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About the Author

Fast Eddie Thomas, a tractor operator with the City of Hamilton, has been an active member of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Local Five since 1981.

Enrolling in a Literacy in the Workplace Program to improve his spelling in 1989, he researched and wrote a book on the history of Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local Five, City of Hamilton, Outside Workers. He shares his experiences of what he learned from his project and encourages all trade unionists to consider documenting their own histories.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to the trade unionist who is considering capturing his or her local union's history.

Acknowledgements

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Foreword

The Canadian Union of Public Employees is proud to co-publish Ed Thomas' guide to doing a local union history. Ed speaks from the heart - sharing the discoveries he made and the lessons he learned documenting the history of his own local (CUPE Local 5) in Hamilton, Ontario. We hope that publishing this guide will encourage more CUPE members and members of other unions to uncover and bring to light their local's rich history.

Brother Thomas' humorous tale of becoming a first-time researcher and popular historian should inspire others to see that they are also capable of this important task. Through these efforts we learn more about the struggles that built our movement - and won the rights and benefits that we currently enjoy. In this way, Labour history projects play a vital role in building union power today - drawing on the lessons of the past to make us stronger in current and future struggles.

Judy Darcy
National President
Canadian Union of Public Employees

Ed Thomas' worker's guide to writing labour history is a co-publication of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and the Ontario Workers Arts and Heritage Centre (OWAHC). As an organization devoted to the preservation and teaching of workers' history, OWAHC is delighted to be a part of this project.

Far too little working-class history is written by workers themselves. This CUPE-OWAHC co-publication suggests how something can be done to change that.

If you are interested in writing a history of your local, union, or some other aspect of working-class history, this guide can help you get started and avoid pitfalls. Written by a member of CUPE Local Five, Hamilton, Ontario, the manual takes the reader through the various stages of preparation, research, writing, and production. Thomas has a knack for putting the inexperienced researcher at ease - and a wonderful sense of humour. Even if you have no intentions of writing labour history, read on. You will enjoy Thomas' stories, and who knows, you might just get inspired to do a little historical digging of your own!

Franca Iacovetta
Chair, OWAHC Research Committee

Introduction

Some people will argue that there is no place for labour union history in our society. Yet, union history is just as important as any other form of history. It introduces the reader to the struggles of working people and their unions and to the major role that unions played in the building of our country.

When history is written, it is usually about people that the dominant society perceives to be important. However, when we read that the person was a worker before he or she became famous, it makes his or her life more interesting. So why not write about people who started out as workers and remained workers, all their lives.

Let's look at Sam Lawrence, a stone mason born in England in the 1800s. In 1934, Sam Lawrence became the first member of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) to be elected to the Ontario Legislature, representing Hamilton East. In 1944, he was elected mayor of Hamilton and denounced big business during the Steelworkers strike of 1946.

When labour history is written, it is usually done by academics. But workers should not be afraid to tell their own stories, to say it in their own words. Who else can write workers' histories with more feeling than workers themselves? After all, we are the ones who live and breathe our histories each and every day.

It is also important for workers to maintain their identities, their own culture, and their union culture. History is more than just things that have happened in the past. Union history is happening around us every day. Consider, for example, the Social Contract, the Ontario Federation of Labour's Days of Action in London, Hamilton, Kitchener, Peterborough, Toronto, Sudbury, North Bay and Windsor. Union history is The Free Trade Agreement and the effects it has had on jobs and unions. Union history is plant closures and downsizing and its effects on workers. Union history is legislation that affects workers! It is the experience that your local and members have had with your employers at the bargaining table, on the picket line or participating

in demonstrations. Even locals that have just recently been organized have histories. The only difference between them and older locals is that it is easier for them to record their histories because everything is still fresh in people's minds.

The time to write your union history is now! The longer you delay, the more difficult the process becomes. Memories become foggy, members die, documents are destroyed or lost forever. So why not start right now?

This guide aims to assist the average trade unionist in writing the history of their local union. It is not intended for academics or, for that matter, the seasoned author. Those individuals already possess the skills and knowledge that is required to successfully complete their own books.

This guide is geared towards the local president, the local recording-secretary, the local shop steward or the local union activist. It is a tool written by a worker to assist other workers in recording their histories.

