Southern Cross University
ePublications@SCU

School of Arts and Social Sciences

2008

Conversations on the river: engaging students in community oral history projects

Adele Wessell
Southern Cross University

Publication details

Wessell, A 2008, 'Conversations on the river: engaging students in community oral history projects', *Oral History Association of Australia Journal*, vol. 30, pp. 25-32.
The abstract and pdf of the published article reproduced in ePublications@SCU with the permission of Oral History Association of Australia

ePublications@SCU is an electronic repository administered by Southern Cross University Library. Its goal is to capture and preserve the intellectual output of Southern Cross University authors and researchers, and to increase visibility and impact through open access to researchers around the world. For further information please contact epubs@scu.edu.au.

Conversations on the River: Engaging Students in Community Oral History Projects

Adele Wessell

This paper explores an attempt at bringing together the academic pursuit of scholarship with a university's engagement with the community through an innovative exercise in community oral history. It also raises questions about the role of location as a stimulus to memory and storytelling. 'Conversations on the river' was an event organised by Southern Cross University, Lismore, as an exercise in engaged student learning. Members of the Lismore community were invited to come down to the Wilson River to share their stories about the setting, with their memories recorded by university students. These contributions to the local oral history collection later informed the creation of heritage story sites along the river. The recording of private and shared memories in public helped both to create and sustain community links with the university and to provide a forum for the generation of public history. The paper offers insights about the process of undertaking community oral histories with students, and explores the strengths of this approach as an exercise in community engagement.

Southern Cross University: the 'place' of regional universities

In the past decade the significance of community engagement in Australian universities has become increasingly apparent. The key role that universities play in the development of civil society and regional culture and economy is widely acknowledged.[1] Engaged scholarship also connects academic expertise to public purposes in a reciprocal relationship that involves collaboration and mutually beneficial outcomes. Like many other institutions, Southern Cross University recognises community engagement as a central platform and aims to 'take a prime role in the intellectual, economic, environmental, social and cultural development of our region' demonstrating 'commitment to regional economic prosperity, social and cultural wellbeing and environmental sustainability' (Southern Cross University Office of Regional Engagement). Integral to community or regional engagement is the design and delivery of teaching programs and research that can achieve such objectives.

Scholarship of application was coined by Boyer to refer to the use of university-community partnerships as a foundation for research and teaching activities that moved towards engagement.[2] Boyer considered service as part of the trinity of academic life, alongside teaching and research, but acknowledged that it was given little attention and all too frequently did not relate to scholarship. Boyer's concern was to integrate academic responsibilities under the umbrella of scholarship; to be considered scholarship, service activities must be 'tied directly to one's special field of knowledge and relate to, and flow directly out of, this professional activity.'[3] Scholarship, rather than service, is the starting point for defining the activities. An important requirement therefore of engaged scholarship is to demonstrate impact in multiple forms including research outcomes and student learning, curricula change and strategic planning.

My concern in this paper is with the learner and how oral history can engage students. Stephen Bowen defined engaged learning in four related but different forms:

- engagement with the learning process (or active learning),
- engagement with the object of study (or experiential learning),
- engagement with contexts (or multidisciplinary learning) and
- engagement with social and civic contexts (also known as community engagement).[4]

Of these forms of student engagement, I am interested in the scholarship of engagement, the work of teachers in integrating their roles as researchers, educators and active community members.

Oral history provides an important tool for engaging students with the learning process, object of study, the context and community in which we live and the human condition. The effectiveness of oral history as a teaching tool that brings history to life and involves students in their communities has been well documented over a long period, particularly in the US context where service learning or community-based research is more well established.[5] However, the outcomes of such projects are generally limited to either substituting for, or contributing to research papers for class. In contrast, the project I have been involved in gave students the opportunity to create historical resources for the community.

Conversations on the river: the event

'Conversations on the river' was organised by Southern Cross University as a public consultation and a research tool. The community was invited to celebrate, share and record stories about the Wilson River and its upstream tributaries. Invitations were distributed through the Richmond River Historical Society mailing list as well as word of mouth, one of the researchers did a radio interview and press releases appeared in the local media. Tables were set up in the shade and away from the music and boats for students to record interviews individually or in groups. Opportunity was provided for people to share stories, for these to be recorded on digital voice recorders or video or on paper. We encouraged participants to bring along photos or memorabilia to show the historical society research team and other members of the public and to view snapshots of the next sites under construction.

