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# OHMAR Newsletter

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Volume XIX Number 3

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## **OHMAR HELPS OHA SET RECORDS AT PHILADELPHIA MEETING**

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by Anne G. Ritchie

Over six hundred people from across the United States and around the world gathered in Philadelphia, October 9-13, for this year's Oral History Association meeting, which was jointly sponsored by OHMAR. "Oral history, memory, and the sense of place" were the themes of the meeting, which also marked the thirtieth anniversary of the first national oral history colloquium.

OHMAR played an integral role in planning and hosting this meeting in its region. OHA president Anne Ritchie, program co-chairs Linda Shopes and Howard Green, and local arrangements co-chair Pam Cassidy (with Mary Bear Shannon) were all former OHMAR officers. On the opening day, OHMAR conducted an all-day workshop for beginning oral historians. OHMAR president John Schuchman joined Anne Ritchie at the Moore College of Art and Design for a joint presidential reception, which OHMAR sponsored. The Friday morning coffee break commemorated OHMAR's twentieth anniversary; and at the Friday luncheon OHMAR's Forrest C. Pogue award for outstanding contributions to the field of oral history was presented to Spencer R. Crew, director of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History. Also at that luncheon, Martha Ross delivered a tribute to long-time OHA and OHMAR member Betty Key.

The five-day program featured a larger number and wider diversity of workshops and sessions than at any previous meeting. In a session on "the state of the art," Ron Grele, director of the Columbia Oral History Research Office, pronounced the meeting "a qualitative leap," and suggested that the quantity of work displayed had been necessary to reach this qualitative level. Those attending could participate in discussions on the psychology of

memory, new legal issues, and varying perspectives on class. Presenters showed how oral history offered insights into African American and Latino neighborhoods in Philadelphia, mill towns in the Rust Belt, and Lesbian and Gay communities. Sessions focused on oral histories of Cold War Germany, teaching with oral history, storytelling, public history, interviews in Cyberspace, and whether some nineteenth-century interview projects constituted an oral history of Abraham Lincoln. Throughout the program, films and videos were shown, radio presentations were discussed, and museum exhibits analyzed.

As oral historians have learned from listening to those who experienced past events first hand, other historians and museum curators have begun to reconsider how their audiences remember the past. David Thelen, editor of the *Journal of American History*, offered a discussion of how Americans learn from and use the past. On a related theme, Spencer Crew compared the assumptions that visitors bring to historical museums and the historical interpretations that the museums present to them, calling for finding a new common ground. At the Saturday evening dinner, New York University professor Robin D.G. Kelley offered his views on oral history, memory, and the Black left.

The Philadelphia meeting had a strong international component, featuring panelists and presenters from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, Turkey, and other nations. OHA was also pleased that the newly elected president and a number of council members of the International Oral History Association were able to attend the meeting and conduct their own board meeting there. Their participation gave testimony to the universal nature of oral history methodology.



**The OHMAR Newsletter is published three times a year by Oral History in the Mid-Atlantic Region, an affiliate of the Oral History Association. Send articles, news, or books to be reviewed to Joel R. Gardner, Gardner Associates, 1060 N. Kings Hwy #315, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034.**

**Deadlines are January 15, June 15, and October 15.**

**Newsletter ad rates for a one-time ad are as follows: Business card \$25; Half-page \$50, Full page \$75.**



## OHMAR News

*The officers and executive council of OHMAR passed the following resolution at the fall meeting in Philadelphia:*

WHEREAS, the members of Oral History in the Mid-Atlantic Region were saddened to learn of the death of Betty McKeever Key; and

WHEREAS, Betty McKeever Key was an early practitioner of oral history, from her involvement with the oral history component of the Eugene McCarthy Project, now housed at the Georgetown University Library in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, she was an early member of the Oral History Association and a member of its Council; and

WHEREAS, she established the oral history office at the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore; and

WHEREAS, she was a founding member of Oral History in the Mid-Atlantic Region, received a Bicentennial grant that funded its first workshop of which she was chair; and

WHEREAS, she chaired the committee that developed the OHMAR constitution and was honored as the second recipient of the Forrest C. Pogue Award in 1980; and

WHEREAS, she wrote OHMAR's *A Handbook for the Conference Staff*, which has become a standard planning tool for program planners; and

WHEREAS, she encouraged the highest standards of oral history practice through the graduate seminar that she taught at Catholic University and in articles published in the *OHA Review* and other professional journals; and by serving as a mentor and consultant to many oral historians and their programs;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that OHMAR recognizes the many contributions of Betty McKeever Key to oral history, its organizations and its practitioners and that OHMAR honors her memory. This resolution shall be entered in the official minutes with a copy to her family and the Maryland Historical Society.

### Treasurer's Report

Beginning balance, Oct. 28, 1995,	
Columbia First Bank	\$8,029.56

#### Activity since last report:

Income	
Membership	\$ 935.00
Conference income	2,025.00
Contributions	50.00
Advertising	50.00
Sales	400.00
Interest	151.65
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$3,611.65</b>
Expenses:	
Printing	\$1,918.45
Mailing	821.80
Stationery/Supplies	46.79
Food*	2,767.00
OHA pamphlets	100.00
Pogue award	54.22
Miscellaneous**	440.11
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$6,148.37</b>

Closing balance, Oct.31, 1995	
Crestar Bank	\$5,389.57

Notes:\* Includes \$2,000 for reception at fall OHA meeting.

\*\*\$35 for Port Washington meeting room, \$62.84 for new checks from changing banks, and \$342.27 for resolution for Betty Key.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cindy Swanson, OHMAR Treasurer

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM**

*If your membership has expired, please return \*\*the following form with your check payable to OHMAR.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (business) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 Area(s) of Interest \_\_\_\_\_

**OHMAR dues for 1996**

Individual	\$10
Student/Retiree	\$ 5
Institution	\$25
Life Member	\$75

**Total enclosed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Make check payable to OHMAR and mail to OHMAR, P.O. Box 2351, Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C. 20002**

**NAMES AND NEWS**

*Fill out the form below to report news or information that you wish to share with the OHMAR membership. We especially welcome information about persons and projects. If this space is insufficient, feel free to attach another sheet.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Institution or Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_  
 News: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Mail to OHMAR, P.O. Box 2351, Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C. 20002**