



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR REMINISCENCE AND LIFE REVIEW

The Center For Continuing Education/Extension - University of Wisconsin-Superior

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<http://reminiscenceandlifereview.org>

Message from the President

Mary O'Brien Tyrrell

With the Global Registry currently in process by Barbara Haight, the addition of Robert N Butler's achives available soon through the UWS Library, the on-line journal development underway by Tom Pierce and Editorial Board, and the new development of possible training for personal historians in cooperation with the Association of Personal

Historians, the Institute is off to a strong start in 2012.

In my first role as President of the Advisory Board, I will host an exhibit of the Institute at the Association of Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) in Arlington, VA, on February 23-26, 2012. Tom Pierce, as our immediate past Board President, will join me periodically. We will display

examples of our Institute's newsletter, the Conference Papers and Proceedings from our 2011 conference in Boston, thumb-drive of both the "Joys and Surprises of Telling Your Life Story" and "The Reminiscence Engagement Process" videos, and some copies of John Kunz's memorial card.

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John Kunz's "The Reminiscence Engagement Process"

Mary O'Brien Tyrrell

Literally months before his passing, John Kunz, in his inimitable creative style, produced an educational fifteen-minute video, "The Reminiscence Engagement Process." Several of our Board Members have reviewed it and believe this is part of John's legacy. During video, the viewer sees John introducing himself to an older couple, explaining the reason for the conversation, and then proceeding into an interview. The basic principles of intent listening, reflection, guiding the topic, summarizing, and thanking the subjects are included. The pace and ambiance demonstrate a gerontological model. This is an ideal classroom tool when preparing students to interview elders, as in a project. The video is available for purchase on a thumb-drive at our website (www.reminiscenceandlifereview.org) for \$25, which includes shipping and handling.

Message from our Past-President - A Great Meeting in Boston

Thomas Pierce

We had a great meeting this past November in Boston. Even before the official start of the conference we had four very successful pre-conference events. Thank you to all of the speakers in these sessions! During the opening session Thursday evening, Jennifer Wortham's moving and thought-provoking Opening Keynote described her use of reminiscence in working with grief and loss. That night we also celebrated awards to Toyoko Nomura

for the Robert Butler and Myrna Lewis Exemplary Research Award, Pam Schweitzer for the James and Betty Birren Exemplary Practice Award, and Dovrat Harel for the Florence Gray Soltys Student Award for Exemplary Research or Practice.

Friday was a very full and memorable day. Each award winner delivered an excellent presentation describing their contributions to the field of reminiscence. We heard 14 presentations

describing widely varied, yet at the same time fascinating contributions to both research and practice. Marv Westwood and two of his graduate students gave a powerful presentation on their work with veterans of the war in Afghanistan. Presentations came to a close with Barbara Haight's progress report on the Global Survey and Repository projects currently underway.

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New Publications

Thomas Pierce, Newsletter Editor

The importance of remembering and deciding together: Enhancing the health and well-being of older adults in care by Catherine Haslam, Jolanda Jetten, S. Alexander Haslam, & Craig Knight. 2012. In J. Jetten, C. Caslam, & S. Haslam (Eds.) *The Social Cure: Identity, Health, and Well-Being*. pp. 297-315. Psychology Press.

Living into the story: Agency and coherence in a longitudinal study of narrative identity development and mental health over the course of psychotherapy by Jonathan Adler. 2012. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 102(2), 367-389.

The reminiscence bump in the temporal distribution of the best football players of all time: Pelé, Crujff or Maradona by Steve Janssen, David Rubin, & Martin Conway. 2012. *The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 65(1), 165-178.

A contextual examination of reminiscence functions in older African-Americans by Juliette Shellman, Everol Ennis, & Karen Bailey-Addison. 2011. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 25(4) 348-354.

Collaborative Remembering in older adults: Age-invariant outcomes in the context of episodic recall deficits by Linda Henkel & Suparna Rajaram. 2011. *Psychology and Aging*, 26(3), 532-545.

Narrative and Psychiatry by Braddley Lewis. 2011. *Current Opinion in Psychiatry*, 24(6), 489-494.

Factor structure of overall autobiographical memory usage: The directive, self, and social functions revisited by Anne Rasmussen & Tilmann Habermas. *Memory*, 19(6), 597-605.

Long life on a fragile planet: Nature, spirituality, and aging by Kathleen Fischer. 2011. *Journal of Religion, Spirituality, & Aging*, 23(3), 172-183.

