



MICHIGAN ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

"Preserving Michigan Voices."

Flipping" Oral History in Michigan October 4-17, 2021

The Michigan Oral History Association will sponsor a "flipped" Conference and Workshop October 4-17, in coordination with the national Oral History Association (OHA) conference. **Presentations will be uploaded** as MP4s on October 4th and made available asynchronously via the MOHA website.

On October 16th and 17th, we will schedule **live Q&A sessions**. Depending on pandemic conditions, they will be in-person or via Zoom (and possibly a mix). Select pre-recorded presentations can be made available to OHA attendees, with participation in any Zoom sessions contingent upon registration (Zoom participation in the Q&A will be free to the public). Updated presentations from our "Covid-Cancelled" conference of 2020 may include: *Alienation and Belonging: Capturing Unheard Voices: Iranian Americans and Romanians; Setting Up an Oral History Community Project; Creating, Promoting, and Growing a University Archives Oral History Program; Oral Histories for Genealogists; The PBB Crisis in Michigan; Michigan Political History Society: Interviewing Michigan Politicians; Incorporating Oral Histories in the College Classroom; The Detroit/Southern Michigan Punk Scene; and Professional Hockey in the U.P.: An Oral History.*

We also expect to issue a **new Call for Presentations** to encourage new colleagues to participate and to promote our local MOHA conference. This opportunity to collaborate with OHA via the "Satellite" program helps with continued travel limitations. In the event that our Q&A is in-person in Lansing, we may participate in an OHA Roundtable entitled, "A Roundtable Discussion of Oral History in Michigan" (via Zoom) in which we would share summary remarks and links to the presentations.

MOHA's conference and membership, like that of the OHA, represent a cross section of researchers who work in a number of settings: K-12, higher education, museums, archives, historical organizations, and libraries.

Watch for notices to MOHA members and the MOHA website (www.michiganoha.org) for more information.

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**Don't Miss Out!
2021 MOHA
Membership Due
See Page 2 for all
the benefits of 2021
MOHA membership,
and easy ways to
send new annual
dues.**

About the Michigan Oral History Association

Mission

The mission of the Michigan Oral History Association (MOHA) is to provide effective cooperation and communication among persons, programs, and institutions concerned with the techniques, uses, and promotion of oral history in Michigan. We serve those who are interested in methods and techniques of the oral history process as a means of preserving unique memory of people, places, events and ideas.

Who We Are

MOHA promotes and educates about oral history, as a resource for capturing on electronic media, attitudes and emotions not otherwise preserved. The pool of presenters includes experienced oral history practitioners, archivists, database managers, video producers, authors, professional transcribers, journalists and teachers. Presenters participate in history-related conference sessions, conduct workshops, and serve as facilitators for state and regional forums.

How Can MOHA Help You?

Workshops, information, advice and resources are available to both beginning and experienced oral historians. Forums provide exchange with others who may have similar problems, obstacles, and opportunities. Established or in-progress oral history projects can benefit from MOHA's ability to promote and publicize initiatives and resources.

Contact info@michiganoha.org

MOHA membership gives you up-to-date information, resources, and guidance in conducting your oral history projects.

OHA Statement

In light of the recent violent attacks against the Asian American community, the OHA has done several things to support our friends and neighbors. We have signed onto a statement with fellow professional societies affiliated with the American Council of Learned Societies, decrying the violence. You can find the statement here: <https://acls.org/ACLS-News/ACLS-News/March-2021/ACLS-Statement-Condemning-Anti-Asian-Violence>.

The Council has also gathered together resources that we might rely on as we stand firm against racial injustice pitted toward Asian and Pacific Islander communities. For an historical view, see this video from the Museum of Chinese in the Americas (MOCA): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H97XNAnGaXQ>.

2021 MOHA Membership

Individual (\$25):

1. MOHA quarterly newsletter
2. "A Guide for Doing Successful Oral Histories" (first-time membership)
3. Reduced fee at MOHA conferences
4. Opportunity to promote and recruit participation in oral history projects

Institution (\$50):

1. E-copy and 2 hard copies of MOHA quarterly newsletter
2. 3 cc "A Guide for Doing Successful Oral Histories" (first-time membership)
3. Reduced fee at MOHA conferences
4. Opportunity to promote and recruit participation in oral history projects
5. Feature in 2021 newsletter issue

Student (\$15):

1. MOHA quarterly newsletter
2. "A Guide for Doing Successful Oral Histories" (first-time membership)
3. Reduced fee at MOHA conferences
4. Opportunity to submit class or other project papers/summaries for publication in statewide newsletter

PLUS assistance with projects, news and updates on resources.