The First Steps

It all starts with the idea. What type of project do you want to undertake? For example, the project could be as simple as a small leaflet or booklet, with one or two paragraphs on each event with some pictures. You could develop an anniversary calendar that marks dates of importance to your local; for example, when your local was first organized, the first officers, strikes, and highlights of the first collective agreement. Each month of the calendar could include a different picture. You could do an oral history of your local, capturing the stories of your members on tape. Or you could do what I did and write a full fledged book with complete chapters.

No matter the size of the project, it is always a good idea to try and recruit some help. Find out if other members or retirees are interested in assisting you. Your local could set up a committee to be in charge of writing the local's history. The task you assign to recruits could be as simple as formulating a list of past members, collecting old photos and collective agreements. Others could be asked to interview retired and current members.

Depending on the amount of funding, you could hire a student or researcher to assist with or take charge of the whole project. Both McMaster and York Universities have Labour Studies Programs and it would be worthwhile discussing your project with these or similar institutions. For a modest fee, the Ontario Workers Arts and Heritage Centre will assist or oversee the complete project for you. The Centre is located at 51 Stuart Street, Hamilton, Ontario L8L 1B5 (905) 522-3003. But don't get discouraged if help is not available or you don't have the resources to pay to have this done. You can do it on your own, just keep with it and be persistent. My book took six years before it was completed. Hang in there. It can be done.

What's Next?

Start your project by formulating an outline. If you have a computer and are using WordPerfect, this procedure can be simplified. WordPerfect has an outline feature built into it. But no matter what you use, the outline is the first step. It is just a simple tool that you create to monitor the project and it will let you see at a glance if the points you want to make are being covered. Of course, as you advance, the outline can change. You may find information that will change your perspective. Or something that you didn't think of when you first started out will require your attention. The following is an outline I created when I wrote my book, *"The Crest of the Mountain, the Rise of CUPE Local Five in Hamilton"*.

Sample Outline on the History of Local Five

1. Suffering of the Workers before Unionization

- A. Wages
- B. Hours of work
- C. Work days
- D. Un-organization of workers
- E. Public attitude towards workers
- F. Health & Safety
- G. First organizers-Nolen & Moore 1918
- H. The first contract with the Hamilton Civic Employees Union.

2. Strikes

- A. The strikes of 1919, 1949, 1950, 1973, and the Royal Botanical Gardens in 1989.

3. Affiliations

- A. The name change from the National Organization of Civic Utilities and Electrical Workers to the National Union of Public Service Employees (NUPSE).
- B. The first merger talks of the two congresses: Canadian Congress of Labour/Trades and Labour Congress.
- C. The merger talks of the National Union of Public Employees and NUPSE that Rogers, member of Local Five was involved with.
- D. The struggle of the early days of CUPE.

The next step is to make a list of people you may want to interview. Retired and current members are valuable sources of information. You might also consult members from other unions who have knowledge of your local. Retired and current management personnel, politicians, people from your national, international and provincial unions, labour councils, etc. can be helpful.

Try and get in touch with retirement homes, seniors clubs and veterans associations. Your local may even have an active retirement group who would happily participate in the project.

Where to go for Research Materials

In order to get your project started you will have to become a bit of an explorer. The job you are faced with is to find out where information on your local is located. Are there past minutes from your local's membership, executive, stewards or committee meetings? How about old union files, correspondence, briefs, reports, union newsletters and management files? Make a list of all of these. They will fit into your outline. What about photos? Does your local have a collection? Members and retirees may have documents, old collective agreements and photos that can be used. Other documents and photos may be found at your local library, university archives, labour or industrial relations library. Newspapers are also a valuable source of information that should not be overlooked. Depending on your financial resources, you could also place an ad in the local newspaper seeking out people with valuable material or who are willing to be interviewed.

Part of your exploration may require you to travel out of your immediate neighbourhood. For example, when I wrote my book, I did some of my research at the National Archives in Ottawa. While I was at the Archives, I went through 38 boxes of files. Sounds like a lot, but I only scratched the surface. They possess boxes upon boxes of files relating to CUPE and its locals, not to mention the huge collection of files on other unions and labour materials. There is also a labour archivist who can help you find what you need.

Does that mean that you should pack your bags and head for our nation's capital? No! Before making a major trek like that, you should do some investigating beforehand. Scout ahead. Find out what kinds of files the archives have to assist you with your project.

How can I do that, you ask? Well first of all you should call them. Ask them to send you their finding aids. For example one document, *"The Quick Guide Series: Manuscript Division - Number 4, Labour Archives"*, by Peter Delottinville & David Fraser, will give you a good taste of the documents stored at National Archives. The guide introduces the researcher (that's you) to the relevant manuscript sources at the National Archives in labour history. It also provides useful bibliography information to permit researchers an opportunity to explore the richness of their archival records.

