

# Andersonville National Historic Site

## Ovation Data Helps National Park Service Preserve and Remaster the Oral Histories of World War II Prisoners of War

### Background

The Andersonville National Historic Site in Georgia is the only park in the National Park Service to serve as a memorial to all American prisoners of war. The park encompasses the Camp Sumter Civil War military prison, the Andersonville National Cemetery, and the National Prisoner of War Museum.

### Challenge

The park's collection included legacy audio and video tapes that needed to be converted to modern digital formats for access and preservation. In their existing formats, these important histories and records were inaccessible to researchers, historians, or other interested communities.

The audio tapes featured oral histories of American World War II veterans who had been held as prisoners of war in German and other prison camps. The tapes, originally recorded in the mid to late 1990s, were of poor sound quality. In many cases, it was hard to hear or understand the interviewees due to competing background noise. The video tapes were recordings of various park programs and events.

#### Formats Converted

**Audio:** standard audio cassette, micro audio cassette, 5" and 7" reel to reel tape

**Video:** camcorder cassette, VHS, MiniDV, DVD

### Solution

The park shipped the tapes to Ovation's secure facility for processing and supplied a brief inventory of the media, including the media type, title, POW name, name of conflict, and copyright information. As part of the project requirements, the park determined prioritization and schedule of work, file naming convention, and final file specifications. A small number of the tapes had to be treated for stiction prior to digitization.

**Digitize original tapes to create museum-quality master preservation files.**

**Remaster audio to remove background noise; create working files to use in park exhibits.**

**Embed keywords into the final digital files to help with searching and retrieval.**

**Return the final digital files with an index file of metadata on a USB drive.**

### Results

Ovation digitized approximately 1,800 pieces of media into WAV, MP3, and MPEG-4 formats. Hundreds of POWs' stories can now be clearly heard and shared and are preserved for future generations.