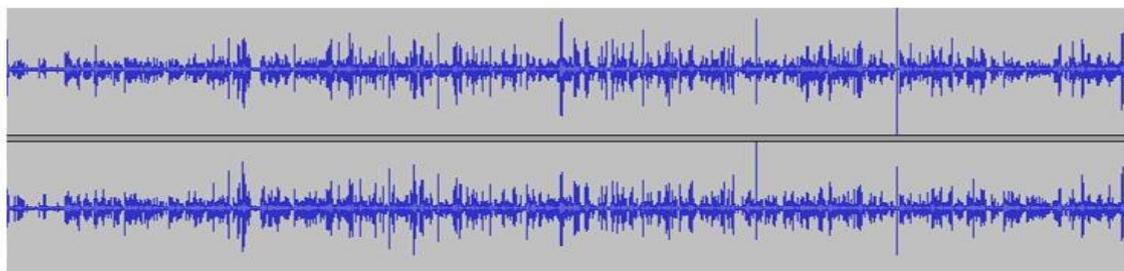




# VOICEPRINT 46 APRIL 2012



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Here is the second edition of Voiceprint on line. I hope you enjoy reading about what your fellow oral historians have been doing. As I meet some of you at our seminars and workshops, I am delighted to hear that there are lots of history recordings being made. I have no concern for the future of oral history, but I am concerned that Voiceprint does continue so members have a newsletter for their news and discussion of ideas.

I have been pleased to get Voiceprint established as an online publication, however the time is fast approaching when it is time to retire from what has been my 'retirement job'. I retired from teaching in 1996, so a little calculation and you will understand why I say it is time for retirement again. I hope someone will offer to help with the October edition and take over by 2013. I am happy to help them as they become established as editor. As it is now an online publication, a computer and an interest in oral history are all that is required. Must be someone out there in all of NSW.

**WANTED** – a member to take over the editorial duties for Voiceprint. This involves compiling a master copy twice a year to distribute in April and October. Copy needs to be obtained from members as well as written by the editor, and then collated with any appropriate photos and graphics into the newsletter. Details available from current editor, help and advise if needed for any willing volunteer interested in taking over. Please telephone 02 98808502 or email < [jcribb@iinet.net.au](mailto:jcribb@iinet.net.au) > to discuss this matter.

**Joyce Cribb Editor Voiceprint**

## **Welcome to New Members**

Welcome to our new members. We do hope you enjoy your contact with the Association and benefit from the programs offered.

Dush Preera Perer	Banker
Michelle Holton	Library Assistant
Mary-Jill Bellhouse	
Helen Fong	Community Historian
Leslie Marsh	Documentary Maker
Kassia Klinger	Student (Management)
Jane Miller	Teacher
Alec O'Halloran	Student/Biographer
Carolyn Roxburgh	Teacher
Nicholas Korner	English Teacher/Retired
Mary Anne Jebb	
George Hancock	Retired
Peter Barnard	Honorary Research Consultant
Fiona Firth	Student
Leanne Morton	Student
Mary Rees	Student
Merril Jackson	Student
Sandra Whitfield	Local Gov Admin
Dr. Shirleene Robinson	Academic
Neil Inall	Student
Anne Kruse	Writer/tour Guide
Kristof Mikes-Lui	Doctor
Louise Brooks	Tour Guide

## President's Report –

Easter 2012 . I'm writing this in Wagga Wagga where I have spent the day meeting many Blamey family members gathered here from all over Australia for a Family Reunion. Everyone has a story. Many have enjoyed meeting each other for the first time since they were children when relationships became severed through family fractures they knew nothing about. This has been a time to talk to each other and hear the stories first hand. Photos, documents and details of family tree research have been exchanged. And, as I find usually happens, many have commented "I wish I had talked to mother, father .... about their lives."

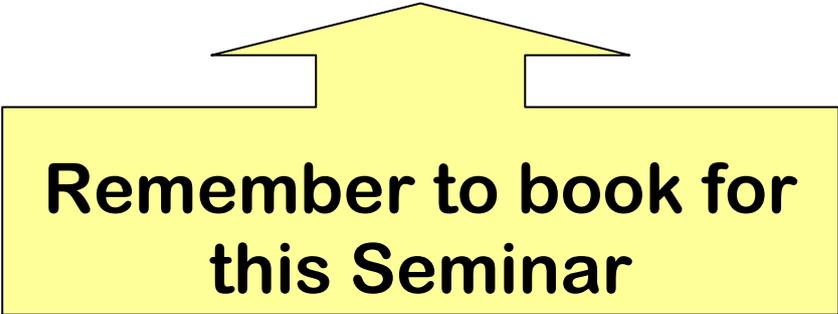
Just this last week I talked with two OHAA members about their interest in Oral History. One urgently wants to record her sister's voice before she loses it completely. Another takes CD's of her mother with her on long car trips so she can listen to her voice once again. My sister asked me to record her young grandchildren as a gift for her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. There is a richness of memory and authenticity that comes with a person telling their story in their own voice.

