Public History Newsletter Spring 2013

Public History Concentration

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This spring, Public History students in the Historical Interpretation and Exhibits class designed and installed, *Impact of WWII* at the Boonshoft Museums of Discovery. They held an opening reception on Thursday, April 18.

Throughout the semester, the fourteen students in the course planned, researched, and designed the exhibit. The Instructor, Lynn Hanson, allowed the students to choose which job they would perform in putting the exhibit together. The positions were: Project Manager, Research and Label Copy, Photographs and Artifacts, Graphics, Event Planning, Media Relations and Budget, and Education.

The students soon got comfortable in their own positions and were quick to help each other when other groups became overwhelmed. This provided students with an understanding of the requirements for each position and instilled teamwork.

Seth Marshall (Research and Label Copy) helped secure artifacts for the exhibit. Kyle Yoho (Photographs and Artifacts) played a big role in editing the Label Copy. Kaitlyn Goss (Photographs and Artifacts) contributed to the

The exhibit explores the experiences of the peoples of the Pacific Islands and the impact that WWII had on their cultures. These experiences are illustrat-

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**In July 2012 I was hired as a Park Guide at Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park. From the beginning I was intrigued by a vacant space behind the Wright-Dunbar Interpretive Center, our visitor center located in the heart of the Wright-Dunbar Business District in Dayton. The chance to transform this underutilized area came last fall when Judi Hart, Education Specialist at Dayton Aviation, offered a grant writing opportunity after I had expressed interest in learning these skills.**

(Continued on Page 4)
I am honored to be featured in the segment. I have always enjoyed reading about what other fellow graduates are doing nationwide and am proud to be a part of the growing WSU Public History Alumni. I departed the program with skills and tools that I utilize everyday thanks to the wonderful SC&A staff, adjunct faculty, and History Dept. I can’t thank everyone enough!

I work as Curator of Collections at the Elkhart County Historical Museum (ECHM) and proudly “wear many hats” at my institution. My job responsibilities include roles such as collections manager, registrar, archivist, research assistant, volunteer manager, librarian, tour guide, or whatever else is needed depending on the day. My position is new and was jointly handled by staff in the past. In addition to the new structure at the ECHM, the current staff is only the second wave of trained professionals and we are working hard to bring the museum and its operations into the 21st century.

I am learning tremendously about the diversity of not-for-profit structures, partnerships, and the importance of governance. For example, I am employed by the Elkhart County Parks Department who operates the facility, but the collections are entrusted to the Elkhart County Historical Society (ECHS). The ECHM is located in north-central Indiana, what is referred to as Michiana, about five miles south of the Michigan border and 100 miles east of Chicago. The institution is unique locally in that it maintains a local history library, an archival repository, and houses a large three-dimensional collection. The museum has nine permanent and two rotating temporary exhibit galleries.

At the beginning of every week, the staff meets and reviews schedules, discusses upcoming programs, events, or special events, meetings, projects, and exhibits. From there my duties vary from day-to-day based on the upcoming needs. Despite the many hats I wear, processing and cataloging collections, rehousing, recataloging, meeting with donors, lenders, and borrowers, and making 2D and 3D objects accessible through exhibits, programs, and exhibits are my primary responsibilities.

Since arriving in 2011, I have been working on several major projects. I am working with the Elkhart Public Library who is currently adding our library catalog to their online catalog system. Additionally, the staff and I have been developing a new website (which is in progress), and I am continuously adding new finding aids to our small but growing number of collection guides (www.elkhartcountyhistory.org). Our most recent project that is coming to a close this week is the grand opening of our new local history library and special collections reading room. I was responsible for the move and organization of the primary and secondary sources. This project was the final step to the extension of a 2500 sq. ft. state-of-the-are storage annex.

