



NATIONAL COUNCIL
ON PUBLIC HISTORY

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Public History News

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Introducing the NPS

A quarterly publication
of the **National Council on
Public History** in cooperation with
the Department of History,
Indiana University Purdue
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Robert Weible, Past President

Patrick Moore,
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John Dichtl,
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LONG RANGE PLANNING FOR NCPH

by Bill Bryans
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I write this having just returned from several days in Indianapolis, first at a meeting of the Long Range Planning Committee followed by the annual fall gathering of the Board of Directors. Both engendered interesting and important conversations about the very nature

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

of public history and what role NCPH should play in the field. Allow me to share with you my impressions of these dialogues, and I stress these are my impressions alone.

Over a day and a half, the Long Range Planning Committee began outlining the course NCPH will take in the next five years. An attempt to fashion a new mission statement for the organization occupied an entire afternoon. Mission statements, by definition, seek to convey succinctly an organization's reason for being, what it does, and who it serves. A great deal of careful phrasing, often the result of thoughtful discussion, went into a process so challenging that the exact wording has yet to be finalized. Yet, all agreed on three tenets that should embody NCPH's mission.



Long Range Planning Committee members—Dee Harris (Mid-America Arts Alliance), Dwight Pitcaithley (New Mexico State University), and Brian Martin (History Associates Incorporated)—at work in Indianapolis, November 3.

The first is a belief that the discipline of history has importance and value to all of society. In other words, history should be a central part of our civic culture. Second, NCPH should promote this societal role for history by serving the practitioners of history, especially those whose work reaches the general public. This, of course, includes NCPH members, but others as well. Finally, NCPH also should promote an appreciation and understanding of history among the general public.

> continued on page 2



**MARK YOUR CALENDAR
FOR THE 2007
NCPH ANNUAL MEETING**

April 12-15, 2007
Santa Fé, New Mexico

Many Histories, Many Peoples—Common Ground?

LONG RANGE PLANNING

> continued from page 1



Top left - Long Range Planning Committee members, Bill Bryans, Bob Weible, Sharon Babaian, Amy Wilson, and Marianne Babal.

Top right - Board of Directors members Emily Greenwald and Randy Bergstrom.

Lower left - NCPH Program Manager Sarah Younker-Koeppel and Board of Directors members Ann McCleary, Marla Miller, Bob Weyeneth, Marianne Babal, and Steve Lubar.

That all agreed on these three core beliefs is hardly surprising. They lay at the heart of what we think of as public history. Still, crafting a short, meaningful statement that includes them is easier said than done. In the next couple of months, the Long Range Planning Committee will be finalizing a draft of the mission and proposing the goals and objectives to direct NCPH's future.

When the board met after the Long Range Planning deliberations, one of its first tasks was to consider the latter's draft mission statement. Members offered reactions and suggestions, but all agreed on the three core values hammered out the day before. The board then addressed a charge proposed by Executive Director John Dichtl, namely to define "public history." Going back to his interview for the position, John argued that NCPH does not do an adequate job in defining for a general audience what this term means. He urged NCPH to articulate a concise definition that explains to all what public history is and disseminate it, especially through our web site. After all, would you not expect to find such a definition available from an organization calling itself the National Council on Public History? Of course you would.

So, for the better part of a morning, the board attempted to come up with a definition. The exercise proved similar to the planning committee's efforts to draft a mission statement. Both require capturing the essence of what public history means, why it is important, and, by extension, why NCPH is important. One theme that the board mulled over, both of the draft mission statement and a definition for "public history," was where NCPH stands, quite literally, between history practitioners and the publics they serve. Most significantly, the board wrestled with the prospect of which of the two might be the priority for NCPH. No one wants to neglect one at the expense of the other, but we do need to find balance between the two. That will challenge the board members as they work on articulating a working definition for "public history" over the next few months.

We still have a long range plan to complete and "public history" remains to be defined, but at these meetings, issues that bear fundamentally on NCPH and what it does were seriously and deliberately confronted. This is something, I believe, we need to do regularly.

Finally, your input on these efforts is needed. Once the long range plan is drafted, it will be made available to the membership for comment and suggestion in time to have it approved at the business meeting in Santa Fé. If you are interested in weighing in on how to define "public history," I invite you to visit Wikipedia on the web. The board agreed to post its working definition there and see what discussion, reaction, and editing it evokes. So, please exercise your shared authority and participate in these important endeavors.

