



# On Tape

**December 2007**

**Editor: Suzanne Mulligan**

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Hello Everyone!

Our Committee is breathing a sigh of relief that our Conference went off so well. We've had some great feedback from participants and we thank all of you who came along and helped make it such a success.

For those of you who did not attend the conference, there is a set of DVDs of a number of the presentations available. You will find further information on the next page.

We had our Annual General Meeting last weekend. Thank you to everyone who attended. Our President, Sue Pechey, retired from her role at this meeting. We thank her for her efforts over the last 12 months, particularly with regard to the National Conference. She will continue to be involved with the OHAA but will enjoy a much deserved retirement from the Committee. The new Executive Committee Members were voted as follows:

President	Lena Volkova
Secretary	Suzanne Mulligan
Treasurer	Maxine Kendall
Editor <i>On Tape</i>	Karen Barrett

We welcome our new President and Newsletter Editor. Accordingly, this will be my last newsletter and I am very pleased to hand over to Karen.

We are also pleased to welcome a number of new members who joined at the Conference as well as other new members:

Daryll Bellingham  
Caboolture Shire Council  
Charters Towers and Dalrymple Archives  
Group  
Delene Cuddihy  
Susan Dickson  
Salvatore Di Mauro  
Fay Gasparini  
Kirsty Guster  
Jane Harding  
Mackay City Library  
North Stradbroke Island Historical  
Museum  
Rosemarie Severin  
South West NRM Ltd  
Val Speedie  
Barry Hampson  
Anne Monsour  
Tracey Hartmann  
Donna Byer-Smith

All financial members will receive the 2007 Journal in the second mailout shortly. So if you are currently unfinancial, please renew ASAP to ensure you receive the Journal. Please email me if you are unsure of your financial status.

Suzanne Mulligan  
Editor



## Oral History Association of Australia (OHAA)

ABN 16 832 377 060

### ORDER FORM – Conference DVDs

<b>DVD1</b>	
Associate Professor Nancy Pachana, the School of Psychology, University of Queensland.	Memory and reminiscence in later life - Ageing is often associated with declines in memory, but this is often off-set by the rich "memory store" of older adults. Research on memory suggests that not all types of memory are vulnerable to ageing, and that memory can be boosted later in life in a variety of ways. Issues of memory will be illustrated by both empirical data as well as case examples; strategies to improve recall in a variety of settings will be discussed.
Associate Professor Janis Wilton, University of New England.	Telling Objects - ways in which oral historians use objects as a focus for triggering memories and interpreting stories.
Deb Stumm and Christine Sayer, State Library of Queensland.	Queensland Stories - content creation through personal histories and digital storytelling at the State Library of Queensland. An overview of the current services and collections at the SLQ.
<b>DVD2</b>	
Pam Willis Burden - Secretary of the Douglas Shire Historical Society.	Your First Oral History Project - a look at basic oral history issues from a layman's perspective providing a guide from the very beginning for individuals and community groups.
Patricia Gee - local history librarian at Redcliffe City Library.	Redcliffe Remembers - in 2005 Redcliffe City Library received a Queensland Stories Grant from the State Library of Queensland for a web site and companion DVD. Patricia explains the process and demonstrates the web site.
Mary Howells uses oral history as a tool to inform and enhance primary source research through her post-graduate studies at the University of Queensland, and through working in local government libraries.	The Chicken or the Egg? Oral and Documentary Research in Producing Local History - examines the role of oral history in enhancing the primary source research, providing community input into that research and often informing it. The discussion aims to demonstrate the wide ranging use of oral history in producing local history.
<b>DVD3</b>	
Kevin Bradley - Curator of Oral History and Folklore and Director of Sound Preservation at the National Library of Australia.	Sustainable Digital Preservation Repositories and the Open Source Solution - a look at the need for a sustainable and affordable digital storage, management and preservation system.
Peter Kolomitsev - State Library of South Australia	The Digital Commitment: the successful transition to solid state field-recording equipment at the State Library of South Australia - the challenges in moving from a well known format to a very new technology; and what to look for when purchasing a digital recorder.
Bill Bunbury - was the producer/presenter of ABC Radio National's history programs for over 20 years.	Hear! Hear! For Oral History - a rationale for oral history as a heard medium. Mood or emotion adds considerably to our understanding of what we hear. Also examining ways in which oral historians can interpret what they collect.