Besides CUPE files, the National Archives have other union records dating back to the 1800s, such as the American Federation of Labour Records 1878-1937, International Association of Machinists (1888), International Moulders and Allied Workers Union (1859), Canadian Congress of Labour, Canadian Labour Congress, etc. About the time I started doing the research for my book, the National Archives had just released some Royal Canadian Mounted Police files that had previously been declared closed to the public. The files were collected during the early 1900s and related to the RCMP's activities centred around the monitoring (spying) of labour activists and radicals (that's us) for that time period.

There are other preparations that you should undertake before making a trek to Ottawa. One of the most important things you must do is obtain a researcher's pass. This is as easy as showing proof of identification. The CUPE files have restrictions. In my case, I had to get a letter from the National President of CUPE giving me permission to research and photocopy their files. The National Archives is open 364 days a year. But this all adds up to a hill of beans if you don't have the researcher's pass to get access to the building.

Another key issue to your success at the National Archives is to make sure the documents you want are there when you arrive. All the files are not stored in one building. They are stored at various other locations throughout Ottawa. You have to arrange ahead of time for the documents that you want to research to be delivered to the National Archives building where you can look at them. If not, expect to waste a day or so while they transport your documents to the main building in downtown Ottawa. Calling ahead will save you a lot of time, aggravation and headaches. You don't want to be sitting around wasting your time, especially if you have travelled a great distance.

While in Ottawa, you could kill three birds with one stone. Just across the river, a short walk from the National Archives, is the Labour Canada library in Hull, Quebec. The National Archives and the Labour Canada library have extensive collections of old labour newspapers, as well as daily and weekly newspapers. Another place is the National Archives of Sound and Moving Images. They have a collection of vintage film and tape recordings related to the labour history of working men and women.

When I was doing my research for *"The Crest of the Mountain"*, I came across some wire recordings. A wire recorder, measuring two feet long by a foot wide, was a device used prior to the modern-day tape recorder. I came across these recordings at the York University archives in Toronto. York didn't have the type of device needed to allow me to listen to them. I contacted the National Archives of Sound in Ottawa and got both the National Archives and York University to talk to each other. It took quite some time but the wire recordings were transferred to a regular tape.

The interesting part of this story is that after listening to the tapes, I discovered that it was the past president of Local Five from 1950 speaking on the original wires. He was talking, not of past experiences, but about events as they were unfolding at the time. In short, this recording caught labour history in the making.

There are other places to do research that should not be overlooked. For example, Mills Library at McMaster University in Hamilton has a fairly extensive collection of labour archives. Also, York University Library in Toronto has the Oliver Hodges papers and photos. This collection dates back to the early 40s and 50s and is comprised of 150 boxes. Hodges was an organizer with the Canadian Congress of Labour, the predecessor to the Canadian Labour Congress. His collection contains a lot of information on unions from Hamilton and other areas. A finding aid is useful if you plan on researching these files. When I was researching my project, these files were closed. I had to get written permission from Oliver Hodges to have access to his files. Hodges has since passed away, so I am not sure if the restrictions on his files have been lifted. But do not be discouraged by restrictions. An important rule for researchers is to persist. Don't give up!

Your local may have all your minutes, photos and so on. Another place that should not be overlooked is your local library. For example, CUPE Local 932, Hamilton Library Workers, have their records stored in the Hamilton Special Collections Division of the Hamilton Main Branch Library.

Local newspapers are a valuable source of information. Besides having articles about union negotiations and strikes, they also are a good source of information on the cost and quality of working-class life, such as cost of food to feed a family, rent and transportation. This information can be used to compare the cost of living then and now. At the Hamilton public library, they have all the newspapers that were published from the 1800s up to the present on microfilm. This collection also includes some labour newspapers that were published in the 1800s in Ontario.

Don't forget to approach your members. Their basements, attics or garages may be a gold mine of material relating to your local and your project. If you find out that the person has passed away, you should approach the family immediately. I cannot stress this point enough. When I was doing the research for my book, there was a retired member of the local who was recording-secretary for 33 years. I had written him a couple of letters requesting an interview with him, all to no avail. In May of 1989, I was informed that he had passed away. A few months after his death, his wife came to our union office with a few old union photos she thought the union might want. I started talking to her about my project, at which point she told me that her son had thrown out three filing cabinets full of old documents dating back to the early Forties. Although this happened over six years ago, it still tears my heart out to think that a lot of my local's history has been lost forever.

