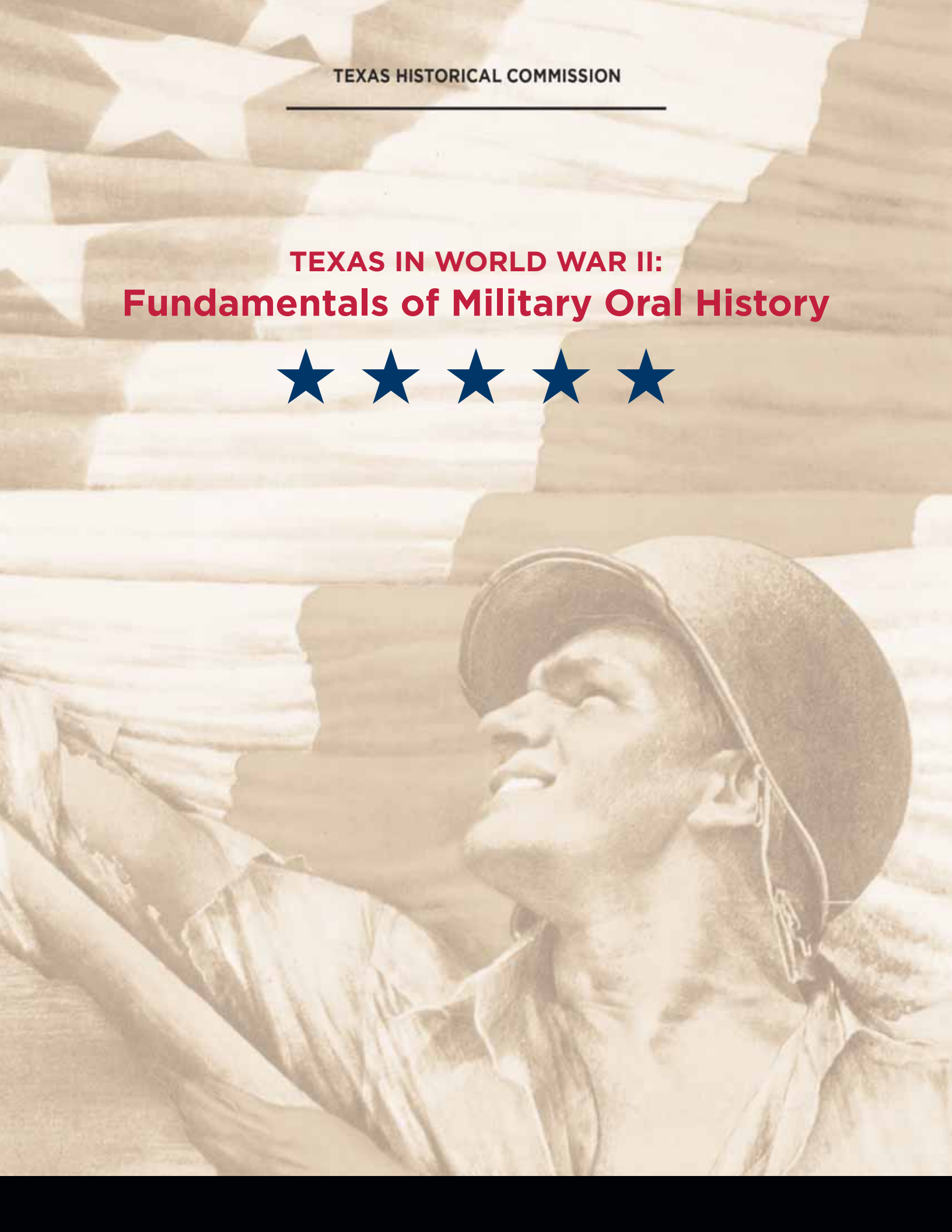


TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

**TEXAS IN WORLD WAR II:
Fundamentals of Military Oral History**



TEXAS IN WORLD WAR II

One of the most significant events of the 20th century, World War II was the broadest and most destructive war of all time. It divided nations, redefined international alliances, devastated populations, ethnic groups and economies, and ushered in an era known as the Cold War. From 1941 to 1945, Americans — and particularly Texans — rallied to supply unprecedented levels of manpower and equipment, while sacrificing much to support the wartime effort. As a result, Texas, perhaps more than any other state, played a pivotal role in attaining victory during World War II.

When the war officially ended on September 2, 1945, the world and Texas had changed forever, socially and economically. Texas had shifted from a rural and agricultural state to an increasingly more urban, industrial one. Social changes occurred as military and industrial opportunities increased for minorities, leading to later civil rights achievements. Women embraced new roles and forever changed the traditional workplace.

In 1940, on the brink of World War II, Texas was far different than it is today. Frontier traditions and rural life remained alive and well in the Lone Star State. World War II not only changed Texas society and its economy, it also changed the landscape. The state's moderate climate and expansive available land made it perfect for year-round military training. Planning and construction of training and command facilities reached wartime highs in the early 1940s. Ultimately, Texas was home to 175 major military installations plus numerous minor ones — including 65 army airfields, 35 army forts and camps, and seven naval stations and bases. There were also nearly 70 base and branch prisoner-of-war camps, more than any other state, and four internment camps used for the detention of individuals; most detainees were from Axis nations and were suspected of being security threats.