Send check to:

MOHA, 210 Detroit St., Saline MI 48176
OR via PayPal at www.michiganoha.org

Muslims of the Midwest

"*Muslims of the Midwest*" has been launched by Michigan State University (muslimsofthemidwest.org). This digital archive features numerous interviews and resources that will be of interest to scholars and students alike. The archive is housed at Michigan State University and was largely funded by a University of Illinois Humanities Without Walls grant.

Our team of Big Ten Academic Alliance researchers include the following scholars: Su'ad Abdul Khabeer, Asma Afsaruddin, Emine Evered, Stephen Gasteyer, Salah D. Hassan, Mara Leichtman, Nadine Naber, Junaid Rana, Leila Tarakji, and Chantal Tetreault. For more information about the project and the various individuals involved, please

see <http://muslimsofthemidwest.org/about>.

Mohammad Hassan Khalil, Professor of Religious Studies, Adjunct Professor of Law, Director of the Muslim Studies Program, MSU

History of Swimming and Diving at MSU

With Michigan State University's announcement last October that the men's and women's varsity swimming & diving programs would be cut, work has focused on the preservation of the moving image history of the program. MSU Swimming & Diving began at Michigan Agricultural College (now MSU) in 1922, so this final season marked 99 years for the men's teams, and 51 years for the women's teams. Preservation work on these films by Matthew Wilcox, Audiovisual Archivist, Media Preservation Unit of the MSU Libraries (MOHA Board Member) is chronicled in the blog *The Charles McCaffree-era Films*: <https://mediapres.msu.hcommons.org/2021/01/20/the-charles-mccaffree-era-films/>

Reels of film are related to swimming and diving. Charles McCaffree (1907-1980) was head coach of the Michigan State Swimming & Diving program from 1942-1969, nearly the entire term of John A. Hannah's presidency at the University. The films include a campy narrated 1966 travelogue and a 1963 interview of then Head Coach McCaffree by sports broadcaster Bob Shackleton. mediapres.msu.hcommons.org

Second Generation (2G) Narrative Series Hosted by Holocaust Center: 3-part Series

In preparation for our **2G Writing Workshop** this summer with *Dr. Karen Shawn of Yeshiva University*, Michigan's Holocaust Center's Education Department is offering a three-part mini-series for second generation individuals (2Gs) to read and discuss high-quality, published narratives written by children of survivors. Each session, led by Ruth Bergman, HMC Director of Education, and Dr. Anne Donato, HMC Education Specialist, examines 2G narratives as powerful and provoking examples of literature. Time for reflections, shared readings, conversations with a paired 2G thought partner, and collaborative discussions open the door to the power of diverse voices that help create a thought-provoking 2G narrative tapestry.

It is our hope that this workshop series will assist children of survivors in feeling more comfortable to share their own parent's story - openly, honestly, and compassionately. Simple writing prompts, paired with the various narratives offered, provide participants the opportunity to exercise their narrative voice in both oral and written formats. As this can be a new challenge for some, we promote an emotionally secure and safe environment, from the stressing of confidentiality, to ample wait time offered for responses, to educational delivery that considers all learners.

The narratives are shared with participants prior to each session in order to reflect on them prior to the workshop. In addition, each session stands alone, so participants may choose to attend one session, or the entire series.

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Films for Social Justice

Grito Productions is a film collection resource for students.

DETROIT 48202: CONVERSATIONS ALONG A POSTAL ROUTE is an essential tool for discussing the structural roots of segregation and economic devastation visited upon cities like Detroit, as well as movements that have fought for racial, economic, and housing justice. All through the lens of an African American letter carrier and the residents on his route.