Another valuable source of information is your local cemetery. Why would I want to go there, you ask? Well, you can get the birth and death date off a gravestone of a past member. After getting the date that an individual died, you could check the local newspaper and examine the obituary columns. They often summarize a person's life and list names of relatives and close friends. Now you go to another source of information (one that we are all familiar with), the telephone book. Try and find out if these people are listed and call them up. Although it may be cumbersome, you could try locating people through an election or census list. Another source of information is the city directory. Your City Hall or local library should have copies of these books. City directories date back to the 1800s and include people's names, addresses and what type of work they did.

Organizations like the Ontario Workers Arts and Heritage Centre (OWAHC) may also be able to assist you with locating research material.

Any documents, photos and other material that you gathered and used should not be thrown away! Donate your collection to an archive such as McMaster or York University where there is a labour collection. The Ontario Workers Arts and Heritage Centre at 51 Stuart Street in Hamilton (905-522-3003) can assist you in finding a permanent home for your collection.

Finally, in terms of archival sources in other parts of the country, I have enclosed a photocopy of a portion of the "*Union List of Manuscripts in Canadian Repositories*". This publication lists the participating repositories which contain labour history sources (see page 81 and 83 as examples). As well, I have enclosed a photocopy of the title page of "*Primary Sources in Canadian Working Class History 1860-1930*". This publication has an excellent introduction to the researching and writing of Canadian working class history which you may want to use. Although it covers the period up to 1930, many of the sources cited have material that go beyond 1930.

Types of Support Available

An important aspect of writing your local's history is to get support. Support can come in many different forms. You could get certain people to write letters of support, such as the Mayor of your Town or City, your member of Provincial Parliament, Minister of Labour, the Chief Executive Officer of your company, your mother, etc. Also, ask your international or national union, labour councils, provincial council, your own local, or a labour historian, for letters of support.

What will these letters do for me? First of all, they introduce people to you and your project. Letters can open doors for you. They get other people interested in the project. Human nature is such that people like to help. These types of letters may give them the opportunity to do just that. They may be just what is needed to let you get access to your employer's files or other important files.

Getting letters of support may also encourage people to contribute money to your project. When I first started doing research for my book about CUPE Local Five, I got letters from Ed Broadbent, then National Leader of the NDP; from Bob Rae, then Ontario leader of the NDP Party; David Peterson, then Liberal Premier of Ontario and Andy Brandt, then Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party. CUPE's National President, CUPE's Ontario Division President, the President of the Ontario Federation of Labour, the President of the Canadian Labour Congress, my Local President, the Workers Education Centre, the Mayor of Hamilton, a professor from McMaster University, the Head of Special Collections for the Hamilton Library, Eugene Forsey (retired Liberal Senator) and others, also wrote letters of support.

At first, money came in slowly. A few CUPE Locals donated from \$50 to \$200. My local contributed over \$1,000. In total, this added up to around \$2,300. Then the City of Hamilton got on board, paying the wages of a student for twelve weeks to assist with research. This added up to \$5,000. CUPE National donated the use of office space. I had written a letter to the Ontario Minister of Labour in the Liberal government for funding, but received only a lukewarm letter back stating that they could not give any money to my project. But what is interesting is, all the other politicians that I was writing to were sending letters to the Minister of Labour saying that my project

should be supported. Lo and behold, I got a letter from the Minister of Labour saying that they were now going to give me \$5,000 to offset the cost of publishing my book. This money wouldn't have materialized if I had not been so persistent.

The Mayor of Hamilton was also a great supporter of my project. Besides the student researcher, he assisted in getting me a City of Hamilton grant for \$2,000. He also bought 100 copies of my book in advance (before my book was published). That generated another \$1,000. The books are given as gifts to dignitaries who visit Hamilton on official business.

Money may not be everything. You may need assistance in getting access to files, you may need things photocopied, permission to reproduce old photos and so on. A letter of support may be just what is needed to unlock doors that may otherwise be locked to union types, like us. Employers may become very helpful if they have the impression that politicians and other public figures are interested in your project.

Money Money Money MONEEEE!

