Past

Arlie Thompson
Burnett Marshall
Clarence Goad
Sammie Phillips

Present

Patrick Moran enjoys a light moment with Arlie Thompson during their interview.

Zachary Newland and Burnett Marshall view a WWII scrapbook.
Greatest generation shares past

Floyd High School classes conduct 4 WWII interviews

On Thursday, February 23, 2012, four WWII veterans from Floyd County agreed to talk about their experiences with high school students in the place-based education oral history program here.

The interviews with Clarence Goad, Burnett Marshall, Arlie Thompson, and Sammie Phillips all took place on one day at the Hotel Floyd.

The students were well-prepared. With the help of Radford University student mentors, volunteers from the Old Church Gallery, and their Floyd County High School class teacher, the students learned and practiced professional interviewing techniques, camera and audio operations, as well as their individual roles for the production.

Goad and Marshall were interviewed during the morning; Thompson and Phillips had interviews in the afternoon. The students heard about WWII actions in the South Pacific, Europe, U.S. Army Camps, and also about life in Floyd County before, during, and after the war as the interviews were recorded and videotaped.

Assisting during the day’s operations were: Dr. Melinda Wagner, Radford University; Angela Myers, Floyd County High School; and Kathleen Ingoldsby and Alice Slusher from the Old Church Gallery.

As part of the program, college mentors, high school staff, and community volunteers meet weekly during the school year to teach the art of oral history collection to Floyd County High School students.

Students learn ethical, methodologically sound interview techniques, practice and complete several interviews, transcribe the audiotapes, create searchable content logs, archive interviewee resources and period photographs, learn the technology of audio and video recording, research historical backgrounds, acquire proficiency in iMovie and storytelling, and finally extract a theme from an hour-long interview to create a seven minute movie production.

With its beginnings in 1998, the program is a community-based, oral history collection partnership of the Old Church Gallery, Ltd. and Floyd Story Center, Radford University’s Center for Social and Cultural Research, and Floyd County High School. The Floyd Story Center archives now hold over eighty interviews. For more information on the program see www.floydstorycenter.blogspot.com.

ABOVE: Clarence Goad explains a detail for interviewer, Shannon Monk. LEFT: Spencer Gravely and Sammie Phillips locate his ship’s travel from San Francisco to Okinawa on a map.