



*Serving those who are interested in methods and techniques of the oral history process as a means of preserving unique memory of people, places, events and ideas*

## **MOHA Forum: What's Happening in Oral History in the State of Michigan?**

Saturday, November 7, 2015  
10:30 am - 1:30 pm  
Delta Township District Library  
5130 Davenport Dr., Lansing

The Michigan Oral History Association will be hosting a forum on **recent projects and activities in Oral History from around the state**. There will be both official reports from MOHA members as well as an open discussion. The Forum is **free** and a box lunch will be included.

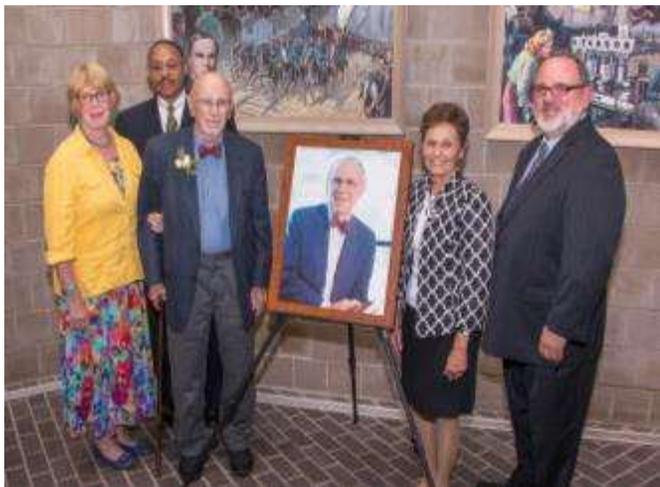
Participants are asked to **register by November 4th**.

**To register**, email [gwiseke@arq.net](mailto:gwiseke@arq.net) or visit our website at <http://www.michiganoha.org/> or [Click Here](#).

*See Page 8 for scheduled presentations.*



*MOHA Board member Donna Odom talks about student oral history projects with Saginaw Valley State University Professor Brad Jarvis at the annual conference of the Historical Society of Michigan in September.*



*Tribute to Dr. Philip P. Mason, Founding Director of the Walter P. Reuther Library, WSU.*

*Unveiling portrait with Dr. Mason's wife Marcia, Gary Pollard, Chair, Board of Directors, Dr. Mason, Sandra Lee, Dean, WSU Library System, and Erik Nordberg, Dir., Reuther Library. More on Tribute Page 3.*

## **MOHA 2015 Strategic Plan**

Progress – with a strategic initiative to identify and create the best ways to utilize resources, and to reach those who would benefit from sharing of expertise on oral histories: that is the purpose of the MOHA Board of Directors' recent work to organize around planned goals.

The MOHA Board of Directors approved the formation of a revitalization committee that will examine and propose new approaches for managing and sustaining the organization.

The goal is to make improvements toward more effective and efficient operations that best serve its members and the ongoing advancement of oral history. A set of recommendations will be provided for board review with the ultimate goal to establish a strategic plan that outlines the priorities, changes, and best practices for operating a healthier organization in the 21st century.

*See Page 5 for full committee work.*

## About the Michigan Oral History

### **Mission**

The mission of the Michigan Oral History Association (MOHA) is to provide for effective cooperation and communication among persons, programs, and institutions concerned with the techniques, uses, and promotion of oral history in Michigan. Based on the foundation of the Michigan Oral History Council organized in 1979, the name of the non-profit corporation was changed to Michigan Oral History Association in 1994.

### **Who We Are**

MOHA serves people who are interested in methods and techniques of the oral history process as a means of preserving unique memory of people, places, events and ideas. It promotes and educates about oral history as a resource for capturing on electronic media attitudes and emotions not otherwise preserved. The pool of presenters includes experienced oral history practitioners, archivists, database managers, video producers, authors, professional transcribers, journalists and teachers. Presenters participate in history-related conference sessions, conduct workshops, and serve as facilitators for state and regional forums. They contribute their energy and expertise without pay.

