

Oral
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in **New Zealand**

National Oral History Association of New Zealand

TE KETE KŌRERO-A-WAHA O TE MOTU



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Oral History in New Zealand is an annual publication of the National Oral History Association of New Zealand, Te Kete Kōrero-a-Waha o Te Motu (NOHANZ).

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*Front cover images: Dick Feathers in the cab of his locomotive.
Back cover: Lynne Hawkins in uniform, and Bruce Goodhall as a young man in service in Vietnam.*

Editorial

This year's issue of Oral History in New Zealand contains another interesting mixture of refereed articles and reports which reflect the lively and diverse field of oral history in this country.

In their two articles, Rangimarie Mahuika and Pataka Moore, Caleb Royal and Alex Barnes demonstrate how oral history interviews can be used to maintain and strengthen iwi history, and argue that oral history interviewing was essential for the success of their research. Rangimarie compares two research projects she has been involved with; each involved interviewing members of Ngati Rangiwewehi. She examines how the different approaches of the two projects elicited different types of interviews and explains how important it was for the success of each project to consult and discuss ideas and approaches with the participants.

Pataka, Caleb and Alex worked with Ngati Raukawa elders to find out how the environment and fishing techniques in their iwi area had changed over the last 80 years. The article

explores the knowledge of elders in relation to a complex web of freshwater, estuarine and marine ecosystems at risk of environmental depletion.

Susan Fowke gives a candid and perceptive insight into the life of a freelance oral historian in a piece based on her presentation to a NOHANZ conference. Sarah Gaitanos reminds us that it is important to question our sources, even when we are interviewing them on such emotionally intense topics such as Holocaust experiences, and Claire Hall writes of the effect of war on the families of those who have served, using material recorded during the Vietnam War Oral History Project.

Loreen Brehaut reports on her project interviewing Picton train drivers, and in the process allows her interviewees to illuminate both their ways of working and the changes in their occupation in their own words.

As always, we welcome contributions to future issues of the journal.

Megan Hutching
Alison J. Laurie

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We welcome contributions, whether long or short articles, book, documentary or exhibition reviews, reports of meetings or conferences, or work in progress. Long articles are anonymously peer-reviewed.

The deadline for contributions to the 2012 issue of the journal is 30 June. A Guide for Contributors is available from the editors and on the NOHANZ website. Please send your contributions to one of the editors below.

If you are interested in becoming a peer reviewer for the long articles, please contact one of us.

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Tōku Rangiwewehitanga: Oral history as empowerment in community research

RANGIMARIE MAHUIKA

As an approach to recording and interpreting the words of individuals and groups, oral history has a number of uses within Māori and iwi communities. For a people whose historical consciousness was transmitted and maintained primarily in oral forms, oral history has an immediate relevance that you might think would automatically avail itself to tribal views and understandings of the past. Yet this is not necessarily the case. More than simply a methodology for capturing the sound of an interactive interview or narrative, oral history – particularly within iwi communities – has the potential to assist many of our underlying aspirations and visions. This paper explores how oral history, as not only an approach, but as a theoretically grounded process, might further enable Māori and iwi research.¹

I draw here on my own experiences with my iwi, Ngāti Rangiwewehi, and two specific iwi research projects. The first was my own Master's research, looking at the potential of an iwi-based curriculum as a tool for revitalizing and rejuvenating Rangiwewehi culture and identity.² The second was a Crown Forestry Rental Trust (CFRT)-funded oral history project used to inform the writing of the Ngāti Rangiwewehi Traditional Historical Report as part of our Treaty of Waitangi claims research.³ In considering the potential that oral history offers to tribal research, this paper also takes note of the political, cultural, and social nuances within the iwi that challenged and complemented oral history as a viable and rich approach, while simultaneously refining and reconfiguring it within the mātauranga of our world views.

One of the tremendous strengths of oral history has been its ability to give voice to those who have in the past been forced into the role of historical objects. History has traditionally been written and recorded by objective and impartial

professionals who could tell the tales without the 'unhelpful' problem of being involved in the emotions or experiences of an event. The 'objects' of these histories were then in the unenviable situation of reading and learning the untruths and misinformation perpetuated by the 'experts'. They read, for example, that Māori travelled to New Zealand in a single 'great fleet'; that they colonized the Moriori, who were here before them; that they are descended from noble savages – although savages, none the less, and that they eventually had to succumb to the civilizing and superior influences of the British colonizing force.⁴

Oral history provides a potential tool to empower these once silent 'objects' of history, to recast their role and rewrite their scripts, and to more fully and more accurately represent their stories, their experiences and their knowledge. Oral history is able to bring new light and understanding to iwi and Māori epistemologies as articulated, for example, in our pepeha:

Ko Tiheia te maunga

Ko Atwahou te awa

Ko Rotorua-nui-a-Kahumatamomoe te moana

Ko Tarimano te papakāhatu

Ko Tawakeheimoa, Ko Te Aongahoro ka puta ko

Rangiwewehi

*Ko Ngāti Rangiwewehi te iwi*⁵

In the context of these two research projects, this is who we are, an affirmation of identity that connects Rangiwewehi physically and spiritually to the whenua, to our wai and puna, and to our ancestors who have occupied these sites since the arrival of our people to Aotearoa. These individuals and places are vital, because within them lie our histories, our tikanga and mātauranga – the essential components which have influenced and shaped this research.

Rangimarie Mahuika is a research assistant in the Te Kotahitanga Research Unit at Waikato University Te Whare Wananga o Waikato.

The Master's project draws on the life narrative interviews with 18 members of Ngāti Rangiwewehi to provide insights into who we are as a people. These insights were used as a foundation from which to consider how a potential iwi-based curriculum might prove a useful tool for the revitalisation of the culture and heritage of Ngāti Rangiwewehi. Stephen Kemmis has argued in his book, *Curriculum Theorizing: Beyond reproduction theory*, that we 'cannot define curriculum without some definition of the world view within which our definition is comprehensible.'⁶ This study has been the first step in the process of considering the conception of a Rangiwewehi worldview, and how the mātauranga embodied within that worldview might be engaged and developed within a curriculum, as a means of empowering and revitalizing our Rangiwewehitanga. As such, the thesis, although embracing theories and methodologies beyond our geographical boundaries, sets its compass within the intellectual and epistemological frameworks of home, and within a knowledge system that amplifies our aspirations, by consciously shifting Ngāti Rangiwewehitanga to the fore.

The way in which the project was conceived, developed and carried out were all shaped and influenced by the needs, desires, attitudes and beliefs of the iwi. This was secured through the establishment of an iwi supervisory body which allowed two major things to occur. The first was that it provided a safety net for me, as a young iwi researcher, and a sounding board from which advice could be sought and offered. Second, and more importantly, it secured iwi direction of the study to ensure the goals and aspirations as articulated in the thesis remained aligned with those of Ngāti Rangiwewehi. The iwi supervisory group oversaw the selection of participants, provided advice on appropriate supervisors and methodology, and gave vital feedback on the structure and content of draft presentations and the thesis itself. This meant that our theory and method could be altered and adapted, and supported and bolstered by frameworks and approaches from beyond our boundaries, to ensure the best possible means of achieving our goals and aims.

While a similar iwi supervisory body oversaw the running and direction of the Crown Forest Rental Trust-funded oral history project, the iwi did not have the same levels of control as they did in the Master's project. The CFRT contractual

obligations, and the complex and labile nature of Treaty claims work, meant the project had very limited timeframes, over which the iwi had little influence. There was only three months to organize, carry out and transcribe as many oral history interviews with our kaumātua as possible. The interviews had to be made available for the historical report writer to complete the report by the end of the same three month period.

The requirement to transcribe the interviews posed an interesting theoretical dilemma that was consciously avoided in the Master's research. In the final thesis document transcribed excerpts were used but, in an effort to privilege the orality of the sources, the digital recordings have been placed in the iwi archive with indexes rather than transcripts. It was also originally intended that the oral versions of the excerpts used within the thesis would be collated on a compact disc which was to accompany the written text. Due to time constraints this was not completed before the thesis submission date, but the compact disc will accompany copies of the thesis held in the iwi archive.

While it may seem self-explanatory to suggest that oral history relies on oral sources, the point is still worth making. Oral history theorists have argued that orality is lost when interviews are transcribed. Alessandro Portelli explains this point: 'The transcription turns aural objects into visual ones, which inevitably implies changes and interpretation'.⁷ The tone, volume and rhythm of our speech all convey meaning that cannot easily be recorded in a transcript. Similarly, the use of punctuation requires that judgments be made on grammatical rules which we seldom follow in every day speech. These additions can significantly alter the flow and meaning in the narrative. More important than punctuation and grammar, however, is the richness and meaning that can be lost in the conversion of the oral source to written transcript.⁸ Hence our emphasis on working from the oral source.

In my Master's research the privileging of the participants' voices created a more active sense of their involvement and influence. Simultaneously, I became aware of my own responsibilities as the researcher, to the participants and the iwi. In light of the iwi intentions to create a digital archive, the weight placed on preserving the oral nature of the sources is significant. Indexing the recordings rather than transcribing them ensures that later researchers and iwi members must use

the oral recordings, rather than merely reading the transcripts which would have been archived with them.⁹ In this way the participants are truly given voice, not simply throughout this project, but each time their recordings are returned to. Furthermore, ensuring reliance on the oral recordings humanizes the research participants, because listening to their voices discussing their experiences brings their stories to life, and allows their personalities to come through in a way that cannot happen in written transcripts.

This issue was highlighted during the course of the CFRT-funded project. When the project was complete, and the report had been written, only myself and the two other researchers involved in carrying out the interviews had listened to the interview recordings. This was partly due to the significant time constraints and the realities of research projects such as these, but it also illustrates the complexities involved in attempting to articulate our *tino rangatiratanga* within a project overseen and directed by individuals or organizations outside of Ngāti Rangiwewehi.

That is not to say that negotiation of our own iwi interests and those directed by the contractual requirements did not take place. Within the Master's project, oral history life narrative interviews were preferred for the way in which they encourage participant-led interviews, ensuring interviewees could talk about the things of importance to them with as little prompting and probing from the interviewer as possible. What the participants chose to share would then direct and influence the shaping of the research. We anticipated that, as the participants spoke about their lives and experiences, they would also inevitably discuss the things that contributed to their identity as Ngāti Rangiwewehi. In discussing their lives, we assumed that they would talk about the ways in which being Rangiwewehi had influenced and impacted on them and their experiences. From this foundation, we believed that we would be able to draw out, not only the things that contribute to who we are as Ngāti Rangiwewehi, but what we would need to know and learn in order to strengthen our 'Rangiwewehitanga'. From these understandings, we sought insights into the ways a curriculum might assist us in our future goals and aspirations.

The CFRT oral history project, in contrast, was initiated in response to gaps in the research identified by an earlier research project in

conjunction with the Office of Treaty Settlements. As a result, the research team was provided with a specified list of topics necessary to fill the gaps. This list was constructed by the Office of Treaty Settlements and further supplemented by additions from the iwi legal team and the historian working under contract to the CFRT. We were then asked to develop a suitable list of questions to ensure that the interviews would record the required information.

Such an approach has obvious problems. Asking specific questions aimed at specialist subject areas severely restricts the number of potential participants who might be able to answer the questions, not to mention considerations around whether or not they wish to share the information. That the pool of possible participants was already relatively limited caused further problems. We were also conscious of the need to avoid setting up an interview situation where the *mana* and *mātauranga* of our *kaumātua* might be called into question, should they be unable or unwilling to answer the detailed list of questions. In negotiating these issues, the researchers emphasized the problems of attempting to ask the long list of questions, and explained that we needed to be more flexible if we wanted co-operation and support from our old people. As a compromise, we circulated the list of questions amongst the potential participants, and then gave them to the participants to consider at the beginning of the interview. We then followed more of a life narrative approach by asking participants to tell us about their lives. Where it was appropriate, we linked into those topics identified as necessary for the CFRT report.

From our perspective this was preferable, as we were simultaneously able to gather much of the information necessary for the CFRT contract and meet iwi desires. We saw it as a valuable opportunity – in conjunction with the Master's project – to record some of our *kaumātua* and *kuia*, and to document and ensure the retention of their stories and some of our history as Rangiwewehi. The oral history recordings provided a strong foundation for the development of the iwi digital archives, and simultaneously created a precious *taonga* for the families of participants and the wider iwi.

It is clear that by using oral history we are able to present the participants as individuals, but it also allows us to distinguish Rangiwewehi

voices from those of the mainstream. Oral history helps us to develop a greater awareness of our unique identities, as an alternative narrative to that of a homogenous Māori identity. Graham Hingangaroa Smith has discussed the tendency to over-generalize our stories. In providing specific examples, oral history can support us to 'sort out what is romanticized and what is real', providing a basis from which we can 'engage in a genuine critique of where we really are'.¹⁰ In a very real way then, oral history projects at whānau, hapu, and iwi level can serve to illuminate those aspects of our culture which we share, as well as those things that make us each distinct. A central feature of the Master's research was to use life narrative interviews to see how members of the iwi perceived their distinctive identity as Rangiwēwhi, and yet the interviews across both of the projects also illustrated the diversity that exists even within our own relatively small iwi.

Oral history has long been recognized as:
*[a] powerful tool for discovering, exploring, and evaluating...how people make sense of their past, how they connect individual experience and its social context, how the past becomes a part of the present, and how people use it to interpret their lives and the world around them.*¹¹

In attempts to utilize this powerful tool, many projects are carried out without any reference to the significant body of oral history literature and theory. It is the way in which the interviews are conducted, the way in which the narratives are used, and the theory which informs the method that makes oral history such a powerful approach. As practitioners of this research method – and art form – it is our responsibility to ensure that we, and others, not only understand the emancipatory potential of oral history methodology, but also the truly transformative possibilities that exist within the theories that underlie these approaches.

Oral history has provided a unique avenue to explore Rangiwēwhi ways of knowing, with the 'raw material' of oral history, consisting of the essential 'expressions and representations of culture' being articulated by interview participants.¹² Perhaps the value of using an oral history approach lies in its ability to centralize these explicit Rangiwēwhi understandings within the study, acknowledging our need and desire to reclaim and own more fully the right to define, on our own terms, our past, present and future. The recordings of life narrative interviews, and the

theories and approaches that inform them, have provided a unique opportunity to understand and revise our history, on our terms.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ This paper is an adaptation of a paper presented at the National Oral History Association Conference, 'Using Oral History in Communities', Wellington, 2009.
- ² Rangimārie Mahuika, 'Anā ko te riu o Tane Mahuta: Possibilities and Challenges in a Ngāti Rangiwēwhi curriculum', unpublished Masters thesis, University of Waikato, 2011.
- ³ Anthony Bidois, Tepora Emery, Rikihana Hancock, Rangimārie Mahuika, Harata Paterson, & Dennis Polamalu, *Ngāti Rangiwēwhi Historical report*, Awahou, 2009.
- ⁴ Russell Bishop has discussed how research conducted in the early twentieth century 'grossly misrepresented the complexities of Māori history in order to present a simple, commodified history suitable for consumption within the compartmentalised education system developed by and for the majority culture'. Russell Bishop, 'Māori people's concerns about research into their lives', *History of Education Review*, 26(1), p. 26. For the specific examples highlighted here, see James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders, from Polynesian Settlement to the end of the Nineteenth Century*, Hawaii, 2002; K. R. Howe, 'Ideas of Māori origins', *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, www.teara.govt.nz, last accessed 15 July 2011; Arthur Thomson, *The Story of New Zealand, Past and Present, Savage and Civilized*, London, 1859, p. 61; Melanie Wall, 'Stereotypical constructions of the Māori 'Race' in the media', *New Zealand Geographer*, 53 (2) pp.40-46.
- ⁵ This is one abbreviated version of our pepeha. For a fuller version along with an explanation of the places and people it refers to, see Bidois, et al, *Ngāti Rangiwēwhi Historical report*, pp.3-4.
- ⁶ Stephen Kemmis, *Curriculum Theorizing: Beyond Reproduction Theory*, Victoria, 1986, p.33.
- ⁷ Alessandro Portelli, 'What makes oral history different', in Robert Perks & Alistair Thompson, eds, *The Oral History Reader*, London, 1998, p.64.
- ⁸ Megan Hutching, 'The distance between voice and transcript', in Anna Green & Megan Hutching, eds, *Remembering: Writing Oral History*, Auckland, 2004.
- ⁹ Indexing requires that, rather than write out the interview ad verbatim, the researcher records the general topics of discussion, including mention of names, places, stories etc at regular time intervals throughout the recording. Their purpose is to allow researchers to know where in the recording they can find certain information while ensuring a reliance on the oral source rather than a written one.
- ¹⁰ Graham Smith, 'Protecting and Respecting Indigenous Knowledge', in Marie Battiste, ed, *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision*, Vancouver, 2000, p.212.
- ¹¹ Michael Frisch, cited in Anna Green, 'Oral history and history', in Green & Hutching, *Remembering*, p.3.
- ¹² Luisa Passerini, 'Work ideology and consensus under Italian Fascism', in Perks & Thompson, *The Oral History Reader*, p.19.

Environmental oral history research with elders: Restoring the food basket

PĀTAKA MOORE | CALEB ROYAL | ALEX BARNES

Previous Māori-based research has demonstrated that the Māori people of Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga¹ are ardent about the restoration, protection and sustainable management of their natural and physical environments. The interconnection between land, fresh water and the ocean has been a vital source of food and a cornerstone of local identity building. Over successive generations, elders from Ngāti Raukawa have used environmental spaces as places of education: passing on traditions about sustainability, forging a healthy respect for the environment and using engagement with their natural setting as a vehicle for social and cultural development.

This article is based on a recent publication, *Te Kete Kai o Ōtaki Oral History Project*, which was a customary research report for New Zealand's Ministry of Fisheries by Moore, Royal & Barnes published in 2010. In this project, we worked alongside Ngāti Raukawa *kaumātua* to identify a complex web of freshwater, estuarine and marine ecosystems at risk of environmental depletion in their tribal area. Working with these elders offered a contribution to a broader layer of indigenous knowledge regarding the sustainability of these fisheries and water bodies.

