

News / Les Nouvelles

ORAL HISTORY PROJECTS/PROJETS D'HISTOIRE ORALE

- Sous les égides de la Société historique d'Acton Vale, Québec, et en collaboration avec la Société historique des Cantons de l'Est, ce projet qui est en cours de déroulement, vise par le biais de l'entrevue d'histoire orale, de récolter les témoignages des "gens de la place" afin qu'une brochure, (peut-être même un livre), sur l'histoire locale puisse paraître. En même temps, une sensibilisation des gens aux archives et au patrimoine est opérée. Une subvention des Archives nationales du Québec fut requise pour ce projet. Le projet est d'une durée d'un an, possiblement renouvelable et les résultats devraient être rendu accessible en 1979.
- La Société historique de Ste-Hyacinthe, a lancé un projet qui, par le biais de l'interview et des témoignages recueillis, voudrait dresser un portrait de Ste-Hyacinthe, ville laitière, ville touristique et ville historique. Tout en opérant un relevé du potentiel archivistique (qui devrait parvenir au Centre régional des Cantons de l'Est des Archives nationales du Québec), on sensibilise la population à son histoire et à son patrimoine.
- Un second projet s'ouvre en Abitibi-Temiscamingue, et plus particulièrement à Rouyn-Noranda. Sous la direction de l'Université du Québec, le projet consiste à recueillir des témoignages oraux sur des sujets précis de l'histoire économique, politique et sociale régionale, à les compiler et à établir une série d'émissions de radio qui tout en desservant la population locale pourrait également être utilisée pour des fins pédagogiques. C'est une première au Québec et les résultats de l'expérience devraient être opératoires en 1979.
- Don Murray, journaliste au réseau anglais de Radio Canada à Montréal, et Vera Murray, professeur de sciences politiques à l'Université du Québec à Montréal, ont complété une étude du Parti Libéral du Québec et le Parti Québécois au cours des dernières années. L'oeuvre, qui a été réalisée à partir d'une centaine d'entrevues avec les dirigeants et membres des deux formations politiques, présente des faits intéressants et nouveaux sur les relations entre Jean Lesage et René Lévesque durant la Révolution tranquille, le départ de René Lévesque du Parti libéral, la fin de Jean Lesage comme chef du Parti libéral, l'ascension et la chute de Robert Bourassa, les dessous de la crise d'octobre 1970 et la montée du Parti Québécois jusqu'à la prise du pouvoir. Les Editions Quinze à Montréal ont publié l'ouvrage sous le titre De Bourassa à Lévesque.
- Gary Lawless, a poet interested in story-telling and oral traditions, is working on a series of "readers", to be published yearly, concerning the Gulf of Maine, but hopefully later including Newfoundland and the Maritimes. The books approach the region as a cluster of bio/geo/ethnological entities, rather than as parts of nations with politically-imposed boundaries. The books also give an interdisciplinary view of cultures, rythms and cycles of the northeast coast of North America. The first reader in the series is entitled The Gulf of Maine and is available from Mr. Lawless. Another of Gary Lawless' projects is a book on the North Atlantic region, from Nova Scotia to Cape Cod, being edited for the Planet Drum Foundation in San Francisco. Anyone interested in obtaining copies of the readers or contributing articles for future publications can write to Gary Lawless at Box 186, Brunswick, Maine, 04011.

WORKSHOPS & CONFERENCES/ATELIERS & CONFÉRENCES

- An oral history workshop was held at the Nova Scotia Museum on April 14-15, 1978. Approximately forty persons were in attendance. Friday evening the keynote address was given by Mr. Hugh Taylor, Provincial Archivist who was unable to attend the workshop and sent a tape recording of his lecture instead. The following day was "work day" with sessions on taping techniques, role playing, practice interviews and a closing discussion on the ethics of oral history. Before the workshop closed, a standing committee consisting of the resource people (Kathy Kuusisto, Jim Morrison, Rockey Jones, David Sutherland, and Pam and Lou Collins) was established to provide a continuity of interest in oral history and to investigate the possibility of organizing a Maritime Oral History Association.

Generally the response to the workshop as shown by the evaluation sheets was very positive. About 80% of the participants felt they had learned what they had hoped to learn. The practice interviewing and evaluation of tapes was considered the most valuable aspect of the workshop. All who filled in the forms wrote that the instructors had done their jobs well and 75% wanted a return workshop. The length of this workshop was quite acceptable and 1½ days seems to be the most popular length. There was some repetition of the suggested topics for a return workshop. Many wanted more on interviewing and filing, etc. topics which were dealt with in the first session in November, 1977. About half of the participants stated that they would like to hear tapes from around the province and in addition would like to know how to organize a slide-tape presentation.

