



ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

June 2017 Volume LI Number II



Built into the ruins of what was once the world's largest flour mill, the Mill City Museum in Minneapolis will host the 2017 Presidential reception at the annual meeting.

Attention, OHA Newsletter readers!

Every story in this issue of the *OHA Newsletter* gives you an opportunity to *do* something for yourself and for the Oral History Association. So please read on—and act.

It's not November, but it's time to vote

OHA members have until June 23 to cast their ballots for OHA leadership. The email address at which you receive OHA communications is your voter ID. Go to [2017 Election](#), read the candidates' biographical information and personal statements, and vote for your future OHA leaders.

Having trouble accessing the ballot? Please contact oha@gsu.edu.

It's also time to plan your October trip to Minneapolis for the OHA conference

Registration is now open online at [OHA 2017](#) for the Oct. 4-7 annual conference. This year's theme is **Engaging Audiences: Oral History and the Public**. And there will be numerous opportunities to engage with workshops, panels, keynote speakers, social events and performances. Register before Aug. 15 for just \$145. The registration fee is \$170 thereafter.

Reservations at the conference hotel, the Hilton Minneapolis, are \$179 per night plus 13 percent tax. Reserve now at [OHA Hilton](#) or call 612-376-1000 and ask for the oral history rate, code ORA.

Plan to pack your walking shoes because the local arrangements committee has lined up an array of Minneapolis-St. Paul activities that will link the conference theme with notable historic places in this vibrant urban community.

[Continue reading...](#)

Put on your thinking caps and contribute ideas to two OHA task forces...



Task force examines OHA committee structure



If you've ever sat in on an Oral History Association Council meeting, you'll know we do a lot of talking...

Task force prepares membership survey

This March in Phoenix at the OHA mid-winter meeting, I volunteered to lead a year-long working group we called the Membership Task Force...

Southeast Asian refugee group focus of Emerging Crises oral history grant

Women in the Rohingya refugee community are the focus of the newest Emerging Crises Oral History Research Grant. The \$4,000 grant will go to Bangladeshi scholar Farhana Rahman, a Ph.D. candidate in multi-disciplinary gender studies at the University of Cambridge.



Rahman's project intended to focus on Rohingya women who have escaped to Bangladeshi refugee camps from years of ethnic cleansing and genocide in Myanmar. A United Nations report earlier this year called the ethno-religious minority group "the most persecuted minority in the world."

Rahman's project calls for interviewing Rohingya refugee women, documenting the brutal condition of their lives, including sexual assaults and rape and their fear of being trafficked into sex slavery.

"For these Rohingya women, the documenting of oral histories fulfills the crucial and urgent role of providing a voice to the forgotten victims of an emerging global crisis, thereby preserving historical memory for future generations," Rahman said in her project proposal.

Rahman was set to return to a Bangladeshi refugee camp in July, but a crackdown by the Bangladesh government on access by humanitarian aid agencies and volunteers created safety concerns. Rahman instead will document the lives of Rohingya women in Malaysia and Thailand, where the Rohingya community is more accessible, but where the women likewise face exploitation and often are sold as brides or kept as sex slaves.

Rahman's project calls for in-depth video interviews with the refugee women, documenting their struggles for survival. The video archive will be housed at the Centre for Gender Studies at Cambridge.

“Crucially, this video project seeks to share the individual narratives of Rohingya refugee women with a wider public in a way that journalists and the media have failed to convey,” Rahman said in her proposal.

Sarah Loose, who chaired the Emerging Crises Oral History Research Fund committee, called the project “an opportunity to document a largely unpublicized crisis and an extremely marginalized community.”

Other committee members were Irum Shiekh and Daniel Horowitz Garcia. The committee received and reviewed a total of 30 applications.



Stay informed, involved in Trump budget requests that cut humanities funding

Humanities advocates expressed dismay late last month when the Trump administration formalized its budget request for the 2018 fiscal year. Proposed expenditures for the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Institute for Museum and Library Services would cover expenses associated with closing the agencies altogether and only honoring existing grant commitments.

As oral historians are aware, libraries, museums and other cultural and educational organizations that benefit from federal support often contribute to oral history endeavors.

Congressional committees are expected to work throughout the summer developing their own budget proposals. Humanities funding has a long history of bipartisan support in Congress, but advocates say nothing should be taken for granted.

