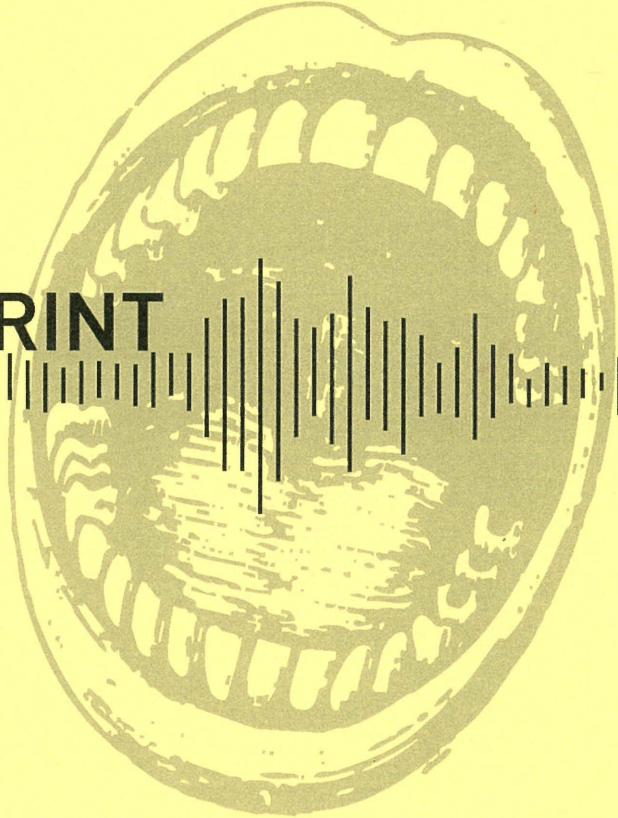


Newsletter of the New South Wales Branch
of the Oral History Association of Australia



VOICEPRINT

32

April 2005

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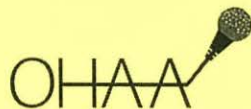
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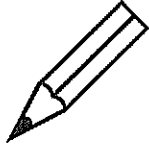
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Editorial



Please do keep this copy of Voiceprint as there is so much happening in oral history and we have tried to list it all for you here. In a little over a year we will have the International Conference in Sydney – Dancing with memory: oral history and its audiences – exciting times ahead! Have you thought about a paper or about plans to come to Sydney July 2006?

Before we come to 2006 there is plenty to do and enjoy in 2005. There are meetings which all members are welcome to attend – do come sometime. This year we will again have three seminars and I know many of you look forward to these days. Do note all the dates in your diary. Then, could you write something for the OHAA Journal – note call for papers in this Voiceprint. Please remember that your editors have a permanent call for papers for Voiceprint! Remember just a few lines about what you have been doing is of interest.

In this issue apart from notices of all that is planned for the future we have included the Guidelines on Fees for Interviewing and Transcription as suggested by the OHAA. Another reason to keep Voiceprint 32 for reference.

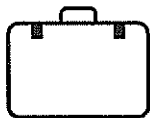
I am sure you will also notice the design changes which give Voiceprint 32 a new look! Graphics have never been among my computer skills, so I am most grateful to Vanessa Block for our new look. Thanks Vanessa.

Thank you to those who contributed articles for this edition. Special thanks to Margaret Park for her history of development and opposition to it at North Sydney The paper illustrates how history can be informed by an ongoing oral history project. It is not often that we have opportunity to review the results of an extended project. We do hope you enjoy reading about it.

We look forward to meeting members at various functions throughout the year. Your contributions for the next Voiceprint by the end of July would be greatly appreciated.

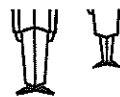
Joyce Cribb

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Membership



New Members

Willoughby City Library

Patricia Silman	interested in oral history
Susan McAlpin	lecturer
Leona Geeves	librarian
Sue Boaden	interested in oral history
Sarah Napthali	writer
David Major	consultant
Barbara Kitanov	retired, interested in oral history
Michael Fitzhardinge	subscription television
Linda Harrison	producer/editor
Christina Amiet	consultant

A warm welcome to you all! We have such exciting events in store and you are all in good time to share in them. The OHAA is participating in the CISH/AHA Conference in Sydney in July this year. This will be instead of holding our full national conference which would usually take place. The reason that this is not happening is that the OHAA is hosting the International Oral History Association Conference in July 2006 also here in Sydney. You will note the Call for Papers (deadline 30 May 2005) in our current Journal and we hope you will be interested in offering a paper and certainly in attending. We are very excited at this first for our Australasian/Oceania region. In the meantime I hope to catch up with you at our regular seminar on 7 May.

Rosie Block

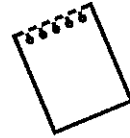


About the Committee

Congratulations to Margo Beasley

Margo was recently awarded a PHD from Wollongong University. I have quoted the synopsis of her thesis as I am sure it will interest members (Ed)

My doctoral thesis was written in opposition to the work for which I am best known as a consultant historian, *Wharfies: the History of the Waterside Workers Federation of Australia*, which was a conventional institutional history of a very well known, highly influential, and exclusively male Australian trade union. I was aware of the 'behind the scenes role' that women played in the WWF but because the book was about the union, and not about the life of the family, the women could only ever be subsidiary within it. I set out in the doctorate to seek the waterfront women's story by accounting for what constituted meaning and significance in early twentieth century waterfront households in Sydney. Along the way I came to see that not only were women excluded from most conventional institutional histories, but so also were many men, as well as much of the work that most men, even unionised men, did. So the thesis became an account of meaning and significance from the perspective of the household that took all members of the household into consideration: men and children, as well as women. It was underpinned by the proposition that history that awards significance from the perspective of public life (as histories of trade unions do) necessarily privileges masculine relationships (actual or symbolic) and generated presence and absence along lines that are often gendered. By contrast, history that seeks meaning and significance from the perspective of the household can scrutinize women, children and men with relative equality. Through this route the interactive and entwined experiences of gender, class and generations can be made more visible, and alternative accounts of meaning and significance can emerge.



Correction

I must admit spelling was never my strong point – especially names! My apologies to Siobhán McHugh our Seminar presenter, and to Helen Klæbe our Rome photographer for spelling their names incorrectly. (Ed)

New Website

www.ohaa.net.au. Do bookmark and visit this site from time to time to keep up to date with what is happening around Australia and further afield!

Congratulations to Annie Bolitho

Last year, 2004 was a significant year for Annie Bolitho. Her radio play 'Word Treasure', composed of Australia and Afrikaans sound, language and politics, featured on Radio National in October. She also won the University of Technology Sydney's Chancellor's Award, an award which recognises the most outstanding PhD thesis across the university. Her doctoral study 'New Dimensions in Water Conversation' drew on a community cultural development project conducted with the support of Rous Water in Northern New South Wales, and includes the voices of specialist and non-specialist 'water lovers' in one locality.

Play at Glen Street Theatre

Sibohán McHugh tells us that the play based on her book *Minefields and Miniskirts: Australian Women at the Vietnam War* will open at the Glen Street Theatre, Belrose on May 11th. We must congratulate Siobhán on the very successful season the play had in Melbourne. If you have the opportunity, an enjoyable and interesting night out recommended.

Hoist on One's Own Ums – By Sue Pechey

(I have copied this short article from our friends in Queensland – perhaps it will also have meaning in NSW! Rewind December 2004 Thanks Ed)

I have been teaching oral history techniques for some time now, and there are a lot of people who have heard me say that remaining silent throughout an interview, except when interpolating a question, seems very unnatural. I can live with a few verbal prompts and think that some exchange of information (meaning some information from the interviewer as well as from the informant) is fine – though naturally one does not wish the interviewer's stories to dominate the interview. All very fine!

