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Maggie Gee, a World War II WASP pilot, was interviewed for ROHO's [Rosie the Riveter project](#), which ends this month after 10 years and over 200 interviews!

**Welcome**

**Charting ROHO's Future**

Last year at about this time my old friend and journalism school faculty colleague, University Librarian Tom Leonard, asked me to undertake a study of the Regional Oral History Office, its past and present, and issue recommendations for its future at a time of transition.

Thus began my immersion in a topic that was amazingly rich and intellectually dynamic. I interviewed numerous leaders of other oral history programs around America, in addition to current and former ROHO staffers, and learned quite quickly how widely admired the Berkeley program was and how deeply beloved it was by people who worked there.

I learned that ROHO, nearing its 60th birthday, was the second oldest oral history program in America, after Columbia, and that its legendary director, Willa Baum, helped establish oral history as a field of research. I listened to many ROHO oral histories, from those compiled of Ansel Adams and Dave Brubeck, to major projects like Kaiser Permanente and Rosie the Riveter. I also learned how widely used ROHO's archives were, judging by the hundreds of re-publication requests the Bancroft's librarians receive each year from researchers seeking to use ROHO's materials.

My recommendations to Tom and Bancroft Library Director Elaine Tennant were simple: Keep ROHO strong, keep its staffers fulfilled and productive in their work, and find ways to gain greater financial support for its mission.

Now, a year later, as ROHO's Interim Director, I'm proud to work with some of the finest oral historians in the land as we chart the future of this extraordinary office. Recently, our staff held a strategy session to discuss our wish list of oral histories to conduct in coming months and years. Names including Sen. Dianne Feinstein, Businessman and philanthropist Bernard Osher, and former San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown were mentioned.

New special projects were suggested, including an oral history of the award-winning extra-solar planet hunters UC Berkeley's Astronomy Department; interviews with the founders and parishioners at San Francisco's legendary Glide Memorial Church; an oral history of political consultants in the Bay Area, such as Clint Reilly, Jack Davis, and Peter Hart; interviews on the subject of the changing media landscape in the Bay Area with Will Hearst, Belva Davis, and Bruce Brugman; and histories of the powerful California Correctional Peace Officers Association and of Chevron Corp. and its longtime pivotal role in Richmond, to name just a few.

The ideas keep coming, and with it new energy to pursue them. With more than 4,000 oral histories in ROHO's archives, that number will surely grow in the months and years to come, as we continue a sterling legacy nearly six decades in the making. Thanks for joining us on this remarkable journey.

Neil Henry  
Director, Regional Oral History Office

### **ROHO in Action**

#### **Oral History and California State Supreme Court Justice Stanley Mosk**

Little did I realize it at the time, but I conducted my first oral histories when I sat down with a tape-recorder and interviewed my paternal grandparents, Louis and Lillian. They told me sometimes hilarious and sometimes sorrowful stories about their life and families in New York, how they met, and married, during the post-WWI years. Their stories filled me with images that dramatically paralleled those inspired by readings assigned during my early college years... ([Read more](#))

#### **Narsai David: Food Impresario**

One of the final interviews ROHO's former associate director Vic Geraci conducted before his retirement last year was with Bay Area food and wine impresario Narsai David. This rollicking, wide-ranging interview will have your stomach growling and your palate craving a fine wine in no time. In this preview-amuse-bouche, if you will-David relates how family food and traditions provided a touchstone for his own contributions. The brief exchange presented here is followed by David's recipe for his "Rack of Lamb, Assyrian." ([Read more](#))



Narsai David with Frog Hollow Farms pumpkins. Photo by Vic Geraci, 2012.

### **Politics Behind the Scenes: Future Topics in Oral History**

In ROHO's previous newsletter, Neil Henry wrote about Gabriel Morris's 1972 interview with Leone Baxter who, in partnership with Clem Whitaker in 1933, created one of the first and most influential political advertising and consultancy firms in the United States. Over the next forty years consultants became an integral part of politics. ([Read more](#))

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### **News About ROHO**

#### **Class of 1931 Annual Interview in University History**



ROHO is pleased to announce the selection of **Professor Laura Nader** as the recipient of the 2013 Class of 1931 Annual Oral History Interview on University History. Nader has been a part of the Department of Anthropology since 1960 when she was the first woman to receive a tenure-track position in the department. She is a beloved teacher and recipient of Berkeley's Distinguished Teaching Award; thousands of students have taken her popular course on "Controlling Processes" and remark that its emphasis on critical thinking changed their lives. ([Read more](#))

### Coming Up

#### **And stay tuned for...**

In the coming months, check back to the ROHO website for the release of our highly-anticipated interviews with former UCSF School of Pharmacy Associate Dean and raconteur **Bob Day**, esteemed historian **Lynn Hunt**, businessman and UC Regent **Richard Blum**, and a handful of interviews on the early years of San Francisco's cultural treasure, the **Asian Art Museum**.

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THE BANCROFT LIBRARY

UC BERKELEY LIBRARY

The Regional Oral History Office (ROHO), a division of The Bancroft Library, documents the history of California, the nation, and the interconnected global arena. ROHO produces carefully researched, audio/video-recorded and transcribed oral histories and interpretative historical materials for the widest possible use.

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