In preparation for our next seminar I did a survey of a number of Family History workshops available in Sydney over coming months (you will find a list of these in the April edition of Oral History Network News). All are excellent sources of knowledge and skills but none appear to cover capturing voices – the oral histories – of family.

So I urge you to come along to our next seminar at the *State Library* on Saturday May 12 *Using Oral History to Preserve your Family History*. Not only will you hear about Memory and Remembering from Dr. Janis Wilton, but three other Oral History Association members will speak about their experience of using oral history as part a family history;  
Di Ritch, who has played a leading role in intergenerational oral history projects;  
Michael Clarke's whose family history involved recorded interviews, letters, photos and much more;  
Laurel Wraight's work as an oral historian has centered around both recording and videoing family histories.  
I hope to see you there.

Sandra Blamey President

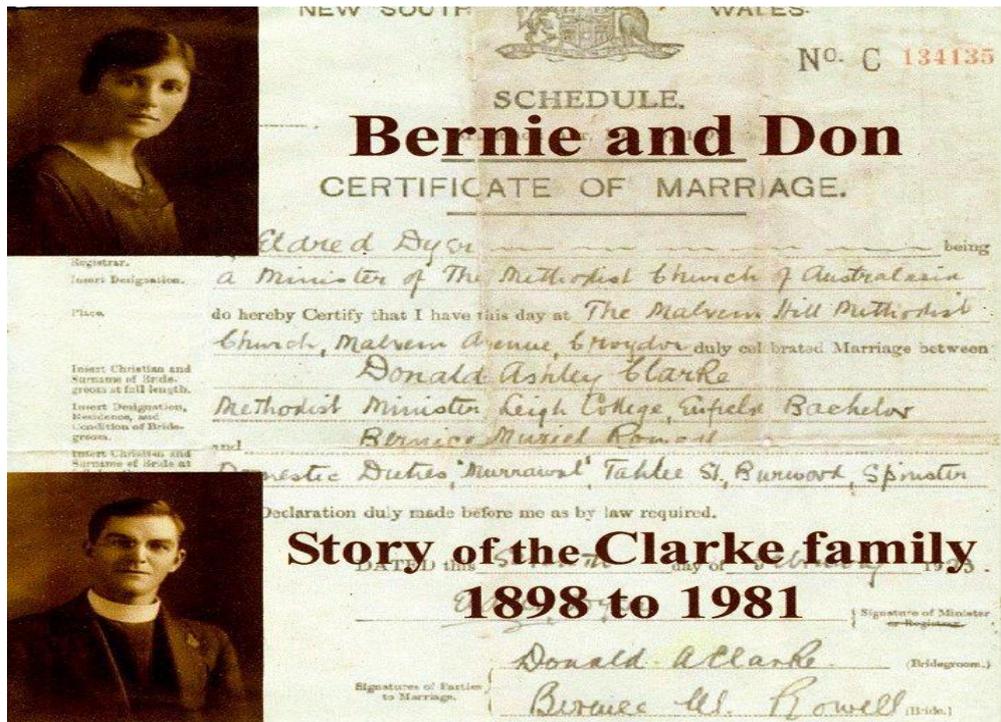
*Click here to link to more information about this seminar and registration form:*  
[www.ohaansw.org.au/article/using-oral-history-to-preserve-your-family-history-sat-12-may-dr-janis-wilton-plus-panel](http://www.ohaansw.org.au/article/using-oral-history-to-preserve-your-family-history-sat-12-may-dr-janis-wilton-plus-panel)



**Remember to book for  
this Seminar**

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Ann and Nikolai Imashev migrated to Australia in 1950 with three children and had an addition to the family. Read the full story on our website and hear sound bites from Anna speaking in her native tongue. Our member, George Imashev says it gives him much pleasure to listen once more to her voice. [www.ohaansw.org.au/p](http://www.ohaansw.org.au/p)



*This illustration is from the cover of the Story of the Clarke family Do come and hear Michael talk about recording family history*

## News From Your Association

### Sound bites needed on the 2012 History Week theme of threads

In 2011 members from the OHAA NSW branch submitted sound bites on last year's History Week theme – Eat History. These sound bites can still be listened to on the History Council website:

[www.historycouncilnsw.org.au/history-week/sound-bites](http://www.historycouncilnsw.org.au/history-week/sound-bites) The Oral History Association NSW is helping celebrate this year's History Week in 2012 and we hope that as many members as possible can contribute a sound bite about 1-3 minutes long on any topic whatsoever to do with Threads – clothing, fashion and so on. As well we would appreciate pictures and images to support the recording if you have them. If you have any trouble creating a sound bite from an extended oral history recording or would like to discuss / contribute to the project please contact Carol Mckirdy at: [carolmckirdy@hotmail.com](mailto:carolmckirdy@hotmail.com) . The deadline for the submission of sound bites for 2012 is Friday June 8, 2012.