Making the Impossible Possible

tells the story of the student-led struggle to win Puerto Rican Studies at Brooklyn College, CUNY, in the late 1960s. A mosaic of voices, film footage, and photographs taken by student activists, this intergenerational story highlights the alliance forged by Puerto Rican, African American, and other progressive students and faculty to win one of the first Puerto Rican Studies programs in the country. **MAKING THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE** is a production of the Alliance for Puerto Rican Education and Empowerment. *Co-Produced by Gisely Colón López, Tami Gold, and Pam Sporn*

“**Cuban Roots/Bronx Stories**” is one of the few films that explore the experience of Afro-Latinxs in the US. Students can delve into these multi-layered identities and experiences by meeting the Fosters – a Black Cuban family that immigrated to the Bronx in 1962, shortly after the failed Bay of Pigs Invasion. As the young Fosters adapted to life in 1960s urban America and negotiated their spaces within a Puerto Rican and African American neighborhood, they developed their senses of self and found common ground in both communities.

Need a workshop to help
you organize your
oral history project?

Contact

info@michiganoha.org

Share Your Project!

Send information on YOUR projects that would be of interest to MOHA members either the particular topic or how you went about developing your project.

info@michiganoha.org

2G Narrative Series

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The first installment of the narrative series – *2G Personal Narratives: A Child's Story From A Parent's Life* – offered two diverse narratives focusing on various writing styles and voice, which provide written and oral testimonies through the lens of parents' experiences. The articles are from *Prism magazine*, Yeshiva University. They are scholarly in nature, yet comfortable in approach.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QT2tDBKU25cPN8PQIiF4di0hOatNi7pi/view?usp=sharing>

Along with discussion, readings and reflections, **thought partnering** appeared to be one of the most enjoyed aspects of the workshop, providing time to pair with a thought partner in order to discuss personal narratives, considering the article offered. The PowerPoint of this presentation is provided here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PN5COrMQ64odZGOjhFF0VI3IjmyY1GmM/view?usp=sharing>

Completed survey responses may be found here:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fxqGARNJogVQSeI_1u0UZ-Lj0KnW-9vDFjNV9qzsy9U/edit?usp=sharing

The next workshop installment will be held on **April 20, focusing on oral testimonies of 2Gs. Part Three in the series will focus on 2G Voice Through Poetry.**
Anne Donato, Education Professional Development Specialist, Holocaust Memorial Center

The University of Michigan-Dearborn
SAVE THE DATES!
Digital Tools, Multilingual Sources, and Oral History:
A “Flipped” Workshop

With support from MCubed, Mardigian Library, the University of Michigan-Dearborn Office of Research Administration and the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters, a “flipped” workshop will be presented on **May 4 and May 21, 2021**.

Presentations will feature several digital projects that make use of customized versions of the **Oral History Metadata Synchronizer (OHMS)** for curating digital collections, research, and teaching. We will also feature the use of a new digital tool, the **Multilingual Indexing and Search Interface (MISI)**, that is being designed to make digital collections of multilingual sources more discoverable and accessible to researchers, students and communities that foster a bilingual or multilingual milieu. Presenters will also **showcase humanities projects in Iranian-American Studies, Foreign Language Pedagogy, Italian History and Jewish Studies** that are making use of these digital tools.

The presentations will be uploaded on May 4 and made available asynchronously. On May 21, we will host a live Q&A session on Zoom with the presenters (stay tuned for registration information).

For more information in the meantime, please contact Prof. [Cam Amin](#).

Presentations uploaded on May 4:

I. “Search, Explore, Connect: Using OHMS to Enhance Access to Online Oral History and to Connect Libraries and Archives to the Classroom,” *Doug Boyd, Director of the Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky*

II. “Bilingual Indexing in OHMS: Leveraging Open-Source Software for Dual-Language Access to Oral Histories,” *Christa Whitney, Director of Yiddish Book Center’s Wexler Oral History Project, and Carole Renard, Wexler Oral History Project Coordinator, Yiddish Book Center*

III. “Transcribing Testimonies: Language Learning through Oral History,” *Julie Evershed, Director of the University of Michigan (U-M) Language Resource Center, and Janaya Lasker-Feretti, Coordinator, Intermediate Italian courses in U-M Department of Romance Languages and Literatures*

IV. “Using OHMS to Navigate the Challenges of Bi-Cultural Indexing,” *Marlaine Magewick, Graduate student in U-M Master of Science of Information program*