In and of itself, the exchange was valuable in getting a large group of people down to the river and showcasing work that has been done over the years by Land Care and the Lismore City Council. For many people it was an opportunity to see Lismore from the river for the first time. Hospitality was a key consideration. Engaging the community is based on a reciprocal relationship – serving the community while achieving academic goals. We organised food and entertainment, boat rides and music. The food was provided by an Indigenous business, Gunnawannabe. Bunya nut damper and home-made jam were a good symbol of what we were trying to do.

'Conversations on the river' was essentially a social event, rather than a research project. This is not to diminish its significance for understanding how individuals live in history. There is material in the interviews that demonstrate historical processes and change, links between local history and national and international developments. But the intention was for the event to be convivial, in the historical sense of this word, as a living together, from the Latin *con* and *vivo*. Community oral history requires a long-term commitment. Eating and drinking is one of the ways we establish and maintain relationships and it is an important way of reciprocating the generosity of people willing to share their stories with the public. Acknowledging this also meant that the emphasis shifted from the research outcome to strengthening the university-community partnership as a longer-term goal.

Students were also involved in recording the conversations, which provided practical experience of oral history and a means to bring teaching and scholarship together. Each of the students involved had already undertaken a small oral history project as part of their assessment in another unit and they participated in the planning and submission of the application to the Human Research Ethics Committee. This ensured that they had a good understanding of their responsibilities, the possible discomforts and risks and of the equipment and procedure. The research contributed to an assignment in another unit about place and could be accessed at the historical society for future projects. Engagement in the local community can provide opportunities for more intense and more personal engagement with learning than less accessible objects of study. Elsa Nystrom found in her experience of using oral history in the community that students were the 'biggest gainers from the experiment…as they record real history rather than writing an often trite and unoriginal research paper.'[6] The collection is a collaborative effort and some of the pleasure of being involved came from the experience of bringing the local history to life and conveying the enthusiasm of research to students.

Further, we can situate ourselves in local debates and history when the focus is on everyday life in the places we live, bringing a civic dimension to the learning experience. Having space in the curriculum and assessment regime to provide such opportunities is an important concern and needs to be planned well in advance. Approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee at the university in this case was dependent on the students having had prior experience of oral history. Providing multiple opportunities for oral history practice and community engagement across different subjects is necessary and the same principle would apply working with volunteers.

Conversations are one part of the Wilson River Experience Walk Project, a Lismore City Council initiative partly funded by the Indigenous Heritage Program. The project aims to stimulate interest and knowledge in the social history of the region. It is being managed by the Office of Regional Engagement at Southern Cross University, working closely with the local historical society, the local Indigenous owners, Land Care groups and other interested parties. The work is directed towards the creation of heritage story sites intended to create awareness of place, stimulate local knowledge and pleasure and provide information for locals and visitors. Historian Jo Kijas has been responsible for the archival research and has constructed an interpretation of the objects and scenes portrayed visually with digital artist Leonie Lane. The process is collaborative. Jo is involved in the archival research and works closely with Leonie on the design of the panels. A draft of the design is circulated amongst the Historic Reference Group established by the Council, of which I am a member and to the Indigenous consultants and their comments are considered in producing the final design. The panels tell stories of individuals and places, and topics that connect the history to broader themes such as migration, production and education. Indigenous consultant Roy Gordon has contributed images and text, and advice on language. Consent has been given for the recordings collected, which are used to inform the panels on the story sites, to be lodged in the historical society.

This panel is from 'Living Together – Galamah', situated at the site of the Wilson Station on the river off Ballina Street, Lismore New South Wales. The size of each panel on site is 360 X 120 cm.