DVD4	
Lorina Barker - University of New England, Armidale.	Playing with Words: Converting voice into print - this paper looks at transcription and its questions of what to include and exclude as well as the problem of transforming the aural into written text. The paper explores accessibility to the intended audience, in this case the research participants, the Aboriginal people.
Peter Robinson - teaches at RMIT and Monash Universities receiving his doctorate from RMIT University in 2007.	How the Telling of Life Stories Reveals a Community of Shared Experience Among Gay Men - this paper explores the community that exists between gay men because of their sexual orientation and their shared experience of stigma or acceptance. The stories were collected during doctoral studies and draws upon the lived experience of 80 Australian gay men.

Pricing - \$20.00 for one DVD; \$34.00 for any two DVDs; \$45.00 for all four.

Please tick which ones you would like to order:

- DVD1 Quantity .....
- DVD2 Quantity .....
- DVD3 Quantity .....
- DVD4 Quantity .....

Total payable: .....

CHEQUE PAYABLE TO "Oral History Association of Australia (Qld Inc.)" WITH ORDER to:

Suzanne Mulligan,  
OHAA (Qld) Inc  
17 Pallinup Street,  
Riverhills Qld 4074

PRICE INCLUDES POSTAGE. THERE IS NO GST APPLICABLE.

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### Introducing – Karen Barrett

Karen has an extensive background in collections management. Since 2003 she has worked at the Queensland Museum, Southbank (both volunteer and paid) before becoming involved with the Queensland Icons exhibition as Assistant Curator in September 2007. Karen is currently the Heritage Support Officer at the Main Roads Heritage Centre, Toowoomba. A significant part of the MR collection is its Oral History Collection which comprises approximately 81 histories relating to the development of the Main Roads Department since 1922. The primary goal for staff is to develop a permanent exhibition by Easter 2008, changing the role of the Centre from its current one of collection storage facility to that of Exhibition Centre.



### Introducing – Lena Volkova

On 8 December I was elected as new president of the Queensland branch. I am honoured to take this position and I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to work with the Queensland's oral historians in a closer contact. I am thrilled to share this responsibility with such remarkable historians as Niles Elvery, Lesley Jenkins and Sue Pechey and I am looking forward to do my best in contributing to the professional growth of our branch.

We have some interesting plans for future workshops and seminars which we discussed at our recent AGM. We would like to welcome any comments and suggestions that would help to further develop our skills and expand our horizons as oral historians.

Let me finish this short note by saying that we are committed to our members across Queensland and we will be working together with our regional members to establish a reliable professional network that will help all of us to stay abreast with new developments in the field of oral history and to contribute to the wonderful work that is being done in this field in Australia.

### A short Biography

As with any emigrant, my life is divided on “before” and “after”. “Before” was the life in Moscow, graduation as a Philologist (Russian Literature & Linguistics) from the Moscow State University and a professional career that brought me in contact with the phenomenon of Oral History. My first encounter with OH happened when I became a part of the team of the Museum's Sound Archive and met Lev Shilov, the pioneer in Audio Heritage and Oral History in Russia. At the beginning I was involved in the process of restoration and subsequent production of the audio disc with the recordings of Leo Tolstoy made in 1908 on a phonograph sent to him by Thomas Edison. Later Shilov encouraged me to start my own projects and I chose to pursue the avenue of oral history and focused on the authors associated with the literature of exile, WWII and Gulag.

I interviewed prominent Russian writers, poets, artists and scholars, produced two vinyl discs of rare recordings and wrote several articles in the *Folklore* magazine. In 1990, I was invited by the first independent radio station of Russia, *Echo of Moscow*, to produce a program about the author Vladimir Nabokov based on the recordings from the Archive's collection. Following the success of this program, *Echo* offered me an opportunity to produce a weekly radio program, *Voice-Radio-Document*, which gave me a chance to not only utilise the recordings I made before but also to expand the scope of my oral history projects.

Being a part of the *Echo's* team was an honour and a challenge. I worked in this radio station through two attempted coups when our building was once surrounded by a barricade built by common Muscovites to protect their “voice of freedom” (as they nicknamed the radio station). This experience helped to realize that the unique radio heritage of the *Perestroika* era should be preserved and in 1993 I initiated the foundation of the *Echo's* Sound Archive and became its first curator.