In discussing these important environmental issues with Ngāti Raukawa elders four themes emerged:

Taonga: recognising natural treasures. An account of the traditional fish stocks, takes and species caught in this network of streams and marine environment

Kaitiakitanga and *manaakitanga*: care for the environment and its people. An exploration of the traditional fish management techniques, some of which are particular to the tribal area

Mātauranga: intergenerational learning. An

examination of the passing down of knowledge pertaining to these freshwater, estuarine, and marine environments

Mauri: acknowledging the life force of all elements. A snapshot of the last half-century mechanical management of freshwater, estuarine environs and some of their impacts on local fisheries.

Taonga, *kaitiakitanga*, *manaakitanga*, *mātauranga* and *mauri* are interdependent Māori philosophies and values inherited from Māori ancestors.² These philosophies and values are used as a framework for analysis of the reflections and stories gathered from the elders. More importantly, these cultural markers connect naturally to the lives of those *kaumātua* who generously shared their observations of the changing nature of their marine and estuarine environments.

This article offers some practical suggestions from *kaumātua* regarding ways to restore integrity and health to what was affectionately referred to as their 'playground' or 'food cupboard'. The interviews were used to inform the development of *iwi* and *hapū* environmental management plans for lakes, streams, and marine environments.

Pātaka Moore: Pātaka's background and passion is in Māori environmental research, project management and hapū advancement.

Caleb Royal: Caleb is actively engaged with his hapū and iwi, and continues to advocate for the improvement of environmental bottom lines. He and Pātaka are connected to Te Wananga o Raukawa.

Alex Barnes: A Pākehā, who was raised bilingually in Tauranga Moana, Alex works at the intersection between environmental research and community development.

METHODOLOGY & METHODS

The oral history project utilised a methodology and methods based on research that promotes *iwi*, *hapū* and *whānau* development models promoted by Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal, Monty Soutar, Hirini Moko Mead, Parekāwhia McLean and others.³ It used a *kaupapa Māori* methodology that offers a specific ethical approach: undertaking research by Māori, with Māori, for Māori, under Māori ways of knowing and doing. The legitimacy of this methodology is embedded in research generating primary benefits and knowledge for Māori.⁴

Since British and colonial settlement, Māori have found innovative ways to foster wellbeing through cultural, political, social and economic means. What has come to be known as kaupapa Māori has offered a platform for such innovative activities to occur. There are multiple understandings of what constitutes kaupapa Māori. The following broad definitions offer helpful understandings. Nepe describes kaupapa Māori in the following way:

Māori society has its own distinctive knowledge base. This knowledge base has its origins in the metaphysical realm and emanates as a kaupapa Māori 'body of knowledge' accumulated by experiences through history, of the Māori people. This kaupapa Māori knowledge is the systematic organisation of beliefs, experience, understandings and interpretations of the interaction of Māori people upon Māori people, and Māori people upon the world.⁵

The Institute of Indigenous Research and Te Rōpū Rangahau Hauora a Eru Pomare discuss the concept of 'mātauranga Māori' and its relationship with 'kaupapa Māori':

Mātauranga Māori is created by Māori to explain their experience of the world. Mātauranga Māori was traditionally created with the view that the earth was Papatūanuku, the sky was Ranginui and the world in which we currently reside is called Te Ao Mārama. Mātauranga Māori, like Kaupapa Māori, is not new. It has been created and maintained for centuries in this country. What is new is to see it in contrast to other disciplines of knowledge, including Western forms of knowledge. The similarities with kaupapa Māori are evident.⁶

As a primarily Ngāti Raukawa research team, we were integrally involved in working with kaumātua and other environmental researchers within the *iwi*

to produce kaupapa Māori research findings. The last 30 years has seen a proliferation of kaupapa Māori theorising and practice.⁷ Arguably, these approaches have challenged and transformed eurocentric domains of education, health, justice and local government.⁸ These primarily mono-cultural sectors and institutions have needed to respond to poor Māori outcomes, which are varied and complex. Moewaka-Barnes discusses how the loss of Māori wellbeing is inherently related to the loss of lands and the diminishing interaction of Māori with the natural world:

A common finding in health research in Aotearoa is that, even when socio-economic factors are taken into account, disparities between Māori and non-Māori persist. Explanations for the poor health status of Māori when compared to non-Māori are many and varied; ranging from factors inherent to Māori to external disadvantage, particularly the ongoing role that colonisation plays. Part of this is the extent to which Māori feel that their ways of knowing and being are reflected and enabled by the wider society in which they live. Loss of land and the disruption of Māori relationships with land are argued as important determinants of health and wellbeing.⁹

Because this research initiative used a kaupapa Māori conceptual framework and incorporated Māori cultural research methods, it has enabled the stories of kaumātua regarding the changing environment to be made explicit. In this sense, the research contributes to Royal's analysis of indigenous knowledge, which is partially concerned with searching 'for better relationships between human communities and the natural world':

This theme arises from the deep 'call' within indigenous knowledge which sees humankind as part of the natural order rather than superior to it. From this idea arises much of the substance of indigenous knowledge such as the notion of the natural world as the embodiment of knowledge, the natural world as a teacher for the human person and that life reaches its fullness when the natural world seems to 'live in' and 'speak into' the consciousness of the human being and their community.¹⁰

Because of its kaupapa Māori and oral history methodological basis, the project used qualitative, semi-structured, in-depth interview techniques. Such research is used widely in national and international oral history field. These methods were conducive to working with Ngāti Raukawa elders,

as they allowed for a natural conversation to occur between us as researchers/family members, and elders as identifiable tribal leaders. This approach encouraged the following ethical foundations in how we worked with our elders:

Manaakitanga: ensuring elders needs are met

Whakapapa: acknowledgement of our genealogical connection to elders, which strengthens relationships

Rangatiratanga: assertion of family and tribal self-determination through involvement in the research process

Pākekatanga: supporting and promoting local and specific information.

Upholding these values was vital in progressing the research to completion. A letter of support from Te Rūnanga o Raukawa – the local Māori council – helped pave the way for this project to engage with local elders. Individual elders were contacted and made aware of the project's aims, objectives and key research questions. It was explained that they could withhold any information they did not feel comfortable sharing or made public. In total 17 elders were interviewed. Three of the 17 were *kuia* (elderly women) and the remainder were *koroua* (elderly men). Two elders requested that their information not be used in any final publications for personal reasons, which was respected. We ensured that each elder worked with members of the research team who they knew and felt comfortable with. As a result, we trained another iwi member to join the research team and assist in the oral history interview process.

Interviews ranged from 30 to 90 minutes. Koha were offered to each elder in recognition for their time and participation. The interviews were recorded on a Sony TCM5000-EV cassette recorder, using a table microphone. Once the interview was complete the audiotape was stored in a secure location, it was copied to ensure its integrity, and subsequently abstracted for themes. These abstracts were then shared with elders to check for accuracy and legitimacy. Once these were confirmed as an accurate representation of the conversation, the themes that emerged were placed within an inherited values framework. Records of the interview were then deposited into the Māori tertiary institution – Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa – and the National Library.

GENERAL REFLECTIONS

Fishing is the way people look after whānau. When government puts bans on, this comes into conflict with such tikanga: looking after koroua and kuia.

Previous Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga freshwater and marine projects have recorded histories drawn from the entire tribal area (stretching over 100 kilometres in length), whereas this oral history project focused on the stories of indigenous elders and their observations of the freshwater, estuarine and marine ecosystems in the local area. These streams, lakes, and this section of ocean were once a major feature of the cultural landscape, and were regarded as 'Te Kete Kai o Ōtaki – the food basket of Ōtaki'.

The water bodies, including the ocean, were so abundant with life that thousands of people relied upon them, year round, for dozens of species of fish, birds, and many other sources of food. Anecdotal evidence, and the evidence produced in the oral history project, suggest that this has ceased to be the case. Based on the testimonies of local elders, the evidence in relation to the changes that freshwater and marine environments have undergone over the last 60 years is now well established.

We now discuss the four major themes which emerged from the interviews.

TAONGA – RECOGNISING NATURAL TREASURES

P.M. Ryan defines *taonga* as 'property, treasure, apparatus, accessory (equipment), thing'.¹¹ This section explores the *taonga*, or traditional fish stocks, takes and species caught in the network of streams and marine environment in the tribal district (see Appendix 2).

Elders spoke affectionately and at length about the streams, rivers, lakes and coastal areas they fished regularly. Some kaumātua spoke about travelling south or north into other neighbouring areas, to collect their *kaimoana* (seafood). In these instances they would approach neighbours (such as Ngāti Toarangatira and Te Āti Awa) for permission to collect *kaimoana* in their areas:

... Our Te Ātiawa relations, they would explain where we couldn't fish and what fish was tapu at the minute because of spawning. Mullet was always tapu... Ngāti Toa would come North, and we would go to Ngāti Toa and get our kukutai and Paua. If you had a hui they would bring their kai with them. That's how they fed everybody. That's the type of fishing we had.

The Māori fishing community could depend on a variety of fish species within iwi fishing *kete* (basket). Five of the primary takes were *tuna* (eel), *pipi*, *pātiki* (flounder), *inanga* (whitebait) and *kahawai*. In relation to *tuna* often 'people would have too many in their *hīnaki* or nets.' This was particularly evident during the *tuna heke* (eel migrations) between the months of February and April each year:

When the eels ran you just couldn't stop them. They were all over us. We struggled to get the hīnaki out, because there were just hundreds of eels... A large take would be a chaff sack full.

Another elder recounted that during the 1950s and '60s the number of *kahawai* were so numerous that 'two miles out to sea and five miles wide' they were 'just black and bubbling... They were all trying to get up the taki River. I used to just grab them and spear them. You'd only need three or four. It was like a big black oil slick.'

READING THE CONDITIONS

If there's a Southerly you go to the south [to fish], if it's a Northerly you go to the North [to fish].

In order to fish successfully, elders took into account a number of environmental and practical variables. Many described the importance of reading the weather and environmental conditions correctly before going out to fish. Ideal conditions would be clear with no wind, however these conditions would shift, which had an impact on the type of fish they could catch at the time. For example, one participant recalled his father knowing that a good time to go fishing for *tuna* was when there were numerous insects around the house lights during the evening. This would mean *tuna* would be feeding on the insects in the rivers:

He'd look at the signs of nature. At times the moon was too bright. But for flounder they'd go out if the moon was bright. Some signs were good for some fish, others not.

Equally, the moon cycles and tidal flows had a large bearing on the quality of the fishing. For instance elders observed that on the full and new moon, the tides were high and good for catching *inanga*.

SEASONAL FISHING AND STOCK PRESERVATION

During tuna heke you could hear them coming...

Nearly all the elders interviewed described their *kaimoana* collection as seasonal. One *kuia*

explained that the 'old seasons' for fishing are 'not how we know it now' and that 'the old people knew it... Certain old people had the knowledge and would hand that down the generations.'

In the late spring and summer months the focus would shift to collecting species such as *pipi*, *pātiki* and *tuna*. Some water bodies in the district were said to be *tapu* before February. It was only during the 'rainy season' between February and March, that the lakes swelled so much that *tuna* would migrate down the connected stream out to sea in order to breed. One elder spoke about how he and his family would dam a local tributary at the end of February. As the lake rose 'the *tuna* would think it was the rainy season, then we'd break it down. As the water would go out we would collect 300-400 sacks [of *tuna*].'

Because technology such as coolers and refrigerators were not readily available to the local Māori community after the Second World War, it was common for families to preserve large catches of *tuna* to sustain them all year long. The most common form of storage was *tuna* boxes or *pā tuna*. They would use these long-term storage technologies in order to cater for iwi gatherings, when *whānau* visited from afar, or when there were local *tangihanga*. In order to keep the *tuna* alive and well, they would run fresh water through the boxes in order to preserve them. Alongside using *pātuna* for storage, most elders would preserve their catches by *pāwhara* (filleting), salting, drying and/or smoking their catch. They would then store them for future use. Alternatively, others would 'just take enough' of a catch for their immediate family and then share it out to others, as one elder explained:

Take them [tuna] home, pāwhara them, salt them. Share them around Tainui Pā. Keep enough for yourself... No eel box, anything in abundance we just gave away.

Large takes of *tuna* would have been taken to the local *marae* for use at Māori gatherings. One *kuia* noted such practices were 'part of our *aroha*; we contributed to what was happening.' Fishing was cultural, recreational and used for food gathering purposes. Another elder explained that eeling 'was part of life,' noting that specific families were well known fishers. Elders reflected that when they were younger, 'there was an abundance of fish life.'

KAITIAKITANGA AND MANAAKITANGA – CARE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND ITS PEOPLE

This section explores some of the traditional fish management techniques that are particular to the tribal area. It explores how the inherited Māori philosophies of *kaitiakitanga* and *manaakitanga* were upheld through fishing activity. In this instance 'kaitiakitanga' is defined as 'acting so as to preserve and maintain taonga; ensuring safety in all activities', while 'manaakitanga' is defined as, 'behaving in ways that elevate others; showing respect and consideration toward others; generosity and fulfilling reciprocal obligations.'¹²

Elders described the interrelationship between these two values. For them, it was vital to take care of the marine and freshwater environment (*kaitiakitanga*) in order to provide for the health and wellbeing of the local people (*manaakitanga*).

KAITIAKITANGA

Ngāti Huia [one of five resident sub-groups] were designated fishers for the area. They would go out when the time was right. They would come through town and stop at every place to share out the kaimoana.

Approximately six families held fishing rights and responsibilities for water bodies in the local Māori community. These local *kaitiaki* fulfilled iwi responsibilities of preserving and maintaining the local water resources and fish species. They were also responsible for teaching the younger generations about fishing techniques and ensuring that fishing practices were safe. These practices (*tikanga*) guaranteed that local and specific knowledge of the fish and the conditions were maintained and built upon by emergent fishers and custodians.

Elders explained that fishing was for survival; it helped to provide for the wellbeing of their tribal people. Again, it was vital that fish stocks were well looked after and not over-fished:

[We] only caught enough to feed ourselves: what is still there, will be there tomorrow. We didn't fish it out – that's the way we were taught – don't fish the place dry.

One elder recalled that during the 1950s, fishing a stream 'dry' could result in serious consequences for the health and wellbeing of local iwi, as the living wage was minimal and there were many family members to cater for. People relied heavily on the local fish stocks and the health of lakes, rivers and streams in order to sustain and take

care of themselves. Reliance on the streams and rivers as a primary source of food continues today. Elders explained that 'if the stocks were too small, you'd put them back.' Fishing was part of everyday life for these elders:

Fishing was a big part of our lifestyle. It was often shared between the family and the rest of the community. It wasn't unusual if you were walking around the streets to see three of six houses with eel on the line.

RĀHUI AND COMMERCIAL FISHING

What you can carry, you can take. If you can't carry it, don't take it.

There was no consensus about exact dates when *rāhui* (temporary bans) were placed over certain water bodies, but all elders were familiar with the practice. They also supported its intention and use to support the health of local fisheries:

If there's rāhui in place, this should never be broken... Our life was ruled around collecting kai for other people. Going fishing was our life.

It was usual for *rāhui* to be put into effect when someone died in a stream or lake, or it was used to help regenerate fish species and protect traditional fishing grounds. In this situation *rāhui* would last two days, one week or up to twenty days. Nature reserves, while culturally and practically different from *rāhui*, had a positive impact on the local coastline and fish population. Because of a local reserve, one elder noted, they are 'catching species we didn't used to catch.'

Elders were supportive of the recent *rāhui* put into place by neighbouring iwi in order to care for their local fishing areas. They saw this as a stance by the local people to re-assert their *rangatira-tanga* over their iwi area in order to maintain their *mana* and fishing rights and obligations. Elders revealed that a tension exists between Western legal interventions to sustain a fishery, such as bans and quota systems of regulation, and those iwi-based approaches recognised and preferred by local people, such as *rāhui*. For example, elders explained that while imposing a ban on collecting fish species might help regenerate a fish stock, it could also conflict with Māori or iwi responsibilities to conserve the environment and provide for iwi members. This illustrates the tensions between Western approaches to strengthen and restore fishery stocks, and those customary approaches preferred by indigenous peoples such as *rāhui*.¹³

Elders believed that commercialisation changed fishing from survival and providing for local people, to a focus on financial gain. As a result of financial incentives, over-fishing and resource depletion had resulted:

Commercial fisherman have done the most damage... There are different groups who are here and they all love our kai (food). They don't have the same values we have on our food.

All elders believed that commercial fishing could not continue at their current rate. It was common for elders to state that the commercial quota system was unsustainable.

Over-fishing was also attributed to other ethnicities settling in the iwi area. Elders believed that such groups over-fished the local streams and did not adhere to local fishing norms, such as 'only taking what you need.' There was a common perception that such groups are 'greedy'. Fundamentally, members of the Māori community believe such groups 'do not have the connection to the land (whakapapa) and they don't feel the responsibility to the people, land and fish (kaitiakitanga and manaakitanga).'

MANAAKITANGA

If there was a friend of the family they would often drop toheroa (shellfish) off. In the old days that's what the old people were like. If you weren't able to go out yourself, the person doing the fishing would help you out. It was aroha. It was manaakitanga. It was a special treat to receive them.

The act of sharing catches amongst the people was one of the strongest themes articulated by elders. This practice demonstrated respect and consideration toward others, while also fulfilling important kaitiaki obligations. Local fishing families would ensure people were 'taken care of' in relation to food for a range of events. For example, when there were tangihanga everyone would come together and share food. Elders explained that there was not a lot of money available during the mid twentieth century, 'but the kai was in abundance. People were well fed and looked after.'

Elders recalled some of the fishing families going through taki and inviting people to take what they needed from a fresh catch. 'In those days people shared their food.' Another elder explained that people only talked about their haul if they could share it with others. For her, this was part of tradition. She explained that if people

talked about their fishing but did not share it with others, then she 'didn't want to know about it':

We would share our fishing with the old people and share out for those that can't get out... If you looked after them they would look after you.