Courtesy of ***Leonie Lane (artist)***

The life of this project is sustained in part because of ongoing activities along the riverbank. It would certainly be a challenge to host conversations regularly as a way of consulting publicly about the heritage sites or riverbank redevelopment, or as a way of collecting stories. The 'Gathering Place – Burbang Mah' story site in Riverside Park was launched in 2006. 'Living Together – Galamah' – maps the discovery and habitation of Lismore from both an Aboriginal and European perspective until around 1900. 'River Crossings – Mirring' focuses on the Ballina Street Bridge site, industry and pre-contact Aboriginal lifestyle. These three story sites are clustered in Riverside Park within sight of each other, and three more are planned along the riverbank. The launch of the last two heritage sites provided another opportunity to collect stories about the river.

The work I am involved in is part of the redevelopment of the riverbank. In the process facilitating storytelling as a public event can forge links within the community, links between people, between the university and community and between the past and present in a way that brings history to life for students.

> I was born in Lismore and I take in interest in activities especially on the river. It was our playground when we were growing up, a place where we learned to swim and all those things. (Neville Collins, 2007)[7]

> Everything seemed to involve the river because you couldn't get to anywhere social unless you went across the river and so we just had to row ourselves across if we wanted to be involved in anything really. So that's what we did. It was really a part of our life. There was no way you could avoid it. We were going across every day. If visitors came they came to the other side of the river and just called 'Cooee' and we had to row across and get them and bring them over, and after the visit was over, row them back again. They'd get in the car and tootle off. It became a very very great part of our life really. (Grace Moses, 2007)[8]

> Memories of the river: I used to watch as a boy I used to watch the steam, the cream boats coming in and Foley's used to have a cream shute that the butter was put on the shute and straight down on the shute down to the cream boat and they used to load the butter that way. That's going back in the late 20s of course. We've seen a lot of changes round here. (Leo Collins, 2007)[9]

Neville Collins and Grace Moses both spoke to the fundamental importance of the Richmond River to their life as they were growing up in and around Lismore. Since then, as Leo Collins, explains, 'We've seen a lot of changes. When I moved to Lismore in the mid 1990s, the only establishment in the main street from which you could view the river was the RSL, which has since been sold to a church'. The popular conception was that people had literally turned their backs on the river swelling the divide between generations and between old and new settlers, Indigenous history and the postcolonial present.

Conversations on the river: relationship to place

The redevelopment of the riverbank may restore its historical significance, where representing the past is part of the process of re-evaluating the meaning of the river to the community. Lismore is located at the junction of two tributaries of the Richmond River: Leycester Creek and Wilson River, in one of the wettest areas in New South Wales. Rainfall is concentrated in Lismore because of the shape of the land, and the steep gradients of streams that run into the creeks. Cedar getters used the flooded creeks and streams to float their logs downstream to timber mills or ships that carried them to markets and good rainfall encouraged settlement. Licensed surveyor Frederick Septimus Peppercorne selected the homestead paddock of William Wilson's station as a suitable site for settlement. Maurice Ryan argues

> It must have presented a splendid vision in the winter of 1855 with the bronze tips of the foxtails stirring in the breeze as Wilson and Peppercorne determined the future of Lismore; however, their minds were already made up as cedar getters and others had already chosen the best site. If a voice down the corridors of time sounds critical about the choice of this flood plain which is periodically covered to a depth of ten feet in parts, one has only to remember that the nearby hills were covered with the big trees, hardly a suitable place for development when technology was limited.

The vibrant activity on the river is still a living memory for many of the older residents of the town.

> There was always something going on on the river in those days. We had the ocean-going steamers that went to Sydney and then there were the ferry boats that ended up down the river – I couldn't resist talking about them. Then there was the mill tugs carting the cane from down river to the mill to be crushed. They were the biggest steam tug they had. They'd take up to ten to a dozen punts behind them. That was the freeway. (George Lord, 2007)[10]

The river was a freeway, George Lord explains, a defining feature of commercial life in Lismore. But the river also prompted discussion about the nuances of daily experience; it was a force that shaped social life, cultural experience and interactions. Industry and entertainment could also overlap, as these memories of the cream boats bear out:

