



Newsletter

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Fall 2001

A Publication of Oral History in the Mid-Atlantic Region, affiliated with Oral History Association

Fall Conference in Philadelphia Friday, October 5, and Saturday, Oct. 6, 2001

**University of the Arts
320 S. Broad Street**

Philadelphia is just beginning to celebrate the 225th Anniversary of the American Revolution. Come on and see the new happenings (the new dent in the Liberty Bell *et al*) and learn about how oral historians, folklorists, and artists of all kinds are celebrating. We welcome commuters from the surrounding area for the day or those who want to experience the city more fully by staying overnight. A block of rooms has been reserved at the Doubletree Hotel (special rates: \$109 single, \$119 double), but you must make your reservation early, by **September 7, 2001**, or the terrific rate will not be available. Remember, that is Columbus Day weekend. The phone number for the Doubletree is **215-893-1600**.

Friday Workshops, Oct.6

All sessions will be held at the Chambers Wiley Church, which is part of the University of the Arts.

9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Introduction to Oral History

Workshop presenter: **Roger Horowitz**, Associate Director of the Center for the History of Business, Technology and Society at the Hagley Museum and Library.

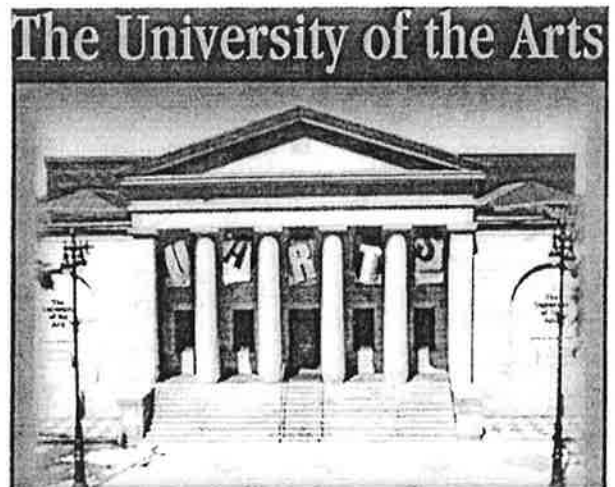
He is Vice President of OHMAR. Among his publications are *Meatpackers: An Oral History of Black Packing House Workers and Their Struggles for Racial and Economic Equality*.

1:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Field Recording Equipment and Its Use

Workshop leaders: **Charles Hardy**, West Chester University and **Steve Rowland**, Culture Works

7:00 p.m. **Louis Massiah**, MacArthur Genius Award-winning filmmaker, will show excerpts from recent oral history-based video documentaries. He will introduce and answer questions about his documentaries on **Louise Thompson Patterson** and *Oral History of Broad Street*.



We hope to see you in Philadelphia!

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2:00 p.m.-3:15 p.m. **Oral History and Video**

Chair. **Louis Massiah**, Director of the Scribe Video Center. Massiah is an independent documentary film maker whose films often explore historical and political subjects. His award-winning works, which have been seen widely on public television and at film festivals internationally, include *W.E.B. Du Bois--A Biography in Four Voices*, a documentary on the life of the great scholar and political activist; *The Bombing of Osage Avenue*, on the 1985 Philadelphia police bombing on the MOVE organization; and *Cecil B. Moore*, an examination of the political leader and the Civil Rights Struggle in Philadelphia.

Panelists:

Tina Morton, Instructor at Scribe. She is currently working on a documentary "*A Promise Fulfilled*" which chronicles a Vietnam veteran's promise to his fallen comrade to travel across country in a horse-drawn covered wagon in the tradition of the Buffalo Soldier. In 2001 she completed "*Severed Souls*" a five-minute documentary about Corrine Sykes, the first African American woman executed in Pennsylvania. This film premiered on Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema and has aired on TV35's *Philadelphia Stories*.

