

Voices

Volume 2, Issue 1

Spring 2005

Migration Project Benefits Researchers and Relatives

By Sharon Pellegrino, Systems Librarian



I can hardly believe that a little over a year has passed since our migration project began. We have migrated over 4,000 hours of audio tape (all but the most recent cassette tapes and a handful of reel-to-reel tapes) to gold CDs. These unique primary sources of history were not only saved from extinction, but the sound quality also greatly improved in the process. Some tapes had such poor sound quality before digitizing that they were often difficult to understand and transcribe.

One of the biggest benefits of the migration project is easier access to the Center's holdings. What a pleasure it is to tell someone that the audio version of a requested interview is available, rather than the transcript alone. Dialects, points of emphasis, and emotion are often lost when reading a paper transcription.

This is particularly important as a growing number of researchers, authors, documentary producers, newspapers, and television news programs request

transcript copies or snippets of audio for their projects. Many of these requested interviews were given by unique historical figures such as former Senator Barry Goldwater; Robert F. Williams, an important figure who emerged out of the Southern Civil rights struggle in the 1950s; Fawn Brodie, UCLA lecturer and author of noted biographies on the Mormon

of Japanese Americans.

In addition to researchers requesting interviews for historical articles and documentaries, many recent requests for CD copies have come from descendants of interviewees. In some cases it was the first time the requestor had heard a deceased grandparent or great-grandparent's voice. In other instances, an inquirer would be tearfully thankful to hear a family member discuss the historical events of their life in great detail. As word has spread about the migration project's success, other institutions and private individuals have requested help saving their collections. It has been very rewarding to help others preserve the priceless contents of their archives.

In order to make this information more widely available, I am currently working with librarian and author, Nancy MacKay, who is devoting a chapter of her proposed book, *After the Interview : Curating Oral Histories in the 21st Century*, to our project's findings and success.

That's the good news. The bad news is that my full-time position at the university has ended. But more



CSUF grad student and Nixon Library intern Lauren Brown is reviewing audio files from our Nixon Collection for a producer working on a documentary for the History Channel.

leader Joseph Smith, Sir Richard Burton, and Thomas Jefferson: *An Intimate History*, in which her discussion of Jefferson's intimate relationship with one of his slaves, Sally Hemings, was eventually chronicled on PBS; and Harry Ueno, long considered a hero for taking a courageous stand against corrupt guards during the World War II internment

(Continued on page 7)

Message from the Director

Globalizing COPH

By Art Hansen



When, in 2003, our Oral History Program metamorphosed into the Center for Oral and Public History, we determined to broaden the scope of its operations so as to encompass not only local and regional developments but also national and international phenomena. This decision was reaffirmed and refined this past spring during a pair of staff retreats spearheaded by COPH associate directors Natalie Fousekis and Cora Granata. We decided that the Center's predominant focus would remain on Orange County, Southern California, and the American West, but COPH would also document and interpret historical and contemporary experiences outside these parameters if they strategically related to this primary geographical focus and/or the special research concerns of CSUF faculty in History and other disciplines.

This policy decision was prompted in part by the impending—and exciting!—fieldwork to be transacted during June 2005 in north-central China's Henan Province by COPH's new Dragon Springs Village Oral History Project. This project, which went through a four-year planning stage, cleared its last major bureaucratic hurdle in 2004. Under the leadership of Laichen Sun, a professor of Asian studies in the CSUF History Department and a Dragon Springs native, this project applied for and received a substantial Mission and Goals University Initiative Project grant from

CSUF President Milton Gordon to document through oral history interviewing the post-1949 transformation of Chinese village life. This grant, supplemented by financial and in-kind support from Dragon Springs, other Henan Province government units, and selected provincial institutions of higher education, covered the expenses for three weeks of fieldwork by the project's five faculty members and five competitively chosen graduate students.

During the spring 2005 semester, the project team met for three hours each week as a seminar-cum-workshop presided over by Professor Sun, who was ably assisted by another CSUF faculty member who had been raised in a Henan Province village, Professor Yichin Shen of the Department of English. The weekly meetings featured presentations by each of the team's faculty members (Professors Sun and Shen, along with Professor Thomas Reins and myself from the History Department and Jie Tian from the

University Library faculty who is a native of mainland China very familiar with village life there), and from a panoply of Southern California-based scholars who had done fieldwork in Chinese villages that had been published in a stellar array of books and articles.