I am very fortunate to be a part of a unique and prosperous organization. My responsibilities vary and no two days are the same,

Liz Haeuptle and with two representatives (kneeling) from the Indiana Historical Society’s Local History Department who are dropping off a traveling exhibit entitled Endangered Heritage. Liz is a 2011 graduate of the Public History Program.

but this also gives me the freedom to be creative and focus on projects of my choosing and areas of interest. I continue to learn and grow everyday with much thanks to WSU and the professional community of Dayton for helping me to achieve this step.

-Liz
Alumni News

Jeremy Katz (2012) started working as Archivist for the Cuba Family Archives at the Breman Jewish Heritage Museum in Atlanta, GA. Some of his duties include providing reference services, processing collections, identifying archival material to include in exhibits, and developing archives oriented programs.

Tricia McEldowney (2012) started a new job at the J.M. Smucker Company in Orrville, OH. Her new position title is: Assistant, Corporate Archives.

Misti Spillman (2012), who works for The Ohio Historical Society as a Central Ohio / Region 6 Local History Corps (AmeriCorps) Member, attended the Midwest Archives Conference. As a panelist, she presented at the “(Fateful) Lightning Round Panel: The Civil War in Archives” session.

Liz Haeuptle (2011), Curator of Collections at the Elkhart County Historical Museum, attended the Midwest Archives Conferences and participated, as a panelist, in the session: “Always Look A Gift Horse in the Mouth: Dealing with Problematic Gifts.”

Mel Glover (2009) was brought on as a full-time Curatorial Technician by the Clark County Heritage Society. He had previously been part-time.

Andrea Green Burton (2008) is the new Adult Services Coordinator for the Auglaize County Public District Library System, based in Wapakoneta, OH. Her main responsibility is a new, county-wide programming initiative for adults.

Chris and Andrea Burton (2007 and 2008) welcomed their second daughter, Laurel Marye, on December 10, 2012, at Miami Valley Hospital. Her big sister, Shiloh, is 2 1/2.

Collette Hill-McDonough (2006) was brought on as an employee by the Kettering Foundation. She had previously been a contractor.

Mark Benbow (1983) was granted tenure at Marymount University. He teaches US History and Public History. He has been working at Marymount University since 2007.

Note From the Director: Dawne Dewey

Congratulations and farewell to our Spring 2013 graduates! It was great to see you walk forward to accept your diplomas on Saturday at the Nutter Center. Thank you to Sarah “Sam” Mikell for all her hard work this year being my GA. You will be missed! And thank you to all of the public history faculty who worked so hard to make the first year of semesters a success. We survived! As you can see by the stories in this newsletter, our students and alumni are doing some pretty amazing things. We will celebrate this success with a 40th anniversary celebration in 2014. The date and details will be announced soon. Have a great summer everyone!

“Peeps in Flight” Orville and Wilbur wish you a happy spring!
Grant writing is an essential skill for public historians and I am grateful for these learning opportunities early in my career. It demands focused, well-written arguments, and the creativity to develop worthwhile projects. I have learned to concisely communicate broad ideas to community members and supervisors in order to acquire letters of support. This will be an exciting year at the park, and I look forward to a busy summer coordinating with teachers, art professionals, and outdoor specialists to make this project a reality. I would like to thank Judi Hart for serving as a supportive mentor during this process. In March 2013 I wrote another grant titled “From Bike to Flight: Riding the World’s First Airfield.” The park was awarded $6,880 from the National Park Foundation for this project.

The experiences of the American soldiers, stationed in the Pacific, have been considered alongside those of the Islanders, to create an exhibit that is both thoughtful and profound.

The artifacts and images used in the exhibit come from all over. The students collaborated with the Cincinnati Museum Center, the Clark County Historical Society, the Ohio Historical Society, the Ohio National Guard, and the Wright State University Special Collections and Archives. From uniforms and weapons to stuffed birds and lava bombs, the artifacts in the exhibit tell the story of the impact of World War II on the Pacific Islands.

Sarah Aisenbrey reflected on her experience: “The experience of setting up an exhibit was one of the most challenging in my career to date, but it was also one of the most rewarding. I was able to recognize the skills of my colleagues and let them shine.. Lynn Hanson was a great help and none of it would have been possible without her!”

