

Plymouth Public Library

Plymouth Collection

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Oral History

Oral history, in the context of genealogy studies, is a valuable source to consider when examining your family history. Family stories pass down from relatives not only link generations, but also shed light on the life and times of names and opportunities to record memories and family history.

Sample Questions for Living History Interview

- When did your family first come to your hometown?
 - Where did they come from?
 - How did they get here?
- What are your first memories of your hometown?
- Where did you attend grade school, junior high school, and high school?
- Who gave you your first part or full-time job? How much were you paid?
 - Who were your neighbors?
 - Who were your friends?
- Where were you when major historical events happened?
 - What do you know about your family's last name?
- Are there traditional first, middle or nicknames in the family?
 - Do you know the names of your immigrant ancestors?
 - What country did they come from?
 - What were their occupations?
 - Which ancestors served in the military?
 - Is there a family cemetery?
- Are there famous people or notorious characters in the family?
- Does anyone still have old photographs, letters or the family Bible?
 - Who was your third grade teacher?
- Describe the first family wedding you attended.

More Sources To Review

Kemphorne, C. For all time: a complete guide to writing your family history.

LoVerde, Mary Touching tomorrow: how to interview your loved ones.

Taylor, Maureen Preserving your family photographs

New England Assoc. for Oral History www.ucc.uconn.edu/~cohadm01

Oral History Association www.dickinson.edu/organizations/oha

Library of Congress, American Memories <http://memory.loc.gov>

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