

*Leave your mark!*

# Community Toolkit

COVID-19 Oral  
History Project



# What's in this Toolkit

- What this project is and why it is important
- Just exactly what an oral history is
- Tips and tricks for capturing your stories
- How to submit your materials
- Where you can learn about others' experiences

# The Project

History is made up of stories shared by people from all walks of life. To help record the coronavirus pandemic, Foxfire is teaming up with Blue Ridge Public Radio to collect memories, photographs, and artifacts. Share your experience and help write history!

**“People who remember their past are more resilient.”**

-Barry Stiles, Foxfire Museum Director





## Impact

Your story will become part of the permanent historical archives at Foxfire. These stories, images, and artifacts will be used for future education and research.



## Impact

Your contribution has the potential to be featured on [BPR](#) or [Foxfire's podcast "It Still Lives."](#) published in the [Foxfire magazine](#) or as part of a Foxfire book.

# Oral History: What is It?

Oral history is the sharing of personal or community-based experiences through stories, songs, narratives, folklore, etc. As historians and journalists, we have a responsibility (and interest!) to capture history as it happens around us.

In simpler terms, an oral history is just a recorded interview, conversation, or testimony from you or others you know.



# COVID In Appalachia: When Borders Closed, This Student Couldn't Go Home

Anh Pham, an international student at Rabun Gap-Nachoochee School shares what quarantine at the boarding school has been like. She hasn't been able to return home to Vietnam since before the pandemic started. Pham shared her story with Foxfire as part of BPR and Foxfire Museum's COVID-19 Oral History Project. BPR's Lilly Knoepp produced the story. Listen [here](#).



# Setting Up

- What to record with:

- Phone
- Tablet
- Hand-held recorder
- Video camera
- BPR Voicemail: **828-253-6700**

- Where to record:

- Find a quiet space, preferably inside.
- Make sure you are away from appliances (air conditioning/heating units, refrigerators, dishwashers, etc.)
- Turn off the television, radio, stereos--even if they are in other rooms!
- Find a comfortable seat where you won't be moving around
- Place your recording device on a sturdy surface, about equal distance from each participant

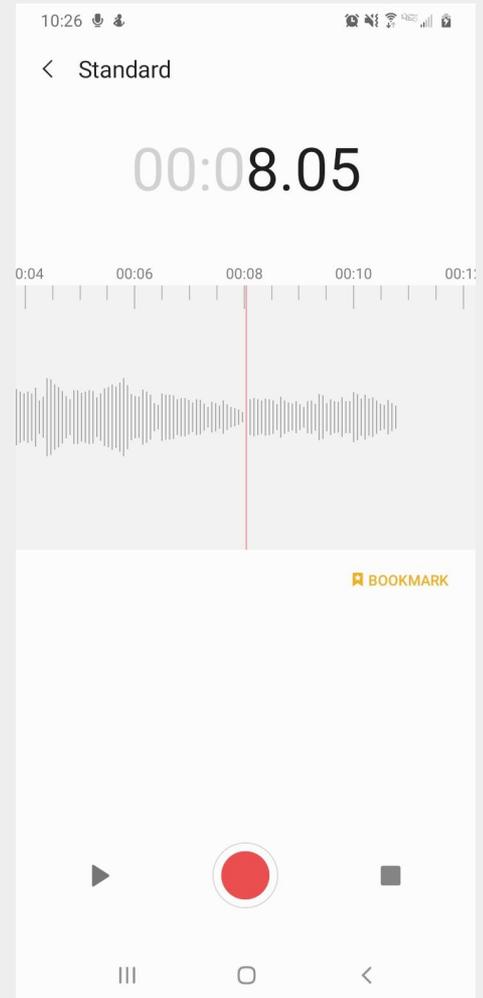


# How to Record

This process will vary depending on what device you are using!

Follow these instructions for an Apple or Android device:

- Open your voice recorder app (for Android devices, you may have to install a free recorder like [this](#))
- Do a test recording. Place the recorder equally between all speakers. Press record. Have each person say their name. Stop the recording and playback. Check that everyone can be heard properly and there aren't any distracting noises in the background.
- Time for the real deal! Press record and begin your conversation.