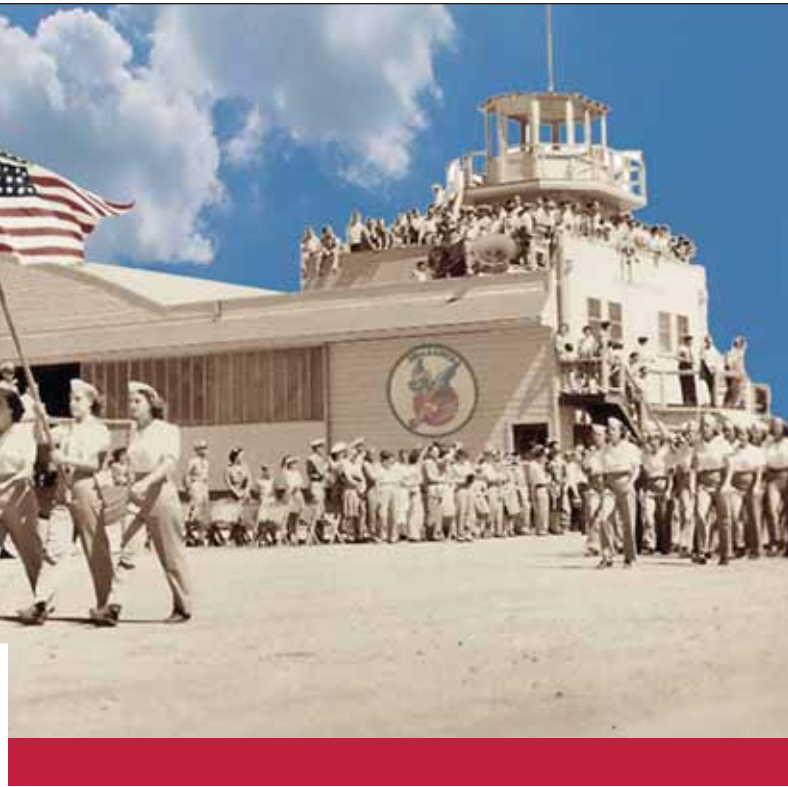
When the military mobilized, so did many more Texans on a different but equally important front — the one at home. Farm families and small-town residents moved to major cities to work



Right: Avenger Field in Sweetwater. Photo courtesy National WASP World War II Museum. Below: Women pilots.



in war industry plants. Hundreds of thousands of workers came from outside the state. Urban migration was on the rise. New opportunities in training and employment opened for women and minority citizens. Seemingly overnight, World War II transformed the face of Texas. As they went about their daily tasks, Texans on the home front remained vigilant against enemy attacks through civil defense training and air raid drills, and by scanning the skies and coastal waters for signs of trouble. All the while,



More than 750,000 Texans served in uniform during World War II, including more than 20,000 women. Texas was home to the only all-women military base in the United States: Avenger Field in Sweetwater, training base for the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP).

they gathered around their radios, eagerly read the daily news, watched newsreels at local movie houses and studied maps of foreign countries to learn the latest about the war overseas. Nothing, it seemed, was more important. With the growth of business and related city expansion came dramatic shifts in population, and urban migration was under way. Those who returned home after the war found a new and dynamic Texas.

Today, generations after the end of World War II, evidence of that historic era and reminders of its impact on Texas can still be found across the state's cultural landscape. The Texas Historical Commission urges anyone interested in preserving the rich history of Texas in World War II to ensure future generations inherit a comprehensive legacy. We invite you to learn more about the real places that tell the real stories of Texas during the Second World War.

MILITARY ORAL HISTORY IS...

The best firsthand record of the history of World War II and any military conflict before and after is found in the lives of the ordinary people who lived it. Collecting, preserving and sharing oral histories not only transmits knowledge from what many call the "greatest generation" to the next, but also enhances our understanding of the past by illuminating the personal experience and price of war.

World War II oral history is the collection and recording of personal war memoirs, home-front experiences and childhood recollections of this seminal event. It is also the best method to learn not only what happened, but also the memories of those who experienced it first hand. This process involves eyewitness accounts and reminiscences about combat, patriotic support, pride and the difficulties that occurred during the lifetime of the person being interviewed.

MILITARY RESEARCH ASSOCIATED WITH THE INTERVIEW

No project should begin without research and investigation of available historical sources. After-Action-Reports, military diaries, newspapers, archival records, secondary sources, captured enemy documents, photographs and even other oral histories can all provide valuable material to frame military history questioning. Payrolls, contracts, city records and photographs are all examples of sources available to conduct research for a home-front interview.

From your research notes, create a list of keywords and phrases representing the information you want to know. During the interview, use your list of topics as a guide, like a road map, for directing the narrator's attention toward the topics you want to cover.