Graphics and Images are used throughout

Setting up for the exhibit opening

Public History Skills at Work: Casey’s Grant Writing Experiences (Continued from Page 1)

Inspired by Dayton’s appreciation for the arts and the rich feeling of community in this city, I envisioned the unused urban parcel transforming into a community space with art, flowers, and benches for public enjoyment. This idea came to fruition in the form of a grant titled “From Alley to Gallery: A Youth Art Experience in Dayton, Ohio.”

The grant focused on providing a holistic arts experience for Dayton Public Schools’ students, including field trips and art supplies to create original pieces for exhibition in the proposed art space. In addition, the grant asked to fund the beautification of the area. The National Park Foundation awarded Dayton Aviation $10,825 in the form of an Impact Grant to implement the project.

Casey Huegel will graduate in December of 2013

Impact of WWII (Continued from Page 1)

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2013 Public History Graduate Symposium
Wright in Your Own Backyard: Exploring and Presenting Controversy in Public History

Carrying on the tradition, the students made the 2nd Annual Public History Symposium a great success! The Symposium is very much a student project. It is planned by students, staffed by students, and features student presentations and posters. The event gives students a chance to practice their public speaking skills while showing of their accomplishments in the program.

Working with Dawne Dewey and the National Aviation Heritage Alliance (NAHA), the student planning committee was able to secure the Senior Curator of Aeronautics at the National Air and Space Museum (Smithsonian Institution), Dr. Tom Crouch, as keynote speaker. In his address, Dr. Crouch discusses his own experiences with displaying controversial material in a museum setting. After his talk, Dr. Crouch spent time mingling with the audience and giving advice to students.

Ten students presented their work in three panel sessions and one poster session. These sessions, covering Education and Exhibits, The Politics of People: Reconsidering Historical Significance, and Cultural History: Media in a Changing World, were moderated by community professionals. A second guest speaker, Mark Holbrook, gave a theatrical performance on Civil War photography as Matthew Brady.

The event was well attended and supported by the community. Additional support came from the College of Liberal Arts—Dean’s Office and the History Department at Wright State University.

Spring Field

Six students, led by adjunct instructor, Chris Wydman, spent a weekend discovering the history of Pittsburgh. Highlights of the trip were the behind the scenes tours at The Heinz History Center Museum, the Heinz History Center Archives. The group also took the Duquesne Incline up to Mt. Washington, and visited the For Pitt History Museum, Fort Pitt Blockhouse, and the Andy Warhol Museum.

Student Awards and Accomplishments

Sarah Mikell—Received the School of Graduate Studies Excellence Award for Outstanding Graduate Student in the Public History Program.

Casey Huegel—was awarded Outstanding History Department Graduate Student by the College of Liberal Arts.

Graduate Retention Scholarship Awards were received by Jessica Cromer, Casey Huegel, and Kyle Pitzer.

Phi Alpha Theta Inductees: Linda Collins, Jessica Cromer, Seanne Finley, Adam Greaser, Taylor Hoffman, Stephanie Keen, Victoria Penno, Karis Raeburn.

Dr. Tom Crouch

Symposium Committee: Linda Collins, Kaitlyn Goss, Sarah Mikell, Dawne Dewey, Adam Greaser, Kyle Yoho (not pictured)
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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Dawne Dewey
Director, Public History Program

Sarah Mikell
Public History Graduate Assistant, Newsletter Editor

C o n g r a t u l a t i o n s
2 0 1 3 S p r i n g G r a d u a t e s

Linda Collins
Elizabeth Dardis
Kasey Eichensehr
Seanne Finley
Adam Greaser (Summer)
Lauren Hamer
Taylor Hoffman (Summer)
Stephanie Keen
Diana Mercer (December, 2012)
Sarah Mikell (Summer)
Noel Rihm
Leona Sargent (Museum Certificate)
Sarah Staples (Archive Certificate)

Left to Right: