

# Real to Reel

Newsletter of the Tasmanian Branch of the Oral History Association of Australia  
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### NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE – Jill Cassidy

#### Biennial General Meeting August 7

The Tasmanian Branch's BGM will be held on Saturday August 7 at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Inveresk. We are delighted that Ian Terry from the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery has agreed to talk about his ongoing oral history project documenting the Franklin River blockade of the early 1980s (see page 2).

There will of course be the usual election for all committee positions. This will be followed by the AGM of the National OHAA, the first time this has been held since the new constitution was passed last year. We need at least 10 members to be present to ratify the Financial Report, but hope that as many of our members as possible can attend.

#### Oral history workshop

Don't forget the workshop to be held on Saturday May 22 at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston. The details and registration form are included in this newsletter.

#### Upcoming conferences

On page 5 is the Call for papers for next year's National conference *Communities of Memory*, to be held in Melbourne 30 September – 2 October 2011. Those of you who attended last year's conference will know that these conferences are both enjoyable and illuminating. You are encouraged to submit proposals for papers.

In this issue is also information about the New Zealand Oral History conference in Rotorua 2–3 April next year. New Zealanders who attended the *Islands of Memory* conference later consulted with the National Committee of the OHAA and as a result OHAA and NOHANZ (National Oral History Association of New Zealand) have agreed to offer reciprocal rights to each other's members. This will mean you will be able to take advantage of member rates when registering for the conference in Rotorua.

Finally, this is a reminder of the International Oral History Association conference, entitled *Between Past and Future: Oral History, Memory and Meaning*, to be held in Prague 7–11 July. For further information see [www/ioha.fgv.br](http://www/ioha.fgv.br)

### **New Zealand grant**

There is a very exciting, and unprecedented, opportunity for experienced oral historians to submit a grant application for an oral history project which explores the history of social, cultural or political aspects of contact between Australia and New Zealand. See page 7 for details.

### **Digital recording**

As you will see, the NZ grant requires recipients to record their oral histories digitally, or at least copy them onto a digital format. This is a good reminder to us all that oral histories stored on tape are fast coming up to their use-by date. It will not be long before tape players are unavailable, so if you want to ensure your hard work in doing the interview is passed on to other people you must organise to copy it onto a CD or a hard drive.

### **Request from Care for Africa project**

This request follows on neatly from the preceding paragraph, and comes through OHAA member Girl Guides Tasmania. The Care for Africa project started out with local doctors sending medical materials to a region in Africa but they soon realised that for change to happen education was very important.

The project has been given quite a few tape recording of stories / books but now they need cassette tape recorders, the type powered by batteries as many places do not have electricity. Do you have or know of any old battery-powered cassette players? If so, please contact me on 0418 178 098.

### **Financial report 2008–2009**

Due to the complexities of the conference finances, the audited financial report for 2008–9 was unavailable for December's *Real to Reel*. It is included in this issue.

## **MORE THAN JUST A RIVER: Collecting oral histories from the Franklin River blockade, 1980–83**

### **Ian Terry**

In 2008 the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) began to collect objects and stories relating to the divisive Gordon-below-Franklin dam dispute of the early 1980s. This seminal environmental debate was enormously significant nationally and internationally. It heralded the development of Green politics as a major political force in Australia and brought attention to Dr Bob Brown, now well known as the leader of the Australian Greens in the Australian parliament.

At the same time the museum's history curators, Elspeth Wishart and Ian Terry, decided to begin a TMAG oral history program. Oral histories had been collected by various curators in the past, but in an ad hoc way with many tapes sitting in the bottom of desk drawers. Despite minimal resourcing to institute the program we managed to get in-principle support from the museum executive and were able to buy an Edirol R-09 digital recorder. We decided to commence the program with a project to record stories from the dam dispute, tying in the current collecting project with the new program.

Since March 2009, despite having to fit in collecting oral histories with other priorities and duties, I have managed to interview eleven participants in the debate. We decided to try to get as broad a cross-section of interviewees as possible, covering various aspects of the debate from both pro- and anti-dam sides. This has not always been easy, anti-dam protesters, (perhaps because they were the winners of the debate) being more visible than their opponents. Nonetheless, I have interviewed a variety of protagonists including hydro employees and lobbyists, police officers who were stationed on the Gordon River, blockaders, Tasmanian Wilderness Society organisers and lawyers, West Coast residents and the graphic artist who designed the now famous No Dams triangle. I have also interviewed the sole living survivor of the first successful descent of the river in 1959.

Interviews have been recorded at as high a quality as possible and are stored in both CD format and on a separate hard drive. A priority has been to get each interview transcribed, for which the museum has a dedicated volunteer who finds learning more about the debate endlessly fascinating. There are still many

interviews to do, but with extremely limited resources available this will be a slow program. In particular we would like to interview key political figures and indigenous Tasmanians who rafted down the Franklin during the anti-dam campaign to visit Kutikina Cave on the Franklin River. This was a key cultural site and was critical to the decision to inscribe the area on the World Heritage Register and to construction of the dam being halted.

The interviews completed provide a rich resource of personal stories from the debate and will be available to future researchers. Additional interviews can only add to this richness. We also hope to use interview material in a future exhibition about the debate, possibly to mark the 30th anniversary of the dam blockade in late 2012. The oral history project has also assisted the object collection project with many interviewees and other protagonists donating important material to the museum collection.

## **NEW PROJECT: WINE INDUSTRY ORAL HISTORY**

**Tony Walker**, who was food and wine writer for the *Examiner* for many years, has taken on a retirement project researching and writing the history of the Tasmanian wine industry as a post graduate student at the University of Tasmania. While the wine industry in Tasmania dates back to 1823, the emphasis will be on the revival of the industry since the first modern vineyard was planted in 1956.

The project is endorsed by Wine Industry Tasmania, recognising the need to research and record this history while many of the major industry figures are still available for interview. Accordingly, oral histories will be a significant part of the project and Tony will be interviewing more than 30 people involved in the early development of what has become a significant industry for the state. So far 14 oral histories have been recorded, using the Association's Fostex flash card recorder.

## **BOOK LAUNCH**

### **Maria Hill, *Diggers and Greeks***

Those of you who attended last year's conference may remember Maria Hill who spoke about the oral histories she had conducted as part of her research into the Greek campaign during World War II. Her book is to be launched in Hobart on 23 May. To quote from the publishers, University of NSW Press:

'This compelling book combines details of the campaigns with an account of the response of Greeks and Cretans to the Allied forces on their soil. It reveals the personal relations that developed between Australian soldiers and Greek civilians and soldiers; these were sometimes hostile but in other cases developed into friendships that lasted decades after the war had finished.'

The launch by Bill Cox is being hosted by the Cretan Association of Tasmania as part of the commemoration of the Battle for Crete with a wreath-laying ceremony at the Cenotaph at 12.30, followed by the book launch at the Hellenic Hall Federal Street Hobart. All are welcome.

## **SCULPTURE ON THE RIVERBANK: The interface of crafted objects, public art and real-time conversation – Lycia Trouton, Head of Theory, Arts Academy, University of Tasmania, Inveresk**

This past January, I participated in a site-specific group art exhibition on the Tamar River in Northern Tasmania curated by my colleague Wayne Hudson, Head of Sculpture and Soft Sculpture. This was my first foray into the regional community of Tasmania, beyond my immediate world of the Arts Academy and Railway Precinct. after my relocation last July to lecture in art theory.

I was interested to see how community oral history interacts with contemporary outdoor sculpture. Conversations often arise spontaneously because they are triggered by a memory from a visual stimulus such as a photograph, or touching a crafted object, or from a visit to a particular site. Thus, art can be an impetus for storytelling, a type of verbal gift-giving that mirrors the legacy of the swapping of objects as trade items.