Compose questions around each keyword or phrase that help interviewees to recall the past and encourage them to tell stories in response. When an interviewee supplies information not on your list but worthy of further investigation, you may want to ask questions about the new topic right then. You can always bring the interview back to the next topic on your list once you have covered the new subject in full.

Be prepared to research before an interview (to prepare), between interviews (to clarify and verify) and after an interview (for validity and accuracy).

TEN TACTICS FOR MILITARY ORAL HISTORY

1. Know and understand military terms.
2. If interviewees are war veterans, read general histories of the war and available records on the units in which they served, such as muster rolls, discharge papers, ship registers, maps, photo collections, newspaper accounts and possible archival materials, like letters and memoirs.
3. If the interview topic is the home front, read about the general history of the home front during the appropriate period and study available records about the specific home front where your interviewee lived during the war.
4. Ask veterans to share materials and mementos related to their service years, such as letters, photographs, medals, uniforms and souvenirs to help you ask better questions. Suggest to veterans that they may want to donate these materials to the Library of Congress Veterans History Project.
5. Gather biographical data on veterans' lives before and after their military service.
6. Ask questions that invite veterans to tell stories, then dig deeper into the stories for details. Ask not only what happened, but also about aspects of the story not recorded in history books, such as what they did, why they did what they did, how they felt about what they did, what they missed most about home and how their lives changed because of what happened.

7. Be aware when asking questions about sensitive topics. Be prepared for emotional moments when difficult memories arise. Allow time for veterans to respond at their own pace.

8. Respect silences in the interview. Jumping in too quickly with a question or comment may squelch an important aspect of the story.

9. Be aware of possible limitations in the veteran's physical stamina. If necessary, do several short interviews rather than one long one. During interviews, take occasional short rest breaks when you sense the veteran is tiring.

10. Always thank your veteran.



“ I saw the flag raising on Mt. Suribachi... and I want to tell you it is something you will never forget... you are just so thrilled and proud to be an American. ”

MILITARY ORAL HISTORY: BASIC TRAINING

Military oral history is a sound recording of historical information, obtained through an interview that preserves a person's life history or eyewitness account of a past experience. Carefully preserved, the recordings carry the witness of the present into the future. Through creative programs and publications these recordings can inform, instruct and inspire generations to come. By enriching the story with individual experience, oral histories will help future historians avoid sweeping generalizations that stereotype people, engender prejudice and overlook important variables in the historical context.

Creating an oral history requires two people: one who questions (an interviewer) and one who narrates (an interviewee). Two strengths distinguish oral history interviewing: 1) subjectivity, which allows interviewers to ask not only “**What happened?**” but also, “**How did you feel about what happened?**” and 2) the partnership of co-creation, which invites interviewees to interpret and analyze their personal experiences through their own points of view and in their own words.

AT THE INTERVIEW

If you have not already, introduce yourself and become acquainted with the interviewee. Once you have selected a quiet place with few distractions, begin the interview with a general introduction that serves as an audio label (this is essential with a digital voice recording).

Far left: The THC's Military Historian William McWhorter interviews U.S. Navy Veteran L.D. Cox (left).

For example:

“This is [your name]. Today is [month/day/year]. I am interviewing for the [first, second, etc.] time [full name of interviewee]. This interview is taking place at [address; may include description, such as home of, office of] in [town, state]. This interview is sponsored by [name of organization, if applicable] and is part of the [title or description] project.”

Remember to ask open-ended questions first, waiting to see what unfolds. Tailor follow-up questions to the interviewee's responses. Pursue in detail. Also, remember that while you are maintaining a pattern of concentrated listening, you are also actively listening for the story behind your narrator's replies.

Provide feedback with silent encouragements: nod your head to indicate you are listening or smile when appropriate. Keep your feedback quiet, being aware that your sounds can override the interviewee's voice during the recording. Keep your feedback neutral (such as, “I see” or “uh-huh”), indicating neither agreement nor disagreement.

Write down a few notes as the interviewee is talking to remind you of subjects you want to cover in more detail. Rather than disrupt the interviewee's train of thought by asking for spellings of unusual words, jot down a phonetic spelling and a clue to its place in the story; after the interview you can ask for the correct spelling.

Give the interviewee time to answer each question fully and finish her/his train of thought, then just sit quietly for a few moments. Chances are excellent the interviewee will think of something else to add. Silence is an integral, important part of the oral history interview process.

Be aware of the interviewee's age and physical condition when deciding how long to continue an interview. Sixty to ninety minutes is a good average length for an interview. Concentration diminishes if the interview becomes lengthy.

Compose questions on the spot from your topic list, adapting the questions to the interviewee's individual experience with the topic.

Ask open-ended questions.

Tell me about . . .

Why . . . ? Why not . . . ? How . . . ?

Probe for details.

Describe . . . Explain . . .

How often . . .

Tell me more about . . .

Avoid leading questions that reveal your biases and suggest you have already formed an opinion of what the answer might be.

Don't: That neighborhood was a hard place to grow up in, I'll bet.

Do: Tell me how you felt about the place where you grew up.

Don't: Sandtown was settled in the early 1900s, so let's start your story there.

Do: Why did your family come to live in Sandtown?