#### History Week 2012, 8-16 September - *Threads*

They wore what?! Long before the fashionistas of today decided 'the look'; dress was an important element of human expression. From status to style, culture to professional identity, clothes have defined us. History Week 2012 will explore the history of threads and unpick the meaning behind the wardrobes of the past.

#### What is History Week?

History Week was initiated by the History Council of New South Wales (HCNSW) in 1997 to showcase the rich, diverse history being produced by organisations and individuals across the state. With over 150 events across NSW, History Week is about celebrating the best in community and professional history, highlighting its role in our cultural life and inviting people to get involved.

During History Week, community groups, local councils, libraries, archives, museums, universities, cultural institutions, professional and amateur historians across NSW open their doors to present the latest in today's historical research – fascinating stories, artifacts and experiences about both our past and ourselves today.

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**Remember to send in  
Your Sound bite**

## **OHAA NSW: LATEST UPDATE ON EQUIPMENT FEBRUARY, 2012.**

*Reviewed by Trish Levido*

*Members please note this information is for the general information of members.*

There have been changes in the recorders available since compiling for OHAA NSW the Comparative Test of Field Recording devices (OHAA NSW website) a year ago. There has also been a general lowering of the prices for recorders. Below are listed the various recorders which have been evaluated for OHAA members in February, 2012, starting from the lowest selling price. Prices below are from Turramurra Music, who offer OHAA members a discount on equipment. If you wish to purchase a recorder from Turramurra Music, please ask to speak to Adrian to secure your OHAA member discount.

- In the past, Zoom H1 retailed for approx. \$160 and we recommended purchasing the accessories kit for a further \$20. Currently, Turramurra Music is selling this for \$139 approx., including the accessories kit. This is an entry level recorder for those members wishing to do a limited number of recordings. It is not robust and for this price cannot be expected to provide years of satisfactory use. The H1 records in OHAA recommended 24bit 48kHz. mode. Very light in weight and easy to learn to use.
- The Roland R-05 sells for \$229 from Turramurra Music. The body is much more robust than the plastic body of the Zoom H1. It is also purported to be easy to learn to use. It uses normal sized SD cards versus the micro SDHC cards in the H1. Again, it records in recommended 24/48 mode.
- The more professional field recorders recommended by OHAA NSW are the Zoom H4N which ticks all the boxes including XLR input jacks for external microphones, and 'phantom' power (which means you don't need a battery in your external microphones as the power is supplied by the recorder as long as you are using XLR jacks on both ends of the cable) something cheaper field recorders don't offer. This sells at Turramurra Music for \$339.
- The next more professional recorder, the Roland R-26 is basically the same as the previously recommended Edirol R-09HR however, it is slightly bigger and it too now has XLR inputs offering 'phantom' power as well, with a large LCD touchscreen display with the added advantage that you can set the screen to stay lit for the recording, enabling you to easily monitor levels continuously. \$515 from Turramurra Music.
- For a top of the range professional field recorder the Fostex 2LE which records on Type II Compact Flash cards, broadcast wave format (BWF) stereo file format. It sells at Turramurra Music for \$699.

I recommend that you Google: You Tube videos to learn more about the various recorders listed above. There are hundreds of videos submitted from different sources, not just the manufacturers, talking about the pros and cons of each. These videos can take you through bringing home your recorder, right through to making a recording.

I would also like to recommend a web site which has tested various field recorders and microphones. The web site is: [www.wingfieldaudio.com](http://www.wingfieldaudio.com). It is a U.S. based company and has tested all three of our previously recommended recorders, Edirol R09HR, Zoom H1 and Zoom H4n and rated them. They include the test recordings for you to hear. In addition if you go into the back copies of their newsletter you can access further information. This is also an excellent site for learning more about the various recorders. Remember the prices on this site are in \$US and if you buy equipment from the US there are usually warranty issues and shipping costs.

For those members looking for a cheaper, good quality microphone, than our recommended Rode M3, (which sells for \$159), our recommendation is the CAD GXL 2200. This is a condenser microphone with a cardioid pattern and satisfies the recommended requirements of the Oral History Handbook. This microphone uses 'phantom power' only, as battery power is inadequate for this microphone. Please be aware that microphones can have different configurations of cable plugs. It is essential that the microphone and your recorder have compatible plugs. This microphone sells in Australia for \$79.95 including a 4.5 metre cable fitted with XLR jacks. Normally 1 metre long cables are sufficient for recorders to microphones. If you would prefer a shorter cable than the 4.5 metre cable supplied, please state this at the time of purchase. This price includes insured postage from Next Distribution Pty. Ltd. at Brookvale, Sydney, Telephone 9905 5997.