**Complimentary Mailings** are exchanged with history-related organizations, editors, and representatives of other state/regional oral history organizations.

**Attendees at MOHA sponsored events and workshops** are entered on the mailing list for one year and one month from date of contact and receive all mailings that paid members receive.

### **Request a Workshop**

Each workshop is designed to meet the specific needs of the audience. For help planning a workshop, contact Geneva Kebler Wiskemann at [gwiskemann@arq.net](mailto:gwiskemann@arq.net) or (517) 321-1746.

***"Wonderful conference. Wish I had known about it years before."***

### **Become a Member!**

As a member, you will receive:

- The MOHA Newsletter
- Mentoring and assistance with your oral history project
- Opportunities to participate in local and statewide conferences and workshops
- News of MOHA publications and other related resources
- Updates on oral history innovations and current projects in the state
- Opportunity to join a MOHA committee

### **Membership Dues:**

Individual:	\$25
Institutional:	\$50
Patron:	\$50
Sponsor:	\$100
Student:	\$15

*Send to: MOHA,  
5580 W. State Rd.,  
Lansing MI 48906-9325.*

### **How Can MOHA Help You?**

Beginning oral historians can attend workshops, receive oral history manuals, and find advice and resources from the professional oral historians in MOHA. Experienced oral historians can benefit by meeting others who may have similar problems, obstacles, and opportunities. Established or in-progress oral history projects can benefit from MOHA's ability to promote and publicize projects. Through mutual efforts, we can improve the quality and quantity of oral histories in our state.

**An Afternoon with Reuther  
Library Founding Director,  
Dr. Philip P. Mason**

Honorary Life Member of MOHA

“The name Dr. Philip Mason is synonymous with the history of the Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University (WSU). Likewise, his work as a prolific historian, archival educator, and force within the archival profession speaks to his love for providing historical resources that make their way into books, articles, dissertations and documentaries.”

So begins the tribute to Phil Mason held August 27, 2015 at WSU. He is also Honorary Life Member of the Michigan Oral History Association “in recognition for his support of our mission to provide a forum and educate for excellence,” notes MOHA secretary Geneva Kebler Wiskemann, who preserves the history of MOHA. “Throughout the years, he included representatives of MOHA (late Council) as presenters for the classes in oral history that he initiated at Wayne State University, and on state and national conference programs. During the beginning of oral history in Michigan and throughout the years of growth and refinement, he has been a mentor.” Members of MOHA attended the celebration.

Further in the WSU tribute, “he established the Labor History Archives at Wayne State, with the first major acquisition comprising the records of the UAW followed by those of other unions. Under Dr. Mason’s leadership, the archives expanded from the basement of the Purdy-Kresge Library to the Walter P. Reuther Library in 1975, followed



*Phil Mason, Katherine Roe, Archivist of New York State and a graduate of Phil’s oral history program at WSU, and Geneva Kebler Wiskemann, founder of the Michigan Oral History Council (parent title of MOHA) and former MOHA President. (Photos by MJ Murawka, WSU)*

by the addition of the Leonard Woodcock Wing in 1990, both with generous funding from the UAW. He expanded the scope of the Archives, considered by many the premier labor archives in the United States, to include the collection of papers and records connected with the historical development of metropolitan Detroit. This resulted in a title change to the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs. Dr. Mason served as president of the Society of American Archivists from 1970-1971.

“During his career, he established one of the first archival education programs in the country and helped to found the Michigan Archival Association and the Midwest Archives Conference. He also established the North American Labor History Conference ...and helped to establish the Great Lakes Book Series within the Wayne State University Press.”

Dr. Mason retired in 1992 as Distinguished Professor Emeritus and continues to pursue history-based projects.

## Preservation Through Digitization

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### *MotorCities supports preservation at Vincent Voice Library*

With the help of a grant from MotorCities National Heritage Area, a non-profit dedicated to auto and labor preservation in the region, more than 100 interviews detailing life at two storied auto factories in Lansing are now collected in digital format and catalogued for easy user access.