Dorothea Braemer of the Termite TV video collective. Braemer collects oral histories of her neighborhood between 2nd and Girard Streets in Philadelphia, near the recently demolished Schmidt's Brewery. As a teacher and Community Visions Coordinator at Scribe, she helps groups use oral histories to create video documentary projects. Currently she is producing five-minute *Life Stories* that will be published on the web and distributed on Free Speech TV to over sixty cable stations in the U.S. She has exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art and the Museum of Television and Radio in New York City.

3:30 p.m.-4:45 p.m. **Who Will Preserve Our Tapes? An Open Forum on the State of Sound Archives in the Philadelphia Region.**

Chair. **Charles Hardy**, West Chester University, teacher and producer of public radio and video documentaries. The first producer of "Crossroads", a national weekly radio news magazine on multicultural affairs, his sound documentaries for public radio include *The Popular Culture Show* (1982-84) and *Return of the Shad* (1992). He co-authored with Alessandro Portelli of *I Can Almost See the Lights of Home: A Field Trip to Harlan County, Kentucky*, a 2.5 hour essay in sound that won the 1999 Oral History Association Biennial Nonprint Media Award.

Panelists:

Margaret Jerrido, Archivist and Director of Urban Archives, Temple University, for the past 10 years. She teaches and consults for numerous organizations. She has written for and/or edited the *Director of African American Collections in Greater Philadelphia and Selected Suburban Areas* and *The Encyclopedia of African American Culture and History*, and other journals.

Kenneth Finkel, WHYY's Executive Director of Arts & Culture Service. He was an executive producer of the prize-winning *Philadelphia Performs* series and has led the development of an Arts & Culture Service plan for WHYY. Finkel entered the field of Philadelphia Arts & Culture as curator of prints and photographs at the nation's oldest cultural institution, The Library Company of Philadelphia, a position he held from 1977 to 1994. Projects during that time include books, catalogues and exhibitions on 19th century photography, book illustration and the history of architecture.

George Blood, sound archivist and recording engineer whose clients include the Philadelphia Orchestra.

We need your vote at the next meeting!
Vote at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 6 on proposed changes to the
OHMAR Constitution and several board positions

Proposal to Change the
OHMAR Constitution

IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE VIII, SEC. 1, "AMENDMENTS" OF THE OHMAR CONSTITUTION, THE BOARD BY UNANIMOUS VOTE, PROPOSES THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS:

1. Article VI: Elections

Sec. 1: The annual election of Officers, At-Large Members, and Nominating Committee shall take place at the spring meeting.

[NOTE: This changes "fall" to "spring"]

2. Article IV Officers and Governance

Sec. 1 [Now reads: All of the Officers shall be elected for a term of two years with the right to stand for reelection.] ADD: "Effective as of January 2002, the president and vice-president shall be elected in even-number years. The secretary and treasurer shall be elected in even-number years."

NOTE: Approval of these changes means that the current terms of the secretary and treasurer will be 1.5 years and the terms of the president and vice-president will be 2.5 years.

Changes to Meetings Schedule

After careful consideration and deliberation, the Board of OHMAR recommends the following changes in the organization's schedule of meetings:

The board proposes that the spring conference also be the time for the presentation of the Pogue Award, the annual business meeting, and the elections.

In order to reach new oral historians and to provide experienced practitioners with new ideas, OHMAR will offer a day of workshops each fall instead of a conference program.

The Fall 2001 meeting in Philadelphia will include workshops on Friday, October 5, and a plenary session on Friday night. In addition to the plenary sessions on Saturday, October 6, the annual business meeting will be held at 1:00 p.m. Presentation of the 2001 Pogue Award will follow the business meeting.

The Spring 2002 meeting will include a discussion of the OHMAR workshop series. Experienced oral historians are especially encouraged to attend and to share ideas and materials. The meeting will also include lunch, a business meeting, and elections.

In Fall 2002 OHMAR will offer at least two half-day workshops, including one for beginners.