Don't: I guess your family, being Mexican, was always Catholic.

Do: Tell me about the role of religion in your family life.

Restate or summarize.

You said . . . Tell me more about that.

Let me say that back to you and see if I understand.

Ask for definitions and clarifications.

Tell me what . . . means.

What is . . . ?

I know what . . . is, but future generations may not.

Please tell me what a . . . was and how it was used.

Follow up.

What else . . . ? Who else . . . ? What other reasons . . . ?

Turn things around.

Some people say . . . What do you think about that?

Also,

- Ask one question at a time.
- Be prepared to get off the topic, then gently bring the narrator back to the subject.
- Use the silent question. Keep quiet and wait.
- Close with a thoughtful question.
- End with an expression of appreciation.

RELEASE FORM

A key component of a military oral history interview is the donor release form. Interviewees must give you permission to record, reproduce or distribute their words. With the storyteller's written permission, an oral history interview can become a primary document that provides significant historical information for years — even generations — to come. Without signed forms, the interviews you record cannot be archived or shared with others in any way.

By signing a contract form or deed of gift, interviewees agree to donate their interviews to the interviewer, the interviewer's sponsoring organization or a designated depository. It is a good idea to begin working with a depository at the beginning of your project so that any particular requirements that organization may have for signed forms can be met easily and efficiently.

Oral history interviews are subject to U.S. copyright law, which protects fair use of the interview in reproduction, distribution, display, public performance and the creation of derivative works. Before an interview recording is duplicated, transcribed or indexed, made public as an audio file or transcript, quoted in a publication or broadcast, or deposited in an archive, the interviewee must transfer copyright ownership to the individual or organization sponsoring the project. When the interviewer is someone other than the designated copyright holder, the interviewer must also transfer copyright to the sponsor. Ideally, release forms should be signed before an interview series begins.

For interviews destined to become part of the Veterans History Project of the American Folklife Center in the Library of Congress, contributors are required to sign an agreement that gives the Library of Congress full but nonexclusive rights to the interviews; interviewees retain rights, including copyright. This arrangement may be a useful alternative when interview participants have reservations about complete, exclusive transfer of copyright.



Interviewees have the right to know how their interviews will be used. Sponsoring organizations or individual interviewers will benefit from thinking broadly when explaining future use, as technological developments constantly create new avenues for publishing and distributing oral histories.

If for some reason interview participants want to restrict the use of their interviews, they have the right to state those restrictions, and the depository is obligated to protect the restrictions. To honor a participant's wish to restrict the use of an interview for a certain period of time or to limit future

use in certain formats (such as on the Internet), provide a legal release form that includes a section outlining the requested restriction, or attach a form that supplements a general release form. It is very difficult to enforce restrictions that are linked to the duration of a lifetime or to specific events such as the publication of a book or the completion of a degree, so ask for a particular future date to end the restriction. Everyone, including those who process recordings and transcripts, should protect the participants' right to privacy by keeping all restricted materials completely confidential until the restriction period ends.

Texas was home to 65 major flying fields and schools established to aid the war effort.



Left: B-25 bomber on tarmac at Marfa Army Air Field.
Below: Marfa Army Air Field, July 2007.



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

INTERVIEW AGREEMENT

Here and There: Recollections of Texas in World War II

The purpose of the *Here and There: Recollections of Texas in World War II* Oral History Training Workshop series is to offer practical instruction in gathering and preserving historical evidence about the many aspects of Texas in World War II, including the memories of the home front, veterans' war experiences, experiences of the children of World War II and more by means of digital-recorded interviews. Digital voice recordings, video and transcripts resulting from the workshop and related interviews will be retained by the Texas Historical Commission, and copies of the digital voice recordings and transcripts will be made available by request to members of the public. This material will be available for historical and instructional research by any interested parties, including members of the interviewee's family.

We, the undersigned, have read the above and voluntarily offer the Texas Historical Commission full use of the information contained on digital recordings, on video and in transcripts of these oral history interviews. In view of the historical value of this research material, we hereby assign rights, title and interest pertaining to it to the Texas Historical Commission.

Interviewee (signature)

Interviewer (signature)

Name of interviewee (print)

Name of interviewer (print)

Date

Date

Address of interviewee

City

State

Zip

Telephone number of interviewee

TRANSCRIBING AND PRESERVING ORAL HISTORIES

A transcript represents in print the words and extraneous sounds present in the recorded interview. The transcriber's goal is to render as close a representation of the actual event as possible. Transcripts make the information on the recording easier to locate and assemble for use in media presentations, exhibits and research publications. Researchers often prefer the ease of looking through a transcript over listening to a recording to find topics related to their interests. In addition, interviewees still attach prestige to having a print document of their stories.

Transcribing is time-consuming. The approximate time required to transcribe one recorded hour is 10-12 hours, depending upon the quality of the sound recording and complexity of the interview.

Preserving the recorded interview ensures it will become part of the lasting historical record, accessible to researchers and communities far into the future. Preservation includes safekeeping original recordings, making useful and accessible copies of them and sharing them in creative ways with others. It also means ensuring that interview and project documentation, including signed forms, are duplicated in paper and electronic form and accompany the recordings to the archives.

