Amigos Bibliographic Council, Inc.
Amigos Fellowship Program

Oklahoma State University Library

Survey of Oral History Collections in Oklahoma

Final Report, compiled December 2009
Updated May 2010

Overview

In May 2008, the Amigos Bibliographic Council awarded the Oklahoma State University Library a $2085 grant to survey institutions across the state of Oklahoma regarding oral history collections, their condition, their accessibility, and their topics. The project would have two end products, a directory of oral history collections in Oklahoma and a replicable model that other Amigos members could use to survey their own collections at regional or statewide levels. The OSU Library successfully completed the survey project in December 2009.

Before this survey, there was no known master list of oral history collections existing in Oklahoma. It was also unknown if there was duplication of efforts by researchers regarding particular subjects. The data collected has identified some collections that are at risk and responses indicate there is interest in establishing a statewide oral history interest group. The directory, created with the results of the survey, will serve as a way to share information about oral history collections with educators, researchers, students, and the general public.

Proposal Highlights

Abstract

Oklahoma based historical societies/museums, higher education institutions/libraries, and public libraries served as the basis for our survey dataset. All groups within the dataset received the survey and self-selected to respond. In addition to identifying oral history collections across the state, it is anticipated the survey will facilitate cooperation in the development of future oral history projects, will potentially reduce costly duplication of effort, and will cultivate a network of librarians and oral history professionals in Oklahoma.

The survey focused on the type of media used in oral history holdings (cassette tapes, reel to reel, compact disc, minidisc, video), approximate number of usable items in collections, preservation efforts, access, interview topics/subjects, existence of printed/machine-readable transcripts, future project plans, and interest in further educational/networking efforts. The Oklahoma Historical Records Advisory Board and the Oklahoma Department of Libraries assisted our efforts in terms of providing additional cultural institution contacts through their e-mail/mail database resulting in a dataset of approximately 500, assisted with marketing efforts prior to the survey launch, and played a role in distributing the survey results.

Objectives
The objectives included in the proposal were:

1) To create a directory of oral history collections in Oklahoma and indicate accessibility
2) To gather information about the condition of collections to better inform the preservation conversation
3) To build a replicable model and instrument for use by other Amigos member institutions in surveying oral history collections on a statewide or regional level
4) To explore the creation of an interest group for libraries and institutions that are committed to further preservation and growth of oral history collections.

Strategy
Mailing lists compiled by the Oklahoma State University (OSU) along with the Oklahoma Department of Libraries (ODL) / Oklahoma Historical Records Advisory Board (OHRAB) were utilized for distribution of the survey. A two-pronged approach was used. For those institutions with valid electronic mail addresses, an invitation to participate in the web-based survey was sent electronically. For those institutions with only a known mailing address, a paper copy of the survey along with a self-addressed stamped envelope was mailed. Follow up reminders were also mailed/e-mailed to the survey population.

When the Directory and the Results Summary were compiled they were made available electronically (http://www.library.okstate.edu/oralhistory/survey.htm). Electronic mail messages were sent to institutions with valid e-mail addresses and a post card announcing the electronic location of the Directory and of the Results Summary was mailed to institutions without e-mail addresses. In a small number of cases, a paper copy of both the Directory and Results Summary were mailed to participants.

In addition to the Directory and the Results Summary, a simple guide or model was created highlighting the project and how it can be replicated by other Amigos members. This information was created in a PDF document and is available from a link off of the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program's website. In addition, the survey data was shared with the Oklahoma Department of Libraries who may use the survey data in developing statewide preservation initiatives.

Schedule and Report
Work on the project began in June 2008 and concluded during the late fall of 2009. An extension was given with the final report being due April 2010.

Project
The following is a description of how the project was accomplished.

June 2008
After the Amigos grant was awarded, the project managers finalized the survey instrument and submitted the project proposal to the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval.

The project received IRB approval.

July 2008
Mailing lists finalized. Supplies ordered and received.

August 2008
Letters with surveys printed and mailed. Electronic messages sent to institutions with known e-mail addresses. Survey posted electronically. Survey advertised on the websites of Oklahoma Department of Libraries and the Oklahoma State University Library.

November 2008
Reminder notices were mailed, both hard copy and electronically.

January 2009
Survey closed and compilation of results began.

April 2009
Managers of the survey project shared preliminary results at meeting of the Oklahoma Council of Academic Library Directors. Managers also presented a session at the Oklahoma Library Association annual conference entitled *An Amigos Grant Helps Discover Oral History Collections in Oklahoma.*

May 2009
A presentation entitled *Checking Out the Cupboard: Surveying Oral History Collections in Oklahoma* was made at the Society of Southwest Archivists annual meeting in Shreveport, Louisiana.

June 2009
The Amigos grant period was extended to April 2010 and approval was given to use part of the remaining funds for travel to present on the survey.

July 2009
Managers presented *Issuing an A.P.B. for Oral Histories: Developing a Survey Model for Other Libraries* at the American Library Association annual meeting in Chicago, Illinois.

October 2009
Compilation of results is completed and a Directory of oral history collections in Oklahoma is created.

November 2009
Managers shared the Directory with 100 attendees at the "Oral History for the 21st Century Symposium" in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and discussed the survey results as part of a panel.

December 2009
Results Summary, Model, and Directory completed and posted on the website of the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program. Participants provided access information and/or hard copies of the Results Summary and the Directory. Final report for Amigos compiled.

April 2010
Managers shared the Directory during a presentation at the Oklahoma Library Association Annual Conference in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

May 2010
Report of expenditures received from Oklahoma State University. Final report submitted to Amigos.

Discussion

Overall, the project was a success. Responses were received from 124 cultural repositories and 59 oral history collections from across Oklahoma were identified. All four objectives were met and a "living" a *Directory of Oral History Collections in Oklahoma* was created and made electronically accessible. An early impact of the survey was the assigning of a registration fee for the "Oral History in the 21st Century Symposium," planned by the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. The majority of the survey respondents had indicated they would attend a one-day workshop on oral history if the price was $40 or less. The symposium was attended by 100 Oklahomans, considered a success by the planners. Roughly one-third of the respondents indicated an interest in training in planning projects, conducting interviews, creative ways to use oral histories, partnering with educational/community on projects, and in processing and archiving interviews. This information will be useful as OSU looks toward developing future workshops. Additionally, a majority of the respondents indicated an interest in forming an interest group and/or an oral history listserv; a majority of the collections were reported to be usable but for in-house use; a majority of the collections do not have a web presence and most have not been transcribed; and preservation is being addressed somewhat through multiple formats, digitizing, and future plans to migrate from one format to another.

Several respondents provided information as to how they would make use of additional funds if available. Primarily funds would be used to initiate new oral history projects, for transcription, to digitize existing collections, to migrate from one format to another, for preservation of recordings, and for training. Suggested subjects for new projects included such topics as old ways of life, Native American oral histories, the immigrant experience in Oklahoma, war veterans' flight experiences, and interviews with old time cowboys.