The quality of recording is significantly improved using external microphones because you are physically placing the microphone closer to the speaker's mouth, without having the whole recorder in someone's face. Ben Oakley, our 'one on one' teacher of OHAA recommended recorders, said that in listening to the recordings on the website quoted above, that the internal microphone samples only sound good because the whole unit was close to the source. Otherwise you would have heard a more open/roomier sound and not a direct vocal sound. For instance, Ben said that by listening to the recordings, using professional sound equipment, it is possible to discern that the Zoom H4n has a more even frequency range using external microphones.

*Trish has added an addendum with more information on microphones.*

For folk who purchase the Zoom H4n and choose to follow OHAA's recommendation for external microphones: Please ensure that the mics. have an XLR cable with male/female connector jacks on either end. This is vital! As it is only when you have the right (XLR) cables that you can access phantom power on the recorder! It makes such a difference because then you can control the input volume on THE RECORDER rather than having to move the microphones backwards and forwards depending on how comfortable your narrator is and their closeness or otherwise to the mics. For example, I have just finished an o.h. of an ex-politician - started off with him leaning as far back in his chair as possible, at the beginning of the oral history (obviously unsure and a bit resistant to this new form of questioning). However, by the end of 4 hours, he was almost EATING the microphone! It was only by me starting off with the input volume levels set at maximum (at the beginning) and then lowering them throughout the interview on the actual recorder, very easily done with one hand, that I could keep the input volume at the correct level and sooooo much better than having to move the actual microphone backwards, which would have been much more noticeable! If you purchase a 3.5mm cable you won't be able to use this facility on the Zoom H4n as it won't give you phantom power and you will also need batteries in the mics.

In addition, for those purchasing a Zoom H4n, you will probably find you have to purchase a tripod for the Zoom H4n, if you use external mics. as it is impossible to just stand the recorder up with the two microphones attached as they are inserted in the end, where you expect to stand the recorder. There is a female input in the centre of the back for the 'stick', supplied with the Zoom H4n, for use as a hand held microphone, but no tripod is supplied as part of the purchase price, hence the need to purchase one separately. *Thanks Trish.*

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### YIWARRA KUJU :THE CANNING STOCK ROUTE



**Dr John Carty**

About 30 members attended the Australian Museum on Sat 31st March to see, hear and experience this stunning exhibition. What a fantastic day it was with oral history playing such an essential part to tell the story of the development of the stock route and of the effect on the Aboriginal people who live in the remote communities along the way. Their lives, land and water were disrupted and changed by this development. I was quite overwhelmed by this exhibition. The fabulous paintings told one story, a triumph in 97 vibrant colourful modern paintings; the voices of the Aboriginal people including many of the artist interpreting the story illustrated by their paintings; the co-curator Dr John

Carty told us of his long involvement with the Aboriginal artists and people who have such a deep spiritual connection with this region, assisting them in many ways from being the tea maker, stretching canvasses onto frames, recording oral historian, to ensuring that the appropriate permission processes were carried out; and the Museum's Indigenous Educator, Jimmy Smith who told us more of the harsh reality of the effect this and other developments have had on Aboriginal people.

The art is so bright and colourful, so contemporary, an absolute feast for the eyes. The photographs and voices from the other displays reflected such hardship and a destructive time in our history. I cannot look at Aboriginal men in chains with any positive view of history – but it is through oral history that all our history is brought to light with its many shades of meaning for the people involved and those who remember and those who only know of it because the story has been handed down.

The museum also had something that was new to me, a 'hands-on' multi media table. At first I backed away as a snake came across it towards me, but the snake moves on, and it is such fun to change the pictures, make the little video stories play, catch the ants and make it all seem alive! So much real information presented in a way that if you are only four it is great fun! Add 70 years and it is still fun but you get a history lesson too!

The disappointment of the day was that more of our members did not have this marvelous experience to see how oral history can be used. The display will still be in the museum until 29<sup>th</sup> April. I am sure you will find a visit worthwhile. The positive thing is that the National Museum in Canberra owns the paintings so they will be available to be seen in the future.

This is an exhibition that has used oral history to advantage and is a marvelous display that fulfills our definition of how widely oral history may be used. Just to remind you I include the definition of how oral history may be used from our website. Our committee member Frances Rush worked so hard in negotiating with the museum and arranging with Dr John Carty to come from Canberra and tell us all of his work in gathering the oral histories and assisting the artists to do their paintings. Our president Sandra Blamey was, as always, busy with the administration. Thank you to all. See the exhibition if you possibly can and take your grandchildren. Joyce Cribb

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## How may Oral History be used?