Cultural history is an amalgam of oral and written history and memory arts:

interconnected and sometimes contested disciplines. Artists/actors today help create contemporary culture and are educated to be informed critics and good conversationalists, presenters and/or interviewers. Young artists and actors can learn much from the oral historian, especially with the proximity of the oral history research 'lab' (including equipment rental) and archives next door to our school at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in Launceston.

An installation artist like myself seeks to construct spaces where a type of 'theatre-of-conversation' may readily occur; the places that I am interested in producing are of meaningful 'slow time' for reflection and dialogue, and, sometimes, the recording of that dialogue. Last January in Deviot I created an outdoor, real-time chat-room, together with a memory-laden 'tool-shed-closet' where I gathered notes from the voices of those who constitute the old and new Deviot community, young and old alike.

In the course of my four days of speaking with garden visitors and passers-by, a community notice board was constructed out of their written reflections for the duration of the exhibition. As an outdoor 'artist-in-residence' for the period of the Sculpture on the Riverbank art show, I was on site in order to encourage the process of dialogue and a particular type of community record-keeping through a participatory process of 'just chatting'. I started conversations under a ready-made outdoor pavilion-pagola in the Barnets' garden overlooking the river, near an outdoor corridor to an old tool shed. I spread out some utilitarian storage blankets, a few chairs and a table. Among cups of tea and lemonade and over a selection of colourful ready-made, pre-purchased fishing ties (instead of among plates of biscuits on china plates over doilies and napkins) various visitors and I began to talk with one another.

The art process concluded in visitors writing letters and notes sparked by these conversations with me. The fly-tying fishing hooks were used to individualise the participant's hand-notes and 'pin' the notes to the wall. The wall was a felt drape: an enlarged, scaled-up version of a fly-tying hook book, the pages of which are traditionally made from felt. The conversation focus was around the broad topics of fly-fishing, the river, the ways in which we use the environment for recreation, hobbies and, finally, how people from all walks of life get along with one another. The paper artefacts (with beaded and feathered fish hooks) of these conversations may also in some way touch and inform others in the Deviot community, adding to the story of its greater, community identity.

Contemporary art-makers are responsible for creating and critiquing culture. Culture necessarily emerges from previous history and the structure of our lives in the place we inhabit. Many people today are privileged enough to travel extensively, not just around Tasmania but throughout Australia and world-wide, and many of us surf the net daily. We are living in many places at once.

Yet, it was wonderful to engage in the slow time of being with Deviot community members in real time and space. Site-sculpture of the kind I produce is non-object oriented. This time, I chose a site that is nestled into the landscape in order to create an intimate setting; as such, my conversations during those days were very special.



Lycia Trouton in front of the notes written by her visitors.

The purpose of my arts practice is stimulation and reflection on various levels. Remembrances of life can inform Deviot's present and future as these 'create' new ideas of community. The post-millennium story of Deviot seems to be as much about Sydney-sider or Queensland newcomers as of those who have been living

in the area for generations. From the latter group, one of my elderly visitors, the story of eating fresh uncontaminated oysters off the beach!

Acknowledgements:

Robyn & Ian Barnet, Mieke Senior-Loncin & Patrick Senior, and the Girl Guides camp, Nindethana. Community-based art & other references for this article may be obtained from the author, Dr Lycia Trouton, [lycia.trouton@utas.edu.au](mailto:lycia.trouton@utas.edu.au) or office (part-time hours): 03 6234 4413.

## ***COMMUNITIES OF MEMORY***

**Biennial conference of the Oral History Association of Australia (<http://www.ohaa.net.au/>)**

**Melbourne, 30 September - 2 October 2011**

### **CALL FOR PAPERS**

In recent years memory has been an increasingly significant resource for many different types of communities: for survivors of natural catastrophe and human-made disaster; in country towns dealing with demographic and environmental change; for cities and suburbs in constant transformation; in the preservation of special places or the restitution of human rights; for the 'Forgotten Australians' and 'Stolen Generations'; for migrants and refugees creating new lives; among virtual communities sharing life stories online. Memories are used to foster common identity and purpose, to recover hidden histories and silenced stories, to recall change in the past and advocate change in the present, to challenge stereotypes and speak truth to power. The concept of 'community' can be enlisted for change or conservatism; 'communities of memory' can be inclusive and empowering, or exclusive and silencing.

