

Grand Rapids History & Special Collections

Archives

GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Finding Aid for the

Native American Oral History Project. Records

Collection # 065

September 2009 version

**Grand Rapids Public Library
Access Restriction Agreement**

The Grand Rapids Public Library will allow access to the Native American Oral History Project records only if the researcher agrees to the following conditions:

1. I will make no xerographic, photographic, nor any other duplication of the copyrighted transcripts.
2. I will make no audio, nor any other duplication of any of the copyrighted reel-to-reel and/or cassette recordings.
3. I will neither extract from the collection nor use in any manner any personally identifiable information from any of the copyrighted transcripts.
4. I will neither extract from the collection nor use in any manner any personally identifiable information from any of the copyrighted reel-to-reel and/or cassette recordings.
5. I will submit all my research notes, in any format, as well as all proposed data based on this research for approval to the Grand Rapids Public Library's Michigan Room Head, or his successor(s).
6. I accept full, total and sole responsibility for all research and subsequent publication of data based on this research, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Grand Rapids Public Library, its employees and agents from any damage that may result from my use of this collection.

_____/_____/_____
(signature of researcher) (date)

(researcher's name, printed)

(address, city, zip, phone)

_____/_____/_____
(signature of library staff member) (date)

Abstract

The Native American Oral History Project Records contain the working papers, oral history interview audiotape recordings, transcripts, chapter drafts and final copies of the publication, The Tree That Never Dies, resulting from the project. The original edition of The Tree that Never Dies is now out of print. It is hoped that a new revised edition will be available in the future.

This original project was developed as a joint effort of the Grand Rapids Public Library and the Grand Rapids Inter- Tribal Council. It attempted to document the history, lifestyle, mores, religion, society, economic condition, crafts, funerary practices and education of Indians in West Michigan, through the recollections of those interviewed.

This collection is unique among those at the Grand Rapids Public Library Archives in that there are restrictions on the usage of the information in the collection. These restrictions were the result of a lawsuit during the project, and essentially restrict the level and type of usage of the contents of the tapes, as well as limits on the usage of the name of the person being interviewed.

The initial proviso, and that still standing after a lawsuit during the project, is:

... that the interviewees would retain copyright to their interviews and resultant transcripts, and that they would not be personally identified in any data that may be derived from the interviews and transcripts.

As both copyright and privacy are at issue, this is applied today to mean that researchers wishing to publish from the content of the interview tapes & transcripts must get permission of the interviewees or their heirs. And, the name of the interviewee may not be used in any publication or presentation. However, current addresses for these individuals are not retained by the Library.

There are inconsistencies within the finding aid from this project. So, it is sometimes not clear whether a tape, and the accompanying field notes or transcriptions in the collection is among the restricted materials or notes. Staff will continue to attempt to clarify the restrictions as they apply.

Collection #: 065

Accession #: 1986.253

Donor: Grand Rapids Public Library

Span dates: 1974-1980

Processor: Original processing, Richard H. Harms, March 1988. Inventory, Jason Shoup, updated by R. Mayne, Aug. 2000.

Reference note to 1981.004 unprocessed, R. Mayne, Dec. 15, 2000.

Size: 12.75 linear ft. (153 inches)

Access Restriction:

Researcher must sign and agree to abide by access restriction.

NOTE: See also related unprocessed materials at accession [81.004], including documents and correspondence related to the Northern Michigan Ottawa Assoc., periodicals and bibliographies related to Native American history & education. [12/15/2000]

Related Collections

See also the following for more information on Western Michigan Native Americans, located in the Department:

Native American History in West Michigan: Research Guide to holding in the Grand Rapids History and Special Collections of the Grand Rapids Public Library.

Guide available in the Department.

Native American Newspaper Clippings file.

Coll. 042, Thomas Porter Collection.

Coll. 050, Grand Rapids Inter-Tribal Council. Indian History Project. Records.
Coll.

See the Departmental Guide for other collections with additional information.

Processor's Note:

The reel-to-reel tapes were numbered by the original project participants. That numbering is retained in the collection. The following tapes contain interviews: 3-7, 10-15, 18, 21-25, 27-36, 38, 42-44, 47, 54, 56-61, 63-65, 69-72, 76-78, 83-84, 86-87. These tapes and transcripts have been formally copyrighted. Tapes 41, 45-46, 48-50, 55, 62, 79-81, 106-107 are either blank or missing. Cassettes in square brackets [] below indicate they duplicate reel-to-reel tapes; therefore any restrictions that apply to the reel-to-reel tape(s) also apply to the cassette copy (copies).