- for the life histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other groups who may be poorly represented in written sources
- to trace the history of a local community
- for family history
- to encourage children to treat people as living history books, at the same time increasing understanding between generations
- for research purposes in tertiary education studies
- in corporate and institutional histories
- in museums to enliven displays
- in publications to capture reader's imaginations
- in radio, television and plays to promote authentic voices of the past
- for interactive displays on websites

## BEYOND TESTIMONY and TRAUMA Conference Concordia University Montreal Canada March 22-25, 2012

The Beyond Testimony and Trauma international conference was organised by Concordia University's Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling <http://storytelling.concordia.ca/>, the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies and the Montreal Life Stories Project.

My paper about the oral history project I conducted and which was launched in Refugee Week in 2011 called *Sudanese People in the Sutherland Shire, a Moving Community*

<http://oralhistory.sydneyinstitute.wikispaces.net/Sudanese+people+in+the+Sutherland+Shire+-+a+moving+community%2C+oral+history+project> was one among over 70 papers from around the world. There were three Australian presenters, myself, representing GyMEA and Community Aid & Information Services, Annie Pohlman from The University of Queensland (*The risks of Telling Stories about Torture in Indonesia*) and Jill Stockwell from the Institute of Social Research at Swinburne University (*Emotions, Deep Memory and Haunting – their role in sustaining entrenched ideological and political divisions in Argentina*). The conference also featured workshops, performances based on oral history, screenings and speaker events, many of which were open to the general public.

The entire conference featured simultaneous translation between French and English so each day participants who spoke only English or French (I can't speak French) set themselves up with headphones and digital translation machines that were very effective and easy to use. In the first session I kept turning around (and I noticed other participants looking around as well) to find the rude person constantly speaking during conference proceedings until I realised it was the translator in the sound booth!

The general tone of the conference was highly academic. Most sessions had four speakers and were run concurrently with another four papers;

for all the papers I attended the focus was entirely on the end result of an oral history project, its ramifications with little or none of the practicalities of oral history practice. The conference started each day at 8am! (Sunday 8:30) and went through to the evening so there was ample opportunity to be inspired and learn and the total registration cost was a tiny \$20 Canadian.

Attending this conference was a great honour and I was especially pleased to present the histories of the Sutherland Shire Sudanese people and those who worked with them that I interviewed. Mixing with and learning from other oral historians was, as usual, very enjoyable. The only thing I didn't like about the conference was that the majority of presenters sat and read their papers aloud. I found this difficult because the content of all the papers was complex, often based on multifaceted political situations and historical events from the past and from many different countries. I enjoyed most the papers that included the presenter speaking to the audience, images, interviewee voices, maps and brief dot points that allowed the listener to engage with the presentation. Montreal is a beautiful, sophisticated city and this added to the overall value of attending the conference.

Carol McKirdy

The Seminar held at the library on 5<sup>th</sup> November last was very successful with a large and interested attendance. The seminar was recorded so hope those who were not able to attend listened when it was up on line. We are indeed in a new age with so much available on line. Do keep looking at our web site as well as international ones to catch up on what is available. I am sure some of you will have registered for the IOHA journal *Words and Silences* that is now available at:

<http://wordsandsilences.org/>

<http://www.iohanet.org/journal/guidelines.html>

Deadline 30 May 2012 for manuscripts to this journal.

Our Digital Workshop on 18<sup>th</sup> February was a sellout. Trish Levido and Carol McKirdy our expert presenters will repeat the workshop for those who missed out. Watch Network News for information on coming events.

#### Discussion Group

Frances Rush has undertaken to arrange small discussion groups of members (no more than 10) to meet. Members interested will have opportunity to discuss questions they have relating to their projects and seek ideas and suggestions from colleagues. There will also be opportunity to present a short 5 minute example from their work for peer review. The first group met on 25<sup>th</sup> February. They had a fruitful afternoon. Frances has arranged for another meeting 19<sup>th</sup> May. This project is on trial for this year, with the hope such groups may become a permanent feature in OHHA's program. It is a great opportunity to meet with other members to talk over ideas and problems. If interested in attending on 19<sup>th</sup> May or a future date - email Frances at

[francesrush@optusnet.com.au](mailto:francesrush@optusnet.com.au).

**Do search the web for oral history information. [Top](#)**

## More on Copyright

Your association has had some Conversations with Geoff Speirs, a professional historian from the South Australian Professional Historians Association. Geoff has discussed the question of copyright when articles are published on their Website. The South Australian association is allowing the authors the right to retain copyright, while as far as is possible allowing visitors to the Website to use the material provided they don't use it for commercial purposes, or remix, tweak or modify the work, and that they acknowledge the author. This policy is based on the Licensing Agreements in the Creative Commons

Website - [www.creativecommons.org](http://www.creativecommons.org) an organization based in Massachusetts, USA.