Now it's getting down to the crunch! Remember, any type of printed project is going to cost money. The amount required will vary depending on the complexity and size of your project. For instance, if you plan on designing a calendar of past events of your local and money is tight, you could do this at a relatively low cost by using a low-end desktop publishing program such as MS Publisher. Then just photocopy the finished product. MS Publisher has a feature that they call Page Wizard. All you do is answer some basic questions that the program asks you and then press "create" and the program does the rest, lay-out and design. Once this has been done, then you can add your own text and scan in your own photos and other details. Creating the calendar yourself could end up costing you as little as 50 cents a copy. Of course, if you wanted to get fancier, you could have all this done for you by a professional unionized print shop. It depends on what you can afford.

Doing an oral history would not cost very much. All you would have to do is lay out the cost for tape recorder and blank tapes.

If you plan to write a book or booklet, the same principles apply. You could produce the book using a low-end desktop publishing program, word processor or typewriter and then photocopy as many copies as you want. Depending on the number of pages and number of copies you want, it may end up costing you less than \$2.00 per copy. Or, you could do what I did and have it done professionally at a printer or have it done by a publisher. My book about CUPE Local Five cost me \$5,500.00 to produce 1000 copies. The book has 97 pages and 29 photos. That cost was only for getting my book printed. It does not include the cost of research etc.

No matter the size of the project, it is going to cost you money. Where do I get it, you ask? At the time of writing this guide, there have been a lot of cutbacks, so various grants have been eliminated. But don't give up. And remember: little bits of money add up.

Your local union might be a good place to start. Just remember, you are doing them a service by writing their history. You could also have your national, international or provincial union send out an appeal on your behalf for funds to other locals. Don't forget to ask the national union for money. Who knows? They may have some. Although grant money may be difficult to secure, don't give up. Approach your local arts council; in Ontario there is an Artists in Workplace Grant that you might be able to tap into. Other forms of support include in-kind donations, funds for photocopying, reproduction of photos etc. You might get other sources of money by begging, borrowing or stealing (just kidding). Maybe you just won the lottery and you can use your own money! Try asking your mom for an advance on your allowance.

Now What?

Start thinking about organizing your project. Size will be the governing factor. If you are designing a calendar, your task is pretty straightforward. It is a matter of gathering some important dates: strikes, first contracts, key players in your union, photos etc. If an oral history is what you have decided on, then skip to the next chapter about conducting interviews.

If you are planning to write a book, the project becomes more complex. If you have a good idea of what you want to say, you could start writing now. Keep referring to your outline, but don't be concerned if it changes. The outline is to be used as a guide, it's not carved in stone. For example, when I was writing my book about CUPE Local Five in Hamilton, I was always under the assumption that my local's history started in 1933. I had already written four chapters of my manuscript assuming the 1933 date was correct. Well, was I ever wrong! One of the people that I had interviewed was writing a book on a CUPE local in Calgary. In his research he came across an early edition of *"The Labour Gazette"*, in which it referred to City of Hamilton workers being organized into a union back in 1918.

That little bit of information threw a wrench into my train of thought. Not only did it force me to change my outline and re-write some chapters of my manuscript, it forced me to find out whether there was any more information on the union. I researched City of Hamilton Council Minutes and old newspapers. I attempted, without success, to locate any of the activists from that time period and I tried to locate any members of their families I could interview. I researched the city directories, cemeteries for dates on headstones and telephone books for addresses.

Don't get me wrong, it was not all work and no play. I enjoyed researching the history of my local, but the most important part of this story is that it provided my local with another 15 years of history. For example, I found out that on May 15, 1919, the very same day that the Winnipeg General Strike was called, Hamilton civic employees also went out on strike.

One key element in writing a book is getting prepared. All the documents, newspaper articles, briefs, the mass of information that you have been collecting, has to be put into some kind of order. I suggest that you divide things into subject categories such as first contracts and strikes. Then, for each category, draw up the proper dates in chronological order.

Before Conducting an Interview

The most important thing you should do before conducting interviews is have plenty of release forms on hand. The people who are telling you their stories own those stories by copyright law. You should have each and every interviewee sign a form giving you ownership of the tape and the voices on those tapes. A release form doesn't have to be elaborate. It certainly doesn't need to be drawn up by a lawyer. A clearly written statement that indicates the interviewee's willingness to let you use his or her stories is sufficient.

People to interview should include past and present members of your local, people from your national and international unions, provincial councils, provincial federations and labour councils. Another invaluable source of information is the Boss, as well as past members of City Councils, CEOs of companies, plant managers and shop supervisors. They can provide a different perspective.