Box Summary

Box No.	Description of Contents	Box Description
Box Inventory 9/2009		
1	Paperwork related to funding	Standard legal
2	Correspondence and finances	Standard legal
3	Miscellaneous paperwork	Standard legal
4	Paperwork	Standard legal
5	Draft transcripts	Standard legal
6	Draft transcripts	Standard legal
7	Draft transcripts	Standard legal
8	Transcripts	Standard legal
9	Transcripts	Standard legal
10	Transcripts	Standard legal
11	Final Bound Transcripts	Standard legal
12	Final Bound Transcripts	Standard legal
12.5	Final Bound Transcripts	Slim
13	Publication	Standard legal
14	Publication	Standard legal
15	Publication	Standard legal
16	Publication	Standard legal
17	Original Tapes	21x6x6
18	Original Tapes	21x6x6
19	Original Tapes	21x6x6
20	Original Tapes	21x6x6
21	Original Tapes	21x6x6
22	Original Tapes, Cassette Tapes	4x6 flip
23	Cassettes-masters	small print
24	Cassettes-masters	small print
25	Cassettes-masters	small print
26	Cassettes-masters	small print
27	Cassettes-masters	small print
28	Cassettes-masters & copy 1	small print
29	Cassettes-copy 1	small print
30	Cassettes-copy 1	small print
31	Cassettes-copy 1	small print
32	Cassettes-copy 1	small print
33	Cassettes-copy 1/copy 2	small print
34	Cassettes-copy 2	small print
35	Cassettes-copy 2	4x6 slim

History

The Native American Oral History Project began when a Grand Rapids Public Librarian, Celene Idema, noted that there was a lack of documentation of Indian history and heritage in the Library's collections. As a result the Library's Director, Alberta Massingill, and Associate Director, Louise Millar, proposed a project to interview Indian elders, record these interviews and then transcribe the interviews. Supervision of the project was to fall to a joint committee made up of library staff and Indians.

Consequently a grant was applied for and funded under the Libraries Services and Construction Act (LSCA), Title I for \$19,800. In March 1975 the Joint Committee hired a part-time supervisor, Lee Haywood Coen (a graduate student in Anthropology at the University of Chicago). Coen was paid no salary, but his expenses were reimbursed. In addition Beatrice Bailey was hired to conduct the interviews. The exact number of interviews conducted is not clear (see below), but by the end of the grant period, the joint committee members realized that they had under-estimated the project's requirements and that the LSCA grant would not be sufficient.

Subsequently a grant for \$14,242 was obtained from the Grand Rapids Foundation to continue the project. Because of Coen's other commitments he was not able to remain a project supervisor, so the joint committee hired Pamela Jean Dobson to become supervisor of the transcription of the tapes and subsequent publication of research. Because the part-time nature of Coen's position was found lacking, Dobson was hired full-time and paid a salary plus expenses. Bailey continued to work on the project in addition to other support staff including James McClurken who became the Assistant Editor.

Another grant of \$3,550 was obtained from the Dyer/Ives Foundation for publication of information that would be drawn from the interviews. Further, a \$38,757 grant was obtained from the National Endowment for the Humanities to offset project costs.

Initially the project proposed publishing five booklets, four of whose titles were tentatively set at,

"Lifeways of the Michigan Indians,"

"Through Deep Snow: Education of Michigan Indians,"

"The Tree That Never Dies: Beliefs and Stories of the Michigan Indians," and

"This is Our Land: History and Views of the Michigan Indians."

The title of the proposed fifth booklet is not extant.

During the preparation of the booklets it was decided to produce a single book, rather than five booklets, titled, *The Tree That Never Dies: Oral History of the Michigan Indians*.

During the preparation of the drafts for this publication Beatrice Bailey insisted on inserting text into the transcripts that did not exist on the original interview audiotapes. The joint committee found this practice objectionable and ordered her to stop. She then went to several interviewees and recommended that they amend their original interviews. This contact with the interviewee's was contrary to the stated policy of the project and Bailey was dismissed from the project in May 1977. She appealed her dismissal and was denied. In turn, she brought suit against the Director, and Associate Director of the Library, alleging the oral histories had been

taken under misrepresented conditions. The suit was dismissed, with the proviso that the interviewees would retain copyright to their interviews and resultant transcripts, and that they would not be personally identified in any data that may be derived from the interviews and transcripts.

Scope and Content

The collection contains the working papers, financial records, grant records, oral history interviews and their transcripts in several draft versions, and various drafts of what resulted in the final version of *The Tree That Never Dies*. The collection documents the lifestyles, diet, education, religion, mores, economics, crafts, funerary practices, history, myths and lore of West Michigan Indians.

