

FINDING MR. CHEATHAM: Searching for and Collecting Oral Histories

Genealogical Society of Collier County--14 April 2015

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SOURCES/RESOURCES

LEARN: Check your state historical society for oral history workshops or events:

Jeff D. Corrigan, The State Historical Society of Missouri <http://shs.umsystem.edu>

Sources from Corrigan's oral history workshop:

→ **Baylor University Institute for Oral History**, *Introduction to Oral History*

<http://www.baylor.edu/oralhistory/index.php?id=23566>

→ **Oral History Association**, *General Principles for Oral History and Best Practices for Oral History* <http://www.oralhistory.org/about/principles-and-practices/>

EQUIPMENT:

→ *Oral History in the Digital Age*, Institute of Museum and Library Services/Michigan State University...

<http://www.oralhistory.org/oral-history-in-the-digital-age/>

Doug Boyd, *Audio or Video for Recording Oral History: Questions, Decisions*

<http://ohda.matrix.msu.edu/2012/06/audio-or-video-for-recording-oral-history/>

Digital Audio Field Recording Equipment Guide, Vermont Folklife Center—Equipment reviews, online and print sources

http://www.vermontfolklifecenter.org/archive/res_audioequip.htm#ix

Nunn Center, Video reviews of audio recording equipment

<https://www.youtube.com/nunncenter>

ONLINE: GUIDES, ORAL HISTORIES/COLLECTIONS

→ *Oral History Online*, **History Matters** (George Mason University/CUNY American Society History Project)--Exemplary Oral History Sites, Oral History Guides, Tips for Evaluating Oral History Online

<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/mse/oral/online.html#tips>

Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky – Oral histories by topic

<http://www.kentuckyoralhistory.org/>

Southern Oral History Program— Center for the Study of the American South,

University of North Carolina: *10 Tips for Interviewers, Principles and Best Practices*, and more

<http://sohp.org/resources-2/>

Oral History Centers and Collections, H-Oralhist

<https://networks.h-net.org/node/16738/pages/16741/oral-history-centers-and-collections>

CONSENT, COLLECTING FORMS

Indiana University Center for the Study of History and Memory (See *Forms-- Informed Consent* on left)

<http://www.indiana.edu/~cshm/>

→ **Veterans History Project Fieldkit** 2008 (16 pp) – PDF includes forms for consent, collecting information <http://www.loc.gov/vets/pdf/fieldkit-2008.pdf>

MEMOIR GUIDELINES

Smithsonian Folklife and Oral History Interviewing Guide (35 pp)—See *Resources* menu (on left)

http://www.folklife.si.edu/education_exhibits/resources/guide/introduction.aspx

VHP Memoir Guidelines (1 p PDF) <http://www.loc.gov/vets/pdf/memoirguidelines.pdf>

Oral History Interview, Questions and Topics, JewishGen – for Life Interviews

<http://www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/Quest.html>

WHAT TO ASK in an ORAL HISTORY interview?

ALWAYS ASK A QUESTION
ASK **OPEN-ENDED** QUESTIONS, **THEN** GO AFTER THE **DETAILS**

NO YES/NO QUESTIONS
NOT: *Do you remember...?*

NO LEADING OR JUDGEMENTAL QUESTIONS
NOT: *Don't you think you should have...?*

FOLLOW UP ON DETAILS AND BOMBSHELLS
"She was Homecoming Queen." → *Can you tell me more about that?*
"He died in the local insane asylum." → *What do you know about that story?*

What do you remember about....?

What do you know about?

What did you feel about...?

What was like?

What was it like to...?

What were you doing...?

What do you remember seeing/hearing/touching/smelling when you?

What did (that) taste like? How did (that) sound?

What is your earliest memory of...?

What did you learn from...?

What surprised you about...?

What would you want people to know/remember about...?

What would you want people to know/remember about you?

How did you feel about....?

Who was with you when this happened?

Who else was involved in...?

Who did you talk to about...?

Where were you when...?

Where did that story come from?

Why did you/he/they...?

Why do you think they...?

Can you tell me about...

Can you tell me about this (photo, picture, item, ...)?

Can you tell me more about this (photo, picture, item,...)?

Can you explain...?

ALWAYS ASK:

Is there anything more you'd like to add? Is there anything you didn't talk about?