In addition, during the course of the semester, each of the team's graduate student members (Hong Vu of American Studies, Jackie Swartout of Anthropology, and Susan Brewer, Allie Frickert, and Yueh-Ying Chu of History) prepared and presented research proposals relative to the focus of their



Dr. Hansen and Yueh-Ying Chu interview a resident of Dragon Springs.

Heartfelt Thanks

Understanding that the general pool of discretionary funds is receiving more and more requests these days, it is particularly rewarding to know that some have chosen to support our efforts at the Center for Oral and Public History. Special thanks are extended for financial contributions during 2005 from the following:

Orange County Pioneer Council
Michael Onorato
Zoe and Dave Berry
Ed Wiber
La Habra Historical Society
Arthur and Debra Hansen
Sharon Pellegrino
Susan Shoho



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respective fieldwork in Dragon Springs and an associated article they would be writing for a prospective anthology to be published in both English and Chinese under the joint editorship of Professors Sun and Shen.

During the course of our trip, the project team collectively generated approximately 100 oral history interviews on multiple facets of Chinese village life. What's more, they established the basis for broader institutional partnerships between CSUF and universities and research academies in China's historic Henan Province, and laid a solid foundation for further globalization of the Center for Oral and Public History. ☺



Curator's Comments

Unique Projects Added to Website

By Stephanie George



I always look forward to the summer months. Not that my to-do list is any shorter than it was during the school year, but my boys are out of school and it always feels like there's less pressure in the house. In addition to planning trips to the beach or family vacations, we usually set out to accomplish one major chore; this summer, it is re-organizing and cleaning our garage.

A similar phenomenon occurs in COPH's archives. Not that the number of phone calls and emails decreases during the summer, but fewer students drop by and there's a more relaxed attitude—whether real or imagined—in the office. Also, much like the summer plans at my house, I like to identify one archival task that can be realized during the summer break when things are less hectic. As always, there are a myriad of projects from which to choose; however, since access to our materials is just as important to our mission as is their preservation, I typically lean toward completing projects that have yet to be added to our online catalogue.

The process, in theory, is rather simple: identify the project, write a description of each oral history, create an abstract for the project, and finally, load all this information onto our webpage. The actual work involved can take weeks (sometimes months) and involves researching projects and chasing down interviewers and project directors who may have completed these oral histories years ago. It also requires that one listen to each oral history—in real time—and write a summary of the topics discussed. Moreover, creating web pages that are user friendly is time consuming and demands attention to detail.

So, what's on my "to do" list this summer? Four projects we hope to have on our website by the end of

August include two dealing with southern California. *Religious Pluralism in Orange County*, a project completed in 1998 and subsequently published as *Behind the Orange Curtain* in 2003, explores the changing religious demographics of Orange County residents, who were once characterized as simply "white bread Christian America." This project includes twenty-eight oral histories representing the changing religious landscape, the transformation of religion, and the impact of religion on Orange County.

The second California-related project was completed in 2004, when Dr. Art Hansen's American History Seminar (History 572) explored Cold War culture in southern California. Topics include Civil Rights, recreation, influence of Sputnik on California curriculum, and Googie architecture.

The German Experience of World War II is a project in which German civilians and soldiers alike discuss their memories of living in Nazi Germany. This collection offers a glimpse of German military and home life, Hitler Youth, attitudes about Hitler and Jews, the effect of propaganda, and post-war issues including the Russian occupation, scarcity of food, and prisoners of war.

Lastly, more than seventy oral

Online Access to Voices

The Center for Oral and Public History's semi-annual newsletter is available on the internet. This is an effort to make the most of our limited funds, especially now during the state fiscal crisis.

If you would still prefer to get a paper copy of the newsletter, please call or write and let us know.

Otherwise, in the future you will receive a notice in the mail when the newsletter is posted on the COPH website.

