



## *NEW GRANT OPPORTUNITY FOR TEXAS COMMUNITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECTS*

Baylor University Institute for Oral History (BUIOH) invites nonprofit organizations in the state of Texas to apply for a grant to facilitate oral history research in their communities. The annual grant enables one Texas community per year to benefit from the oral history process with assistance from BUIOH in developing, conducting, processing, and presenting its work.

BUIOH will support the local organization receiving the grant in the following ways:

- a one-time grant of \$2,500 to support the oral history project
- conducting a training workshop in oral history research for project volunteers
- consulting with organizers and volunteers throughout the project
- processing, duplicating, and transcribing the oral history recordings
- making the oral history transcripts accessible online
- co-depositing the recordings and transcripts at Baylor University and a local public archive chosen by the organization receiving the grant

The local organization will initiate the project, carry out the interviews in a timely fashion, and develop and arrange public programming to share the outcomes with its community. Resources are available to help nonprofit community groups initiate oral history projects. Begin with these materials available from the BUIOH Workshop on the Web: *Introduction to Oral History and Organizing Oral History Projects*, available at [http://www.baylor.edu/oral\\_history](http://www.baylor.edu/oral_history). The Oral History Association provides *Using Oral History in Community History Projects* (2007; \$15), which offers concrete suggestions for planning, organizing, and undertaking oral history in community settings, including a step-by-step guide to project planning and establishing project objectives. This pamphlet and others on oral history and the law, family oral history, and oral history in the classroom are available from the Oral History Association, <http://www.oralhistory.org>.

For additional details, go to [http://www.baylor.edu/oral\\_history](http://www.baylor.edu/oral_history). To apply, please complete the application form available on the BUIOH Web site and return it with the required attachments by January 15, 2010. The grant recipient will be announced by January 29, 2010.

To ask questions or obtain application information by mail, call us at 254-710-3437 or e-mail [BUIOH@baylor.edu](mailto:BUIOH@baylor.edu).

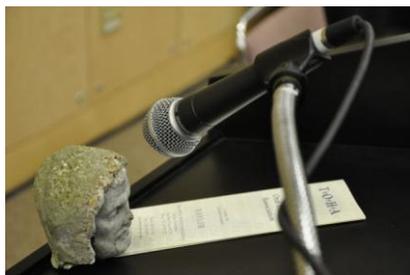
# *TOHA Board of Directors News*

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## 2009 Program Meeting and Spring Board Meeting



Program chair Jo Ann Stiles, with presenters Ware, Rienstra, and Linsley



St. Francis, liberated from Ware's garden, visited the TOHA session and made many friends.



After the program, the board and editors met and discussed business and visions for the organization.

The room was filled to capacity last March 26 at the Palmer Events Center in Austin, when TOHA met in joint session with the Texas State Historical Association for its annual program meeting. The session, titled “Land, Lumber, and Cotton: Family Fortunes in Southeast Texas,” included papers and slide presentations by Diane L. Ware, Judith W. Linsley, and Ellen Walker Rienstra, who introduced us to the fortunes and misfortunes of three prominent Texas families: the Dews, the McFaddins, and the Lutcher-Stark-Brown dynasty.

Following the successful program session, the TOHA board gathered to conduct business for the organization and bid farewell to two board members who were retiring after six years of service. During their three terms on the board, Diane L. Ware and Rebecca Wright both served TOHA as vice-president and president, and both accomplished much for the organization through their service on various committees. Thank you, Diane and Rebecca, for being such special friends to TOHA.

## *TOHA 2010: “Using Oral History to Document Civil Rights Movements in Texas”*

Plan to join TOHA in early March 2010 for a timely oral history session arranged by Michelle Mears. The program, chaired by Todd Moye, director of the University of North Texas Oral History Program, will stimulate understanding on the topic of African American and Mexican American civil rights in Texas. Dr. Moye intends to organize the session in a roundtable format to maximize discussion among the presenters and the audience.

Robert Edison, Dallas ISD director of social studies, will present “Oral Histories of African American Educators from the Era of Segregation.” As the title suggests, this presentation stems from Edison’s many oral history interviews with black educators from the segregation era and documents an important chapter in the early history of civil rights organizing in Dallas.

Martha Norkunas, professor in the public history program at Middle Tennessee State University, will present “The Development of Racial Consciousness: Austin African Americans Narrate the Emergence of a Racial Sensibility.” This paper highlights history gleaned from the University of Texas African American Texans Oral History Project, a collection of more than four hundred hours of recordings with Texans of African descent. The paper highlights key moments of racial awareness in the narrators’ lives.