Oral historians, in a variety of guises and combining age-old listening skills with dazzling new technologies, play important roles in this memory work. Our conference welcomes participants who use oral history in their work with and within communities of memory across the many fields and disciplines that contribute to community, public and academic histories. We invite proposals for individual presentations, workshops and thematic panels.

The conference will include history walks and tours that introduce participants to Melbourne's rich and diverse communities of memory. Oral history training workshops will be held on the Thursday prior to the conference (29 September).

#### **Keynote speakers**

**Stephen High:** Chair in Public History and co-director of the Center for Oral History and Digital Storytelling at Concordia University, Montreal; publications include *Corporate Wasteland: The Landscape and Memory of Deindustrialization* (2007). See <http://storytelling.concordia.ca/oralhistory/index.html>

**Nathalie Nguyen:** Australian Research Fellow, University of Melbourne; publications include *Memory Is Another Country: Women of the Vietnamese Diaspora* (2009) and *Voyage of Hope: Vietnamese Australian Women's Narratives* (2005). See <http://www.australian.unimelb.edu.au/aboutus/people/nguyen.html>

**Peter Read:** Australian Research Council Professorial Fellow, University of Sydney; publications include *Tripping Over Feathers. Scenes in the Life of Joy Janaka Wiradjuri Williams. A Stolen Generations Narrative* (2009) and *Returning to Nothing: The Meaning of Lost Places* (1996). See <http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/history/staff/profiles/read.shtml>

**Conference sub-themes** will include, but are not limited to:

Memory and Catastrophe  
Memory Work for Human Rights  
Indigenous Memory  
Place, Community, Memory  
Communities of Identity  
Contested Communities  
Communities of Gender and Sexuality  
Migrants and Refugees  
Communities of Work or Leisure  
Activist Communities  
War Memories  
Generational Communities  
Theories of Collective and Community Memory  
New Approaches to Recording Lives  
New Technologies for Documenting Memory and History  
Memory Work in Creative and Fictional Writing  
Ethical Issues in Memory Work  
Training Community Oral Historians

We welcome proposals for presentations in a variety of formats and media, including standard paper presentations (typically 20 minutes); short accounts of work in progress (typically 5 minutes); participatory workshops; and thematic panels comprising several presenters. Presentations should involve oral history. Contact the organizers at [ohaa2011@gmail.com](mailto:ohaa2011@gmail.com) if you would like to discuss the format or focus of your presentation before you submit it.

**Proposals for presentations / papers / panels** should be no more than 200 words (single space, 12 point font in Times New Roman) and must include at the top your name, institutional affiliation (if applicable), postal address, phone number and email address, the title for your presentation / panel, the sub-theme/s your work best connects to, and the presentation format (standard paper, short account of work in progress, thematic panel or participatory workshop). Presenters will be encouraged to submit papers to the refereed *Journal of the Oral History Association of Australia* (ranked in the ERA journal list), which aims to produce a theme issue about Communities of Memory.

#### **CLOSING DATE FOR PROPOSALS: 31 OCTOBER 2010**

**They should be uploaded to <http://www.easychair.org/conferences/?conf=ohaa2011>**

To use this online system you will need to create an author account (a simple process) and then submit your proposal either by attaching it (with full details as listed above) as a PDF or by using the copy/paste function. If you are unable to use this system please email your proposal to [ohaa2011@gmail.com](mailto:ohaa2011@gmail.com)

The 'Communities of Memory' conference will take place at the State Library of Victoria in Melbourne's city centre. It is organized by the Oral History Association of Australia (Victoria branch) in partnership with ABC Radio National Social History Unit, the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, the Institute for Public History at Monash University, Museum Victoria, the National Film and Sound Archive, the Professional Historians Association and the State Library of Victoria.