Series Description

The collection is divided into three series:

Series I. Administrative files, 1974-79, n.d. (1 cu. ft.)

The Administrative files consist of the following sub-series:

- Grants and Proposals, arranged chronologically
- Meeting Minutes, arranged chronologically under the three committees--Library, Indian and Joint
- Financial Records, arranged chronologically
- Subject files, arranged alphabetically
- Book distribution, arranged chronologically
- Copyrighting, arranged alphabetically
- Lawsuit, arranged alphabetically.

These materials document the origin, management and history of the project.

Series II. Interviews, 1974-79 6.7 cu. ft.), consisting of reel-to-reel tapes and cassette duplicates of those reel-to-reel tapes,

The Interviews consist of fifty-three audio tape recording of interviews with Indians; and twenty audio tapes of meetings important to Indians. The actual number of interviews conducted is unclear since it appears that several interviews were either erased or lost. The fifty-three copyrighted tapes were transcribed and drafts versions as well as final copyrighted versions of the transcripts are included. Also in the series are field notes and background information on the interviewee's as collected by the interviewers.

Series III. Publication files, c.1979 (1.3 cu. ft.).

Within the Publication series are various extracts from the transcriptions assembled by topic; drafts of early booklets and later chapter drafts, as well as two copies of the final publication.

Contents

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>
Series I. Administrative Files, 1974-79, n.d.		
Grants and Proposals, 1974-79.		
1	1	Library Services and Construction Grant, 1974-76
1	2	Grand Rapids Foundation, 1974-77
1	3	Prospective Foundation Grants, 1976-77
1	4	Dyer-Ives Foundation, 1976-77
		National Endowment for the Humanities
1	5	Proposal #1, 1976
1	6	Correspondence, 1976-80
1	7	Proposal #2, 1977-78
1	8	Quarterly Reports, 1977-79
1	9	Application Guidelines, 1974-79
Meeting Minutes, 1975-79.		
1	10	Library Committee, 1975
17		Tapes 8-9, 16; Box 18 Tape 40 -- 1975
23		[Cass. 8-9, 16; Box 24 Cass. 40]
21		Tape 118 – 1977
1	11	Indian Committee, 1976-78
1	12	Joint Committee, 1976-79
Tape Recordings of Meetings		
20		Tapes 82, 88-90 -- 1976
21		Tapes 95-97, 98-105, 108-117, -- 1976-78
25		[Cass. 95-96, 99-105]
25		Cass. 121-126 -- 1978
22		Tapes 119-120 -- 1977
7	14-16	Meeting minutes transcripts, 1976-77
Financial Records, 1974-79, n.d.		
2	1	City Budget, 1976
2	2	Library Budget, 1976
2	3-4	Reimbursement Receipts, 1975-76
2	5	Working Papers, 1974-79, n.d.

Series I. Administrative Files, 1974-79, n.d.

Subject File, 1975-79, n.d.

2	6	Applications, Employment, 1976-78
2	7	Applications, Workshop, 1977
		Applications - Interviews, 1975
18		Tapes 37, 39
24		[Cass. 37, 39]
Applications Workshop Reel-to-Reel Recordings, 1975.		
17		Tapes 1, 4
23		[Cass. 1, 4]
		City Commission Meeting on Museum Artifacts, 1975.
17		Tape 17
23		[Cass. 17 & Box 25 Cass. 127]
2	8	Correspondence, 1974-78
		Detroit Pow Wow, 1975
17		Tapes 19-20
23		[Cass. 19-20]
2	9	Field Study by Tom Klynsma, 1975
17		Tape 2 Great Lakes History Conference
23		[Cass. 2]
		Indian Commission Meetings
18		Tapes 51-52 -- 1975
24		[Cass. 51-52]
19		Tapes 53, 66-68 -- 1975, 1976
24		[Cass. 53, 66-67 & Box 25 Cass. 68]
20		Tapes 73-75, 91-92 -- 1976
2	10	Job Announcements, 1976-77
2	11	Journal of Daily Activities, 1977-78
2	12	Legislation, 1977
2	13	Meeting Notes (Bea Bailey), c.1976
2	14	Michigan Council for the Humanities, 1976
2	15	Notes, c.1976
2	16	Oral History Workshop, 1975
2	17	Personnel Time Sheets, 1975
2	18	Policy Statements and Rules, 1975-77
2	19	Publicity, 1975-79, n.d.
3	1	Reports to NEH, 1977-78
3	2	Reports, Miscellaneous, 1975-78

Series I. Administrative Files, 1974-79, n.d.

