

Winter 2010

# Public History Newsletter Winter 2010

Public History Concentration

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# Public History Newsletter

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY

## Students at Work

**Sara Boteler-Project:** I recently finished my project at the Jewish Federation of Greater Dayton. Last year they started an archive with the help of another graduate student from the program and I was able to step in to help with the next

step in the process. There is a lot that goes into starting an archives—more than I realized. To help them figure out what they had, I worked on creating a finding aid for the whole archive. This finding aid includes what files are in which

boxes and where these boxes are located. I also spent time doing research for Marshall Weiss, the editor of the Jewish Observer. This year marks the Federation's 100th year in Dayton and Mr. Weiss is sharing this with his readers. Knowing what is in the archive has allowed me to get information for him that he needs for his articles.

Through this project I have learned how important the first steps are when you are establishing an archive from nothing. I am sure that this experience will be beneficial to me as I go out into the workforce.

**Ashley Nittle—Internship:** I interned with the German Village Society (GVS) in Columbus from June through November 2009. My direct supervisor was the GVS Historic Preservation Officer, Jody Graichen, a graduate of the University of South Carolina Public History program. I was able to shadow her on site visits where she helped residents determine how to move forward with their renovations in an historically appropriate way. I also attended German Village Commission meetings with her. The commission hears applications for renovations on historic properties and determines whether applicants



**Matthew hard at work at the Greene Co. Records Center and Archives in January.**

Center and Archives in Xenia, Ohio, under Gillian Hill. I am cataloguing, researching, preserving, and digitizing two sets of county engineer railroad valuation maps: a set of revised 1916-1918 Interstate Commerce Commission maps, and 1918-1920 Miami Conservancy District railroad relocation maps. Learning how to

will be awarded a Certificate of Appropriateness (and allowed to renovate their property) or denied because their application did not fit the guidelines developed for the historic neighborhood. My other main focus was the society's archives where I processed three small collections. Of course, I also helped with administrative tasks such as working in the visitor's center and answering telephones. The German Village Society is a community hub in the neighborhood and it was a lot of fun meeting new people every day and seeing the dedication to historic preservation not only by GVS staff, but also by the residents.

**Matthew Peek—Internship:** I am currently working on my internship at the Greene County Records

preserve large-format archives has been a big learning curve which will benefit me greatly in the future. Preserving blueprints and large maps is a challenge for many archives tight on space, and I have enjoyed the opportunity to work with the Greene County archives to preserve these im-



**Touring Duncarrick at the beginning of the project. Left to Right: Angela Vanderbilt, Lauryn Bayliff, Sandy Bialik, and Lynley Culpepper.**

portant records. The experience has been tremendous for me, as I have worked with county officials, local government departments,

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**Sara showing Dawne her work at JFGD.**

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## The Day in the Life of MARY OLIVER Dayton History

Not everyone is lucky enough to have an interesting job. Since graduating from WSU's Public History program in 1998, I have been blessed to have a job that I find not only challenging, but also very interesting. I was hired as the Curator of Collections for the Montgomery County Historical Society before I even completed my degree program. The Society and Carillon Historical Park merged in 2005 to form Dayton History, where I have been the Director of Collections since shortly after the merger. I oversee a staff of two full-time and one part-time employees and a number of volunteers. Together we care for the more than three million items in both the Dayton History community history collection and the NCR Archive. I also serve as the staff liaison to two advisory councils that assist Dayton History with the management of both our

community history collection and the NCR Archive.

While Dayton History is a large organization, like many museums our staff is actually somewhat small. My staff and I work collaboratively with the education department to develop temporary exhibits, as well as planning for the permanent exhibits to be installed in Heritage Center, which is currently under construction. For me, exhibit time usually includes text writing and editing, artifact and graphic selecting, and assisting with exhibit design and installation. I am also implementing a new oral history program that is designed to capture stories of Dayton's manufacturing and entrepreneurial past, present and future. One of my biggest challenges at the moment is to develop a disaster plan for the

two vastly different properties that we own... an urban warehouse storage facility and a 65-acre open-air museum with over thirty exhibit buildings.

Sometimes, I never know what a day might bring, but I have had some remarkable experiences recently, including:

-Hiking on the moraine above Carillon Park to explore possible hiking trails and wayside placements;

-Working with our National Park Service partners to document original Wright family furnishings that may someday be placed on exhibit at Hawthorn Hill;

-Spending a Sunday morning in July walking in a "parade of homes" as we relocated four

historic structures from the former Kettering-Moraine Museum to Carillon Park;

-And, one of the most exciting (and nerve wracking) experiences, performing collections care to a priceless piece of aviation history when I had to vacuum the 1905 Wright Flyer III.

My time in Wright State's Public History program taught me that this field allows for a career that is always interesting and filled with endless possibilities. My career so far has proven this to be so!

**Mary Oliver is a 1998 graduate of the Public History Program. Mary is the Director of Collections at Dayton History.**

## Statehood Day

A group of seven students joined Dawne in attending the 5th Annual Statehood Day in Columbus, Ohio on March 3, 2010. For those unfamiliar with Statehood Day, this is an event in which history advocates are given an opportunity to meet with state legislators and express the need for support in establishing and funding initiatives that promote the history of Ohio.

The students, along with Dawne and Gillian Hill (a WSU Public History alumna), enjoyed the opportunity to meet with state representatives to advocate specific legislative priorities and agendas.

This event gives students a chance to network with others in the field and learn the skills needed to lobby for the preservation of Ohio's rich history.



From left to right: Jeremy Feador, Ryan Qualls, Matthew Peek, Melissa Dalton, Beth Morgan, Robin Heise, and Rachael Bussert.