Preservation Measures

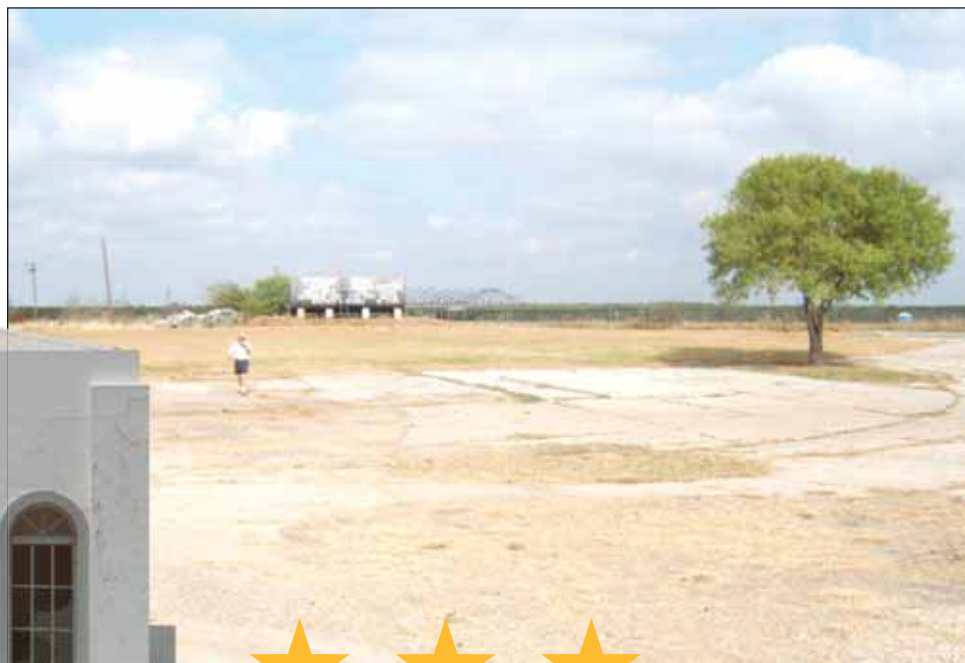
Make every effort to ensure that the sound recordings of your oral history project are deposited in a suitable library or archives where they will receive professional care and will be made accessible to researchers. This may mean placing them in a local library, large metropolitan public library, nearby university library, museum or state library and archives.

Carefully label items to be archived. Identify original recordings as such; in most libraries and archives, the original recordings are stored for preservation and never used for public access. The librarian or archivist may ask you to supply duplicates for public use. Be prepared to provide the archives organization with copies of signed agreement forms and other documents related to the project in paper or electronic format, or both.

To further ensure that your oral history interviews serve the historical purposes for which they were recorded, publicize the availability of the recordings, transcripts and other project creations. Local historical societies, libraries and community groups will be interested to know about the collection. Help interested researchers and community members use the information in the interviews by creating finding aids such as abstracts, indexes and topic outlines, as well as simple lists of interviewees.

Approximately 50,000 Axis prisoners were housed among nearly 70 Texas POW camps and filled American labor shortages.

Right: Italian prisoner of war camp memorial chapel at Camp Hereford.
Far right: Crystal City (Alien) Family Internment Camp swimming/irrigation pool.



SELECT ORAL HISTORY BIBLIOGRAPHY

Print Materials

Charlton, Thomas L., Lois E. Myers, and Rebecca Sharpless, eds. *History of Oral History: Foundations and Methodology*. AltaMira Press, 2007.

Lanham, Barry A., and Laura M. Wendling. *Preparing the Next Generation of Oral Historians: An Anthology of Oral History Education*. AltaMira Press, 2006.

Powers, Willow Roberts. *Transcription Techniques for the Spoken Word*. AltaMira Press, 2005.

Ritchie, Donald A. *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide*. 2d ed. Twayne Publishers, 2003.

Sommer, Barbara, and Mary Kay Quinlan. *The Oral History Manual*. 2d ed. AltaMira Press, 2009.

Whitman, Glenn. *Dialogue with the Past: Engaging Students and Meeting Standards through Oral History*. AltaMira Press, 2004.

Yow, Valerie Raleigh. *Recording Oral History: A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences*. 2d ed. Rowman and Littlefield, 2005.

Internet Resources

Baylor University Institute For Oral History Workshop on the Web

Introductory and advanced instruction in oral history methods, teaching and learning oral history, and digital recording, available at www.baylor.edu/oral_history.

Library of Congress Veterans History Project

Memoir guidelines, forms and a field kit for conducting and preserving interviews, at www.loc.gov/vets/kitmenu.html.

Texas Historical Commission

“Fundamentals of Oral History: Texas Preservation Guidelines,” available at www.thc.state.tx.us/publications/guidelines/OralHistory.pdf.

Texas Oral History Association

Statewide network for oral historians and affiliate of the national Oral History Association. Learn more at www.baylor.edu/toha.