Before we gave our fish away we would clean them, scale them and gut them for our kaumātua (elders). This was part of the tikanga.

Often fishers would let people select their own seafood depending on their need. As illustrated by the quotes above, this was particularly important for elders in the community who were not in a position – because of ill health, frailty, or state of temporary sacredness placed on family members in mourning, for example – to fish themselves. These practices continue today. One kuia pointed out that the very act of being able to collect kaimoana is very important for upholding Māori identity:

...If there's anything coming up, it's just important to try and get something for the hākari (tribal feast): it's manaakitanga.

MĀTAURANGA – INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING

The kai was out there. There were no fridges; you had a safe outside. Someone would always drop kai off. Someone was always cooking something. It was a great learning experience for me.

Mead defines *mātauranga* Māori as 'Māori philosophy as well as Māori knowledge', which is given life through the practices, or tikanga.¹⁴ This section illustrates how *mātauranga* pertaining to freshwater, estuarine, and marine environments and tribal fishing practices were passed down through successive generations.

Because fishing was such a large part of every-day life, young people were expected to learn how to fish and contribute to the iwi from an early age. Their learning would often consist of observing older family members fishing during the tuna or inanga seasons:

A lot of us kids were taught by maybe three people. [We were] privileged to be taken out. Just by observation we carried it [tikanga] through... It wasn't about greed. It was about looking after tomorrow; it's going to feed you tomorrow.

Kuia and koroua were often involved in teaching their grandchildren about how to read the weather conditions: when to fish and how to fish. In this sense, fishing was much more than just 'getting

a good catch or haul'; it was about strengthening intergenerational relationships. These activities would have ripple effects: they would engender young people with responsibility and traditional knowledge through action:

The moana (oceans) were our cupboards. The doors were open when the tides were low. We would get kaimoana first and then play.

Many elders had spent extended time camping near river or stream mouths and learning from their own elders about how to fish. They learnt how to read the environmental conditions so that they felt confident and safe when fishing. One elder recalled how he learnt from his kuia about different tidal flows and when to collect pipi and when not to. This was so he would not get washed out to sea by strong tidal currents. Elders emphasised 'making *tangaroa* (god of the sea) safe' and he fondly recalls 'heaps of old kuia teaching us.' Through learning about how and when to fish correctly, and how to share out your catch, 'tikanga became the only way we know... It gives for sustainability [because] you don't waste: eat anything you take out of the sea or share it.'

Often, fishing expeditions with families would take place in the early evening and be completed early the next morning. As this elder describes, such trips were not just recreational in nature, it was part of their role and work for the tribe:

Our uncles would divide the fish up and put them in a kete. You would take off and deliver the fish to all our kaumātua. What was left was divided between those who went fishing. As long as everybody else got a feed Dad was happy. Our kui knew when we were coming. So that was our job every week. This work would go on from February to March every week.

Those interviewed described these routines as being 'hard work'. It was an important part of their formative education:

It was for learning, it was our culture and for survival. It was easy to learn because everyone's focus was on Tuna – from kaum tua to p pi (babies).

Fishing sends you away from the home to learn more skills – about the moana and the world: when to get it, where to get it and how to get it. We are spoilt in this rohe (tribal area) – we have the best of everything.

Nearby streams and rivers were like 'cupboards for our old people – they needed to fish close to them.' As a result, these elders learnt to fish afar at a young age. This would then leave local water bodies for the old people to fish because 'they

would enjoy it so much.'"

Today elders are acutely aware of the loss of local M ori knowledge. The quote, 'our children don't have these skills – my grandchildren are classic examples. They don't even know how to collect *puha*', typified this sentiment. Many elders believed that their fishing has a spiritual meaning that contributes to their wellbeing:

You can feel good with the water. It's a healing thing. Your spirit lives. You become one with everything around you.

MAURI – ACKNOWLEDGING THE LIFE-FORCE OF ALL ELEMENTS

This section provides a snapshot of the last half-century of mechanical management of freshwater, estuarine environs and their impacts on local fisheries. It applies the inherited value of *mauri* to help explore these changes. Barlow defines *mauri* in the following broad terms:

Everything has a mauri, including people, fish, animals, birds, forests, land, seas, and rivers; the mauri is that power which permits these living things to exist within their own realm and sphere... Likewise with the oceans, rivers and forests; when the food supplies become depleted it is possible to return the mauri through conservation (rahui) and appropriate ritual ceremony.¹⁵

The growth in industrial farming and flood protection works by local government have contributed to the depletion of the fish habitat in the local district. In relation to farming, many of the elders believe that the draining of water bodies and increased nutrients from farming practices has meant fish spawning areas have disappeared, and that there has been an increase in algal blooms:

They do not have the same breeding areas and the pollution is bad. Algal bloom never happened [historically].

It [the Waitohu River] was our swimming and fishing hole... Everyone would head across to Waitohu to swim. Now it's too shallow and full of rocks. It was about two metres deeper. They've drained all the swamps into farmland.

Other elders noted that dry stock, such as cattle, are constantly in waterways, which has increased lake pollution and rendered the lake un-fishable for many.

Works by local government, particularly flood control and the construction of flood banks since the 1960s, has meant tuna and inanga have had their normal migratory patterns up

rivers and streams restricted. Works to control the meandering nature of river mouths has also had a negative impact on migratory patterns of fish species up rivers. Interviews revealed that a tension exists between protecting residents and encouraging township growth through flood protection activities, and the needs of local Māori fishers. Finally, other elders believe the water table has dropped locally because of development, which has had a negative impact on fish and the quality of waterways.

These environmental changes have been well documented in previous research reports regarding freshwater fishery habitat and sustainability in New Zealand.¹⁶

SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGE

When asked what actions could be taken to revitalise the local waterways of the area, two general suggestions for change emerged from kaumātua.

Have a presence: listen to and engage with iwi

Elders saw it as vital that government organisations, such as the Ministry of Fisheries, have an active presence in the local area and establish a positive working relationship with the local iwi and hapū through mandated personnel. Public officials could meet with local Māori fishers, understand the issues they face, and work with local iwi to help address fisheries problems such as poor water quality and waning fish stocks.

They felt that iwi fisheries forums should be appropriately resourced, in order for culturally appropriate management systems to be established. Local iwi need to be assisted to gazette rivers, streams, and oceans in order to protect them from commercial fishing and pollution, and mandated iwi personnel must be resourced to undertake a 'policing' role in relation to the fisheries in the district. Non-commercial fish stock, such as those species designated as treasures by iwi and hapū also need to be monitored.

Initiate an evidence based public education campaign

Elders believe that establishing an education programme that draws on indigenous and Western knowledge in relation to sustainability of stock and sustenance of the natural environment is vital. Implementing an evidence-based education

campaign aimed at raising public awareness could better sustain local fisheries, for example, an intergenerational bilingual education programme that focuses on learning more about the rich iwi fishing history, customary-based fishing techniques and care for the environment generally, could be created.

They also felt that, while acknowledging commercial sensitivity, a study into the fish stock commercial fishers currently take from the local district should be undertaken, and the resulting information should be incorporated into public education initiatives to raise awareness about stocks, risk of depletion and how to look after waterways and beaches.

Collaboration with iwi to hold annual gatherings and/or presentations regarding the state of fisheries in the district was also seen as important.

Jefferies & Kennedy explain that findings such as these, which are based on kaupapa Māori approaches to environmental planning, help to 'identify, explain and clarify the key concepts from te ao Māori that underpin Māori perspectives and beliefs towards and about the natural environment'.¹⁷ However, mātauranga Māori and Western scientific understandings of our natural world are not perceived as equal by local government decision-makers, as Jefferies & Kennedy explain:

... There is still a widely held view – and this is certainly our own experience – that western scientific knowledge is accorded greater weight than mātauranga Māori – for example in RMA [Resource Management Act] consents processes. Archaeological evidence, while often acknowledging that it is not intended to replace tangata whenua cultural knowledge, is routinely treated as authoritative when making decisions regarding modifying or destroying Māori sites. Scientific water quality measures are preferred to explanations in terms of the health of mauri, and landscape architect perspectives to explanations in terms of cultural landscapes.¹⁸

The aim of this article is to encourage work to find philosophical and practical ways so that mātauranga Māori and Western science can discover common ground and complement each other.

CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates that indigenous and qualitative research methodologies and methods offer appropriate and timely tools for intergenerational learning. It also shows that Māori people of Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga are ardent about the restoration, protection and sustainable management of their natural and physical environments. The interconnection between the land, freshwater and the ocean has been a vital source of food and a cornerstone of local identity building for these Māori elders.

Māori philosophies and values inherited from Māori ancestors such as *taonga*, *kaitiakitanga*, *manaakitanga*, *mātauranga* and *mauri* were used as a framework for analysis for the reflections and stories gathered from the elders. These cultural markers connect naturally to the lives of those elders who generously shared their observations of the changing marine and estuarine environments. Working with these elders offered one contribution to a broader layer of local knowledge regarding the sustainability of these fisheries and water bodies. The research process generated practical suggestions from elders regarding ways to restore integrity and health to what was affectionately referred to as their 'playground' or 'food cupboard'.

Research that is based on culturally relevant ethical foundations and practice creates opportunities for intergenerational learning. By using such a process, we have found that Māori people have significant relationships with their freshwater and marine environments. These natural spaces are an important source of physical sustenance, and a cornerstone of indigenous identity.

HE MIHI - ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I te tuatahi e rere atu ngā mihi ki ngā kaumātua o Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga i tohatohatia o ratou mātauranga, tikanga mō o ratou ake takiwā. He tika ai te whakatauki:

"E kore koe e ngaro, he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiātea"

Nā runga i te aronui o tēnei whakatauki e kaingakau ana koutou ki te tiaki tangata, tiaki taiao. E kore e mutu ngā mihi ki a koutou mā We are thankful for the generous support of elders from Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga. They gave their time and shared rich experiences of fishing in the Ōtaki area and the changing environment over the last 40-80 years.

We would like to acknowledge Te Rūnanga o Raukawa without whose support this research would not be possible. Rititia Royal (Ngāti Pare, Ngāti Raukawa) joined the research team and provided great enthusiasm for the project and those she worked with. Hilary Wooding and Riria Hotere provided invaluable editing of the first draft.

Finally, to the Ministry of Fisheries – Te Tautiaki i ngā Tini a Tangaroa, who funded the original research project. Funding that enables research into customary fishing practices can only enhance local and national fishing practices and decision-making.

Tēnā rā tatou katoa.

APPENDIX 1: INHERITED MĀORI VALUES¹⁹

Manaakitanga: Behaving in ways that elevate others; showing respect and consideration toward others; generosity and fulfilling reciprocal obligations

Rangatiratanga: Exhibiting leadership by example; the ability to bind people together; following through on commitments

Whanaungatanga: Recognising that our people are our wealth; knowing that you are not alone; and, assuring others that nor are they alone

Kotahitanga: Making decisions and taking action that lead to unity of purpose and not to division and disharmony

Wairuatanga: Recognising that our relationship with each other and with our environment (maunga (mountains), awa (streams), moana (oceans), marae (meeting places) is more than physical

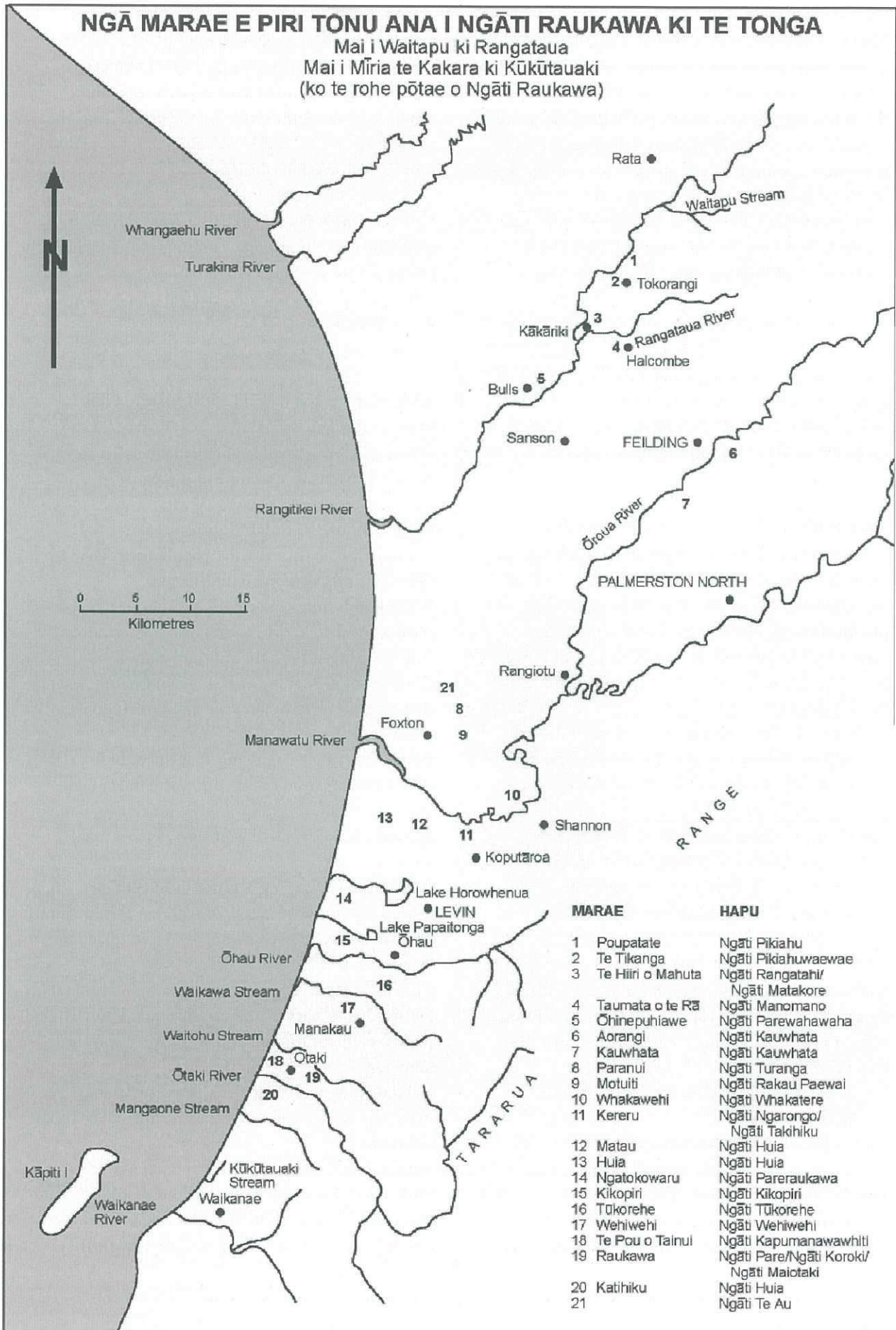
Ūkaipōtanga: Having a sense of importance, of belonging and of being a contributor to your land, to your home, to your tūrangawaewae (place to stand)

Pūkengatanga: Teaching, preserving and creating knowledge as part of the mātauranga (knowledge/philosophy) continuum and with other ways of knowing

Kaitiakitanga: Acting so as to preserve and maintain taonga (treasures); ensuring safety in all activities

Whakapapa: Ranginui and Papatuanuku (Sky Father and Earth Mother) and their children are here; our tūpuna (ancestors) are beside us; we are one with these as we carry out our role in the creation of our future

Te Reo: This [the Māori language] is the repository of all that we are as Māori.



ENDNOTES

- ¹ Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga are genealogically connected to the Tainui canoe, however they hold their own autonomy or rangatiratanga, which was established following their migrations to the Kāpiti-Horowhenua areas in the 1810s and 1820s.
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- ³ See R. Selby and A. Laurie, (eds) *Māori and oral history: A collection*, Wellington, National Oral History Association of New Zealand, 2005.
- ⁴ L. Pere and A. Barnes, 'New learnings from old understandings: Conducting qualitative research with Māori', *Journal of Qualitative Social Work*, Vol. 8, 2009, pp.449-467; L. T. Smith, *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. London, Zed Books, 1999; J. Bevan-Brown, 'By Māori, for Māori, about Māori is that enough?', *Te Oru Rangahau*. Palmerston North, 1998.
- ⁵ Cited in L. Pihama, 'Tihei Mauri Ora: Honouring Our Voices. Mana Wāhine as a Kaupapa Māori Theoretical Framework', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Auckland, 2001, p. 77.
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- ⁸ See H. Moewaka-Barnes, 'Arguing for the spirit in the language of the mind: A Māori practitioner's view of research and science', unpublished Doctor of Philosophy thesis, Massey University, Auckland, 2008 <http://mro.massey.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10179/1008/01front.pdf?sequence=2>; M. Durie, *Te Mana, Te Kawanatanga: The Politics of Māori Self-Determination*, Auckland, Oxford University Press, 1998; R. Walker, *Ka Whaiwhai Tonu Matou: Struggle Without End*. Auckland, Penguin, 1990
- ⁹ Moewaka-Barnes, p.120.
- ¹⁰ T.A.C. Royal, 'Exploring Indigenous Knowledge'. Paper delivered to 'The Indigenous Knowledges Conference – Reconciling Academic Priorities with Indigenous Realities', Victoria University, Wellington, 25 June 2005, <http://www.charles-royal.com/assets/exploringindigenousknowledge.pdf>, p. 3.
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- ¹² W. Winiata, 'How kaupapa contribute to innovative activities', presentation at 'Our People, Our Future' conference, 1-2 September 2009, Ōtaki, Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa, p. 2; p. 1
- ¹³ see Wayne T Ormsby, 'A customary right or wrong?: A study of the effects of the Kaimoana Customary Fishing Regulations on hapū of Ngāti Kahungunu', Master of Philosophy thesis, Massey University, Palmerston North, 2008.
- ¹⁴ Mead, p. 7
- ¹⁵ Barlow, p.83
- ¹⁶ see Te Wai Māori, Freshwater fisheries habitat sustainability strategy. Te Ohu Kaimoana, Wellington, 2007, <http://www.waimaori.maori.nz/inners/publications/habitat.htm>; Land and Water Forum, Report of the Land and Water Forum: A Fresh Start for Fresh Water, 2010, http://www.landandwater.org.nz/land_and_water_forum_report.pdf
- ¹⁷ Jefferies & Kennedy, *Viewing the World*, p.15.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid*, pp.9-10.
- ¹⁹ See Winiata, 'How kaupapa contribute to innovative activities'.

