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nationalhellenicmuseum.org

WHAT TO EXPECT FOR YOUR ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

The National Hellenic Museum is committed to serving as a repository for the unique stories of the Greek experience in America. Our archive continues to grow through the participation of people like you, and those interested in preserving their story at the Frank S. Kamberos Oral History Center.

What is oral history?

Oral history is the act of preserving history by interviewing people about their lives: both extraordinary events and everyday occurrences. From the days of Homer, storytelling has been an important part of Greek culture. Oral history is a continuation of this tradition, one that allows our stories to become a conscious addition to the historical record. Recording your oral history is a contribution that you control in order to preserve, recollect, and reflect on life. Themes sometimes include family, education, careers, celebrations, events, and moments of everyday living by everyday people.

The NHM Oral History Project

The purpose of our project is to preserve the history of the Greek experience in America. People of Greek descent, their spouses, and relatives are all invited to tell their stories and all those connected to the Greek experience. The NHM Oral History Project is guided by the Museum's mission of collecting and preserving the stories of the Greek American experience in consideration of the Oral History Association listed guidelines and best practices in the field. Oral history recordings are made available through the NHM Collections & Archives to future researchers, historians, genealogists, educators, and students.

The Process

A staff member from the Museum will be in contact with you to schedule your oral history recording session and answer any questions you might have about the interview process. Before the interview, you will review a release form of permissions that states how you will control your interview. We honor your experiences and respect your right to choose how the interview will be used. You can decide to be video recorded or audio recorded. Questions are open-ended and there are no "right answers." This is a time for you to share your story in the way you feel most comfortable. On average, interviews will last an hour, but some have run shorter or longer.

Where?

We would be happy to meet you wherever is most convenient, but it is important that we record in a quiet space. This can be at the Museum, in your home, or another place of comfort.

What happens to your recorded interview?

You will receive a copy of your interview and it will be archived as a part of the NHM Oral History Collection. The archival process includes tracking and recording interview information, accessioning each interview, and following preservation procedures that allow for long-term safekeeping and retrieval of our oral history collections.

Sample Questions

Tell me a little bit about your childhood/describe an early memory.

What holidays did you celebrate in your family?

How has this community changed since you were a kid?

What does it mean to be Greek and/or Greek American?

Contact us:

Please contact oralhistory@hellenicmuseum.org or call 312-655-1234 x23 to inquire further.