V. “Bilingualism(s), Mobility and Observing the Fluidity of Iranian-American Identity in Text and Conversation Using Two Digital Tools: OHS and MISI,” *Camron Michael Amin, Professor of History and Coordinator, Middle East Studies certificate program, and principal investigator for Michigan Iranian American Oral History Project. Featuring: Patrick Armatis, Systems Administrator for Mardigian Library, UM-Dearborn; Hussein Hourani, BS in Computer and Information Science UM-Dearborn and Full Stack Developer for Ford Motor Company; Heidi Keppen, User Services Supervisor, UM-Dearborn Mardigian Library; Graham Liddell, PhD candidate in U-M Comparative Literature; Holly Sorscher, Associate Director, Mardigian Library; Tim Streasick, Electronic Resources Librarian, Mardigian Library.*

Presentation link information and registration for the May 21 Q&A session will be sent out by May 4. Questions? Please contact Prof. Cam Amin, College of Arts, Sciences and Letters, University of Michigan-Dearborn.

Grant Will Support Digitization of Native American Oral Histories

Funding will help universities make decades-old interviews
widely available

By *Livia Gershon*, SMITHSONIANMAG.COM

FEBRUARY 11, 2021

The Covid-19 pandemic has taken a [disproportionate toll](#) on Native American communities and, in particular, the [Indigenous elders](#) who often act as keepers of historical knowledge. To help keep these stories alive, the New York-based [Doris Duke Charitable Foundation](#) is providing more than [\\$1.6 million in grants](#) to digitize and share [oral histories](#) collected decades ago (reports Susan Montoya Bryan for the [Associated Press](#) (AP)).

Most of the money will go to seven universities that can use the funds to pay for translation, digitization, transcription and indexing. The [Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums](#) (ATALM), which oversees care of the materials across the locations, will also receive \$300,000 over two years to coordinate the project, according to a [statement](#). ATALM will create a single website that acts as a portal for the collections, ensuring they are accessible to Native American communities, scholars, students and the public as a whole. The campaign will also add new histories to the collection.

The original [oral history project](#) ran from 1966 to 1975, collecting 6,500 stories from Indigenous people across the United States. [Doris Duke](#), a tobacco heiress and philanthropist who died in 1993, provided funding for the universities' collection process. Members of 150 Indigenous American cultures provided the histories. Interviewers recorded some of the testimonies on reel-to-reel tape or cassettes. A number of recordings are accompanied by typed transcripts.

While parts of the collection, such as hundreds of interviews housed at the [University of Oklahoma](#), are available online, others are only available in older formats, presenting a challenge to anyone hoping to use the work. In some cases, rights issues have stymied digitization efforts. [Molly Stothert-Maurer](#), head of the Arizona State Museum's library and archives, tells the AP that some interviewers did not obtain permission slips when they interviewed members of tribes including the Tohono O'odham, Apache, Navajo, Pima and Yaqui. Though this has prevented the museum from sharing the material broadly, the grant is poised to help ensure that interviewees or their communities provide proper approval before anything is released to the public.

Lola Adedokun, the foundation's program director, tells the AP that the rise in Native American political activism helped spur the new Doris Duke project. "I think the movement in the last couple of years specifically has created a space where the experience of Native people is actually valued and where there's a movement around particularly young people who are really driving that conversation."

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Matthew Wilcox, Audiovisual Archivist, Michigan State University

Food in the U.P.

Continuation of Winter 2021 Issue:

“The Oral Interview Adds to Stories of Food and Restaurants in the U.P.”

*Russell M. Magnaghi, Professor of History Emeritus,
Northern Michigan University*

The oral interviews delve into the nooks and crannies of our heritage. The topics are endless and interviewers should keep this in mind as they look towards developing new areas of social heritage to be saved.

The first interview was with Giovanna “Jennie” Cappo” of Baltic who led the way with information about cooking in the province of Piedmont. Philip Marketty of Negaunee went into detail about his hunting camp and Elmer Mongiat told of his addiction to fishing just about year round. Dante Pricco of Bessemer and John Gedda of Hancock expounded in detail on their baking businesses as did John Marta, whose mother Catherine was the oldest active baker in the US in the late 1940s. Flossie Dani, a French Canadian who “became” Italian, was the last person to make Italian bread in Hermansville in 1982. George Simondi of Negaunee told of his salame making and invited me to a salame making session. Ercole Barsotti of Calumet went into detail about the ice cream business and provided me with invaluable photographs.