TREASURES OF AMERICAN HISTORY

by Peter Liebhold

On Labor Day, 2006, the National Museum of American History (NMAH) closed to the public as the museum embarked on a major renovation of its forty-year-old building. Concerned that visitors, some of whom travel to Washington, DC, for a once-in-a-life-time visit, would be disappointed if they did not get to see NMAH's most-prized artifacts, the museum decided to create a treasures exhibition. Two questions immediately became apparent—where would the exhibition be displayed and what should be in the proposed show?

Locating an appropriate Washington, DC, venue was not an easy task. The exhibition team looked at a number of spaces in three different museums but scheduling conflicts, security concerns, and conservation issues finally led the team to accept the National Air and Space Museum's generous offer to use its fine art gallery. The 5,000 square feet of space and its location in the nation's most-visited museum meant that numerous individuals would have an opportunity to see such important artifacts as the desk on which Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence and the ruby red slippers that Judy Garland wore during the filming of the *Wizard of Oz*.

The next task was to determine the content of the show. Curators Katy Kendrick and Peter Liebhold sought to create an exhibition that would connect visitors to compelling stories from the American past and represent the breadth of NMAH collections. We wanted an engaging mix of the famous, the familiar, and the unexpected while conveying the significance of each object as a treasure of American history.

Following a consultative approach, Katy and Peter asked their peers for object suggestions, examined numerous lists of the museum's most



National Museum of American History
Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution.



National Air and Space Museum
Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution.

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popular artifacts, and delved into the collections for important artifacts not recently on display. Dividing the exhibition into four major sections, the curators selected 150 objects ranging from Jacqueline Kennedy's inaugural gown to Edison's first demonstration light bulb.

The first section, *Creativity and Innovation*, includes treasures of scientific discovery, technological invention, and artistic creation. Stories and objects include the *Wizard of Oz*, *Birth of Telecommunication*, *the Human Machine*, *Reinventing Daily Life*, *Industrial Innovations*, *Creative Masterpieces*, and *Scientific Insights*.

Biography, the next section, focuses on the lives of people who made history. Drawn from the worlds of politics, business, science, sports, arts, and entertainment, these objects represent 23 individuals whose experiences and achievements earned them a place in the national spotlight. Each artifact displayed in this section is accompanied by a portrait of the individual, so the connection between person and object is immediately clear.

The third section, *National Challenges*, is more like a traditional museum exhibition. Here we present artifacts that document major struggles, conflicts, and challenges that have shaped American history. This section, more chronologically oriented than the others, is structured around particular episodes and comprised mainly of artifacts that connect to specific moments in time. Stories include *the American Revolution*, *Slavery*, *Western Expansion*, *The Civil War*, *Women's Suffrage*, *The Great Depression and World War II*, *Civil Rights*, and *AIDS*.

In the final section, *American Identity*, we present artifacts that reflect how people have defined and expressed themselves as individuals, members of communities, and as Americans. The subsections include *Childhood Treasures*, *American Music*, *Expressions of Faith*, *American Television*, *a Signature Piece*, *American Hats*, and *Home Sweet Home*.

Treasures of American History opened November 17, 2006, at the National Air and Space Museum. The exhibit will run through May of 2008 when the objects will be moved back to the NMAH in preparation for the July reopening of the building. For additional information on the exhibition or the museum's renovation project please visit our website at <www.americanhistory.si.edu>.

Peter Liebhold is Chair of the Division of Work and Industry at the National Museum of American History.



**BALLOTS FOR
THE 2007
NCPH ELECTION
ARE COMING IN
JANUARY!**

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK



by John Dichtl
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Two dozen individuals volunteered their time to participate in NCPH planning meetings last month. Members of the Board of Directors, the Editorial Board, and the Long Range Planning Committee paid their way to Indianapolis and persevered through hours of intense discussion about the future direction of the organization. As noted elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter, each group considered questions at the heart of public history and the work and common interests of public historians. I mention this to underscore three points. NCPH benefits immensely from the active contributions of its members. Our strategic planning is an intellectually invigorating process. And the organization is in strong shape, ready for new challenges.