When asked what oral history collections they were aware of, a large portion of respondents listed none. Marketing and promoting oral history collections across the state will need further consideration. The Directory will help with this and will also need marketing and promoting. Improving access to existing collections also warrants additional exploration. Roughly one-third of the respondents stated they are no longer conducting oral history projects, roughly one-third stated they were planning projects, and roughly one-tenth stated they were currently conducting projects. Of those conducting projects, museums, historical societies, cultural entities, and public libraries were represented the most. This information will be helpful in drafting a plan to garner support for organizing an effort to increase awareness of oral history initiatives across the state. See Appendix 2 for the Results Summary.

Evaluation

The success of this project was to be based on a response rate of 25% on all surveys e-mailed/mailed. A total of 128 responses were received, roughly ¼ of those receiving the survey.

Objectives

The first objective was *to create a directory of oral history collections in Oklahoma and indicate the accessibility* of existing oral history collections. This objective was successfully met. See Appendix 3.

The second objective was *to gather information about the condition of collections to better inform the preservation conversation.* The survey results indicate that there is a need for further discussion and education on how to better preserve existing as well as future oral history collections. This information was shared with the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Oklahoma Historical Records Advisory Board, and board members of the Oklahoma Museum Association. It is anticipated that workshops on preservation will be developed in the very near future.

The third objective was *to build a replicable model and instrument for use by other Amigos member institutions in surveying oral history collections on a statewide or regional level.* This objective was successfully met. See Appendix 4.

The fourth objective was *to explore the creation of an interest group for libraries and institutions that are committed to further preservation and growth of oral history collections.* The results of the survey indicate there is interest in both a listserv and an interest group focusing on oral history. It is anticipated that the discussion will continue in regards to establishing an Oklahoma oral history listserv, then followed by a state interest group if there is enough enthusiasm. In lieu of a state listserv, the materials shared as end products of this project will include information regarding the Oral History Association listserv and the Midwest Oral Historians group listserv.

Strategy

The strategy outlined in the grant proposal was followed, although the timeline for the project was extended to allow for more time to compile the data and to promote the end products.

Future Approaches

It is anticipated that the electronic Directory will be a living document. Institutions and individuals will have a standing invitation to inform the OOHRP of new oral history project initiatives.

Conclusions/Recommendations

Results of the survey brought to the forefront several areas for the OSU Library and the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program (OOHRP) to give further thought.

- What, if anything, can the OSU Library do for survey respondents who have collections but no internet access to them?
- What, if anything, can the OSU Library do for respondents with recordings that have not been transcribed? Would there be interest in and support for providing transcription service in exchange for a copy? What would the selection criteria be?
- Several respondents provided the title of books pertaining to their counties and/or projects. Does the OSU Library own these books? If not, would they be interested in acquiring them?
- Several respondents noted the existence of very small collections of recordings. Would the OSU Library be interested in becoming a repository for these? If so, what would the criteria be?
- Using oral history methodology with the focus on Native American Indians was mentioned many times in the survey responses. How might the OSU Library assist with training and/or conducting oral histories with elders and tribal members?
- The majority of respondents were not connected to libraries. What other entities in the state would provide professional support for oral historians?
- There is interest in workshops pertaining to oral history methodology, preservation, collaboration, and creativity. How can the OSU Library begin to develop a strategy for addressing these various issues in a series of workshops?

Many respondents noted they were planning oral history projects and there will be a method in place for these to be added to the directory as they are completed. A strategy for checking on their progress may need to be developed as well. For oral history collections with a web presence, the OOHRP will consider listing and linking to these from the OOHRP web site. Several of the respondents stated particular issues they were concerned with and assistance with some of these issues could be included with the Summary Report such as providing guidance on how to store cassette tapes and how to migrate them from tape to CD.

The managers of the survey suggest that a pilot survey be sent to a few potential participants requesting feedback on the survey questions so that the final survey gets at the targeted information. As for improvements to the survey used, Question 2 needs additional choices such as: do not have an oral history program; or do not have oral history recordings; or not gathering oral histories. Question 2 also needed space for them to provide information about what they were planning, if anything. Additionally, it would have been helpful in Question 15 to ask the respondents to rank the options.

Also, it is recommended there be a strategy for how to proceed with surveys returned due to incorrect addresses.

The OSU Library and the project managers would like to thank Amigos for their generosity and support for the "Survey of Oral History Collections in Oklahoma."

Tanya Finchum & Juliana Nykolaiszyn
Project Managers
12/18/2009

Appendix 2: Results Summary

Survey of Oral History Collections in Oklahoma
Results Summary

Introduction

Oral narratives rich in history and information can be found in the collections of libraries, museums, historical societies and other cultural repositories across Oklahoma with some effort. Identifying and locating usable oral history collections can be a barrier to access for researchers, students, and the public as many remain largely unknown, un-cataloged, or unpreserved for present use.

In 2008, researchers at the Oklahoma State University Library's Oklahoma Oral History Research Program created a statewide survey to analyze and pinpoint collections across the state. This survey was developed with the primary objective of creating a master list of Oklahoma's oral history holdings. A secondary objective of this project involved the development of a survey model that other states could replicate. Additional survey benefits included facilitating cooperation in the development of future oral history projects, reducing costly duplication of effort, creating an inventory of collections at risk, and building a network of librarians and oral history professionals in Oklahoma. Material developed as a result of this survey can be accessed online by visiting http://www.library.okstate.edu/oralhistory/survey.htm.

Below, you will find a brief summary of results regarding the 2008 Survey of Oral History Collections in Oklahoma.

Respondents

Using mailing lists compiled from the Oklahoma Historical Records Advisory Board and the Oklahoma State University Library, approximately 500 surveys were e-mailed and/or mailed to cultural repositories such as historical societies/museums, higher education institutions/libraries, and public libraries across the state. Survey responses were received from 124 cultural repositories and 59 oral history collections from across Oklahoma were identified.

The majority of responses were received from public libraries (25%) and museums (25%), followed by other institutions (17%), academic libraries (12%), historical societies (11%), genealogical societies (7%), and arts organizations (3%).

Subject Areas Covered

Many of the oral histories included a mix of local history or projects tied in with the respondent's specific organization (arts, aviation, terrorism, oil and gas exploration, Native Americans, etc.). Academic institutions and the statewide Oklahoma History Center collections reflected a broad body of work covering various topics of interest to Oklahomans and the communities they serve.

Recording Formats

This particular question looked at the different recording formats of oral history collections held in various repositories. Many respondents selected a mix of choices, including cassette tape, reel-to-reel, compact disk, mini disk, video cassette, and digital video tape. Many indicated a move from older formats, such as cassettes, to digital recording (both audio and video) in the comments section of this question. Few institutions indicated a lack of the original recording, with only a paper transcript available in their respective holdings.

Transcription

In this question, researchers asked if collections were transcribed and to what extent. Only a limited number of responses indicated available transcripts, although some respondents mentioned a gradual transcription effort was underway with the help of both paid staff and/or volunteers. Of the 59 collections identified, only 18 indicated available transcripts for some, if not all of their recordings. Those respondents that did indicate availability of transcripts are noted in the *Directory of Oral History Collections in Oklahoma*.

Preservation Efforts

With recordings in various formats, some in fragile condition, researchers were interested in the question regarding preservation efforts and data migration. This answers provided insight into the care of oral history recordings. Some respondents were engaged in migrating old cassette tapes to compact disks while others took the time to explain that they were not sure what to do in terms of preservation and would like additional guidance. From this question, the researchers learned that this would be a key area to target future continuing education programming within the state.

