

Fall 2011

Public History Newsletter Fall 2011

Public History Concentration

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Public History Newsletter

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESERVING THE PAST: RESTORING HOWELL CEMETERY

During the summer of 2011, second year public history student, Misti Spillman restored a historic cemetery in Montra, OH. Howell Cemetery has some of the earliest settlers interred in their grounds. Arriving in the early 1880s, they established Jackson Township. Four veterans from the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, and the Civil War are also buried in the historic cemetery.

Before Misti began the restoration process, she attended a workshop that discussed and explained how to fix and reset stones. After attending the workshop, she cleaned the gravestones and the perimeter of the cemetery. She then mapped, outlined, reset, and fixed several broken stones. Misti fixed all six stones that were broken in half and reset three stones. She informed the community about the im-



Howell Cemetery with newly funded sign

portance of the site and helped raise money for the sign that now stands in front of the cemetery.

Misti explained that she learned a lot through the whole process. "I could not have accomplished anything without the help of the trustees of Jackson Center, the community, and my family.

The support they gave me was amazing! During the project, I had to give three presentations to the trustees. I had to write proposals on what I wanted to accomplish including, the funding for the sign. People donated items and money to help get Howell Cemetery restored. By educating the community, everyone became more aware of the importance of old cemeteries and how they need to be taken care of.

In this case it was more personal to me because I grew up in Montra and knew of Howell Cemetery almost all my life. Even though it was hard work I enjoyed every minute of it! I definitely found a new passion. I only wish I had more time to restore more cemeteries."

Misti's comprehensive research on Howell Cemetery might be published in the Ohio Genealogical Society journal.

INTERNING IN GREENE COUNTY



Greene County Records Center & Archives

Throughout the summer of 2011, Robin Heise, second year public history student, worked on her internship at the Greene County Records Center and Archive in Xenia, Ohio.

While interning Robin had the opportunity to attend local government, professional, and departmental meetings. She learned the daily operations of the archive, including how to properly care, store, and dispose of public records. Robin's primary project for her internship was writing a *(Continued on Page 4)*

A DAY IN THE LIFE ...

Karen Jean Hunt

DUKE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

It's raining in San Juan. That's what one gets, when attending the International Federation of Library Association (IFLA) annual conference in Puerto Rico during hurricane season. Today, I'm booked on a flight from Puerto Rico to the island of Dominica. While on the island, I will be conducting research for a new library collection policy on African Caribbean culture. Why would a librarian travel all the way to the Dominica for a collection policy? I'm a trained Public Historian. I need to be in the field.

My last morning in San Juan starts out like any other day, looking for my iPhone to check voicemail and email from work. Thanks to Wi-Fi and call forward, I've been able to stay connected on library trips from Alaska to Zimbabwe. This time, I'm traveling to Dominica (pronounced Dom-in-eek-a), midway along the Eastern Caribbean archipelago, just a few miles from Martinique to the south and Guadeloupe to the north. Christopher Columbus sighted the island on his second voyage, in 1493.



Karen Jean Hunt is a 1989 graduate of the Public History program. Karen is currently the librarian for African and African American Studies.

My adventure starts at the Melville Hall Airport, with a rather abrupt landing on a tarmac strip at ocean's end. After making my way through customs, and locating my driver, I settled in for the two hour car ride from the North of the island to the South. Drivers in Dominica stay to the left-hand side of the road. The roads are simultaneously steep, thin, and twisted, without protective siding to prevent cars from "flying" over the side. My destination, for all this trouble, is the Jungle Bay Resort and Spa. I know what you're thinking. What does a resort with a spa

have to do with research for a library?

Although public history often refers to the employment of historians outside of academia, my subject librarian duties provide the opportunity to use my public history training in academia. I've been able to develop collections, locate rare materials, and work with vendors from around the world. My secret is thinking like a public historian. For example, the ride from the Melville Airport to the resort became a two hour oral history interview on historical heritage and Dominican culture.

Once at the resort, my time was spent touring the nearby villages of Delices and Petit Savanne to learn about the Bay oil industry, one of the primary economic activities of Dominica's southeast. I was also able to join a guided tour retracing the footsteps of Dominica's "maroons" (runaway slaves). It is one thing to read about runaway slaves and quite another to hike the historic Perdu Temps trail. I was most moved by a visit to the Roseau market, the last authentic community market in the Eastern Caribbean. The Old Market, once used for slave-trading, contains a monument on the very site where slaves were sold.

Every time I travel for work, I use something from my public history degree. I believe it makes me a better researcher, curator, and subject librarian. Dominica was just a toe in the sand. With more than thirty major islands to choose from, I'm going to need to set sail again and fast. It's a dirty job, but someone has to do it. Yes, I'm a trained public historian and I get to travel the world in the name of research. -kj

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR: DAWNE DEWEY

Public History at WSU is stronger than ever and great things are being planned for the coming year. On March 2, 2012, we will hold the first WSU Graduate Public History Symposium in the Student Union. Students will showcase their research and capstone projects for the campus and community. Other plans include an online student

public history journal, fundraising for scholarships and programming, and more community projects. Watch for details about these exciting public history initiatives in 2012.

Happy holidays and best wishes for the coming new year.