Thank you for your cooperation and support. ☺

histories conducted with Japanese American residents of Hawaii probe Americanization in Hawaiian schools, 1930-1941. These interviews examine their educational experience, as well as peripheral educational experiences (in particular, the Japanese language school, newspaper, and radio) and how they impacted—either facilitating or hindering—the Americanization process.

There are still many more projects waiting to be posted on our website, and it's often difficult to choose which ones make the cut each summer. By the end of August, though, these projects should be up on our website, and much like my garage clean-up, I'll be thrilled when it's completed. ☺

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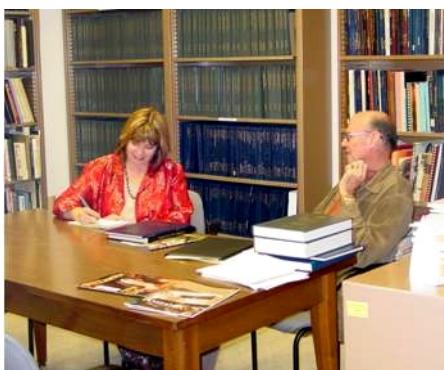
Please make check payable to CSUF Foundation—COPH, and send to Center for Oral and Public History, Cal State Fullerton, P.O. Box 6846, Fullerton CA 92834-6846.

Titan Magazine Highlights COPH

There's just something ironic in conducting an interview about an oral history center. A few weeks ago, Valerie Orleans of *Titan Magazine* did just that when she met with Dr. Larry de Graaf to discuss COPH's origins and what it has to offer researchers. Orleans's article, entitled "The Voices of our Past," recently appeared in the summer 2005 issue of *Titan Magazine*, CSUF's magazine for alumni, friends, and the university community.

The article traces the history of both the Center and CSUF's oral history program. It also highlights several projects the Center has collaborated on, and gives an example of how a conversation in an oral history class can lead to a major research project and eventually a book. The complete text of the article can be viewed at TitanMag.com/oralhistory (just click anywhere on the photo that appears when you open the site).

At the end of the article, there is also a brief sidebar about COPH's interviews discussing Mexican-American deportation during the Great Depression, which Dr. Hansen says are the most widely requested tapes in the Center's collection. The Mexican-American sidebar and several audio excerpts from COPH's archives can also be accessed from the webpage mentioned above. ☺



Valerie Orleans interviews Dr. Larry de Graaf in COPH's reading room.

COPH Surveys Fifty Years of CSUF History By Lorene Broersma, Research Associate



Cal State Fullerton is preparing to commemorate its Golden Anniversary. The Center for Oral and Public History (COPH) is actively participating in this milestone event by heading up the Fiftieth Anniversary Historical Documentation Project.

The Historical Documentation Project has two main phases. In the initial phase, COPH designed and sent out surveys to record the unique historical materials that are housed at the different University departments, units, centers, and organizations. The surveys were delivered by either email or in person to the units and departments across campus. During the spring semester, replies were slow, but the creation of a new email account, csuf50th@fullerton.edu, has facilitated communication and generated more responses. Some departments are returning supplemental materials along with their surveys. To encourage survey participation, COPH has given departments the opportunity to enter a drawing for prizes with the return of their survey.

Information collected from the surveys will be compiled into an inventory of the documents and records held at various campus departments. The Fiftieth Anniversary Inventory will become a valuable resource for planning exhibits and historical projects that highlight the development, achievements, and changes of the University during the past fifty years.

Research for this project included examining the questionnaires and documents that had been collected by Dr. de Graaf's Historical Update Subcommittee for Cal State Fullerton's

Fortieth Anniversary. To make these records a more useable resource, an archival student organized the collection and created an inventory of the contents. When contacting departments about the Fiftieth Anniversary, it has been helpful to refer to materials documented in the earlier questionnaires.

In phase two of this project, historical documents and records reported in the surveys will be scanned and saved for the eventual creation of a digital archive. The inventories of both the Fortieth and Fiftieth Anniversary Collections will also be digitized and included in this online archive, providing better and wider access to records for research about Cal State Fullerton's history. Scanning of some of the historical documents collected for the Fortieth Anniversary is already being done.

