4th International Conference on Deaf History
Held at Gallaudet University, 27-30 June

DHI's 4th conference was held at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, USA, this summer. The theme of the 4th conference was "Researching, Preserving, and Teaching Deaf People's History." DHI thanks President I. King Jordan, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Department of History and Government, the Graduate School and Research Institute, the University Library, the Department of Deaf Studies, the College for Continuing Education, and the Student Body Government for their support!

Want to purchase the planned proceedings of the 4th International conference on Deaf history? Send name and address to Ausma.Smits@Gallaudet.edu or write her at
Department of History/Government,
Gallaudet University, Washington DC
20002, USA
Greetings from President Odd-Inge Schröder

I look forward to working with the new DHI Bureau on expanding our organization. Why expand? To fulfill our purpose of encouraging the study, preservation, and dissemination of Deaf people’s history around the world.

While looking forward, I look back, too. I would like to thank personally the outgoing members of the Bureau for all the time and effort they gave to DHI: Brian Bernal (Australia), Bernard LeMaire (Belgium), and Ausma Smits (USA). Former president Ulf Hedberg (USA) is not leaving the Bureau - he is continuing as member-at-large and supports me as the new president. Breda Carty (Australia) was re-elected, this time as secretary/treasurer for six years. Also re-elected was Jochen Muhs (Germany), but this time as vice president for three years. Nice to have experienced people in the Bureau!

New faces as members-at-large include John A. Hay, former president of DHI. DHI is moving eastwards and becoming more international with Elena Silianova (Russia) and Yutaka Osugi (Japan). Welcome.

I attended the fourth DHI conference in Washington, and was impressed. The conference was successful because of the excellent organizing committee, proposal reviewers, consultants, and assistants. There were more than fifty people that I cannot mention by name, but I cordially thank you all. I especially want to thank Ausma Smits, who worked hard before, during, and after the conference.

Three different Deaf history societies - Finland, Great Britain, and France - expressed interest in hosting the next conference. The new Bureau had a very hard job choosing among them, but at last we chose France as the site for the 5th DHI conference in 2003.

If DHI is to be able to keep the world informed about Deaf history news between the triennial conferences, we must depend on our newsletter. On behalf of the new Bureau, I thank our former editor, Renate Fischer (Germany), who did a great job. And welcome on board the new editor, Lois Bragg (USA).

There were many excellent lectures at the 4th conference, and everyone who attended was happy to learn more about Deaf people’s history internationally. The keynote address by Jack R. Gannon was especially impressive. Jack was the first co-chair of DHI and is the author of imposing books such as *Deaf Heritage: A Narrative History of Deaf America*. I salute him.

Deaf heritage...Deaf history... When I learn about Deaf people in different countries, I learn not only about their experiences as Deaf people, but also something about myself as a Deaf person.
An Evening with Guy Bouchauveau

The evening performance by French Deaf comedian Guy Bouchauveau was a highlight of the 4th conference. But just days before the scheduled performance, Guy suddenly realized that his passport had expired!
Hello Everyone,

As president of DHI and on behalf of the DHI Bureau, I am pleased and proud to be here to participate in the 4th International Conference on Deaf History. It was nine years ago that we held the first International Conference here at Gallaudet University. In 1991, Denmark and Norway were the only two countries with established Deaf History societies. Now there are four Deaf History societies, including Sweden and Great Britain. While Finland does not have a Deaf History society, they do have an excellent collection that is well preserved in the Museum of the Deaf, which falls under the auspices of the Finnish National Association of the Deaf.

Since the birth of DHI, the subject field of Deaf history has made great progress, and the evidence of that includes workshops, conferences, the publication of new books, information appearing on the World Wide Web and reaching researchers around the world. It is my hope that we will continue to make progress and see even more new developments within the area of Deaf history, more research, preservation, teaching the next generation and encouraging other nations to establish Deaf history societies, including the United States.

As further evidence of our growth, we have here today approximately 200 people, representing 23 countries. During this four-day conference, participants will exchange information and share their excitement about their research and new discoveries related to Deaf history.

