Library, Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center-Shreveport and 2007-08 chair of MLA's Oral History Committee.



The year 2007 marks the 30th anniversary of the Medical Library Association's Oral History Project. This program was proposed "to provide one basis for the history of American medical librarianship and the Medical Library Association... [by recording] in their own voices the memoirs and reminiscences and experiences of medical librarians..." MLA's first Oral History Committee, aided by funding from the National Library of Medicine, promptly laid the foundation for this ambitious undertaking. A list of librarians most active in the association and those associated with advances in the field was compiled. A

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ORAL HISTORY NEWS (continued)

procedure manual was prepared and the committee participated in a one-day seminar on interviewing techniques.

Initial interviews were with medical library luminaries including Janet Doe, Gertude L. Annan, Frank B. Rogers, Harold Bloomquist and Mary Louise Marshall. Early efforts of MLA members Estelle Brodman, Nancy Whitten Zinn, Dorothy Whitcomb and Ruth Wender, coupled with the more recent participation of Diane McKenzie, Victoria Pifalo, and Richard Nollan have resulted in the production of sixty-two oral histories that have been taped, transcribed, edited, summarized and distributed for use in historical research. Interviewees include MLA presidents, board members, fellows, MLA Headquarters executive directors, directors of major health sciences libraries, educators and award winners. Almost any topic that has generated discussion in the medical library community in the past 75 years will most certainly be covered in this collection of oral histories.

A listing of available oral history interviews, with summaries, can be found at www.mlanet.org/about/history/oral_history.html#4. The original taped interviews and transcripts are kept in the Medical Library Association archives. Copies of edited transcripts are made available through interlibrary loan by contacting either the National Network of Libraries of Medicine (<http://nmlm.gov>) or MLA Headquarters (mlaedo2@mlahq.org). The printed histories also include biographies and in many cases, photographs of the interviewees.

While these early visionaries have captured the dynamics of twentieth century medical librarianship, we are confident that MLA's Oral History Project will continue to preserve the achievements, innovations, and milestones of our 21st century leaders.

Catholic Boarding Schools Project

Submitted by Stephanie Morris

Stephanie Morris, Sister Jeanette Kinlicheeny, SBS, and Mrs. Sandra M. Kemp have initiated an oral history project concerning two boarding schools for African-Americans conducted by the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and Mrs. Louise D. Morrell in Powhatan, VA. Col. and Mrs. Edward Morrell purchased land on

the James River in 1894 and in the following year St. Emma's Military Academy was opened. In 1899, Mother M. Katharine Drexel and her congregation opened St. Francis de Sales High School (for girls) nearby. Both schools closed by 1971. We have spoken with two former employees, two former students and two members of the local community about the schools and the role and legacy of these schools for African American students.

The History Center Receives Award

Submitted by Emily E. Hyatt

The History Center in Diboll, Texas, is pleased to announce its receipt of the Mary Faye Burnes Award for Excellence in Community History Projects from the Texas Oral History Association. Given for "outstanding work in collecting and preserving oral histories of significance to the story of East Texas," the award recognizes the approximately two hundred interviews that are transcribed, indexed, and catalogued for use by researchers. These interviews provide an invaluable resource for those interested in the social and community history of Diboll, Angelina County, East Texas, and the lumber industry during the twentieth century. The Diboll Historical Society created the bulk of these oral histories, which were prominently featured in two publications, *The Cornbread Whistle* (1986) by Meagan Biesele and *Nameless Towns: Texas Sawmill Communities, 1880-1942* (1998) by Thad Sitton and Jim Conrad, and are still used by family historians and local students. After the historical society became inactive, The History Center continued to add to the collection and is now exploring options to digitize the sound files and make the transcripts available as PDF files on their website in order to make them accessible to a wider audience.

The History Center is a public history and archives center that collects, preserves, and makes available the history of Diboll, Angelina County, and the surrounding region for the educational use and benefit of present and future generations. Providing research opportunities is the core of its mission, and its holdings include manuscripts, business and local government records, maps, newspapers, oral histories, books, and more than 200,000 photographs. They also have exciting exhibits both inside and out that help interpret the

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ORAL HISTORY NEWS (continued)

Center's growing collections as well as the area's rich cultural and natural history. For more information, access The History Center's website at www.TheHistoryCenterOnline.com.

Edmund S. Muskie Oral History Project at Bates College

Submitted by Katherine Stefko



Sen. Edmund S. Muskie, shown during his Congressional confirmation hearings as U.S. Secretary of State, 1980. (Photo: Vince Pussio, Senate Democratic photographer)

Edmund S. Muskie's alma mater has completed a project that tells the late U.S. statesman's story in the voices of those who knew him.

