Public History Newsletter Spring 2010

Public History Concentration

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This year, Dawne put out a call for volunteers to partner with the Salvation Army to create an exhibit at the Duncarrick Mansion, the historic home of Katharine Kennedy Brown. Five students-Lynley Culpepper, Sandy Bialik, Angela Vanderbilt, Jackie Frederick, and Lauryn Bayliff-participated in the project and offered some insight into the project and their experience.

**Frederick**-I was excited to see the call for volunteers for the Duncarrick Mansion project, as I had worked as a tour guide during the groundbreaking ceremony for the Kroc Center, and I had fallen in love with the house, it owners, and its history at that time. The goal for my part of the exhibit was to showcase the philanthropic activities of the previous inhabitants of the house. Because the Kroc Center’s mission is to serve the community, the Salvation Army was interested in the Kennedy’s family involvement in similar type endeavors. The Katharine Kennedy Brown papers in the WSU Archives are filled with evidence of the family’s charitable works, and I was able to highlight these in the exhibit. It was very gratifying to hear the visitor’s comments as they viewed the exhibit, particularly those from the neighborhood who shared their memories of the home and family with us. They expressed their appreciation that the Salvation Army chose to save the house, and I think it was very important to them to retain this connection to the community. As the WSU exhibit team was able to be at the house during the exhibit, we received immediate feedback, which I think only strengthened our enthusiasm about the house and project. If this experience did not make you a local history buff, I don’t know what would!

**Laurny Bayliff**-For my part of the Duncarrick project I had to create an exhibit case displaying Katharine Kennedy Brown’s political career. I was very fortunate to have so many documents and artifacts available when researching this area of her life. Mrs. Brown was involved in several different organizations that were dedicated to the Republican cause. The breadth of her career and Wright State’s archival collection full of primary documents and pictures made creating this exhibit a challenge. Narrowing such a large aspect of KKB’s life down to two cases forced me to evaluate what information was of crucial importance and would be interesting to visitors. Much of my time on the project was spent trying to locate pictures that corresponded with the different activities that she was a part of and verifying the subjects in the photographs. It took

**Culpepper**-For my capstone project I helped design a museum room at the new Kroc Center in Dayton. The room is located inside of Duncarrick Mansion, the former home of Katharine Kennedy Brown. Duncarrick is being restored to serve as the local headquarters of the Salvation Army. The exhibit focuses on the history of the mansion, and (Continued on page 2)

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The students of the Museum Exhibits class designed and installed at the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center. They held an opening reception on June 5. The exhibit, “Before It Was Art: Cultural Connections to African Art,” provides the museum visitors a chance to explore the origins and craftsmanship of various African objects that are now commonly displayed as artwork. Museum guests will discover the historical and cultural significance of African artifacts, and gain an appreciation of how common objects can also be works of art. Visitors will also be able to explore all exhibits at the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center, including the temporary exhibition, “The Journey of Hope in America: Quilts Inspired by President Obama.” The Museum is open Wednesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
The Duncarrick Project Continued

on the life and work of Katharine Kennedy Brown. Mrs. Brown was a prominent figure in the Republic Party, and was also very active in various civic organizations. Her papers, along with those of her mother and mother-in-law, are located in the WSU Archives. We researched these collections and reproduced photographs in preparation for the grand opening held in May. This was a great opportunity to learn about exhibit design, while collaborating with other historians, the Salvation Army, and a professional exhibit design firm.

Vanderbilt—When Dawne announced the opportunity to assist the Salvation Army with putting together a small museum exhibit at Duncarrick since my area of focus is Historic Preservation. Researching the Katharine Kennedy Brown collections in the WSU Archives for images and information to include in the exhibit was a great learning experience. An added bonus was having access to another collection of KKB’s political and personal correspondence, which Lynley and I were processing for the Advanced Archives class. This was a great opportunity to search for additional materials not only for the house exhibit, but also the other exhibit cases. One great addition was a box containing ‘pieces and parts’ which were collected during the renovation - pieces of wood from mantles or molding, nails and bits of marble - were placed on the shelves by the pictures giving an idea of how much work was done to restore the house. It was a great experience working together and helping each other tweak the final case arrangements. The Kroc Center opening was a fun way to wrap it all up, hearing the visitors comments as they walked through and viewed the exhibits, seeing the surprise and delight on their faces as they toured the room and learned a little bit about that ‘house behind the walls’.