Additionally, it has come to the attention of the Fiftieth Anniversary Documentation Project that there are many documents including newsletters, photographs, and event programs posted as PDF files on department websites. The Project has discovered that paper copies of these items of historic interest cannot always be located. Webpage documents are not maintained indefinitely and will not be available for tomorrow's research if they are not saved today. To preserve some of these online records, the PDF files are being downloaded from the websites and saved for the upcoming digital archive.

The new digital archive at the Center for Oral and Public History has the potential of becoming a repository of historical campus documents that will become part of the University's legacy to its future students, faculty, and staff. ☺



Forgotten Patriots: The Making of the Mexican American World War II Veterans Project (MAV)

By Charlene Riggins, Research Associate



It has been estimated that 350,000 to 500,000 persons of Hispanic heritage served in the different branches of the armed forces during World War II, and several thousand were Mexican Americans from our own backyard, Orange County. This ethnic group distinguished themselves by receiving more Medals of Honor than any other ethnic group, yet these accomplishments are rarely addressed in historical accounts.

In spring of 2002, Judge Frederick P. Aguirre, a Mexican American born and raised in Placentia, California, and whose father is a World War II veteran, approached California State University, Fullerton about the possibility of a project documenting the role of Southern California's Mexican Americans during World War II. After meetings with university president, Dr. Milton Gordon, the department of history, and its Center for Oral and Public History, the proposition was accepted. Utilizing two sections of a required history course, Historical Writing, taught by Dr. Arthur Hansen and Dr. Wendy Elliott-Scheinberg during the fall 2002 semester, the interviews were collected. The Mexican American Veterans Oral History Project (MAV) was born.

I was cordially persuaded by my esteemed mentor, Dr. Arthur Hansen, to bring this project to fruition. The job was massive. Because many of the oral interviews were not transcribed I started the process of listening to the over ninety tapes in order to narrow the field to approximately twenty-five to thirty interviews that provided substantial historic dialogue. I soon became a little overwhelmed by the immensity of the project, so Dr Hansen allowed me to enlist the aid of Miguel Garcia, a graduate student who had a

deep interest in the subject.

The two of us have been working diligently for the last year, transcribing tapes and identifying the more substantial interviews for use in the project. Miguel has also been contacting some of the interviewees to obtain additional information and fill in holes not covered in the original interviews. We are currently transcribing the last of the interviews, and we expect to submit a final draft of the project to the publisher this fall.

The main purpose of the MAV project is to develop a manuscript to provide needed understanding and study of Mexican American's contributions during World War II and the advancements made with regard to their social status as a result of the war. Also, this manuscript of oral histories will offer additional insight on Mexican American experiences during World War II, which were first examined by Raul Morin in his book, *Among the Valiant: Mexican Americans in World War II and Korea* (1965). His work is now outdated and out of print, but will serve

as a complementary case study to the recently published *Mexican Americans & World War II* (2005), which contains oral histories compiled and edited by Maggie Rivas Rodriguez from the University of Texas, Austin.

Mexican Americans are very much a part of our history, especially in Southern California, and they are in need of a sense of place, a sense of history. This project will culminate in the fifth publication of the Michi Nishiura and Walter Weglyn Multicultural Publication Series, and will hopefully provide a greater sense of history for Mexican Americans in Southern California. ☺



COPH Research Associate Awarded Maag Scholarship

This year's Jorice Maag Local History Scholarship recipient is COPH's very own Maria Luisa Hernandez de Figueiroa. Maria is a CSUF senior and member of the Honors Program. Her scholastic interests focus on social movements, women's history, and oral history.

Maria's interest in oral history led her to fulfill her Honors Project requirement by performing interviews and transcribing them for donation to COPH. Her project is entitled "The Other Face of Undocumented Immigrants" and it focuses on problems of identity among young

adults who were brought to the US illegally and are still undocumented or in the process of legalization.

In addition to her research, Maria is working as a non-paid intern translating documents from the era of the Mexican Revolution (1910) from Spanish to English. She is also involved with the Migration Project at COPH, translating interviews about Chicano experiences during the early 1900's in the US onto CD's for future use and preservation.