Below is a sample of the release form that I drew up:

Name of interviewee _____

Name of interviewer _____

Date/time _____

Location _____

I hereby give CUPE Local Five the right to use this recorded interview for research purposes for the history of CUPE Local Five. I fully understand that this tape will be deposited at Mills Library at McMaster University in Local Five's archives. I further understand that this tape may be reproduced and used by other researchers who have obtained permission from CUPE Local Five.

Signature _____

Before you start, make sure the tape recorder is working properly and loaded with a blank tape and batteries. At the beginning of the tape, state the date, time and location of the interview and who conducted the interview. This information should also be on a label attached to the tape case. Nothing is more frustrating than playing every tape to find a particular interview.

The interview should be conducted in a location free from background noise. You should be aware of things like the sound of an air conditioner, a compressor on an old refrigerator, a TV or radio that is playing in the background, a bird chirping in a cage or kids playing in a backyard. If you are conducting the interview at a convention or some other public location, seek out a quiet area. Tape recorders have a habit of picking up other people's conversations too. This presents a problem when you are trying to hear what the person you interviewed was saying.

How to Conduct an Interview

This section focuses on how to make the most of your interviews.

The first step in the interview process is to develop a list of people that you want to interview. Try to prepare a questionnaire for each individual person on your list.

It is wise to have questions prepared beforehand for each person you intend to interview. How many questions you prepare will depend a lot on your knowledge of your local or the person you intend to interview. Some of the basic questions to be asked are biographical: what's their name, birthday, what they did at work, seniority date, when they got involved in the local, what positions they held, etc. After asking these routine questions you can start to get more specific. For example, ask them about:

- Certain strikes
- Bargaining contracts
- Other members of the executive
- What issues sparked the drive for formation of the union?
- Struggles in getting certified and gaining recognition.
- Relations between employer and union. How has the power relationship changed over the years and why?
- Important grievances and arbitrations that changed the relationship between union and employer.
- Changes in health and safety.
- Changes in working conditions on the job.
- Changes in the lives of the membership and their families.
- Changes in hiring practices and promotions.
- Changes in composition of membership: gender, ethnic origin, educational standards.
- Relationships with other CUPE locals, other unions and Labour Council.
- Relationships with National Office, provincial division.

Some questions could be formulated by reviewing past membership minutes, correspondence and newspaper articles. However, don't get concerned if you are not sure what types of questions to ask. You could start by just letting the person whom you are interviewing tell their own story as they recall it. This may require a little tact on your part. Some people have a habit of rambling on. You should be prepared for this.

One thing you don't want to do is be rude. Remember, this person has given you their time, so be patient. Try to get them back on topic by asking another question. In some cases, memories become fogged because the person may be trying to recall something that has happened years ago. In other cases, their "rambling" may result in more terrific stories. When I was researching material for my book, I came across a person who had worked for the City of Hamilton from 1920 to 1933. I didn't have a tape recorder at the time. This person was rambling on about his memories of work. I kept asking him if he could recall anything about the union, which he couldn't, so I didn't really listen to the other things that he was saying. Later that day, it hit me on the head like a ton of bricks. This person was talking about working conditions, strong-arm tactics of management and the lack of health and safety. I was lucky, because I later had the good fortune of running into this person again.

If the person mentions someone who may have more information, ask if they have a phone number so you can contact the person later. If the person has passed away, ask about any surviving relatives that you may be able to contact.

One thing that is sure to happen when interviewing people is that you will get conflicting statements from two people. If this happens, try to get a third person to corroborate one of the stories. Sometimes the most interesting story may not be the most factual, so be careful. Remember you are trying to write the history of your local, one based on fact, not fiction. That doesn't mean a member's different recollections aren't part of the story. But it is important not to present someone's faulty recollection as fact. Although it is OK to show, through interviews, that people have different recollections of the same event.

One key thing to remember when interviewing is to keep your mouth shut. Don't offer people what you think the answers should be. Sometimes you may have to sit on your hands and bite your tongue because you are dying to say something. People will be looking to you for encouragement that what they are saying is of use to you. The best rule of thumb is to nod your head up and down, smile and make encouraging hand gestures. Use body language, not words. It is also wise not to start talking about your project. The purpose of the interview is to hear what the person is saying. If you really want to hear yourself talk, you can go home and interview yourself.