Membership

Individual membership numbers are increasing and the total number of individual members, 992 in October, is a bit higher than it has been at the same time in recent years. Institutional subscriptions are doing well at 608. Currently NCPH individual membership is 24 percent students, 7 percent new professionals, and 69 percent regular members. Of the 1,600 individual members and institutional subscribers in countries other than the United States there are 66 in Canada, 21 in Australia, 9 in Western Europe, 7 in New Zealand, and 4 in Asia.

Publications

At the beginning of October, Randy Bergstrom (University of California Santa Barbara) was appointed the new editor of *The Public Historian*. He had been serving as interim editor since July 1, 2006, so his five year term will run through July 1, 2011. Randy led his first editorial board meeting at the beginning of November and is pursuing multiple article and special issue ideas.

There have been many improvements, both visual and regarding content, to the NCPH web site. We have upgraded the job listings and consultants pages, integrated the site with our new membership database, and begun adding features, such as online registration for the annual meeting. The Curriculum and Training Committee is creating new resources to be deployed on the site in the next few months, including best practices for graduate public history programs and a list of expert individuals willing to review these programs. We are working on other additions and need to know what resources and services you would like to see. I am particularly interested in hearing from consultants, consulting firms, public historians beginning their careers, and independent historians.

Annual Meetings

The joint 2006 Annual Meeting in Washington, DC, with OAH was a financial success for NCPH. NCPH attendance was approximately 245 and we realized a net income of \$13,900. The 2007 meeting in Santa Fe will include several core plenary events as well as nearly twice as many sessions as in past years. (We received 90 proposals and are planning for approximately 60 sessions.) Our conference will be centered at the La Fonda Hotel, with extra meeting space nearby in the Inn at Loretto and a block of substantially reduced-rate rooms for students at the Sage Inn. The 2008 Program Committee will soon release the theme and Call for Presentations for the meeting in Louisville. In 2009, NCPH will meet in Providence, RI.

Endowment Campaign

Annual investment earnings on the Endowment will help fund expanded member services and other activities outlined in the Challenge Grant proposal and taking sharper definition in the new Long Range Plan. But NCPH has \$1,000 left to raise to meet a \$30,000 Challenge Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. We are only a handful of contributions away from the amount necessary to unlock the NEH matching grants. Please consider a tax-deductible donation to NCPH today.



THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PUBLIC HISTORY

The National Council on Public History makes the public aware of the value, uses, and pleasures of history; advises historians about their public responsibilities; helps students prepare for careers in public history; and provides a forum for historians engaged in historical activities in the public realm.

Individual membership orders, changes of address, renewals, and business correspondence should be addressed to

National Council on Public History, 327 Cavanaugh Hall – IUPUI, 425 University Blvd., Indianapolis, IN 46202-5140. E-mail: ncph@iupui.edu. Tel: 317-274-2716. New members are welcome. Join online or renew at www.ncph.org.

Institutional subscription orders, changes of address, and business correspondence should be addressed to Journals and Digital Publishing Division, University of California Press, 2000 Center St., Ste. 303, Berkeley, CA 94704-1223. Or visit < www.ucpress.edu >

We welcome submissions to *Public History News* sent to John Dichtl, Editor, at the above address. Articles 400-800 words in length; announcements and bulletin items up to 100 words. NCPH reserves the right to reject material that is not consistent with the goals and purposes of the organization.

www.ncph.org

CENTRE FOR ORAL HISTORY AND DIGITAL STORYTELLING

by Steve High
shigh@alcor.concordia.ca

It is an exciting time to be a public historian in Canada. Everywhere you turn these days there is a new public history center, program, web site, conference, or research project popping up. In the past year, for example, the Public History Working Group of the Canadian Historical Association has been reborn and now operates an active listserv (Paul Litt, Carleton). For its part, a newly resurgent Canadian Oral History Association organized the first national oral history conference in decades and has launched a web site that features past issues of the Oral History Forum and an online database of oral history recordings in Canadian archives (Nolan Reilly, Winnipeg, www.canoha.ca).

Public history research and teaching has also experienced something of a renaissance. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) has recently funded a number of large collaborative public history projects including “The Canadians and their Pasts” (Jocelyn Letourneau, Laval), “Reconnecting with the History of Labour in New Brunswick: Historical Perspectives on Contemporary Issues” (David Frank, New Brunswick), “Life Stories of Montrealers Displaced by War, Genocide and Other Human Rights Abuses” (Steven High, Concordia), and “Laboratoire d’histoire et de patrimoine de Montréal” (Joanne Burgess, Université de Québec à Montréal). For their part, university students wishing to specialize in public history have a growing number of programs from which to choose. At present, there are Master’s level programs at Université de Québec à Montréal, Carleton, Western, and Waterloo. Other universities, such as my own Concordia University, offer standard history degrees, but encourage graduate students to specialize in oral/public history. In September 2006, Concordia launched Canada’s first undergraduate program in public history.