But in the latest project I have taken part in, I have been well and truly hoist on my own methodology. I have been working with Vicki Warden, Regional Museum's Officer in Toowoomba, to interview nine people from Killarney, Warwick and Allora, for a project



entitled "People, Places and Past-times" – 35/45 minute interviews, using my minidisk recorder. Not at all a difficult task, and I met some wonderful people.

Then the real crunch – Vicki wanted no more than five or six minute of each of these interviews and she had borrowed an IBM with the relevant software and had a 2-hour workshop on how it all worked. She then gave me a lesson – in 10 minutes or thereabouts. We laboured mightily for about three weeks and everything that could have gone wrong did – ran out of disk space, could not save in the right format for the material to be played on a CD player, as opposed to on a computer, lost part of a couple of interviews by hitting the wrong buttons at the wrong time, even had the printer crack up as Vicki tried desperately to print CD labels. BUT, by far the worst part of the task was taking out all my oh-so-unhelpful non-silent prompts – uhm – uuuhm – Oh, yes – Wow – Indeed ... and several more. Very tedious it is, trying to catch a nanosecond of sound and extract it without impairing the flow of the main speaker – not to say time consuming. Never again!

And just to prove I can still (or is it, at last) learn by experience, one interview had to be repeated after I had started on my sound-editing career. It has scarcely an Um in all twenty-three minutes. Such a shame about all those interviews I've done over the last 30 years. I have visions of sound editors throughout the centuries cursing the day I first took tape recorder in hand.



OHAA Guidelines on Fees for Interviewing and Transcription

The Oral History Association of Australia suggests the following fees for oral history interviewing and transcription:

1. One hour of recorded interview may range in cost from \$400-\$450. This includes research, unless extensive research is required, in which case extra fees may be negotiated between the oral historian and the commissioning party. Each extra hour of interview undertaken may range in price from \$50-\$100 per hour. Travel expenses may form part of this fee or if the interview is some distance from the oral historian's workplace this may be negotiated according to travel fee guidelines developed for State Government public servants. GST may also be added to this figure if the oral historian is registered for GST.
 - The range of fees for interviews is based on the extent of preparation required and the range of qualification and experience of the interviewer.
 - The Association cannot insist on particular fees and it is up to individuals to establish fees they consider suitable.
 - One hour of recorded interview will typically involve up to five hours of research/preparation. This will usually include a preliminary interview prior to recording. This may be undertaken by telephone or in person.
2. One hour of tape transcribed may range generally in cost from \$100-\$150. Additional charges may be incurred for transcription checking and post-editing corrections to the text.
 - Fees for transcription are based on the assumption that one hour of tape typically takes 4-6 hours for a professional transcriber to transcribe. If there are problems of sound quality, pronounced accent or use of non-standard English, the time taken (and hence the cost) will increase.
 - Where translation is required it is noted that there is an award for this service.
 - Fees for transcription at the higher end of the scale may include post-editing corrections to the text or these may be charged at the transcriptionist's hourly rate.
3. For the purposes of project budgeting, a figure of around \$500-\$600 for one hour of interview (researched and transcribed) is generally appropriate. This may be varied depending on the project. Instead of a full transcription, a summary; or log (timed summary); and/or index may be required.

Reports (cont...)



- For the purposes of project budgeting, the research component may be reduced or increased depending on the nature of the project.
- Again, depending on the project's nature and complexity it may be recommended that the research component is estimated and quoted separately. Also, additional fees outside these guidelines should be charged for work that is separate to the research/interviewing component of projects (e.g. publications, exhibitions etc.).
- Transcription may also be quoted separately.

Guidelines of Ethical Practice – see website

Contract

The Association recommends that where a body is commissioning a project it is important that there is a contract between that body and the oral history project manager/historian. The contract should include fees, nature of services to be provided and conditions of employment.

Professional Historians Association

The Association advises members that there are professional historians' associations throughout Australia whose members are qualified and accredited. This association publishes a scale of fees for their members and to assist commissioning parties in the development of project budgets.

Community Arts Networks exist in most states to advise on the development of project budgets and fees for practitioners featuring oral history in their work.

Seminar Report: 6 November 2004

From Family to the Famous: Oral History and Documentary


Rod Freeman a Sydney film maker shared his expert knowledge and many fascinating stories with us on this occasion. Rod spoke particularly about the making of his award-winning film *Uncle Chatzkel* and his work with the most recent episodes of *Australian Biography*. Rod is particularly interested in documentary and he sees oral history as the foundation of documentary – the persons own story as the foundation on which a documentary is built. *Uncle Chatzkel* started with the idea of recording family history as Uncle Chatzkel is Rod's great uncle, the youngest brother of his grandmother, and he was the last of the family still living in Lithuania, the last link back to the families' origin in Lithuania. With the support of the family Rod went to Lithuania to film and record Uncle Chatzkel story without any funding for producing a documentary film. As his uncle was born in 1904 and was 93, there was no time to loose! Obtaining funding for any project, Rod explained is a long and involved process.

At 93 Rod found his uncle still working – he was a philologist and lexicographer – and was working on the production of another dictionary in Lithuanian . He had already published dictionaries and was regarded as a very important scholar in Lithuania for his work in preserving the language. Rod spent about 2 weeks to record some 8 hours of interviews. The interviews had to be fitted in around his uncle's busy work schedule. They were filmed in Uncle Chatzkel home and were also recorded on tape. His uncle understood some English

but an interrupter was used to translate the questions and answers. If the answer was long the interrupter would give a précis of the answer. Rod told us that having the recordings spread out over two weeks gave him time to think and allowed for informal times. He found it frustrating having to work through an interrupter as he was not able to fully respond with appropriate questions as the interview progressed. Later when listening to the full translations in English he wished he had followed up on some points that he had not fully understood at the time of interview.

The film that Rod was able to make tells Uncle Chatzkel life story and of the troubled times he lived through. Rod showed some excerpts from the film and told us some of the story. Members were so interested that Rosie has been able to arrange a screening of the film which will be held at the Library on May 20 at 12.10pm. I will not try to retell the story here – do come to see the film! However I can tell you about the technical details that Rod explained to the audience.

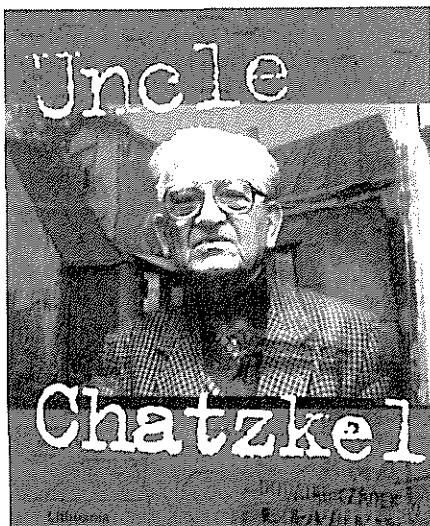
Rod explained that in putting the film together he had to find a balance between images and words to tell the story. He used footage of the interviews with his uncle, other footage shot on his visit to Lithuania as well as a considerable amount of historical footage which he had been able to obtain from a number of sources as well as still photographs to illustrate people,



places and the events being spoken about. Rod acted as narrator as required to make explanations and to link the story together. One of the most difficult things he found was to fit the documentary within the time limitations – 52 minutes – as allowed for showing on television.

Rod went on to talk about his work with Australian Biography – he produced the most recent series of episodes and is currently working on another series to be shown later this year. In this program he works with an experienced interviewer Robin Hughes – a collaborative or team production which requires discussion and planning. Again fitting the production to the time – 26 mins – was not easy as the interviews are conducted over three days. Again he may use some still photos that belong to the interviewee or if the person has been a public figure there may be moving footage available. The production is very challenging as for many of the biographies there is only some stills photographs and the interview; no moving footage to cut in, to enliven the visual effect and illustrate the story.