“After” is in the making. Since I moved to Australia I continued to pursue my interest in collecting people's stories. I was Editor-in-Chief of the Russian monthly magazine *Southern Cross* and a co-presenter at the multicultural radio station 4EB. I also incorporated an oral history element in every research project I undertook.

My last biggest achievement was the successful graduation in 2006 from the Deakin University with the Graduate Diploma in Museum Studies. My last professional achievement was participation in the national Oral History conference in September 2007 that brought me in contact with so many amazing people working in the field of Oral History in Australia and overseas and provided me with great inspiration and creative ideas. I wish you all Merry Christmas and Happy and creative New Year!

With warm wishes,

Elena (Lena) Volkova  
President,  
OHAA, Qld Branch

## The Challenges of Writing Biography Victoria Glendinning

I attended a few sessions at the Brisbane Writers Festival in September including this presentation by Victoria Glendinning <http://www.contemporarywriters.com/authors/?p=auth42>

Victoria Glendinning is an award-winning British biographer, novelist and critic. Her biographies include Trollope, Edith Sitwell and Vita Sackville-West and most recently *Leonard Woolf: A Life*. Her best-known novel is *Electricity*.

Her latest work is about Leonard Woolf, wife of Virginia Woolf, and she spent some time discussing this book.

She said that biographers love their work. It is more like play as they become scholarly sleuths. Biographers lead a double life – their own and some else’s at the same time. You join the dots in biography, make connections and fill in the jigsaw puzzle. You read private letters and interview people over time. You read endless books and the references in those lead you to other books. Victoria catalogues her notes in spiral notebooks. The research is meticulous. You are spending a long time with this person, your biography subject, and you become totally absorbed with the character.

It is about story so the first duty is produce a readable, true story. Victoria said it is the least ritualistic of all literary genre. With real life, our memories are patchy. When someone has died, people decide what their life was about so there is no control over their own story at all. Biography makes sense of someone’s life. Biography takes you out of your time and out of your own skin, takes you back in time. Biography provides insight into someone else’s psyche and into our own. Biographers should not conceal what they learn.

When it comes to the market, each decade/era has its own preoccupation. Publishers find it

hard to justify biographies of less well known people. Self-publishing is a good way to get a book out into the world. We idolise a certain number of iconic figures, “poodle” biographies done for the subject person - celebrity biography, sports biography usually ghost written – sort of journalism

Biography is about context, for example political, geographic. Victoria describes biography as a novel under oath. The process of selecting what goes in is important.

Sources that are resourced include surviving documents, letters, books, drawings, books about contemporaries as well as previous biographies. A new biography may have a different focus. Letters and diaries are the most exciting material to work on. Seeing handwritten originals brings you close to the subject. Seeing the actual documents that were handled by the subject makes a fantastic difference.

Archives are full of lies and silences. Some papers will have been destroyed in an effort to sanitise the past. The biographer selects and discards material.

Survivors, particularly relatives, who knew the subject are the most valuable thing in the world as you can interview them. They are as close as you will get to your subject as they share your subject’s genes and DNA. You get the physicality. However, you can’t always rely on what they are going to tell you. They may be simply forgetful or they may have an agenda. Sometimes the survivors will give themselves more prominence in the subject’s story than is justified. They are the most wonderful source and the most difficult. Facts provided need to be verified somewhere else. Do all the research before you start writing.

Notes from presentation by Suzanne Mulligan

## Telling Tales in a Digital World

### Jane Harding

The University of the Sunshine Coast recently held a digital storytelling workshop entitled 'Telling Tales in a Digital World'. Primarily aimed at teacher librarians, the information and technology presented was applicable and adaptable to a range of situations and age groups, including those involved in oral history projects.

Keynote speaker, Daryll Bellingham (a professional storyteller based in Brisbane) defines digital storytelling on his website as: "a short movie, usually 2 - 5 minutes long, with the voice of the storyteller telling his or her own story"<sup>1</sup>. In addition to the voiceover, the movie can be accompanied by digital still photos, scanned documents, music, sound effects, or sometimes short segments of video. There are a numerous software programs, offering varying levels of sophistication, available for creating these digital stories; however, a high quality production can be achieved with minimal technology.