> Catch the old cream boat from down from the rowing club, and um, you know, a couple of hundred yards down the river or so. There you used to jump off or dive off I 'spose in the river and swim back up to the rowing club. Sometimes you couldn't make it and you used to pull in down here and walk back up. Especially if the tide's going out you know it's pretty hard swimming against the tide. (Michael Roberts, 2007)[11]

> [My mother] travelled to the boarding school in Lismore by the cream boat. She come up on Monday and went back on Friday afternoon boarded in Lismore through the week. That particular boat had a piano on the top deck. They had a sing-song all the way down to Whyralla. So, yeah, I mean it was a real mode of transport. But that would be going back into the late '20s early '30s. So that's going back a while, but certainly she always spoke about the sing-song around the piano going home on Friday afternoon. (Alan Hoskins, 2007)[12]

> And we had to carry the cream, in cans, down to the riverbank, and the boat would pull in and pick the cream cans up and take them off. When we first went there our cream went to Coraki. The factory was still opened at Coraki. The beautiful *Arakui*, which was a bigger boat, was a steam boat. It was a very pretty boat too. It had a deck and an upper deck. The captain was up on top. He steered the boat you know. But also on that top deck there was lots of chairs and things and they would take you for the day trip almost down to Woodburn, not quite, and back, on that boat. It was a delightful trip. You could get hot water for your tea or anything like that you wanted. You took your sandwiches with you. And down on the lower deck there was a sort of lounge in there and because it's a steam boat too it was silent. The motors were not pumping or anything they would just come with a sort of hiss and come in and gracefully pick up your cream and out again and away it would go. It was pretty. And silent. It was the biggest of the boats that would pick up cream and the nicest. (Grace Moses, 2007)[13]

The choice of the town site facilitated the creation of communities in a geographical sense, and in the past the river was a shared facility from which collective experiences such as fishing, swimming and boating were built. Other communities exist in different forms, and these are not mutually exclusive even within a bounded geographical area. But the interviews did demonstrate that the river didn't just provide a single shared interest that defined the community, rather it contributed something closer to classic definitions of community, a network of people linked by shared interests and concerns. Historically, it was an important feature of social life and the local economy. The university was not established until 1994 and students have generally not shared this experience.

In Lismore there has been a disjunction between the geography that sustained social life in the past and the conditions of modern living. By the time the need for the town to be situated so close to the river had passed, the commercial centre was well established, even though it is very low lying and periodically inundated with water. Debate proceeded about the expense of relocating the central business district out of the flood area, elevating buildings and other flood mitigation measures that could be introduced. The river redevelopment has followed the recent construction of a flood levee along the river.

Holding an oral history event on the river stimulated a range of stories and experiences that show how dynamic the relationship is between people and the environment. The value of engaging with local people about the river was recognised as of equal significance to the inquiry being undertaken. Communication is certainly not the same as community, but places can connect us with the past through their role as a repository for meanings and memories. It is worth noting, although it's an obvious point, how significant conversations are to our knowledge. In a public site, people can share stories with each other that are not recorded. The acknowledgement and celebration of these is a significant benefit for people involved.

Conversations on the river: oral history practice

The event presented a number of challenges familiar to oral historians and some exceptional issues that stimulate reflection about the practice of oral history. How to involve participants and students or volunteers, meet ethical obligations, record the stories for public use and draw on them for scholarship are factors in all oral history projects, but the peculiarities of our project necessitate some discussion. Recording outdoors generally resulted in poor quality recordings that couldn't be used in an aural exhibition. Recordings made on the boats were completely inaudible. Fortunately the weather was good and the time we chose, from 3pm, provide scope for involving people with children at school or at work.

Participants

The intention was to engage a large cross-section of the community. Invitations were issued through the media and the historical society bringing newcomers as well as people with a long association with the community, who may have been the only people identified in more formal invitations. We underestimated the number of people who wanted to share their stories, but insisting on responses to the invitation might have dis-

couraged people from coming who were unsure of committing themselves to an interview. Follow up interviews are ongoing and understanding how to meet these obligations is important from the outset. Many people are unwilling to do an interview when they first meet you, and in public, and it is necessary to inform people about what resources are available to continue interviewing and to know your own time constraints.