There was considerable discussion regarding the issue of copyright when including any material from other sources. Rod explained that it could be very expensive, however he did try to negotiate an affordable price. The issue is a complex and one and there are no easy simple solutions. Everyone has to do their own negotiations regarding the purposes for which the film may be shown, what term



the permission will be for and where within the world it may be shown, all variations which affect the price that may be asked.

Rod explained that the Australian Biography series is archived and may be accessed on line at www.australianbiography.gov.au where the full transcripts of the interviews are available. At present not all (over 60) of the interviews are up on the web but the plan is that they all will be available for educational purposes. I'm sure you will find a visit to the sight of interest. Members should also keep a watch for other interesting documentaries in which Rod has been on the production team. Did anyone see *Crossing the Line* on ABC TV *Message Stick* in February?

It was wonderful to have such a talented professional share his knowledge with us and we do thank him most sincerely.

Joyce Cribb



Engineers Australia's Oral History Collection Swells to 193 – by Michael Clarke

The Engineers Australia Oral History Collection at the State Library of New South Wales has been increased to 193 interviews with the deposit of the 220 tapes of a further 82 interviews by Sydney Division of Engineers Australia.

The presentation was made on 4 November by Richard Phillips, Director Sydney Division to the State Librarian, Ms Elizabeth Ellis, Assistant State Librarian, Collection Management Services & Mitchell Librarian. The guests included Barry Anderson, President of the BMC-Leyland Heritage Group, Michael Clarke, Manager of the Oral History Program and Ms Sarah Szacsvey its Oral History Coordinator.

In welcoming the guests to the ceremony, Ms Ellis said:

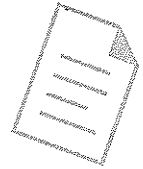
(The Oral History Program) was a brilliant conception and as to be expected from members of the engineering profession, was carried out with impeccable precision and accuracy. The second presentation of 156 tapes ... came to the Library in perfect order and ready for immediate incorporation into the collection, fully logged and summarised as is the latest donation we are celebrating today. I might say that it is not always so, with donations of original materials to the Library sometimes leaving a lot to be desired ... leaving staff with the at times superhuman job of bringing order to chaos after their acceptance. It takes

great discipline and dedication to persevere from the first idea of compiling a collection through to final achievement...

It is salutary that Engineers Australia is so committed to their own history in a manner which is eminently practical and enduring and which links so well with other resources which document the history of the lives and people in this state held in the State Library. Of all the oral history projects of professions held here, this program is the most comprehensive, the most active and the most carefully presented.

In the process of engaging appropriate oral history interviewers for the project, the Heritage Committee has perfected the relevant tender and commissioning documents and they have very generously shared their high standards with other colleagues in the Oral History Association representing cultural institutions from across the nation ...

Engineering Australia's oral history project has become one of the landmark enterprises in the Library's oral history collection – and we are very grateful and proud to be the recipients of the results of this great undertaking. Thank you for entrusting this work to us for preservation for posterity and for access and use by researchers in the Mitchell Library now and in the future.



The interviews included 14 conducted by the Monaro Group of Engineers Australia of retired Snowy engineers, and the 17 done by the BMC-Leyland Heritage Group for its project about the history of BMC-Leyland in Sydney. The BMC-Leyland project was a very significant one as the company along with the Snowy Scheme played a major role in the employment and assimilation of post-war European migrants; the tapes will thus be an important social history resource.

The Engineers Australia Oral History Collection at the State Library is becoming the recognised place to research engineers through oral history.



(From left to right) Barry Anderson, Richard Phillips, Elizabeth Ellis, Sarah Szacsvey and Michael Clarke

Marie Byles – by Julie Petersen

This article originally appeared in Phanfare, the Professional Historians Association (NSW) magazine. It is a condensation of an article to appear in Reflections the magazine of the National Trust of Australia (NSW). Thanks to Julie Petersen for permission to publish in Voiceprint. Ed

*'There once was a lady called Byles,
who made us walk miles upon miles.
She would call out 'Relax' and we'd
fall on our backs,
that very weird woman called Byles.'*

So went the ditty affectionally created by 10 year old Sabine Erika which she sang with her sisters, Monika and Renate after they had accompanied Marie Byles on one of her bush land walks near her home in Cheltenham during the late 1940s. This home in the leafy suburbs is no mere suburban fibro and sandstone bungalow. Its history and associations remain as a testimony to a committed conservationist, the first practicing female solicitor in NSW, mountaineer, explorer and avid bushwalker, feminist, author and a founding member of the Buddhist Society in NSW.

According to Sabine who lived with her family in nearby Beecroft in the 1940s and 50s, Marie "stood out like a sore thumb because she was so different". The neighbours would have observed a small sprightly woman who chose to live alone. They would watch her walking to the train station in her simple unadorned outfits (usually loose trousers and a simple shirt) to work every day as a female solicitor at her own practice with offices in Eastwood and Sydney CBD. Many would have wondered why this woman would have left

her home on valuable land of over three and a half acres to the National Trust in 1971 and remained living there until her death in 1979. To understand the answer we have to go back to Marie's adventurous youth in the 1920s.

Born in 1900 to English Unitarian and vegetarian parents, who valued individuality along with long and arduous tramps in the English countryside, Marie developed a respect for self discipline and the environment. In her unpublished autobiography 'Many Lives in One', Marie writes 'mother taught me we cannot be true to ourselves unless we are indifferent to what others think and say about us'. This gave Marie the inspiration to follow her dreams and to strike out on her own. In Australia, aged 11, Marie was given the freedom to choose her school (Pymble Ladies College) and her future career in law before marriage and family.

During her legal studies at Sydney University in the early 1920s, her passion for mountain climbing in NSW and throughout the world, was preceded by her adventurous exploration of the bush land around Maitland Bay, then known as Boat Harbour, on the NSW Central Coast. From her family's holiday retreat on Sunrise Hill at Palm Beach. Through escapades and camping trips to the area



with her girlfriends Marie developed a strong love of the area. To protect the land and marine environment from the incursion of roads, houses and rutilic mining, Marie along with members of the Sydney Bushwalkers Club lobbied the NSW Department of Lands to extend the public reserve from the northern end of Killcare Beach to encompass the larger area around Maitland Bay. In 1935 Bouddi Natural Park was created and was further expanded over the years. Marie's environmental and legal credentials made her the perfect partner to act as the consulting solicitor for the drafting up of the Constitution of the National Trust in 1946.

In 1938 Marie hired workmen to construct a sandstone and fibro one bedroom house on her bush land property at Cheltenham and named it after Ghandi's philosophy of Ahimsa. In Marie's words, 'Ahimsa means harmlessness, harmlessness of acts, words and thoughts.'

In addition to the house Marie wanted to have a place on her land where like minded individuals could come and stay to have discussions and to meditate. In 1942 she organised a working bee for friends to construct The Hut of Happy Omens.

Marie died at Ahimsa aged 80, a formidable, determined and brave woman who had conquered mountains, discrimination and her own pain in order to achieve her dreams for adventure, the environment and the spirit. Her decision to give her home to the National Trust was based on her faith in the Trust to help preserve the native bush

land around her home and help protect the surrounding reserves.

Today the Trust honours her wishes by providing a sympathetic tenant to care for Ahimsa and by leaving the Hut and grounds open to visitors. A team of National Trust bush regenerators visit approximately three times a year to carry on the work of weed eradication that Marie championed throughout her life and the Parks and Gardens Conservation Committee are currently planning to re-establish her vegetable garden to Marie's original plan. This year, the life of Marie Byles will be celebrated in an exhibition planned as part of the Trust's Diamond Jubilee Anniversary in September.