We used Photostory 3 for Windows (which can be downloaded for free from the Microsoft website) in one session. The basics were very easy to master and I was able to create a short 'movie' within a few minutes. This program lends itself very readily to adding images to a previously recorded oral history or creating a scripted voiceover to accompany images. Alternate programs that were discussed include Adobe Premiere, Movie Maker, and Sony Vegas. The workshop also explored websites that offer tools to enhance digital images such as Flickr Tools (<http://www.bighugelabs.com/flickr/>) which provides tools for creating photo mosaics, captioning, and tagging photos and VoiceThread, which allows an image to be turned into a conversation. The range of tools and features available is potentially overwhelming and it would be easy to spend

vast amounts of time simply exploring and trying out all the options.

However, mastering the technology is only half the journey towards creating a great digital story. As with any oral history project (or, in fact, any project at all), planning is key and this was emphasized by several of the presenters, including Daryll Bellingham and Gary Crew (creator of 'The Swamp' cartoon). Key points were to:

- Collect art, photos, images, and sounds in the initial stages of the project;
- Know what you want to achieve;
- Write a script before you begin compiling the 'movie'; then record the voiceover; and finally add the pictures.
- Stick to a basic narrative structure;
- Keep it simple;
- Look at story from all angles and explore the ideas then focus on one idea.

The presenters 'screened' examples of their own projects, some of which were incredibly moving, in spite of (or perhaps as a result of) the simplicity of the concept, to provide ideas and inspiration. Further examples of digital stories are readily available on the World Wide Web sites of projects such as Capture Wales

(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/galleries/pages/capturewales.shtml>) and Queensland Stories (<http://www.qldstories.slq.qld.gov.au/>).

What is evident in viewing the examples reflects the tenet advocated by Bellingham, that despite all this great technology, the story is still the most important element and you must have a great story to achieve a great digital story.

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<sup>1</sup> Bellingham, D 2007, 'What is digital storytelling', viewed December 6, 2007, <http://www.storytell.com.au/digital.html>

## **Stradbroke Excursion**

### **Suzanne Mulligan**



The day before our National Conference began, 20 of our delegates enjoyed an excursion to North Stradbroke Island in Moreton Bay. It was a beautiful sunny day so ideal for showing the delights of the island to interstate and overseas visitors. Our bus left Riverglenn Conference Centre in the early morning and we caught the barge across to the Island.

Our first stop was the North Stradbroke Island Historical Museum which showcases Aboriginal and early European occupation of the Island. The Museum has a large collection of oral history recordings by both Indigenous and white Australians. Tracy Ryan from the Redland Shire Council showed us examples of the files and the recordings collected which was fascinating to see. This is a very extensive project which has resulted in a web site <http://www.redland.qld.gov.au/Corp/Residents+Info/History/Stradbroke+stories.htm>

The Council hosted a delicious morning tea of home-made scones and cakes provided by the volunteers at the Museum. Volunteer guides then took us for a ‘walk and talk’ of the historic Dunwich cemetery, which is listed by the National Trust. Our guide told us stories associated with some of the gravestones including the tragic tale of when the island was the quarantine station for Brisbane and a ship arrived with passengers suffering from typhus. Many more of the passengers died on the island as well as the doctors who treated them. All were buried at Dunwich.

We were then driven to the other side of the island to Point Lookout for the beautiful ocean views. Some enjoyed a swim at Cylinder Beach while others did the Gorge walk where we had spectacular views of the sea and were privileged to see whales, dolphins and at least one turtle. After a relaxing couple of hours we returned to the Dunwich side of the island for lunch at the Little Ship Club by the sea. It was a great opportunity to talk about the day and what we expected from the conference. After lunch we set off for Brown Lake, an important attraction on the island. The lake derives its name from the brown or “tea” coloured water formed by the vegetation that surrounds the lake as it decays and settles on the bottom. It is a beautiful spot for swimming or just enjoying the surroundings.

Tired but happy, at the end of the day we made our way back to Brisbane. We were pleased to be able to present delegates with a day that combined historical and recreational activities as an introduction to our Brisbane conference.

## Copyright Essentials

Copyright dates back to 1709 in Great Britain with the enacting of a law – known as the Statute of Queen Ann – which gave authors, rather than printers, rights in relation to their written material.

Under Australian law, copyright is automatic and no formal procedures need be followed though copyright owners may put the relevant copyright notice on their work themselves.

