MLA Board Report

I. January 29, 2021

II. Oral History Committee

III. Members: Therese Dickman (2021), Chair; Melissa Wertheimer (ex officio); Elwood “Woody” Colahan (2021); Robert DeLand (2022); Sara Wallace (2022); and Lynne Weber (2021).

IV. Board Action Required: None.

V. Summary of Activities:

- Two MLA members have expressed interest in joining the Committee as new members; their names will be forwarded, along with anticipated others, with explanation to the MLA President for official appointment after the 2021 MLA Annual Meeting. Six more members are still actively sought to reach a membership of ten members. Additional recruiting, including of former experienced members or MLA chapter oral history coordinators, should yield these committee members beginning the 2021 year.
- As of 2021, the OHC Committee will have two co-chairs. The senior co-chair will mentor the junior co-chair. This will improve continuity by sharing the coordination work and tasks of the committee, providing time for the junior chair to gain experience before assuming the senior chair role. This was unanimously agreed upon by members during the February 28, 2020 meeting and approved at the last MLA Board meeting.
- The OHC is co-sponsoring an MLA program session proposed by MLA Archivist Melissa Wertheimer, for the MLA 90th Annual meeting in March 2021.
- Two “Oral History Insights” articles for the MLA Newsletter or MLA Blog are in preparation:
  1) Marci Cohen has transcribed her February 28, 2020 interview of past MLA President Michael Colby and editing is in progress for an article.
  2) Treshani Perera has transcribed her February 3, 2018 interview of Judy Tsou and is collaborating with Tsou to prepare an interview-based article. Perera also completed transcribing her recent interview of Vincent Pelote and is currently transcribing her interview of Mark Puente. These add welcome diversity. These and other gathered OHC materials will be forwarded to the MLA Archives in coordination with the MLA Archivist and the new OHC chair, as possible, in 2021.
- Elwood “Woody” Colahan developed a sitemap in consultation with the OHC chair and forwarded it to MLA Webmaster, Katie Buehner, who identified a Wordpress blog as the best means to share completed oral history interviews as well as corresponding photos of interviewees and audio recordings or clips. Collaboration with the MLA Webmaster will continue this year to develop and launch the OHC blog.

Submitted by Therese Dickman, Oral History Committee Chair