# Now...What to Say?

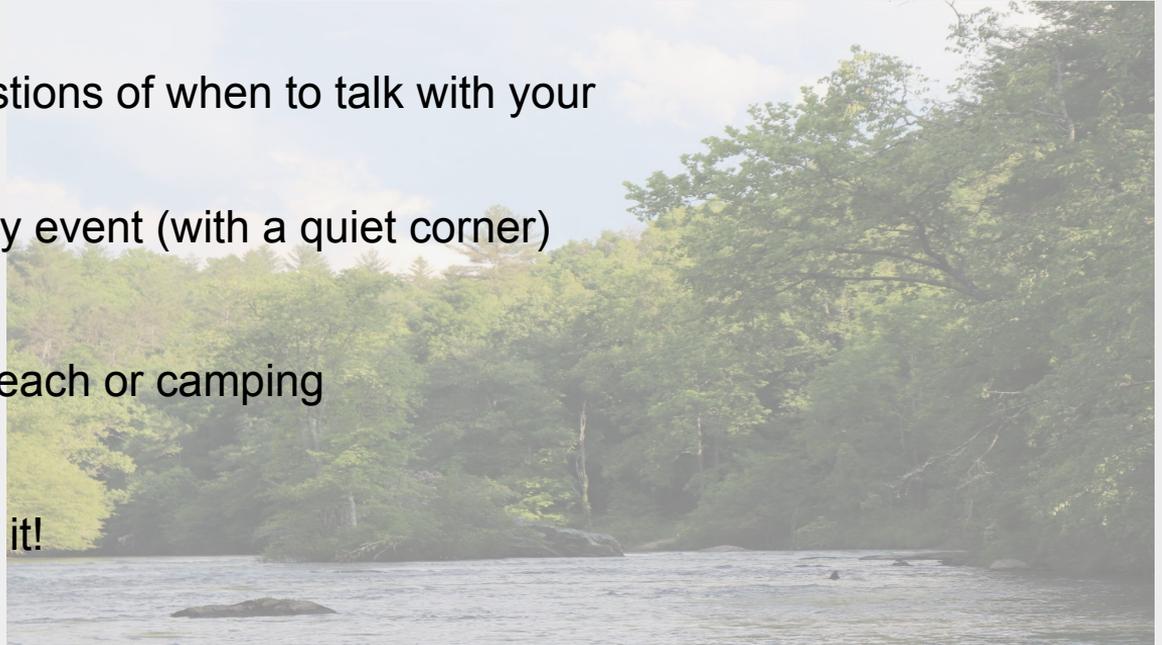
Often when we get in front of a recorder, our minds go blank! Here are some suggestions to get your conversation started:

- Who you are, where do you live and work?
- When did you realize the pandemic was going to change your life?
- How did your community respond to the pandemic?
- What about the pandemic surprised you the most?
- Have your opinions or feelings about the virus changed since March 2020?
- What changes brought about by the pandemic do you think will be permanent?
- What do you think is important for you to remember about this experience?
- What coping mechanisms did you use to get you through stressful times?
- Did you pick up any new hobbies or skills during quarantine?

# Now...When Can You Do An Interview?

Anytime! Here are some suggestions of when to talk with your community and loved ones:

- When you are at long family event (with a quiet corner)
- On the phone
- On a family vacation
- Outside - At the lake, the beach or camping
- On the porch
- After a meal together
- Anywhere - don't overthink it!



We are all still processing this year. But we want to invite you to record your history by being a part of this project!

**Foxfire & Blue Ridge Public Radio Permission for Use Form  
for Audio, Video, Photographs, Digital Media**

DESCRIPTION: *COVID-19 Oral History Project*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

I, (We) \_\_\_\_\_, being of legal age\* hereby consent and authorize The Foxfire Fund, Inc., its successors, legal representative and assignees, and Blue Ridge Public Radio dba Western North Carolina Public Media, its successors, legal representatives and assignees, to use and reproduce my name and photograph (or photographs) taken by Foxfire, Blue Ridge Public Radio or provided by me, motion picture film, VTR, or recording of my voice taken by Foxfire, its assigned production personnel, myself or selected friend/family member, and to circulate the same for any and all purposes, including publication and advertising of every description, with the completed article to be copyrighted by The Foxfire Fund, Inc and/or Blue Ridge Public Radio.

I also authorize The Foxfire Fund, Inc. or its assigned production personnel and Blue Ridge Public Radio to distribute and archive the titles(s), in its entirety, for nonprofit, educational purposes and research via the Internet or successive technologies. I give express permission for the repository to digitize, reproduce, and display audio, photographs, video, and text from the collection online as a part of the repository's digital collection activities to promote educational research by providing electronic copies for personal study and not-for-profit educational uses.

No representations have been made to me, and I understand that I will receive no payment for my services. No further claim of whatsoever nature will be made by me.

I understand that at no time will photos, interviews, or films of me be used in a way slanderous or detrimental to my character. I have reviewed the above information and give my approval for its use in any of the formats listed above.

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

(\*Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

\* Parent or Guardian if under legal age.

*\*Turn page over\**

WITNESS (print) \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

*This is the release form for the project.  
The priority for this release is the comfort of the interviewee. As it is written in the release: "I understand that at no time will photos, interviews, or films of me be used in a way slanderous or detrimental to my character."*

Please let us know if you have any questions!  
Click [here](#) to download the form.

# How to Share Your Story

- Compose a new email to “[covidhistory@foxfire.org](mailto:covidhistory@foxfire.org)”
  - Upload your recording (you may need to compress or zip the file if it is large)
  - Complete a permission to print form
- Stop by and see us in person!
  - We will be outside the Macon County Public Library on Saturday June 5th from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm to record your stories in person!
  - Or you can send us a voicemail by calling Blue Ridge Public Radio at 828-253-6700.

# Thank you for taking the time to meet with us!



Here's our contact info in case you have any questions!

We will also be sending a follow up email after this workshop.

Lilly Knoepp:  
[lknoepp@bpr.org](mailto:lknoepp@bpr.org)

Kami Ahrens:  
[asstcurator@foxfire.org](mailto:asstcurator@foxfire.org)

## Here are some additional references for the toolkit:

- <https://libguides.libraries.claremont.edu/ohtoolkit>
- <https://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/uarchives/transfer/oral-histories>
- <https://library.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Oral-History-and-Archive-Toolkit-2018-06-22.pdf>
- <https://www.bpr.org/post/covid-appalachia-when-borders-closed-student-couldn-t-go-home#stream/0>
- <https://www.bpr.org/post/foxfire-and-blue-ridge-public-radio-partner-covid-19-oral-history-project>
- <https://www.foxfire.org/covid19/>