The information kits were acceptable and what some participants felt had been excluded was given in the November session. As mentioned the practice interviews were especially liked while two participants stated they disliked the Hugh Taylor tape. (This should provide them with a tantalizing taste of what the transcribing of oral history tapes will entail.)

As can be seen from the above, the workshop can be said to have been a success if the evaluations are taken as evidence. The beginnings of an oral history association have been made, and it would be wise to discuss at this point where oral history goes from here. Workshops can be held every six months for the uninitiated with standard topics being dealt with but the experienced will not come unless something more substantial is offered. Perhaps workshops in future will function at two levels simultaneously; introductory topics for the beginners and papers or tapes by those who have already done some interviewing. Both sections are important: one to maintain the growing interest and competence of experienced oral historians and the other to provide a methodology for the interested beginner. Both are vital for a continuing oral history program in Nova Scotia.

- The Atlantic Canada Institute included lectures on the use of oral history as part of its summer school held in Charlottetown from 10 to 28 July. Dr. Margaret Mackay Gerrard, Research Fellow at the School of Scottish Studies, Edinburgh University, gave the lectures on oral history. The lectures offered an introduction to oral tradition and oral history through examples of information about the past uniquely provided through personal reminiscences, family traditions, song and tales. Approaches to the collecting, processing and assessing of orally transmitted information were also presented. Finally, the lectures were illustrated with tape recordings made in Scotland and Canada by Dr. Gerrard, who has

been working since 1973 on the oral history and traditions of people who emigrated to Canada from the Hebridean Island of Tiree.

- The Toronto Area Archivists Group sponsored a conference on 26 October 1977; Christine Arderne (Archivist, Bank of Nova Scotia) organized it and was in the chair. In a panel discussion Jack Granatstein (History Department, York University, Ontario) opposed the use of oral history on the grounds that it produces large quantities of material to sift through and that individuals remember events idiosyncratically. He himself had worked on Conservative Party politicians in a project on the Diefenbaker period, but had obtained contradictory results. Moreover the material was now sealed for twenty-five years. Gordon Dodds (Archives of Ontario) pointed out the need to get beyond the elite to the gut-feeling of the ordinary man. The role of the archivists was to provide technical guidance and to store records; however, they appreciated collections in which a guiding motive created unity: Marten Lewis (Ontario Museum Association) urged the need for transcription and for commentary on the tape about the circumstances of the interview. He thought interviews were better sources of City history than reports of sanitary commissions etc. Mavis Waters (Social Science Division, York University, Ontario) explained the use being made of oral history in English universities, especially at Essex, and suggested that investigation of occupational groups as well as ethnic groups could well be applied in Toronto.

The conference was attended by representatives of a number of local historical societies and senior citizens' organizations; its main complement, however, was from the Multi-Cultural Historical Society of Ontario. This society has undertaken the investigation of the cultural history of some 20 different ethnic groups in Ontario, including the collection of diaries, records, etc. from the communities concerned.

Principally, however, they are taping interviews with 'people who can describe the early immigrant and settlement experiences of each ethno-cultural group' and have a research worker employed on this from each of the communities. Seven administrators and archivists are also employed, the whole project being financed from the proceeds of the Ontario Government lottery through the Ministry of Culture and Recreation. The project is headed by Professor Robert F. Harney.

- The Oral History Society in Great Britain held its annual conference at Bulmershe College of Higher Education, Reading, from 31 March to 2 April, 1978. The theme of the conference was Oral History and the Local Historian.

NEW ASSOCIATION/NOUVELLE ASSOCIATION

- The Oral History Association of Australia was formally launched on July 26th, 1978 with Peter Reeves and Jean Teasdale of the History Department at the University of Western Australia serving as President and Organizing Secretary respectively. There are Vice Presidents and committee members from all Australian states as well as an Executive Committee in Western Australia. The idea is to have a national association with an executive committee located in one State serving on a rotating basis for a number of years. In this way each State will have its turn for administering the affairs of the national association. The Association will encourage the recruitment of a wide membership by publishing a quarterly newsletter, and holding local seminars and workshops in addition to a national conference.

The first local workshop is being planned for early 1979 to be followed by a national, or perhaps even international, conference in August 1979. Early plans are to convene the August conference shortly following the International Conference on Indian Ocean Studies to be held in Western Australia. Further information on the Oral History Association of Australia can be obtained from Mrs. Jean Teasdale, History Department, University of Western Australia, Crawley, Western Australia, 6009.