The National Humanities Alliance, a coalition of more than 170 institutions and organizations, including the Oral History Association, has reminded members that lawmakers need to hear from their constituents. Go to www.nhalliance.org for information on ways to advocate for continued funding for NEH and other humanities programs.

Other opportunities

Scholarly conference may be trip down memory lane for



some

In recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Summer of Love in San Francisco, California, Northwestern University's [Center for Civic Engagement](#) and the [California Historical Society](#) are hosting a three-day, interdisciplinary academic conference celebrating and reexamining the Summer of Love.

The conference is July 27-29 at Northwestern University's new conference and networking center in the heart of downtown San Francisco, the city that was ground zero of the Summer of Love and the home of the Haight-Ashbury, where so much of that era's celebrated history unfolded. Top scholars from around the country will present on topics ranging from media, music and art to

community, politics and social change.

[Registration](#) is open until July 1. [Visit our website](#) to learn more about the schedule for the three days, conference location, hotel and travel information.

Public historians examine power of public history

July 15 is the deadline for submitting proposals for "Power Lines," the 2018 annual meeting of the National Council on Public History. The conference is set for Las Vegas April 18-21, 2018. Access the full CFP at <http://bit.ly/ncph2018CFP>

Conference planners invite proposals that address the power of public history to define, cross, and blur boundary lines—work that explores public history's power in all its complexities, idealism, and, perhaps, unintended consequences.

Anthology to link family history, national history

Sept. 1 is the deadline to submit proposals for an anthology titled *Historians Tell Their Stories: Family and Nation During the F.D.R. Years*. The anthology will explore the connections historians create between past and present, family history and the nation's history. How do professional historians tell family stories? How has their disciplinary perspective been affected by their family history? Historians can use their knowledge of history to broaden and place into context their family stories, thus illuminating both sides of the historical narrative, both national and familial.

Proposals of no more than 300 words should be sent to Marie Bolton (Ph.D., University of California, Davis; Associate Professor of American History, University Clermont Auvergne/CHEC, France) at marie.bolton@uca.fr along with a brief cv by Sept. 1, 2017. For a fuller version of this cfp or for more detail on the project, please send an email to Marie Bolton.



Copyright © 2018 Oral History Association, All rights reserved.

Mary Kay Quinlan, Editor

You are receiving this email newsletter because you are an OHA member.

Our mailing address is:

Oral History Association

P.O. Box 4117

Atlanta, GA 30302-4117

[Add us to your address book](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)



Minneapolis-St. Paul activities link theme with historic places

Plan to pack your walking shoes because the local arrangements committee has lined up an array of Minneapolis-St. Paul activities that will link the conference theme with notable historic places in this vibrant urban community.

Immigrant Stories: A walking tour of Eat Street

In 1997, a one-mile stretch Nicollet Avenue south of downtown Minneapolis became known as “Eat Street” in recognition of its diverse ethnic restaurants and markets. These immigrant-owned businesses served as engines of revitalization in an area of the city that had been plagued by problems stemming from the closing of Nicollet Avenue at Lake Street, declining property values and street crime.

On this walking tour, you will learn about the history of Eat Street through the stories of immigrant business owners who have participated in the Eat Street Oral History Project. Tour stops include a Mexican bakery, a Vietnamese market, the site of a former Middle Eastern café, and German, Greek, Chinese, and Vietnamese restaurants.

Historic St. Paul pub crawl

Seek out new go-to brews and learn about St. Paul’s hoppy past on this three-hour tour with samples, conversations and hidden gems along the way. The tour includes a behind-the-scenes look at the Schmidt Brewery Complex, now Schmidt Artist Lofts, with one of Schmidt’s last brewmasters, Phil Gagne, as well as tours and tastings at Flat Earth Brewing and Summit Brewing.

On the Ave

Explore Franklin Avenue, backbone of Minneapolis’ Native American Cultural Corridor, with several local Natives who will share history, culture and personal narratives on this two-hour amble of “The Ave.” Stops include Powwow Grounds coffee shop, All My Relations art gallery, the Minneapolis American Indian Center, the Franklin Library with its mural “Red Lake” by Robert Desjarlait, Northland Visions gift shop, and the AIM Interpretive Center.