Home Fires Burning: Remembering the Vietnam War back home

CLAIRE HALL

This piece draws on life histories recorded with New Zealand Vietnam veterans, their wives, widows and children during the project's first three years. It explores the war's immediate and ongoing impact on kinship and close relationships, and the challenges of oral history interviewing within families, and across generations.

It was first presented as a Ministry for Culture and Heritage public seminar, November 2011.

This is dedicated to Lt Col John Masters, who lost his battle with cancer late last year.

John was New Zealand's inaugural Anzac of the Year. A decorated Army officer with 27 years service, he saw active service in Malaysia, Borneo and Vietnam, and was awarded a Military Cross for rescuing a wounded Gurkha Warrant Officer.

John was the man who found the maps. These confirmed the use of chemical defoliants in New Zealand areas of operations in Vietnam. This evidence, and his testimony to the Health Select Committee, did much to advance the case of New Zealand service personnel and their families seeking acknowledgement for chemical exposure during the Vietnam War.



The oral history and digital archiving project is part of the chain of events that followed the discovery of John's maps. It is a four-year project recording the oral histories of veterans and their closest family members, and developing a digital archive of memories and resources.

At the project's peak we had a dozen interviewers recording around the country, working in their communities with veterans and their families. The involvement of family in this project was not our idea. It was stipulated by veterans negotiating the Memorandum of Understanding with the New Zealand government.

Family interviews represent about 16 per cent of total so far, and there has been a big emphasis in the last year on boosting these numbers. Wives often say, It's not my story. Children think they will not have much to add to a collection of war oral histories, being so far removed.

The themes I will discuss were naturally emerging, in that they were commonly observed as areas of focus in interviews, influenced by question line, Vietnam mythology, and areas of particular significance to interviewees. This piece looks at a group of interviews to give a flavour of how families remember the Vietnam war back home.

Before sharing some stories, I need to touch on some of the practical considerations in interviewing members of the same family.

For an oral historian, there is a marked difference behind the microphone to doing a veteran interview and a family interview. These interviews were new territory for even the most experienced in the group. My first family interview with a veteran's daughter was also only

Susan Hughes and her sister

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my third interview with a non-veteran in five years of interviewing. I had heaps to talk about with the blokes, but what do you talk about if you can't swap war stories?

It is well established that one of oral history's strengths is capturing history from below, putting on record voices which were previously silenced – bringing the bomber and the bombed to the negotiating table, as Alessandro Portelli puts it.

But where do family sit within this paradigm?

What if you were neither above nor below when the bomb went off? What if you did not actually see the bombing, maybe you were not even born when it happened, but it has always loomed large in your life?

Is it the view from in between?

I quite like this description in relation to family, because I think it represents where some family feel they sit in relation to the Vietnam War.

I will explore four themes: while he's away, homecoming (return to the family fold), living with the legend, home fires burning.

WHILE HE'S AWAY

Between 1964 and 1971, 3500 New Zealanders served in Vietnam. It is hard to quantify the ripple of Vietnam in Aotearoa some four decades later, and even if we did it is not huge, but it is significant for reasons more than numbers alone.

To begin, I will contrast the memories of two generations – a seven-year-old's impressions of her father's time away in Vietnam, with those of two wives. Wives tell stories of being left alone with young children, having little contact with their husbands while they were away, or support from the army. The very luckiest got to meet the husband on 'R&R' in Singapore. For most wives, stepping up to parent alone while their husband was away meant long-term changes in independence and responsibility.

Susan Hughes was seven years old when her father, Terence deployed with 161 Battery. It was in the early days of New Zealand's involvement, and New Zealand personnel were still attached to 173rd Airborne Brigade. Susan is a New Plymouth criminal lawyer, Queen's Counsel, who grew up an army brat in army schools until she was sent to Catholic boarding school in Stratford.

Her Vietnam era was passed at home with Mum, Mavis and brother, Stephen, living at

Waiouru surrounded by the children of other Vietnam servicemen. She remembers the Vietnam War filtering into the playground of her army school in a short video clip, one of our first forays into digital storytelling which we turned into a video for an oral history installation last year. We were experimenting with different ways of presenting oral history for use in the archive, and in public exhibitions.

Susan Hughes

I remember writing letters to him because I wanted a Vietnamese doll. They used to stand on a little wooden plaque I suppose about four inches by three inches, they had ridiculously long legs and they had the wee coolie hat, and they'd have – I don't know what you call the dresses that go over the long white pants, but they had those. And I desperately wanted one because everyone else had one so I wrote and asked him for one and he sent it back. And he was writing letters to me.



Susan Hughes with her mother and brother

Interviewer: So they just started emerging in the playground did they?

I suppose in people's houses. But that was what I definitely wanted, all the girls had them. It was a hugely prized possession, if your dad was in Vietnam

you needed to get one of these Vietnamese dolls. And then I must have said something to Mum about 'oh god it's a drag writing letters to Dad' and she must have told him that and he never wrote to me again. I feel really sad about that, because she should have made me do it.



Susan Hughes in 2008.

I asked Susan if her father's return had changed her life very much. She said things were perhaps a little less relaxed – no jelly and ice cream every night when Dad was around. She recalls the time when her father was away as a difficult time for her mother, who relied on the friendship of neighbours, close and enduring friendships forged over cups of tea while husbands were away.

For Adrienne Lichtwark, wife of Bryan Lichtwark, 161 Battery, NZATTV, Vietnam was time to think. She says it may even have saved her marriage. Her reaction to news of Bryan's deployment was, 'Good, and when you get back, things are going to be different.' And they were.

But in spite of the relief she felt it, was a difficult time for the family, and both she and Bryan talk about their disappointment at the lack of support offered to the family, in spite of assurances from the army and the fact she lived on base while Bryan was overseas.



Here we pick up her story in 1970 shortly after her youngest daughter, Kim had nearly died, and was diagnosed with spinal meningitis.

And it wasn't long after that Bryan had to go to Vietnam. She was 21 months old when she got sick, and that was in the January and he went to Vietnam in the March. But Kim, being 21 months old, the meningitis affected her so badly that I had to teach her to crawl and walk again, which wasn't pleasant either because she used to just scream. And then he had to go to Vietnam, and I got left.

The hardest part was we were told that I'd get help. We had one of the biggest sections in Burnham, it had hedges all the way round, and Bryan's boss told him they'd look after us, come and do the hedges and the lawn and things like that, and I think they visited us twice in the 10 months that he was away. We were left on our own.

These occasional visits were usually by a Catholic padre, who would turn up to drink tea with the wives, more to check their spiritual wellbeing than help with the lawns or hedges, or run them up the road for some groceries.

Ellie Duggan, wife of 161 Battery Bombardier, Pat Duggan also recalls the Catholic padre visiting in her interview.

Ellie emigrated to New Zealand from with her family Holland as a child. 'My English was limited to yes, no and my bonnie lies over the ocean.'

Her father was a pacifist, and she was not really aware of the Vietnam War, being too busy living life in her new homeland.

She worked with Pat Duggan's sister, and she and Pat became penfriends when she was in her late teens – 'no military stuff, just personal everyday stuff' – then firm friends. Their relationship was well established by the time he came home.

They became engaged two weeks after he arrived home from Vietnam, despite her father's directive that she needed to be 21 or have \$2,000 before she could marry. He relented after Ellie's younger sister fell pregnant.

By the time news of Pat's second tour came through in 1971, the couple had two young children. Ellie was lodged away from other army families in suburban Otara because there was no room for the family at Papakura Camp. Her closest family was in Christchurch, and she relied heavily on neighbours. She recalls cleaning a lot, sleeping little.

Left: Adrienne and Bryan Lichtwark, in 2008.

Below: Ellie Duggan in 2008



She pretended Pat was away on exercises or operations training of some sort because that was easier to bear. She says she never feared for his safety in Vietnam, or that he would not come back. She just found it easier not to look at a map or think about where he really was.

Here she recalls a visit from the padre, and how she found out Pat was coming home early.

Interviewer: Did you have any contact with the army while he was away?

No. One month before Pat came home the Padre came round and wanted to know if I was all right. I sort of said I've managed so far.....that was just so bad...I was 22 I had two young children and the army just left me out there.

Interviewer: How did you know he was coming home?

I heard it on the radio.

Interviewer: Really?

Yeah, I heard it on the radio, on the morning news, and I'd just given Mark his breakfast...heard it on the radio knelt down and gave him this big hug, Your Daddy's coming home. Then in the papers. News that pulling out the battery. Somebody should've told me but I s'pose they couldn't really.

Interviewer: Why?

Those things are all so hush hush, aren't they? They couldn't because there was so much kerfuffle about us being in Vietnam.

Letters were the main way of keeping in touch – as Ellie said, not military detail, but the day to day stuff. Letters are a valuable window on the way relationships were forged and maintained during the Vietnam War. They were a vital part of keeping the home fires burning. Many people also talk about the modern era of communication – tapes being sent back and forth. Adrienne Lichtwark recalls sending tapes of the children to Bryan.

There were more images and stories coming through in media of Vietnam War than ever before, but wives recall it as an isolating time, one of little communication from army, and much anticipation of the homecoming.

HOME COMING

Much has been made of the notion, the mythology, of homecoming in relation to the Vietnam War, and whether you consider Vietnam veterans the most, or least welcomed, it is a topic that stands out in these interviews.

It covers a range of experiences – the actual arrival home (dead of night? day time? protestors? orders on arrival?), the 161 Battery civic welcome

in Auckland in 1971 targeted by protestors and the events that followed; the sense of a lack of a welcome home until Parade 98 and Tribute 08 ten years later.

The range and significance of these events is explored in these interviews, but I want to focus on homecoming in the true sense – the return to the family fold, and returning to family life after service.

First, a veteran's story

Bruce Goodall was 21 years old and single when he deployed as platoon signalman for V3 Company. Bruce speaks frankly about the impact of war and his subsequent police service on his wellbeing, and his relationships. He lives in Glen Eden with his third wife, Joy.



Bruce Goodall as a young man in service in Vietnam.

Here, Bruce describes returning home to a family eager to see him again after his extended absence and no contact, and why he was able to talk to his grandmother, but not others.

They were all over me, I just couldn't handle it. And I get back to the house and they were all getting into it, my cousins coming up and saying did you kill anybody all this sort of shit...oh my god. The first thing she gave me was an ice cold glass of milk, I immediately threw it up. It wasn't very successful.

Wives recall husbands being forced to accept changes in family dynamics on their homecoming. One wife recalls staying with family for two months to learn to drive before heading back to camp. Adrienne Lichtwark not only learned to drive, when Bryan got home she told him they'd be buying a car. Bryan's reaction?—'but I can't drive'.

I mentioned earlier that the Lichtwark's relationship was struggling when Bryan came home with news of his Vietnam posting. Here Adrienne recalls how the dynamics changed while he was away, and some of the differences when he came home.

Before he went I would get my warrant each fortnight for the groceries and what not...and he would pay all the bills. But when he came back, while he was away actually, I got my driver's license. So when he came back the first thing I said to him was we're going to buy a car. And he said but I can't drive. And I said, no but I can and I want a car. So we went out and we bought a car. And then, the second thing was I said to him that we needed a cheque book, open a bank account and have a cheque book. I've been paying the bills all this time while you've been away, whereas before he'd

been paying the bills. I'm used to doing it so I'm going to keep doing it. He said fine as he felt I was better with the money than he was. So I took over that and have been doing it ever since. So a lot of that changed.

Other wives recall similar stories of independence forged while he was away, and maintained after the homecoming.

Reintegration into family life was difficult for some. Tensions between army culture and the domestic sphere are revealed in these interviews. In some cases it was a very difficult time, with some wives insisting their husband quit the service; for other women it was part of job, especially for wives with fathers, uncles, or brothers who had served.

Living with the legend

When interviewing we ask about a range of symptoms that may be related to a family member's Vietnam service. Our aim is to elicit some of the stories behind and around the ticks in boxes, the broad labels associated with the Vietnam era.



A recent study in Australia of the health and wellbeing of partners of Vietnam veterans attending partners' support groups in New South Wales, concludes that secondary traumatic stress is evident in interviewees.

The study found that sleep disturbance, alcoholism and violence were common, evidence borne out by the family members of New Zealand veterans we are recording. Here I will focus on the first two: sleep disturbance and alcoholism. They are common topics in family and veteran interviews.

One widow recalls being mistaken for a Viet Cong, others family members have similar stories of living in the dream-time of Vietnam, and of hyper-alert behaviour, such as patrolling the home and property in defence of home turf against an imagined enemy.



Lynne Hawkins in uniform.

Artillery. She was in the army, and the couple met on his return from Vietnam. His first marriage had broken up while he was away.

Laurie died of heart failure which his family and physicians

attribute to his Vietnam service. Here Lynne recalls learning the no-sneaking rule.

We hadn't long been married and we were both smokers at the time and he had a packet of cigarettes on his bedside table and I couldn't sleep this particular night and I got up and snuck round as quietly as possible to his side of the bed to get a cigarette and I reached for it. He was snoring, he was sound asleep and I reached for this cigarette and the next thing this hand comes out and grabs my wrist so hard I thought he was going to break my wrist and I let out a scream and he sort of woke up. He said, 'Don't ever sneak, make a noise, if you make a noise, I'm not going to wake up. I'm trained to pick up (LB stealth), just walk around and pick it up naturally and I'm not going to wake up.'

Behaviour was often the way people found out about the residual, most prominent Vietnam memories, rather than by veterans talking about their experiences. This is a topic on which there is much reflection in these interviews – how much or little is told, and what kinds of things are remembered within families.



Lynne Hawkins in 2008

A daughter's voice.

Linda Lilley is the daughter of Victor Company veteran, rifleman Brian Wilson. She is in her early 30s, and was born after Brian returned from Vietnam. She was born with, and had surgery for, a club foot and extra nipples.

She recalls being careful as a child not to sneak around the house lest Brian startle, and grew accustomed to being noisy.

I remember always

being careful about sneaking round the house, even if I wasn't sneaking I'd make some noise if I was coming up behind him, like I'd whistle or start (singing) I didn't want to scare him because he was always on edge but I don't think he realized he was. I don't think that's ever been drilled out of him. Even as a teenager when I was sneaking out I used to have to be a bit careful. Remember him walking round the house with a little mini baseball bat, used to sleep with his rifle under the bed.

In his interview, her father Brian also refers to waking his wife with his nightmares, and reacting defensively in his dreams of the enemy.

Lynne Hawkins is the widow of Laurie Hawkins, 161 Battery, Royal New Zealand



Linda Lilley in 2008.

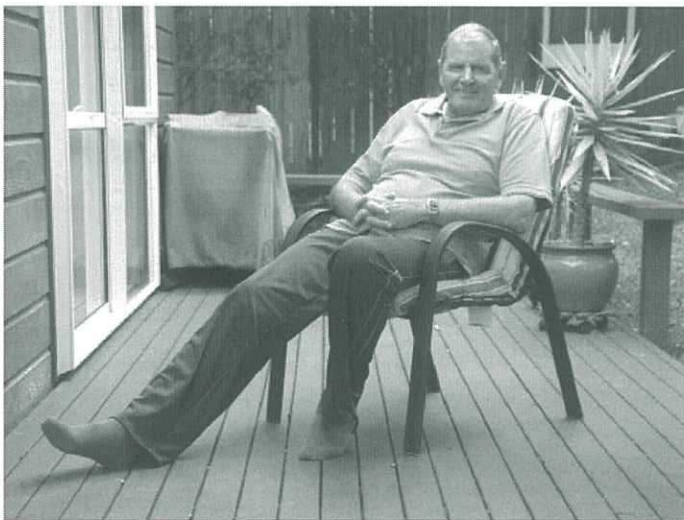
Most report that it was the funny things, the easy things. For Linda Lilley, it was the oft-told story of her father, Brian's bayonet being blown off the end of his rifle. The bayonet is itself part of her father's Vietnam memorabilia.

Often there's a defining incident that looms large in veterans' lives, and therefore inevitably in the lives of their families. In one set of family interviews, each person refers to an ambush story that defined their husband/father's Vietnam experience, and they each have their own stories about it. The father's memories were of the experience itself. The mother told of guiding her husband through the memories. Their daughter was born a couple of days before its anniversary, and every year the two inevitably clash.

Goodall contemp

Why couldn't many men talk to their nearest and dearest – their wives, or their mothers? Bruce Goodall explains.

Somebody said why don't you talk to your wife about it? You can't talk to your wife about that sort of thing. That's ridiculous. You had to compartmentalize everything. Undercover stuff I couldn't talk about. I'd thought I'd save my kids a whole lot of trauma if I got out of it.



Bruce Goodhall in 2008

And of his son, he says: 'I won't tell him anything unless he asks.'

Herein lies the greatest challenge of oral history interviewing within families – disclosure. That is to say, the way information is used from one interview to the next.

When interviewing family members, it is really difficult as an interviewer to retain who knows what about whom, so keeping personal information personal is paramount. It is always

up to interviewees who they share their interview with, both within their family and outside. In terms of public access, the majority of interviews in this project have no restrictions.

HOME FIRES BURNING

Here I will look at what the oral history is revealing of the ongoing impact, the intergenerational ripple, if you will, of the Vietnam War.

As Alison Parr writes: 'Most people today are familiar with the fact that soldiers can be traumatised – and the effects of trauma can be life-long. The bad news, however, gets worse... it now appears that the impact of trauma doesn't stop with one generation – it's not only the people who live through the fear, carnage and destruction of war who are affected by it. Research is now telling us that the impact of this can reverberate through families.'

