CASSETTE TAPE
RECORDING PROCEDURE

Contents

I. Setting Up the Cassette Player ........................................................................................................... 2
II. The Recording Process ....................................................................................................................... 5
III. Editing the Recording ...................................................................................................................... 12
IV. Burning CDs ..................................................................................................................................... 16
V. Labeling the CDs ............................................................................................................................... 18
VI. Troubleshooting/Miscellaneous ...................................................................................................... 23
I. SETTING UP THE CASSETTE PLAYER

The cassette player is used to play the tapes that need to be recorded.

Before you do anything else, make sure the cassette player is properly connected. Two cables should be plugged into the “Line Out” connection on the back of the player. The red cable connects to the red connection, and the black cable connects to the white connection.
Turn the cassette player on by pressing the “Power” button.

Open the tray and load a cassette into it by pressing the “Open/Close” button. Put the tape in as pictured, with the first side (for example, “Side 1” or “Side A”) facing up. Close the tray by again pressing the “Open/Close” button.
Make sure that the tape is rewound all the way to the beginning before you start to record. Press the left “Music Search” button (with the two arrows that point to the left) to rewind the tape to the beginning.
II. THE RECORDING PROCESS

1. Turn on the Mac. Click on the **Peak LE 5.2** icon in the program bar at the bottom of the screen to open the program.
2. Once you have opened Peak, click on **File**, then **New**, and click on **Stereo Document**.

3. A new document will open. This is the main screen used to view and edit the recording.
4. Open the **Audio** menu at the top of the screen and then click on **Record**.

![Audio menu screenshot](image)

5. This will open the Record window. Click on the **record** button in the lower right corner to begin.

![Record window screenshot](image)

6. After pressing record, press the **Play** button on the cassette player. The recording process occurs in real time. Once the tape has reached the end of the first side, the player will stop automatically.
7. While recording, watch the MobilePre device and listen through the headphones attached to it.

8. The volume of the sound coming through the headphones can be adjusted by using the Headphones knob to the right of the headphone jack.

9. The MobilePre device has two LED lights for both Channel 1 and Channel 2. The LEDs show when the input from the cassette player is present (which is represented by a green light) or clipping (which is represented by a red light). Clipping occurs when the audio coming through the device is too loud. The knobs on the device should be adjusted so that the clipping does not occur. The Output Level knob on the cassette player functions in the same way. The knobs on both the cassette player and the MobilePre device may be adjusted to create the best recording possible.

The LED lights on the MobilePre should look like this:

They should not look like this:

To reduce clipping, turn the knobs down (counterclockwise). Once you have adjusted the knobs, you may need to start the recording process over with the correct audio levels.
The **Output Level** knob on the cassette player is located on the bottom right corner. It will increase or decrease the volume of the audio before it passes through the **MobilePre** device. Because there is only one knob, both channels are adjusted together (rather than independently as they are on the MobilePre device). The larger Input Level knob above will not affect the volume while playing a tape.

10. Watch the Record window. You should be able to see the sound waves moving through the top portion of the window that signify audio is being recorded.

11. Once the tape has finished playing, press the Stop button in the Record window. The stop button in the Record window is located directly to the left of the record button.
12. Save the audio document by opening the **File** menu and clicking on **Save As**.

13. The file name should be in this format:

    **1751 Shirley Grundmeier July 13, 2007**

14. All audio documents should be saved on the desktop in the **SMHC Archives Oral History Project** folder and **MUST** be saved as a .WAVE file.
15. Once the first side of the tape is finished, you are ready to record the second side. Open the tray by pressing the “Open/Close” button. Flip the tape over and put it back in the tray as pictured, so that the second side (for example, “Side 2” or “Side b”) is facing up. Close the tray by again pressing the “Open/Close” button. It is possible that there will be no audio recorded on the second side of the tape.

16. Place the **Cursor (dotted line)** at the end of the current recording. This will ensure that the additional cassette tape is recorded at the end of the audio document. Failure to place the **Cursor** at the end of the audio document may result in the second side of the tape replacing your new recording of the first side.