Copyright protects only specified categories of material: “works” and “subject matter other than works”. The category of “works” (s. 32) includes:

Literary works – text, compilations and software. It does not protect information, ideas or raw data. When information is selected and arranged in a certain way, that attracts copyright protection, but not the data itself. There must have been some effort or labour e.g. White Pages – the way the information is selected and arranged;

Dramatic works – scripts, screenplays, mime and choreography;

Artistic works – anything that is visually perceived e.g. paintings, drawings, photos, engravings, logos, plans, sculptures, medals, craft;

Music – anything which is heard – allotting time for something to happen.

Subject matter other than works (ss 89-92) include:

Sound recordings (protected separately from any music, lyrics or other copyright material recorded);

Cinematograph film footage (the different layers of music, sound, script, photos, recording are separately protected);

Broadcasts – the putting together of the program is separately protected from the material itself which is broadcast;

Published edition – typesetting, layout is separately protected from the writing itself.

Copyright does not protect underlying concepts, information or ideas, styles, techniques or ways of doing things (other areas of law may apply).

Owners of copyright have a number of exclusive rights over their material. Anyone who wants to use someone else’s copyright material generally needs permission.

### Right to communicate material

Communication is a reasonably new terminology from 1 March 2001 comprising:

1. The active component includes broadcast, cable TV and now includes email, faxes, any transmission by wire or wireless, i.e. you send something out.
2. Passive – making something available on line electronically i.e. put something on line for people to see.

### Ownership of Copyright

General rule – creator is the first owner of copyright. Copyright is personal property.



You can buy and sell (assign) to someone else. Heirs can acquire the rights.

Exceptions – employer owns work done by employee, but only applies to work you create as an employee and must be to do with your work.

Contractor e.g. with personal and private domestic photos, such as wedding. The person paying contractor is copyright owner.

Governments have broader copyright ownership of material it directs or controls as first publication.

How long does copyright last?

Depends on what you are dealing with. “Works” generally for the life of the creator plus 70 years.

Rule before 1 January 2005 – life of creator plus 50 years; photos – date taken plus 50 years. Therefore, copyright on artistic works for those who died before 1 January 1955 and photos and sound recordings made before 1 January 1955 has expired.

From 1 January 2005 new rule – life of creator plus 70 years (includes photos). Note that if copyright has expired under the old rule, it is not extended.

If works not published as at death of creator, then it is from date of publication plus 70 years. Copyright becomes part of estate.

After copyright expires the material becomes “public domain” (note – term not meant in the same way as web software).

### Dealing

As copyright is a form of property, copyright owners can assign or license all or any part of their rights in a written agreement. When assigned, someone else becomes the owner and when licensed, someone else can use the copyright material with permission such as for a particular time (e.g. one year) or territory (e.g. Australia or New Zealand) or type of right (e.g. reproduce only), type of format (e.g. artwork or T-Shirt), number (e.g. 500 for postcard). It is all a matter of negotiation and can be subject to conditions, including payment.

In some cases a non-exclusive licence may be implied, such as sending a letter to the newspaper, implies it can be used on the letters page.

### Free Exceptions – where permission is not needed

For research or study, 10% is deemed to be “fair dealing”, or for critique or review. Also for reporting news, parody or satire, giving legal advice. Back-ups of computer programs is allowed.

### Infringements

There is a copyright issue if you use all or any substantial part of someone’s material, or even a small part if it is easily recognisable, without permission and where no exception applies.

Copyright owners are entitled to take legal action when their rights are infringed.

You may find more information on the Australian Copyright Council’s web site at <http://www.copyright.org.au/>

Editor’s note – I attended this seminar on behalf of the OHAA (Qld Inc.)



## Oral History Training Workshop

Lesley Jenkins

Oral history training ensures that the opportunity to capture someone's memories on record will not be wasted. Each interviewer develops their own style of interviewing, but good interviews have features in common that can be learned at a workshop.

The Oral History Association of Australia – Queensland Inc will be conducting an 'introductory' oral history workshop. Depending on interest, this will be followed up with an advanced workshop focussing on specific issues of interest to participants engaged in or developing oral history project work. Lesley Jenkins, an experienced oral historian, Churchill Fellow and author of the handbook, *Talking Together: A Guide to Community Oral History Projects*, will facilitate the workshop. We gratefully acknowledge the support of the State Library in providing a venue for the workshop.