Collection Access

This question asked how oral history collections could be accessed by patrons or the public. The majority of respondents selected in-house use only. Only a limited number of oral history collections were available online or through interlibrary loan. Also a small percentage of collections were closed to the general public.

Collection Website

The survey also looked at the availability of an internet website dedicated to the repository's oral history collection. Of those with oral history collections, the majority of respondents indicated no web presence. Of those collections that did indicate a web presence, respondents noted a mix of available information online, ranging from just the collection holdings to a combination of transcripts, audio and video. For those respondents that did provide such information, please consult the *Directory of Oral History Collections in Oklahoma*.

Oral History Use in Books, Displays, Other Projects

This question asked respondents if their oral histories have been used to publish books, develop displays or in other activities. The majority of respondents indicated such usage, with some emphasizing the use in creating local history books about their respective communities. Many did not provide added detail outside of answering yes or no.

Training

The survey asked if respondents would be interested in attending a future oral history symposium to be held at Oklahoma State University. The majority of respondents provided a positive response to this question if registration fees were reasonable. Some respondents also provided a response of unsure which is a realization in line with the state of the overall economy during the survey period. Overall, this question helps assist researchers in the development of future training efforts.

Future Projects

Respondents provided many suggestions for future oral history projects. Suggested subjects for new projects included such topics as old ways of life, Native American oral histories, the immigrant experience in Oklahoma, war veterans' flight experiences, interviews with old time cowboys, art and architecture, political movements, black towns, disappearing towns, WPA projects, and a variety of social topics impacting the lives of average people.

Knowledge of Other Collections

When asked about knowledge of other oral history collections within the state, a large portion of respondents indicated a lack of knowledge of such collections. The key collection highlighted by those that provided a response included the holdings at the Oklahoma History Center. Researchers believe that this question highlights the need for additional efforts geared toward marketing and promoting oral history collections across the state.

Membership in Organizations

The majority of respondents listed no membership or affiliation with organizations providing an oral history slant. Overall, this shows researchers that many organizations do not have a body to turn to for added training opportunities or guidance when it comes to oral history.

Future Statewide Involvement

The researchers sought to gauge an interest in developing statewide resources that could bring Oklahoma's oral history community together. Questions asked if respondents were interested in joining a statewide e-mail listserv regarding oral history and in forming a statewide interest group. The data recorded 43% of respondents were interested in joining an oral history specific listserv and 45% in favor of forming an interest group. Both of these responses indicate the interest in developing channels of communication regarding statewide oral history efforts.

Grant Opportunities

Several respondents provided information as to how they would make use of additional funds if available. Primarily funds would be used to initiate new oral history projects, for transcription, to digitize existing collections, to migrate from one format to another, for preservation of recordings, and for training. This question was of particular interest to the Oklahoma Historical Records Advisory Board, as they regularly offer preservation grants for a variety of projects, including oral histories.

Creation of the Statewide Directory

Responses from the 2008 Oral History Collections in Oklahoma Survey provided the foundation for the development of a statewide directory that includes collections uncovered from the data. This directory, available online by visiting http://www.library.okstate.edu/oralhistory/survey.htm, is a living document that will be updated regularly as new collections come to light or changes are made to existing entries by institutions. We hope you enjoy exploring this document as you discover the oral history gems in Oklahoma cultural institutions and repositories across the state.

Acknowledgements

The researchers would like to thank Amigos Library Services, the Oklahoma State University Library, the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program and the Oklahoma Historical Records Advisory Board for their assistance in this project.

Appendix 3: Directory

Oral History Collections in Oklahoma

DEVELOPED BY:

Tanya Finchum & Juliana Nykolaiszyn
Oklahoma Oral History Research Program – Oklahoma State University Library

Last Update:
March 3, 2010

Oral History Collections in Oklahoma

Unlike monograph and serials holdings, it has historically been difficult to gauge oral history holdings in Oklahoma libraries. It appears many libraries do not publicize or catalog their oral history collections and no known effort has been made, until now, to develop a master list of oral history recordings and collections in Oklahoma. With the compilation of the *Oral History Collections in Oklahoma* directory, oral narratives rich in history and information can now be more easily found in the collections of libraries, museums, historical societies and other cultural repositories across Oklahoma. It is our hope that by identifying and locating usable oral history collections across Oklahoma we will enable the research community and the general public to know more about Oklahoma's rich oral history holdings.

Through a survey of Oklahoma's approximately 500 cultural repositories conducted in 2008, we have identified and enumerated numerous oral history collections in Oklahoma. Mailing lists of Oklahoma based historical societies/museums, higher education institutions/libraries, and public libraries compiled by the Oklahoma State University (OSU) Library along with the Oklahoma Historical Records Advisory Board (OHRAB) were used for survey distribution. For those institutions with valid electronic mail addresses, an invitation to participate in a web-based survey was sent electronically. For those institutions with only a known physical mailing address, a paper copy of the survey along with a self-addressed stamped envelope was mailed.

128 responses were received and what follows is an alphabetical listing of institutions providing information regarding their oral history collections. Each entry may, based on data provided, include the type of media used in oral history holdings (cassette tapes, reel to reel, compact disc, minidisc, video, etc.), an approximate number of usable items in collections, accessibility information, interview topics/subjects, and whether transcripts exist as well as contact information for the institution.

The survey was made possible by an AMIGOS Fellowship and the Oklahoma State University Library. The Oklahoma Historical Records Advisory Board assisted in our efforts in terms of providing additional cultural institution contacts through their e-mail/mail database.

This document will be updated on a periodic basis. If your institution or cultural repository has a collection of oral history materials for inclusion, or if you would like to update your institutional entry, please contact us as follows:

> Oklahoma Oral History Research Program
> 207 Edmon Low Library
> Oklahoma State University
> Stillwater, OK 74078
> Phone: 405-744-7942
> E-mail: liboh@okstate.edu
> Web: http://www.library.okstate.edu/oralhistory

A

Alva Public Library

504 Seventh Street
Alva, OK 73717
Phone: 580-327-1833
Website: http://www.alvaok.org/library.htm

Collection Information: Collection includes 21 interviews with the people of Woods County. Topics include early day recollections. Interviews conducted in the late 1970s or early 1980s by the Oklahoma Historical Society. Interviews have not been transcribed.

Condition of Access: Not available to the public at this time.

Anadarko Heritage Museum

311 East Main Street
Anadarko, OK 73005
Phone: 405-247-3240

Collection Information: Collection includes written accounts from early white settlers to the Anadarko area along with written interviews from individuals in the late 1970s about their beginnings in the area, life on the frontier, along with growth and changes in and around Anadarko, OK.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Ardmore Public Library

320 E Street NW
Ardmore, OK 73401
Phone: 580-223-8290
Website: http://www.ardmorepublic.lib.ok.us/

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews with significant members of the Ardmore community conducted by a local historian. Many of the interviews have been transcribed.

Condition of Access: Material not readily available to the public but transcripts will be made available upon request.

B

Bristow Historical Society

7 Sunset Drive
Bristow, OK 74010
Phone: 918-367-6768

Collection Information: Collection includes approximately 20 interviews with individuals and written family histories.