17. Repeat steps 4 through 11 of the Recording Process. Save the audio document by opening the **File** menu and clicking on **Save**. You do not need to save this as a new audio document.
III. EDITING THE RECORDING

The top section of the audio document shows the entire length of the recording from beginning to end while the bottom section is used to view smaller sections of the recording at a time.

When a section is zoomed-in at the bottom, the top portion of the recording box highlights the section of the recording being viewed by the user in a white box.

The program allows users to zoom in by pressing the + key and zoom out using the – key on the keyboard.

To hear playback of the recording, press the **spacebar** on the keyboard. Press the spacebar again to stop playing the recording.
1. You may need to split the recording into separate tracks in regards to sides one and two of a cassette tape. To do this, you must create new **regions**. Select a section by clicking and dragging the cursor through the bottom portion of the window. This will highlight a section of the recording.

2. Once a section is highlighted, open the **Action** menu and click on **New Region**.
3. An **Edit Region** box will appear. Choose a **Name** for the section you have highlighted and click **OK**.

Once a region has been created, it will look like this:
4. You may need to zoom in between regions and delete dead time between regions. Be sure to listen to any selections before you delete them to be sure that the space is completely dead time. To delete a section, highlight the dead space, just like highlighting a section to create a new region.

5. Press the **delete** key on the keyboard and the selection will be deleted.

6. Continue this process and save the changes you have made to the audio document.

***NOTE***

It is extremely critical that you DO NOT alter the recording in any ways besides splitting up the audio document into regions and deleting dead space. There may be some imperfections such as pops, scratches or various noises that can be heard on the recording, but the goal of this project is to preserve the recordings in their current condition, not to enhance the recordings in any way.
1. Once the editing process has been completed for an audio document, it can be burned onto a CD. Open the **File** menu and click on **Burn Audio CD**. This will open the Burn Audio CD box.

2. Open the DVD-RW drive on the computer by hitting the **eject** key on the top right of the keyboard. Insert an **Archival Gold CD** into the drive. Close the drive by pressing the eject key again.

3. In the **Burn Audio CD** box, check to be sure the settings are correct. The burner should be set to **Pioneer DVD-RW** and the burn speed should be **8x**. The settings under Burn Options that should be checked are **Verify after burn** and **Use Buffer Underrun Protection**. The setting that should be checked under Tracks & Indexes is **Regions are Tracks**.

4. Click on **Burn** in the Burn Audio CD box. The burning process will take several minutes. When it is finished, the drive will eject the CD. A box will appear asking if you would like to burn another copy. Click **no**.
5. Only 80 minutes of audio will fit on each CD. If an audio document is longer than 80 minutes after it has been edited, it should be split into two parts and two separate CDs should be burned.

The space between the first and second sides of a cassette tape may be the ideal place to split the audio document into two parts. If that does not work or is not ideal, find the region that begins closest to the center of the audio document and split it at that point.

6. Once you have saved two separate audio documents (one for each half of the interview), burn two CDs (one of each half of the interview).

7. Once you are done burning an interview to CD, you will need to know how long the recording is before you print on the disk. You can do this by scrolling to the end of the audio document and examining the time in the lower right-hand corner.

The total time for this interview is 01 HR. 02 MIN. and 37 SEC. Write this information down and save it for later when you are ready to label the CD.

8. Once you are finished editing a file and burning it to CD, save your progress and move the file into the folder titled Archive Completed Files on the desktop. You can do this by dragging the file from the SMHC Archives Oral History Project folder to the Archive Completed Files folder.
V. LABELING THE CDS

1. Open the **Discus for DYMO** program. The icon is located at the bottom of the screen.

2. Once the Discus for DYMO program is open, click on **SMHC Template.CD4** (under the **Recent Projects** tab) to open the file.
3. Once the file is open, click on the **Text** tab to begin labeling the CD.

4. A new side bar and Font Tab at the bottom will appear, allowing you to alter the text.
5. Click on the top portion of text and a red text box will appear. Double click on the red text box and replace the current text with the information about the recording. The red text box will turn yellow once you have double clicked.

6. When you are finished editing the top portion of text, hit OK and double click on the bottom portion of text. Replace (NUMBER ON FILE) with the correct file number. The file number should match what you entered above.
7. The CD should be labeled in this format:

Shirley Grundmeier  
July 13, 2007  
SMHC 1751  
25MIN. 02SEC.