Maria plans to become a teacher after graduation and apply to a Masters Program or Credential Program. ☺





Suggested Summer Reading



Looking for something interesting to read while you relax by the pool this summer? Consider some of the unique books COPH has to offer:

Behind the Orange Curtain: Religious Pluralism in Orange County is a collection of interviews that reveal the striking religious diversity of a county widely perceived as homogenously conservative Christian. Interviewees include Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Jews, and chaplains with public service organizations working to accommodate a community of many faiths.

Between Two Adversaries: Korean Interpreters at Japanese Alien Detention Centers explores a virtually unknown aspect of the Japanese American Internment story. The author, Hyung-ju Ahn, examines the interethnic conflict that developed when the U.S. government enlisted Koreans to interrogate Japanese American internees at camps for “potentially dangerous” aliens during World War II.

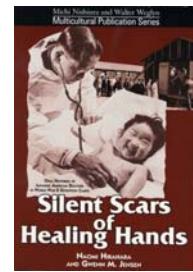
Camp and Community: Manzanar and the Owens Valley is a collection of reminiscences from eastern California residents about the nearby Manzanar War Relocation Center that housed Japanese Americans during World War II. The twenty interviews demonstrate how feelings in their previously isolated community evolved from hostility to acceptance of their temporary neighbors.

Silent Scars of Healing Hands: Oral Histories of Japanese American Doctors in World War II Detention Camps tells the story of Japanese Americans who practiced medicine under the most stressful circumstances: within the confines of detention centers in their own country. Oral histories with these doctors and nurses reveal men and women of great ingenuity and compassion who struggled to give their patients decent care amid indecent conditions.

Song of Anger: Tales of Tule Lake is part memoir, part history, and part fiction. It is a collection of “war stories” based on Jewish American author

Barney Shallit's experience as a social worker at the Tule Lake Segregation Center for Japanese Americans during World War II. Shallit uses irony and satire to confront both the injustice of the mass detention and his own complicity with it.

The Young Nixon: An Oral Inquiry contains fourteen interviews in which friends, teachers, and relatives of Richard M. Nixon reflect on the future president's prepolitical life. The interviews, which with only one exception were conducted before the Watergate scandal, provide unique insight into Nixon's background and formative years. ☺



Read Any Good Books Lately?

Enrich your library with these COPH publications:

- Behind the Orange Curtain: Religious Pluralism in Orange County*, \$36.00
- Between Two Adversaries: Korean Interpreters at Japanese Alien Detention Centers*, \$27.00
- Camp and Community: Manzanar and the Owens Valley*, \$24.00
- Silent Scars of Healing Hands: Oral Histories of Japanese Doctors in World War II Detention Camps*, \$18.50
- Song of Anger: Tales of Tule Lake*, \$25.00
- The Young Nixon: An Oral Inquiry*, \$10.00

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Make check payable to CSUFF-COPH. Payment should include cost plus 7.75% tax and \$3.50 shipping and handling. Send request and payment to: Center for Oral and Public History, California State University, Fullerton, PO Box 6846, Fullerton, CA 92834-6846

For mail in form, go to <http://coph.fullerton.edu/BookOrderForm.htm>

Peruvian Japanese Experience in WWII

By Gisela Shimabukuro, Research Associate

I recently took a trip abroad to conduct research for my master's thesis on the resettlement of former Japanese Peruvian internees in Peru, the United States, and Japan. I stayed in Lima, the capital city of Peru, for five weeks. Unlike my visit there last year, when I interviewed three former Japanese Peruvian internees, I decided to do archival research on this trip. My work involved a visit to the Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Peru's Ministry of Foreign Relations, in search of records relating to the resettlement.

During World War II, Japanese Peruvian internees were deported from Peru and interned in camps in the United States that were administered by the Immigration Naturalization Service and the Justice Department. Once the war was over and the internees were released from camp, Japanese Peruvians faced an international dilemma. The Peruvian government did not welcome their return and the United States government wanted to repatriate them to Japan, their country of ancestral origin. However, many Japanese Peruvians did not consider Japan their home. Almost all of them wanted to return to Peru where they had already established a life.