Condition of Access: Available for in-house use only.

Buffalo Public Library

PO Box 265
11 East Turner Street
Buffalo, OK 73834
Phone: 580-735-2995
Website: http://www.buffalo.lib.ok.us/

Collection Information: Collection includes recordings on cassette tapes. Topics not specified.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

C

Caddo Heritage Museum

PO Box 487
Binger, OK 73009
Phone: 405-656-2344
Website: http://www.geocities.com/caddoheritagemuseum/

Collection Information: Collection includes approximately 100 recordings on various topics such as language, music, dance, origin stories, and Western Oklahoma (Anadarko, Binger, Fort Cobb).

Condition of Access: Available for in-house use only by tribal members and researchers. Not available to the general public at this time.

Cameron University Library

2800 W. Gore Blvd.
Cameron, OK 73505
Phone: 580-581-2957
Website: http://www.cameron.edu/library/

Collection Information: Public radio station KCCU in conjunction with Cameron University teamed up to conduct oral history interviews with current and former students, alumni, faculty, staff, and others that were impacted by the University. Copies of interviews will be housed at the Library.

Condition of Access: Not available at this time.

Cherokee City-County Library

123 S. Grand Ave
Cherokee, OK 73728
Phone: 580-596-2366

Collection Information: Collection includes recordings about local/regional history and events recorded during the late 1990s and early 2000. Interviews have not been transcribed.

Condition of Access: Video cassette tapes available for check out.

Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center

507 S. 4th Street
PO Box 5891
Enid, OK 73701
Phone: 580-234-8999
Website: http://www.regionalheritagecenter.org/

Collection Information: Collection includes 116 interviews about the Cherokee Strip Land Run, the city of Enid, OK, oil and gas exploration, and the military. Transcripts available for approximately 87 interviews at this time.

Condition of Access: Interview summaries available online. In-house use is available through the Center's archives.

Chickasaw National Recreation Area

1008 West Second Street
Sulphur, OK 73086
Phone: 580-622-3165
Website: http://www.nps.gov/chic/

Collection Information: Collection includes 60 interviews about the history and ethnography of Platt National Park/Chickasaw National Recreation Area and its relationship with the community of Sulphur, OK. A portion of the interviews have been transcribed.

Condition of Access: Available for in-house use only. A published ethnographic study including material from the interviews is available on the park's website for public use and download.

Cimarron Heritage Center

Box 214
Boise City, OK 73933
Phone: 580-544-3479
Website: http://www.ccccok.org/museum/

Collection Information: Collection includes approximately 30+ interviews covering topics such as the Dust Bowl, early day settlement, and the military. Some interviews have been transcribed.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Confederate Memorial Museum

PO Box 245
Atoka, OK 74525
Phone: 580-889-7192
Website: http://www.okhistory.org/outreach/affiliates/atokamuseum.html

Collection Information: Collection includes approximately 22 interviews primarily about the history of Atoka County, OK recorded in the 1980s. Interviews are currently undergoing transcription.

Condition of Access: Not available to the public at this time.

Conoco Museum

501 W. South Avenue
Ponca City, OK 74601
Phone: 580-765-8687
Website: http://www.conocomuseum.com/index.htm

Collection Information: Interviews cover key events in the history of Conoco. Topics include changing logos, the DuPont takeover, the jobs of the doodlebugger, family activities, and what it was like to work for the company.

Condition of Access: Contact the museum for usage information.

ConocoPhillips Corporate Archives

C21 PB
Bartlesville, OK 74004
Phone: 918-661-7252

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews with Phillips and Conoco employee executives from the 1960s through 2007. Some interviews have been transcribed.

Condition of Access: Not available to the public at this time.

E

El Reno Carnegie Library

215 E. Wade
El Reno, OK 73036
Phone: 405-262-2409
Website: http://www.elreno.lib.ok.us/

Collection Information: Collection includes 22 interviews conducted by Edna May Arnold. Interview topics focus on early day El Reno, OK including: driving lessons, Underground Chinatown, history of hairdressing, early barber shops, history of Musgrove Grocery, early law enforcement, history of El Reno Junior College, among others. Interviews have not been transcribed.

Condition of Access: Not available to the public at this time.

Elk City Carnegie Library

221 W. Broadway
Elk City, OK
Phone: 580-225-0136
Website: http://www.elkcity.com/library

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews on a variety of topics including pioneering in Western Oklahoma-daily life, family history, history of Elk City, OK. Majority of interviews were recorded in the 1970s. Approximately 60% of collection has been transcribed.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

F

Friends of Nardin, Inc.

110 Memory Lane
Nardin, OK 74646
Phone: 580-363-4760
Website: http://friendsofnardin.org/

Collection Information: Collection includes 34 interviews from 1976 and 1977. Topics include history of early Nardin, OK and the surrounding area. Interviews have been fully transcribed.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

G

Gateway to the Panhandle Museum

RR1, Box 25
Gate, OK 73844
Phone: 580-934-2110
Website: http://www.gatewaytothepanhandlemuseum.org/

Collection Information: Collection includes approximately 20 interviews about the early 1900s and Dust Bowl period, along with a tour of historical sites in the Gate, OK area. Interviews have not been transcribed.

Condition of Access: In-house use only, material available for sale.

H

Harn Homestead Museum

1721 N. Lincoln Blvd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
Phone: 405-235-4058
Website: http://www.harnhomestead.com/

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews with early Oklahomans recorded in 1938-1939, plus one about log cabins. Interviews have not been transcribed.

Condition of Access: Some interviews available for in-house use. Most interviews are not available to the public at this time.

Harrah History Museum

Harrah Historical Society
PO Box 846
Harrah, OK 73045
Phone: 405-454-6911
Website: http://www.harrahhistoricalsociety.com/

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews about Polish immigration to local area, history of Harrah, OK, businesses, families, railroad, and more. Recorded 1983 to the present. Transcripts available for approximately 95% of the collection.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Hinton Historical Society Museum

801 S. Broadway
Hinton, OK 73047
Phone: 405-542-3181

Collection Information: Collection is recent with two projects newly underway. Topics include wagon roads through Oklahoma and ghost towns in Caddo County, OK.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Historic Roger Mills Preservation Board

RR 1, Box 32
Cheyenne, OK 73628
Phone: 580-497-2106

Collection Information: The preservation board manages seven museums in Cheyenne, OK. Collection includes an oral history interview from a former teacher at the Roll One Room School along with several oral histories from military personnel.

Condition of Access: Contact HRMPB for access information.

L

Love County Historical Society, Inc.

PO Box 134
409 W. Chickasaw
Marietta, OK 73430
Phone: 580-276-9020

Collection Information: Collection includes 50 interviews about local/personal history recorded in the 1960s and early 1970s. Transcripts available for approximately 75% of the collection.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

M

Madill City-County Library

500 W. Overton Street
Madill, OK 73446
Phone: 580-795-2749
Website: http://www.trinex.net/library/

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews with 13 individuals including Governor Raymond Gary and General Fitzhugh Lee Lewis. Recorded on cassette tape. Interviews have not been transcribed.

Condition of Access: Not available to the public.

McAlester Building Foundation

200 E. Adams, Room 104
McAlester, OK 74501
Phone: 918-423-2932

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews about coal mining. Transcripts available.