Bialik—The Duncarrick Project was my first experience with any Public History event. When Dawne asked for volunteers, I had no idea what to expect since I am new to the Public History program and not a native of the Dayton area. I was a little apprehensive until I walked into the house for the first time. Duncarrick was in the process of a renovation but I was completely sold on being a part of this project. My teammates seemed more versed in what they were doing, so I had to figure out where to fit in. I decided to work on a short documentary of the house and its inhabitants using Adobe Premiere Elements 8. I never worked with software for movies so this was a completely new experience. I really enjoyed researching the WSU Archives for the information needed to make the video. It was time consuming to look for the perfect photos, write a script, choose music of the era, and edit the interviews while not overlooking any copyright laws and keeping the video brief. I also created a website in order for the team members to share information. The team created an exhibit to be proud of and their professionalism and dedication was exceptional. A highlight we all enjoyed was meeting a few family members of Katharine Kennedy Brown. We spoke with them at the grand opening and again a few days later in the archives. The time spent with her family gave us a new perspective of Katharine Kennedy Brown. It brought to life all the pictures and writing found in the archives.

If you like a varied and somewhat unpredictable work routine, managing an archive might appeal to you. In my experience, no two days in the office are exactly alike. Just when you have planned how to spend your day reducing the number of tasks on that perpetual to-do list, the phone rings. A patron has arrived and requests your help. Please don’t resent such interruptions. Archivists are in the people business. There is nothing we do that is more important than helping connect researchers with the historical resources they are seeking.

Furthermore, satisfied patrons become friends and supporters of your institution. So please take a genuine interest in your patrons and their quests. If possible, offer them more than they ask for:

tour of the facilities, instructions on how to use the catalog and finding aids, and ideas about related collections, publications, and repositories.

My day typically begins at 8:30 with three security card swipes. Once in the office, I check email, voice mail, and my paper calendar. After addressing any urgent matters, I review my to-do list and assign tasks to my assistants in an effort to keep one step ahead of them. Administrative meetings are frequent here at Bridwell Library. I am on seven committees or task teams that meet at least monthly. When not in meetings, I am free to pursue more routine chores such as ordering supplies, accessioning new materials, processing collections, posting finding aids on the internet, planning presentations and exhibits, digitizing, encapsulating, making phase boxes, doing research, supervising assistants, and networking with other archivists and historians.

Then the phone rings. Another patron has arrived. It is time to set aside my agenda in order to assist a student, faculty member, or visiting scholar. Every research request gives me an opportunity to get to know Bridwell Library’s collections better. Each patron is a fascinating person on a unique quest for knowledge. It is a privilege for me to get to know them and to assist them as I am able.

Timothy Binkley is a 2005 graduate of the Public History program. Tim is currently an Archivist at Bridwell Library at the Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas.

“There is nothing we do that is more important than helping connect researchers with the historical resources they are seeking.”

Duncarrick Project Continued

House, I jumped at the chance to work on such an interesting topic for my capstone project. I was responsible for preparing an exhibit case focusing on the house itself, a great opportunity for researchers to learn about exhibit design while collaborating with other historians, the Salvation Army, and a professional exhibit design firm.

Touring the facilities, instructions on how to use the catalog and finding aids, and ideas about related collections, publications, and repositories.
**Alumni News**