Begun in 1997, the Edmund S. Muskie Oral History Project at Bates College comprises more than 400 interviews with people who worked with, otherwise knew or were directly affected by Muskie. A native of Rumford, Maine, and member of the Bates class of 1936, Muskie went on to become Governor of Maine, U.S. Senator, U.S. Secretary of State and a candidate for U.S. president.

The interviews are preserved in analog and digital format and are accompanied by indexed transcripts. They are held by the Edmund S. Muskie Archives and Special Collections Library at Bates, joining a documentary collection of Muskie's personal and professional papers that is among the largest U.S. political collections outside the presidential libraries. Transcripts and select audio files are also available online at: <http://digilib.bates.edu>.

Interviewees include Muskie's friends from throughout his life, college contemporaries, Maine legislators, political associates and competitors, journalists, campaign supporters, gubernatorial and Senate staff, Senate colleagues, public officials, lobbyists, State Department officials, foreign-policy specialists, law practice associates and citizens associated with Muskie in myriad ways.

Among them are former Governor of Maine Kenneth Curtis, current Governor John Baldacci, former Maine Attorney General James Tierney and Howard Baker, until recently U.S. ambassador to Japan.

Funding for the creation, processing, and online publication of the Muskie Oral History Collection was generously provided by the Edmund S. Muskie Foundation. For more information, please contact muskie@bates.edu.

Ball State University Libraries Create Middletown Digital Oral History Collection

Submitted by Maren L. Read

Ball State University Libraries announce the completion of a 2006-07 Library Services Technology Act digitization grant to create a digital collection of selected oral histories from its Archives and Special Collections. Digitized audio and transcripts of interviews with the African American, Jewish, and Catholic communities of Muncie, Indiana are now available as part of the Middletown Digital Oral History Collection in the Ball State University Digital Media Repository, a project of the University Libraries, located at <http://libx.bsu.edu>.

The interviews selected were conducted over the last thirty years and document the lives of those communities neglected in the seminal studies conducted and published by sociologists Robert and Helen Lynd in the 1920s using Muncie as Middletown, a representative American Community.

The interviews allow students, scholars, and others the opportunity to listen to members of the Muncie community share personal stories about their lives. Topics include segregation, religious discrimination, the Ku Klux Klan, the Great Depression, organized

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ORAL HISTORY NEWS (continued)

labor, and the economic, social and religious lives of African Americans, Jews and Catholics in the 20th and early 21st centuries.

As part of the grant project, the University Libraries collaborated with the Center for Middletown Studies, St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, St. Lawrence Catholic Church, and St. Mary Catholic Church to conduct new interviews with three Catholic parishes in Muncie, Indiana. Trained volunteers from each church attended a workshop on "Oral History Methods" taught by Dr. Michael Doyle, Associate Professor of History and Director of the Public History Internship Program at Ball State.

This grant project was truly a University Libraries-wide effort. Staff and student assistants from several departments devoted many hours to the time-consuming and difficult task of transcribing the interviews.

Ball State University Libraries will also be hosting Can You Hear Me Now: Digitizing the Voices of the Past, a one-day conference on digitizing oral history on September 20, 2007. For more information on the conference and to register online, go to www.bsu.edu/library/conference/oralhistory.

For more information, contact Maren L. Read, Assistant Archivist for Manuscript Collections at MLRead@bsu.edu.

Studs Terkel Center for Oral History

Submitted by Alan H. Stein, Chair SAA Labor Archives Roundtable

Announcing "Free Spirit, Free Speech: The Studs Terkel Center for Oral History" (Session 101) at the 2007 SAA Conference in Chicago, Illinois on Thursday, August 30 from 10:00-11:30am.

Studs Terkel, Pulitzer-prize winning author, oral historian and distinguished scholar at the Chicago History Museum turned 95 on Wednesday, May 16. A panel discussion with Terkel about his work and oral history archives at the Chicago History Museum will feature Michael Gorman, (past-president of the American Library Association), Russell Lewis (Chicago History Museum) and Sydney Lewis (Atlantic Public Media).

Terkel - an effective soapbox orator and former mayor of Bughouse Square - was a featured speaker with Michael Moore at a recent *Sicko* rally for Universal Health Care in Chicago (see photo). Terkel helped transform the oral history movement in America by concentrating on "oral history from the bottom up" as it relates to social and political change.



Studs on-a-soapbox, speaking with Michael Moore at the *Sicko* rally for Universal Health Care in Chicago. Terkel opened the microphone for a generation of free speech activists. Still from *Labor Beat*, c. 2007 Steve Dalber/Labor Beat (used with permission).