The saloon business at the White House at Mohawk was part of the focus of the Carlo Boggio interview. At Iron Mountain I collected a mead recipe from Alfred Gasbarro who went into detail about food, while Gildo De Muri told of the origins of the Frigo Cheese company which was a new bit of history for me. Sam Chetto at Negaunee was a creative individual who developed a smoker from a discarded refrigerator and operated it from his kitchen to avoid the winter cold and he also processed over 200 bottles of wine, while others like the Dozzis of Princeton distilled grappa and showed me its 150 proof volatility. The stories

The stories are endless. Not only did I learn of Italian involvement with food I also enjoyed many delicious meals. Many of these people also provided me with invaluable photographs.

Prior to 2007 I interviewed a number of Cornish-Americans for a book I was writing. The three Holman brothers who were in their 80s living in Negaunee provided me with detailed information about the pasty when it was brought to America and its role in their lives. Sarah Bottrell (1905-2011) of Marquette allowed me to conduct an interview with her when she was one hundred years old, “as sharp as a tack” and provided me with insights to Cornish cook, the pasty and sweets.

The cudighi, the name for an Italian sausage, became famed in the central Upper Peninsula. Its history was not accurately known and full of questions. I was able to conduct interviews with Italian-Americans like Jim Laferriere who was part of the Italians at North Lake who introduced the cudighi to the area. I also interviewed relatives of Felix Barbieri, the alleged father of the cudighi. Jim Johnson, grandson of Felix, provided important insights. Kathleen and Bruno Gervasi from Ralph’s Italian Deli in Ishpeming added to the history of this food item. It was only through interviews that the complete and accurate history of this food came into being. Today the history is available in local libraries and archives in an article I published in *Michigan Chronicle*.

Probably the only interview to be found in an academic archives was the one with Jason White who, as a college student, worked as a fudge maker. It is interesting to note that as a professional he never told of some of the secrets of candy making that he encountered, which impressed me. Ted Bogdan, a local restaurateur in Marquette, provided information about mushroom gathering, his restaurants in the Holiday Inn and the Crow’s Nest in a local hotel, and the role food, drink and fishing played in the life of author of *Anatomy of a Murder* John Voelker aka Robert

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THE STOLEN NARRATIVE OF THE BULGARIAN JEWS AND THE HOLOCAUST



JACKY COMFORTY
WITH MARTHA ALADJEM BLOOMFIELD
FOREWORD BY OMER BARTOV

The Stolen Narrative of the Bulgarian Jews and the Holocaust shares a complex tapestry of voices of memories previously underrepresented, ignored and denied. This alternative perspective includes stolen, silenced, but now reclaimed Jewish narrative based on our peoples' experiences. It contextualizes and personalizes our history, reconstructs the puzzle, praises those who helped the Jews and shares their exemplary acts of humanity for future generations. Filling a void, the book specifically provides first-hand accounts of memory of survivors, eyewitness, photographs, official publications, laws, and newspaper articles. The website also includes "The Story Behind the Story." <https://www.the-stolen-narrative.org/>

"Drawing on a rich collection of oral and visual sources, most previously unknown, this book presents an account of Bulgarian Jews and Bulgaria's role in the Final Solution like no other book on its subject. First-person oral testimonies and accompanying graphics make for engaging, gripping, reading." — **Alvin Rosenfeld, Center for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism, Indiana University**

"...a patiently assembled and processed collection of individual voices which blend into a telling polyphonic narrative. The myriad personal memories convincingly demystify well-established canonical stories and pay a deserved tribute to human decency." — **Roumen Avramov, Centre for Advanced Studies Sofia**

Special 30% discount offer! Use code LEX30AUTH21 when ordering online. Valid until 12/31/21.

JACKY COMFORTY - WITH MARTHA ALADJEM BLOOMFIELD - FOREWORD BY OMER BARTOV

To schedule an event with the authors, visit: www.the-stolen-narrative.org

Food in the U.P.