Kristine Navarro, director of the Institute of Oral History at the University of Texas–El Paso, will share stories from “The Bracero Oral History Project,” a collection of more than four hundred interviews with Bracero participants from both sides of the US-Mexican border. The Bracero program, a federal guest worker program initially intended to address labor shortages during World War II, brought more than two million Mexicans to the US to work.

Details of the program—day, time, place—will be announced in early January. In the meantime, mark your calendars for this special event and plan to join us in Dallas early next spring.

# TOHA Member News

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The Denton County Historical Commission has appointed **Michelle M. Mears** chair of their Oral History Committee. She and her committee members have plans to interview long-time citizens of all the communities in Denton County, as well as work to create a list of all of the oral histories about the county's history that have already been conducted and are housed in local area libraries, museums, and historical society offices.

**Bobby H. Johnson** would like to hear from people who are, like him, polio survivors. If you are a polio survivor or can put Dr. Johnson in touch with someone who is, please call him at 936-564-2170 or write him at 1904 East Austin Street, Nacogdoches, TX 75965. Recipient of the TOHA Lifetime Achievement Award, Bobby Johnson has written several plays based on his extensive interviews on life, tragedy, and war in East Texas. His latest play, "East Texas Talks," premiered last February 20 at the Lamp-Lite Playhouse in Nacogdoches. The two-act show featured about twenty actors who portrayed vignettes of tales told by a colorful host of East Texas farmers, housewives, preachers, and undertakers. About the same number of musicians performed a variety of appropriate music, from Sacred Harp to barbershop to light classics, combined with a little folk music and an audience sing-along.

**JoAnn Pospisil**, Director of the Baylor College of Medicine Archives, and **Sarah Canby Jackson**, archivist at Harris County Archives, conducted a joint presentation for Julie Knutson's eighth-grade history class at Chinquapin School in Highlands, Texas. Sarah's presentation focused on research methods and the use of primary sources, and JoAnn discussed oral history methodology with the students. Both presenters were impressed, they report, with the attentiveness of the mannerly and engaging audience. JoAnn sends kudos to Mrs. Knutson and her students for their interest in oral history as a tool for historical research.

**Barbara Parsons Smith**, chair of the Victoria County Historical Commission Oral History Project, invites TOHA to mark our calendars for June 24-26, 2010, to attend the Victoria College/University of Houston Library conference commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the Korean War. Coordinator for the conference is Charles Spurlin, himself a Korean War veteran. Program chair Jim Smallwood has issued a call for papers (see page 6) and has already enlisted presentations on a variety of topics related to the war, including Hispanic involvement, African American involvement, foreign policy background, medic/MASH units, Blue Star Mothers, POWs, and combat artist Ralph Schofield. Barbara and her committee are organizing an oral history component for the conference. Keynote speaker for the conference banquet will be celebrated newsman Jim Lehrer. More information will be forthcoming on this significant event. Until then, plan to be in Victoria on June 24-26, 2010.

How many oral historians are the subject of an original ballad? We know of at least one: **Lincoln King**, of Carthage. Founder of the Loblolly program at Gary High School and winner of TOHA's W. Stewart Caffey Award for Excellence in Teaching, King was honored by Steef Sealy who composed the ballad, "Loblolly: The Legend of Lincoln King," and performed it with the Ever Hopefuls. A line from the ballad reminds us "there were thousands of stories—some were big, some were small. But for the kids in that class, it changed them all, 'cause when truth about life hits a young person's ear, it gives them meaning to history, makes their part of it clear."

TOHA charter member **Louis Marchiafava** remains actively engaged in oral history and local history through his company, Texas Research Consultants, after his retirement as archivist from the Houston Metropolitan Research Center of the Houston Public Library and history teacher at various campuses of the University of Houston. Earlier this year, Louis directed a day-long introductory oral history workshop for the Katy Library, in which he taught best practices in equipment usage and interviewing techniques. Participants conducted practice interviews with one another and critiqued the interviewers' skills. Recently, too, Dr. Marchiafava conducted interviews for Galveston's Rosenberg Library to document the experiences of three employees who rode out Hurricane Ike in the library. The executive director, an archivist, and an IT systems analyst stayed in the library during the storm and took immediate preventive measures to help preserve as much as possible of the library's collections. The entire first floor of the library was flooded, but their heroic efforts prevented catastrophic losses. Contact Dr. Marchiafava, Texas Research Consultants at 713-664-9367 or 713-870-7137, or e-mail [barbrovm@cs.com](mailto:barbrovm@cs.com) or [louis101@att.net](mailto:louis101@att.net).