Sources

National Trust Archives

Marie Byles, Many Lives in One (Unpublished autobiography)

Allison Jane Cadzow, Waltzing Matildas:

A study of select Australian women explorers 1840s – 1940s (PhD Thesis, 2002)

Sabine Erika, Oral History, Interviewed by

Julie Petersen, December 2004

(See PHIN notice – visit Ahimsa on May 14. Ed)

“A Pretty Militant Lot”: Women and Resident Action Fighting Development, A North Sydney Story

This is an extract from a talk presented by Dr Margaret Park in March 2004 for the National Library of Australia’s Lunchtime programs in association with International Women’s month.

For my PhD and publication, *Designs on a Landscape: a history of planning in North Sydney*, I researched the history of North Sydney’s urban planning and development in the twentieth century. For North Sydney, this was a tumultuous period – the building of the Sydney Harbour Bridge resulted in the demolition of hundreds of buildings including shops, houses, public buildings and churches. By the early 1920s, this part of North Sydney was a thriving Victorian townscape and an important Sydney transport hub where trams, trains and ferries converged at the foreshores of Milsons Point and Kirribilli. In the early 1960s, further large-scale development cut a path through the heart of North Sydney in the form of the Warringah Expressway. Over 500 homes and buildings were lost to the bulldozer – all before heritage legislation and the rise of concentrated community protests. On top of this, the development of a twin city to rival that of the city of Sydney was mooted by the ‘progressive’ local civic leaders and a wave of highrise development, both commercial and residential, began to impact upon the lives of the residents of the area.

Many of these residents, many of them women, saw this rampant development as a threat to their lifestyle, local amenity and environment. From Estelle Hillard

who fought and won against a planned industrial landscape for McMahons Point in the 1950s to the women of the Wollstonecraft Peninsula Resident Action Group of the 1960s and the subsequent rise of the independent movement in the late 1970s/early 1980s, North Sydney’s planning history has been made by women joining together. These individuals, with common ideals, protested to turn back the sweeping tide of development. The role of women in resident action movements was pivotal, specifically in North Sydney, but broadly as well. By adding excerpts from some of their stories, I hope to demonstrate that North Sydney is by far a better place today because people took the time and expended the energy to act.

In late 1998, North Sydney Council commissioned a history of its development patterns in the twentieth century. This study aimed to identify the origins of planning at a local level and reveal the evolution of town planning in a rapidly changing urban environment. As the Council Historian, at that time, I began by researching primary and secondary resources and conducting an extensive oral history program. The planning history project took five years to complete resulting in 48 oral histories and two publications – *Voices of a Landscape* (2001), and *Designs on a Landscape* (2003). Recording the voices of

the community enhanced the documentary sources available and provided a depth to the story. The research and oral history work for the planning history project helped to paint a picture of a community facing immense change and social upheaval throughout the course of the twentieth century.

North Sydney's experiences are not necessarily unique though and this study helped to demonstrate the changes local communities in general have witnessed since Federation.

While North Sydney may not be unique in the way it developed as a local government body, it has always been at the forefront of town planning initiatives in New South Wales and this makes the project highly relevant to the study of urban history in Australia. North Sydney employed a town planner as early as 1947 and formed its first town planning committee in 1948; it was the first local council to produce a town plan under the County of Cumberland Planning Scheme and then the first to undertake a heritage study under the New South Wales *Heritage Act* (1977).¹ It was also the first council under the New South Wales 1979 *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* to submit a local environmental plan but one of the last to have its plan gazetted. The saga of the *North Sydney Local Environmental Plan* 1989 is told through several of the voices of those who contributed to its history in *Voices of a Landscape: Planning North Sydney*.²

The road, nonetheless, was not easy or without controversy. These controversies, embedded in the written records, reveal the stormy issues and vibrant debates that took place, as well as the results which shaped a locality. However, it is the oral history interviews, conducted with

key people present in these debates and making these decisions, which give weight and give voice to a community at work and under development. Planning, whilst not directly on the agenda of early local councils, was intrinsic to daily routines, as local government determined issues of road building, kerbing and guttering, overseeing community health issues and working with State Governments on 'big picture' items, such as water supply, sewerage and sanitation. This can all be viewed as town planning in a de facto way. In North Sydney's case, due to its position on Sydney Harbour, the local council also became involved in the building of large transport infrastructures which altered its landscape forever, including the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Warringah Expressway.

As a result of these upheavals, a substantive and persuasive resident action movement developed in the 1960s, early 1970s paving the way for the rise of the Independents and open government practices for which North Sydney Council is renowned.

Carole Baker was North Sydney's first woman mayor. She joined the resident action push and through the movement entered the world of local politics in North Sydney. During her interview Carole relayed many fascinating stories, in one of these she talked about the men on Council, both the professional staff and the aldermen. Carole referred to one of them as 'being terrified to meet with these women, especially on their turf and coined the phrase 'the new breed of aldermen'.

Carole Baker on the resident action movement in North Sydney:
Of that eight, Phyllis King, Judith Ambler, myself, and Robyn Hamilton had been involved, to varying degrees, with other Resident Action Groups, and indeed,

*were members of a group called CRAG, which stood for Coalition of Resident Action Groups... The Coalition of Resident Action Groups was to remain a source of information and advice for many of us who were trying to change things in local government. We particularly were drawn to a similar group to ours in Leichhardt, who had done the same sort of sweeping out the old to bring in the new.*³

What produced the rise of the resident action movement?

During the 1980s North Sydney Council was at the forefront of planning change and innovation. This experimental, sometimes risk-taking period was largely the product of the rise of the 'new breed' of aldermen that came to power, in part, as a result of the growth of resident action groups in the late 1960s and 1970s.

Group participation in planning and other policy decisions can be highly effective at the local level and can initiate change through a variety of methods and activities. Early protesters in local government were the letter writers who barraged their ward aldermen, the mayor and town clerk with constant streams of complaints about their locality, particularly with concerns of polluted drains and water holes, straying animals and basic infrastructure services, such as kerbs and guttering.⁴ Early building applications from the time of the first and largely toothless *Local Government Act* in 1906 (New South Wales) were simple line drawings with basic instructions as to the type of building to be erected and were rubber stamped for approval by the council of the day without any interference from neighbours.⁵

Following the new act of 1919, detailed applications for building, development and subdivision were required by councils but public notification was not. By the 1930s

petitions to the Council concerning land use and calls for open space, public right-of-ways, opposition to factory and other industrial premises and noise pollution were on the increase. Flat building attracted specific attention. In the 1960s the number of petitions protesting against the 'height of buildings' dramatically increased. They were not all from single dwelling families. Some were submitted by people living in the classic 1960 style three-storey walk up unit blocks angry, about proposed developments of eight-storey highrises in their vicinity.⁶

Development in North Sydney was at its most rampant in the 1960s both in commercial and residential districts. The Council was operating under the draft North Sydney Planning Ordinance and the 1960 Flat Code and struggling unsuccessfully to maintain a balance that was beneficial to its residents, while at the same time projecting North Sydney as a progressive area where development was encouraged, but controlled. Out of the confusion and anger that ensued came the resident action movement, inspired in part by an effective union movement together with the 1960s protest movements in the context of the prosperous post-war boom period. Protesting and publicly participating at the neighbourhood level, including against the impact of modern planning and urban renewal and redevelopment, was an urban grassroots expression of the environmental movement. It became an effective means of curtailing development that was seen as undemocratic and damaging to local environments and preserving a portion of the past that was facing demolition and destabilising societal cohesion.⁷