The **Lansing Auto Town** oral history project is part of 100,000 hours of spoken word recordings preserved within Michigan State University's **Robert Vincent Voice Library**. The mission of the Voice Library is to collect and preserve spoken word recordings of people from all walks of life with some dating back to the early 19th century. Pieces preserved in the Voice Library provide a unique contextual element to human history.

As part of the MotorCities Challenge Grant program, the Voice Library received a \$9,000 award to digitize and catalogue the Auto Town gallery interviews which provided a rare glimpse into the shop floor world of workers and beyond at the General Motors' Fisher Body and Diamond REO assembly plants in Lansing.

"This online gallery offers the opportunity to listen to the ordinary, the extraordinary, the wit and candor of these men and women as they discuss experiences and perceptions about factory work, labor and management relations, corporations, the community and motivations for union activism," according to the **Voice Library website** ([vlib.msu.edu](http://vlib.msu.edu))

### *New Guide to Audio Preservation Gives Non-Specialists Expert Information*

The **ARSC Guide to Audio Preservation** is an introduction to caring for and preserving audio collections, specifically for individuals and institutions that have recorded sound collections but lack the expertise in one or more areas to preserve them.

Experts cover audio conservation and preservation, recorded sound formats and their associated risks, appraisal, related copyright issues, and disaster preparedness. The guide also offers advice on making informed decisions about digitization, as well as strategies for managing digital content. An appendix focuses on fair use and sound recordings.

The "ARSC Guide to Audio Preservation" is available electronically at [www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub164](http://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub164). Print copies are available for order through CLIR's website for \$30 plus shipping and handling.

The guide is published by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) in partnership with the Association of Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC) and the National Recording Preservation Board (NRPB) of the Library of Congress.

### *"Uprising of '34" Interviews to be Digitized*

The Oral History Association's host institution, Georgia State University (GSU), has received a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission to digitize and transcribe the oral history interviews conducted for the film, **"The Uprising of '34"** on the 1934 general textile strike in the South. Until now, the interviews themselves have been largely inaccessible. Using the Oral History Metadata Synchronizer (OHMS) system developed by the Louis P. Nunn Center at the University of Kentucky, GSU archivists will greatly enhance access to this important collection about a pivotal moment in American labor history and its broader social and cultural contexts.

For more information: <http://webapps.library.gsu.edu/blogs/library/2015/06/11/georgia-state-university-receives-nhprc-grant-to-digitize-uprising->

*Michigan Oral History  
Association Strategic Plan  
Committees, Responsibilities, and Chair*

**Organizational Structure – Executive Board**

- Create organizational chart
- Delineate clearly-defined roles, duties and responsibilities for Board positions
- Develop reporting structure for new committees
- Review and revise prerequisites for Board positions
- Re-examine bylaws and tenures of Board positions
- Determine membership meetings

**Communications Committee –**

Newsletter – Marci Cameron

- Gather and write articles pertinent to Michigan practitioners of oral history
- Solicit articles, pictures, announcements, etc.
- Edit and format the newsletter
- Compile, address and send out newsletter

Website and Digital Media – Tim Streasick

- Build a dynamic website that allows for easy online membership sign-up and renewal, register conferences and workshops
- Generate content relevant to all levels of interest and experience
- Feature expertise of oral historians in the organization, region and beyond
- Use social media and listservs to initiate conversations and build community around topics of interest to oral historians in the region
- Link to tips, best practices, and resources for oral history
- Create an online “Ask an Expert” video series

**Program Committee – Donna Odom**

- Continue to hold an annual conference, with dates confirmed 5 years in advance and with modest registration fee
- Continue to hold two annual workshops (fall, spring) in conjunction with the conference, scheduled 5 years in advance with modest registration fee
- Name program chair and local

- arrangements chair for annual meeting and annual workshops 3 yrs in advance, and offer ample opportunities for volunteers to be involved in planning
- Formulate ideas for informal, low-cost events that members can have access to year-round: online workshops, institutional tours, networking opportunities, brown bag lunches, etc.
- Pursue opportunities for joint seminars with universities in each region, as appropriate and when strategically advantageous
- Co-sponsor events with history organizations and public history institutions, as appropriate and when strategically advantageous
- Re-write “Guide to Doing Oral History”

