

March 2021

News from the OHC

**From all of us at the Oral History Center, we are wishing you our best in these challenging times.
We hope that you and your loved ones are staying safe and healthy.**

March Column from Guest Contributor Shanna Farrell

Every other month during 2021, we'll be hearing from OHC guest columnists. This month, interviewer Shanna Farrell discusses rapport—the importance of it, how to cultivate it, and how it's changed while we're conducting interviews remotely.



Read Shanna Farrell's guest column, "The Importance of Rapport," here.

The Advanced Summer Institute

The OHC is offering an online version of our one-week **advanced institute** on the methodology, theory, and practice of oral history. This will take place from August 9-13, 2021. Applications will be accepted through July 16, 2021. **Apply now!**



The cost of the Advanced Institute has been adjusted to reflect the online nature of this year's program. This year's cost has been adjusted to \$550. See below for details about this year's institute.

The institute is designed for graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, university faculty, independent scholars, and museum and community-based historians who are engaged in oral history work. The goal of the institute is to strengthen the ability of its participants to conduct research-focused interviews and to consider special characteristics of interviews as historical evidence in a rigorous academic environment.

We will devote particular attention to how oral history interviews can broaden and deepen historical interpretation situated within contemporary discussions of history, subjectivity, memory, and memoir.

Instruction will take place online from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Pacific Time, with breaks woven in. There will be three sessions a day: two seminar sessions and a workshop. Seminars will cover oral history theory, legal and ethical issues, project planning, oral history and the audience, anatomy of an interview, editing, fundraising, and analysis and presentation. During workshops, participants will work throughout the week in small groups, led by faculty, to develop and refine their projects.

Applications are now open!

One Shot for Gold: Developing a Modern Mine in Northern California

by OHC Emeritus Historian/Interviewer Eleanor Herz Swent

Swent wrote an account of the creation of a modern, environmentally sensitive mine, as told by the people who developed and worked it, through oral history. The result is a forthcoming book from the University of Nevada Press Spring 2021 catalog.

In connection with this, Swent will be presenting her work as part of the American Society for Environmental History's Environmental History Week. Her panel will be on Earth Day, and **more information can be found here**.

Read Swent's piece on our blog.

New Interview Releases:

Bruce N. Ames: The Marriage of Biochemistry and Genetics at Caltech, the NIH, UC Berkeley, and CHORI, 1954-2018

We're pleased to announce the release of the oral history of UC Berkeley biochemist Bruce Ames. In a career spanning seven decades, Ames was a professor of biochemistry at the University of California, Berkeley from 1968 until 2000. Dr. Ames studied with George Beadle at the California Institute of Technology at the beginning of the revolution in molecular biology. He joined the National Institutes of Health in 1953 as a fellow, and became Chief of the Microbial Genetics section in 1962. While on the faculty in biochemistry and genetics at UC Berkeley, he developed the Ames test of the mutagenic potential of chemicals. In 2000, he became a senior research scientist at the Children's Hospital of Oakland Research Institute until his retirement in 2018. With over 550 publications, he is among the top two hundred most highly cited scientists across all disciplines.



[Read more about Paul Burnett's interview with Ames here.](#)

Robert Praetzel: Marin County Lawyer Who Stopped Marincello

Robert Praetzel, a World War II veteran and graduate of UC Berkeley in 1950, is the Marin County lawyer responsible for stopping Gulf Oil's **Marincello real estate development** in the late 1960s. The Marincello project would have built from scratch a new city in Marin County for some 30,000 people housed in fifty apartment towers, numerous single-family homes, low-rise apartments, and townhouses on 2,100 pristine acres in the Marin Headlands area. Today, thanks to Robert Praetzel's fastidious and pro-bono legal work from 1966 through 1970, those lands are now preserved within the **Golden Gate National Recreation Area**. Praetzel and Roger Eardley-Pryor recorded his four-hour-long oral history in the spring of 2019 at his home, nestled among the redwood trees on the slope of Mt. Tamalpais in Kentfield, Marin County, California. Praetzel's **127-page transcript**, complete with family photographs, adds important details to the broader story of how two major American cities, San Francisco and Oakland, came to have such exceptional tracts of preserved national park lands just minutes away from their urban centers.

[Read more about Roger Eardley-Pryor's interview with Robert Praetzel on our blog.](#)

Nancy Donnelly Praetzel: Tales from Marin County

Nancy Donnelly Praetzel's oral history documents a century of lived history in Marin County as told by a **1953 graduate of UC Berkeley**. Praetzel, who has researched her family's genealogy, discussed several generations of her family who have lived in Marin County from just after the 1906 earthquake through the present. She shared her family's stories of migration to and survival in Marin County, including that of her English-born grandfather, **Ernest Clayton**, who made beautiful paintings of California wildflowers that she still sells today. Praetzel also recounted her own memories of the Great Depression, of life on the Homefront during World War II, of youth summer camps in Sonoma County, as well as her experiences at UC Berkeley in the early 1950s. Praetzel offered insight into the nature of work as a stewardess in the commercial airlines industry of the mid-1950s. She also discussed her marriage from 1957 through today to fellow UC Berkeley graduate, **Robert Praetzel**, with whom she raised four children in Marin County. Nancy Donnelly Praetzel's oral history provides a snapshot of one woman's experience from what Tom Brokaw popularized as the **"Greatest Generation."**

[Read more about Roger Eardley-Pryor's Interview with Nancy Praetzel on our blog.](#)

In Memory of Anne Halsted (1942-2021)

On March 13, 2021, the Bay Area lost one of its leading community advocates, **Anne Halsted**. Since shortly after moving to San Francisco in 1964, Anne worked tirelessly on committees and boards to improve life in the Bay Area, often organizing people in her own neighborhood. She worked with over twenty organizations, both locally and nationally, in addition to her full-time job in Human Relations with United Leasing. She served two terms as president of the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR) board, and much of her service focused on protecting the environment, open space, and improving local communities. The list goes on, and chances are good that if you've ever lived in San Francisco or the larger Bay Area, your life has been touched by Anne and her work in some way. She was a force to be reckoned with, and was truly an inspiration. In 2018, Shanna Farrell conducted **thirteen hours of interviews** with Anne.



For more about Anne Halsted and **her interview, read Shanna Farrell's blog post**.

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