Lynn Simonelli (2002) I am marrying Dr. Peter E. Hanson, Associate Professor, Chemistry, Wittenberg University on July 10 at Fort Ancient. We are planning to reside just west of Springfield. Tiffany O’Sheal (2007) Moved from Utah to Maryland. I am currently working at the Steppingstone Museum in Havre de Grace, Maryland. Danny Schlegel (2009) I was accepted to a workshop in Austin for an AASLH project management class that is underwritten by IMLS. I have hired an Administrative Assistant. We are currently working on hiring a new curator. I have also been working on the reaccreditation process with AAM. The museum has seen a sharp increase to nearly 200 people a month since I’ve been Director (there were less than 50/month previously). Mark Benbow (1983) My book, “Leading Them to the Promised Land, Woodrow Wilson, Covenant Theology, and the Mexican Revolution, 1913-1915” is due to be published by Kent State University Press in the next few weeks. I am currently working on a chapter on Woodrow Wilson’s personal life for a new book called “The Woodrow Wilson Companion” as well as several articles. My next book project is a biography of Christian Heurich, a prominent local (Washington, DC) brewer. And I am still teaching part time at Marymount University and will be teaching “Introduction to Public History” in the Fall. Lorrie Monteiro (2007) I have moved to Oklahoma City since my husband has now retired from the USAF. I was just hired as a collections manager for a private art collector/philanthropist here in the city.

**Student Awards**

We would like to congratulate the following students on their accomplishments:

Elizabeth Ash—Inducted into Phi Alpha Theta History Honor Society on May 14.

Lauryn Bayliff—Inducted into Phi Alpha Theta History Honor Society on May 14.

Lynley Culpepper—Inducted into Phi Alpha Theta History Honor Society on May 14.

Melissa Dalton—Inducted into Phi Alpha Theta History Honor Society on May 14.

Jeremy Feador—Received the School of Graduate Studies Award for Outstanding Graduate Student in the Public History Program on May 5.

Ashley King Nittle—Inducted into Phi Alpha Theta History Honor Society on May 14.

Matthew Peek—Inducted into Phi Alpha Theta History Honor Society on May 14.

Anne Ryckbost—Presented her video project “A Trip to Jamaica 1891-1892: A short film examining early American tourism in Jamaica” during the CoLA Graduate Student Colloquium on May 27.

**Note from the Director: Dawn Dewey**

This has been an extremely busy and exciting year for Public History at Wright State University. We launched our mentor program! Thank you to all of the alumni who volunteered to serve as mentors. SAA Student Chapter advisor, Lynda Kachurek and eight students attended the Midwest Archives Conference in Chicago. Adjunct faculty worked hard on semester planning and launched a new class on film making for public historians. We had another great field study experience in Cleveland. One of our stops was the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame where project archivist and WSU alumnus Jim Kohler (2006) was our guide. We graduated three in March and nine at spring commencement. We held a great graduation party at the Greene. Interest and enrollment in WSU’s Public History Program is at an all time high.

I’d like to say a special thank you to Melissa Dalton, my Graduate Assistant for the past two years. Melissa worked very hard to support the program, editing the newsletter, sending out weekly announcements, maintaining student files, planning special events, doing research for the field study class and the list goes on and on. So if you see her, tell her thank you!

Have a great summer and best wishes to all of our graduates. I wish you much success and most of all, happiness in the years ahead.

“One of the deepest impulses in man is the impulse to record, - to scratch a drawing on a tusk or keep a diary, to collect sagas and heap cairns. This instinct as to the enduring value of the past is, one might say, the very basis of civilization.”

~John Jay Chapman, Memories and Milestones

**Students at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum**
The mission of the Public History program at Wright State University is to prepare professional who are well-grounded in knowledge of historical content, professional training and hands-on experience.

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**Dr. Paul Lockhart**
Director, History Graduate Program

**Dawne Dewey**
Director, Public History Program

**Melissa Dalton**
Public History Graduate Assistant, Newsletter Editor

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**C o n g r a t u l a t i o n s  t o  o u r**
**2 0 1 0  S p r i n g  G r a d u a t e s !!**

Sara Boteler
Melissa Dalton
Jeremy Feador
Elizabeth Morgan
Ashley Nittle
Matthew Peek
Ryan Qualls
Emily Roush
Anne Ryckbost

Back left to right: Tiffany Knapp, Melissa Dalton, Rachael Bussert, Sara Boteler, Matthew Peek, Emily Roush. Front left to right: Jeremy Feador, Ashley Nittle, Ryan Qualls, Elizabeth Morgan