A study of 14 Vietnam veterans for an oral history project in South Australia found that that the war affected each of their interviewees in profound and lasting ways.

Home fires burn strongly in families, and in their stories of the Vietnam War. People express guilt and fear for both the past and future. Differently from the Second World War, this war manifests itself not only in the emotional ripple, but also physically, that is, in the intergenerational health effects of toxic exposure.

Compared with Second World War veterans, Vietnam veterans' conditions are more likely to be officially diagnosed, and they are more likely to be receiving or have access to treatment. They have a great uptake of war pensions and I have spoken to many veterans who feel well supported. Others disagree.

It is the health effects which cut to the sharp end of family relationships – health, or potential for ill health, may influence decisions about having children, and the impact of caring for a critically ill loved one, and living with loss.

Lynne Hawkins spoke about the impact of nursing her husband, Laurie in the final stages of his chronic heart disease. It was exhausting and took a grave toll on her own health. She talked about living with the stress of caring too much, and Ellie Duggan, too, referred to the fact that it is often the women who need to stay strong; that there is no room for both partners to go to pieces.

For Lynne Hawkins the pain is less now, but it is still present. She was with her husband when

he took his last breath, which may sound dramatic but I mention it because, in talking to her, it is obvious she has relived that moment over and over again.

And where there is war there is booze. Drink is a recurring theme of not only the Vietnam interviews, but also of Second World War interviews. Within the Vietnam interviews there is new evidence that it is influencing our next generation of drinkers.

Linda Lilley

I think in a lot of ways my dad the way he dealt with his memories or experiences I always remember him being a drinker, having a few beers or a few too many beers. Social aspect of growing up as well, barbecues with his mates over, and even looking back in photos there was always beer around. I think in some ways you grow up and do what your parents do – I'm probably more of drinker than some people are. I probably was way back from at the age of 14 me and my friends going down and stealing liquor, experimenting with alcohol way back then. Maybe it was (related to Vietnam) in the way I saw my dad and that had some influence on me.

Alcohol looms large in our society, and in the context of war, an ongoing reliance on alcohol and stories of addiction are not surprising. Adrienne Lichtwark speaks about her husband Bryan's alcoholism – she calls his drinking that, he heartily disagrees. She started going to Alcoholics Anonymous to cope with it, which was her way of finding a method of living with this particular hangover of the Vietnam War within her family.

HOME COMING

I now want to look at homecoming in the context of reconciliation, because the Vietnam Oral History Project is that waka, as part of the Memorandum of Understanding. Whether or not they agree with the politics of the agreement, we are getting great feedback on the value of our recording programme both from veterans and families. The majority are sincerely grateful for the chance to put their stories on record.

So oral history is performing well as part of a package focused on reconciliation. It is a methodology that is very forgiving of the fact that understanding is a work in progress.

Why was oral history used? Why now?

Oral history can variously be an exploration of individual memory, public memory, and popular memory, and in the context of these family

interviews, we explore all three.

Many family members are sharing their memories through the website www.vietnamwar.govt.nz One such is Katherine Barnsley, niece of sister Claire Jacobsen (1940–2007) a New Zealand nurse from the Royal New Zealand Nursing Corps, based at the 1st Australian Field Hospital in Vung Tau. Claire died of cancer in 2007, but was interviewed by Paul Diamond shortly before her death.

Here Katherine talks about her aunt, and about her surprise at her aunt's consent to speak of her Vietnam experiences after such long-held silence. Her words bear meaning for all families living with the Vietnam War back home.

When my Aunt recorded the interview that may form part of this project she was in the final stages of a long battle with cancer. It is important to consider her condition at the time these recordings were made. As the trustees of her memory it is



Claire Jacobsen.

important to us to ensure that her story is told the way she would have wanted. It is important that it reflects the dignity and gravity she maintained in her storytelling when she was less ill. I hope that eventually her account of her experiences in Vietnam will be used with compassion and I hope that it will contribute to a greater understanding of the commitment and sacrifice of New Zealand women in war.

We are very proud of her service and we feel that it is important that the women who served and who continue to serve, who felt it their duty and their responsibility, are remembered and that their voices are heard. For me it important that her story is told because she was so reluctant to tell it and her silence did her no good.

Perhaps if we think more about what we ask of the people we send to war and the toll it exacts, we will know better how to help them when they return.

The Violinist:

Clare Galambos Winter, Holocaust Survivor

SARAH GAITANOS

This article is based on a presentation I gave at the IOHA conference in Prague in July 2010. The conference started with master classes which I found extremely poignant given the topics discussed, all the more so because it was 7 July, the anniversary of the day in 1944 when my Hungarian-born narrator, Clare Galambos Winter, then known as Klári, arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau. It was the last time she saw her mother and 14-year-old brother who were presumably sent to the gas chamber soon after their arrival. Together, 20-year-old Klári and her 35-year-old aunt Rozsi survived.

Like many Holocaust survivors, Klári tried for years to put the past behind her. She wanted to forget. She and Rozsi returned to Hungary after the war in hope of finding survivors in the family, but it held too many memories and they hated living among the people who had betrayed them. In 1949 they emigrated to New Zealand, as far from Europe as possible, where they could make a new life without being constantly reminded of the old. Klári changed her name to Clare. Now 87 years old, she often says she was 'born in New Zealand'.

Clare joined the fledgling National Symphony Orchestra which became her family for the next 32 years. She rarely talked about her past until her retirement in 1983 when second husband, Otto Winter, a Jew from Czechoslovakia, encouraged her to record her memories of the Holocaust. I referred to these earlier accounts when I started my own oral history interviews with Clare in 2005.

Despite decades of silence, Clare has vivid recall of some events of the Holocaust, but time has changed and eliminated others. This loss is to some extent compensated by the mass of material that is now available through other people's memoirs and primary documents, and recent scholarship other researchers have brought to the

subject. Thanks to the internet, it was possible to fill some of the gaps in ways I could not have done earlier from New Zealand. It was nevertheless necessary to carry out in-the-field research in Hungary, Poland and Germany. My timing was fortunate: in 2008, the Red Cross International Tracing Agency (ITS) in Bad Arolsen, Germany, released 50 million files.

How were Clare's versions of the Holocaust affected by my wider research? This is the question I am often asked, and the subject of my paper in Prague in which I gave the following examples.

Klári was a violin student in Budapest when, on 19 March 1944, the German army occupied Hungary. Until then the Hungarian Jews had suffered but not feared for their lives in the way that Jews in the rest of Europe had done. Everything now changed for them. Terrified at the sight of German tanks rolling through the city, Klári wanted to flee Budapest and go home to her family in Szombathely, a provincial town in the west of Hungary near the Austrian border. She describes how 'three days' after the invasion she went to the railway station with her non-Jewish boyfriend, Sandor. Here is how she reconstructs her story:

Sándor my boyfriend came and we had no money, we couldn't take things like taxis, we went by bus or by – I think it was by bus – it must have been. It wasn't

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trams, because there were trams also in Budapest but no, I think it was by bus – but we couldn't sit next to each other because I had the yellow star. The yellow stars all had to go to the back and sit squashed up with all the other non-human people wearing the yellow star. And then, again I can't remember how we got together again at the railway station but all I remember is that Sándor said, "I am going to take your big luggage and put it in the luggage van." ... So he has done that, he has put it up, and as we walked into the railway station there was a man there who looked at us and said, "Jews that way, non-Jews that way," so we were immediately separated, and that's when Sándor said, "I'll put this onto the train", and I remember getting on my tippy-toe and looking for him, and said "See you later". "Yes, don't worry". I never saw him again.

After we have been over 20 or 30 people we were gathered together, we were all standing around there, and the man pointed at the door that we should go in there and so we all went over to the door and the door was opened, and it wasn't an office, it was an outside door, and we were herded across the street, and there was a jail. It was a holding jail – it wasn't a proper-proper jail – it was only for people who they had picked up on the street, whores and such like, until they could be processed to go into a proper jail.¹

Clare has strong recollections of the next fearful days in this overcrowded jail, her first experience of being treated like an animal, and her bewilderment that this should happen to her in Budapest, the beautiful city of her birth. She recalled that on the 'third day' (three days is a way of saying it was more than a day and less than a week) the doors were opened and without explanation of why they had been held or why they were being freed, they were told to scam.

While the main interest is her account of these days, my problem as a biographer was fitting the event into the chronological sequence of events. Klári said this happened in the days immediately after the occupation, and that she was wearing the yellow star. But the decree that declared all Jews had to wear a yellow star did not come into force until 5 April. Did this event occur after that date? Could 'three days' have really been 15 days or more? Possibly. But on further discussion, it became apparent that Clare assumed she wore the yellow star. She had reconstructed what she thought must have happened, not what she remembered. When I discussed this with her she said she must have been wearing the yellow star

– how else would they have known who were the Jews when she arrived at the railway station? But, as she explained in an earlier account, Jews had to carry identification papers, and they would simply have obeyed the order.

Establishing that this event had occurred as she said, in the first days after the German occupation, puts it in a context that not only gives a better understanding of what happened to her, it also adds to the record of that course of historical events through her personal testimony. This is the context:

In the days immediately following the occupation, thousands of Jews were detained in and around railway stations in Budapest on the pretext of disobeying a new law – not yet announced – that required them to obtain written permission to travel. They were released some days after a meeting that took place on 28 March between Hungary's Jewish leaders and Nazi SS officers when the Jewish leaders requested the three thousand or more Jews who had been arrested be returned to their families. The real reasons for the arrests were several: to get rid of opposition; to make a show of German control; to create an atmosphere of fear and chaos; and to provide hostages for negotiating with the Jewish leaders.²

Klári didn't know any of this.

She did eventually get home to her family. In the second week of May, the Jews of Szombathely were evicted from their homes and ghettoised.

On 4 July the Jews of Szombathely were deported, arriving on 7 July at Auschwitz–Birkenau. Today the memorial site looks very different, but its scale and purpose is nonetheless undeniable and overwhelming.

The Jews of Szombathely were among the last to arrive from provincial Hungary. The world now knew about Auschwitz and, under pressure from other leaders, Hungary's head of state, Miklós Horthy, had stopped deportations on 6 July, foiling Eichmann's plans for the Jews of Budapest.

By this time, new arrivals at Auschwitz–Birkenau were no longer being registered and selection processes were increasingly chaotic, but a selection obviously took place and Clare recalls the SS officer, at a flick of his finger, directing her and her aunt in one direction, her mother and brother in another. Those selected to go into the camp were showered, shaved all over, given rags

to wear – and by this time they really were rags. Clare says she regarded all this with utter lack of interest. The only thing she thought about was her thirst and hunger. She had no idea where in the world she was – she had never heard of Auschwitz and knew little about Poland. She wondered where her mother and brother were and when she would see them. Other survivors recall the smell of burning flesh, but Clare has no memory of this. There was talk of burning Jews. Others recall their fear of the gas chamber. Clare says the idea was beyond belief. What a person once knew or did not know is as questionable as memory itself, but I do not doubt her disbelief.

Clare said that she and Rozsi were in C-Lager, and I did not at first question that – the Hungarian women were in C-Lager. I narrowed my focus. But I was aware of discrepancies, and when I talked to her after going there myself, these became more worrying. Conditions in C-Lager were worse than in other camps in Section BII – they did not have bunks, for example, but they did have kitchen barracks and ablutions blocks, and rudimentary plumbing.

Clare was adamant that in her camp the reconstructed barrack with its latrines were uncovered, that her camp had no kitchen facilities and their food, such as it was, was brought in from outer camps. And Clare recalled she could see the gypsies from her camp – they were diagonally opposite. This would not have been possible if she had been in C-Lager. Her accounts made better sense when I eventually considered the possibility that she was somewhere else.

But when I myself was at Birkenau I thought, what do these things matter? They seemed inconsequential in the face of what happened at there, where the Nazis systematically, in cold blood, murdered one and a half million people, mainly Jews. Klári's account of what it was like to be in Birkenau rang true, wherever she was.

When I eventually did consider the possibility that she and Rozsi were not in C-Lager, I discovered they were probably among the 30,000 unregistered Hungarian women, the last to arrive, who were concentrated in Section BIII, a so-called 'transit camp' nicknamed 'Mexico' by inmates of other camps, because it was for the poorest of the poor, and because the rags they were wearing looked like ponchos. The camp was still under construction, it had no plumbing, no ablution blocks or kitchen facilities, but the rest of

the camp was full and there was nowhere else to put these last arrivals. Clare had never heard of a camp called 'Mexico' but the description affirmed some of her other memories.

How long she and Rozsi were in Auschwitz-Birkenau was always open to question. One can understand that time seemed to stand still. Their Nazi files show they were registered in Auschwitz on 13 August, before being transported with 1000 Hungarian women selected to work in an ammunitions factory at Allendorf (now Stadallendorf) in central Germany. They arrived there on 19 August.

In Allendorf, conditions were quite different, better, and they had something to do, even though it was heavy dangerous work handling poisonous materials to make bombs. The camp where they lived was about half an hour's brisk march from the factory. Klári describes the first time they went to the factory, walking through dense pine forest for a long time until they came to an opening in the mountain:

It was just like a cave. And we found ourselves walking more and more in obviously a dugout walkway and we came out the other end and we looked around and there were huge buildings and on the top of the buildings, three, four, five-storey buildings, there were trees growing on the top of the buildings, so from the aeroplane you couldn't see a thing, because it was just one level of pine trees. It was very difficult for me to say anything nice about the Germans but that a brilliant piece of engineering.³

Clare regarded photographs of these now whitewashed buildings with disbelief. There is no mountain, but there were tunnels, and while she had probably exaggerated the heights of the buildings in her memory, they would have looked higher as she came upon them suddenly out of the tunnels, close up in the dark under the overhanging canopy. Of course, she had no sense of orientation and no idea of the whole complex. Her memory is valid because even though magnified, it gives us an idea of how different it looked from the prisoners' perspective.

On the other hand, photos of exhibits such as the bombs she had filled were very familiar. Klári describes in detail how to make grenades and bombs. The dynamite, she says, came in boxes with a metal strap that stuck out, which she remembered because they slept on those boxes in the boiler room where she mostly worked, filling the vats.

With so many bad memories, it was a relief when Clare had a good memory. She remembers their supervisor, a great big man with a great big voice called Peter Peters, a German Democrat from Danzig. In the Gieshaus, in the time between filling the vat and refilling it, when the bombs and grenades were being filled on the floor below, he allowed the women to lie down and sleep. When the SS returned, Peter Peters warned them. Clare says, 'We woke up to Peter's huge booming voice yelling at us, calling us "filthy Jews and lazy whores". We loved him for it, because he spoke the Nazi language to us but we knew he didn't mean it.'⁴ The same scheme worked for air raids when the SS left to shelter in bunkers.

Other survivors have told this story, according to staff at the Documentation and Information Centre in Stadtallendorf. They knew him only as Peter. It was gratifying to record the kindness of Peter Peters, and to know where he came from and give him his full name.

Nothing conveys these events more powerfully than eye witness accounts, but all records – documentary and personal accounts – throw light on each other. Even then, there is often room for doubt. I have to acknowledge that we who were not there can imagine, but never really know, what it was like for those who were.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Interview, Clare Galambos Winter to Sarah Gaitanos, 10 August 2005, side 10.
- ² Randolph L. Braham, *The Politics of Genocide: The Holocaust in Hungary, Detroit*, Wayne State University Press, 2000; Anna Porter, *Kasztner's Train: The true story of an unknown hero of the Holocaust*, Melbourne, Scribe Publications, 2008; Vera Ranki, *The Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion: Jews and nationalism in Hungary*, Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1999.
- ³ Clare Galambos Winter to Sarah Gaitanos, 14 November 2005, side 20.
- ⁴ Clare Galambos Winter to Jason Walker, Survivors of the SHOAH, recorded on video, *Visual History Foundation*, 13 December 1997, tape 5.

Reflections on a career in oral history

SUSAN FOWKE

This article is based on a presentation given at the NOHANZ conference, Wellington, 2009

I have been earning my living – in a meagre sort of way – as a freelance oral historian for much of the last 20 years, and now I am about to retire.

This presentation is titled 'Reflections on a Career in Oral History' – but it could also be called 'Turning Points', as that is what my life and career has been: a series of turning points.

While preparing this piece, I realised that, just like an oral history interview, it is not the whole picture – it is just the bits that stick out in my memory. In places my memory fades and may even deceive me.

As well as talking about what I have done, I want to say some things about important aspects of oral history interviewing, starting with the importance of asking about family background and childhood.

As an abstracter (I do a lot of abstracting other people's interviews) so many times I listen to interviews with no information on family background or childhood, and I find this hugely frustrating.

If you do not ask questions about family background and childhood you lose the richness of the person. You will not really understand their place in the world, and your interview will be one dimensional. By asking some personal questions, you honour and respect the person by acknowledging them as a whole being, multi-faceted, rather than just a career person, or one with a particular experience, or whatever it is that you have been commissioned to interview them about.

Throughout this piece, I will tell you some personal bits and pieces about myself and I hope you will agree that it makes it more interesting.

So, here is something of my beginnings.

Susan Dorothy Fowke born on 8 March 1944 in Ceylon, now known as Sri Lanka. Both my parents were born in Sri Lanka, as were my paternal grandfather and great grandmother. Both sides

of my family are English in origin – Fowkes have been in England since before the Norman Conquest, and originally they were Vikings. There are various permutations of spelling and pronunciation of the name.

In Sri Lanka my father was a tea planter. In New Zealand he was a motor mechanic and had his own garage in Lower Hutt. In Sri Lanka my mother lived the life of a mem sahib, but in New Zealand she was a housewife just as was everyone's mother in those pre-generation Y days.

We arrived in New Zealand in 1947 and I grew up at Plimmerton. I went to Plimmerton Primary School, Wellington Girls' College and Wellington Teachers' Training College. I taught for 15 years and was very happy as a teacher. Then along came a crucial turning point and it was this that set me on the path to become an oral historian.

