

## **Getting started, safety first**

For public safety reasons, please DO NOT visit anyone in person who is outside of your immediate family, for the purpose of discussing or recording an oral history for the Piermont Remembers project.

If there is someone you would like to hear you tell your story, or their is someone you wish to assist in telling theirs, please communicate by email or phone and we can connect you via Zoom.

We believe that during the duration of this pandemic, Zoom is the safest and most reliable method to collect oral histories.

## **Instructions**

Thank you for sharing your family's story

Here are some guidelines and suggestions to safely and securely add your story to the Piermont Remembers project.

If you have any questions, at any time, please contact our project staff Bill Batson (845) 675-3160 and David Bell (347) 835-0202.

### **Step 1: Location, Location, Location**

Find a cozy spot:

- Where you or your subject can comfortably sit and tell their story.
- few visual or auditory distractions.
- A background that DOES NOT distract from the storytelling.

Remember: Because Zoom uses the camera from your laptop or computer, anyone facing your keyboard and everything behind you will be on camera

You may wish to have someone with you to hear your stories of Piermont's past, or you may be helping someone tell their story, but there should only be one person on camera.

You may also request to have a friend or family member join the zoom call but there is only one main character in each oral history...YOU

## **Step 2: Visual Prompts (Show and Tell)**

Visual prompts, like:

Awards  
mementoes  
photos  
documents

Can help you tell the story by prompting memories.

You can hold them up when you are telling the part of the story where they are relevant, but we do not want them to become too distracting

Please list the prompts that you wish to use in the pre-interview questionnaire so that we can make sure they are properly recorded.

## **Set 3: Sound (Quiet on the Set)**

**Silence** - We'll need to capture an approximate minute of silence at the beginning. This allows options for clean editing and a chance to listen to the background for the pesky sounds that could be missed and could compromise the recording.

**Pauses** - If you are in the room with the subject to listen or prompt them, please do not talk over the storyteller and encourage the storyteller not to talk over the moderator. It is better to have a moment of silence that can be cut out than voices that overlap. Please be kind to future listeners and editors.

**Background** - Eliminate background sounds. This can be as simple as closing doors and windows. The goal is not to totally eliminate background noise but rather to quiet it down so that the voice of the storyteller comes through clearly. Heating and cooling fans are a particularly sneaky source of background sounds. Use your best judgement.

**Use the Mute Button:** If you are joining the Zoom call for someone you have recommended, please mute yourself when you are not talking.

**Phones** - Please mute phones.

**Interruptions:** There will be interruptions. When these happen, go back to before (hopefully just before) the interruption and start over.

This also can be used to correct errors and embarrassing fumbles. Editing out is easy, fixing overlapped sounds is difficult.

We mention the audio first because poor audio ruins the recording. We can survive less than perfect video and still communicate through the voice of the subject, but we can not recover from a bad voice recording.

#### **Step 4: Video**

Bright is better, but not too bright. DO NOT sit in front of a window or have a naked bulb facing the camera.

Once we join your Zoom call for the final checklist and to hit record, we will work with you to make sure that the lighting is favorable to the subject.

#### **The day before**

Make sure you have the latest copy of Zoom. You can check that your version is the latest by visiting the link below. If you need help with Zoom, ask Bill or David or some tech savvy member of your household.

You can use this link to test your zoom: [Update](#)

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362233-Upgrade-update-to-the-latest-version>

You can test your zoom by clicking this link: [Test](#)

<https://zoom.us/test>

Here is your Zoom link for the recording session:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4915834756?pwd=bTdpek93Sjl2VFVhNHc3VEthNjNmdzO9>

Meeting ID: 491 583 4756

Passcode: 17727

**During -**

Relax and enjoy the story telling (or listening if you are not the subject)

For the purposes of editing and to ensure that we collect from as many Piermont residents as we can, we are limiting all sessions to one half hour. If near the end it becomes apparent that something major was not adequately addressed, we can schedule another session at another time, after we have collected a half hour session from all who have registered.

**After -**

Please think of anyone you know who may also wish to participate in Piermont Remembers and give them the registration email.

You will be notified when your submission will be accessible on the web. We expect to begin posting oral histories in the fall of 2021.

Thanks for your participation

If you have any questions, at any time, please contact our project staff Bill Batson (845) 675-3160 and David Bell (347) 835-0202.