Tape recorders have a dial that lets you know the time the tape has been running. You should be aware of how much time is left on the tape. Keep glancing at your tape recorder to make sure the tape hasn't run out! What a crying shame to have someone telling you all kinds of important things about your local and then discover that the tape has run out.

If the person says something that you want to find later, make a written note. For example, the president of the local got arrested during the strike of 1973. You would then write down "president arrested, 35 minutes". Then you just fast forward the tape recorder to that part of the tape to find that information. Of course, this doesn't mean that you aren't going to listen carefully to the whole tape, but it is a good way of searching and marking the highlights.

After you have interviewed all the people on your list, you must keep in mind that you now have a good portion of your local's history down on tape. It would be a crying shame to just erase that history. My suggestion would be that these tapes eventually become part of your local's archives. You may recall that I mentioned that I came across some old wire recordings that were made 50 years ago. So, wouldn't it be great for someone to come across your tape recordings in 50 years.

There are a number of books written on the subject of conducting interviews. Two examples are The Ontario Historical Society publication, *"Approaching Ontario's Past, Conducting an Oral History Interview #7"* by Celia Hitch and Jay Norris, and also *"Popular Oral History and Literacy"* by Mary Breen and David Sobel, published by StoryLinks. A good source for technical tips on conducting oral interviews as well as advice on how to prepare and practice for interviews, is *"The Power of the Past: Doing Steelworker History"* by Mary Breen and David Sobel, available from the Steelworkers.

Photos

Using photos in your project may require that you get permission. Yes, photographs are covered under copyright laws too. If you are getting your book published by a professional publisher or printer, they will scan the photos in for you. If you are just going to photocopy the end product, you can still get good quality photos by having them scanned at a photocopying business. Each scanned photo will cost you a few dollars. Getting as many as you can on one page will reduce the number of pages to photocopy, thus reducing cost.

Photos can also be reduced in size. A large picture that fits on one page may be reduced to allow for more pictures on the same page. This will reduce costs when you are getting your publication reproduced. Grouping all your photos together in one section will also reduce cost.

Editing/Publishing/Printing

Now is the time to put what you have been working on into print. I am not going to go into great detail on how you should do that. There are numerous books on the subject of writing and writing skills. The key thing to keep in mind when writing anything is to know your audience. Are they the types that wave like the Queen or drink their martinis with their pinkies stuck up in the air? No. The people who are going to be reading your book are the people who matter. WORKERS.

Don't forget to thank everyone who contributed to your book. That means people who gave money, let you interview them, gave you photos and documents, institutions where you did your research and people who did the editing. So with all that out of the way, I am going to leave you to the task of completing your book.

Now that you have completed your book, what should you do? In my case, I read it. Then I read it again, and again, and again. Every time I'd find more mistakes or rearrange some sentences. Now that you are satisfied, don't stop there! Get other people to read your drafts and make comments. Don't be afraid to get feedback. Use it to help you finish the book. A key thing to remember – writing takes time and you will need to draft, revise and rewrite. It is part of the process. No one writes a book overnight, even experienced authors. So, don't get discouraged.

In addition to reading my book over and over, I hired an editor. This person's job was to help me tie all the chapters together and make sure the story flowed. The copy editor will correct spelling, grammar, sentence structure and punctuation. Keep in mind that this might cost you some money. The person I hired normally charges \$40.00 an hour, but because my book was elaborate she gave me a deal and only charged me \$10.00. The whole project ended up costing me under \$400.00 dollars. That's not bad if you have that kind of money to put out, but don't be discouraged if you don't. You could always go to your local university and hire a co-op student who could do it. After your work has been edited, you should get someone to proofread it.

When my manuscript was complete, my editor and I went off to visit the printer. No matter how you get your book into print, it is going to cost money. If you are photocopying, the cost will be low. But if you get it done professionally, it will be costly.

The printer I used was quite good and made suggestions to bring costs down. For example, if your completed manuscript is 100 pages, you could use a larger size paper, thus reducing the amount of pages, thus reducing the cost of printing. The cost does not increase because a larger size paper is going through the press. Instead of placing each photo under the subject, group them together into a centre spread to save costs.

The number of copies that you get done will determine the cost. But if you increase the number of copies, the unit price comes down. For example, if you intend to get 500 copies done and the price per copy is \$6.75 per copy, you may be able to get 1,000 copies done and bring the cost per copy down by \$1.00. The formula to remember is: the more copies, the cheaper the price per copy.