Condition of Access: Material available for purchase.

McCarter Museum of Tonkawa History

220 E. Grand
Tonkawa, OK 74653
Phone: 580-628-2895
Website: http://tonkawachamber.org/mccarter_museum

Collection Information: Approximately 150 written stories, mostly handwritten with some typed. These stories cover a variety of topics including memories of Grant County, OO pioneers, life after the Three Sands Oil Field, among others. Also in the collection, accounts resulting for the Federal Writers Project undertaken in the mid to late 1930s. Stories have been compiled and are available in hardback notebooks. Only a limited number of physical recordings are available, approximately six on cassette tape/compact disc.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Melton Art Reference Library

4300 N. Sewell
Oklahoma City, OK 73118
Phone: 405-525-3603
Website: http://www.marl-okc.org/

Collection Information: Collection includes approximately six recordings about the art genre along with interviews with artists. Recorded on cassette tapes. Transcripts for some interviews are available. The Melton Art Reference Library continues to collect oral histories with new interviews recorded in digital format.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism

Lawson Terrorism Information Center
PO Box 889
Oklahoma City, OK 73101
Phone: 405-278-6311
Website: http://www.mipt.org/

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews looking back at the Oklahoma City Bombing that took place on April 19, 1995 focusing on the response effort. Interviews recorded on digital video tape and fully transcribed.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Metropolitan Library System

300 Park Avenue
Oklahoma City, OK 73112
Phone: 405-231-8650
Website: http://www.mls.lib.ok.us/

Collection Information: Collection includes oral history interviews recorded starting in 2007 with Oklahomans primarily from Oklahoma County, OK. Interviews are ongoing and available at the library on compact disc. No transcripts available.

Condition of Access: Interlibrary loan and in-house use only.

Museum of the Western Prairie

1100 Memorial Drive
Altus, OK 73521
Phone: 580-482-1044
Website: http://www.okhistory.org/mwp/index.htm

Collection Information: Collection includes 170 cassettes recorded in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Most of the interviews revolve around memories of Southwestern Oklahoma. Other topics include the Dust Bowl, Great Depression, and other 1930s era themes. Few transcripts have been produced, but basic interview outlines are available.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

N

National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum

1700 NE 63rd Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73111
Phone: 405-478-2250
Website: http://www.nationalcowboymuseum.org/

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews with 63 artists recorded during 2001-2008 and 106 rodeo participants from 2003-2008.

Condition of Access: Available for in-house use and for rental.

Newkirk Community Historical Society

PO Box 235
Newkirk, OK 74647
Phone: 580-362-2377

Collection Information: Collection includes 42 video recordings with 51 people covering topics such as World War I, World War II, the Depression, the flu epidemic as related to Newkirk, OK, oil boom days, building of the new courthouse in 1925-26, family stories about the Land Run of 1893, growing up on farms, and one room schools.

Condition of Access: Original videos are closed to the public, housed in a climate controlled vault. Copies of recordings are available for in-house use only, through the Newkirk Public Library.

Newkirk Public Library

116 N. Maple Ave.
Newkirk, OK 74647
Phone: 580-362-3934
Website: http://www.newkirkpl.okpls.org/

Collection Information: Collection includes 42 video recordings with 51 people covering topics such as World War I, World War II, the Depression, the flu epidemic as it related to Newkirk, OK, oil boom days, building of the new courthouse in 1925-26, family stories regarding the run of 1893, growing up on farms, and one room schools. Original recordings housed with the Newkirk Community Historical Society.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Ninety-Nines Museum of Women Pilots

4300 Amelia Earhart Lane
Oklahoma City, OK 73159
Phone: 405-685-9990
Website: http://www.museumofwomenpilots.com/

Collection Information: Collection includes oral history recordings.

Condition of Access: Contact museum for further details.

Nona Jean Hulsey Gallery

2501 N. Blackwelder
Oklahoma City, OK 73106
Phone: 405-208-5230
Website: http://www.okcu.edu/petree/humanities/art/nona.aspx

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews with local artists including Steve Mauldin, David Cherry, and Alexandra Alaupovic.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

O

Oklahoma City University Law Library

2501 North Blackwelder
Oklahoma City, OK 73106
Phone: 405-208-5271
Website: http://www.okcu.edu/law/lawlib/

Collection Information: Currently recording oral history interviews with attorneys and judges throughout the state. Primary subject area includes the practice of law in Oklahoma. Interviews recorded digitally and are available on compact disc. Transcripts for 80% of collection are available at this time.

Condition of Access: Available through interlibrary loan.

Oklahoma Historical Society

Research Division
2401 N. Laird Avenue
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
Phone: 405-522-5225
Website: http://www.okhistory.org/research/

Collection Information: Collection includes one of the largest repositories of oral history recordings in the state on a variety of topics relating to Oklahoma history and people. Recorded on various formats, approximately one to two percent of over 18,000 items have been transcribed.

Condition of Access: In-house use only. Some databases, finding aids, and lists are available online through the OHS website.

Oklahoma School for the Blind

3300 Gibson
Muskogee, OK 74403
Phone: 918-781-8200
Website: http://www.osb.k12.ok.us/

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews about the history of the Oklahoma School for the Blind. Interviews recorded on cassette tape. Interviews have not been transcribed.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Oklahoma State Archives

200 NE 18th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
Phone: 405-522-3579
Website: http://www.odl.state.ok.us/oar/

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews about coal miners and the McAlester Prison Riot. Material recorded on cassette tapes and reel-to reel. Interviews have not been transcribed.

Condition of Access: Not available to the public at this time.

Oklahoma State University Library - Stillwater

Oklahoma Oral History Research Program
102A Edmon Low Library
Stillwater, OK 74078
Phone: 405-744-7942
Website: http://www.library.okstate.edu/oralhistory

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews with women who recall the Dust Bowl; women who worked during the war years as Rosie the Riveters; memories from Oklahoma A&M and OSU students, faculty, and supporters; current and former women Oklahoma legislators; inductees of the Oklahoma Women's Hall of Fame; Oklahoma Centennial Farm families; memories of the 1930s in Oklahoma; African American life in Muskogee, OK; and memories of Wilma Elizabeth McDaniel, Oklahoma poet and Dust Bowl emigrant. The Library also houses several extant oral history collections, including the Oklahoma Library Association's Library Legends, among other recordings. Material available in various formats. Many interviews have been transcribed.

Condition of Access: Some material, including transcripts and partial audio recordings, available online and also through in-house use.

Oklahoma State University Library - Tulsa

700 North Greenwood Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74104
Phone: 405-594-8130
Website: http://www.osu-tulsa.okstate.edu/library/

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews conducted by author Michael Wallis as research for his various books. Interviews are also available from survivors of the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921 conducted as part of an unpublished book manuscript authored by Tulsan Ruth Sigler Avery. Some audiotapes in the Tulsa Race Riot Collection have been transcribed. The Library is currently recording interviews about Route 66 as part of the National Parks Service Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program.

Condition of Access: In-house use only. Finding aids available on Library's website under Special Collections.