# Community Projects Earn TOHA Awards

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The TOHA Board of Directors has awarded the 2009 Mary Faye Barnes Award for Excellence for Community History Projects to Dr. Sara Massey of Austwell and to Susan and Rob Burneson of Austin. Congratulations to these projects that demonstrate excellent community applications of oral history!

## **Dr. Sara Massey**

Dr. Massey's project, titled "Never Far from the Sea: The Vietnamese of the Texas Gulf Coast," was nominated for the award by Dr. Joe F. Dahlstrom, director of libraries for Victoria College/University of Houston–Victoria Library, who commended Massey's collection of interviews with Vietnamese men and women who migrated to the Texas Gulf Coast following the fall of Saigon. The interviews are available to researchers in the Victoria Regional History Center of the Victoria College/University of Houston–Victoria Library, the University of Texas at Austin Center for American History, and the City by the Sea Museum in Palacios.



Dr. Massey first saw the need for the project in 1998 while she was employed by the Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio.

As she edited the book *The Asian Texans*, she could find no primary source material on the Vietnamese in Texas. Two foundations in Victoria and one in Palacios furnished funding for Dr. Massey's project to fill in the gap in the historical record. During 2008, she recorded interviews with forty-eight individuals whose families fled Saigon and settled in the Texas Gulf towns of Palacios, Port Lavaca, Seadrift, and Rockport. The interviewees ranged in age from twenty-one to eighty-two, all born in Vietnam except one who was born in Guam.

Dr. Massey began by acquiring background information through researching materials on Vietnam, the fall of Saigon, the refugees, and their arrivals at US camps. From her research, she developed a set of questions. All the subsequent interviews followed the same general pattern, thereby providing future

scholars a rich primary resource on living in Vietnam, memories of the war, the escape from South Vietnam, life in the refugee camps, coming to the US, obtaining a sponsor, finding work, learning English, moving to Texas, finding better work, getting married, and building a new life.

A press release in the Palacios newspaper announcing her intent to interview Vietnamese people in the community yielded Dr. Massey the names of a few potential interviewees. She found other interviewees by visiting places Vietnamese people gathered, such as restaurants, nail salons, and local hangouts like the Dairy Queen and a bait shop where older men played dominoes. When meeting a person of Vietnamese origin, she handed them a one-page flyer explaining the project and providing her contact information. Some people refused to be interviewed or photographed. Some were embarrassed by the difficulty they had in responding to questions in English, and others never had told their stories of leaving Vietnam, even to their children. Among the forty-eight people who agreed to take part in the project, several required the help of family members or friends to serve as translators during the interviews.

Each interviewee signed a release form beforehand to donate their interview and photograph to the archive. In exchange for participation, each one received a copy of the transcript and the photograph. After the recordings were transcribed and deposited in the chosen archives, Dr. Massey presented her findings to local county historical commissions and wrote an article for *Sound Historian*. She held a "Thank You Reception" at the Museum of the Coastal Bend in Victoria to honor the interviewees, their extended families, project funding agents, and others associated with the project.

## **Susan and Rob Burneson**

The Burnesons have created a video documentary titled *A Community Mosaic* to capture the history and thriving community spirit of two working-class neighborhoods in Austin: Brentwood and Crestview.

Established more than fifty years ago as two of Austin's first suburbs, today they are in the heart of the city. Brentwood and Crestview are undergoing transformation in the twenty-first century as the original residents age and move away or die. For younger families moving in, the documentary provides a historical perspective on their new home, with a strong emphasis on sustaining the community spirit of the former residents.

The Burnesons live in Crestview and participate in many facets of community life there. Their oral history documentary has roots in a 120-foot mosaic Wall of Welcome, created by artist Jean Graham to portray the neighborhood's history. As long-time residents came by and shared their memories with the artist, the Burnesons realized the opportunity to collect more extensive stories from their older neighbors through video-recorded oral history interviews.

In their research in local libraries, the Burnesons discovered little documentation of the neighborhoods, but interviews with dozens of residents uncovered information on



schools, churches, shopping centers, recreation areas, and landmarks. Among the interviewees was Bill Williamson, who in 1958 created the eight-foot star at the top of the Capitol rotunda in Austin.