First Year Public History Students

ALUMNI NEWS

Tanya Zanish-Belcher (1990) Associate Professor and Special Collections Department Head at Iowa State University was inducted as a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) during a ceremony on August 26, 2011, at ARCHIVES 360°, the 75th Annual Meeting of the Society of American Archivists in Chicago. The distinction of Fellow is the highest honor bestowed on individuals by SAA and is awarded for outstanding contributions to the archives profession.

Chris Burton (2007) and Andrea Green (2008) were married on October 22, 2011, at the Circleville Pumpkin Show in Circleville, OH.

Lonna McKinley (1996), Brett Stolle (2004), and Christina Douglass (2006) of the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force all successfully completed the ACA examination last August and are now Certified Archivists. "Our special thanks to Dawne Dewey who provided us a room in the Dunbar Library to take the exam at Wright State."

Matthew Peek (2010) has been hired as a full-time temporary Corporate Archivist/Historian for Airstream, Inc., in Jackson Center, Ohio. He is establishing an archives, library, and records manage-

ment program for the company and is beginning a corporate oral history program. In August, Matthew passed on a provisional status the Certified Archivist exam.

Tiffany O'Sheal (2007) "We welcomed our first child, Henry Parker O'Sheal, on 9/9/11. 7 lbs. 5 oz, 20 inches!"

Brittany Guerra (2011) is now the assistant registrar at Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, and now resides in Columbus. Brittany is in charge of their art/archives collection, loans, and the traveling exhibit Savage Gardens: The Real and Imaginary World of Carnivorous Plants.

Angela Vanderbilt (2011) was the Contract Archivist with The Anniversary Company from February, 2011 through September, 2011. "In this position, I was responsible for creating an archive repository from the ground-up for the law firm Thompson Hine, LLP located in Cleveland, Ohio. As the Archivist, I wrote the Collections Policy, assisted the firm in writing their mission statement for the archives, produced the formal processing plan, established a budget for materials and a schedule for completing the project. Then came the fun part - processing the entire

collection! . Lastly, I wrote finding aids for all three collections with complete indexes."

Lynn Hanson (2001) is an Octomom! She is now the proud mother of 8 chickens.

Rachel DeHart (2008) was married on July 16, 2011 to Bob Bilokonsky.

Liz Haeuptle (2011) recently accepted the position of Curator of Collections at the Elkhart County Historical Museum in Elkhart, IN.



The experience was very interesting, and everyone was wonderful to work with, both my contacts at The Anniversary Company and at Thompson Hine law firm. I drew heavily on the Advanced Archives class (thanks John and Lynda!) - Angela Vanderbilt

LOUISVILLE FIELD STUDY TRIP

During the first weekend of October, eight public history students traveled with Chris Wydman (Wright State University Records Manager) and Melodee Caudill (History Department Support Supervisor) to Louisville, KY.

On Saturday, the group visited Historic Locust Grove. Locust Grove is a fifty-five acre national historic landmark that once served as the home of General George Rogers Clark. The next stop was the Frazier History Mu-

seum. The Frazier interprets a 1,000 year history through armories from around the world. Saturday night the group had the opportunity to dine on the steamboat, "The Spirit of Jefferson."

Sunday, the group headed to Churchill Downs to visit the Kentucky Derby Museum. Interactive exhibits and a historic tour of the famous racetrack conveys the history of the Kentucky Derby.

Before heading back to Dayton,



the group visited the Muhammad Ali Center. The Center presents Ali's life through thought-provoking themes and emphasizes life lessons and values.

Pictured above: Public History students and Chris Wydman in front of the Spirit of Jefferson



Doing Public History the
"Wright" Way since 1974.

The mission of the Public History program at Wright State University is to prepare professionals who are well-grounded in knowledge of historical content, professional training, and hands-on experience.

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WELCOME NEW STUDENTS!

Michelle Anthony – Wright State University
Jenifer Baker – Miami University
Linda Collins – Wright State University
Jessica Cromer – University of Cincinnati
Lizzie Dardis – The Ohio State University
Seanne Finley – Ohio University
Adam Greaser – The Ohio State University
Lauren Hamer – Baldwin-Wallace College
Taylor Hoffman – Eastern Kentucky University
Casey Huegel – Grand Valley State University
Stephanie Keen – Bowling Green State University
Sarah Mikell – College of Wooster
Heather Myers – Wilmington College
Sarah Staples – B.A. Wichita State University; M. ED Antioch University Midwest

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Publication entitled *A Guide to Researching Your Greene County Historic Property*. This document provides descriptions of the various records that are available to the public through Greene County Offices. Contact information for these offices is also included in the document. Copies of the guide will be made available to the public, both in the archive and on their website.

Robin explained that her experience at the Greene County Records Center and Archive has given her a good understanding of the role of records management at the county level. "This experience has also given me a thorough understanding of the services that are available, in various Greene County departments, to assist researchers with historical property research. I feel that I have had a wonderful experience and gained valuable skills that will provide me with a solid foundation as I enter the job market in the next few months."

For Information About Greene County Records Center & Archive Visit: <http://www.co.greene.oh.us/Archives/>

WELCOME TO THE PROGRAM!