
Experiencing War: A Project to Preserve and Make Accessible Oral Histories of World War II

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Center for Archival Collections
Bowling Green State University Libraries
Society of Ohio Archivists Conference
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Interviewee Wilber Sanholtz with fellow servicemen during flight training

Presentation Overview

- Who we are
- The collection
- Ohio History Fund
- Grant application process
- Project workflow
- Challenges and lessons learned
- Publicity

BGSU[®]

**Center for
Archival Collections**

B O W L I N G G R E E N S T A T E U N I V E R S I T Y

About Us

COLLECTIONS

University Archives,
regional history
collections, National
Student Affairs
Archives, special
collections

STRENGTHS

Civil War history,
women, labor,
agriculture, religion
(Christian churches)

TECHNOLOGY

Omeka (finding aids,
digital collections/
exhibits), Avalon
(streaming media),
Z- DAM (DAM system),
Preservica (digital
preservation),
ArchivesSpace
(finding aids, in
progress)

MS-0871: HISTORY 303 WORLD WAR II INTERVIEWS



About the Collection

- 108 audio/video recordings
- Created 2000 - 2004 for a History of World War II course taught by Drs. Kathren Brown and Walter Grunden
- "To give voice to individuals who experienced war and to produce a useable historical record"
- Prior access to collection was difficult to facilitate due to formats

Ohio History Fund



FUNDING

Income tax check-offs, mastodon license plates, designated donations

CATEGORIES

Bricks & Mortar, Organizational Development, Programs & Collections

ELIGIBILITY

Ohio-based nonprofit organizations and public entities; requires matching

Grant Application Process

TIMELINE

One year to complete upon award

PERSONNEL

CAC staff (Michelle and Nick); Dept. of History graduate student; vendors for outsourced portions

FUNDING AMOUNT

Received \$6,700 from an initial request for \$10,700; Dept. of History funding for graduate student provided majority of our match

Project Workflow

COMPONENTS

- Fall 2018
 - Digitization (Outsourced)
- Spring 2019
 - Transcriptions and closed captions (Outsourced)
 - Metadata and quality control
 - Online delivery

Digitization

VENDOR SELECTION

Obtained quotes from four media digitization vendors; selected Memnon based on estimated cost and established work with Indiana University's Media Digitization and Preservation Initiative



Digitization

DELIVERABLES (3 MONTHS)

PRESERVATION MASTERS

- Audio: 24/96 BWF
- Video:
 - Format: NTSC
 - Codec: FFv1
uncompressed
 - Resolution:
720x486px,
4 :2 :2

PRODUCTION MASTERS

- Audio: 24/96 BWF
- Video:
 - Format: NTSC
 - Codec: MPEG - 2
 - Resolution:
720x512px, 4:2:
2

ACCESS COPIES

- Audio: 192 kbps
MPEG- 4
- Video:
 - Format: MPEG - 4
 - Codec: H.264
 - Resolution:
720x486px, 4:2:0

Transcriptions and Closed Captions

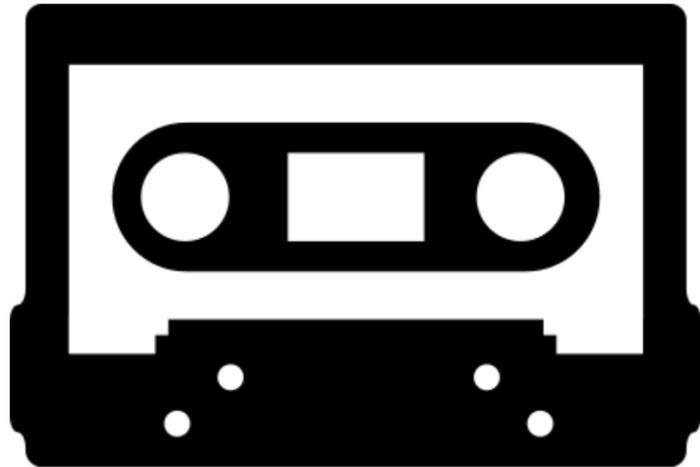
VENDOR SELECTION

- Selected Rev based on rates (\$1 per minute) and recommendations on archival listservs
- All other options were cost - prohibitive



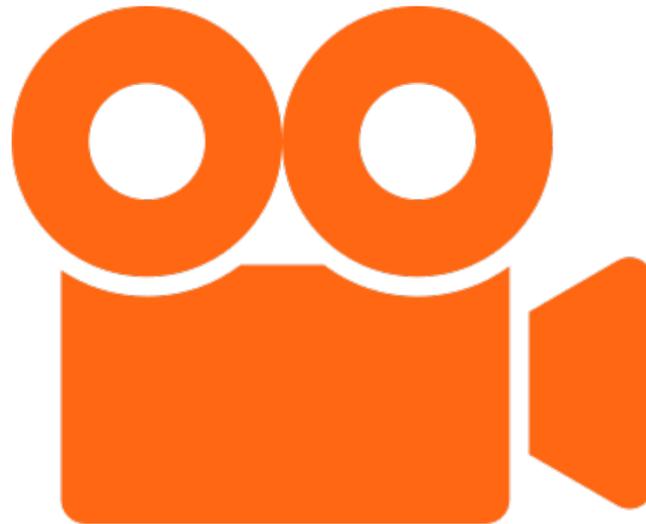
Transcriptions and Closed Captions

DELIVERABLES (5 MONTHS)