### Workshop Timetable

- Introduction to oral history – the history of oral history; how can it be used and what can be made from the recordings
- Memory – its reliability, its triggers, its possibilities
- The interview and interviewing techniques – research, the questionnaire, the venue and ambience
- The recording medium - tapes, cds, minidisks, soundcards, professional and domestic equipment
- Tricky Issues - copyright and ethics
- Making the recordings accessible – summaries, indexing, transcribing and logging

When: Saturday 8 March 2008 10.00 am – 4.00 pm

Where: Fourth Floor, State Library of Queensland, Cultural Centre, Stanley Place, South Bank Note – we cannot have food in the room, however there is a café on the ground floor.

Cost: \$60.00 (members) \$70.00 (non-members))

- If you have a voice recorder, please bring it along.

### **ENROLMENT ESSENTIAL**

Please enrol by making cheques payable to “OHAA-Qld Inc” and send to The Secretary, OHAA (Qld Inc.), PO Box 12213, George Street, Brisbane Qld 4003. Email enquiries can be sent to Lesley at [lesley@recordinghistory.com.au](mailto:lesley@recordinghistory.com.au) or phone Suzanne Mulligan on 3376 1865.

## **Report on National Conference Sue Pechey, President Queensland Branch**

We are now in the happy position to give some wrap-up information about the September 2007 Biennial OHAA Conference. We had a team of six people who worked hard for about fifteen months to get it off the ground; and then we were indeed blessed with 60 presenters of papers and workshops (some from as far away as Finland, Guam and New Zealand), all of whom were of exceptional quality; and then we had about 129 visitors, 95 for the whole conference and 34 who came for a single day—we thank you all.

We've had several messages of congratulations, one saying that it was the best conference the sender has ever been to—most gratifying at the end of what can only be described as a trying year. We failed to attract any grant money from the two bodies we approached (Arts Queensland and the Gaming Community Benefit Fund)—perhaps because I can't write funding applications, or maybe 'they' don't want to fund oral history conferences (take your pick)—I find funding applications just the pits and was constantly reminded of a late 1960s poster looking forward to the day when childcare was well funded; and the air force had to hold a lamington drive to fund its bomber update.

The committee consisted of Suzanne Mulligan, the Queensland branch secretary, who really bore the brunt of the hard work—she is efficient, prompt and never loses her cool. Lena Volkova literally ran from one room to the other at times during the conference, making sure all the equipment worked well and Maxine Kendall kept her beady eyes on the finances. Jean Tremayne was present throughout the conference doing all the little things (like book sales, raffle tickets and other useful but unforeseen tasks).

Helen Klæbe put the program together and this drew the one serious criticism I have so far heard by having to create a third session on Saturday to fit everyone in—we thought a 4-day program would be enough time to have two competing sessions only, but were wrong. It is not unusual for conference to have three, or even more, competing attractions, and the only way to avoid this is to reject offers of papers or workshops. Since some of the potential presenters were not known to us, we didn't feel able to do this, and I cannot think of a paper we could have rejected to avoid three sessions.

Throughout the year leading up to the conference, we felt the chilly wind of potential debt as there are so very many imponderables—we engaged a company to handle registration, but in retrospect feel that a competent spreadsheet would have served our purpose much less expensively. The venue was a huge plus, and we cannot praise Riverglenn too highly—their help in preparing us for the event was wonderful and their staff working throughout the conference were impeccable—friendly, professional and of a high standard—very good value indeed and I hope Brisbane visitors remember them if they are planning a similar event.

In the end we have covered all debts, repaid the national body for the \$2000 seeding funds and have a small profit, still not quite sure what that amount is, but the branch is resting its collective head easy—pity about all the time I wasted writing those @#!\* funding applications!

We have a bundle of material to send on to Tasmania, who will host the next Conference, in 2009. I do think individual state branches could do more to help this biennial event along—particularly in the way of publicity in their own communities—perhaps we should try to build much closer ties with the ABC and SBS; we have so much in common with many of their programs that with a little encouragement at the national level, they could be much more amenable to helping us advertise this major event. We found contact with them like pulling teeth. During the one interview I managed to get on the local radio station the young interviewer expressed astonishment that a core profession of interviewers even existed—and ... 'You're paid for what you do?'