P

Price Tower Arts Center

510 S. Dewey Avenue
Bartlesville, OK 74003
Phone: 918-336-4949
Website: http://pricetower.org/

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews about the history of Price Tower, Price family, Price Company employees, Price Tower contractor, Price Tower Arts Center docents and volunteers, along with former Price Tower tenants recorded on various formats. Transcripts available for approximately 90% of collection.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

R

Renfrow/Miller Museum

2201 Yearling
Billings, OK 74630
Phone: 580-725-3487

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews with community members about local history. Interviews have not been transcribed.

Condition of Access: In-house use only. Museum open by appointment.

Rose State College

Rose State College LRC
6420 SE 15th
Midwest City, OK 73170
Phone: 405-736-0259
Website: http://www.rose.edu/EOCRHC/OralHistoryIndex.htm

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews on various topics including World War II veterans from Midwest City and the Eastern Oklahoma area. Transcripts available online.

Condition of Access: Online access to transcripts available.

S

Sac and Fox National Public Library

Route 2, Box 246
Stroud, OK 74079
Phone: 918-968-3526

Collection Information: Collection includes 47 recordings about tribal history covering the topics of genealogy, language, culture, politics, mission school accounts, education, and farm life. The library also is home to two interviews (copies) from the Truman Michelson Collection. Tribal history recordings have been fully transcribed.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History/ Native American Languages Department

2401 Chautauqua Ave.
Norman, OK 73068
Phone: 405-325-7588
Website: http://www.snomnh.ou.edu/collections-research/nal.htm

Collection Information: Collection includes recordings from Native American societies and cultures in the native language. Recordings cover personal narratives of growing up, war-time experiences, and remembering family traditions. Some recordings contain sensitive materials regarding ceremonies of traditional medicine and beliefs. Most of the holdings date back to 1950s through present day. The Native American Languages Department continues to receive materials from families and also actively records new interviews. Approximately 10% of the collection has been transcribed.

Condition of Access: In-house use only. Catalog records of interviews available online.

Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation

2510 Sam Noble Parkway
Ardmore, OK 73401
Phone: 580-224-6261
Website: http://www.noble.org/

Collection Information: Collection includes approximately 100 interviews of Noble Foundation Trustees and/or employees. Interviews have not been transcribed.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Sapulpa Historical Society

PO Box 278
Sapulpa, OK 74066
Phone: 918-224-4871
Website: http://www.sapulpahistoricalsociety.com/

Collection Information: Collection includes family histories recorded on cassette tape. Transcripts for some interviews are available.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Skiatook Museum

115 S. Broadway
Skiatook, OK 74070
Phone: 918-396-2717

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews with residents of the Skiatook, OK area conducted in 2000-2001. Future projects include recording the memories of area veterans.

Condition of Access: In-house use only

Southern Prairie Library System

421 N. Hudson
Altus, OK 73521
Phone: 580-477-2890
Website: http://www.spls.lib.ok.us/

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews about the Depression years and history of Harmon County, OK. Interviews have not been transcribed.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center

18154 1st Street
Spiro, OK 74959
Phone: 918-962-2062
Website: www.okhistory.org/outreach/museums/spiromounds.html

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews about Spiro Mounds commercial/WPA excavations. Recorded on video cassette tapes.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Stafford Air & Space Museum

3000 E. Logan Road
Weatherford, OK 73096
Phone: 580-772-5871
Website: http://www.staffordspacecenter.com/

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews with astronauts including General Stafford. The collection also houses interviews with author Andy Chaikin who discusses the space program and artifacts in the museum. Recorded on digital video. Interviews have not been transcribed.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

T

Tulsa City-County Library

400 Civic Center
Tulsa, OK 74103
Phone: 918-596-7977
Website: http://www.tulsalibrary.org/

Collection Information: The collection, recorded in 1980 by Junior League of Tulsa, Inc., includes conversations with 62 Tulsans on various aspects of local history, including daily life, education, and business. Interviews are currently being transcribed and digitized.

Condition of Access: Compact discs may be checked out; digitized interviews are being added to online collections: http://www.tulsalibrary.org/tulsahistory/photographs.php

Tulsa Performing Arts Center

110 E. 2nd Street
Tulsa, OK 74103
Phone: 918-596-2368
Website: http://www.tulsapac.com

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews conducted in December 2006 on video/audio cassettes of John H. Williams, Charles E. Norman, Robert J. LaFortune. Additional interviews with Katie Westby, Benedict Lubell and Roy Saunders. Some of the interviews have been transcribed. Video portions of interviews can be seen on Tulsa cable television, Channel 24 (TGOV). Transcripts for some interviews are available.

Condition of Access: Please contact TPAC directly for access information.

U

University of Central Oklahoma Library

100 N. University Drive
Campus Box 192
Edmond, OK 73034
Phone: 405-974-2882
Website: http://library.uco.edu/archives/oralhistory/

Collection Information: Collection includes approximately 150 interviews and covers the following topics: UCO alumni, faculty and staff, Edmond citizens/pioneers, American Indian Cultural Center, NAACP Youth Council, Oklahoma oil barons, Oklahoma artists. Interviews recorded on a variety of formats, with the majority of interviews transcribed and available online.

Condition of Access: Full transcripts, partial audio/video available online.

University of Oklahoma Library

Western History Collections
630 Parrington Oval, Room 452
Norman, OK 73019
Phone: 405-325-3641
Website: http://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/

Collection Information: Collection includes the Indian Pioneer Papers and the Doris Duke Indian Oral History Collection. The Indian Pioneer Papers Collection contains subjects related to Oklahoma history, particularly around the time of statehood. The Doris Duke Indian Oral History Collection contains all types of historical information related to Native Americans in Oklahoma, particularly around the time of statehood through the first few decades of statehood. Interviews available on cassette tapes and compact discs. Transcripts available for most of the collection.

Condition of Access: Transcripts of the Indian Pioneer Papers and the Doris Duke Indian Oral History Collection are available online. Audio tapes, compact discs are available in-house only.

University of Tulsa Library

McFarlin Library
2933 E. 6th Street
Tulsa, OK 74104-3123
Phone: 918-631-2873
Website: http://www.lib.utulsa.edu/

Collection Information: Collection includes the Chapman-Barnard Ranch Oral History Project, interviews with Dr. Charles W. Oliphant - geophysicist and Tulsa oilman, University of Tulsa Oral History Project, interviews with Mr. C. Arnold Brown – Tulsa oilman and founder of KWB Oil Property Management, Inc., Tulsa Race Riot interviews. Materials recorded on various formats. Transcripts are available for approximately 75% of the collection. The Tulsa Race Riot materials have not been transcribed.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

W

Washita County Museum

PO Box 153
Cordell, OK 73632
Phone: 580-832-3681

Collection Information: Collection includes interviews about the history of Washita County, OK from before the Land Run of April 19, 1892 until present.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Watonga Public Library

301 N. Prouty
Watonga, OK 73772
Phone: 918-596-2368
Website: http://www.watongapl.okpls.org/

Collection Information: Collection includes local history interviews on 46 cassette tapes recorded in 1973 and 1983, along with some unknown dates. Interviews have not been transcribed.

Condition of Access: In-house use only.