**Membership & Outreach Committee –**

Bill Gulley

- Continue to offer low membership fees
- Continue to offer low conference and workshop fees in order to attract members at all stages of their careers and from all backgrounds
- Initiate a membership drive to gain new members
- Institute procedures for welcoming new members, and for sustaining meaningful communication with existing members
- Celebrate and spotlight the diversity of our membership: age, profession, race, ethnicity, geography, and experience
- Create a pipeline for members to become more involved through committee membership positions
- Implement a system for membership renewal notices
- Review library memberships, historical societies, museums, etc.
- Identify how to turn “free” memberships into regular members

**Nominations & Elections Committee –**

John Revitte

Membership Chair – Jane Veitch

- “Committee shall be composed of at least 3 members.
- This Committee shall consult membership for suggestions, prepare a slate of nominations for Officers and Board of

*Continued on Page 6*

### ***Strategic Plan, Continued***

Directors, and present its report by mail to the membership at least 20 days prior to the fall meeting. A member desiring to stand for election shall make his/her name known to the Nominating Committee. Nominations may also be made from the floor.” MOHA Constitution Article VI Section 2.

- Solicit potential Board members from various universities, libraries, museums, and educational institutions.
- Nominate Board members considering diversity including age, profession, race, ethnicity, geography and experience

### **Finance Committee – Bill Gulley**

- Establish an annual budget planning cycle
- Establish budgets for each of the committees
- Work with Program Committee to determine appropriate fees
- Work with Membership Committee to determine appropriate membership dues
- Work with Membership Committee to determine appropriate institutional membership dues
- Work with Education Committee to determine appropriate award monies

### **Education Committee – Tammy Apmann**

- Establish connections with universities, libraries, and museums to promote oral history in their programs and activities
- Establish connections with K-12 organizations to promote oral history in their programs and activities, e.g. MCSS, MCHE, MCCE, MCEE, MGA, MSSSA
- Create an awards program to include a lifetime award, graduate or undergraduate award, History Day Award, Michigan-based oral history project award, and others.
- Submit articles on the above to the Communications Committee
- Produce and share oral history resources targeted toward educational institutions – middle, high, collegiate, region-wide
- Produce and share oral history resources targeted toward museums, archives, libraries, and historical societies region-wide

- \* Sponsor a new annual “Oral History in the Classroom” workshop in collaboration with, and on the premises of, colleges and universities
- Highlight the educational impact of oral history in high schools and universities to policymakers at conferences, in publications, and on social media
- Encourage Board members to write and publish articles or blogs on oral history during their tenure on the Board under the banner of MOHA
- Develop and lead a region-wide campaign to raise awareness of oral history’s value and significance.
- Revise MOHA Guidebook

### **Strategic Relationships**

- Build programmatic partnerships with policymakers, leadership of historical organizations, and sister associations
- Invite organizations, teachers, and political leaders into conversations around integrating oral history into their programming
- Deepen ties with national, regional and international oral history organizations
- Designate a Board member to be liaison to national and regional organizations
- Strengthen interpersonal relationships with leadership of other organizations
- Position MOHA as a pipeline to new members for OHA and others
- Funnel information from OHA to MOHA membership and vice versa to inform direction and policy.

***Inquiries about joining in and collaborating on these initiatives are welcome and should be sent to: Geneva Kebler Wiskemann at [gwiskemann@arq.net](mailto:gwiskemann@arq.net) or by phone 517-321-1746.***

***Please submit newsletter ideas, information, news, and features to: Marci Cameron at [cameronlady210@comcast.net](mailto:cameronlady210@comcast.net).***

## *New Initiative from StoryCorps*

StoryCorps founder David Isay spoke on NPR: "We're asking U.S. history teachers - high school teachers - to ask their students over Thanksgiving weekend to record a grandparent or another elder using the StoryCorps app. We are hoping to record as many interviews over that one weekend than we've recorded over the last 12 years combined." The idea is to create an audio snapshot of one American generation hearing from another. In the meantime, you can hear any of your favorite StoryCorps moments at their website - npr.org.