Students' work needs to be acknowledged in their learning performance and deadlines have to be considered. With volunteers as well, providing time to learn something of the history of the place is a factor, although a comprehensive grasp of everyone's past is not possible. Community settings are a valuable learning context for history and community issues. Having learned from other people's experience though I would now include opportunities for reflection. Studies by Prentice and Garcia (2000), and Butcher, Koch, Lebone et al. (2003) highlight the crucial importance that students engage in critical reflection about their learning. Such reflections also provide a resource for evaluating the project and its pedagogical potential.[14]

Seven people in all were involved in the recordings, but some of those people were needed for practical tasks – replacing cups of water, providing empty digital cards, introducing people to each other and keeping a lookout for anyone who appeared neglected. Identifying someone from the outset who is willing and has the skills to play this facilitating role is important.

Community engagement is essentially about the development of mutually supportive relationships. In the case of projects involving students and members of the community, equal consideration must be given to the needs, goals and responsibilities of both groups. People participate in interviews for their own purpose, and acknowledging this has long been recognised as good practice. Students' time is also limited and expectations must be clarified early in the project. The opportunity to make a contribution to local knowledge and their community may be their motivation in becoming involved, but ensuring that this meets the objectives of their studies and sits within their own timeframe is a responsibility of teachers. Semester timetables don't always correspond with research projects, local government calendars or community culture. Having a clear purpose, a compatibility of goals and effective communication between the people involved develops the relationships involved in the project. For it to be mutually satisfying recognising people's different influences, interests and expectations can help maintain the relationship.[15]

Ethical considerations

Responsibilities of interviewers are comparable across different oral history projects. Explaining the purpose of the interview, having an agreement prepared for people to consider, conducting the interviews with integrity and with regard to ethical and obligations are expected aspects of oral history practice. In this case the personal narratives were recorded on the river and in public. Someone may inadvertently join in a conversation being recorded that they do not wish to be stored, or change their minds later about other people hearing their stories. Information about who to contact and follow up was available from the outset for people to take home with them, to avoid any detriment to individuals.

The narratives were shaped by the context in which they were performed. The function to which people were invited was generally social and the conversations were non-intrusive. There were no foreseeable risks or discomforts. People who are reserved and uncomfortable in the company of others may have wanted to listen and give their stories one-on-one and seating was arranged to accommodate this. The recordings may include both personal memories and community stories and perhaps disagreements could have arisen. In addition to the students operating recording equipment, other researchers involved in the project were available to participate in the conversation.

All the recordings were placed in the Richmond River Historical Society for future research. Provision was made to store culturally sensitive material in the Keeping Place at the historical society, where permission is required before it is made available to anybody. Information about the procedures to be followed and consent forms were prepared, although implementing this was complex with multiple recorders and interviews. A number of people carried out numerous interviews on the one day so keeping track of who had given informed consent was sometimes a challenge. A registration form was available for people to record their contact details for any follow up they identified. Sometimes people did want to be recorded but wanted to make another contribution to the history. Photographs and memorabilia were recorded as well as referrals to other people.

The local historical society was central to the project, and using the event as an opportunity to raise awareness of their work was one way of reciprocating the support they had provided for the archival research. The society also sent out invitations to the event to all their members and was responsible for quite a number of people being involved.

Recording for public history

The event produced public history in multiple ways:

- 'Conversations' was a forum in itself for presenting the past for which there was an immediate audience, an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate people's own histories and the different histories and associations people have with the river;
- the primary research outcome is the creation of panels with word and text for heritage story sites along the river bank, which is a community asset;
- the event provided a space for public consultation

about the project and riverbank development;

- the interviews will be used in the development of resources for future research – they will be deposited in the historical society to make them available for other people and used in education collateral; and finally
- as Linda Shopes, explains, '[i]nsofar as an oral history interview requires formal engagement with a person who typically lies outside the scholarly world about matters that are nonetheless historical, oral history is de facto a kind of public history.'[16]

Recording oral history publicly can also have a reciprocal impact on the audience for the narratives. Because the stories are retold publicly and stored and accessed in a public site, this contributes to the identification of the personal narratives as community stories. In this sense the process of recording is significant to creating and sustaining a community, rather than necessarily reflecting an existing community. Maps were provided as a vehicle for memory and became an important historical source as people recorded the location of their stories along the river and prompted memories about their experiences. It can't be assumed that the community exists because of a name on the map, in part it is invented through the process of sharing understandings of what that place means, which the conversations helped facilitate.