For conference information or to join the conference mailing list please go to the conference website at <http://sites.google.com/site/communitiesofmemory/home> or email [kerrie.alexander@arts.monash.edu.au](mailto:kerrie.alexander@arts.monash.edu.au)



## NEW ZEALAND ORAL HISTORY AWARDS OPEN TO AUSTRALIANS

For this year only, a major New Zealand oral history awards scheme will accept applications from Australian oral historians.

In 1990 the Australian government gifted \$1 million to the people of New Zealand to mark the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. The money was used to set up a trust fund, and since 1990 the fund has granted more than \$1.5M dollars to New Zealand oral historians.

2010 is the 21st anniversary of the **Australian Sesquicentennial Gift Trust Awards in Oral History**. In this anniversary year we acknowledge this generous gift and mark its significance by:

- inviting applications from both Australians and New Zealanders
- accepting applications **only** for projects that explore the history of social, cultural or political aspects of contact between Australia and New Zealand offering one grant of up to NZ\$80,000 for a major project of outstanding significance. Anyone considering applying for this level of grant should first contact Alison Parr at [oralhistory@mch.govt.nz](mailto:oralhistory@mch.govt.nz)

Two other grants are also offered:

- one grant of up to NZ\$35,000 for a project of up to 20 interviews
- up to NZ\$10,000 for projects of fewer than 10 interviews

Awards will not necessarily be made in all these categories; decisions will be based on the quality and significance of the proposed project and the track-record of the applicants.

The closing date for applications is **Friday 25 June 2010**.

**An application form is available online at: <http://www.mch.govt.nz/awards/history/oral.html>**

Preference will be given to oral historians with proven experience of successfully completing oral history projects. Applicants must be citizens of either Australia and New Zealand and currently resident in one.

Apart from this, all existing criteria apply – as follows:

[http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg\\_URL/Services-Lottery-Grants-Environment-and-Heritage?OpenDocument](http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Services-Lottery-Grants-Environment-and-Heritage?OpenDocument)

### **Eligibility**

- Awards may be made to individuals, groups or communities.
- Assistance is not available for projects that are eligible for funding from tertiary institutions, nor for university theses.
- Assistance is not available for funding institutions, such as museums, for their core work.
- Video recording is eligible for funding as a component of a project, but neither video nor film projects, in themselves, are eligible for these awards.
- If you have already received a grant from this fund, you will not be eligible to apply for further funding until you have completed the previous project within the terms agreed.

### **Conditions for successful applicants**

- You are expected to complete the project within twelve months of receiving the grant. (**See Information for Applicants below.**)
- The original recordings must be deposited at the Oral History Centre, Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington, NZ.
- For each interview you must provide an oral history recording Agreement Form signed by the person interviewed.
- A detailed contents summary or abstract for each interview must accompany recordings for deposit.

- You will be required to send, when requested, regular progress reports until the project is completed.

## **Information for Applicants**

### **When preparing your application, you should note:**

- Awards are given as a contribution towards the recording of interviews for oral history projects. This can include money for training, travel and other expenses and buying good quality recording equipment.
- The Award will be paid in two stages.
- Half the amount granted will be paid at the time of the announcement of successful applicants. The second half of the award will be paid on completion and delivery of the project within one year – this includes all required paperwork. In the event of an award up to \$NZ80,000 being granted, arrangements for payment will be discussed with the successful applicant.
- If the project is not completed at the end of one year, the remainder of the grant will be forfeited and the money will return to the Oral History Trust Fund – unless prior approval has been granted for an extended deadline.
- If a project is partially complete, a portion of the money may be paid.
- Only projects that use digital recording equipment will be considered – unless you provide your own copies of tapes.