Oral History Association

Principles and Standards: “Oral History Evaluation Guidelines,” Revised, 2000. Adopted by the National Endowment for the Humanities as the standard for conducting oral history. Available at www.oralhistory.org/do-oral-history/oral-history-evaluation-guidelines.

Pamphlet Series

The resources below are available for nominal cost from the Oral History Association, Dickinson College, P.O. Box 1773, Carlisle, PA 17013. Learn more at www.oralhistory.org/publications.

“Oral History and the Law,” by John A. Neuenschwander, 3d ed., 2002.

“Oral History Projects in Your Classroom,” by Linda P. Wood, 2001.

“Using Oral History in Community History Projects,” by Laurie Mercier and Madeline Buckendorf, 2007.

“Oral History for the Family Historian: A Basic Guide,” by Linda Barnickel, 2006.



The THC's former Chief Historian Dan Utley addresses attendees at an oral history training workshop in Laredo.

SELECT WORLD WAR II ORAL HISTORY RESOURCES

American Airpower Heritage Museum

Oral History Program

Visit: 9600 Wright Dr., Midland, Texas

Mail: P.O. Box 62000, Midland, TX 79711-2000

Contact: 432.563.1000; oralhistory@aahm.org

URL: www.airpowermuseum.org/oralhistory

The museum has a collection of more than 4,200 oral histories from World War II veterans of aviation. Museum personnel conduct interviews on site and offer, by request, an oral history kit with instructions for conducting interviews.

Baylor University Institute for Oral History

Visit: Suite 304, Carroll Library Building,

1429 South Fifth St., Waco, Texas

Mail: 1 Bear Pl. Unit 97271, Waco, TX 76798-7271

Contact: 254.710.3437; BUIOH@baylor.edu

URL: www.baylor.edu/oral_history

From the Institute's home page, click on "Search our collection" to explore Baylor's oral history interviews, which contain information on military history from World War I through the Vietnam War, including materials on the home front and prisoners of war, as well as the testimony of veterans. Transcripts are available for online viewing by request.

Baylor University – The Texas Collection

Visit: Carroll Library Building,

1429 South Fifth St., Waco, Texas

Mail: 1 Bear Pl. Unit 97142, Waco, TX 76798-9712

Contact: 254.710.1268; txcoll@baylor.edu

URL: www.baylor.edu/lib/texas

The archive of military oral histories includes more than a dozen interviews and information on the 56th Evacuation Hospital in World War II, as well as interviews from World War I veterans and prisoners of war from Vietnam. Available by appointment.

Library of Congress Veterans History Project

Visit: American Folklife Center, 101 Independence Avenue SE, Washington, D.C.

Mail: 101 Independence Ave. SE, Washington, D.C. 20549-4615

Contact: 202.707.4916, (toll-free) 888.371.5848; vohp@loc.gov

URL: www.loc.gov/vets

The Veterans History Project is sponsored by the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress. The ever-growing database of oral histories and submitted stories covers all branches of service and conflicts from World War I on. The "List of Official Partners" page, at www.loc.gov/vets/partners/partners.html, includes links to veterans and military organizations, libraries and archives, museums, oral history programs, universities and civic organizations cooperating with the project.

National Museum of the Pacific War

Visit: 340 East Main St., Fredericksburg, Texas

Mail: 340 E. Main St., Fredericksburg, TX 78624

Contact: Sarah Walch, Archivist and Librarian, 830.997.8600 x264. walch@nimitzfoundation.org

URL: <http://www.pacificwarmuseum.org/get-involved/oral-history/>

The museum has had an active oral history program since 1988, with more than 4,000 interviews. About half of the interviews are transcribed, and they are available to researchers by request or appointment. Interviews may be conducted in person or by telephone.

Stephen F. Austin State University – East Texas Research Center

Visit: Steen Library (Second Floor), Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas

Mail: Box 13055 SFASU Station, Nacogdoches, TX 75962-3055

Contact: 936.468.4100; asketrc@sfasu.edu

URL: <http://libweb.sfasu.edu/proser/etrc/collections/orlhstry>

Provides searchable database of oral history interviews with East Texans on World War I and World War II. Available to researchers by appointment.



Texas A&M University Military History Oral History Collection

Visit: Cushing Memorial Library, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas
Mail: Cushing Memorial Library, 5000 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-5000
Contact: 979.845.1951; cushing-library@tamu.edu
URL: <http://libraryasp.tamu.edu/cushing/collectn/oralhist>

The collection has more than 90 oral histories collected since 1980, some transcribed and all open, covering World War II through the Vietnam War. The “Aggies to Generals” collection includes interviews with alumni who became general officers and retired in Texas. Another collection records the stories of survivors of Bataan and Corregidor. Available by appointment. To contact a curator, visit the Cushing Library web site at <http://cushing.library.tamu.edu>.