Group integrative reminiscence therapy of self-esteem, life satisfaction and depressive symptoms in institutionalized older veterans by Li-Fen Wu. 2011. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 20(15-16), 295-2203.

The last of life: Psychological reflections on old age and death by Stanley Leavy. 2011. *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 80(3), 699-715.

The integration of agency and communion in moral personality: Evidence of enlightened self-interest by Jeremy Frimer, Lawrence Walker, William Dunlop, Brenda Lee & Amanda Riches. 2011. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 101(1), 149-163.

Reminiscence and adaptation to critical life events in older adults with mild to moderate depressive symptoms by Jolanneke Korte, Ernst Bohlmeijer, Gerben Westerhof, & Anne Pot. 2011. *Aging & Mental Health*, 15(5), 638-646.

Become a Memoirist for Elders: Create a Successful Home Business by Mary O'Brien Tyrrell, (Memoirs, Inc., 2012) Available on Amazon.com

Message from the President Continued from Page 1

In honoring John Kunz, our Founder and Executive Director, many of the Institute's members composed and sent him letters of tribute. The letters were compiled into a beautifully produced memory book, which was sent to John's parents, Jack and Betty Kunz. During the Boston conference, the letters were read aloud by the writers as Donna Sislo, his program assistant, videotaped the event. Donna and I, in representing the Institute, will present a copy of that video to Mr. and Mrs. Kunz in their home in March. John's legacy continues to live on through the Institute and his presence is felt in many of our interactions.

One of John's strongest wishes was for his legacy of the Institute to thrive. Because of his carefully laid foundation and plans, we shall continue and, with united effort, continue to grow. Please continue to encourage your colleagues to join us in this goal.

By the way, you will notice that our website (www.reminiscenceandlifereview.org) now offers two thumb-drive videos which may be of interest to your institutions, "The Joys and Surprises of Telling Your Life Story" and "The Reminiscence Engagement Process." Profits from these sales will go to the Institute.

Thank you for all your efforts toward making the Institute strong and vibrant.

Mary O'Brien Tyrrell, President of the Advisory Board

Successful and Profitable Venture for IIRLR and APH

Mary O'Brien Tyrrell, President

With the collective goal of sharing knowledge and skills, the 2011 biennial conference of the International Institute for Reminiscence and Life Review (IIRLR), which was held in Boston, included a pre-con-



ference training session focused on personal history skills. Arriving from all over the United States on November 16, five veteran personal historians from the APH shared their collective expertise with a small group in a day-long intensive that in the morning focused on asking powerful questions and in the afternoon provided strategies for difficult clients and assessment for possible risks.

Pam Pacelli, MA, LMHC, LMFT, who hails from the NE Region and whose company offers personal history through videography, opened the morning with a role play demonstration and explanation on "Understanding and Identifying Auditory, Visual, and Kinesthetic Learning Styles." Participants were encouraged to learn how to identify their clients' modality of expression to better deepen their

Pictured from Left to Right

Mary O'Brien Tyrrell, Pam Pacelli, Anita Hecht, Cheryl Svensson, Teri Friedman

ability in asking powerful questions. New to the APH, Cheryl Svensson, PhD, (also a veteran member the IIRLR) provided her wisdom on group work using Guided Autobiography (GAB), emphasizing that group process stimulates memories among the participants and that the group will moderate and stimulate each other as they open and connect with other group members. Cheryl presently conducts GAB train-the-trainer sessions in an international array of webinar groups. Well known to all in the APH, Anita Hecht, MSW, LCSW, who also works internationally and in three languages, shared her expertise on the interview process, identifying among other techniques, four possible interview topics that can be emotional triggers for clients. Anita also discussed self-monitoring in careful analysis of a "Critical Incident Instrument." Teri Friedman, PhD, APHer from New York, discussed her personal history/psychotherapy practice in which she also produces and publishes hardcover books for clients. She included multiple examples of complex clients and her methods to avoid pitfalls. Teri invited the attendees to describe their most difficult clients to process possible strategies. Using video from *The Joys and Surprises of Telling Your Life Story*, which APH supported and participated in creating, Mary O'Brien Tyrrell, MPH, demonstrated interviews with three clients and focused on ethical issues discovered over multiple years of experience with 300 clients. She also described assessment of narrators to prevent family problems and other risks. Mary organized and moderated the session.