## *Oral History v. Oral Interviews in the Classroom*

*By Jim Cameron, History Teacher for 40 years*

According to the Oral History Association, "Oral history is distinguished from other forms of interviews by its content and extent. Oral history interviews seek an in-depth account of personal experience and reflections, with sufficient time allowed for the narrators to give their story the fullness they desire. The content of oral history interviews is grounded in reflections on the past as opposed to commentary on purely contemporary events." Oral histories also require the appropriate documentation- Biographical Data Sheet, Release Form, transcription, transcription approval, and many others.

Teachers want students to complete oral research but may not have the time for formal oral histories. Oral interviews are an excellent way to bridge that gap. Dispensing with the Release Form, transcription, and transcription approval will shorten the time necessary and still provide students with first hand accounts of historical events. Proper preparation is necessary as with any oral research so a Biographical Data Sheet and a good set of questions will be as important in oral interviews as in oral histories. Interviewing grandparents, parents, even older brothers and sisters can provide historical perspectives as well as encourage family connections. While teaching high school US History, my students were required to do an oral interview with a person who grew up during the decade under study for each post-WWII decade. Although not formal oral histories, the students learned much about each decade and enjoyed sharing their information with the other students.

Whenever possible, teachers should encourage students to do formal oral histories. But real world limitations may make oral interviews the better option.

***Upcoming Issues of the MOHA Newsletter will feature "how to" articles on Using Oral Histories and Interviews in the Classroom - both in high school and college classes. Ethnic voices through oral histories and story-telling will also***

## *MOHA Board of Directors*

***Richard D. Peiffer*** (President), Sound Engineer, Michigan State University G. Robert Vincent Voice Library, Digital & Media Center

***John Revitte*** (Vice President), Professor Emeritus, Human Resources and Labor Relations and Residential College in the Arts and Humanities, Michigan State University  
***Bill Gulley*** (Treasurer), Staff, Document Freeze Drying Document Restoration Services

***Geneva Kebler Wiskemann*** (Secretary), Founder of the Michigan Oral History Council (parent title of MOHA), former MOHA President and long-time Secretary and newsletter production  
***Tammy Apmann***, Audience Outreach Director, Tibbits Opera House Foundation.

***Gwen Etter-Lewis***, Professor, Women's Gender & Sexuality, Miami University, Ohio

***Donna Odom***, Executive Director (Founder) of SHARE (Society for History and Racial Equity)

***Karen Schaumann-Beltran***, Asst. Professor of Sociology, Schoolcraft College

***Tim Streasick***, Information Resources Asst, Duderstadt Center, University of Michigan Library Operations Group

***Jane Vieth***, Professor of History, Michigan State University

***Hilarv Virtanen***

**MOHA Forum: What's Happening in Oral History in the State of Michigan?  
Saturday, November 7, 2015**

FEATURING Project reports from

- \* Jim Cameron, Social Studies Consultant, Michigan Department of Education
- \* Donna Odom, Executive Director, SHARE (Society for History and Racial Equity)
- \* Rick Peiffer, Unit Engineer, Michigan State University
- \* John Revitte, Emeritus Professor, Michigan State University
- \* Karen Schaumann-Beltran, Associate Professor, Schoolcraft College
- \* Geneva Wiskemann, Former State Archivist, Lansing

***Open Discussion: Share your ideas on interview techniques, interview protocols, recording methods, special challenges, project possibilities.***

***The annual membership meeting of the Michigan Oral History Association (MOHA) will follow the Forum, with election of 2016-2018 Board of Directors and officers.***

To receive the **MOHA newsletter electronically**, send an email to [MOHAnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:MOHAnewsletter@gmail.com) with the word "newsletter" and a preferred email address.

**Michigan Oral History Association  
5580 West State Road  
Lansing MI 48906-9325**