Robyn Read remembers the radical feeling of the times. In this excerpt Robyn talks about getting involved in the resident action movement:

I became very active in resident action and started connecting with resident action groups in other places and other resident action groups spun off around – we called ourselves the Wollstonecraft Resident Action Group... It was when the full impact of the worst of the sixties development was starting to show itself around North Sydney.⁸

Before the resident action groups, local residents would muster support for petitions and protests by joining progress associations and other types of 'advancement' societies. Progress associations did not die out as resident action or Precinct Committees came along. They survived well into the late 1970s and early 1980s in North Sydney, and like the precinct system were a source of fresh candidates for local government elections. Resident action groups did much the same but more. They were more politically militant, perhaps more intent on changing power regimes within all spheres of government and more active in promoting their ideologies and their particular patch. Progress associations were initially composed predominantly of conservative men from a more business orientated background; resident action groups contained far more women and in many situations were an extension of the womens' movement of that period.⁹

Robyn Read remembers that she – *started with a couple of other women. It was all really a powerfully based women's movement. In some ways I sometimes think that it was our version of the women's movement, there were so many parallels.¹⁰*

If planners and politicians did not move fast enough to incorporate public

opinion into the planning process, motivated members of the public began to invite themselves to the table. Ad hoc development had been occurring at a rapid rate threatening different communities' lifestyles which were not necessarily ready for massive destruction or change for change's sake. In many areas of Sydney some residents were becoming tired of hearing about the reshaping of their neighbourhoods, as new town plans were devised and adopted making it possible for development to thrive in traditionally low-scale residential areas, ushering in the home unit developments of the 1960s and 1970s which dot the landscape of North Sydney and other areas of suburban Sydney. As successive plans failed, local councils such as North Sydney, attempted new methods to replace the old and unworkable plans to avoid a complete collapse of their planning systems.

On the northern foreshores of Sydney Harbour there was a complex mixture of remnant bushland and industrial development with a smattering of residential buildings. Waterfront industries had been essential for the early economic growth of Sydney, but this began to change with de-industrialisation when these industries moved out of the inner-city harbour environs as economics shifted and transport delivery systems improved."The latter were either no longer profitable and/or were occupying sites with enormous land development potential. This was an issue of prominence in the 1970s and even today, but an earlier issue surrounding McMahons Point and the encouragement of industrial development in the 1950s, resulted in the Council's first woman alderman, Estelle Hillard. Hillard began her fight to save McMahons Point and the foreshores from industrial devastation. Hillard's campaign to restore

the area to its deserved residential status commenced in earnest when she and her husband purchased a house in John Street in 1951 and discovered it was affected by industrial zoning controls. Discovering what this zoning meant to her family home and its environment led her to the Council chambers. Not finding satisfaction there, Hillard embarked upon a fast learning curve in local government law. Realising that she would need local support to overturn the zoning regulations, she approached the Waverton Progress Association for their support, became an active member of its Committee and from her knowledge gained there she helped to establish the McMahons Point/Lavender Bay Progress Association.

It was through this newly formed community group that she was able to gather the support she needed to ensure that the re-zoning issue remained on the Council's agenda. It was also a platform for her to launch a successful election campaign to become the first female alderman on North Sydney Council when she won a seat representing the Victoria Ward in the 1956 local government elections. Hillard's original purpose of defending her own home and backyard grew into a large-scale resident protest which is an early example of the style of other resident action groups (RAGS) just beginning to sprout up at this time throughout Sydney. These groups formed with a determination to stem the tide of development and to influence the type of developments occurring in their regions.

As industries relocated or simply disappeared due to changing land values and uses, the sites became the focus of redevelopment. Often these types of industries were situated in bushland settings and after their demise the site and its surroundings were under threat

of development, usually for large-scale housing schemes.

Kelly's Bush at Hunters Hill was one bushland area which avoided redevelopment by the determination of the local people to preserve it and ensure that it remained zoned as open space for future generations.¹²

In his book *Green Bans and Beyond*, Jack Munday recalls the contact made by the Group calling itself 'Battlers for Kelly's Bush', in response to a statement made by the Builders' Labourers' Foundation (BLF). This statement reinforced the right of the workers to "express an opinion on social questions relating to the building industry". Jack Munday and the executive of the BLF discussed the approach made by 'The Battlers' who believed that only the BLF could put a stop to the redevelopment in Hunter's Hill, as they had exhausted all other avenues of approach.

Undoubtedly Munday and his builders' mates would have thought the merger of a group of middle-class professional women and the BLF an unusual blend of cooperation, but they were willing to take on the developer and make a stand against redevelopment of bushland on harbour foreshores. In his book, Jack Munday, goes on to say that – *The Battlers' were well organized, and interestingly, they were all women.*¹³

About the same time as the Kelly's Bush issue, a North Sydney group, the Wollstonecraft Peninsula Resident Action Group (WPRAG) was having its own fight with a waterfront industrial change. This group had formed to fight a townhouse development in Tryon Avenue and although this particular case was lost, those involved learned a great deal from the process. When the next threat arrived they were ready for battle. This next case involved the

preservation of their residential amenity which would be lost if a development application by Boral Road Services Pty Ltd, for a pre-mix concrete plant at the Oyster Cove Gas Works site, was approved. North Sydney Council refused the application in late 1969 on the advice of the Council's town planner, Maurie Ross. Ross advised that the plant would add to traffic generation in a residential area and if allowed to go ahead 'would be contrary to the wishes of the residents'.¹⁴ Boral, on the other hand, presented its case to the Court on the strength of the industrial zoning and that the area had a long history of industrial use. Justice Hardie's judgement favoured this view.

The Judgement included a qualification of use which related to the life of the plant tied in to the gas-making facilities and operation times. The group's campaign began again in earnest and this time they were angry and willing to take on the politicians and Boral, regardless of the legal clout Boral now possessed with its Court win. The Group made a concerted effort to letterbox the area warning residents of the industrial nightmare on their doorstep. They held public meetings and protest demonstrations. A demonstration outside Boral's North Sydney headquarters attracted media attention and a live interview with their Secretary, Mr Errol, conducted by radio broadcaster, John Tingle. Following the interview Tingle summed up the situation by telling his listeners that they had the facts and had to make up their own minds, but noting of the Group that --

I would rather have [them] with me than agin me, because they have done this sort of thing before, they have blocked development in the Wollstonecraft Peninsula area of various types of flat buildings and so on. The Group, so far as I can gather, is mainly made

*up of women in the area – a pretty militant lot. They go around chaining themselves to the railing or something, but they have every right of course to protest against what they consider to be an amenity threat in their area.*¹⁵

This excerpt from the interview with Judith Tinning, a member of WPRAG, demonstrates the lengths they were prepared to go to stop the development. Judith mentions Maureen, who is Maureen Goddard, one of the movers and shakers in the resident action movement in Sydney: *Maureen and I decided that the only way to push things along was to go down to see Richard Walsh, who was then the editor of the Nation Review in Melbourne, it was regarded as something of a stirrer, a bit like the National Times in later times only not quite as high class. So we flew down at 7:30 in the morning on a weekday. The rest of the passengers were all male businessmen as I recall. We got ourselves out to Nation Review, had the interview, told him all about it. Had plenty of documents with us and when he asked us at the end of the interview what would we do if we didn't win. We said something to the effect, well there's always the unions. At that time the unions placed a black ban on railway land in Carlton in Melbourne and it had also happened here with Kellys Bush and although the threat was made lightly, I suspect that it hit home back here in Sydney. He published the article, I'm not sure if it was that Sunday or the one after. I remember we both got up at about 5 in the morning and bought many many copies. We believed that that was the trigger.*¹⁶

Public participation will occur whether it is part of the formal system of a government structure or not. If the mechanisms are not in place to have a direct say in planning and other aspects of council work then people will have a say of their own volition.