One thing that you should definitely do when publishing your book is get an ISBN-number issued. This is an international number that is used by libraries around the world. You can get this number by simply calling the Canadian ISBN Agency at the National Library of Canada at (613) 995-9481. This number makes it easy for anyone wishing to get a copy of your book. When I published my book about CUPE Local Five, I didn't get this number. But I should have. Under law, you are required to send two copies of your book to the National Library's Legal Deposit. For more information on this you can get a booklet called *Legal Deposit - Preserving Canada's Published Heritage* from the National Library of Canada.

You should be using a unionized shop to do your printing. Depending on the area you come from, you may have to look around. In my case, I got three quotes _ two from unionized printers in Hamilton and one from a union magazine in Toronto. Quotes will vary. In my case, they ranged from \$4,600.00 to \$8,742.22.

Celebrating

Now that you have completed your book and the finished product is in print, there is a very important formality that you must get out of the way. You have done something that no person has done before: written the history of your local. This is a time to be proud. How do I do that, you ask? Well, stand up and pat yourself on the back for starters, then jump up and down in the air, shout, scream, yell, sing, dance around in circles and let the whole world know that you did it.

When I completed my book, I did a number of things. First, I took a day's vacation from work and went to the printers and spent the whole day watching the whole process of printing my book. I took a complete roll of film of pictures. I got pictures of the printer changing the plates in the massive printing press, pictures of the presses rolling, pictures of me standing on the press, pictures of the printer with a magnifying glass checking the quality of print on the pages, pictures of them running the cover of my book, pictures of me standing by the skids of paper that were to become my book before the pages were cropped and cut. I got pictures of me loading the 16 boxes that contained my book into my car. When I got home I got my dog involved in the celebrations. I opened one of the boxes and took out one book and, yes, you guessed it, took more pictures. This time with me and my dog.

When my book came off the press, it was done on paper that had sixteen pages on the one sheet of paper printed on both sides. The large paper was folded, cropped, cut, glued and then the cover added. So there is really no first copy "off the press". The first copy out of the box symbolizes to me the first copy off the press. A copy of that book hangs in my home office in a glass display case.

I also went out to the cemetery. You may recall I wrote earlier about a member who was recording-secretary of my local for 33 years and that this person died before I had the opportunity to interview him. Well, I went out to his grave site with my first copy and stood over his grave. I first faced the book down to the ground and then to the sky and shouted "*I did it!*".

Did this end my celebration of my accomplishment? No! My wife and family got into the act. They had a surprise congratulations party for me, and, you guessed it more photos.

Advertising and Marketing

Now what should you do with all these boxes of books? Because right now, you are the only one that knows that you have them. The key thing to do is advertise. How do I do that? A good place to start is your local's newsletter (assuming that they have one). Contact your city newspaper, your national and international union's newspaper, your provincial union's newspaper, your labour council's newspaper, and magazines such as *"Our Times"* are also good places to advertise. The Ontario Workers Arts and Heritage Centre has a newsletter called *"WorkLines"*. They do book reviews on labour books. CALM, (the Canadian Association of Labour Media), and any local arts magazines should get a copy. You may want to take out an ad in the newspaper, distribute a flyer, use word of mouth, etc.

When I finished my book, I gave a copy to a *"Hamilton Spectator"* columnist. This was my way of thanking him for all the positive articles he had written on my local. To my surprise, he wrote a review of my book titled *"Worker's history of CUPE union local is a must read"*. Within two weeks of that article appearing in the paper, I had sold over 200 copies of my book. The article was so good that I asked him for permission to photocopy his article and hand them out as advertisements.

Request a table at your national, international, provincial, or local council's conventions, conferences, courses etc. Participate in workshops on union heritage. Contact your university labour studies department. Libraries should be interested in your book.

Bookstores may also be interested in carrying your book. But keep in mind that they normally want 40% or more of the price for themselves. You could ask your local museum to carry copies. The Ontario Workers Arts and Heritage Centre may also be interested in selling copies.

You probably haven't noticed, but I have been advertising my book, *"The Crest of the Mountain, the Rise of CUPE Local Five in Hamilton"* throughout this book. I can do that, I'm the author.

If you are interested in getting a copy of my book, contact:

**CUPE Local Five
1130 Barton St. East
Suite 200
Hamilton, Ontario
L8H 7P9**

**Tel: 905-544-3391
Fax: 905-544-6217**

Price is \$12.50 postage included.