For further information contact: Alison Parr, Senior Oral Historian  
Ministry for Culture and Heritage, PO Box 5364, Wellington, New Zealand  
[oralhistory@mch.govt.nz](mailto:oralhistory@mch.govt.nz) +64 4 496 6331

## **ORAL HISTORY IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

**Rotorua New Zealand  
2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2011**

### **Advance notice**

The Nohanz Executive has announced that the 2011 conference will be held in Rotorua in April 2011.

The Distinction Rotorua Hotel and Conference Centre has been booked and 50 rooms reserved for Nohanz members, members of OHAA and visitors to the conference at a cost of \$NZ135 per room (Double or twin).

Rotorua is well known as a centre of tourism in the North Island of New Zealand and has many scenic drives, tourist packages and attractions for those who want to make a long weekend or a week of staying in Rotorua and the surrounding area.

A call for papers will be made in July 2010. A conference programme will be available later in 2010.

There will be an early bird registration available in 2010.

*The theme of the conference invites participants to look at changes in oral history, the ways in which oral history is being used and promoted by individuals and organisations, innovative ways of collecting and presenting interviews, new innovations and uses of new technologies.*

Book the date now. Updates will be available on the NOHANZ website and in the OHAA newsletters. OHAA members are able to book for the conference at the member's rate following an agreement to give members of OHAA reciprocal rights when attending New Zealand conferences.

Rachael Selby  
President, Nohanz (National Oral History Association of New Zealand)



## EQUIPMENT HIRE

A **Fostex digital recorder** is available for hire to members. It comes with its own lapel microphones and *User Guidelines*. You will need access to a PC which runs on Windows ME, 2000 or XP and has a USB connection, or a recent Mac.

Cost of hire: \$30 a week, plus transport costs if necessary. You will also be required to sign a form agreeing to pay to replace any part that is damaged or lost while you have the recorder, up to a maximum of \$250 for individuals or \$500 for groups or institutions.

A **Marantz tape recorder** is also available. It comes with its own lapel or stand microphones and a set of instructions. Cost of hire: \$20 a week or \$10 students, with a \$20 refundable deposit.

A **Lanier Transcribing Machine** is available to OHAA members for hire at \$5 a week, with a \$10 refundable deposit.

To make a booking, contact Jill Cassidy on 6394 7677 or 0418 178 098, or email [mandjcassidy@gmail.com](mailto:mandjcassidy@gmail.com); or ring Jan Critchett on 6343 3445.

## COMMUNITIES OF MEMORY NATIONAL CONFERENCE WEBSITE

<http://sites.google.com/site/communitiesofmemory/home>

## OHAА WEBSITE

[www.ohaa.net.au](http://www.ohaa.net.au)

## IOHA (International Oral History Association) WEBSITE

[www.ioha.fgv.br](http://www.ioha.fgv.br)

### THE OBJECTS OF THE ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

promote the practice and methods of oral history

educate in the use of oral history methods

encourage discussion of all problems in oral history

foster the preservation of oral history records

## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Individuals \$35.00      Households \$45.00      Institution \$55.00      Student/unemployed/pensioner \$25.00

## TASMANIAN EXECUTIVE

President and delegate to National Committee: Jill Cassidy      (03) 6394 7677 or 0418 178 098  
Email: [mandjcassidy@gmail.com](mailto:mandjcassidy@gmail.com)

Treasurer:                      Jan Critchett 6343 3445

Minutes Secretary:          Dorothy Rosemann

Committee members: Bruce Beattie, Elaine Crisp, Heather Felton, Terry Fritsche and Lana Wall

All correspondence should be directed to Jill Cassidy, OHAA (Tas) Inc., Queen Victoria Museum, PO Box 403, Launceston Tas 7250.

The next edition of *Real to Reel* is due in August 2010. Contributions should reach the co-editor, Jill Cassidy, no later than 31 July. They can be emailed to [mandjcassidy@gmail.com](mailto:mandjcassidy@gmail.com) or sent to the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, PO Box 403, Launceston Tasmania 7250.

*Real to Reel* is edited by Jill Cassidy and Elaine Crisp.