If members visit the website they will find that six Creative Commons licences have been developed, and details of all the licences. Geoff has given us permission to publish the policy that he has developed for the SA. PHA. We include Geoff's policy here as an example of how copyright may be defined when publishing on the web. Members should understand this is an example only and they will need to address the issue of copyright in relation to their own projects.

**Website – Copyright** *(policy developed for South Australian Professional Historians Association by Geoff Speirs)*

### **Authors**

#### **Sole Copyright owner**

Contributors of articles to the PHA (SA) Website must be members of PHA (SA). In your role as contributor we are assuming that you are the sole owner of copyright to the article submitted to our Editors for publication on the Website. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have copyright, as well as any approvals required from clients, before you submit the article. Ditto any photographs or illustrations accompanying the article.

#### **Editorial Changes**

The Editors may make minor changes to grammatical construction, punctuation and citations to ensure that the format of the article is consistent with the house style. We may also edit the article for reasons of legality, length or accuracy but we will not make changes that significantly alter its substantive content.

#### **Indemnity**

You indemnify members of PHA (SA) against all loss, damage and expense incurred or suffered directly or indirectly by them as a result of our publishing your article.

## **Users**

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## **See Voiceprint 45**

## **for article on copyright details**

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## Member's Projects

I have been assisting **Dr Jane Elix** on an ARC funded project **Women and Leadership in a century of Australian Democracy** – please see the template of the letter sent to interviewees by way of outlining the project.

Although not strictly oral history, the interview write-ups on Jane's blog do include some audio of the women she has interviewed for the environment movement and consumer movement sections of the project. I thought that your readers might be interested in reading some of the interviews and engaging in discussions around them. The blog can be found at: <http://janeelix.wordpress.com/>

Unfortunately Jane Elix is presently undergoing treatment for a serious illness so any enquiries about the project should be directed to either myself or **Dr Judy Lambert** who has undertaken the task of finishing Jane's work: [judy@communitysolutions.com.au](mailto:judy@communitysolutions.com.au)

I think Jane's work in this area is a valuable historical record of some contributions to the fabric of Australian society in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beyond and therefore a valuable resource to be disseminated and used.  
**Heather Pearce**

### **Ben Morris reports:-**

My many apologies for not answering this email earlier but as you said "there is a lot of paddling along on your own out there". I would love to get some discussion started on military oral history

My project has involved collecting thirty-four oral histories of soldiers and officers who were serving during the period January 1967 to June 1968. Nineteen narrators were members of the same platoon (2PL) of A Company of the Second Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment (2RAR).

I have cross-referenced this material against war dairies, official histories and other official documents. The soldiers' recollections have followed the general contours of the Commander's Diary. The 'commanders' dairies' are akin to a boat's log and give basic information like time, location and a brief summary of events.

The soldiers' recollections tally with the commander's diary but do conflict with official histories with much of their history unreported. Anyone can contact me on email – [taxmaster\\_1@yahoo.com](mailto:taxmaster_1@yahoo.com)

*(Anyone out there who is interested in military history. Do get in touch with Ben and he also has some interesting contacts in other countries. Ed)*

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## **Realising my wildest dream!**

Have you ever had your wildest dream come true?

I was lucky enough to see my dream come true when one of my clients asked me to fly to Belfast in Northern Ireland to interview the rest of her family last year. As well as the experience being a highlight of my career it was also unbelievably exciting for me, someone whose greatest passion is to capture precious family stories for future generations.

The overseas gig was my third commission from a client whose parents I had interviewed in 2003, not long after I established my documentary making business, Sound Memories. The original interview was with Deirdre O'Donnell's father, Sean, a Belfast lad who paid ten pounds to sail to our country as part of the Australian Government's assisted passage program. I also interviewed Margaret, Sean's Australian wife. Both individuals had fascinating stories that brought some of the big world events to life for me. Margaret O'Donnell, nee Caulfield was a descendent of the Judge, Sir Redmond Barry who sentenced Ned Kelly to death. Sean's dad, Francis O'Donnell was a policeman who attended the launch of the Titanic and the Easter Uprising in Dublin.

Last year, Ms O'Donnell's aunt, Annie O'Donnell's plans to fly to Australia for a holiday in February, prompted Deirdre to ask me to produce a documentary about Annie's life as a film producer in Canada, the United States and Australia. When Deirdre hand delivered Annie's documentary to her aunts and uncles in Belfast a few months later the stories prompted an outpouring of other evocative yarns from the rest of the clan.

When my client returned to Australia she asked me to fly to Belfast to record more of the family's stories. Not having to be asked twice I popped on a plane and had the joyous task of interviewing Father Páidí, a ninety-seven year old priest who had photos of him with President John F Kennedy and President Clinton during Belfast peace talks. I also interviewed Father Páidí's sisters, Kitty, Peggy, Deirdre and Annie who had an amazing story about the seven hours they sat under the dining room table during the Belfast Blitz, when the Germans bombed Northern Ireland in World War II.