Studs is also the star of the Chicago PBS documentary *Studs Terkel On A Soapbox*. On the program producer Tom Weinberg opened the microphone on Terkel to address today's burning issues as well as personal hardships (including the death of his wife Ida in 1999). Much of interview is conducted in Terkel's home, his backyard and at Bughouse Square (Chicago's historic free speech corner) across the street from Newberry Library. Bughouse Square is a well known Chicago public place (the symbolic center of revolutionary thought and action) where many others have fought free speech battles and it's also the place where Terkel plans to have his ashes scattered.

Studs Terkel on a Soapbox draws from 41 archival source tapes, and the series *It's A Living* (based on Terkel's *Working*) filmed in Chicago from the 1970s to 1999, with more than 30 hours of materials, spanning most of Terkel's broadcasting career. Some black and white archival segments with Weinberg and Terkel date to 1974. For oral history educators these tapes can open the door to extended discussions about entire periods of Chicago history, revolutionary

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ORAL HISTORY NEWS (continued)

thought, and the role of the public square in free speech, social and economic justice. This intimate documentary begins with Terkel mounting a soap box at Bug House Square, interspersed with archival footage at WFMT radio, and with some of his favorite Chicago characters, including Mike Royko and Nelson Algren. One segment features Terkel in 1951 on his national television show, *Studs Place* – a program that helped define the Chicago “school” of broadcasting. *Studs Place* was taken off the air during the McCarthy Blacklist era, leading Terkel back to work as an interviewer on radio and later as “oral historian.”

Studs Terkel on A Soapbox, aired on WTTW’s *Chicago Stories* on January 5, 2001. Hosted by John Callaway. Produced by Tom Weinberg, Edited by Joel Cohen. Camera: Skip Sweeny and Mirko Popadic. Project Archivist: Al Stein. *Chicago Stories* Website: www.wttw.com/main.taf?p=1,7,1,1,51

Daring to Resist: Jewish Defiance in the Holocaust at the Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust

Submitted by Bonnie Gurewitsch



Rachel Posner, wife of Rabbi Dr. Akiva Posner, the last rabbi of the prewar Jewish community in Kiel, Germany, took this photo from inside the family home on Hanukkah 1932. Credit: USHMM, courtesy of Shulamith Posner-Mansbach.

Conducting a Passover seder in a forced labor camp, partisans fighting in the forests, dangerous courier missions, and illegal underground newspapers tell a fascinating, but rarely heard story. Defying the Nazis — whether with words or with actions — is the subject of the new, extraordinary exhibition *Daring to Resist: Jewish Defiance in the Holocaust*, which opened at the Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust in New York City on April 16, 2007 that will remain on view through July, 2008.

During the Holocaust, Jews throughout Europe, in individual and collective acts of resistance, engaged in a range of resistance activities with the aim of preserving Jewish life and dignity. Their efforts powerfully refute the perception that Jews were passive victims. Using video and audio testimony, archival film footage, authentic artifacts, documents and diaries, the exhibition helps visitors to understand the varied forms of Jewish resistance.

The curatorial team at the Museum of Jewish Heritage used its own collections and tapped the resources of several dozen archival and museum collections from all over the world, to assemble vivid and eloquent materials that would tell this extraordinary story.

The exhibition is chronologically organized into sections documenting Response to the Rise of Nazism, Resisting Occupation, Resisting Deportation, and Resisting Mass Murder, and explores the themes of armed, spiritual, political, and cultural resistance to the Nazis’ campaign against the Jews.

Armed resisters took up weapons to physically attack the Nazis or to sabotage their efforts. As partisan Faye Schulman remembered, “Our task was to blow up trains, to attack the Nazis, to ruin everything so the Nazis would not have possibilities to take stuff to the front line.” Artifacts of armed resistance include weapons, boots made by Jewish partisans in the forest, and a handwritten manifesto by Abba Kovner, partisan leader, who called for armed Jewish resistance on January 1, 1942.

Spiritual resisters continued to practice and study their religion despite the circumstances and the danger. A prayerbook handwritten in a forced labor camp with a stolen pencil, a pair of Tefillin hidden by a prisoner in his armpits, tell of prisoners who risked

continued on next page

ORAL HISTORY NEWS (continued)

their lives to continue religious observance.

Those who resisted politically published underground newspapers and communicated with other isolated Jews in order to shatter illusions encouraged by the Nazi policy of deception and secrecy, and to call for armed action. Women couriers traveled illegally, carrying news of mass executions and carried ammunition for revolt. Artifacts of clandestine documentation in the exhibition include: a typewriter from Belgium, which had Hebrew keys, used to produce an illegal newspaper displayed next to it; and a diagram of the mass murder site at Ponar, saved in the Vilna Ghetto archive of Hermann Kruk.

Cultural resistance was expressed attempts to lift the community's spirit through concerts, plays, and lectures, which also provided employment for actors and musicians. A maquette of a stage set for a production in the Lodz Ghetto, film of a children's opera performed in Terezin, with commentary by one of the performers, give the visitor insight into the subtext of defiance behind cultural activities.