RECORDING TECHNIQUES FOR ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS

The Sound Archives of the Public Archives of Canada has produced a demonstration tape on the techniques of recording oral history interviews. The tape, which runs for 16 minutes and 30 seconds, offers a basic introduction to oral history interviewing and illustrates some common technical problems encountered. This tape was auditioned at the workshop of the Oral History Association (U.S.A.) meetings in Ottawa during September, 1976, and is now available free of charge from the Public Archives of Canada. A french-language version is also available.

Persons requesting a copy of this tape should send the appropriate amount of blank tape (open reel tape or cassette of at least 30 minutes per side) to the Sound Archives Section, Public Archives of Canada, 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0N3, Canada.

LES TECHNIQUES D'ENREGISTREMENT DES ENTREVUES D'HISTOIRE ORALE

Le Service des Archives sonores aux Archives publiques du Canada a réalisé un documentaire démontrant les techniques de l'enregistrement d'entrevues d'histoire orale. La bande, d'une durée de 16 minutes 30 secondes, comporte une introduction à l'entrevue d'histoire orale et en illustre quelques problèmes techniques communs. On peut se la procurer gratuitement, dans la version française ou anglaise, en s'adressant aux Archives publiques du Canada.

Toute personne désirant une copie de ce document doit faire parvenir une bobine ou cassette vierge d'une durée d'au plus 30 minutes par piste au Service des Archives sonores, Archives publiques du Canada, 395, rue Wellington, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0N3, Canada.

SOUND ARCHIVES MANUAL

At the beginning of 1979, the Sound Archives Section of the Public Archives of Canada will re-issue the SOUND ARCHIVES MANUAL (previous title-Manual: Sound Archives). This will be the third edition of the MANUAL and it will contain new information on the description and indexing of sound recordings in the PAC. The sections on restrictions and preservation have also been revised to conform to current policies. The MANUAL is, of course, the basic working guide for the archivists in the Sound Archives but it has proved useful to researchers and other archivists who are thereby provided with an understanding of the methods and approach of the PAC.

INVENTORY OF MAIN HOLDINGS

In addition, the Sound Archives Section of the Public Archives of Canada is issuing the INVENTORY OF MAIN HOLDINGS in which researchers and archivists will find a brief description of the Section's holdings. These holdings come from governmental sources (departments, agencies, commissions of enquiry) and from individuals and private organizations (political parties, associations...). The INVENTORY also describes many oral history collections. For a quick reference, the INVENTORY offers a speaker-subject index.

To receive a free copy of both publications, please write to the following address: Public Archives of Canada, Information Services, 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0N3.

GUIDE DES ARCHIVES SONORES

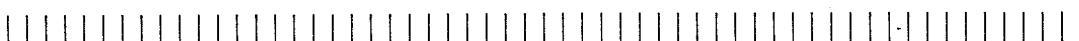
Le Service des Archives sonores aux Archives publiques du Canada prépare actuellement une réédition de son GUIDE DES ARCHIVES SONORES (ancien titre-Manuel: Archives sonores). Cette troisième édition de GUIDE, devant paraître dès le début de 1979, comportera de plus amples renseignements sur la préparation d'instruments de recherches, la communication de même que la conservation d'enregistrements sonores aux Archives publiques du Canada. Bien que le GUIDE soit l'outil de base des archivistes du Service des Archives sonores, il s'est avéré par le passé fort utile aux chercheurs et autres archivistes et continuera, nous croyons, de leur être d'un apport précieux.

RÉPERTOIRE SÉLECTIF

Le Service des Archives sonores aux Archives publiques du Canada annonce également la parution du REPERTOIRE SELECTIF dans lequel sont décrits sommairement les fonds d'archives sonores dont il est dépositaire. On y trouve des fonds provenant d'organismes gouvernementaux (ministères, agences et commissions d'enquêtes), et des fonds de particuliers et d'organismes publics et privés (partis politiques, stations de radio, sociétés...). Le REPERTOIRE comprend aussi plusieurs fonds constitués d'entrevues d'histoire orale. Un index vedettes-matières permet de consulter ce répertoire de façon rapide.

Toute personne intéressée peut se procurer un exemplaire gratuit de ces publications en écrivant à l'adresse suivante: Archives publiques du Canada, Services d'Information, 395, rue Wellington, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0N3.

publications



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