Some may do this individually, others may band into groups to stop actions they see as detrimental to their environs, but public activism will always be a part of civic life in a democratic society. As Hugh Stretton observed in his book – *Ideas for Australian Cities* –

*What the citizens want to participate in is the discretionary use of power. So there has to be some discretionary power for them to use. Officials and policy-making committees with clear powers and wide discretions are not a general alternative to participant decision-making; they are a necessary condition of it.*¹⁷

The public were beginning to be asked to participate in planning matters in Sydney by the end of the 1960s and early 1970s. Local councils, such as City of Sydney and Willoughby made attempts with public consultation in planning processes with varying results. Overall the problem stemmed from a lack of inclusive consultation and the resources to mount such large-scale public planning programs.¹⁸

At this time, North Sydney Council was investigating its options for a Civic Centre and while it embarked upon a form of consultation process, it mainly contacted known groups of possible users of such a centre, not individuals and certainly not the community-at-large. This larger scale consultation process happened at a later date when designs were advanced and placed on public exhibition. It was at this point that the resident action movement played its part in the demise of a highrise civic centre and a change in direction of planning politics in North Sydney.

Women played a pivotal role in the demise of the proposed highrise civic centre site, in particular, several of the women who were

elected to the Council as a direct result of their resident action stance.

As North Sydney Council began to embrace the prospects of commercial development growth within the municipality post World War II, it also embarked upon a course to develop a civic centre with a commercial focus. This was to be one of the most controversial issues of the Council's history. North Sydney Council played host to a developer, Sabemo (Carl Salteri, Franco Belgiorno-Nettis, Victor Moratelli) with the intention of creating a civic place within the existing Council precinct. Sky-reaching tower blocks constructed in staged proportions would launch civic pride in the modern world.

Although the tender was accepted in 1970, it was not until the 1972 *Guide to the Ratepayers of North Sydney* that the Council provided details and a sketch of the Sabemo scheme for the North Sydney Civic Centre.¹⁹ An agenda item that was quietly simmering in the background for nearly twenty years became one of North Sydney's most notorious political and planning dilemmas. This turning point brought the issue to the forefront of the Council's business and into the public arena.

Whilst on the one hand the deal seemed to be secured for Sabemo, dissatisfaction had been brewing amongst the rank and file of a 'new breed' of aldermen which changed the way North Sydney Council would operate in the future, particularly towards public participation in council business. In the 1970 by-election Robyn (Hamilton) Read was the first of this 'new breed' to reach the floor of the chambers from the resident action movement of the late 1960s. Read's dissenting voice was soon joined by several other aldermen elected in 1971 and her opposition was strengthened by these political changes.

1973 was a major turning point for the future of the site. Unlike the processes of public exhibition and advertisement in today's planning world before approval is granted, the Sabemo development approval preceded any large-scale public consultation and it wasn't until June 1973 that North Sydney Council announced a press conference to demonstrate the approved model for the site and that it be placed on public exhibition 'as soon as possible'.²⁰

Judith Ambler, one of the women aldermen on the Council, an architect, tells us her memories of the Civic Centre dilemma – *Well, I suppose my first memories of it were a feeling of helplessness that it had gone so far, that the plans were there for these three great towers of office blocks, and a feeling that, we were very late in trying to get any change to this. Although, all of the Resident Action people were very much against that concept there - the waste of the old buildings and the fact that it was being handed over as a commercial lease, the whole site, for ninety-nine years and so on - and the fact that the Council offices would be squeezed into parts of these great office blocks, the three great office blocks that they were planning. I think everyone of the Resident Action people [was] very much against that sort of idea, and way of doing things. Although up 'til then I'd probably been a follower than a leader I was, in terms of what went on in Council and in the different causes that people were involved in, I did have to take a more active role because of the fact that I was an architect.*²¹

When the model was eventually presented to the public, first at the Council then at Stanton Library in July and August 1973, people were finally able to comprehend the scale of the project as previous public exhibitions of the proposal featured only schematic-type drawings. Resident action

groups and the *Give North Sydney a Heart* campaign feared that the Council was attempting to hide the issue from public scrutiny and the groups went to great lengths with letter-writing campaigns and public meetings to ensure that the issue remained in the public eye. The Wollstonecraft Peninsula Resident Action Group, which included determined women such as Maureen Goddard and Judith Tinning, had already succeeded in a concentrated campaign to stop Boral from taking over the gas works in Oyster Cove and their tenacity in achieving their goal there enabled them to redirect their efforts towards the Civic Centre site. Letters were written to the state authorities as well as North Sydney Council and general flyers were distributed widely alerting the community to the importance of the proposed commercial use of their community land.²²

Opposition to the Sabemo scheme was growing in strength. Vocal groups, such as the Wollstonecraft Peninsula Resident Action Group, the North Sydney Civic Action Group and the Neutral Bay Civic Amenities Group continually asked questions of the Council as to the viability of the proposal and queried the lack of any social analysis of the project. Alderman Robyn Read expressed her concern for the disregard of social issues and asked that on top of an economic evaluation of the latest scheme (Scheme 4), Council should also be evaluating 'the social and human viability of the project'.²³

Where at first there was full support from every alderman for this development, this support was whittled away almost one by one beginning with the voice of Alderman Read; Read was joined by her fellow woman aldermen, Alderman Judith Ambler, Carole Baker and Phyllis King as well as others who

changed their votes as the feasibility of the project waned.

The plight of the Civic Centre site remained on the Council agenda for years and the subject of many a bitter debate mostly because of the personalities involved and the political importance attached to the voting patterns and the ultimate demise of a scheme seen as visionary by some and a social disaster by others. In the years before Ted Mack's plan of the 1980s culminating in the Civic Centre Park of today, the site became a bit of an urban eyesore containing a mixture of buildings, some open space, a car park and community facilities. It was not quite a civic heart nor a place to inspire gatherings and the hustle and bustle of a busy urban environment.

Spanning nearly fifty years of North Sydney's planning history, the Civic Centre issue was a catalyst for change and one of the issues of the mercurial late 1960s and 1970s that brought people into the planning arena. The development of a prominent and highly visible civic centre was the product of an earlier view that progress was achieved by redevelopment and urban renewal programs, utilising panels of experts with strict adherence to rigid policies which lacked transparency and often conducted behind closed doors. This view was fostered over the years as North Sydney Council officers and aldermen saw this direction as the right way to produce a good balance between the provision of community facilities, not necessarily services, and a profitable mix of commercial development which would reap the reward of high yielding rates.

The combination of economics and the over supply of office accommodation of the early 1970s, plus the rise of resident action and a 'new breed' of alderman, in particular women, resulted in the demise of

the Saberno scheme. It took many years to achieve the initial intention of 'a civic heart' by the way of open parkland for community use combined with a mixture of commercial development, public housing, Council offices and community facilities which occupies the site today.

Note:

The majority of this paper is from my PhD Thesis and publication of the same name Designs on a Landscape: A History of Planning in North Sydney. The thesis was submitted to UTS, Sydney in 2003 and the book was published in April 2003 by North Sydney Council in conjunction with Halstead Press. All other sources are cited in the endnotes. Margaret Park.