The excitement didn't end when I returned to Sydney as I then interviewed the next generation of O'Donnells, Deirdre, my client and her brother Brian and their dad, Sean about their close connection with the extended and far flung family clan. These interviews were stimulating but I still had a dilemma. I asked my client if she knew of any versions of O'Donnell Abu, her clan's traditional fighting song that her uncle, Father Páidí had sung during his interview. As luck would have it Sean O'Donnell still had a reel-to-reel tape that he had used to record his dear Dad, Francis and his Australian and Irish family singing this song in Belfast in 1964! Luckily the music was retrievable and I used it in the documentary, "Tales from the Black Book...stories from three generations of the O'Donnell clan". My client kept the news secret that her grandfather could also be heard in the documentary. When the Belfast family were sent the CDS for Christmas they couldn't believe their ears when they heard their departed dad's voice booming from their compact disc players!

So not only do wild dreams come true but armed with a digital recorder, some great family stories, who knows what will eventuate...I certainly didn't!  
Louise Darmody - Sound Memories

Email: [louised@bigpond.net.au](mailto:louised@bigpond.net.au)

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## Members' Ideas and Suggestions

*(Trish Levido has passed on these questions from Dan Curtis. What do members think? Would you use all these questions? Some I think quite confronting. Love to have some comments please. Ed)*

For some time now I have been receiving updates from Dan Curtis, a Personal Professional Historian. Dan is based in British Columbia, Canada and writes a weekly newsletter for other personal historians. Dan's website is: <http://.dancurtis.ca/2011/01/26/the-best-50-life-story-questions/> and he is happy for others to use his questions.

### 50 of Life's Best Questions.

1. If you could do one thing over in your life, what would it be?
2. What makes you happy?
3. Looking back on your life, what do you regret?
4. What do you believe to be true?
5. What is the secret to a happy life?
6. What do you believe happens to us after we die?
7. Who's had the greatest influence on your life and why?
8. What are the qualities that you admire in your friends?
9. What is the hardest thing you've ever had to do?
10. How would you describe yourself?
11. If you could meet anyone in the world, who would it be and why?
12. What's important in your life?
13. If you had a million dollars, what would you do with it?
14. What's a secret ambition of yours?
15. Who in your life would you like to thank and for what?
16. What principles have guided your life?
17. Where do you find serenity?
18. What makes you sad?
19. What's the most important lesson you've learned in your life?
20. How would you like to be remembered?
21. If you had only one day to live, how would you live it?
22. How would you describe your spiritual beliefs?
23. Who is the most important person in your life today and why?
24. What was the worst job you ever had and why was it so bad?
25. What's your idea of a good time?
26. What's wrong with the world?
27. What's one big question you'd like answered?
28. What is it that you absolutely couldn't live without?
29. How would you describe yourself as a child?
30. What's the greatest gift you could give to someone you love?
31. What does love mean to you?
32. What was the best job you ever had and why was it the best?
33. If you had to evacuate your home immediately and could take only one thing, what would it be and why?
34. What do you still want to accomplish?
35. What's right with the world?
36. What's one thing you'd like to change about yourself?
37. How would you describe your perfect day?
38. What event in your life would you like to live over and why?

39. What are you avoiding?
40. What are your best qualities?
41. What's the most romantic thing you've done for someone?
42. Who are your heroes and why?
43. What are your failings?
44. What's the kindest thing you've done for someone?
45. What is more important to you, challenge or comfort and why?
46. How is your home like you?
47. If your life were a motion picture, what would the title be?
48. Who in your life would you like to forgive and for what?
49. What are the advantages of getting older?
50. What would you place in a time capsule that would tell a relative one hundred years from now who you were?

## Memory Jar

Annie Payne is a professional personal historian and family story keeper who lives in Adelaide.

*(Annie told us some time ago about the meetings she conducted over a cup of coffee when she was assisting oral historians in Perth. She is now based in Adelaide and you can find about her work at her website.)*

[www.historyfromtheheart.com.au](http://www.historyfromtheheart.com.au) Her work is different to both oral history and genealogy, as she teaches people how to gather, organise and preserve their family or personal stories as a heritage legacy for their family.

As we are coming up to Mother's Day, Annie suggests as a lasting gift this Mother's Day, you present her with a Memory Jar. This Memory Jar is a low cost, high impact gift for all mothers of any age, which anyone can make. Recording her story is something we think about doing, but when to find the time to do it? So this year, why not give her a Memory Jar as a lasting gift from her to you, which you will become a lasting legacy.