The stories people shared about the river were generally nostalgic, a romanticised view of riverboats and swimming and even of floods. Rather than being a research problem, however, that should be corrected by scholars, nostalgia can be repositioned as a comment on the present and a way of linking it to the past. Elizabeth Grosz points out that as a way of linking us to the past, nostalgia 'prefigures and contains corresponding concepts about present and future'.[17] Oral history can also problematise the distinction between past, present and future, which is inherent in the concepts of time traditionally employed by historians. Nostalgia for the days of greater river activity can be read as a comment on modern living, a critique of the demise of the dairy industry in a global economy or an assessment of the environmental health of the river. It has a productive force in this sense that can be directed towards change.

Communication is a key factor in both fostering communities and working to bring about positive changes in the health of the environment and water use. Capturing the past, understanding how people see the past by paying attention to how they reconstruct it, is one way of contributing to the future of the local community. The river was important to Widjabul people and was the kernel of the city. It was essential to the economy and trade and a meeting place for different people from outlying areas and within the city, a place of recreation and amusement. Some of its utility has been lost, but generating the stories is an important way of building a sense of place, identity and history. As an aspect of this project, then, the making of communities is also a complex and contested task that deserves a discussion of its own.

Name		
Address		
Phone/mobile		
Email		
I would like to contribute to the recording of Lismore's history in the following ways: please tick or comment		
Share memories/stories - oral or video (brief description of time period & subject) Recorded by: TRACK NO.		
Share memories - written (bief description)		
Photograph for RRHS records or project use (brief description)		
Object/memorabilia that may be of interest (brief description		
Other (friends or family who are a mine of information)		
I would like to be interviewed	Today	Another time
Are you a current member of the Richmond River Historical Society		
If not, would you like to be?		
Name of person filling out the form if different from above		

Sample: 'Conversations on the River' Registration Form

As an academic working in the context of twenty-first century late capitalism and bureaucracy, I study certain topics partly because they engage me personally and partly because they fit in with the frameworks of knowledge production at this moment. I juggle making judicious choices about time and ways that I can build partnerships between teaching and research. As the only historian at a regional university I also do work that matters in the community where I live, where its academic credibility may be more difficult to gauge than if I were located in a disciplinary setting. This presents a number of challenges and a number of opportunities that arise from collaboration with people from a range of disciplines, in this case, digital art, Indigenous studies, media studies and tourism. The common ground was the place we live in.

Community engagement is now one of the core responsibilities of universities in Australia, integral to the design and delivery of teaching and learning and research. The 'scholarship of engagement, Ernest Boyer explained:

> means creating a special climate in which the academic and civic cultures communicate more continuously and more creatively with each other, helping to enlarge what anthropologist Clifford Geertz describes as the universe of human discourse and enriching the quality of life for all of us.[18]

Engaged scholarship involves academic research outcomes, but it can also have an impact in multiple forms including student learning, curricula change and strategic planning, community revitalization and social change initiatives. Oral historians are well positioned to incorporate community engagement projects in the curriculum. The benefits for students are manifold – enhancing knowledge about issues in their community, developing interpersonal skills and active community involvement. Such collaborations help build on the university's capacity to develop an active, just and civil society. The stories that are collected on the Wilson River will contribute to the heritage sites and consequently make them reflective of the community they represent. Equally important, when all things are considered, engaging the community in an oral history project is an end in itself, a way of returning history to the community by providing a forum to share stories and build relationships.

NOTES

1 A. Winter, J. Wiseman and B. Muirhead, *Beyond Rhetoric. University-Community Engagement in Victoria,* Eidos, Brisbane, 2005.