First turning point Literally overnight I decided to leave teaching. Now, with hindsight or insight, I can see that I left teaching because I was having an affair with a very unsuitable man and that either unsettled me or released me from my conventional path. I'm not sure which.

Anyway, in 1978 I walked out of a plum teaching job after having been there only three weeks, with nowhere to go. In those days you could do that and be sure of picking up another good job.

And sure enough I did. Leaving school one day I met Judith Fyfe, who at that time I knew only slightly. She was picking up her son Jock, who was at Thorndon School where I was teaching. She asked me how I was getting on and I explained I was looking for work. Judith at that stage was working at the television programme Fair Go, and she told me there was position going there for researcher.

Susan Fowke is a retired oral historian living in Gisborne.

I worked in Fair Go for two years and during that time Brian Edwards, who was the frontperson, did a series of interviews called 'Sons and Daughters'. Judith did the research but Brian asked me to do one research interview – on tape.

It was with Barbara Basham, daughter of Aunt Daisy (Maude Basham). I can't tell you about that interview because it just passed in a blur of extreme anxiety, but Brian based his interview on it so it must have been OK.

After two years I moved from Fair Go to a job as researcher in Television New Zealand Documentaries, and it was here that I did the ground work that, in the long run, enabled me become an oral historian. I was finding people to take part in documentaries by finding out their particular story.

I learned to approach people, to sit down in their houses or workplaces and ask them to tell me their story, whether about their life in general or their work. One person I particularly remember was Peg Taylor, aged 81, who lived in Taylors' Hotel (which she owned) at Ohai, a coal mining town in Southland. I stayed with Peg for ten days. I sat at her kitchen table, ate in the dining room and drank in the bar – all the time talking to Peg, her family and her workers about their lives.

From that job I learned that (so called) ordinary people have fascinating lives and great stories to tell.

Another documentary that sticks in my mind was 'Beginner's Guide to Going Onto a Marae'. We filmed with Wiremu (Bill) Parker. He was our guide, and quite well known at the time as he read the Maori news on radio, and lectured at the Department of Maori Studies, Victoria University.

I remember travelling in the car. I drove, with Bill at my side, from Wellington to Fielding, where we filmed at the marae. All the way there, and all the way back, Bill talked – about his life and his experience in, and knowledge of, the Maori world.

They were wonderful, wonderful stories and reminiscences. I still clearly remember Bill's beautiful voice, and his lovely face. He was a generous and erudite man with such rich experience and deep knowledge of things Maori. I felt enormously privileged to have such an experience, as I sat there and soaked it up.

The next turning point – a start in oral history. In 1986 after eight years as a TVNZ researcher I went freelance. By this time Judith

Fyfe and Hugo Manson had set up the New Zealand Oral History Archive, the forerunner of the Oral History Centre, and they asked me to do some abstracting.

Oddly enough, the first life history I listened to was Hugo's interview with Bill Parker. Here he was again, but this time just his voice, and in the structured format of the interview, what a marvellous life story he told.

I abstracted that interview by long-hand – computers were only just coming in – and I still think it was one of the most interesting oral history jobs I have had ... just doing an abstract.

Then, and this really kicked it off for me as an interviewer, Judith and Hugo asked me at very short notice if I would interview Ces Blazey for the AMP insurance company. Blazey was a long time employee of AMP, but he was mostly known as the chairman of the New Zealand Rugby Union.

It all happened in a rush. Judith gave me a lesson on how to use the Marantz cassette tape recorder. She told me what to ask at the pre-interview, and how to do a recording identification. She mentioned the importance of background research, in particular to construct a chronology, and gave me some sample biographical questions taken from Paul Thompson's book, *Oral History*.

And off I went.

Blazey proved to be a wonderful person to start on. He was a gentleman of the old school, a straight up and down person who was very articulate and able to reflect on his life; a careful and considered person with a sharp memory.

One of the things I remember most about that interview, and Blazey, was that in his backyard he grew beautiful gladioli, also straight up and down, in perfectly weeded rows.

Here are some generalisations and observations about interviews:

Almost without fail everyone says they have had a happy childhood and a wonderful mother.

Fathers come in for praise too but they, much more frequently than mothers, come in for criticism. That criticism is nearly always to do with the father being a harsh disciplinarian, much more so than mothers. I hardly ever hear criticism of a mother.

A question I usually ask of everyone I interview is, 'What is your earliest memory?' This has brought forth a huge range of answers

– from the mundane to the extraordinary. If there is any commonality to be found, it is that for many people their first memory, particularly if it is a very early memory, is of being held up and looking at something – perhaps out of a window at some clouds or a tree – something to do with the physical world. I think perhaps those memories might be of the time when the child is first conscious of the fact that they are a separate entity.

Another quite frequent first memory is of a small accident or trauma of some sort, such as falling out of the pushchair or down some steps.

By far the most unusual earliest memory I have ever heard was one woman's account of watching her younger brother being circumcised on the kitchen table.

I have a theory about early memories – just a theory, mind you, with nothing scientific to support it – that a person's earliest memory often says something about the sort of person they grow into.

My own earliest memory – standing on the path outside our house with a doll's pram – is rather a misty memory, but later than that I have a perhaps more significant memory, and one that backs up my theory. My older brother, who delighted in teasing me, once cut out *The Listener* (the header from the magazine) and stuck it on my bedroom door because, he said, I spent so much time listening to my mother's telephone conversations. He was probably right. I have always been more of a listener than a talker – a personality trait well suited to oral history interviewing.

In my interviews, most often than not my final question is, 'And what has been the most satisfying aspect or era of your life?'

Almost invariably, and I guess naturally enough, regardless of the fascinating career or adventures in life that they had, people place their spouse and family as being the most satisfying aspect of life.

One of the rare exceptions was the answer that came from a man who had a very successful career, with lots of travel, as well as a full and rich family life, but for him the most satisfying thing in his life was listening to Beethoven's piano concertos. I was surprised and moved by that.

The zoo keeper who trained the chimpanzees for the tea party was a true animal lover, yet his most satisfying experience was going on deer shooting expeditions – a most surprising paradox.

Some projects I have worked on:

The Dames. I was fortunate to receive an Award in Oral History for this project. It happened to be in the year of the women's suffrage centennial, 1993. My project was to interview New Zealand Dames (of the Queen's honour variety). At that stage there were about 25 Dames and I interviewed 17 of them.

This was an amazing group of New Zealand women – intelligent, creative, academic, women with a social conscience, community workers, feminists. At that time I don't think there was a business woman or a sportswoman amongst them – compare that with the *Sirs*. I have always felt and hoped that someone else would at some time pick up the project and add to it.

War Stories Our Mothers Never Told Us. It was a marvellous experience working with Gaylene Preston. There was a big team of interviewers and, between us, we produced a rich collection of very personal stories. Many people will have seen one of the results on film.

Another turning point, 1994 I took a break from oral history. For many years I had been working from home, alone – and I lived by myself. I became depressed and knew I had to get out into a job that took me out of the house, where I would have people around me. By then it was not easy to pick up a job, especially for someone who does not have a university degree, so I started selling real estate and did this for seven years.

Then once again I felt the need for a change, and took on a job as foster mother for an at risk teenage girl. If there had been one major regret in my life, it was not having had children and this is why I took that work up. I also felt I could do it. I wanted meaningful employment, and once again I was ready for a challenge.

My foster daughter was 14 going on two. She sucked her thumb constantly, she wet her bed every night, and she was always wanting to sit on my knee – and she lied and she stole. I did what I could to fill in the mothering and experiential gaps, and when she left me she was 16, going on 10. So you can see from that that she and I covered a lot of ground in a short time.

My experience with my foster daughter and learning about her life and her family made me think about how most oral history interviewees are middle class. Nearly always we interview the haves, not the have-nots – that certainly has been the case with the interviews I have done.

I would have really liked to be able to interview my foster daughter, her mother, and her two grandmothers, but for all sorts of reasons to do with privacy and family dynamics I did not think it could be done. I am pleased that at the oral history conference there was a presentation from Pip Desmond and her work with women in gangs.

2004, back to oral history I was looking for work and Megan Hutching rang me, offering an interview with Bob Walton, retired commissioner of police. This grew into a 15-interview project for the New Zealand Police, one of the most enjoyable and interesting I have done.

It was a walk through New Zealand social history. The police are so often an integral part of the big things that have happened in our country, for instance, the Springbok Tour of 1981, the Rainbow Warrior affair in 1985, the Erebus air disaster in 1979, and the sinking of the Wahine in 1968.

I heard marvellous stories about being on the beat in the 1950s. When policemen went on beat in those days they walked and they took a pocketful of pennies. They were required to keep in contact with the station and they did this by using public phone boxes. It was the era of six o'clock closing, when at six every evening the patrons fell out of the pubs. There were many arrests for being drunk and disorderly. The arrested men were taken back to the police station by tram. Usually they were quite amenable and there was no need for handcuffs.

One of the men I interviewed witnessed the last hanging in New Zealand.

Another of my favourite projects was done for the Wellington Zoo at the time of their centenary. I had a range of interviewees but most were zoo keepers. Probably the most interesting one for me was an interview with the keeper who was responsible for training the chimps, during the era when chimpanzee teas parties were acceptable. He took baby chimps home and kept them in bassinets and nappies, and sometimes took them for Sunday drives in the family car.

OSH (occupational safety and health) and PC (political correctness) were not in the lexicon of that time!

People

Out of all the interviews, over all the years, I can only think of about three people of whom, when I

finished the interview, I walked away thinking, I really didn't like that person.

I find this interesting and surprising because in 'real life' I don't like everybody I meet. And I wonder why I like my interviewees. Is it because you learn a lot about a person in very a short time and so you get to understand them?

In 'real life' it is true to say that, generally, I prefer the company of women to that of men, but in oral history I enjoy interviewing men just as much as women – and I feel I can interview them just as well as I do women.

I really do not have the answers but I mention both these things it because I think a good oral historian must be open to liking the interviewee, have a genuine interest in their lives and a respect for those lives, whatever they are like. If you cannot do that at least 99.9 per cent of the time, then get yourself another job.

Difficult interviews—difficult people—difficult topics

A project for the Office of the Auditor-General, another for the Earthquake and War Damage Commission with earthquake engineers, one for the Plumbers, Gas Fitters and Drainlayers Board – these projects really stretched the brain.

Famous or well-known people can be the hardest. They have been interviewed time and time again, they have said it all before, and it can be very hard to get something fresh, and it is hard to dig deep because they are often very private people with a public persona they have developed as a protective covering.

I think the most difficult interviews I have done have been with public people. One of these was one of the New Zealand Dames. Just before I turned on the recorder, she leaned over and said, 'Of course, you won't be able to ask me anything I haven't been asked before – in fact, if you do, I will give you a lollipop.'

During the course of the interview I asked her questions about her experience of sex education as a young girl, and of getting her first period. Surely she won't have been asked these questions, I thought to myself, but at the end of the interview, she leaned over, wagged her finger at me and said, 'No lollipop for you!' Yeah right, I thought.

I was once sent to do an interview with a man who turned out to be barking mad.

I was given an address in Wellington's

Newtown. This turned out to be a half-way house and the man clearly was suffering from severe paranoid delusions about the crown entity he had worked for, which was my commissioning body. In fact, he thought I had come to help him present a case against them.

Another time I drove all the way to Levin from Wellington for an interview, to find the interviewee had Alzheimers or senile dementia, with virtually no memory at all. She could not remember her husband's name, let alone anything about her job.

Abstracting and the voice

I do a lot of abstracting of other people's interviews and this allows me to indulge in a penchant of mine – listening to the voice.

You are so close to it as it comes through the headphones.

Other oral historians have often said to me, 'Oh, I can't understand how you can bear to do all that abstracting – it must be so boring.' Well sure, it can get tedious. That is, what is being said occasionally gets tedious, but never, to my way of thinking, or imagining, does the voice itself get tedious.

I love listening to the disembodied voice – to the recording of a voice. It reveals such a lot. All the nuances, and lights and shades of meaning, things that are not actually said are somehow expressed in the voice. Feelings or emotions are held in the voice as much as in the words, in fact, quite often more so.

I like to think of myself as a journeywoman

I am not a person who says she is passionate about oral history because I think 'passionate' is an over-used word. A journeyman (or woman) is a qualified person or an artisan who works for another. I think that is what I am, as each interview takes me on a journey through another person's life.

This way suits me well. It is just as, if not more, interesting than following a personal passion as there is so much variety. You never know what you are going to have to research, and hear about, next.

I have been lucky to have a job that has allowed me an entree into so many different lives and lifestyles. It is a privilege to have been asked into so many homes and work places where almost immediately I reach some level of intimacy with a person I have only just met.

Archival purpose

For me, the archival purpose is what it is all about.

Most of my interviews and projects are sitting on the shelf, or stored on hard drive at the Alexander Turnbull Library's Oral History Centre. Many will have already been listened to by researchers, for whatever purpose, but some will not have, and may not be for many years to come.

That does not worry me in the least. In some ways, I think the longer they sit there the better. It is a bit like storing a cheese – with time comes the depth of flavour. In 100 years time, or longer, who knows what people will want from them or will get from them. I like that feeling of mystery, of not really knowing how an interview will be used or how it will be heard or understood by the listener. I find it quite tantalising to think about.

I'm glad that so many of the stories I have recorded are not immediately pinned down, dissected, analysed or reconstituted. Let's just leave them be for a while in all their richness and mystery, for people in the future to make of them what they will.

Finally, I would like to express my thanks to Judith Fyfe and Hugo Manson, Linda Evans, Megan Hutching, and Alison Parr – all of whom have supported me along the way.

Picton Train Drivers Project

LOREEN BREHAUT

In many ways the small town of Picton remained an example of early New Zealand life longer than many larger settlements, in that it had better connections with the wider world by sea than by land. The railway era started in Picton as early as 1872, when 124 men and their families were brought from England and began construction of the line to Blenheim. The line was completed and opened in 1875 but was less than 18 miles long. Its purpose was to access the deep water port in Picton where overseas shipping delivered needed imports and local produce (particularly meat) could be exported.

The line was slowly extended into the Marlborough hinterland, but by 1931 was still no further than Wharanui. A protest march of 500 Marlburnians on Parliament that year had no effect, so Picton, although the entry port to the South Island, had no rail connection to the major cities and remained simply the terminus of a rural service.

Even when the South Island Main Trunk Line to Christchurch was completed after the Second world War, Picton remained out of the mainstream. One of the railwaymen I interviewed who moved here in 1955 found that there was very little freight:



Barry Boese greeting Girl Guides who were about to ride on his railcar.

Loreen Brehaut is a free-lance oral historian based in Picton, who works mainly with the Picton Historical Society and Hospice, Marlborough. She prefers to work on themed projects or life histories.

When we arrived in Picton it was a backwater at the end of the line. Now they weren't spending any money on the place, because the freight in Picton, unless there was a boat in, usually was coal for the locomotives. So you dropped off your tonnage in Blenheim and then arrived at Picton with the coal which they would store for over Christmas. I remember they had a checkup once how many wagons were in Picton; there was forty-four, and forty of them were coal. So there wasn't much coming in and out of here – unless there was a boat.

We'd get meat and the sugar boats and orange boats.¹

Picton is now the northern entry to railways in the South Island. I became aware that the town contains large numbers of ex-railwaymen – they seem to stay on here after retirement – and with the support of a Sesquicentennial Oral History Award I interviewed 8 train drivers, mostly retired but one still in service.² Amongst them was the first female train driver in the South Island, and the second in New Zealand.

To say they were willing would be an understatement. Once the project was known to them, they compiled their own list for me, indicating not only who I should interview, but in which order. Seniority always played an important role in their careers and still apparently counts. Their ages ranged from 46 to 87 at the time of interview, and only the youngest two did not start their training on steam locomotives.

Training

In the old days of steam, boys who wanted to be engine drivers (as most boys seemed to) had to start their training as 'cleaners'. This literally meant cleaning the engines, cleaning out the fireboxes, and usually also cleaning the depot, the boss's office and the lunchroom. During this time they attended classes and were taught the rudiments of lighting the fires and attending the boilers, but they were the depot dogsbodies and got all the dirty work. Although it was over sixty years later in some cases, they remembered the details of this training period very clearly:

It was the hardest part, and you were every man's boy. Most of them didn't call you by name, they just called you 'Boy', and you had to do as they told you. You couldn't answer back to the old drivers, they'd soon give you a kick in the backside, and they weren't afraid of doing it. And you did get told off. You had to step very carefully. Some of them were good, some of them helped you a lot, but a lot of them, they wouldn't help you at all, they wouldn't give you the time of day.³



Dick Feather in the cab of his locomotive

As many people did not have telephones at home then, they sometimes acted as messenger boys, biking around the town with changes of roster when somebody reported sick:

Your first job when you arrived at the depot was to go to the foreman's office, and he had all these notes of change of shift or change of things – a pile of notes. Now he worked out there'd be two or three, depending on how you had to deliver them, but you must get a reply from each individual, whether they could change their shift or they'd do it or not. And that was our job.