As I declare the 4th International Conference on Deaf History open, let us thank certain people for making it possible: Jane Dillehay for bringing the conference to Gallaudet University, Ausma Smits for chairing the conference, Audrey Wineglass and many others who did so much work to make this conference happen. Finally, I want to thank every one of you who have come to be here with us for the next four days at the 4th International Conference of Deaf History.
4th International Conference

on Deaf History

27-30 June 2000

Gallaudet University
Washington, D.C.
Deaf History International, A Comparative View
John S. Schuchman, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus

Nearly 250 people, deaf and hearing, registered for the 4th International Conference on Deaf History, June 26-30, 2000 on the campus of Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C. Participants from twenty-four countries could choose from more than thirty sessions as well as three pre-conference workshops that fit within the conference theme of "researching, preserving, and teaching deaf people's history." Most of the conference participants did not realize that it had been nearly a decade since the first Deaf History conference occurred in the summer of 1991.

The first conference also took place on the Gallaudet University campus; however, the location was in a different place, the Gallaudet Television studio. This was done in order to allow participants to see the speakers’ video image and English captions projected onto a screen and assorted television monitors stationed around the room. This was the first time that this technology was utilized for an academic conference on the Gallaudet campus. At the end of the conference, Gallaudet President I. King Jordan announced that the University had received a $12 million dollar grant from the Kellogg Foundation to build a new conference center. Jordan invited the conference participants to return when the new building was complete. The 4th DHI Conference took advantage of the opportunity to return to Washington, D.C. and the Gallaudet campus.

Professor John V. Van Cleve and I were the co-chairmen for the first conference. From the beginning, it was decided that the conference would not be limited to professional historians but open to all those interested in deaf history. This was important because many of the early contributions in deaf history came from deaf community researchers and leaders. The selection of keynote speakers reflected this view: Jack Gannon from the United States; Peter Jackson from Great Britain; Bernard Truffaut from France, and Clifton Carbin from Canada. I am pleased to note that this practice has continued throughout the conferences that have followed.

So what were the differences? The most obvious is the organization of Deaf History International itself. There was none in 1991. Immediately after the meeting, participants organized a committee and DHI came into existence, complete with a newsletter, by-laws, and dues. Through the efforts of these early organizers and succeeding officers, deaf history and DHI are on a sound footing.

The other major difference between 1991 and today is that deaf people are clearly in charge. Although I believe that Professor Van Cleve and I did a fairly good job in putting together the first conference, it was and is clear that it was not necessarily the “deaf way.” This is a good change, one that I applaud. The deaf community, by both right and interest, must be in charge of its own history.

The variety of sessions at the 4th DHI conference made it clear that deaf communities throughout the world are hard at work investigating their past and preserving the stories of deaf individuals and the deaf community for future generations, deaf and hearing alike. Speaker Breda Carty (Australia) reminded the conference audience of the importance of this and future generations of deaf people's need to “Reconnect... with our Deaf Ancestors.” Harlan Lane (USA) presented the audience with a genetic analysis of deaf communities in Martha’s Vineyard and New Hampshire which led him to novel conclusions about the formation of the deaf community in the United States. Elena Silianova (Russia) described another deaf community in her presentation and video about the history of Russian “Deaf towns.” At the last session of the conference, Yutaka Osugi (Japan) shared the results of his lengthy life interviews with a deaf signer through CD-Rom and Online Data sharing through the Internet, as well as a personal appearance of the deaf Japanese immigrant he interviewed, Takeshi Yamaji (USA, formerly Japan).

A final change from the 1991 conference was reflected in the diversity of the participants themselves. Because prior conferences had been dominated by European and United States attendees, Conference Chairperson Ausma Smits, DHI President Ulf Hedberg, and Coordinator Audrey Wineglass were particularly pleased by the participation of representatives from Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia, Japan, Kuwait, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The 4th DHI Conference participants applauded and complimented Chairperson Ausma Smits and DHI President Ulf Hedberg on a job “well done.”

The next and 5th DHI Conference will take place in France in 2003. I look forward to both the continuity and changes which each conference brings to our field of deaf history.
To be Deaf in a hearing world is to be multicultural. Add to this a Hispanic or Asian cultural heritage and you have Deaf plus. Deaf Plus: A Multicultural Perspective is a collection of essays that gives valuable information about multicultural children and their educational needs.

Diverse backgrounds of the contributing authors reflect Deaf, Asian, African American, Hispanic, and Native American Indian heritages. These authors suggest that diversity within the Deaf Culture enhances and enriches the quality of that culture. Find out more about the greater Deaf Culture from this fascinating book.
Join Deaf History International!
Membership in DHI is open to everyone interested in the study, preservation, and dissemination of Deaf people’s history.

DHI Membership Form
I am (check one) □ a new member □ renewing my membership

For membership dues through 31 October 2001, I am enclosing
□ 40 USD for an individual membership
□ 100 USD for an institutional or organizational membership.