Texas A&M University – Kingsville Veterans History Project

Visit: South Texas Archives, Jernigan Library, 1050 University Boulevard, Kingsville, Texas
Mail: South Texas Archives, Jernigan Library, TAMU–Kingsville, 700 University Blvd. Stop 197, Kingsville, TX 78363-8202
Contact: 361.593.4154; Director, Sandra Rexroat, sandra.rexroat@tamuk.edu
URL: <http://archives.tamuk.edu/release.htm>

The TAMU–Kingsville Veterans History Project website provides forms to download that assist in donating veteran and home-front interviews to their collection. More than 200 of the interviews in the TAMU–Kingsville oral history collection pertain to World War II; some are in English, and some are in Spanish. None are transcribed, but all are available to researchers by appointment.

Texas Military Forces Museum

Visit: Camp Mabry, 2200 West 35th St., Austin, Texas
Mail: P.O. Box 5218, Austin, TX 78763-5218
Contact: 512.782.5659; museum@tx.ngb.army.mil
URL: www.texasmilitaryforcesmuseum.org



Located at Camp Mabry in Austin, the museum is dedicated to the history of all the military forces of Texas since the Texas Revolution. Museum exhibits include the 36th Division in Europe, the 112th Cavalry in the Pacific and the 124th Cavalry in China-Burma-India. The museum web site includes histories of Texas National Guard units in World War II at www.texasmilitaryforcesmuseum.org/wiiunit.htm.

Texas Tech University Southwest Collection Oral History Program

Visit: Southwest Collection & Special Library, 15th and Detroit, Lubbock, Texas
Mail: Texas Tech University Libraries, Southwest Collection, Box 41041, Lubbock, TX 79409-1041
Contact: 806.742.3749; Oral historian, David Marshall, david.marshall@ttu.edu
URL: www.swco.ttu.edu/Oral_History

Military history is a current project of the Oral History Program. Men and women affected by the war at home and abroad are encouraged to provide personal accounts to document this important period in history. The Southwest Collection is the repository for the program’s oral history collection of more than 2,800 interviews. No interviews are transcribed, but all have abstracts. The Southwest Collection also holds the statewide chapter records of the American Ex-Prisoners of War. From the program’s web site, click on “Oral History Collection” to search oral histories by name or keyword. Oral histories available by appointment.

Also at Texas Tech’s Southwest Collection is the **Vietnam Center and Archives Oral History Project**. From the center’s home page at www.vietnam.ttu.edu/oralhistory, link to instructions on participating as an interviewee. The site also provides an online oral history workshop. You may listen to or read the center’s interview collection in the Virtual Vietnam Archive. Contact vaoralhistory@ttu.edu, or call 806.742.9010.

Texas Veterans Land Board

Voices of Veterans Oral History Project

Visit: Stephen F. Austin Building, 1700 North Congress Ave., Room 800, Austin, Texas

Mail: Texas Veterans Land Board, P.O. Box 12873, Austin, TX 78711-2873

Contact: 512.936.1948; (toll free) 800.252.VETS (8387); vlbinfo@glo.state.tx.us

URL: www.voicesofveterans.org

The Voices of Veterans oral history program seeks to record the stories of Texas veterans and archive the transcripts in the Office of Veterans Records for future researchers, historians, genealogists and the general public. The program is open to any Texas veteran who served in combat from World War I to the present. Interviews are by phone or in person in Austin. You may volunteer to participate as an interviewee or interviewer. Also on the web site, you may listen to recordings or read transcripts of World War II interviews and view photos donated by veterans.

Texas Woman's University Libraries

Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) Collection

Visit: TWU Libraries Woman's Collection, Blagg-Huey Library, off Bell Avenue, Denton, Texas

Mail: P.O. Box 425528, Denton, TX 76204-5528

Contact: 940.898.3751; womansc@twu.edu

URL: www.twu.edu/library/wasp.asp

The web site provides histories of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) and Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS). Search the digital collection of almost 400 oral history interviews wherein interviewees describe their personal backgrounds, interest in flying, army training, various bases and post-war activities. Transcripts of some of the interviews are available online, and others are available in circulating copies through interlibrary loan. Also, explore the virtual collection of original documents, military records and artifacts, as well as an extensive digital photograph collection.

U.S. Military Academy

West Point Center for Oral History

Mail: West Point Center for Oral History, Department of History, U.S. Military Academy, West Point, NY 10996

Contact: Todd Brewster, director, todd.brewster@usma.edu

URL: www.westpointcoh.org

The West Point Center for Oral History will be the premier oral history archive of the story of the American soldier, in both war and peace. It will serve as a powerful learning tool for West Point cadets and as an important research center for historians and the general public. Interview subjects will range from veterans of World War II through soldiers returning from the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Center for Oral History will exist largely online, with high-definition video and digital audio files, easing access for everyone from campus cadets to scholars, journalists and interested students half a world away.

University of North Texas University (UNT)

Archives Oral History Collection

Visit: Willis Library, Room 430, 1506 Highland, Denton, Texas

Mail: 1155 Union Circle #305190, Denton, TX 76203-5017

Contact: 940.565.2766; University archivist, Michelle Mears, michelle.mears@unt.edu

URL: www.library.unt.edu/ohp/collection.htm

The UNT Oral History Program has deposited in the University Archives more than 1,000 interviews—all transcribed—on World War II, focusing on Pearl Harbor survivors, former prisoners of war, the Pacific naval war, the air offensive in Europe and Holocaust survivors. From the web site, you may search the index of interviews and obtain information to view transcripts in the archives in Denton or purchase a photocopy of a transcript.