This is the second time I have been involved in organising the OHAA Biennial Conference and the last time I will speak as the Queensland Branch President. It has a difficult but rewarding ride, the last 25 years or so, and I do so hope for much more institutional support for oral history in this State. But I have learned much, shared some wonderful memories with almost complete strangers, formed a few friendships and come in contact with some wonderful professional colleagues.

Thank you

## Queensland Life Members 2007



OHAA Life Members 2007 – Margaret Hamilton, Francis Good, Lesley Jenkins, Sue Pechey, Rosie Block

### Sue Pechey

Sue Pechey came to oral history by accident, an accident of marriage. In 1973 she married into a Yugoslavian family and started to learn their language, mostly from her husband and mother-in-law, Jozica. With the language came the family history and after a year or so, having arrived at some sort of fluency Sue wanted to put Jozica's stories down on paper, but found the task impossible. Speaking limited Slovene was one thing, but writing in Slovene, one of the most heavily inflected European languages, was out of the question. Translating straight into English would have seriously interrupted the flow of Jozica's stories. So Sue started taping and then translating. The family teased her unmercifully, along the lines of 'Why are you talking to Mama? She exaggerates everything, you know.' But Sue was hooked.

Arriving back in Australia in the early 1980s, Sue picked up some of her former connections, including Marjorie Roe, then audio-visual librarian at University of Queensland, who lent her a cassette recorder and suggested people she might interview. Sue started by using the questionnaire developed by the bicentennial project, then being run by Louise Douglas.

'I had discovered oral history and felt comfortable with it immediately. I had sat through history classes in the early 60s, where Greenwood's notion of history was always a matter of Kings and captains of war and industry, and often wondered where all the

real people were—now I had found access to their places in the warp and weft of history.'

In the following thirty years Sue held many positions in the Queensland Branch committee, ran workshops all over the state, contributed to Branch publications, developed teaching materials and presented a paper at the American Oral History Conference. On the grounds that the best interviewing is often achieved when interviewers are working amongst their own peer group, Sue's main interest now lies in skilling enthusiastic members of the community to undertake their own projects.

As a freelance practitioner, Sue has had come in contact with an inspiring peer group including Marjorie Roe, Roberta Bonnin, Geoffrey Bolton, Niles Elvery, Lesley Jenkins and Suzanne Mulligan.

One of Sue's major works was an oral history of unemployment, done for the National Library and the Department of Education & Training in the mid-80s. This was an Australia-wide project, with Sue's team looking at unemployment in the southeast Queensland country towns of Gympie, Warwick and Crow's Nest. Sue was the team leader for four interviewers, four transcribers, and an office manager. The project involved a lot of travelling, and training of interviewers. Sue has often thought that a follow-up on a percentage of informants would be interesting.

Other highlights include interviews done in Augathella about 10 years ago when she lived in the town for about 10 days; a workshop run in April 2007 and then being present for the launch of one project that was helped on its way by that workshop--Don Watson's windmill project beside the Cobb & Co Museum in Toowoomba; working with nurses who had lived in at 'the Diam', at Princess Alexandra Hospital in Annerley conducting a workshop to help people learn how to do the interviews, monitoring the transcript and then editing it into a coherent form and publishing the book.

In conferring Life Membership on Sue Pechey, we acknowledge her outstanding contribution to oral history through teaching best practice and mentoring many projects. We also

recognise her efforts to try and gain greater recognition for the value of oral history in Queensland.

### **Lesley Jenkins**

Lesley Jenkins is a consultant historian specialising in oral history. She completed a Bachelor of Arts majoring in history and radio at the University of Technology in Sydney. She has been working in NSW and Queensland on history, oral history and community publications and projects for 15 years. In 1997 she completed a Graduate Diploma in Arts (Applied History) at the University of Queensland. Lesley has also worked as a journalist, as a correspondent for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and in the museum sector as a curator and consultant oral historian. She has written and presented many papers for state, national and international oral history conferences.

In 1992 Lesley began an oral history project with members of the Italian community in Lismore. Nowhere else in New South Wales at that time was there any documentation of the growth and interaction of a non-English speaking community, let alone one where the final published work was fully translated. The elegant and informative book, *The power of the land/il potere della terra: a social history of Italian settlement in Lismore*, kept the faith both with her interviewees and with those who supported the project. Her work set a benchmark for successful oral history conducted in close consultation with a community.