Name:______________________________________________

Fax:________________________________Email:__________

Mailing address:____________________________________

__________________________________________________

Please help us serve you better by telling us about yourself.

Occupation:________________________at________________________
□Deaf □hard of hearing □hearing Language(s) I know ______________________

Please mail this form with your check or money order in USD only to Professor Ausma Smits, DHI: Dep’t of History & Gov’t; Gallaudet University; Washington DC 20002-3695, USA
22 August 2000

Dear Dr. Jordan:

As you already know, the 4th International conference on Deaf History, Researching, Preserving Teaching Deaf People's History, was a success! It brought much international attention to the University as well as to DHI association itself.

This second USA-based conference would not have happened without the generous support provided by different units of the University: the College of Arts and Sciences, the Departments of History/Government and Deaf Studies, the University Library, Graduate School and Research Institute. Also, especially important was the able coordination by Ms. Audrey Wineglass of the College for Continuing Education. This combination enabled the attendance not only of scholars but amateur historians as well, and quite a number of students - all interested in Deaf History. Moreover, the conference provided an impressive springboard for the new "Deaf History Certificate" program offered by the University.

Finally, we want you to know that your personal role in welcoming all played a significant part in getting this event off to an impressive start. First there was that welcome delivery about the historic university located right in the heart of the nation's capital. Then not only the open-handed invitation to all to attend the University President's reception but the generous opening of your private residence, as well as office, for viewing. And finally, being personally present to greet the attendees. All this made for a relaxing atmosphere for what tends to be a hectic and tiring first conference day usually wasted on 'where can we eat?' on top of checking into strange accommodations. Thank you, IKJ, for that great start in setting off a positive mood for the whole conference!

Sincerely,
Ausma Smits, Chair
New and Noteworthy works on Deaf history
Thomas R. Harrington, Gallaudet University Library

BIESOLD, Horst (1999). Crying Hands: Eugenics and Deaf People in Nazi Germany. Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press. A history of the eugenics movement and how it was seized upon by the Nazis to justify their aims of "racial purification" by, among other things, the elimination of Deaf people by sterilization or killing. Also covered is the REGEDE (German Union of the Deaf) and other Deaf organizations that were taken over or established by the Nazis, and other Deaf collaborators in the persecution of the Deaf. This practice had an impact on German Deaf culture that is still strongly felt today. This is an English translation and re-editing from the 1988 German original, Klagende Hände (Solms, Germany: Jarick Oberbriel).


RÉE, Jonathan (1999). I See a Voice: Deafness, Language and the Senses—A Philosophical History. London: Harper Collins; New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt and Co. A historical survey of how deaf people and deafness have been viewed by the hearing majority from early times to the present, with emphasis on the linguistic and senses view. Deaf people and their sign languages have at different times been viewed as fascinating or as repugnant, as non-linguistic or as linguistic pioneers, as marvels or as something to be repressed and hidden.

From the Editor's Desk

Dear Friends of Deaf History,

Your newsletter is now published out of Gallaudet University, where I teach English, but, as always, it is your newsletter, an international bulletin on events and news in Deaf history around the world.

- Does your club own any archives or photographs that are open to people doing research in Deaf history?
- Do you live or work near a historic site that members of DHI might like to visit?
- Is your community planning any jubilee, or organizing a study group?
- Do you know of someone doing new research?
- Have you seen any new books or articles about the history of Deaf people?

If so, send the information to me! My fax and email are on the left.

I am honored to serve as your editor and hope that I can maintain the good job that Renate, Mary, and Ausma have done for us. I can edit your English writing, and can translate into English from German, Scandinavian languages, Dutch, French, Spanish, and Italian. But you, members and friends of DHI, write the information that appears here.

I hope you like this special issue on the 4th conference, and our new column, “New and Noteworthy,” by Tom Harrington. Coming up in our regular fall issue are:

- Tomas Vollhaber on Deaf author Ruth Schaumann
- Walter Schott on the Jewish Deaf school in Vienna
- An introduction of our new officers and Bureau members
- And much more!

If you’re in Washington, DC, this winter, don’t miss the exhibit at the Folger Library, “Writing on Hands,” about hearing people’s use of their hands for counting and memory.

Everyone with access to the internet will want to see the list of books and articles on “Sign, Gesture and Deafness in South Asian and South-West Asian Histories,” compiled by M. Miles and posted at http://www.sign-lang.uni-hamburg.de/bibweb/miles/miles.html.

Thanks, Ausma, for all your help in the editorial transition.