The Nominating Committee offers the following slate to fill several positions:

- Member at Large:
Sandra Stewart Holyoak
- Nominating Committee:
Valerie A. Pawlewicz
Sara Collins

with Mr. Nixon.” What she was saying was that she had lived a life prepared to make this statement. This so important. I said to Alferdteen out in the hall, “That is the importance of your oral history.” Because if you look at what has been said about Rosa Parks in the newspapers, it's all about how she got tired one day and just decided not to give up her seat on the bus, and that wasn't it at all. The message for young people is that these people who we interview as a part of our oral history projects are people who have been prepared to make the contributions that they made. They didn't just suddenly appear.



Alferdteen Harrison

I think that one of the things that has always been important to me about oral history is its democratic nature. While I know that it's important for us to professionalize what we do, and to do the very best job we can, I hope—and I think meetings like this with camaraderie are a part of that—that we never lose that sense of the contributions that people have made. I think without oral history, we would not have women's history, we would not have minority history, we would not have labor history. We have been a part of a revolution that has changed the very nature of history. I think we have done it because of that democratic spirit, which I hope we will never lose.

Sara Collins: I think oral historians don't go into that field unless they like people a whole lot, and that's what I've seen in our regional oral history association and the national Oral History Association. They are people-oriented people. I predict that they will continue that way. I had an opportunity—I was

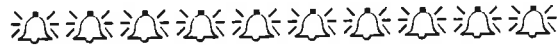
giving a slide-show as a kick off for our bicentennial in Arlington, we're celebrating our two hundredth anniversary, and I had given some of the early colonial, nineteenth and early twentieth century history and someone from the audience offered: “That's all well and good, but what about the history of this important fifty years?” It's because people don't believe there is history unless they have been part of it. They considered the history of the last fifty years, which is very, very important in Arlington, to be the only history and asked: “Are you keeping that?” I was able to say, “I am retired from the library, but fortunately, your local library in its community archives and its oral history program, has a wonderful documentation of the civil rights struggles, and the school struggles of the last fifty years.” I think, like you were saying Alice, that's where we're going to be able to give the most, in some of these more recent but otherwise undocumented struggles.



From left: Benis Frank, Mary Jo Deering and Sara Collins.

Mary Jo Deering: Well, as someone who has left oral history as a profession over 15 years ago, I pick up on the remarks of the others and what was said earlier that I would judge oral history not as a discipline or a sub-field but as a set of values and attitudes and approaches toward people. As such, I think those of you who are teaching oral history at any level, and those who are organizing meetings about oral history, should remember that not all of those who come to you will be professional oral historians. But the skills and values and approaches and attitudes that you give to them can be extraordinarily valuable to them in their professional life in a variety of settings. So I

OHMAR Fall Conference Registration



Friday, October 5, 2001

Workshops

9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. **Beginning Oral History.**

Roger Horowitz leads a half-day workshop on interview techniques, methodology, equipment usage and all the basics you need to start your project. Limit 20 people. Make check payable to OHMAR.

_____ \$35 member/non-member
_____ \$25 student

1:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **Field Recording and Its Use.**

Charlie Hardy and Steve Rowland lead an intermediate to advanced workshop on digital equipment and recording techniques. Bring your future radio programs and sound exhibits up to broadcast quality. Limit 20 people. Make check payable to OHMAR.

_____ \$35 member/non-member
_____ \$25 student

Saturday, October 6, 2001

Registration for the conference covers program, coffee, and snacks. Lunch is not provided. If you join OHMAR with your registration you can receive the member registration rate. Make check payable to OHMAR.

_____ \$35 member
_____ \$15 student
_____ \$40 non-member
_____ \$20 to join OHMAR
_____ \$10 to join OHMAR, student
_____ \$45 REGISTRATION AT THE DOOR [member or non-member]

\$ _____ **TOTAL:** Workshops, conference registration, membership.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____