Participants in the course earned six contact hours or 0.6 CEU's awarded by the University of Wisconsin, Superior. With Pam Pacelli providing most of the local needs assessment and marketing to the NE Region of APH, ten participants came from that region. Two arrived from East Canada Region, two from Mid-Atlantic Region and one each from Upper Southwest and California Regions. Others in the group included a participant from Japan and another from Israel.

In providing feedback to the instructors through evaluations, participants in the session felt the material was clearly presented, and one wrote, "I think this conference clarified the professional position of the life story/guided autobiography writer. More Standards Please!"

As part of the agreement in producing this event, it was agreed that the IIRLR and the Northeast Region of the APH would split the profits. Each will receive \$536 for their organizations.

Premier Summit Meeting with Association of Personal Historians

In St. Paul, Minnesota using a combination of in-person and Skype presentation, on December 12, 2011, representatives of the University of Wisconsin, Superior Center for Continuing Education (CCE) Department, the Association of Personal Historians (APH), and the International Institute of Reminiscence and Life Review, held their first meeting. APH's President Sarah White and Executive Director Linda Coffin traveled to St. Paul. Donna Sislo and Michele Hughes participated via Skype from U of WI Superior CCE. The assembled convened around Mary Tyrrell's dining room table.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and brainstorm how the organizations could work together on providing education to personal historians. All assembled agreed that the essential components would include: gerontology, business management, ethics, and technical execution. The possibility of offering these components online was discussed as well as the AGHE's criteria for Program of Merit. The possibility of continuing education units and testing out of courses would be highly attractive. At the conclusion of the meeting, it was agreed:

- APH will utilize its members as a resource by conducting a survey concerning the skills required of a Personal Historians and an outline of the curriculum.
- The Institute will develop standards by which the skills are measured and perhaps a resource for some of the instructors.
- The U. of WI, Superior CCE would be the fiscal agent.
- Mary Tyrrell will pursue a task force within the Institute and will discuss these ideas with Academic Staff at the U. of WI, Superior.

The participants agreed to quarterly meetings, probably through Skype in the future. The next meeting will be held in March.

A Great Meeting in Boston

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At the Advisory Board's meeting later in the afternoon we welcomed three new members to the Board: Cheryl Svensson, Nicole Caza, and George Wright. As Mary O'Brien Tyrrell's term as President begins, the Advisory Board elected Robin Mintzer and Diana Taylor as Co-Presidents Elect. Congratulations to all of them! After that the UW-Superior confirmed its strong commitment to the IIRLR's current organizational structure and the Board discussed plans for our 2013 meeting in New Orleans. Finally, the Board approved a proposal from our Publications Committee to initiate a new journal for our field to be called The International Journal for Reminiscence and Life Review.

It was as full, informative, and productive a three days as one could wish for. It's difficult to express the depth of my appreciation to Donna Sislo and the other members of the UW-Superior staff for making the meeting such a great success, thank you so very much!

Report on the IIRLR Registry

Barbara Haight

John Kunz had a dream, a dream to continue the work he had started when establishing the International Institute of Reminiscence and Life Review. An organization whose mission was to develop the interdisciplinary field of reminiscence and life review through discussion and collaboration in practice, research, education, volunteer and individual applications across the lifespan.

Once the Institute became established at the University of Wisconsin-Superior, the Institute became the gathering place for those interested in the field and, despite many setbacks, thrived over the years. Most of us attended the biennial meetings and looked forward to them as a way of keeping in touch with our colleagues and keeping up with the field. Our success was due in large part to one man, John Kunz, who gave his all to the Institute's success.

Report on the IIRLR Registry

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For much of the year prior to his death John explored ways to keep this dream going. He chose to leave a bequest that would continue to support the biennial meetings, but he wanted more. John wanted to create a repository for everyone working in the field, a site where all those who used reminiscence in practice, teaching, or research could find like-minded scholars, as well as answers to questions about the field. For most of 2010 John explored ways to achieve this dream and finally settled on two approaches; the first being a registry of individuals working in the field of reminiscing and life review, actually a community of scholars.

The registry has just begun. We presented the concept of the Registry at our 2011 meeting in November in Boston. The Registry is presently in its infancy. It is meant to serve the membership, particularly students as a site to find and communicate with like-minded others. You can take a look at its beginning by googling the International Institute of Reminiscence and Life Review (IIRLR) website. When you access the web site, click on Registry which is listed in the upper left of the Institute's home page. This click will gain access to people listed in the Registry. Presently there are eight scholars and practitioners who have taken the time to send a picture and a CV to CPrior@uwsuper.edu. Crystal Prior takes the time to enter the information that was sent electronically into a registry of individuals who are active in reminiscing and life review.

