



NEWS RELEASE

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NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA

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USI TO COLLECT ORAL HISTORY OF NEW HARMONY

Students from the University of Southern Indiana's history department have begun collecting an oral history of New Harmony, Indiana, as a project for the Historical Methods class.

"The purpose of the assignment is to understand what it means to be in a community like New Harmony, that has this unique past and is, to this day, a historic site," said Tamara Hunt, chair of USI's Department of History. "What is it like to live in a community that is a modern living community, but also has this significant past that is identified by the nation as a historic community?"

Throughout the spring semester, students have identified interview subjects, and begun the initial round of interviews. Questions include asking residents how they feel about living in a historic community, how it shapes their view of the world, and how they perceive New Harmony has changed since being declared a historic community.

At least two more semesters of students – in the coming summer and fall semesters – will continue these and other lines of questioning, in an attempt to get a complete oral history of the area.

Community leaders also are working to videotape the interviews, and the University will make all interviews available to the public.

"The students are recording their interviews electronically," Hunt said. "And they will create transcripts from those interviews, which will be put in USI's archives, Historic New Harmony's archives, and the archives of the Workingmen's Institute in New Harmony."

The first transcripts will be available this summer.

Dr. Hunt can be reached at 465-1202 or tlhunt@usi.edu.