Now we'd check out on a big map of Christchurch up on the wall, where you were going. You had your pile, and we used to shoot off and do them. The young boys pedalling like hell. So away we'd go with these mates and deliver them all around, but then we had a meeting-up point. We realized if we went back to the depot, more than likely he had more for you, so we used to have a rendezvous, the three of us, down town. There was a particular milk bar we went to, to see who was on who's motor bike and all this sort of carry-on.⁴

At times the job had its hazards:

You had to make sure you wedged the firebox door open while working in the firebox, because you always got some smart alec while you were in there that

would come along and shut it behind you. We found out that if all the fire bars were out and the ash pan was open underneath, if you were lucky you could sneak down out that way, but it wasn't a very good idea because you were likely to get jammed! I hated working in there, because I used to get a big sweat up in there.⁵

We used to clean out the brick arches and knock the crows' nests off the fire boxes. We used to get inside the fire box for this one. We got a Confined Allowance for that, by the way! So I skiddle-diddled into this fire box. Now I had the drop-gate down because I was going to rake out all the muck, knock all the crows' nests out and put the fire bars in. But now when I came to get out, here's the blimming baffle plate in there. You must swell with the heat and the warmth, you see, and I was stuck in there! I was the only one in the depot – it was quite frightening. Here you are in a fire box, you know the next guy will be on in about four or five hours, so it's not nice. Being skinny, I could get in, but to get out was different.⁶

Once the boys passed their Boiler ticket, they were allowed to fire up the engines and keep the boilers ready for the day's work. After some months of study, the next step was the Fireman's ticket, which allowed the trainee to work on the locomotives, keeping the fire going. At first this would be in the shunting engines in the yards, then gradually they would move out on to trains on the line, for what was to be seven years of shovelling coal into the firebox. However the fireman was also the driver's companion and assistant:

There was great camaraderie with your fireman. If you had a good fireman you had a lot of fun together, because you had to work in with one another... It was a very personal challenge to get the best out of a steam engine, and I enjoyed getting the best out of a steam engine. I really did, because I liked it. I was quite a good fireman, I was a good steady fireman. I was nothing brilliant, but I was steady and I could get steam out of an engine.⁷

This cooperation sometimes extended to competition between different crews:

On what they used to call the 'cabbage train', the Express Goods used to leave here at 8 o'clock at night, somewhere there, we'd go to Kaikoura and back again. And it got that way that we'd see who could go down to Kaikoura and back on the least amount of coal. And this became a sort of challenge. It depended a lot, of course, on the locomotive you had, the fireman you had, and the type of coal you had, as

to whether you'd get a good run. And when you'd get the exceptional run, you always told everybody what you'd done, you see. So this became quite competitive, and of course I had this chap firing for me for a long time. He was just so many streets ahead, in the finish, he would shovel a bit of extra coal on the front plate before we left, and he said, 'We'll give it a go, tonight; we'll see if we can do a ton each way!' That was unheard of – it was usually about two and a half ton. By joves, he was a skilled fellow. And we did! We went down there, and of course when we came home and we said, 'We've done it on a ton each way, to Kaikoura and back,' they just all laughed. 'Oh, you're telling fibs.'⁸

Firemen were all hoping to become drivers eventually, and during their years in the cab would be watching and learning, and sometimes they would get a chance to drive under supervision.

When a fireman got up perhaps six years or something like that – or a bit earlier sometimes, depending on what he was like – you would let him drive and you would do the firing. Perhaps you might fire one way, and that was how they learnt to drive, as well. The Department never made any allowances for firemen to be taught to drive – that's strange, isn't it? So most of the drivers use to let them have a drive.⁹

Naturally once steam locomotives were replaced by diesel in the 1960s, a fireman was no longer needed, but the role remained, now called 'Locomotive Assistant', and this person, an aspiring driver, would sit in the cab and help watch the signals and so on:

If the light was on your side, you had to tell the driver what the colour of the light was, and he'd act on that. Even on the Main Line, the fireman always said what the light was, or the driver would say it if it's on his side, and they repeated it back to each other so there was no chance of a mistake.¹⁰

Eventually the fireman was allowed to take his driver's exams – Second Class at first, to drive shunt engines and freight trains, then First Class, in charge of passenger trains and Expresses. This was the pinnacle of the job and equivalent to being a ship's captain.

Female driver

Susan O'Rourke was one of two in the first intake of female locomotive trainees in the South Island, in 1982, and the only one who stayed on to become a driver. She did experience some resistance from older men in the service:

Well, you had a lot of older men in Christchurch that had been doing steam train and moving on the start of diesel-electrics, and a lot of them would not take you, even as a loco trainee, out on the train. They had to find others to take you to do these things. ...But you had to get a driver who was willing to take a female. But also, in saying that, some of them wouldn't take trainees. So it was not necessarily because it was a female, some of them just didn't want to have a trainee in the cab. And they weren't obliged – they didn't have to.¹¹

The Picton Drivers I interviewed spoke highly of her work:

Oh, she was good, she was excellent. The big bull-hooks – they're great big huge couplings, mainly in between the carriages. They've got them on the locomotive, because when the loco hooked on to the carriages with bull-hooks, they used to put them in like that [demonstrating with his fingers]. They were heavy, and awkward darn things. She never hesitated, she just used to push them up like everybody else. I never found her shirking anything – I found her darn good, actually. She was good value.¹²

Not everyone was happy to have a female on the job, however:

When she had more service and she went on the top roster, they had to get a permanent mate for her. And it was those old guys' wives kicked up! Most of them rang up the boss and said, 'She's not going to be



Susan Hansen as a young locomotive trainee

working with my husband!' you know. Which says a lot about what they think their husbands are like, really!¹³

Susan remembered such an incident herself: *My first Main Line train job was with [a certain driver], and I'll never forget this. We were on a train and it left Picton at 5 o'clock at night, so you started work at 4, and we'd left the loco depot and come out on to the train in the yard. It was a Friday night, and next thing [his wife] arrives down in the car, and out she bales her son! And it was her husband's first night down the track going for a train ride with me! She brought their son down so he could go for a ride. I'll never forget that, because all week we'd been on the shunt, and it was just so obvious. Friday night, it was the first Main Line drive, and we were going down to Wharanai – that's just past Ward – and she was making sure there was nothing! So the son came for a ride, and you sat on little fold-down seats that were lucky if they were a foot wide, so that's how he rode all the way down and all the way home, to keep an eye on Dad!¹⁴*

The main problem Susan faced (apart from the inappropriate fit of the men's uniform trousers) was toilet availability.

There was never a female toilet. [...] It's not the ideal situation, but in the end you know it doesn't matter how much noise you make, you're not going to get anywhere really. So you just learnt to cope with it. Make sure that when you stopped somewhere, like if you had to stop at Blenheim, you made sure you went to the toilet, because the public toilet's at the station, and of course you've got to remember that there's no toilets in some of the sidings. At Grassmere, at Ward, Wharanui, some of those sidings never had a toilet, so you had to try and plan your trip.¹⁵

Of course these are the issues that women faced in all workplaces when they were the first female employees. In the end, it was the shift work that made her decide to retire from driving trains. She married another driver, and they were never on the same roster and had very little home life together. To this day, women drivers are more common on city commuter trains than on the main lines, probably for this reason.

Incidents and accidents

Most of the drivers interviewed had unpleasant experiences of one sort or another on the track. Susan O'Rourke described the situation for the driver when an accident looms:

We were coming home on a train about 11 o'clock at

night and we'd left Blenheim and we were coming around behind KFC. We came over the railway crossing before we went to go on to the bridge. You're going 50, 60 k[ilometres an hour], you're starting to get your speed up, and all your judgments are on split decision. ... Coming home, you're stopping a thousand-ton train, you can't just stop on an eggshell. And there was this thing lying on the ground and I wasn't driving, Pat was driving. He had to make this split decision and he threw the brakes on immediately, because we thought it was a body lying in the middle of the track. But as we got closer – and once you've put the brakes on emergency you can't do anything, it's just got to ride itself out – as we got closer it was sheets of building paper had blown on to the railway track. But it looked like at the time someone curled up asleep on the middle of the track. So that's the scariest time. You've got a split decision: is it a person? You've got no time to evaluate, you have to make your mind up then, and there's no humming and ha-ing, there's no discussion. You're in control, you make the decision.¹⁶

This is how two drivers described fatal accidents:

As far as level crossing accidents went, I had two. One was at Budge Street in Blenheim, and that was in steam days; that was on the 'cabbage train'. I was driving, and lucky for me, the fireman was right on the ball. There was a car coming up towards the crossing and he looked back and he said, 'I've got a funny suspicion that joker's driven into the side of the train.' Which he had. We went back and we actually found him on the line. The car was over on the property adjacent to the crossing. He died three days later, unfortunately. He'd come from a meeting at the Bowling Club and just drove straight into the side of us.

It would take you a while to stop, too, wouldn't it?

Oh yes, we went quite a way past. We had a 30 k speed restriction down through there, but still, after you've put the brake on it still takes some time to stop.¹⁷

[I] came round the corner past Blenheim Station, that level crossing by the station, and ran over a guy. He was an itinerant, and he was drunk, and he'd just gone to sleep on the track and I just ran over him. ... I saw him about from here

to the gate away [about 50 metres] as I came round the corner. I thought it was just a lump of old clothes or something, but I just knew when I ran over him it couldn't be.

There's nothing you can do at that distance? Nothing I could do, no. Put my rig into Emergency and stopped up at the next level crossing up there. So I had to go back and have a look, make sure what it was, and saw what it was. So I went back and called up the Police. So I was off the road again, so I had to get counselling again! I really was going to chuck the job in altogether, then I thought, what the hell else am I going to do at this stage of my life? So I went back, and I don't do overtime now, or anything extra, I just do my rostered shifts and disappear.¹⁸

I was also told about several near misses, of which this is one:

I hit a little kid out at Riverlands. He was playing on the track with his dog, and it was big dog, one of those big hairy things. It was on a straight piece of road, too, and I could see this dog on the track in the distance, and I thought, Oh, it's only a dog. Dogs, they always move off. I blew the horn and the bloody dog moved off all right, and this kid was standing – he was only a little toddler – he was standing behind the dog! He didn't move! He was on the outside of the rail, luckily, and I'd just about stopped when I hit him with the front and bowled him into the grass. He broke a leg and a hip or something, but he came right – he was bloody lucky!



Bob Carson and Jack Knight with AB696 and a broken axle on the main driving wheel while climbing the Dashwood Pass, c.1950

I had an assistant, and we had a guard at that time. And when we stopped, the guard was right opposite the house, and he yelled out to them and they came up and the ambulance came and picked him up and took him to hospital. But he was one lucky little kid!

So who did you have to report to, or what happened?

Well in those days not a lot really happened. I rang Train Control, of course, because he rings the ambulance, and then once it had all cleared up we just carried on home. Where now if you have an accident they take you off the train straight away and bring out a relief driver. But you had no counselling or nothing in those days – nothing at all.¹⁹

Adjusting to diesel

When diesel locomotives were introduced and steam was gradually phased out, train crews had to do a lot of adjustments. Drivers had to be re-trained to new driving techniques and to understand a different type of engine.

There was only one man in Picton depot that didn't adjust. Now that's pretty good, because he was due to retire anyway. But we adjusted. We made our mistakes, we talked about our mistakes, and of course naturally the younger guys were listening, and we handed them a legacy and mastered these machines. We did. See, you had to keep up with the play, because there's always someone trying if you're on the top roster, wanting your job. We mastered them. We got very efficient at these diesels.²⁰

A lot of the very, very old drivers, they didn't take the transition very well. They'd done say thirty-five years as a steam driver, then suddenly getting on to a modern piece of equipment, they were scared of it, and that's all it amounted to. They were scared of the power that it had, and they reacted that way. A lot of them, they couldn't get out off the track quick enough, because they just couldn't cope. It's just like running round in a Model T [Ford car] then getting into a limousine or something like that. They just couldn't take that transition period, and a lot of the drivers opted out.²¹

Changes in the industry

During the period these people worked for the Railways Department, there were a number of major corporate changes. From being a government department, the Railway was sold and management went to private companies. This affected some staff more than others, but a main feature was the big staff cuts. It was during the staff changes in 1990 that Susan O'Rourke took

redundancy, but the other interviewees were all men who survived the downsizing or who had retired beforehand. Some spoke of frustrating experiences with changing management when a well-ingrained system was changed. However others could understand the necessity to reduce the very large staff.

First the guards were taken off, then the firemen or assistant drivers, so from then on, trains had just a single driver on board and no other staff. Then the signalling system was changed to Track Warrants issued by computer from Wellington, which not all drivers are happy about.

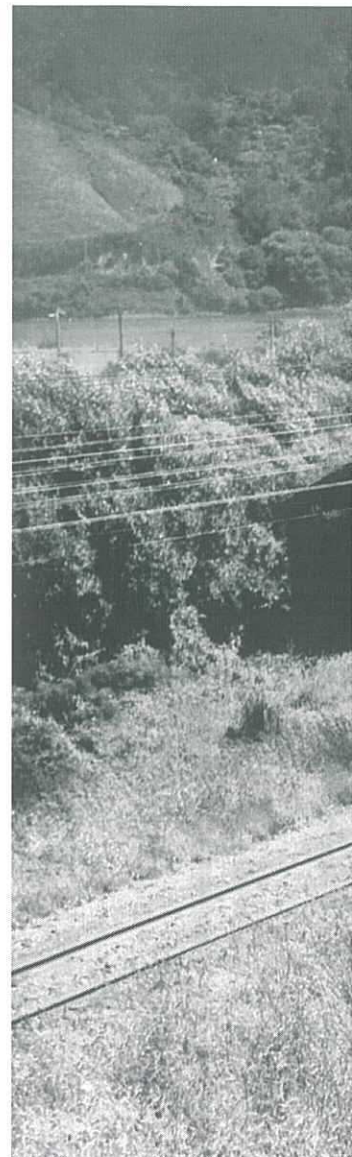
They wanted to skeletonise the railway, and they'd go down and down and down until it wouldn't work any more, and then they'd come back up until it just would. And they made no secret of that, and I suppose you can argue that's a reasonable business approach, but if you're at the sharp end of the train it's not very nice, because you're the one that's going to be having the problem if anything happens.

[...]

Instead of having a signal system we went to a system called Track Warrant Control, which is just a paper system where you fill in a form saying that you can go from A to B. And that was invented in America for branch lines and things like that, and I don't think anyone else in the world ever tried it on anything as busy as our line. Our line isn't busy like an overseas one, but compared to a branch line with say one train each way, it's a big change. We pointed out all sorts of problems with them and they wouldn't listen.

The problem with it is they're issued through a computer

Train A-46, loco AB688 leaves Picton station in 1957



in Wellington, so that part of it's fail-safe. But at the actual operating side it's totally down to human competence, and if a human being makes a slight mistake then you can have two trains hurtling towards each other. We hated that, because the previous system with automatic signalling was a great system – it was fail-safe. But here we are.²²

What became evident through the interviews was that as the many changes were imposed upon the drivers, they felt powerless to have their views heard. Being at the peak of their chosen careers, they had no agency to influence decisions which vitally affected their work. The only responses available were acceptance or resignation from a position they had spent years acquiring. As with the change from steam to diesel, the drivers could learn to adapt, or leave. Those I interviewed were the ones who chose to adapt. They had stayed because with all its frustrations they loved the job:

I'm a Green, so I feel that I'm doing something worthwhile for the country as well as everything else. And I like being part of an industry that's got lots of heritage. I like being part of the country's history and all that sort of thing. And I do like diesel-electric locomotives. You'll probably hear old guys say, 'There's nothing like steam engines,' and they might be right, but they're a marvellous piece of engineering in their own right.

And the job itself is good, because the minute you leave Picton, you're the boss of the train. Other people give you guidance, like track crew and things like that, but you decide how you're doing it, and that's all good. You don't have a boss sitting on your shoulder all the time.²³

There was a wide range of interesting experience covered in the interviews. One man had grown up in a railway camp while his father was building the track along the Kaikoura



coast. This same man was later the driver of the demolition train taking up the Nelson track after it was closed. Several had worked on coal trains in the West Coast, or on the Rimutaka line, and a number had driven passenger railcars. These Picton train drivers experienced storms and floods, and their engines had hit animals, rocks and sometimes sabotage materials on the line. Their memories were sharp and often they re-lived the events while describing them. It was an enlightening privilege to interview and record them.

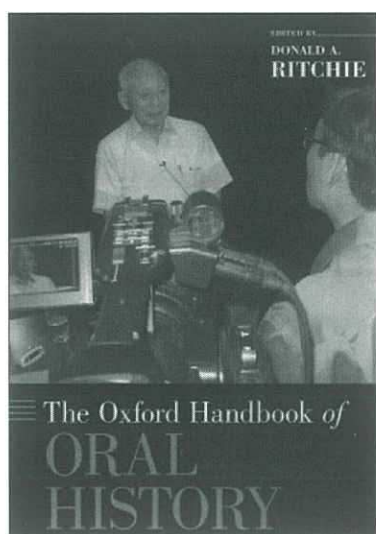
ENDNOTES

- ¹ Dick Feather, interview, May 2010, Picton Historical Society archive.
- ² In compliance with the terms of this Award the interviews are archived at the Oral History Unit, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington. Full transcripts are also available at Picton Museum.
- ³ Bill Bain, interview, August 2009, Picton Historical Society archive.
- ⁴ Dick Feather, interview.
- ⁵ Barry Boese, interview, February 2010, Picton Historical Society archive.
- ⁶ Dick Feather, interview.
- ⁷ Bill Bain, interview
- ⁸ John Knight, interview, June-July 2009, Picton Historical Society archive.
- ⁹ John Knight, interview
- ¹⁰ Bill Bain, interview
- ¹¹ Susan O'Rourke, interview, October 2009, Picton Historical Society archive.
- ¹² Barry Boese, interview
- ¹³ Chris McMahon, interview, December 2009, Picton Historical Society archive.
- ¹⁴ Susan O'Rourke, interview
- ¹⁵ Susan O'Rourke, interview
- ¹⁶ Susan O'Rourke, interview
- ¹⁷ Barry Boese, interview
- ¹⁸ Chris McMahon, interview
- ¹⁹ Robin Gibbons, interview, August 2010, Picton Historical Society archive.
- ²⁰ Dick Feather, interview
- ²¹ Bill Bain, interview
- ²² Chris McMahon, interview
- ²³ Chris McMahon, interview

Book Reviews

Donald A. Ritchie (ed) *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History*. Oxford University Press, 2003. £85

Susan Jacobs, Auckland



Anyone who has embarked on an oral history interview armed with a tape recorder and unlimited enthusiasm will know that there is much more to the process than meets the eye.

When I played back my first few interviews I was alarmed at the frequency of my own voice chiming in, if only to encourage, affirm and admittedly add my bit to the reminiscences of the interviewee. Despite being pleased with the information I received, I was glad that no one but myself would ever hear how invasive I sounded.