Endnotes

1. Margaret Park, *Voices of a Landscape: Planning North Sydney*, North Sydney, North Sydney Council, 2001, pp154-159.
2. Park, *Voices of a Landscape*, p90.
3. Interview with Carole Baker, interviewer Margaret Park, Stanton Library's Oral History Collection, Stanton Library, North Sydney Council, 7 March 2000.
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7. Peter Dreier, *Place Matters: Metropolitans for the twenty-first century*. University Press of Kansas, 2001, pp157-160. See also Verity Burgmann, *Power and Protest: Movements for Change in Australian Society*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1993, pp192-195.
8. Interview with Robyn Read, interviewer Margaret Park, Stanton Library's Merle Coppel Oral History Collection, North Sydney Council, November 1999.

Robyn Read (known as Robyn Hamilton when first elected to North Sydney Council, also later an independent member of the state legislative assembly.

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17. Hugh Stretton, *Ideas for Australian Cities*. 3rd edition, Sydney, Transit Australia Publishing, 1989, p313.

18. Loveday, Peter, 'Citizen Participation in Urban Planning' in *The Politics of Urban Growth*, edited by Parker and Troy, Australian National University, Canberra, 1972, p.137.

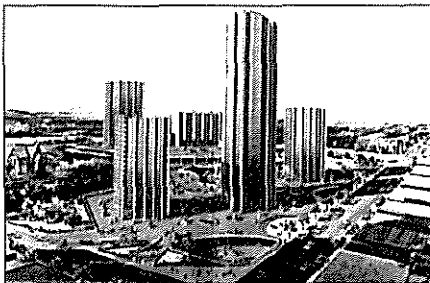
19. *Guide to Ratepayers of North Sydney*. North Sydney Council, 1970-1972.

20. *Minute of the Mayor*, 22 June 1963, North Sydney Council Minutes, 26 June 1973.

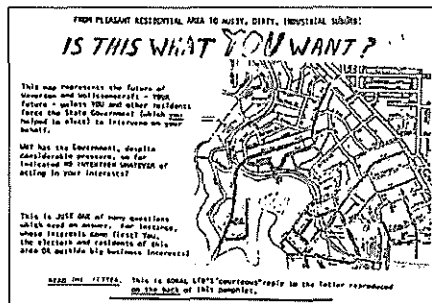
21. Interview with Judith Tinning, interviewer Nan Manefield, Merle Coppel Oral History Collection, Stanton Library, North Sydney Council, 29 November 2001.

22. Tinning, Judith, interview.

23. *North Sydney Council Civic Centre Files*.



Artist's impression of the proposed North Sydney Civic Centre (Sabemo) From: North Sydney Council Guide to Ratepayers 1972



Pamphlet distributed by Wollstonecraft Peninsula Resident Action Group

Call For Papers

OHAA Journal No. 27, 2005

Talking communities, talking families

- (A) **Papers** ranging from 3,500 to 5,000 words are invited on the following themes:
- **Heritage and arts projects** – including relative emphases on community participation and heritage preservation goals
 - **Local history studies** – including work initiated by local governments, libraries and historical societies
 - **Family histories** – work arising from personal interest, contributing to broader research topics, or family-commissioned
 - **Life histories** – including long life-history interviews, always of great family value whether part of a family project or otherwise
 - **Cultural and ethnic groups** – community based projects, identities, empowerment
 - **Agencies and institutions** – including churches, labour unions, specific occupations or professions
 - **Oral history in schools and tertiary education contexts** – whether having primarily pedagogic, or historical research-oriented goals, or arising from mixed interests.
- Aspects which could be explored within these themes include:
- Engagement with ideas about the role of oral history in community and family histories and projects
 - The relative value and meaning of oral history records and other sources
 - Oral history processes in different contexts – e.g. artistic or educational projects, relationships to sponsors' interests, historical research requirements, culturally proactive agendas
 - The genesis of projects, particularly the aims and interests of people proposing and carrying out projects, who the stake holders are and their relationship to outcomes
 - Funding, and logistical considerations – how addressed, and their impact on the process and the final product
 - Recording issues encountered, particularly issues with digital technology (either audio and/or audio-visual), transcription and audio archiving
 - Ethical, moral and legal aspects encountered – solutions, difficulties and methodological implications
 - The relationship between original oral records and the material presented in publications, exhibitions or broadcasts, in particular questions of ownership, authority and interpretation
 - Maintenance of endangered cultural memory and identity – particularly oral history documentation of lost or disappearing communities or particular social groupings

Articles (cont...)

(B) Short reports of approximately up to 600 words on any projects are also invited, whether on community or family themes or other topics. These could include summary detail of the project goals, sponsors or research projects, who interviewed and by whom, how many interviews and how long, funding issues, how material is to be used, and where archived.

(C) Long project reports up to 2,500 words, on any projects are also invited, whether on community or family themes or other topics. In addition to content such as in (B) above, these could also include extracts of interviews, and some summary discussion on issues and outcomes—such as ethics, ownership and access, relationship between aspirations or motivations of participants and the nature of the project, or any of the issues suggested in (A) above.

(D) Reviews of publications, films, videos etc., from 500 to 750 words, are also invited.

Photographs and other images are particularly welcome. Written work must be in the required format—all intending contributors will need to contact the editor for a style guide.

Send proposals (200 words), or completed work to:
Mr Francis Good, Editor,
OHAA Journal No. 27, 2005
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E-mail: francisgood@mail2me.com.au

**DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF FINAL
SUBMISSIONS: 30 APRIL 2005**



Call For Papers – XIVth International Oral History Conference Sydney, Australia, 12-16 July 2006 *Dancing with memory: Oral history and its audiences*

Oral History Association of Australia
website: <http://www.ohaa.net.au>

Papers are invited from around the world for contributions to the XIVth International Oral History Conference hosted by the International Oral History Association in collaboration with the Oral History Association of Australia, State Library of New South Wales, University of Technology Sydney, and University of New England.

Proposals may be for a conference paper, a thematic panel or a workshop session. Offers to convene a Special Interest Group Session are also sought. (See details below*)

Proposals will be evaluated according to their oral history focus, relevance to the conference theme and sub-themes, methodological and theoretical significance, and sound scholarship.

Conference theme *'Dancing with memory: oral history and its audiences'*

Much of the research and reflective work in this field over the years has focused on those who carry out oral histories and the process of interviewing itself. But what has been the effect of telling stories largely through the sound medium over the last 40 years? As we move to a new age of digital storytelling which strengthens the visual elements, it seems timely to ask: who listens and how? Oral history is one of the ways in which people share memories and how people hear and respond to them is partly shaped by the contexts of their telling and listening.

The conference theme invites presentations which investigate that 'dance with memory' which occurs between the speaker and the listener, and between the performer or product and their audiences. We therefore encourage people who have worked with oral history in a wide range of environments such as museums, heritage agencies, academic institutions, law courts, radio and television, performing arts, community projects all of which express a relationship to the past through a particular cultural medium.

The conference theme also invites reflective analysis of the ways in which, through past and current projects, 'dancing with memory' involves both pleasure and pain – for the subject, the interviewer and the audience – and the ways in which awareness of particular audiences shapes the focus and conceptual framework of individual projects.

We encourage proposals which explore indigenous lives, and we envisage that some sessions will focus specifically on comparative indigenous perspectives and experiences.

Conference sub-themes offer an opportunity to tease out some of these issues as well as to extend discussion to include ongoing concerns within oral history scholarship and practice.

Articles (cont...)