After looking over several files of archives, I found petitions from some of these Japanese Peruvians—including one from my great uncle—asking the Peruvian Ambassador to allow them to return to Peru. Unfortunately, my great uncle and his family were denied permission to return. With that option closed to them, they fought to stay in the United States, where they resettled

in New Jersey and later in Los Angeles. Approximately, 100 Japanese Peruvians

were granted permission to return to Peru under special circumstances, while 350 stayed in the U.S. The rest were repatriated to Japan.

Because of my short visit, I did not have a chance to find the actual documents denying my family's return to Peru. However, I

felt very lucky to have come across even one document relating to my family. It was a wonderful experience



Gisela outside Peru's presidential palace.

(Continued from page 1)
regrettable is the end of a fantastic experience with a wonderful group of students whose dedication, teamwork, and sense of humor made this project a successful venture. We shared an experience that will last in our memories for a lifetime, and had fun doing it. I am so thankful for the opportunity to have worked with them, and I hope they realize the value of their work to the county and beyond for many years to come.

Coming to the end of this project is like finishing the last page of a good book: there is a sense of sadness that it has to end, but also excitement about the next adventure that awaits us. ☺



Interview with President Gordon Continues Tradition

By Lawrence de Graaf,
Research Associate



A tradition of sorts is being continued at Cal State Fullerton, whereby campus presidents near the end of their tenure are interviewed about their experiences and reflections on the history of the campus during their presidency. To date this has been done for former presidents Langsdorf, Cobb, and Shields (though the Shields one is still being edited). In March, 2005, interviews were begun with current president Milton Gordon. Five have been completed to date, resulting in over seven hours of taped discussions. Like the two other presidents' completed interviews, this will be transcribed, edited, and bound in book form. Unlike others, it will be printed in multiple copies for distribution beyond the CSUF library. Hopefully, this will make it a stimulus for further work on university history.

This interview will form an important part of a momentous upcoming event in Cal State Fullerton's history: the celebration of its 50th anniversary. Many past faculty and administration figures have been interviewed already, especially in conjunction with the 25th and 40th anniversaries. But many more, especially those who have come in the past two decades, need their recollections preserved. The University Archives, located in the Special Collections Department of the Library, is an extensive but still incomplete repository that needs updating in many areas. The Gordon interview can serve as a basic text for both document collection and further interviews to make the 50th anniversary not only a celebratory event but a major contribution to campus history. ☺

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Cal State Fullerton
PO Box 6846 - PLS 363
Fullerton CA 92834-6846

Phone: 714-278-3580
Fax: 714-278-5069
Email: coph@fullerton.edu

We're on the Web
<http://coph.fullerton.edu>



Pioneer Council Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Orange County Pioneer Council occurs every April, and this year it seemed to be an especially amiable event. Council members assembled in the windowed reception room at the First American Corporation headquarters in Santa Ana, where it was difficult to tell whether the room was warmed more by the afternoon California sun or the comfortable camaraderie. Animated Pioneers greeted old friends and their children, with a sense of historical awareness underlying the whole evening. They enjoyed reminiscing about the county's historic difficulties and triumphs that they experienced together.

As it has every year for the past two decades, COPH contributed to the celebration by presenting newly bound copies of interviews the Pioneers have conducted. COPH helps with the preservation of Orange County local history by developing the interviews the Pioneers conduct with their members into volumes that are deposited at five locations throughout the county: Santa Ana Public Library, the Old Courthouse Museum, UC Irvine, First American Corporation, and Chapman University.

This year, two newly completed volumes were presented at the meeting. The first was the interview conducted by Eileen DeCair with Leroy Cook, who recounted the early days of the community in San Juan Capistrano including filming silent movies, rumrunner activities, and raising sheep. The fifth and final volume of La Habra Pioneers was the second book presented. This volume includes the last seven of thirty interviews collected by Esther Cramer during the early 1960s as part of the class she took at what was then Orange County State College.

Thanks to the financial support from the Pioneer Council, these long-delayed publications are now available for use by scholars and history buffs in COPH's reading room and at the five locations mentioned above. ☺

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