

# LifeStory captures experience of a lifetime

By Elin Abercrombie

Many of us wish we had listened more closely to and remembered our parents', grandparents', or great grandparents' stories about what their lives were like growing up, what and who influenced their lives, their immigration stories, wisdom they have gained, and even quirky stories about other relatives in the family. An audio recording preserves stories to pass down through the generations, permanently capturing in their own voices, their dreams and experiences.

LifeStory, a Carrboro Practice co-founded by Melissa Carter and myself, audio record your and your loved ones' stories in the comfort of your own home or over the phone. We have worked with clients of all ages in several states including California. Melissa and I feel honored

and moved when we sit with people as they share cherished memories and

## Neighbor to Neighbor

stories about their own life journeys. It is a simple yet profound fact that when people tell and record personal stories they are speaking to those who are not yet born.

"We developed LifeStory because we appreciate the need for families to pass on their history and have seen too many people regret not capturing their relatives' voices before they were lost to time," says Melissa Carter. "Many people have every intention of 'some day' recording their family stories, but very few actually do. We bridge that gap through an easy and personalized process, so that the

Family Record is moved forward."

Prior to the recording session the LifeStory Partners work closely with each family member to help him or her feel relaxed during the process, and tailor the approach to their personal style. Some families prefer to work together to submit questions to their loved ones in advance. Topics can range from telling experiences about the Great Depression, military service, to their parents' or grandparents' love story. Others want to hear how their ancestors immigrated to America. At a family reunion, one woman asked her Aunt questions about her experiences and life growing up in an orphanage. Many families and individuals prefer a set of standard questions to get them started on their outline development.

While it is normal for some people to have some initial apprehension about talking into a microphone, when the process is completed everyone reports a sense of accomplishment, and a new deeper understanding of themselves and their families. Completing the recording process always underscores the significance of

passing on their memories and values to their friends and loved ones.

Once the interview is finished, LifeStory professionally edits the digital recording, organizes it into chapters, and delivers an archival quality CD. Clients can also order a Companion Photo Book and a written transcript.

We can record stories at family reunions, weddings, and special birthdays. Some new parents have recorded family stories as well as hopes and dreams for their infants. While you may feel your life story is ordinary, the Partners at LifeStory can show every person the value of their stories and wisdom, regardless of age or life stage.

For more information about LifeStory and package options, contact Melissa Carter at [mcarterlifestory@gmail.com](mailto:mcarterlifestory@gmail.com) or Elin Abercrombie at [elinaber@bellsouth.net](mailto:elinaber@bellsouth.net).

*Elin Abercrombie is co-founder of LifeStory, a practice in Carrboro. She has lived in Chapel Hill for over 15 years and currently splits her time between North Carolina and Northern California.*

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