

THE MARIA ROGERS
Oral History Program
NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2002

**NEW
INTERVIEWS**

OH 1053V: A 1987 interview in which Daisy Bracegirdle Swallow describes daily life in Erie at the beginning of the 20th century and her part in the 1910-1915 mine strikes in Boulder County. By Marilyn Brand. (Audio)

OH 1054V: Jackson Fuller describes his years as a student at the University of Colorado from 1938 to 1945. By Shirley Steele. (Video)

OH 1056V: Ruth Kinney talks about the history of the Wahlstrom and Kinney families and about growing up in the Whittier neighborhood during the 1920s and 1930s. By Shirley Steele. (Video)

OH 1057V: This is a 1988 interview with Daisy Bracegirdle Swallow about her youth in Erie during the early 20th century. By Marilyn Brand. (Video)

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**Making Oral
History Portraits**

Jay Gianukos, owner of Living Portraits, a California company which produces video oral history portraits for families, visited our April volunteer meeting. He was in town for the Conference on World Affairs, at which his oral

history film about Howard Higman was shown. In the last couple of years, Jay has produced nearly 50 video portraits.

“I work on trying to preserve the essence of the person,” Jay told us. In order to prepare for an interview, he talks to a variety of people who know the interviewee and assembles a list of topics and relevant questions. He doesn’t do any “pre-interviewing” with the person he will be filming, however, because he wants each story to be “fresh.” He does ask the prospective interviewee to look at old photos, listen to old music, even to smell flowers that were part of their past, to help them remember and reflect on their past. Jay says that his two best tools for drawing people out during an interview are “silence and genuine interest.” His goal during an interview is to say as little as possible.

While he does move the camera around if he is filming a person’s house or environs, he seldom moves the camera while a person is telling their stories, preferring to have the person’s storytelling rather than camerawork be the focus. “The flow of the person’s consciousness is the most important thing,” he told us.

Jay feels passionately about the value of oral history. “I see this as a sewing together of generations,” he said.



Ruth Kinney's (OH 1052) interview includes this 1902 photo of her mother Christine with Ruth's oldest brother as a baby.

NEXT MEETING

Volunteer Meeting:
Saturday, May 4
9:00 a.m.



Recently Interviewed

Dorothy Ciarlo interviewed Ellen Klaver, a protester who was arrested at Rocky Flats.

June Howard interviewed Fred Pruett about his publishing career and his political activism over the years.

Shirley Steele interviewed Art Bronstein about the formation and growth of Boulder's the first Jewish congregation. She also arranged a donation to Carnegie of a film about the building and dedication of Congregation Har HaShem's synagogue in 1999.

Anne Dyni, with Liz McCutcheon as camera person, interviewed five long-time Boulder County Parks and Open Space employees about the early days of the department.

Mary Jo Leaving OH

Mary Jo Reitsema saddened everyone at April's meeting by announcing that she will be leaving the Oral History Program's staff in order to have more personal time available. We will mightily miss her involvement with the program.

Susan and Wendy will divide up her responsibilities. Partially in order to lighten the workload while we adjust to Mary Jo's absence, and partially to have more time to work with the volunteers already on the team, we will temporarily close the Oral History Program to new interviewers for the next six months.

Thank heaven Mary Jo is still part of the library staff, so you can still drop by Carnegie to see her!

IN BRIEF

We welcome **Katharine Alden** as our newest volunteer to the Oral History Program. Katherine is a new arrival to Boulder (one month ago) by way of Nashville, Tennessee. She is a journalist and is in search of a job. We look forward to Katharine joining our team.

Boulder Public Library Computer Services has received a grant from the Boulder Public Library Foundation to begin placing **oral history interviews on the library's web site**. Oral History staff will be assisting Computer Services as they carry out this important project, which should help increase the visibility of the program.

Shirley Steele and Wendy Hall are discussing a possible Oral History Program project that would involve **interviewing six elderly Superior residents** who were active in area mines.

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The public is invited to stop by the Carnegie Library to listen to or view any of our more than 1,000 interviews.

Carnegie Branch Library
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WEB SITE: www.boulder.lib.co.us/branch/carnegiemariarogers.html