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Traver. This was a very difficult interview to conduct because Ted was a good friend of Voelker and did not want me to go into his life, only his role in the world of food. John Ageropoulos and Mary Padakis provide details about the development of Greek-owned restaurants in Marquette. Other interviews have dealt with Slovenians and Croatians and their foods especially their famed nut roll, known as *potica*. French Canadian pork pie was been investigated as well.

Oral interviews enrich our social heritage. Check out Professor Magnaghi's "What to Do With Song Birds" from U.P. in the Summer issue of the MOHA Newsletter.

**Book Review:
“Music, Moxie and Money”**

Susan Whitall’s book, *“Women of Motown: An Oral History”* is a breezy, informative, behind the scenes look at the women who fueled so much of Motown’s phenomenal musical success.

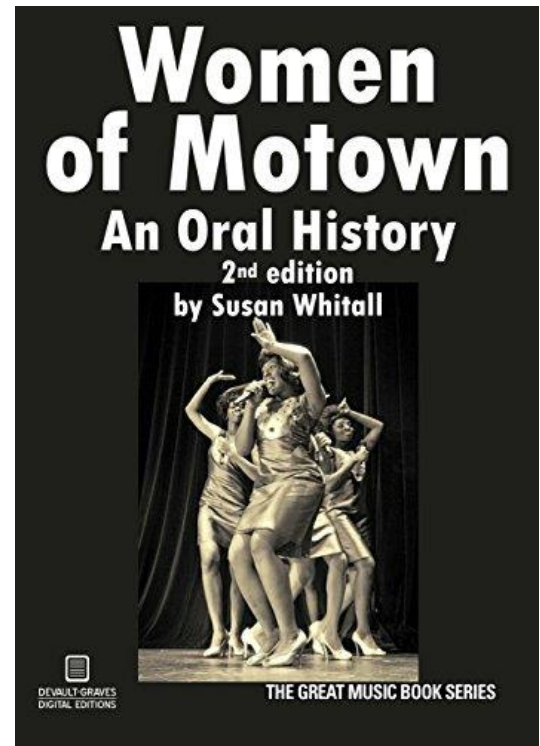
Personal stories are buttressed by observations by those who had the moxie to stick out the rigors on the road to success and who experienced Motown in the early years in Detroit. Mable John, the first woman singer that Berry Gordy signed, describes working part-time for Berry Gordy’s mother’s insurance company after school, driving Berry to meetings and eventually performing at the Flame Show Bar with the legendary Billie Holiday before leaving the pop music scene to follow her rhythm and blues roots.

Martha Reeves and the Vandellas, with their hit song, “Dancing in the Streets” were Motown’s biggest stars until they were eclipsed by the Supremes. While crediting Gordy with creating an environment that fashioned young, inexperienced teens into superstars, Reeves admits having to sue him for her royalties. She proved to be a strong, resilient woman who weathered the storms at Motown and is still, as the author noted, “the quintessential Motown diva”.

But even Martha couldn’t ‘out-diva’ Diana Ross whose ambition was boundless. Some of the women of Motown recall many episodes that they witnessed the unquenchable, uncompromising drive of Diana Ross. Others, most notably Florence Ballard, would be lost in Diana’s wake. She may not have been the best singer or the prettiest but no one doubted that she was the most determined.

Smokey Robinson’s wife, Claudette, an original member of the Miracles, tells of being on the road performing. With Smokey out sick, the audience thought she was Smokey because she hit the high notes like he did. After a series of miscarriages she and Smokey had a daughter they named after Berry Gordy’s first label, Tamla.

Other stories in this informative book include Janie Bradford who started at Motown as a receptionist and then graduated to co-writing songs such, “Money, That’s What I Want”. Motown alumni describe the sad story of sweet, innocent, seventeen-year old Mary Wells. After



many bad business decisions and poor romantic choices she met an early death at forty-six. Memories are shared by Brenda Holloway, Sherrie Payne, Tammi Terrell and more.

This book offers insights and stories of those who found fame, fortune and heartbreak at the iconic offices on W. Grand Blvd. There are stories of opportunities seized and opportunities lost; talent rewarded and talent wasted; and unbridled ambition that wouldn’t be denied. Susan Whitall manages to put human faces on the Motown women who entered Motown as teens and exited as polished international performers. Motown mavens will enjoy these stories.

Sherry Tuffin Book Reviewer - Lawrence Technological University Library Oral Historian, Reedsy International