The Registry is meant to be interdisciplinary and international. The Registry is helpful to anyone doing work in the field of reminiscence and life story and in fact will help us all broaden our outlook to be more encompassing and inclusive. The Registry is international and plans to reach scholars and practitioners in all countries. Our present sample of eight already represents two countries with many more international scholars and practitioners in process as registry entrants.

There are many reasons why those in the practice of reminiscence would benefit from being listed in the registry. First, if you are just beginning and are presently unknown in the field, your entry and picture will introduce you to other practitioners of reminiscing. The listing is designed to make everyone look equal on the first and second pages and then as one develops in the field, the new work can be added and entered into a complete list of accomplishments. Thus the registry is for established and growing scholars.

Secondly, if you are a student looking for information about reminiscing or looking for people who are active in the field, the registry serves as a source of information. Students can find scholars and practitioners who do work similar to the student's interests. Students will be able to contact these same practitioners through the email addresses displayed in the Registry. Additionally, students are often looking for tools to use in their research and will have easy access to them. For example, Jeff Webster published a very popular tool to measure reminiscence functions. Click on Tools under Jeff's registry and the tool will appear. If you wish to use that tool, Jeff's email address is also listed making it easy for you to ask permission to use the tool in your own work.

Those who are already known in the field will also gain from being listed in the Registry. If they have published a book, and the book is in print, when the reader clicks on the book, the reader is taken to Amazon.com where the interested person can look at selected pages in the book and decide if they are interested in the book before buying it. This capability will benefit both parties, the author and the interested person.

By being listed, the registrant will become more widely known and easily available to those who are putting together conferences and looking for speakers. Another plus happens when a journalist is looking for information about the work in reminiscence, autobiography, and life review. Journalists will have access to those who can give correct answers. Job offers may even come through this medium when the site is accessed by employers looking for therapists who incorporate the life story in their work.

This Registry is a way to keep the work in reminiscing and the life story at the forefront of gerontology. Anyone who has been around as long as I have can tell you that interest in a therapeutic modality, or way of doing, swells, then disappears, kind of like the tide going in and out. With the Registry we may be able to keep reminiscence and life story work at the forefront and available to all.

International Institute for Reminiscence
and Life Review Endowment Fund

Proceedings from these funds help sponsor the biennial awards programs and other activities that support the IIRLR mission and goals.

In January 2008 the IIRLR opened an endowment fund with the University of Wisconsin–Superior Foundation. This is a tax deductible donation that was opened specifically for the Institute to carry out its mission and goals. If you are interested in donating to this designated fund contact Jeanne Thompson with any questions at 715-394-8598 or by e-mail at: jthomp51@uwsuper.edu. Checks can be made out and written inquiries directed to: UW-Superior Foundation, Inc., OM 237 PO Box 2000, Superior WI 54880, and all donors need to reference this fund so we can be sure to attribute the donations correctly.

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- Identify yourself as a leader in the field
- “Members only” list serve to network, identify and address issues, and develop collaborative opportunities
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More to come:

- Global Repository
- Online Journal

Annual fee: \$48 US dollars
\$24 US dollars for full time students

Contact:
Donna Sislo by email at: dsislo@uwsuper.edu or call 715-394-8170.

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International Institute For Reminiscence
and Life Review

MISSION

To further define and develop the interdisciplinary field of reminiscence and life review through discussion and collaboration in practice, research, education, volunteer and individual applications across the lifespan.

GOALS

- Promote increased awareness, knowledge, and skill development in direct practice of reminiscence and life review.
- Further reminiscence and life review research activity, providing a venue for discussion of results as well as guidance for future research.
- Establish a working definition of reminiscence and life review.
- Further integrate research and practice.
- Educate others about reminiscence and life review practice, research, and ways to integrate the material in formal education, staff training, and volunteer organizations.

HISTORY

The International Institute for Reminiscence and Life Review is a program in the Health and Human Issues division of the Center for Continuing Education/Extension at the University of Wisconsin-Superior. The Center sponsored the premiere National Reminiscence and Life Review Conference in 1995.

Major leaders in the field formed the International Reminiscence and Life Review as a follow up to that conference. The Board of Directors and interested participants have met at the 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2011 International Reminiscence and Life Review conferences sponsored by UW-Superior.