Waynoka Historical Society

PO Box 193
Waynoka, OK 73860
Phone: 580-824-5871
Website: http://www.waynoka.org/

Collection Information: Collection includes local history interviews on various topics, including Fred Harvey, transcontinental air support, Santa Fe Railroad in Waynoka, Railways Ice Co., and the Waynoka Sand and Gravel Company. Transcripts available for approximately 10% of collection.

Condition of Access: In-house use only. Not available to the public.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Alfalfa County Museum
Alva Public Library
Anadarko Community Library
Anadarko Heritage Museum
Apache Historical Museums
Ardmore Public Library
Arkoma Public Library
Beaver County Pioneer Library
Blackwell Public Library
Break O'Day Farm & Metcalfe Museum
Bristow Historical Society
Broken Arrow Genealogical Society
Buffalo Public Library
Caboose Museum
Caddo Heritage Museum
Cameron University Chelsea
Public Library Cherokee City
County Library
Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center
Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Chickasha Public Library
Choctaw County Public Library
Cimarron Heritage Center
City Arts Center, Oklahoma City
Confederate Memorial Museum
Connors State College
Conoco Museum
ConocoPhillips Corporate Archives
Cushing Public Library
Czech Cultural Museum
Delaware County Historical Society
El Reno Carnegie Library
Elk City Carnegie Library
Ellis County Historical Society
Fairfax Public Library
Friends of Nardin, Inc.
Frisco Depot Museum
Garrard Armeneum
Gateway to the Panhandle Museum
Grace M. Pickens Public Library
Grady County Historical Society
Grove Public Library
Harn Homestead Museum
Harrah History Museum
Hinton Historical Society Museum
Historic Roger Mills County Preservation Board
Hobart Public Library
Honey Springs Battlefield
Indian Territory Genealogical & Historical Society
Johnson County Historical Society
Love County Historical Society, Inc.
Madill City-County Library
Martin Park Nature Center
Mayes County Genealogical Society
Maysville Public Library
McAlester Building Foundation
McAlester Public Library McAlester
Scottish Rite Masons McCarter
Museum of Tonkawa History
McCurtain County Historical Society
Melton Art Reference Library
Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism
Metropolitan Library System
Murrell Home
Museum of the Western Prairie

Mustang Public Library
National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum
National Rod & Custom Car Hall of Fame
National Wrestling Hall of Fame & Museum
Newkirk Community Historical Society
Newkirk Public Library
Ninety-Nines Museum of Women Pilots
Nona Jean Hulsey Gallery
Oilpatch Genealogy Society
Oklahoma Christian University
Oklahoma City University
Oklahoma City University Law Library
Oklahoma City Zoo-Historical Archive
Oklahoma Historical Society
Oklahoma School for the Blind
Oklahoma State Archives
Oklahoma State University-Center for Health Sciences
Oklahoma State University-Stillwater Library
Oklahoma State University-Tulsa Library
Old Greer County Museum & Hall of Fame
Old Town Museum
Olive Warner Memorial Library
OSU-Institute of Technology Okmulgee
Pawnee Bill Ranch
Pawnee County Historical Museum
Payne County Genealogy Society
Performing Arts Center-Norman
Pioneer Library System
Pocahontas Trails Genealogical Society, Oklahoma-Texas
Pottawatomie County Genealogy Club
Prairie Song Pioneer Village
Price Tower Arts Center
Renfrow/Miller Museum
Rogers County Historical Society
Rose State College
Sac and Fox National Public Library
Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, Native
        American Languages Department
Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation
Sapulpa Historical Society
Shortgrass County Museum
Skiatook Museum
Soutar Memorial Library
Southeastern Oklahoma State University
Southern Prairie Library System
Southwestern Christian University
Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center
Stafford Air & Space Museum
Temple Museum Association
The Freedom Museum, Inc.
Tulsa City-County Library
Tulsa Performing Arts Center
United Spanish War Veterans
University of Central Oklahoma Library
University of Oklahoma Law Library
University of Oklahoma, Western History Collections
University of Tulsa-McFarlin Library
Washington County Historical Society
Washita County Museum
Watonga Public Library
Waurika Public Library
Waynoka Historical Society
Western Plains Genealogy Society
Wilson Historical Museum

Appendix 4: Survey Model

Surveying your state: A Model for uncovering and discovering oral histories

DEVELOPED BY:

Tanya Finchum & Juliana Nykolaiszyn
Oklahoma Oral History Research Program – Oklahoma State University Library

Surveying your state: A Model for uncovering and discovering oral histories

Introduction

O ral narratives rich in history and information can be found in the collections of libraries, museums, historical societies and other cultural repositories across the nation with some effort. Identifying and locating usable oral history collections can be a barrier to access for researchers, students, and the public as many remain largely unknown, un-cataloged, or unpreserved for present use. While the internet provides a great starting point as a gateway to information, for a variety of reasons many oral history collections continue to remain hidden.

In 2008, researchers at the Oklahoma State University Library's Oklahoma Oral History Research Program created a statewide survey to analyze and pinpoint collections across the state. This survey was developed with the primary objective of creating a master list of Oklahoma's oral history holdings. A secondary objective of this project involved the development of a survey model that other states could replicate. Additional survey benefits included facilitating cooperation in the development of future oral history projects, reducing costly duplication of effort, creating an inventory of collections at risk, and in building a network of librarians and oral history professionals in Oklahoma.

We hope with this survey model provided in the coming pages, you too can develop similar efforts in discovering and uncovering oral histories within your state thus providing access to oral history resources for others and furthering the preservation and promotion of such materials in our libraries, institutions, and cultural repositories for generations to come.

This model was prepared in part thanks to a 2008 Amigos Library Services Fellowship awarded to Tanya Finchum and Juliana Nykolaiszyn with the Oklahoma State University Library. To view material produced as a result of this survey effort, visit: www.library.okstate.edu/oralhistory/survey.htm.

Tanya Finchum & Juliana Nykolaiszyn
Oklahoma Oral History Research Program at the OSU Library
207 Edmon Low Library
Stillwater, OK 74078 (405)
744-7685
www.library.okstate.edu/oralhistory

Steps for Surveying Your State

1.   Create a Project Timeline

Sometimes having a roadmap is the best way to travel. This is also true when conducting research. One of the first things you should do is think about everything that needs to take place and from there, create a timeline of activities in order to achieve your final outcome. This includes, but is not limited to budgeting time for gathering contact information, creating questions, designing the survey, pre-testing, marketing, launching, compiling results, and preparing reports.

2.   Determine Your Survey Population

Oral histories can be created by many organizations. These include: historical societies, museums, genealogical societies, parks, zoos, arts organizations, academic libraries, public libraries, corporate libraries, special libraries, private and public foundations, college/university academic departments, and businesses. The key is not placing limits on the institutions and cultural repositories you contact, but finding those organizations where oral histories may be discovered or uncovered.

If you want to focus on a specific group, for example only museums or only libraries, this would be a good time in the planning processes to determine such an angle. If you are looking for a more comprehensive look into the possible oral history holdings in your state, you may want to expand and develop your list of contacts to include various institutions and entities.