2 Ernest L. Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, New York, 1990.

3 *Ibid.*

4 Stephen Bowen, 'Engaged Learning: Are We All on the Same Page?', *Peer Review* (Winter 2005), pp. 4–7.

5 See for example, Larry E. Hudson and Ellen Durrigan Santora, 'Oral History: An Inclusive Highway to the Past', *The History Teacher*, vol. 36, no. 2, Special Focus Issue: The Teaching American History Program (February 2003), pp. 206–220; Glenn Crothers, 'Bringing History to Life: Oral History, Community Research, and Multiple Levels of Learning', *Journal of American History,* vol. 88, no. 4 (March 2002), pp. 1446–1451; Elsa A. Nystrom, 'Remembrance of things past: service learning opportunities in U.S. history (studying oral history through student community service)', *Oral History Review* 29.2 (Summer–Fall 2002): p61(8). *Expanded Academic ASAP*. Thomson Gale. Southern Cross University. 1 May 2007; Patrick Hagopian, 'Voices from Vietnam: Veterans' Oral Histories in the Classroom', *Journal of American History,* vol. 87 (September 2000), pp. 593–601; Pattie Dillon, 'Teaching the Past Through Oral History', *Journal of American History,* vol. 87 (September 2000), pp. 602–05; Marjorie McClellan, 'Case Studies in Oral History and Community Learning, *Oral History Review,* vol. 25 (Summer/Fall, 1998), pp. 81–112; John Forrest and Elisabeth Jackson, 'Get Real: Empowering the Student through Oral History', *Oral History Review,* vol. 18 (Spring, 1990), pp. 29–44; Jean M. Humez and Laurie Crumpacker, 'Oral History in Teaching Women's Studies', *Oral History Review,* vol. 7 (1979), pp. 53–69; Robert D. Illisevich, 'Oral History in Undergraduate Research, *The History Teacher,* vol. 6, no. 1, (November 1972), pp. 47–50.

6 Elsa A. Nystrom, 'Remembrance of things past'.

7 Neville Collins, interview with Adele Wessell, Wilson River Lismore, 27 July 2007. Richmond River Historical Society, Lismore.

8 Grace Moses, interview with Theresa Mason, Wilson River Lismore, 2 March 2007. Richmond River Historical Society, Lismore.

9 Leo Collins, interview with Adele Wessell, Wilson River Lismore, 27 July 2007. Richmond River Historical Society, Lismore.

10 George Lord, interview with Margie Henderson, Caroona Nursing Home, 9 March 2007. Richmond River Historical Society, Lismore.

11 Michael Roberts, interview with Holly Lovegrove, Wilson River Lismore, 2 March 2007. Richmond River Historical Society, Lismore.

12 Alan Hoskins, Interview with Holly Lovegrove, Wilson River Lismore, 2 March 2007. Richmond River Historical Society, Lismore.

13 Grace Moses, interview with Theresa Mason, Wilson River Lismore, 2 March 2007. Richmond River Historical Soci-

ety, Lismore.

[14] M. Prentice and R. Garcia, 'Service learning: The next generation in education', *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 24: 1 (2000), pp. 19–26; Jude Butcher, Howard Koch, Elizabeth Labone, Mark McFadden, and Peter W Sheehan, 'Developing just citizens in Australia', *Academic Exchange Quarterly* 7.2 (Summer 2003): 188(6). *Expanded Academic ASAP*. Thomson Gale. Southern Cross University. 1 May. 2007.

[15] For a discussion on initiating and maintaining relationships in community projects involving students, see Sandra J. Fogel and James R. Cook, 'Considerations on the scholarship of engagement as an area of specialization for faculty', *Journal of Social Work Education* 42.3 (Fall 2006): 595(12). *Expanded Academic ASAP*. Thomson Gale. Southern Cross University. 1 May 2007.

[16] Linda Shopes, 'Oral History and the Study of communities: Problems, paradoxes, and possibilities', in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader,* second edition, Routledge, Oxford, 2006, p. 260.

[17] Elizabeth Grosz, 'Thinking the New: of Futures Yet Unthought', in Elizabeth Grosz (ed.), *Becomings: Explorations in Time, Memory and Futures*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1999, p. 18.

[18] Ernest Boyer, 'The scholarship of engagement', *Journal of Public Service and Outreach*, 1, 1996, p. 20.

*****