### So here is how you create a Memory Jar:

Take a clean jar with a lid (like a coffee jar); Purchase some ribbon in Mum's favourite colour and a loose leaved notebook and a pen.

Set aside an hour or two of free undisturbed time. Sit down with a pen and pad and something to drink. Think of a list of questions for Mum, preferably about things you don't know about her, to answer. Write the question down on the pad and when your list is finished, cut them into strips (a question on each paper strip).

**Fold them in half and place the pieces of paper into the jar. Put the lid on the jar and tie the ribbon round it. On the cover of the notebook, write 'Mum's Memory Jar, 2012' and attach a pen to the notebook.**

**On Mother's Day, give the Memory Jar, notebook and pen to your Mum and ask if she would spend 10 minutes a day/week/month selecting a question from the jar, sticking it onto a new page in the notebook and writing her response to your question down in the book.**

**(Another tip is to attach each question to a special tea bag, using a paper clip, or perhaps Mum's favourite sweet or chocolate, all crammed into the jar. This may encourage her to sit down and enjoy a special reward as she wanders down memory lane, pen in hand, to answer each question.**

**Here are some suggested questions:**

**When/where did you meet Dad and what was your first impression of him?**

**What was the best time of your life and why?**

**Describe your childhood home. Take me on an imaginary walk through it.**

**What dish are you 'famous' for and can you write down the recipe please?**

**What is your most pleasant childhood memory?**

**If you were able to go back in time, what would you do differently at 21.**

**What is the most important lesson you have learned in your life?**

**Once you have received the notebook back with the questions answered, use these as the basis for a memoir type of format, which can either be the entry to even more questions or else as part of a photo album or scrap book or memorabilia. There are many ways this can be used. Imagine how valuable this would be, to you, if you were holding your great grandmother's answer to your questions? Do this before it is too late.**

## **Transcribing has its Moments**

**Since beginning years ago transcribing (sometimes difficult) interviews in broken English i.e. making phonetic stabs at words in 'language' such as Sanskrit, Hebrew, etc which hugely amuses the client, when not quite getting there!**

**Using short cuts for commonly used words or phrases is essential to save time (and money). ie. typing in shorthand, but sometimes I've doubled up and when proofing the work find, for instance, (itm 'in the meantime') reads as International Teachers Membership – or something like that, so back to 'auto-correct' - throw in a different entry, and delete the other.**

**Over the years I've created 100's of short cuts and often wonder why they're so easily recalled, when unable (sometimes) to remember what I did five minutes ago? Gabrielle Godard.**

## **Moments too in written language**

**Sometimes it is not always easy to translate the written words! Miss Seven's letter, who, as her Mother explained wrote it all on her own, needs a little translation. It seems she 'had a nis time larst weec and I sore my cusin.' And she also added a 'picher'. Perhaps a voice recording would be easier! Off to see her next week. Will not bother with spelling lessons! Joyce Cribb**

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## Coming Events

### Helsinki Conference

Call for papers - Private and Public Memories - Helsinki, 29–30 November 2012

Papers are invited for contributions to the fourth international symposium of the Finnish Oral History Network Private and Public Memories hosted by the Finnish Literature Society in collaboration with the Academy of Finland project Strangers from the East (2009-2012). Our intention is to stimulate discussion and bring together scholars from various fields interested in private and public memories. The invited speakers include Paula Hamilton (Australian Centre for Public History, University of Technology Sydney), Daniela Koleva (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski), Kirsti Salmi-Niklander (University of Helsinki) and Vieda Skultans (University of Bristol). Proposals will be evaluated according to their focus on the topic. Please e-mail your proposal as an e-mail attachment by 25 May 2012 to [fohn@finlit.fi](mailto:fohn@finlit.fi). The acceptance or rejection of proposals will be announced by 15 June 2012. For more information see

<http://agricola.utu.fi/nyt/pyynnot/index.php?ilmoitus=543>

*Look forward to Paula's report. Ed.*

**See Network News for details to book for these events.**

28<sup>th</sup> April - *Capturing Memories: Oral History in the Digital Age*

12<sup>th</sup> May - *Using Oral History to Preserve your Family History*

**Discussion Group** : 19th May - contact Frances Rush for details

<mailto:francesrush@optusnet.com.au>

**History Week 8 -16 September 2012** (OHHA Sound bites and other interesting activities for those interest in our history.)

See the new IOHA Journal *Words and Silences* - register for your online copy. Details too, if you wish to contribute.

<http://wordsandsilences.org/>

<http://www.iohanet.org/journal/guidelines.html>

**All details of coming events and how to book are listed in Network News.**

**Remember to search our website too.**

[www.ohaansw.org.au](http://www.ohaansw.org.au)

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*The end. Hope you have enjoyed Voiceprint 46.  
Thank you to all those who have contributed. Ed.*

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