

# **Instructions for Analog to Digital Conversion, and editing of the sound recording**

The following instructions were used by the staff of the Langley Centennial Museum to convert analog audio cassette recordings to digital recordings, stored on CD. The instructions describe the use of a TASCAM CD-RW 402 CD Recorder/Duplicator to complete the conversion, and create a preservation copy CD. Two different cassette players were plugged into the TASCAM product to play the cassettes. A more modern player was used for recently recorded cassettes, and a 1970s-era cassette deck was used for the older recordings.

While the tape was playing and the sound was being converted to a digital file, the technician was listening and creating a partial transcription of the recording. Analog to digital conversion takes place in “real time” – in other words, the recording takes as long to make as it takes to play the cassette. To make best use of staff time, the partial transcription was therefore completed during the conversion. This partial transcription was later used to edit a copy of the recording into tracks, to be used as a reference copy by researchers.

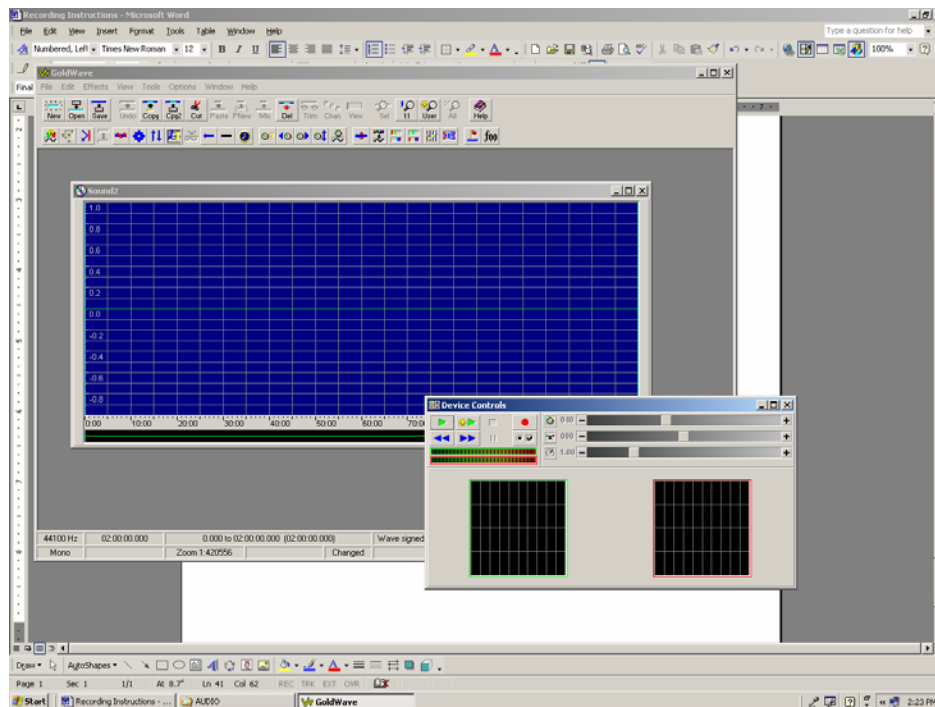
These instructions also describe the use of GoldWave software to edit a copy of the preservation file, and burn it onto a second CD for reference use. Finally, it describes a process for converting analog to digital audio files, using the sound card of a PC. This method was only used occasionally, when a playback device was required that would not work with the TASCAM product. It should be noted that there are products comparable to the TASCAM and GoldWave products – they are not the only products available. The TASCAM product was rented from Long & McQuade.

## **Recording Audio Cassettes and Determining Track Breaks**

- 1 Place a blank CD in tray 2 of the TASCAM CD recorder, and the cassette in the tape player. On the CD recorder, press Record and then press Menu. Turn the Multi Dial until the screen says Rec Menu 1? Press the Multi Dial. Turn the Multi Dial until the screen says Digital Volume?, and then press the Multi Dial again. The screen will show a + or – and a number of decibels. Now play the cassette and turn the Multi Dial to change the recording level until the voices of each person are audible but the bar doesn't go Over. Press the Multi Dial to set this volume. Rewind the cassette.
- 2 In a new Word document, type “Tape SR-xxx” at the top, followed by “Biographical Sketch” and then “Interview Info”. Any available biographical information about the interviewee or the person they are being questioned about goes under Biographical Sketch. Under Interview Info, state the name of the interviewee and interviewer as well as the date and subject of the

interview, if available. Save this document as “SR-xxx”, in F:\data\museum\1Museum\Curatorial\Aural History Digitization.

- 3 Press Play on the tape player, and then press Play on the CD recorder. While the cassette is playing, note the times of subject changes as well as any breaks in the tape, the end of Side A, etc., and write brief descriptions of each section’s topic.
- 4 Once the entire interview has been recorded and described, press Stop on the CD recorder. Press Finalize and then press the Multi Dial when the screen says Finalize OK? Rewind the cassette if necessary.
- 5 Now go back through the Word document to clean up the notes, add biographical information mentioned in the interview, and name each section TRACK 1, TRACK 2, etc. Label the CD with Sharpie pens, with the cassette number (ie SR-001) and “PRESERVATION”. Put the CD in the box of CDs Ready for Editing and the cassette back in order in the box. Mark on the printed database that the Preservation Copy is complete.
- 6 If the cassette needs to be recorded from a different tape player (ie, the multiple-speed recorder), connect that directly to the sound card in plug in the computer via an RCA-headphone cable. In GoldWave, select File – New, select mono or stereo as needed, and make the time length longer than the tape (extra time can always be deleted). Click OK, and the new Sound window will take a few moments to pop up.



In the Device Controls window, click on the button with a black bullet and a check mark. This will open the Device Controls Properties window. Under Volume, select Line In and deselect any other sources. You may need to listen to the tape and adjust the volume level as well. Click OK. When you are ready to record, hold CTRL while clicking the red dot Record button in the Device Controls window. This will begin the recording, and you can now press Play on the tape player. You can take notes during the recording, as you would with the other method. When the tape is finished, click the magenta square Stop button in the Device Controls window. To make the Preservation CD, make a start cue at the beginning of the file, and an end cue where the sound stops, to cut off the blank part of the file. Record this using Roxio Easy CD Creator. Then go back into GoldWave, and create tracks as outlined in the Instructions document.