Highlights of the exhibition include images taken by George Kadish, the photographic chronicler of the Kovno Ghetto in Lithuania. One powerful scene is of the aftermath of a pogrom that killed over 800 Jews. Kadish's photo is of his murdered neighbor's last words. The desperate message written in Yiddish by the neighbor with his own blood reads "Yid'n nekama!" ("Jews, revenge"). Kadish took his own revenge by documenting not only the atrocity, but the struggle for life in the ghetto. He buried his photos in the ghetto and retrieved them after the war.

One of the iconic images in the exhibition illustrates the importance of faith and hope in defiance of the Nazis. Rabbi Dr. Akiva Posner was the last rabbi of the prewar Jewish community in Kiel, Germany. His wife Rachel took a photo from the inside of their home on Hanukkah 1932. The menorah is proudly displayed in a window, with a swastika flag looming on the opposite side of the street. On the back of the photo Mrs. Posner wrote: " 'Death to Judah' the flag says, 'Judah will live forever' the light answers."

Powerful filmed testimony plays an important role in the exhibition. Four 6 –7 minute films provide the mindset of those who experienced the Holocaust,

giving the visitor insight into what was known and how this information was interpreted at the time. Four 3 minute films look at specific episodes in more depth. Archival film footage and photographs are illustrated with excerpts from diaries, memoirs, and oral history interviews with survivors originally from Poland, Latvia, France, Greece, Hungary, and beyond, who tell their stories of survival and defiance. Shalom Yoran talks about what motivated his own resistance, "Before being separated from my mother, she told me, 'Go fight...try to save yourselves, avenge our death, and tell the world what happened.' These are the words that guided me through that dark period, what gave me strength to fight, and what inspires me to share my story today."

The companion volume to the exhibition, which shares the exhibition title, highlights the themes of the exhibition. This compilation of more than thirty memoirs, oral histories, and letters, some published for the first time in English, documents from a Jewish perspective the vitality and resilience of Jewish life under Nazi oppression. In addition to original and thought-provoking essays by exhibition curator Yitzchak Mais, Holocaust scholar David Engel, and psychologist Eva Fogelman, who offer new insights about this important chapter of Jewish history, the book gives the reader access to archival sources from a variety of perspectives.

Several entries are from well-known resistance figures such as Abba Kovner, the first to raise a cry for armed Jewish resistance; Rabbi Leo Baeck, who spearheaded attempts to save German Jewry; and Dr. Janusz Korczak, who protected 200 orphans in the Warsaw Ghetto. Equally important are previously unpublished oral histories, diaries and memoirs of ordinary men and women who, through their courageous actions, showed that the Nazis could not break their spirit or destroy their faith.

These moving first-hand accounts are supported by photographs and art produced clandestinely by Jews in ghettos and camps. This anthology of written and visual materials illustrates the tremendous resourcefulness, diverse methods, and daring initiatives of Jewish men and women in all occupied countries who risked their lives defying their Nazi oppressors, saving their fellow Jews, and preserving their Jewish traditions.

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ORAL HISTORY NEWS (continued)

This exhibition was made possible through major funding from: Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, the Elizabeth Meyer Lorentz Fund of The New York Community Trust, the Edmond J. Safra Philanthropic Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Humanities.* as well as generous individual and private foundation support. Media

sponsorship is provided by The Jewish Week. To learn more about the exhibit and the book, go to: www.mjhnyc.org/daring/daring.html.

*Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this exhibition do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



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The Oral History Section of the Society of American Archivists is composed of members of the Society and others who are interested in or are actively engaged in conducting oral history interviews and/or teach oral history methodology. The Oral History Section provides a forum for news, for discussion of issues and developments, and for establishing and maintaining communication and cooperation with other professional organizations.

ORAL HISTORY HAPPENINGS AT THE 2007 SAA CONFERENCE IN CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

www.archivists.org/conference/chicago2007/index.asp

Pre-Conference Workshop

August 26, 9 am - 5 pm
"Using Oral Histories: Publications, Exhibits, Internet"
(This workshop will also be held on October 22, 2007 at Texas State University-San Marcos.)

Privacy and Confidentiality Roundtable Program

August 29, 4 - 6 pm
"Privacy Issues and Oral History in the Digital Age"

Session 101

August 30, 10 - 11:30 am
"Free Speech, Free Spirit: The Studs Terkel Center for Oral History"

P7 Poster Presentation

August 30, 5:45 - 7:45 pm & August 31, 9:30 am - 4 pm
"Gathering Institutional Memory: Oral History as Outreach Programming"

SAA Oral History Section Meeting

August 31, Noon - 2 pm



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