Oral histories of Smithfield tell stories both sad and exciting

By Allison B. Law
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Voices of the past are being heard loud and clear in Smithfield thanks to an oral history project headed by William "Robert" Thorday.

While getting acquainted with the Smithfield Museum after joining the Smithfield Historical Society Board, Thorday found four boxes of old cassette tapes. The tapes dated from 1977 to 1981 and included town church meetings as well as interviews of people. As Thorday looked through the tapes he recognized many names of people he'd known as a child growing up in Smithfield.

"I thought they ought not just sit there," he said. Knowing he didn't have the capability or the knowledge to take the cassettes and put them into a digital recording and transcribe them, Thorday decided to seek help. Before agreeing for a grant, "he helped put together a non-profit, tax-free Foundation named the Clark and Gladys Robert Family Foundation after his parents. He then applied to the Utah Humanities Council for a grant to record the oral histories. Upon receiving the grant and matching funds totaling $6,000, the process of recording the oral histories began.

Thorday had a cassette player that was about 30 years old, but in almost new condition. He played the tapes in the player and used a digital recorder to digitize the recording. The digital recorder was having trouble walking on the audio file. This also brings up a timeline by minute and second to make it easy to know when things were in the interview. This allows those using the computer recordings as they do research to find much faster than going backwards and forwards on the'stapes.

Once the audio files were complete, Thorday began to look for transcribers. He was supported by the number available and found two who were willing to help at a reduced price. He would send

New York to implement clothing recycling program

NEW YORK (AP) — Here's the truth about fashion: It changes quickly. So what do you do when you're stuck with a closet full of tatty worn shirts, dresses and skirts?

Starting in September, New York City will launch its largest textile recycling initiative in the nation. The aim is to make it easy to donate clothing, almost as easy as throwing it away.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, Americans pitch almost 100 million pounds of jeans, shirts, and sheets per year, per person.

In New York, where 199,000 tons of tenement entered the city's landfills in 2008 alone, the plan would place 55 collection bins in high-traffic areas. "I've heard from times in the last five years, and each time I'll end up getting away two clothes," says 25-year-old Tanya蜡 voting. "It is just too hard to toss it all over the city. If I have a shirt on my house, I wouldn't hesitate to recycle them."

The city is taking bids for a 10 to 15-year contract with a nonprofit company that will be responsible for the bins. Goodwill Industries International is one of the companies bidding on the contract.

"There has been no other program like this that we know of," said Goodwill spokesman Alfred Vondel. "We think they are being very creative and we hope this sets a new standard."

A Goodwill Industries survey of 600 adults in the United States and Canada found that more than half of people who donate clothing say they wouldn't go more than 15 minutes out of their way to make a donation.

Robert Lange, the director of the Bureau of Waste Prevention, Reuse and Recycling in New York, said the department discovered the same problem. "You can open a black bag at the landfill and see what looks like new clothing, said. "It is too easy to throw it out than recycles."

Not all used clothing can be recycled into usable clothing — like those old, scratchy sweaters and torn clothing. But that doesn't mean these are smelly can't be donated. While Goodwill is mostly looking for clothing that can be resold, there are ways to recycle even the odd latticed pieces.

A Waste Connections collects clothing recycling bin is seen outside GWC fuller on July 7, 2010. This company's employees sort the bins on an once-a-year basis, and tenants never have to get rid of their old clothing.

Bensonhurst, New York, is enthusiastic about city govern-