

## Logan Family History Oral History Program

Congratulations on your decision to create an oral history at the new Logan Family History Center oral history room. To assist you in this exciting project we have listed a few things that you may want to consider as you prepare for and conduct this history.

1. *Decide who will be involved. Who is the person to be interviewed? A spouse? A neighbor? A parent? Next, you will want to consider whether this person would like someone to assist with the interview. This may be someone who can ask questions and gently guide the interview session.*
2. *Consider the topics you will want to cover. The center has several outlines available for you consisting of brief histories, extensive histories, chronological histories, "rambling" histories or formal histories. You may wish to use one of these outlines or create one of your own. We find that it is generally helpful to have some kind of structured questions but also we would encourage you to be flexible and be willing to pursue unexpected topics and directions in the interview.*
3. *Become familiar with the recording facilities. A staff member at the Center will acquaint you with the equipment and assist you in getting started with your history interview. Feel free to ask questions so that you can be comfortable with the available facilities. The Center staff member can be available to assist you throughout the interview, or if you prefer, they can leave you while you conduct the interview in private.*
4. *Begin the interview. It is helpful to start the interview by giving the names of the people involved, ages, current date and the location of the interview. Remember that the questions and outlines that you have prepared in advance are merely suggestions. Feel free to include additional questions, and if something is of interest, feel free to ask the person to tell more. If either of you needs to take a break, put the camera on "pause" and then resume when you are ready. The interviewer should avoid making comments such as "uh huh" or "wow!", but should use visual cues such as smiling or nodding their head to encourage the storyteller to continue with their narrative.*

5. Continue to encourage the interview:

**Listen carefully.** Look the storyteller in the eyes. Nod your head occasionally, smile and stay engaged.

**Encourage topics** that have an interesting quality to them. If you begin a topic that isn't something you want to put on tape, gently steer the conversation in another direction.

**Ask questions** that will elicit emotions. The question "how did that make you feel?" will often result in interesting responses.

**Be considerate** of the feelings of the person being interviewed. If you find that there are topics they do not want to talk about respect those wishes and move to a different topic.

**Be curious** and honest and keep an open heart. This will result in an interesting and productive interview:

6. Finishing the interview: Before turning off the recorder, ask if there is anything else that the person you are interviewing with like to talk about. If there is, allow a few more minutes to explore additional topics.

When you are through, stop the recorder and locate a staff member who can assist you in transferring the video you have just created to a DVD.

If you would like to schedule additional interviews with this individual or someone else, please notify the receptionist who can schedule time for you to create additional histories.

If you have any ideas or suggestions that will help us improve the services that we offer we would appreciate hearing from you. Contact one of the staff members to share your thoughts, or leave a note in our suggestion box. Thank you for using this resource. We hope it will be meaningful for you.