The outcome of the interviews is a 22.5-minute video documentary. Interview clips mingle with other valuable information,

including early maps, photographs, and home movies, woven together with present-day video and music. The video premiered in March 2008 at the dedication of the Wall of Welcome. Since then, the Burnesons have shown their work in a variety of community centers, churches, and other venues in the area. Last October, during a community art festival, they showed the video in a popular mid-twentieth-century drug store in Crestview. The Burnesons also donated copies of the documentary to the Austin



History Center, Austin Public Library, Hot Springs Documentary Film Institute Library, Baylor University Institute for Oral History, and local elementary, middle, and high schools. The interview recordings on DVD are available to researchers in the Austin History Center. Transcribing of the interviews is under way and the transcripts will be deposited in the Austin History Center as well. Excerpts from the transcripts were shared with the neighborhood through public readings at a community festival.



Among the outcomes shared with neighbors was a fourteen-foot-long display featuring stories and photographs from residents, plus additional historical information about the area.

Beyond its value as a history of working-class people, the documentary, the Burnesons say, “reveals important truths for people of all ages: being a good neighbor and working to keep community spirit alive makes a neighborhood strong and a great place to live.”



Nominate a project—your own, perhaps?—for the 2010 TOHA Mary Faye Barnes Award for Excellence for Community History Projects. Nominations will be accepted until February 1, 2010. Begin the nomination process on the TOHA community awards page at <http://www.baylor.edu/toha/index.php?id=29362>.

# Announcements

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*Call for Conference Papers:* The Victoria College/University of Houston–Victoria Library is commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the Korean War by sponsoring a conference to be held at the Victoria College, Victoria, Texas, on June 24-26, 2010. Presentations on all aspects of the conflict will be considered. Proposals must include a brief biography, a one-paragraph abstract, and the name, street address, and e-mail address of the presenter. Submissions should be sent to James M. Smallwood at [jms8466@okstate.edu](mailto:jms8466@okstate.edu) or by mail to 1413 S. Lindsay St., Gainesville, TX 76240-5625, no later than January 15, 2010.

The Clements Center for Southwest Studies in conjunction with Southern Methodist University's DeGolyer Library offers travel research grants to scholars who live outside the greater Dallas-Fort Worth area. The grant offers \$700/week for up to four weeks to help to defray costs of travel, lodging, and research materials. Travel grants are ongoing and have a "rolling deadline" in that people can apply for them throughout the year. Find out more at <http://smu.edu/swcenter/clemdeg.htm>. Major subject strengths include the European exploration and discovery of America, the development of the Spanish and Mexican borderlands, and the history of the Trans-Mississippi West. The library also possesses significant collections in the fields of business, transportation, especially related to railroads, and science and technology with notable holdings in the history of geology. Other collections are devoted to major and minor figures in English and American literature and there is significant material related to tourism in Mexico.



## *Texas History Day Awards*

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TOHA recognized outstanding use of oral history in individual documentaries entered in the state's history fair contest, held May 21-22, 2009, in Austin.

Both first-place and second-place winners in the junior division were students of teacher Duane Devereaux at O. Henry Middle School in Austin. Bo Balagia won first place for his documentary titled "Charlie Wilson: How He Defeated the Russians," and Richard Swafford won second for "Pete Seeger: When Music Changed History." The TOHA judges also presented an honorable mention award at the junior level to recognize the work of Matthew Johnson, of Lake Air Middle School in Waco, for his documentary "Equal Justice under the Law."

On the senior level, TOHA award winners were: first place, Carolina Lopez-Trevino, of John Jay Science and Engineering Academy in San Antonio, for "Through the Eyes of Jesse Trevino"; and second place, Marleyna Botello, of Waco High School, Waco, for "Anne Frank."

TOHA is pleased to recognize these outstanding students. We appreciate the gifts of time and talent given by our 2009 Texas History Day judges: Cynthia Beeman, Susan Burneson, and Kathryn Krastin.

### **Worlds of Transcription**

Preserving Yesterday's World Today for Tomorrow



Diane E. Saylor

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## *Beware Sticky-shed!*

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Digital recording of oral history interviews can produce recordings of better quality and longer life than recordings made on analog tape media. Digital recording also makes it possible to provide broad access to recordings easily through various network and Internet technologies. The quality of digital recordings depends on mastery of best practices for recording, processing, storing, and editing, as well as careful selection of equipment.