Minnesota State University, Mankato  
Southern Minnesota Historical Center  
SMHC 1751

8. Put the CD into the **DYMO DiscPainter** that is located to the right of the computer. Lift the lid, place the hub of the CD on the short spindle, and put the lid down.
9. Click on the **Print** tab. Once the side bar changes, click the **Print** button that appears.

![Print tab](image1.png)

10. The Print box will appear. Click on the **Print** button in the lower right-hand corner.

![Print box](image2.png)
11. Once the printer has finished labeling the CD, close the Discus for DYMO program. **DO NOT** save the changes you have made to the SMHC Template.CD4 file. Let the ink on the CD dry for a few minutes before handling the disc.

12. If an interview has been split into two audio documents and two CDs have been burned, the CDs will need to be labeled accordingly. Label the CD with the first half of the interview “**CD 01**” and label the CD with the second half “**CD 02**.” The CDs should be labeled in this format:

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shirley Grundmeier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 13, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMHC 1751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25MIN. 02SEC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD 01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Minnesota State University, Mankato
Southern Minnesota Historical Center
SMHC 1751
```

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shirley Grundmeier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 13, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMHC 1751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25MIN. 02SEC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD 02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Minnesota State University, Mankato
Southern Minnesota Historical Center
SMHC 1751
You may encounter some problems while working on this project. Refer to these tips if you have any problems. If you are unable to find a solution here, converse with the other students who work on the project; you may be facing a problem they have encountered before or they may be able to help you find a solution to the problem.

1. If you only hear audio coming through one channel (or, one side of the headphones), it’s possible that the Output Level knob on the cassette player and/or the MobilePre device’s channel 1 and channel 2 knobs are turned too low. Try increasing the volume by turning the knobs clockwise.

Another possibility is that the headphones you’re using are causing the problem. Try using a different pair of headphones.

2. If you are unable to record a tape, you may need to change the Hardware Settings in the Peak program. Open the Audio menu at the top of the screen and then click on Hardware Settings. The Input Device and Output Device should both be set to M-Audio MobilePre.

3. If, after recording a tape, the Mac creates a new audio document rather than adding the audio to your current audio document, you will need to change the Record Settings.

Click on Audio at the top of the screen, then Record Settings. Under the Options section, be sure the box next to Append to document is checked to ensure that the tape you record is added at the location of the cursor in your current audio document.
4. When the **DYMO DiscPainter** is low on ink, the ink cartridge will need to be replaced. Instructions for replacing the cartridge are located inside the DiscPainter. A spare cartridge is kept by Systems to eliminate a waiting time while a new ink cartridge is ordered. Similarly, a new set of blank **Archival Gold CDs** should be ordered when the current supply of CDs runs low. This should eliminate downtime while new CDs are ordered. Let your supervisor know when you are running low on Gold CDs and/or ink.

5. Any minor problem with the Mac can typically be solved simply by restarting the computer. For example, after using Peak for an extended period of time, the playback feature will sometimes malfunction and a short (less than one second) clip of audio will play in a continuous loop. In this instance, you should save the progress you’ve made on the current audio document and restart the computer.

6. If you are unsure of what information to include when saving an audio file or what information should be printed on a CD, visit the **SMHC Manuscript Collection** website at:

   [http://lib.mnsu.edu/archives/fa/smhc.html](http://lib.mnsu.edu/archives/fa/smhc.html)

Browse for the call number of the item you are working with on the right-hand side. This website can be used to verify the spelling of names and can verify the date of an interview.

7. When you are completely done with a cassette tape, add its information to the **SMHC Archive Completed Tape Files** Excel document that is saved here **S:\circulation\Music**. You will need to know the tape number, how many discs there are, the name of the person being interviewed or the topic name, and the date of the interview. Make sure the tape numbers are in numerical order (smallest to largest) in the file. Here are some examples:

   ![List of SMHC Completed Tape Files](http://lib.mnsu.edu/archives/fa/smhc.html)

**NOTE:** This document is only accessible from a PC.