Sub-themes:

- **archiving memory** – methodological sessions which focus on interviews as evidence of the past for future researchers; reuse of interviews; electronic media and access; publishing oral history in written texts
- **fire and water** – environmental issues, natural heritage, disasters
- **healing memories** – oral history in health work, aged care, disability.
- **island stories** – island nations and nations of islands; their stories and connections; sea passages and borders.
- **memory and community** – where oral history has been central to the recreation of community in particular locations or used to document disappeared or lost communities.
- **memory and trauma** – in cases involving – human rights, justice or restitution where oral history has been utilized as testimony, surviving war, surviving terrorism
- **places and buildings** – lost places, localities, heritage issues and debates
- **pleasures of memory** – where the focus is on oral history as a sensuous engagement with the voice; relationship to seeing (still and moving image), touch (material culture and museums), performance (theatre and music); emotion and experience.
- **political pasts** – government agencies and corporate memory, politics, politicians
- **remembering the land** – particularly where oral history has been central to land claims

or ownership of particular sites, and where oral history is used to map spatial histories

- **sharing/passing on beliefs** – religious traditions, oral traditions,
- **stories in translation** – diasporas, cross-cultural dialogue
- **talking to ourselves** – history of oral history, oral history as an international movement, 10th anniversary of IOHA
- **teaching and learning** – where the audience is cross generational and oral history makes an intervention in passing on cultural heritage either through formal schooling or informal family or community traditions

If you are interested, please send us a single page proposal including an outline of your paper and the following details:

- name (with your family name in CAPITAL letters)
- affiliation
- postal address
- email address
- phone and fax numbers
- relevant sub-theme
- whether an individual paper, a thematic panel, or a workshop proposal*
- suggestions for Special Interest Groups*

Proposals (and subsequent papers) must be written in English or Spanish. Presenters will be required to send their final paper in English or Spanish, with a summary in the other language. We strongly recommend that translations are done by professional



translators. If none are available please notify the Association at ioha@uts.edu.au

Papers should, as much as possible, allow the conference audiences to hear the voices of narrators

- * NOTE: Individual papers – these will be grouped by the conference organizers into panels or workshops with papers which have a similar focus
- Thematic panels – proposals for a thematic panel should contain no more than four presenters, preferably representing different countries
- Workshops – workshop proposals should identify an issue or focus for a workshop, propose a structure and workshop leader/s.
- Performances – segments (of no more than 30 minutes) from oral history based performances
- Special Interest Groups – There will be network sessions for Special Interest Groups to meet, establish contacts, share resources and ideas. Convenors will be required to organize each Special Interest Group. Suggestions and offers are invited.
- Master classes – There will also be some oral history master classes or workshops available before the conference and led by internationally recognized oral history scholars and practitioners.

Deadlines for Proposals

- By 30 September 2005: acceptance or rejection of proposals
- By 28 February 2006: receipt of papers for publication on conference CD-Rom

Scholarships

The International Oral History Association has a Scholarships Fund to provide financial assistance to attend the conference, particularly for participants from developing countries. Guidelines are available on the IOHA website (<http://www.ioha.fgv.br>). To be eligible for a Scholarship you must, in the first instance, have a paper or other proposal accepted. Please consult the IOHA website for details.

Send Proposals to:

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Diary of Events

Biennial General Meeting Of Oral History Association of Australia 2005.

Notice is hereby given that the Biennial General Meeting of the Oral History Associations of Australia will take place on Tuesday 5 July 2005 at 5.30pm. in the Coles Room, Macquarie Wing, State Library of New South Wales, Macquarie Street, Sydney, NSW

The business of the meeting will be:

- Apologies
- Confirmation of minutes of Biennial General meeting held at the Constitutional Centre, Perth, WA, on 6 September 2003
- President's Report
- Treasurer's Report
- Election of Executive and National Committee for 2005/2007
- IOHA Conference
- General Business
- Motion re 2007 Conference

(Members are encouraged to attend this meeting and meet some of our interstate friends.)

CISH Conference

Sydney, 3-9 July 2005 University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW
<www.cishsydney2005.org>

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE for OHAA ORAL HISTORY SESSIONS NOW ON 6 AND 7 JULY 2005

Panel Session: Day 1, 6 July

Session 1: 9.00 – 10.30, Talking communities

Community oral history projects have reached out to include a wide range of

participants and have used a variety of approaches. This panel will offer an exchange of approaches and projects: collaborative research, applied research, community ownership, performance, exhibitions, publication and multimedia.

Janis Wilton, immediate past president of the International Oral History Association, Department of Classics, History and Religion, University of New England, NSW, historian and author; Sandra Hodgson independent oral history consultant, QLD; Heather Goodall, historian and author, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, UTS; NSW, Jan McCahon, Local Studies Librarian, Victoria Park Library, WA, president OHAA (WA); Jill Cassidy, consultant, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston, TAS; Mary Ann Jebb, historian and author, independent consultant, WA

Panel Session: Day 1, 6 July

Session 2: 1.30 – 3.00

Oral history and its challenges

The OHAA was established in 1978. Its formation coincided with the publication of Wendy Lowenstein's 'Weevils in the flour', and the heated debate about the place and reliability of oral history led by Patrick O'Farrell. Since then, the debates and challenges have continued. Among others, there is Geoff Spenceley looking again at the Depression and Keith Windschuttle with his recent attack during the History Wars.



This panel invites reflections beyond the debates. The presenters will highlight some of the contributions and challenges posed by oral history to the practice of history making in Australia.

Paula Hamilton, historian and author, Centre for Public History, UTS, NSW; Rosie Block, Curator, Oral History, State Library of New South Wales and National President OHAA, NSW; Frank Heimans, independent oral history consultant, NSW; Margaret Hamilton, independent oral history consultant, WA; Margaret Park, former North Sydney Council Historian, historian and author, independent consultant, ACT

Panel Session: Day 1, 6 July

Session 4: 5.00 – 6.00

Oral history and technology - the way forward

This workshop will address the challenges and decisions facing practitioners and archival institutions. These include which recording formats to use for interviewing; how multimedia can play its part; presentation and publication; archiving; storage; and access.

George Imashev, formerly Australian War Memorial, ACT; Beth Robertson, Coordinator Preservation, State Library of South Australia, editor, Oral History Handbook, SA; Francis Good, Manager, Oral History, NT Archives Service, NT, Richard Neville, Manager, Original Materials Branch, State Library of New South Wales, NSW

Panel Session: Day 2, 7 July

Session 5: 2.00 – 3.30pm

Handling ethics and ethics committees

Drawing on the ethical guidelines of the OHAA and debates about ethics in oral history practice, this panel invites discussion about ethical practice in history more broadly. It also invites reflections on the role of University Human Research Ethics Committees.

Julia Horne, University Historian, University of Sydney, NSW; Lucy Taksa, Head, School of Organisation and Management, UNSW, NSW; Cathie Clement, independent consultant historian, WA

Committee Meeting Dates

for 2005: 19 April; 21 June; 18 October; 22 November. Members are encouraged and welcome to attend the Management Committee meetings held at the State Library 5.30pm. Please meet in the Mitchell Wing vestibule at 5.25. (Staff will direct you if you miss the group)

Annual General Meeting

23 July (The AGM will be held prior to Seminar)

Seminar Dates

for 2005: 7 May; 23 July, 5 November.



Documentary Film Screening

Uncle Chatzkel

Friday 20 May in the Metcalfe Auditorium at 12.10pm. Do come and see the film that Rod Freeman spoke of at our last seminar.

Public History Interest Network

Saturday, 14 May 2005, 3-5 pm
"Ahimsa", Day Road, Cheltenham
A National Trust property – former home of Marie Byles

Julie Petersen, Public Programs Manager, Museums and Properties Department, National Trust of Australia (NSW) will tell us about the forthcoming exhibition on Marie Byles.

Dr Allison Cadzow will also give a short talk about her research into women bushwalkers and explorers and Marie's place in that and the conservation movement.

Drinks and nibbles in the Meditation Hut on site. RSVP and enquiries to: rburge@ozemail.com.au Tel: 0413.733.218

Noticeboard



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