## Students at Work

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Miami Valley records managers, and various archival institutions. I have also learned much about conservation of archival material from a conservator the county consults. All told, I have gained invaluable information as to how a county archives works within the greater scope of area government.

**Lynley Culpepper—Project:** For my Capstone Project I am helping to design a museum room at the new Kroc Center in Dayton. Also working on this project are fellow PH students Lauryn Bayliff, Sandy Bialik, Jackie Frederick, and Angela Vanderbilt. The museum room will be located inside of Duncarrick, the former home of Katharine Kennedy Brown. Duncarrick is being restored to serve as the local head-

quarters of the Salvation Army. The exhibit will focus on the history of the mansion, and on the life and work of Katharine Kennedy Brown. Mrs. Brown was a prominent figure in the Republican 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 Special Collections and Archives. We have been researching

these collections and reproducing photographs in preparation for the grand opening in May. This has been a great opportunity to learn about exhibit design, while collaborating with other historians, the Salvation Army, and a professional exhibit design firm.

**Jeremy Feador—Project:** I am working to restore/conservate WSU's Rockfield Cemetery for

## Students at Work

(Continued from page 2)

my Capstone Project. I will start an initial clean up of the cemetery. This will include raking the debris, such as leaves, twigs, etc. After this is done I will probe the cemetery grounds to determine if any headstones or fragments have been lost under the dirt. If anything turns up, it will be documented. The following step will be documenting the location and the condition of each headstone still standing in the cemetery. This will include taking photographs, recording inscriptions, and noting iconography. The next step will include conserving the stones. Some stones will need to be re-leveled because if they are not corrected, they will crack in the near future. Other stones will need to be rejoined by using an epoxy to connect the pieces.

After this is all said and done, the stones will receive a cleaning with a solution that kills the biological growth on the outside. The solution is not harmful to the stone. I will also carefully chisel off the cement from headstones that was the result of a poorly done conservation job. This may reveal makers marks on the particular headstone. After this is done, I will record the changes as well as photograph each stone once more to include in a final report. If possible, I would like to have a ground penetrating radar scan of the cemetery. The ground penetrating radar can determine if there are any unmarked burials in the cemetery. It has been noted that 45 people are interred in the cemetery but there are no records to verify this "fact." I may also attend another cemetery workshop in the month of April.

The other part of the project is the research. I

*"Let the science and research of the historian find the fact and let his imagination and art make clear its significance."*

*- George Trevelyan*

will research the history of the cemetery and individuals interred in the grounds. This will include utilizing the local history information at WSU. This includes census, marriages, and other types of records. I will also travel to the Greene County Archives. This will hopefully turn up additional information.

A public event may be planned to celebrate the restoration of the cemetery. A cemetery report will be completed and turned into the archives for future reference. Each stone will have a particular section with all the information that will have been discovered.

### Welcome New Students!

Robin Heise—Ohio State University (B.A & M.A.)

Beth Morgan—University of Findlay

Kevin Parks—Miami University

Bonnie Roche—Bowling Green State University

**Welcome to the Program!**

## Alumni News

**Catherine Wilson (2008)**, has been appointed to the Civil War 150 Advisory Committee, Gov. Strickland's directive to commemorate the sesquicentennial of the Civil War in Ohio (2011-2015). The committee will provide guidance to the historical society on programs and activities to ensure a successful commemoration effort at both the state and local levels. Meetings will run quarterly, and members will serve until the end of 2015. **Chris Burton (2007)**, accepted the position of Executive Director at the Armstrong Air and Space Museum in Wapakoneta, Ohio. **Jennifer Budzek (2009)**, recently accepted a position as an Associate Investigator for the U.S Investigative Services (USIS). She will be conducting background checks and utilizing the skills learned in records management in the

Public History program. **Daniel Schlegel (2009)**, moved 1250 miles from Dayton to Snyder, Texas when he accepted a position as Director of the Scurry County Museum. Danny states the museum needs an updated website, a volunteer corps, and some educational programming, but he's up to the challenge. This position will give him the opportunity to demonstrate what he learned at Wright State and in his years of working for a Dayton area museum. **Bob Smith (1976)** After retiring from full-time work in 2005, Bob has returned (part-time) to work at Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio as the Records Manager/Archivist. **Rachael Bussert (2010)**, just accepted the position of Project Archivist at Northern Michigan University in Marquette, Michigan. Rachael begins May 1, 2010.

## Note from the Director: Dawne Dewey

Public History at Wright State University is fortunate to have amazing community support! Organizations and institutions in the Miami Valley have supported our students with many internship and project opportunities through the years. Our students have helped establish archives, design and install exhibits, write histories, conduct oral history interviews, inventory collections, serve as docents, process manuscript collections

and local government records, and develop community history programs. Dayton is rich in history and the entire community is a terrific classroom for public historians in the making.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of the following entities for their support: Afro American Museum and Cultural Center • American Jewish Archives (Cincinnati) • Beaver Creek Historical Society • Boonshoft Museum of Discovery •

Brethren Heritage Center • Cincinnati Museum Center • Clark County Heritage Center • Dayton Art Institute • Dayton History • Greene County Records Center and Archives • Jewish Federation of Greater Dayton • Learning Tree Farm • National Museum of the United States Air Force • Peace Museum • Salvation Army • Sinclair Community College • United Theological Seminary • University of Dayton.

<http://www.wright.edu/cola/Dept/hst/pubhst/index.html>



Doing Public History the "Wright"  
Way since 1974.

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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## Congratulations to our Winter 2010 Graduates!

Rachael Bussert

Mel Glover

Tiffany Knapp

**Best of Luck to All of You!**



Left to Right: Rachael Bussert, Mel Glover, and Tiffany Knapp