Last January, many TOHA members attended the **Baylor University Institute for Oral History** workshop on digital oral history. For those of you who could not make it to Waco then, Baylor has made the **Digital Oral History Workshop** available online as part of its Workshop on the Web. If you do not know what sticky-shed is, you can find out from the glossary available in the online workshop at [http://www.baylor.edu/oral\\_history/index.php?id=61236](http://www.baylor.edu/oral_history/index.php?id=61236). In addition to a glossary, the notebook covers best practices for digital audio and video recording, digitization of analog tapes and transcripts, and archiving digital oral history, plus it provides suggestions for locating funding for digital oral history and includes Internet links to projects, centers, and resources.

In addition to the Baylor Digital Oral History Workshop, these other online resources provide excellent guidance and tutorials for digital audio recording:\*

① **U. S. Library of Congress. Digital Formats Guide**

<http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/formats/index.shtml>

This Web site provides a comprehensive guide to understanding digital formats for a wide range of materials, including audio files as well as digital images and text files. See, for example, the page describing the WAVE audio format, widely considered the most suitable digital format for recording oral history interviews for long-term preservation and access: <http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/formats/fdd/fdd000001.shtml>

① **Vermont Folklife Center**

[http://www.vermontfolklifecenter.org/archive/res\\_audioequip.htm](http://www.vermontfolklifecenter.org/archive/res_audioequip.htm)

This Web site provides the best, most up-to-date information on all aspects of digital audio recording relevant to oral history practice. The site includes equipment reviews and recommendations, advice on recording technique, and extensive links to further online and print sources of information.

① **Historical Voices** <http://www.historicalvoices.org/oralhistory/audio-tech.html>

On this Web site are detailed explanations of most aspects of digital audio recording, equipment selection, and effective recording practices, as well as digitization. The site includes online tutorials with downloadable audio samples.

① **Transom** <http://transom.org/>

Transom's Web site offers extensive, up-to-date information on recording equipment and techniques and audio editing tools. Although the intended audience is those who produce recordings for radio, much of the information is relevant to oral history practice as well.

\*Thanks to Elinor Mazé, senior editor at Baylor Institute for Oral History, for compiling the workshop notebook. If there is a demand, the Institute may offer the digital oral history workshop again, with necessary updates as technology changes. Let the Institute know of your interest by e-mailing [BUIOH@baylor.edu](mailto:BUIOH@baylor.edu).



## **TOHA Board of Directors 2009-2011**

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# ***TOHA Calendar of Events***

## **August 15, 2009 – Here & There: Texas in World War II Oral History Workshop, Houston**

Baylor University oral history faculty will teach this workshop in conjunction with the Texas Historical Commission and Harris County Historical Commission at Clayton Library Center, 5300 Caroline Street, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Future workshops will be held in Brownsville, Victoria, Waco, and El Paso.

## **September 24–26, 2009 – East Texas Historical Association Fall Meeting, Nacogdoches, Texas**

Details available at <http://www.easttexashistorical.org>.

## **October 14–18, 2009 – Oral History Association Annual Meeting, Louisville, Kentucky**

With the theme “Moving Beyond the Interview,” OHA 2009 will demonstrate new and expanded options for “doing something” with the materials oral historians collect. View program and obtain registration forms and lodging information at <http://www.oralhistory.org>.

## **February 26–27, 2010 – Joint meeting of East Texas Historical Association & West Texas Historical Association, Fort Worth, Texas**

Details forthcoming at <http://swco.ttu.edu/westtexas>.

## **March 4–6, 2010 – Texas State Historical Association, Marriott Quorum Hotel, Dallas, Texas**

Details forthcoming at <http://www.tshaonline.org>.  
TOHA session theme: “Using Oral History to Document Civil Rights Movements in Texas”

## **June 24–26, 2010 – Korean War Conference, Victoria College/University of Houston–Victoria, Victoria, Texas**

See pages 3 and 6 of this newsletter for more information.

## **July 7–10, 2010 – International Oral History Association, Clarion Congress Hotel, Prague, Czech Republic**

Details forthcoming from IOHA annual meeting Web site at <http://www.ioha2010prague.com>.

SOUND BITES is an occasional newsletter of the Texas Oral History Association Board of Directors for the benefit of TOHA members. For questions, submissions, or comments, please contact Lois E. Myers at [lois\\_myers@baylor.edu](mailto:lois_myers@baylor.edu) or 254-710-6285. Access live links in Sound Bites online at <http://www.baylor.edu/TOHA/index.php?id=29357>.