University of Texas at Austin
U.S. Latino & Latina World War II
Oral History Project

Visit: Benson Latin American Collection,
Sid Richardson Hall 1.108, UT Austin, Austin, Texas
Mail: School of Journalism, UT Austin,
1 University Station A1000, Austin, TX 76712
Contact: 512.471.1924; latinoarchives@
www.utexas.edu
URL: www.lib.utexas.edu/ww2latinos

The project has interviewed more than 500 Latinos/Latinas from the World War II generation. The archives, comprised of the interview recordings — most of them on videotape, as well as digital copies of photographs lent to the project and other supporting materials — are being prepared for transfer to the Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection and the Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin. The project will continue to accept interviews and encourages the interviewing of family and friends. The web site provides training for conducting interviews and submitting them to the project and invites the public to browse through hundreds of World War II narratives composed from the oral history interviews.

University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP)
Institute of Oral History

Visit: Burges Hall, Room 415, 500 West University Ave., El Paso, Texas
Mail: 500 W. University Ave., El Paso, TX 79968-0532
Contact: 915.747.7238; ohistory@utep.edu
URL: http://academics.utep.edu/oralhistory

In operation since 1972, the institute's collection represents one of the largest border-related oral history projects in the United States. One third of the interviews are in Spanish. Transcripts for about a dozen interviews gathered for the World War II: Border Home Front project are available online. Copies of all oral history tapes, transcripts, indexes and summaries are housed in the Special Collections Department, University Library, UTEP. The public is invited to read transcripts and listen to tape recordings there. Search the entire collection of interviews from the Oral History Digital Commons at http://digitalcommons.utep.edu/oral_history.

University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA)
Institute of Texan Cultures

Visit: Second Floor, Room 3.04.13, 801 South Bowie Street, San Antonio, TX 78205-3296
Mail: 801 S. Bowie St., San Antonio, TX 78205
Contact: 210.458.2228; ITCLibrary@UTSA.edu
URL: www.texancultures.com/library/histories.html

The Institute of Texan Cultures Museum Library is a satellite of the UTSA Library. It houses more than 600 interviews, some of which relate to World War II topics. Most are transcribed, and the public can purchase copies of transcripts and recordings. Among selected oral history transcripts online is that of Brigadier General Lillian Dunlap, a San Antonio native who joined the Army Nurse Corps and served for 33 years.

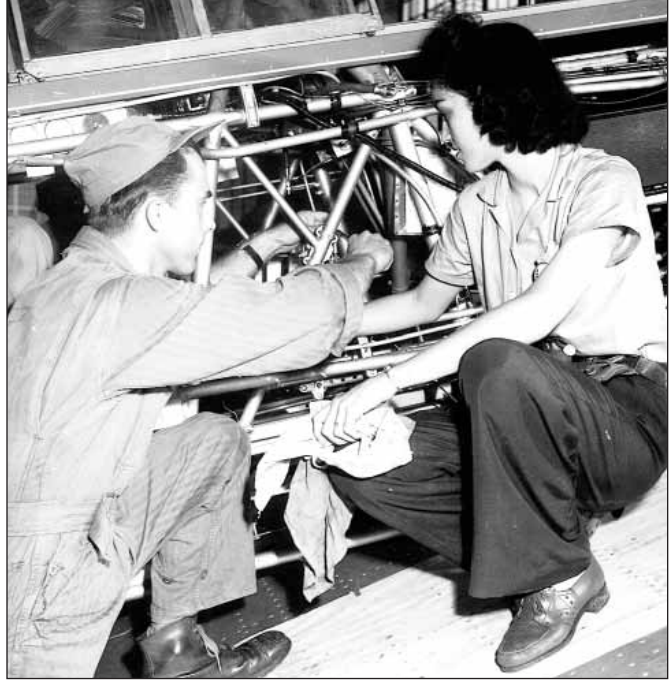
Your local County Historical Commission is often a fine source for local oral histories.

URL: www.thc.state.tx.us/links/lkchc.shtml



Vintage military aircraft fly over the Texas State Capitol to celebrate the launch of the THC's World War II initiative on September 2, 2005.

World War II affected the entire population. It required the unification and mobilization of Americans as never before, resulting in new employment and civic opportunities for historically marginalized groups, including women, African Americans, Latinos and the poor.



Mrs. Josephine Ledesma teaches a soldier how to repair the fuselage of an airplane at Randolph Field, San Antonio, in January 1942. Photo courtesy U.S. Latino & Latina WWII Oral History Project.



New units were organized as the number of minorities entering the military rose. The 2nd Cavalry Division, an all-African American unit assigned to Fort Clark, was the largest mounted formation ever stationed in Texas.

The U.S. 2nd Cavalry Division, an African American unit, assembles at Fort Clark. Photo courtesy Kinney County Historical Commission/Friends of the Fort Clark National Register Historic District.



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories

www.thc.state.tx.us

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