SUGGESTED ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Tell me about growing up in: _____________________________________________________

Did you come from a big family? What was your father’s occupation? _________________

How did you become interested in baseball? Did your brothers play? _________________

Did you play sandlot, American Legion or High School ball? College? _________________

What positions did you play growing up? ___________________________________________

Did you have a favorite player or team growing up? _________________________________

What did your family think of you making a career out of baseball? ___________________

Tell me how you were discovered and who signed you. _______________________________

Did you receive a signing bonus? What was your biggest contract? ____________________

MINOR LEAGUE CHRONOLOGY (Managers, Teammates, Ballparks, etc.) _________________

______________________________________________________________________________

What was your first professional engagement? ______________________________________

MAJOR LEAGUE CHRONOLOGY (Managers, Teammates, Ballparks, etc.) _________________

______________________________________________________________________________

What type of hitter/pitcher were you? Baserunner? _________________________________

What kind of fielder? Describe your pitching motion or batting stance. ________________

What player did you pattern your game after? ______________________________________
Can you share some memories of Spring Training? ___________________________________

What teammates, coaches or managers were especially helpful to you? _________________

What was your best year? ________________________________

Were you ever injured? ________________________________

Describe the playing conditions. Equipment, uniforms, clubhouse, etc. _________________

Which were your favorite big league ballparks to play in? ______________________________

Least favorite? Why? ________________________________

Who was your favorite umpire? Why? Least favorite? ________________________________

Were you ever ejected from a game? Any memorable brawls? __________________________

How did you handle all the travel? What was your favorite city? _______________________

Who did you room with on the road? Did you have a curfew? __________________________

How did you spend your free time? Did you have a favorite hangout? ___________________

How did the travel affect your family life? Did they ever come on the road? ____________

Do you have a favorite baseball memory? Your biggest thrill? _________________________

Were you superstitious? What about your teammates? ________________________________

How did you get along with The Press? The Fans? ____________________________________

How did you know when it was time to quit? _______________________________________

How did you adjust to “civilian life” after baseball? _________________________________

What did you do after your playing days? ___________________________________________

If you could put together an all-star team of the guys you played with or against, who on it?

Who was the smartest manager you played for? ________________________________

What player today reminds you of yourself? ________________________________
How is baseball different today? __________________________________________________

Do you still follow the game closely? Go to the ballpark often? _________________________

Are you still in touch with your old teammates? ______________________________________

If you could change one thing about your baseball career, what would it be? ____________

How do you want to be remembered? _____________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Don't forget to ask to see any scrapbooks, photos or memorabilia that your subject may have. Looking at the scrapbooks to start the memories flowing. If it's appropriate, speak with a spouse or family member. Also ask if anyone that was involved in the game that lives nearby might be willing to be interviewed.

This outline is by no means perfect. It is important to LISTEN as he/she is talking so you don't miss obvious follow-up questions during the interview. Feel free to add or delete questions. By all means, be yourself, relax and have fun!