A program based on Lesley's project and broadcast by the ABC in 1994 emphasised that there had been no mention of the Italian community in the recently published official history of that region. Later a play on the same topic was presented at the Adelaide Festival. Lesley also set up a permanent display at the New Italy Museum at Woodburn, again including interviewees from her Lismore project.

Lesley has published three books, numerous booklets and contributed content to many social history and arts based web sites. She has been actively involved in the Oral History Association of Australia since 1992 when she

joined the NSW branch. She then transferred to Queensland when she moved there in 1994. She has held the roles of secretary and president of the Queensland branch of the Association and was instrumental in having the branch incorporated. She has represented the association at intergovernmental meetings seeking greater acknowledgement of the role of the Branch and seeking greater support from the Queensland Government and the State Library.

Lesley's skill in oral history, particularly in the area of community history, is held in high regard. She shared her valuable experience in her excellent handbook, *Talking Together: A Guide to Community Oral History Projects*, Queensland 1999 which has sold well since its publication. She has conducted many oral history workshops which have raised funds for the Branch and educated many on oral history best practice.

In 2002 Lesley successfully applied for funding for the Queensland State Conference and played a major role in its organisation. This very successful conference ensured the financial viability of the Branch. In 2004 she was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to further her knowledge of oral history and its applications, travelling around the world to learn the latest in oral history practice.

At the 2003 OHAA National Conference Lesley held a training workshop for independent oral history contractors. As a result of this she set up an on-line independent Consultants' Discussion List which attracts lively debate. Lesley has always pushed for 'best practice' in equipment and training in undertaking oral history. When a member of the National Committee, Lesley made a valuable contribution including updating the Consultants Fees brochure and having it placed on the OHAA web site.

In conferring Life Membership on Lesley Jenkins we acknowledge the long list of activities in which she has been involved or has initiated. This bears testimony to her being a conscientious, talented oral historian whose feeling for history and for the community results in fine collaboration with publishers, museums, exhibitions and heritage work.

## Web Sites

**Vermont Folklife Center Archive** : Field Research Guides. In an effort to provide useful information to fieldworkers, students, community scholars, and others interested in cultural documentation, ethnography and oral history, the Vermont Folklife Center archive provides online access to a series of research guides:

<http://www.vermontfolklifecenter.org/archive/archive-fieldguides.html>

**Living Stories** – a UK site where you can read and hear the stories of people telling their stories of haemophilia and HIV <http://www.livingstories.org.uk/>

**When history gets personal** - Post-War Britain is about to come dramatically to life in a major TV history by Andrew Marr. The Magazine is teaming up with him to compile a users' history - written, photographed and filmed by you. Andrew explains why personal history matters. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/6658705.stm>

**Columbia University Libraries** – Oral History Research Office shows a number of interesting oral history projects that are underway  
<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/oral/>

**The Washington University School of Medicine Oral History Project** is an ongoing series of recorded interviews and transcripts dating from 1959. The project was envisioned to capture and preserve first person accounts and reflections on the history of the medical school, medical practice in St. Louis, and developments in the field of medicine. Interview subjects include faculty, staff and alumni of the School of Medicine, as well as family members, friends and others associated with Washington University. Users can listen to audio recordings or read transcripts of the interviews, and view images of the oral history subjects. <http://beckerexhibits.wustl.edu/oral/index.html>

**StoryCorps** – the conversation of a lifetime. Our mission is to honor and celebrate one another's lives through listening. Since 2003, almost 30,000 everyday people have shared life stories with family and friends in our StoryBooths. Each conversation is recorded on a free CD to share, and is preserved at the Library of Congress. Millions listen to our broadcasts on public radio and the web. StoryCorps is the largest oral history project of its kind. <http://www.storycorps.net/>

**Digital Audio Best Practices** has a guide for those undertaking converting their analogue collections to digital. Although it's a North American site, most of the information will help us [http://www.cdpheritage.org/digital/audio/documents/cdp\\_dabpv2\\_1.pdf](http://www.cdpheritage.org/digital/audio/documents/cdp_dabpv2_1.pdf)

**MemoryArchive** – a site where people can submit their own stories  
<http://www.memoryarchive.org/en/MemoryArchive>