Applications Workshop Reel-to-Reel Recordings, 1975.

21 Reunion of Mt. Pleasant School Students
Tape 94 -- 1976
25 [Cass. 94] [4 tapes fnd. 9/19/2001. These were checked and are duplicates.
One was sent to a patron, 1 is the master & 2 are users]

18 Southern Michigan Inter-Tribal Council Meeting, Recording
Tape 26 -- 1975
23 [Cass. 26]

3 3 Tax-Exempt Status, 1976
3 4 Correspondence, Bea Bailey, 1976-77
3 5 Lee Coen - Name Index, n.d.
3 6 Pam Dobson, 1976-78

Book Distribution, 1978-80.

3 7 Correspondence, 1979-80
3 8 Lists, 1978-79

Copyrighting, 1975-79.

3 9 Correspondence, 1978-79
3 10 Applications-Sound Recordings, 1975-76
3 11 Registrations, 1975-76
3 12 Applications not completed, c.1976

Lawsuit, 1978-79.

4 1 Claims and Affidavits, 1978-79
4 2 Correspondence, 1978-79
4 3 Miscellaneous Papers, 1978

Series II. Interviews, 1975-1979.

		Administrative Records, 1975-c.1978.
4	4	Field Notes, 1975-76
4	5	Background Records, 1975-76
4	6	Interview Notes, 1975
4	7	Tape Index, 1975
4	8	Interview Log, 1975
4	9	Interviewer Training, n.d.
4	10	Survey of Tapes and Transcripts, c.1978
4	11-12	Log Cards, 1975-76

Reel-to-Reel Tapes, 1975-76 (officially copyrighted)

17	Tapes #3, 5-7, 10-15, 18, 21-23
18	Tapes #24-25, 27-36, 38, 42-44, 47
19	Tapes #54, 56-61, 63-65, 69-72
20	Tapes #76-78, 83-84, 86-87

Cassette Duplicates of Reel-to-Reel Tapes, 1975-76 (officially copyrighted)

23	Cassettes #3, 5-7, 10-15, 18, 21-25, 27-30
24	Cassettes #31-36, 38, 43-44, 47, 54, 56-61, 63-65
25	Cassettes #69-72, 76-78, 83-84, 86-87

Series II. Interviews, 1975-1979.

Draft Transcripts, 1975-1976

4	13	Tape #2
4	14	Tape #5A
4	15	Tape #5B
4	16	Tape #6
4	17	Tape #7
5	1	Tape #10
5	2	Tape #11
5	3	Tape #12
5	4	Tape #13
5	5	Tape #14
5	6	Tape #15
		Tape #17 See
5	8	Tape #18
5	9	Tape #19
5	10	Tape #21
5	11	Tape #22
5	12	Tape #23
5	13	Tape #24
5	14	Tape #25
5	15	Tapes #27 & 28
6	1	Tapes #29 & 30
6	2	Tape #31
6	3	Tape #32
6	4	Tape #33
6	5	Tape #34
6	6	Tape #35
6	7	Tape #36
6	8	Tape #38
6	9	Tape #42
6	10	Tape #43
6	11	Tape #44
6	12	Tape #47
6	13	Tape #54
6	14	Tape #56
6	15	Tape #57
6	16	Tape #58
6	17	Tape #59

Series II. Interviews, 1975-1979.

Draft Transcripts, 1975-1976

6	18	Tape #60
6	19	Tape #61
6	20	Tape #63
6	21	Tape #64

7	1	Tape #69
7	2	Tape #70
7	3	Tape #71
7	4	Tape #72
7	5	Tape #76
7	6	Tape #77
7	7	Tape #78
7	8	Tape #83
7	9	Tape #84
7	10	Tape #86
7	11	Tape #87
7	12	Tape #94
7	13	Tape #97
7	17	WASA – Gishik Recollection.

Alternative Content (Tapes of non-oral history events [created 10/2002])

Tape #17 Tape City Commission Meeting on Museum Artifacts, 1975

This folder contains correspondence from the Young Native Americans and other Indian groups, The position of the Art and Museum Commission position of the Norton Mounds Site problem, signed affidavits of principal Native Americans involved in the argument.

Series II. Interviews, 1975-1979.