AUDIO

Microsoft Word document



VIDEO

SRT plain text
file

ms00871_b002_video_arnoldrichard_captions.srt - Notepad

File Edit Format View Help

```
1
00:00:40,526 --> 00:00:43,026
- And, we were all volunteers,

2
00:00:45,460 --> 00:00:48,800
and at graduation we were...

3
00:00:48,800 --> 00:00:51,530
Well, we weren't
commissioned at graduation,

4
00:00:51,530 --> 00:00:55,990
but we did go to OCS, and then
were commissioned from OCS.

5
00:00:57,083 --> 00:00:58,287
- [Interviewer] What kind of stories

6
00:00:58,287 --> 00:01:00,047
about World War I have you heard?

7
00:01:00,047 --> 00:01:02,290
- World War I?
- [Interviewer] Mm-hmm.
```

SRT
example

Metadata and Quality Control (5 months)

■ TRAINING

Trained Department of History graduate student in Dublin Core metadata and accessibility document standards

■ REFORMATTING

Graduate student reformatted transcriptions to adhere to the Baylor Institute of Oral History style guide; saved as searchable PDFs

■ ACCESSIBILITY REVIEW

Graduate student reviewed all recordings against transcriptions and closed captions; corrected errors

■ METADATA

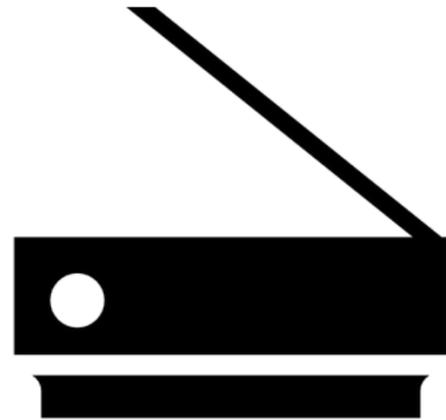
Graduate student entered Dublin Core metadata for each oral history in an Excel XSL file

Online Delivery

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER (2 MONTHS)



Dublin Core XSL converted to CSV, uploaded to Omeka to batch create item records



Scanned supplemental materials and video stills used for exhibit icons, uploaded to Omeka



Host platform for access copies of recordings (videos bundled with SRT files)



Host platform for digital exhibit; recordings embedded into item records from Avalon

OVER 100 ORAL HISTORIES OF OHIOANS' EXPERIENCES OF WORLD WAR II NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE



Students from the history of World War II course taught by BGSU faculty members Walter E. Grunden and Kathren Brown created audio and video oral histories between the years 2001 and 2004. With grant support from the Ohio History Fund, the Center for Archival Collections is pleased to provide online access to digitized versions.

Featured in the oral histories:

- Service in all branches of the armed forces
- Combat experience in the European and Pacific theaters of the war
- Noncombatant life on the U.S. home front and abroad
- A variety of social and economic backgrounds

Access the interviews at https://digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/exhibits/show/wwii_oral_histories.



- PRESS RELEASE
- OVERSIZED POSTCARD
- SOCIAL MEDIA
- SLIDE ON CAMPUS SCREENS



Experiencing War: A Project to Preserve and Make Accessible Oral Histories of World War II is made possible in part by a grant from the Ohio History Connection's History Fund. The Ohio History Fund is supported exclusively by voluntary donations of state income tax refunds, Ohio History "mastodon" license plate sales, and designated gifts to the Ohio History Connection.

www.ohiohistory.org/historyfund

Many of those interviewed were relatives of students living within a reasonable distance of BGSU, resulting in a collection that primarily documents longtime Ohio residents' roles in the war.

Audio recordings have associated transcripts; video recordings have been closed-captioned.



Access the interviews at https://digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/exhibits/show/wwii_oral_histories.



Lessons Learned

LEGAL PAPERWORK

To the degree that you can, have all parties that will review your project do so before grant submission

BLANK SPACE

Ask vendor to remove irrelevant and blank content from access files; it is time - consuming to do it yourself

KNOW THE CONTENT

Oral histories may contain offensive or hateful language meriting an acknowledgement or advisory statement

ANTICIPATE DONATIONS

As people learn about your project, be prepared to answer questions about recording new stories, donations of objects

DIGITAL EXHIBIT DEMO

Interviews

[Digital Gallery](#) / [Exhibits](#) / [Experiencing War: A Project to Preserve and Make Accessible Oral Histories of World War II](#) / [Interviews](#)

Exhibit Contents

[Introduction](#) [Interviews](#) [Statement on Content and Accessibility](#) [Exhibit Sponsors](#)

All History 303 World War II oral histories are available below, arrayed alphabetically by interviewee last name. Select any of the gallery images to access the corresponding individual's interview. To enhance accessibility, all audio interviews are accompanied by transcripts, and all video interviews contain closed captions, which may be activated by clicking on the "CC" icon in the lower right portion of the video window.



Bill Allen



John Allison



Carl Amato



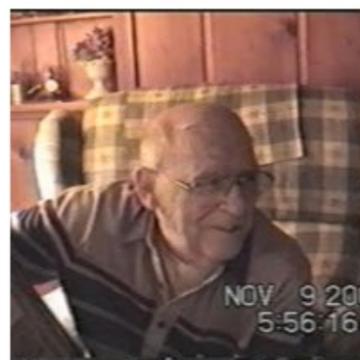
John Andryc



Lester Arnold



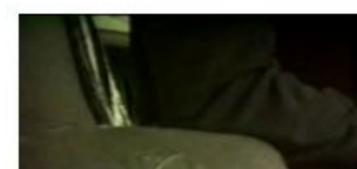
Richard Arnold



Ralph Baringer



William Baur



Contact Us

WE WOULD LOVE TO
HEAR FROM YOU!

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