3.   Develop Your List of Contacts

Once you have a target audience in mind, you may be able to enlist the help of state agencies in developing your list of contacts. Many states have a Historical Records Advisory Board (http://www.statearchivists.org/shrabs.htm) or a Department of Libraries. These organizations usually have a database of contact information for cultural repositories or institutions they serve. Build partnerships and share the data with such organizations. You will find that these agencies are also in the business of preservation and have a vested interest in helping organizations with this cause. Since oral histories are recorded in a variety of formats, some more fragile than others, surveying your state could tie in nicely with future preservation efforts or programming. More than likely, these groups would be willing to assist or point you in the right direction as you collect vital information, like mail/e-mail addresses regarding your target audience. Ask if they would be willing to share contact information in exchange for survey results or other partnership opportunities.

Also check to see if your state belongs to a regional oral history organization (http://www.oralhistory.org/about/regional-organizations/). These organizations may help guide you to known oral history collections within their respective regions, thus adding additional contacts to your survey population.

4. Decide on the Survey's Implementation Strategy

Questions to think about: How are you going to contact your population? How are you going to have institutions and cultural repositories responding to your survey? There are several options available, depending on the budget you have at the time of creating your survey. You can focus your efforts on the internet only (contact via e-mail, complete survey through programs like SurveyMonkey.com). You can also send out a paper mailing (contact via postal mail, include copy of the survey and return self addressed stamped envelope). Another option is combining a mix of both approaches, using the internet and postal mail for contact, survey distribution and response.

One major drawback in conducting an all internet based survey, some of the smaller organizations in your state may not be equipped to participate based on lack of technology available. This is important to consider when you are planning how your survey will be released.

We propose the mixed approach for best results. This includes:

- Creating both a paper copy of the survey and an internet based survey
- For respondents with valid e-mail addresses, e-mail the link to the internet based survey
- For respondents with no e-mail, send a paper copy of the survey via postal mail, along with an SASE for ease in return

5. Create Your Survey Questions

What do you want to learn about oral history collections in your state? There are many things to consider, including subjects covered, different recording formats, usable collections, number of transcripts or indexes available, web sites dedicated to projects, preservation, etc. You may want to ask Likert-type scale questions, open ended questions or a mix. Either way, question development is important in discovering answers to meet the overall goals of your survey research. For sample questions, please see the Appendix.

6. Pre-Test Your Survey

Pre-testing your survey simply means taking it out for a test drive. You can pre-test your survey with oral historians you have a relationship with, fellow colleagues, or others. In the pre-test phase, you are looking to see if the questions make sense, are worded correctly, have a good flow, and are easy to understand. Also, you may have forgotten to ask important questions. Remember, the pre-test phase is about feedback and minor re-tooling before the big launch. This is a time where you can work out any kinks not only with questions, but also with how the survey looks, both in print and online. If you are conducting an internet based survey, remember it is important to send out the link to your pre-testers and make sure everything works as you hoped it would, and if not, go back and make adjustments.

7.   Think About Marketing

In some cases, it is good to let your target population know that a survey is coming their way. This can take place through formal or informal channels. Some ideas to help promote your survey include a pre-launch press release and a launch press release. Try to work with statewide, regional or various local groups that produce newsletters and submit a brief or article about your goals and intentions. Also, be sure to include on your organization's website any promotional information/content developed.

8.   Launch Your Survey

For paper/postal mail surveys, here are things to consider once you are happy with your survey instrument:

- Draft and print letters explaining the survey. Include deadlines and contact information

- Print mailing addresses for envelopes

- Print survey instrument

- Prepare self-addressed stamped envelope (if using) or other method of survey return

- Assemble all components and mail

- After mailing your survey, have a plan in place to handle postal returns – mail returned to you for a variety of reasons

For internet based surveys, here are things to consider once you are happy with your survey instrument:

- Create an e-mail letter explaining the survey. Include deadlines and contact information

- Check survey website URL and make sure it works within the body of your e-mail (or your particular method of online survey distribution)

- Compile e-mail address lists and distribute survey electronically

- After e-mailing your survey, have a plan in place to handle "bounce backs" – those e-mails that are returned to sender for a variety of reasons

9.   Collect Results

If you are conducting a paper based survey, create a space to keep all incoming survey responses. Remember it may be easier processing the survey responses as they come in, instead of waiting until the final deadline. As surveys come in, record the responding institution's name and process survey data by using a spreadsheet or other data management program. If you are conducting an internet based survey, some programs will process the data for you pending certain parameters. Again, don't wait until the last minute to see what is coming in, be sure to check your online survey management system periodically, export reports, and monitor activity.

After your initial survey collection, you may also want to send out reminder e-mails/mailings to those institutions who did not respond to your survey request. One to two reminders before the final deadline are sometimes key in helping to motivate institutions to respond.

10.   Analyze Results

Now that your data collection has come to an end, it is time to look at your spreadsheet (or other program) and take a look at what your survey results say about oral history collections in your state. If you utilized open ended responses, try looking at the trends and group like ideas together. If your survey was more numbers driven, you can also crunch the data or utilize statistical programs to generate detailed results.

11.   Share Results

What good is conducting a statewide survey of oral history collections if you do not share the data with others in your state? Upon completion of your survey, try to publish the results of your work in various local, statewide, regional, or national publications. The internet is also a great tool for showcasing your survey results. Be sure to highlight results on your own organization's website, and tie in with other groups, for example, your state's Department of Libraries. Also, submit your work to various calls for conference program presentations in order to help spread the word about your work.

Final Thoughts

One of our main objectives in developing a statewide survey was to create a living electronic document that included all known oral history collections throughout Oklahoma, with periodic updates as new information becomes available. We found this oral history directory was a great way to utilize the data gathered in our statewide survey, along with providing the public with an electronic resource that, for the first time, brings to light many oral history collections across our state. In the survey process, we found that many repositories had questions about oral history preservation and methodology, and we now hope to connect such respondents with needed information to help their collections survive into the future.

What started out as a fact finding mission has taken on a new life of providing education and awareness of collections across Oklahoma. We hope you too can have the same success in helping connect others in your respective states with not only holdings information, but also archival and preservation techniques that will bring hidden oral history recordings and transcripts to light.

Appendix

Sample Survey Questions

These questions were taken from a 2008 survey launched by the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program at the OSU Library. This is just a starting point to help facilitate question development.

- Does your organization have a collection of oral history recordings?
- What is the status of your oral history activities?
- What subject areas does your oral history collection(s) cover?
- In what recording format(s) are your original oral history interviews?
- What percentage of interviews have been transcribed?
- What percentage of interviews are in usable/unusable conditions?
- Please describe any preservation or data migration efforts underway or planned in the future.
- How can your collection be accessed by patrons or the public?
- Do you have an internet website dedicated to your oral history collection?
- To what extent can your oral histories be accessed on the internet?
- Have your oral history interviews been used to publish books, develop displays, or in other projects?
- In what oral history training programs have you or others in your organization participated?
- Would you be interested in attending a symposium on oral history?
- What topics would you like to see covered in a symposium?
- When thinking about future oral history projects, what subject areas do you think need to be top priority?
- List oral history collections in this state which you are aware.
- To what organizations with an oral history focus do you belong?
- What are your thoughts regarding initiating a statewide oral history interest group?
- If grant funds of $500 to $5,000 were available to help preserve current collections or undertake new projects, what projects would you propose?
- Would you be interested in subscribing to an electronic listserv pertaining to oral history collections within the state?