Final Transcripts (unbound), 1975-1976

7	18	Tape #5A
7	19	Tape #5B
7	20	Tape #6
7	21	Tape #7
7	22	Tape #10
7	23	Tape #11
7	24	Tape #12
7	25	Tape #13
8	1	Tape #14
8	2	Tape #15
8	3	Tape #18
8	4	Tape #21
8	5	Tape #22
8	6	Tape #23
8	7	Tape #24
8	8	Tape #25
8	9	Tape #27
8	10	Tape #28
8	11	Tape #29
8	12	Tape #30
8	13	Tape #31
8	14	Tape #32
8	15	Tape #33
8	16	Tape #34
8	17	Tape #35
8	18	Tape #36
9	1	Tape #38
9	2	Tape #42
9	3	Tape #43
9	4	Tape #44
9	5	Tape #47
9	6	Tape #54
9	7	Tape #56
9	8	Tape #57

Series II. Interviews, 1975-1979.

Final Transcripts (unbound), 1975-1976

9	9	Tape #58
9	10	Tape #59
9	11	Tape #60
9	12	Tape #61
9	13	Tape #63
9	14	Tape #64
9	15	Tape #65
9	16	Tape #69
10	1	Tape #70
10	2	Tape #71
10	3	Tape #72
10	4	Tape #76
		Final Bound Transcriptions, 1979 (officially copyrighted)
10	5	Tape #77
10	6	Tape #78
10	7	Tape #83
10	8	Tape #84
10	9	Tape #86
10	10	Tape #87
10	11	Tape #94
10	12	Wasagishik recollection
10	13	Tapes #1, 5A, 5B, 6, 7
10	14	Tapes #10, 11, 12
11	1	Tapes #13, 14, 15, 18
11	2	Tapes #21, 22, 23
11	3	Tapes #24, 25, 27, 28
11	4	Tapes #29, 30, 31
11	5	Tapes #32, 33, 34, 35
11	6	Tapes #36, 38, 42, 43
12	1	Tapes #44, 47, 54, 56
12	2	Tapes #57, 58, 59
12	3	Tapes #60, 61, 63
12	4	Tapes #64, 65, 69
12	5	Tapes #70, 71, 72, 76
12	6	Tapes #77, 78, 83, 84

Series II. Interviews, 1975-1979.

Final Transcripts (unbound), 1975-1976

- | | | |
|-----|---|-------------------------|
| 12B | 1 | Tapes #86, 87, 94 |
| | 2 | Wasagishik recollection |

Series III. Publication, c. 1978.

Subjects, c.1978

- | | | |
|----|-----|--------------------------------|
| 13 | 3 | Art Work |
| 13 | 4 | Bearwalk |
| 13 | 5 | Crafts |
| 13 | 6 | Crafts-Black Ash Baskets |
| 13 | 7 | Education |
| 13 | 8 | Feast for the Dead |
| 13 | 9 | Food |
| 13 | 10 | Funerary Practices |
| 13 | 11 | History |
| 13 | 12 | Housing |
| 14 | 1 | Lore |
| 14 | 2 | Medicine |
| 14 | 3-4 | Politics |
| 14 | 5-6 | Religion |
| 14 | 7 | Stories and Native Religions |
| 14 | 8 | Subsistence |
| 14 | 9 | Miscellaneous |
| 15 | 1 | Unused |
| 15 | 2 | Disputed Material (Bea Bailey) |

Booklets, c.1978

- | | | |
|----|-----|---------------------------------|
| 15 | 3-5 | Booklet I - Lifeways |
| 15 | 6-8 | Booklet II - Education |
| 15 | 9 | Booklet IV - Early Drafts |
| 15 | 10 | Booklet IV - Miscellaneous |
| 15 | 11 | Booklet IV - Unused Material |
| 15 | 12 | Booklet IV - Bea Bailey's Draft |
| 15 | 13 | Booklet IV - Final Draft |

Series III. Publication, c. 1978.

Chapter Drafts, c.1978

15	14-15	Beliefs
16	1	Beliefs
16	2	Canoe Building
16	3	Crafts
16	4	Education
16	5	Quill Boxes
16	6	Bibliography
		Index
16	7	General
16	8	Subjects
16	9	Politics
16	10	Final
	Vols. 1-2	The Tree That Never Dies: Oral History of Michigan Indians (2 copies)

Duplicate Cassettes (officially copyrighted)

22	Cassettes #1-18, 21-40, 42-43, 47, 51-54, 56-58, 64-69, 71, 76-78
26	Cassettes #83-87, 94-96, 99-100

Triplicate Cassettes (officially copyrighted)

26	Cassettes #3, 6-7, 10-12, 14-15, 18, 27-30, 33-34, 38, 78, 84, 94-96, 99, 100
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