Little did I know at the time but my fumbling attempts were part of a skill-honing process that many oral history

practitioners can identify with. Oral history, once the Cinderella of historical source-gathering and regarded with suspicion by universities as little more than a colourful subsidiary to the real work of research, has come of age.

Since its first tentative steps to justify its credentials as a valid source of historical inquiry, oral history has moved from the margins to the mainstream. As this timely book shows, it now has an extensive history of its own to record. In a collection of eclectic articles from a wide range of contributors spanning different countries and disciplines, this handbook documents fascinating facets of this journey. Divided into seven loosely thematic sections, there is something to inform and inspire everyone, from the oral history professional to researchers working on community projects, or to anyone thinking of recording precious memories of a family member.

Its self-reflection encompasses an exploration of the complex relationship that underpins the conversation between interviewer and interviewee as well as an examination of the explosion of digital technology that can allow recordings to be shared with an audience of millions via the Internet. The questions raised, among others, about the ethical issues such accessibility can pose and the long-term preservation of digital content ensure that there is much to discuss in the future. As Doug Boyd states, the transmission of oral history has always depended on the technology used to record it. The changeable nature of the

technologies means that it needs the paradox of 'technology to save us from technology.'

Mary Kay Quinlan offers a solidly based piece on the dynamics of interviewing, now seen as a dialogue with its own set of contextual circumstances that need to be made transparent. Of interest was the account of Richard Candida Smith, a seasoned oral history interviewer, who described the slightly disturbing experience of being interviewed himself. His preconceived notions of the unlimited scope oral history provides to seamlessly tell one's own story were challenged by his anxious effort to understand what he was required to say, and fit his story around the interviewer's expectations. He felt that he had so much more to offer. 'Oral history thrives', he wrote, 'when it goes beyond collecting people's stories and prompts an engagement with the past that stimulates new interpretations.'

For Megan Hutching, the only New Zealand contributor, the satisfaction of conducting oral history interviews is precisely receiving much more information than was originally asked for. Her interviews with New Zealand World War Two veterans revealed not only battle experiences, but also the domestic, routine side of war where most soldiers' spent their time. The opportunity to contextualise these individual, anecdotal experiences within a larger narrative of war can lead to a more nuanced understanding of their effects on veterans' lives.

In a thoughtful analysis Anna Green explores the theory that memory is collective and

the act of remembering a social process. Basing her ideas on Halbwach's suggestion that memory is created through active discourse with others, she both affirms this approach and cautions against using it uncritically. She advises oral historians to remain alert to 'the capacity of individuals to reflect critically upon their own experience and practice, and those of others.'

Collective memory is often a conscious act that reveals how a community chooses to recall a troubled past. Rearrangement of memories to suit present circumstances and even amnesia of certain events can feature in the way public memories are carefully created. Alistair Thomson examines the research on memory that has proven so fertile for understanding the processes affecting how people remember, so that 'memory becomes both the subject and source of oral history.'

Italian oral historians Alessandro Portelli and Luisa Passerini are credited with shifting paradigms of interpretation that challenge the beliefs of critics of the unreliability of memory and the bias of the interviewing process. Arguing that memory, by its intrinsic nature, changes in each re-telling, they believe that rather than being a passive storehouse, it is a catalyst for understanding how people make sense of and ascribe meaning to their experiences. Portelli's contribution describes the establishment of the House of Memory and History in Rome to continue the work of the post World War Two anti-fascist Resistance institutes. Supported by a mayoral advisor responsible for the

'preservation and development of democratic memories', it is, however, sobering to learn of the struggle to maintain the relevance of such memories in a climate of historical revisionism and dwindling participants. Although it encompasses a broad spectrum of issues such as human rights and peace, controversial areas such as immigrant communities and the Palestinian question have remained off limits.

Themes of war and conflict receive attention from several contributors. Jessica Wiederhorn gives an overview of the oral history accounts of Holocaust survivors, an important project not only for bearing witness to arguably the most chilling atrocity of the twentieth century, but also because it is the largest collection of oral histories on a single subject. Survivors who were interviewed at different times by different interviewers often decades apart show that trauma is enduring and that emotional truth is as important in creating meaning as factual truth. But it also demonstrates how testimonies can strive to fit the narrative genre expected of them. The interviewer as secondary witness then becomes part of the process of constructing the memory.

It has left a blueprint for how to conduct and reflect on oral histories of subsequent catastrophic and traumatic events. Narratives of experiences of genocide, torture, rape and sexual abuse are often embedded in ambitious projects like that of the post-apartheid South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Designed to foster forgiveness

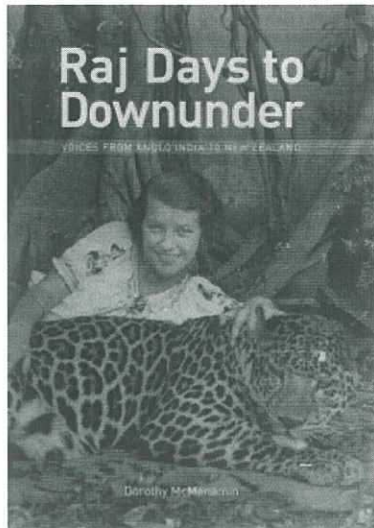
and healing in preparation for a socially cohesive future, it was discovered that most survivors of the violent regime wanted punitive not restorative justice. According to Sean Field, the supposedly therapeutic, redemptive power of telling one's story needs to be balanced, against the often political purpose behind such information-gathering.

Exposure to catastrophic events through the media on a daily basis can be overwhelming and difficult to interpret. For Mary Marshall Clark oral history's role in documenting the immediate effects of a catastrophic event 'supports the process of meaning-making' for those who live through them. She describes the longitudinal study undertaken to record the oral history of the September 11 events and their aftermath. A sense of being agents rather than victims, in that their narratives contributed to how the event would be remembered, was a powerful feeling for many.

It is impossible to do justice to all the thought-provoking contributions in this book. Suffice to say that oral history is multi-disciplinary and deeply engaged in exploring theories and methodologies enhanced by research. Yet however complex the interpretations, its roots are clearly embedded in the stories of ordinary individuals and their communities. Both a social and individual activity, oral history is, at its simplest, an exchange between an interviewer and a narrator who record a story for the benefit and understanding of others.

Dorothy McMenemy *Raj Days to Downunder: Voices from Anglo India to New Zealand*. Available from the author at dorothym@snap.net.nz \$40 +p&p

Mark Watts, Auckland



In *Raj Days to Downunder* Dorothy McMenemy has assembled a fascinating and important collection of oral history from Anglo Indians who settled in New Zealand in the years following the independence of India.

The very term 'Anglo Indian' is probably not a familiar one to New Zealanders of the early twenty-first century, but for the 29 people featured in Ms McMenemy's collection it is a term rich in identity, historical association and personal meaning. In the India of the Raj the Anglo Indians inhabited a distinctive world, and it is in the description of this now-vanished world that this collection excels.

Through her efforts over many years McMenemy has assembled a picture of a society and time that seems improbably exotic.

Here is how Jewel Keating remembers her grandmother's house in Rangoon, Burma:

'I still dream of that place, with a big concrete pad at the back. It was like a great big hollow apartment. We stayed on what was called a field bed, no mattresses, just a mat on the floor. It was too hot to have a mattress, just straw mats put down, pillows, maybe a sheet and a mosquito net. The window opened up top and the bottom had Venetians with bars so nobody could get through. It could let the air in and at night we could hear the hawkers going past.'

The personal is mixed in with much larger themes in these histories: racial division, the dislocation of a world war, the post-war political partition of the Indian subcontinent and the upheavals this occasioned, and the presence and role of family servants as a common feature of Anglo Indian society.

The war, and the terrible birthing-pangs of the new India, Bangladesh and Pakistan changed everything: 'After 1947 you never knew where you stood', says Gypsy Barnett, who arrived in Wellington with her husband in 1951.

The transition to New Zealand can't have been easy and brought unexpected challenges that have lived on in memory. Dick Cox left Lahore in late 1949 and after arriving in New Zealand lived initially in Raglan. He recalls having to dig long-drop toilets 'at the end of the garden and dispose of the 'doings' into it, then cover it with soil. This was akin to what the *jamadār* did for us in India.'

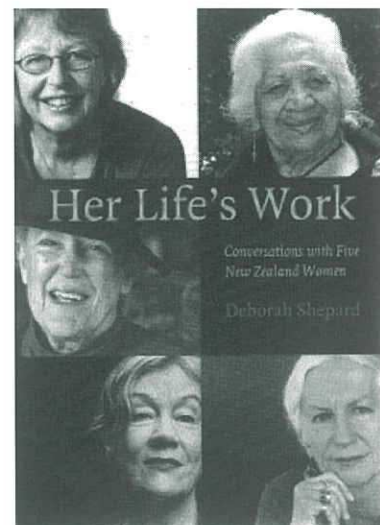
Dick Cox didn't dig many long-drops, however. He married, trained as a doctor and gave many years of service on the West Coast, and in Christchurch.

There are many similar trajectories traced in these histories, and collectively they demonstrate the contribution the Anglo Indian community and its descendants have made to postwar New Zealand.

If there are faults in the collection, they are few in number. Some long sections of text might have been benefitted from a bit of judicious pruning, but that's a minor quibble. McMenemy's labour of love has provided us with a collection of fascinating personal history rich in both resonance and relevance.

BRIEFLY NOTED

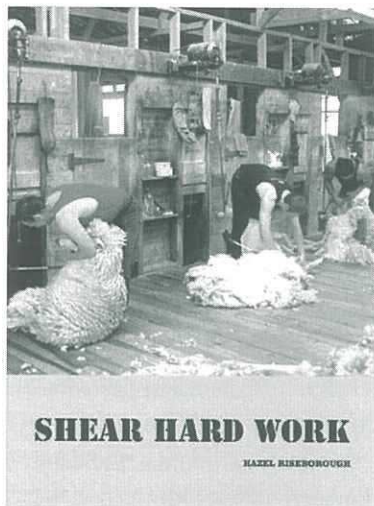
Deborah Shepard *Her Life's Work: Conversations with five New Zealand women*. Auckland University Press, \$45



Deborah Shepard has interviewed Jacqueline Fahey, Merimeri Penfold, Anne Salmond, Gaylene Preston and Margaret Mahy about their lives, their work, the constraints imposed on them by their gender, and how they responded to opportunities and overcame difficulties. It is a terrific book, rich in detail, which deftly captures the way in which these

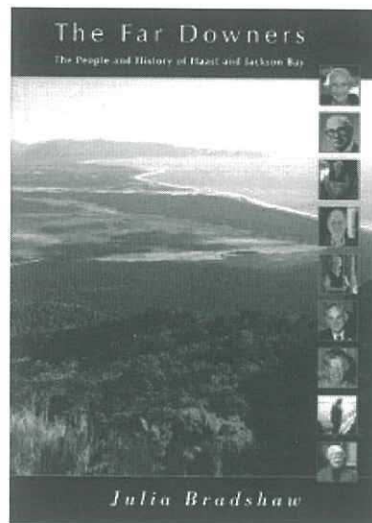
women's lives have constantly evolved. Each woman's story is accompanied by a beautiful portrait photograph by Marti Friedlander.

Hazel Riseborough *Shear Hard Work*. Auckland University Press, \$45



Hazel Riseborough uses interviews, among other things, to bring to life the noise and bustle, the long days and hard work of the men and women of the New Zealand shearing shed. The book relates the history of shearing in the words of the shearers, shedhands, wool handlers and cooks who work in the sheds, compete at the shows and set the records.

Julia Bradshaw *The Far Downers: The people and history of Haast and Jackson Bay*. Otago University Press, \$34.99



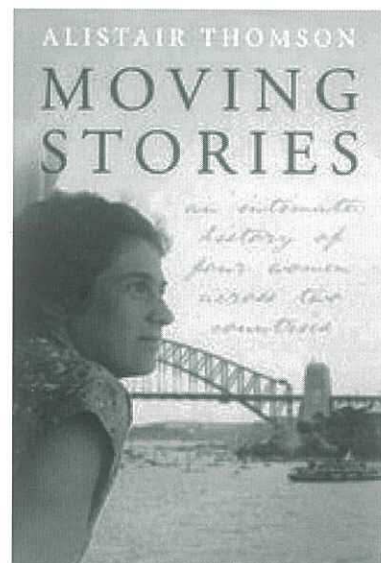
This is a reprint of Julia's book which contains the life stories of nine people who grew up in this remote area of the South Island, which did not have a direct road link to the rest of New Zealand until 1960.

Alexander Freund & Alistair Thomson (eds) *Oral History and Photography*. Palgrave Macmillan, \$US85

From the publishers' website: This essay collection explores the 'photographic turn' in oral history. Contributors ask how oral historians can best use photographs in their interviewing practice and how they can best understand photographs in their interpretation of oral histories. The authors present a dozen case studies from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In exploring the intersection of oral history and photography, they complicate and move beyond the use of photographs

as social documents and memory triggers and demonstrate how photographs frame oral narratives and how stories unsettle the seeming fixity of photographs' meanings.

Alistair Thomson *Moving Stories: An intimate history of four women across two countries*. University of New South Wales Press, \$64.95



From the publishers' website: Skilfully combining oral history and biography, Alistair Thomson tells the life stories of Phyllis, Gwen, Joan and Dorothy, illuminating the forgotten history of women's lives before the advent of feminism. As housewives, working mothers and adventurous travellers, these women recorded, described, compared and explained their everyday lives in Australia in the letters and photos they sent to their families in Britain. In writing about childcare and housework, friendship, family and married life, these women reveal much about Britain and Australia at the time, but as much about themselves.

NOHANZ Origins

The National Oral History Association of New Zealand
Te Kete Kōrero-a-Waha o Te Motu (NOHANZ)
was established as result of the first national oral history seminar
organised in April 1986 by the Centre for Continuing Education
of the Victoria University of Wellington and the New Zealand
Oral History Archive, a professional organisation then based in the
National Library that worked on major oral history projects.

Objectives

- To promote the practice and methods of oral history.
- To promote standards in oral history interviewing techniques, and in recording and preservation methods.
- To act as a resource of information and to advise on practical and technical problems involved in making oral history recordings.
- To act as a coordinator of oral history activities throughout New Zealand.
- To produce an annual oral history journal and regular newsletters.
- To promote regular oral history meetings, talks, seminars, workshops and demonstrations.
- To encourage the establishment of NOHANZ branches throughout New Zealand.
- To compile a directory of oral history holdings to improve access to collections held in libraries archives and museums.

Code of ethical and technical practice

This Code exists to promote ethical, professional and technical standards in the collection, preservation and use of sound and video oral history material.

Archives, sponsors and organisers of oral history projects have the following responsibilities:

- to inform interviewers and people interviewed of the importance of this Code for the successful creation and use of oral history material;
- to select interviewers on the basis of professional competence and interviewing skill, endeavouring to assign appropriate interviewers to people interviewed;
- to see that records of the creation and processing of each interview are kept;
- to ensure that each interview is properly indexed and catalogued;
- to ensure that preservation conditions for recordings and accompanying material are of the highest possible standard;
- to ensure that placement of and access to recordings and accompanying material comply with a signed or recorded agreement with the person interviewed;
- to ensure that people interviewed are informed of issues such as copyright, ownership, privacy legislation, and how the interview and accompanying material may be used;
- to make the existence of available interviews known through public information channels;
- to guard against possible social injury to, or exploitation of people interviewed.

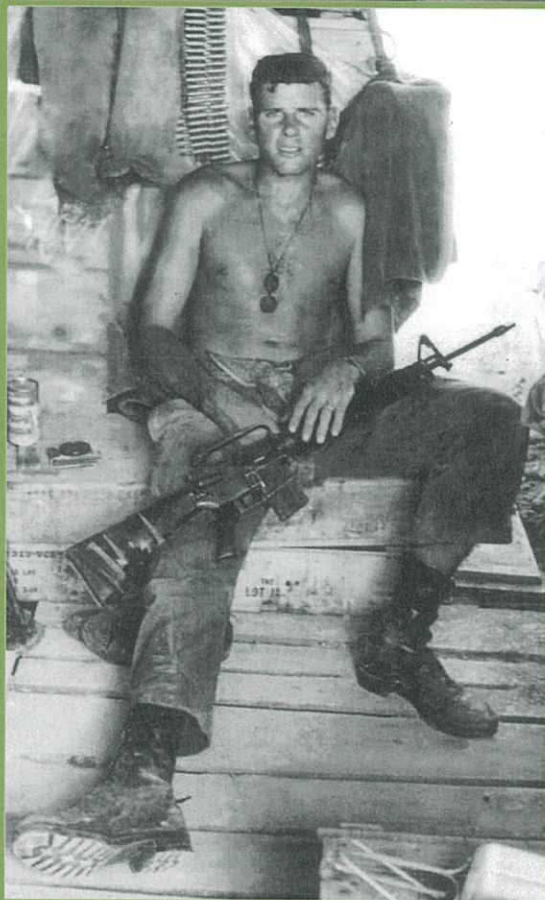
INTERVIEWERS HAVE THE FOLLOWING RESPONSIBILITIES:

- to inform the person interviewed of the purposes and procedures of oral history in general and of the particular project in which they are involved;
- to inform the person interviewed of issues such as copyright, ownership, privacy legislation, and how the material and accompanying material may be used;
- to develop sufficient skills and knowledge in interviewing and equipment operation, e.g. through reading and training, to ensure a result of the highest possible standard;
- to use equipment that will produce recordings of the highest possible standard;
- to encourage informative dialogue based on thorough research;
- to conduct interviews with integrity;
- to conduct interviews with an awareness of cultural or individual sensibilities;
- to treat every interview as a confidential conversation, the contents of which are available only as determined by written or recorded agreement with the person interviewed;
- to place each recording and all accompanying material in an archive to be available for research, subject to any conditions placed on it by the person interviewed;
- to inform the person interviewed of where the material will be held;
- to respect all agreements made with the person interviewed.

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NOHANZ



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