The tour will be led by Colleen Casey and Thomas LaBlanc. Casey (Mdewakanton Dakota descent) will share an overview of the neighborhood and LaBlanc (Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakota elder) will chronicle some of the neighborhood’s seamier “unholy” aspects. LaBlanc will also describe the birth and growth of the American Indian Movement as it relates to the history of the neighborhood and his own story.

And if you’re a Prince fan...

When you arrive at the conference, look for information in your packets about sites related to the life and work of Prince, the wildly popular musician who died April 21, 2016, of an accidental opioid overdose. He was 57.

You’ll find names of some of Prince’s favorite area performing venues along with websites to guide your visits to the sites. We’ve also included information about Paisley Park, located about 20 miles from downtown Minneapolis in Chanhassen, Minnesota.

Task force examines OHA committee structure

By Allison Tracy, OHA Council

It you've ever sat in on an Oral History Association Council meeting, you'll know we do a lot of talking. For a group of folks who have centered their work on listening to others, which we also do at meetings, of course, it can feel unnatural to talk so much, but we do get a lot of it in.

In recent months, conversations returned again and again to committees. The work of committees is essential to the OHA. Committees are places where focused, patient attention can be brought to problems, initiatives and tasks that require ongoing efforts. But as we kept circling back to committees, we realized we could be doing better. Council can interface better with committees, and how the committees function can be improved to make the work more satisfying for members and more impactful for the association.

Before Council's mid-winter meetings in Phoenix this year, Kristine Navarro-McElhaney, our interim executive director, asked me to work on some of these issues we kept returning to. I realized quickly I would need some help and was exceedingly lucky to recruit Mary Larson, Stephen Sloan and Annie Valk to join me on the newly formed Committee Task Force.

Over the winter, President Doug Boyd sent questions to our current committee chairs and members, asking for feedback. Questions included: "How can we as an organization better utilize our committees?" "How can we better recruit for membership?" and "What can we do to better empower and motivate committees?" At the mid-winter meetings, Council reviewed the very helpful feedback we received, and this spring the task force began its work.

The feedback highlighted four areas in need of improvement: How we recruit members to committees, how we develop committee charges, the communications between committees and the broader association, and promotion of the committees and their work. The task force is thinking about these areas and what changes can be made. We hope to have some changes and improvements implemented as soon as the annual meeting.

Part of the task force's work is to consider the current language of our bylaws and constitution as it pertains to committees. If we think any revisions are needed to the language of either document, we certainly will give the membership proper notice and follow all of our relevant procedures.

If you have any thoughts or suggestions for the Committee Task Force, we'd love to hear them! Please email me at allisonkaren@gmail.com.

Task force prepares membership survey

By Troy Reeves, University of Wisconsin-Madison

This March in Phoenix at the OHA mid-winter meeting, I volunteered to lead a year-long working group we called the Membership Task Force. While I did this certainly to get a chance to be in Phoenix (instead of Madison) for a couple of days in early March, I primarily offered my help for two reasons.

First, I wanted to help the organization collect data that will assist and inform its new executive director and host institution, to be named later this year.

Second, in my many hallway conversations at recent OHA annual meetings, attendees have furnished their opinions about what could make our organization better, so I felt I held enough anecdotal information that a task force's work would bear fruit. (Why me? I don't know. Friendly face? Seem to be in the hallway more than I should?)

I also knew I could make time for this effort, because I would not do it alone. I asked several colleagues to join me in this effort: Carlos Lopez, Christian Lopez, Sarah Milligan, Sarah-Jane Poindexter, Stephen Sloan and Janneken Smucker. Graciously, they all agreed, because they, too, feel strongly about OHA and its future. And Allison Tracy has joined us as Council liaison.

Our primary charge and the bulk of our early work has revolved around creating a survey to send to members and former members. We have used Google's Hangout feature to meet virtually once a month since March, crafting by early June a list of draft questions. We will work more this summer to refine the survey, in hopes of having a draft ready before the annual meeting. Those who come to Minneapolis in October should expect to be asked by me or one or my task force colleagues, "Have you filled out the survey yet?"

Eventually – preferably before the end of the year – we will submit the survey results and our thoughts about them to Council. Also, as a secondary part of our charge, we will communicate with Council our thoughts about how best a membership group – whether it be called a committee or task force or something else – should liaise with OHA's leadership in the future.

If you have any thoughts or suggestions, we'd love to hear them! Please email me at troy.reeves@wisc.edu.