It is in this exciting environment then that Concordia University’s Department of History received a \$400,000 grant from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation and Quebec’s Ministry of Education to create the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling—Canada’s first digital oral history research laboratory. When renovations are completed



Steven High, left and students from his Oral History class at Concordia University.

“It is an exciting time to be a public historian in Canada. Everywhere you turn these days there is a new public history center, program, web site, conference, or research project popping up.”

on the permanent space, the center will consist of a digital history lab, an oral history research lab as well as a video conferencing room, a “smart room” equipped with 16 computers for training workshops, an interview studio, an archive, and several video editing rooms. The center houses facilities for digital video and audio cataloging and editing as well as the production of DVDs, CD media, and audio cassettes for research purposes.

In collaboration with Michael Frisch at the University at Buffalo, The State University of New York, the CFI grant is also paying for the construction of searchable databases of videotaped oral history interviews—another

first in Canada. New digital tools have appeared recently that offer direct access to the audio and video content of oral history collections.

The broader implications of these changes to the theory and practice of oral history are many. First, and foremost, digital oral history promises a move away from transcription. In former times, recorded oral interviews were quickly transcribed and the original audio or visual source was either set aside or discarded altogether. With the loss of the orality of the source at such an early stage, the power of oral history to put a face and a name to history was muted. Analogue audio and visual cassettes were ponderous to use and, as a result, underutilized. Museums and archives have oral history collections that collect dust on shelves or in cabinets. Digital technologies are opening up new nonlinear ways to access and analyze the audio or video source directly. In the creation of searchable databases of recorded life stories and oral histories, the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling will operate on this “software frontier.”

Steve High is the Canada Research Chair in Public History at Concordia University.

NCPH BOARD OF DIRECTORS FALL MEETING

On Saturday, November 4, 2006, the NCPH Board of Directors convened in Indianapolis, IN, and took the following actions:

- > Approved the Minutes of the Spring 2006 Board Meeting in Washington, DC.
- > Authorized the secretary/treasurer and the executive director, in consultation with the Finance Committee, to transfer funds from the organization's savings account to its endowment accounts invested with The Vanguard Group.
- > Directed the Finance Committee to propose in time for the spring meeting a new policy for investing and managing NCPH funds.
- > Accepted the financial audit performed by Gauthier & Kimmerling, LLC, which found the organization's finances and financial policies to be in good order.
- > Discussed the draft long range plan and commended the work of the Long Range Planning Committee, which had met for two days in Indianapolis immediately prior to the Board of Directors.
- > Drafted a brief definition of public history, which will be used in long range planning and in the organization's web site, publications, and promotional materials. Agreed to post the working definition on Wikipedia to invite feedback and to present it to the membership in the March issue of *Public History News* for additional discussion.
- > Selected Providence, RI, as the site for the 2009 NCPH Annual Meeting.
- > Committed funds for a major redesign of the NCPH web site.
- > Charged the Executive Committee with recognizing the exceptional work that NCPH Program Manager Sarah Younker-Koeppel has accomplished in the past several months.

> Charged the Executive and Finance Committees to prepare a plan for using the earned income on the NCPH Endowment in support of expanded membership services and other activities already outlined in the NEH Challenge Grant proposal and to be outlined in the new long range plan.

> Thanked Bruce Craig for his years of exemplary service to the historical profession as executive director of the National Coalition for History.

> Thanked Hal Rothman for his extraordinary contributions to the NCPH and the field of public history.

In between its spring and fall meetings the NCPH Board of Directors took the following actions via email discussions:

> Approved the appointment of Donna Neary to be the Board Representative on the Executive Committee.

> Decided that NCPH should send a letter to the leaders of the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee and its Transportation/Treasury Appropriations Subcommittee requesting increased funding for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

> Authorized the NCPH Executive Committee to take action on advocacy issues that arise between the meetings of the full board.

> Agreed that NCPH should adopt the American Association for State and Local History's proposed resolution to join the Federal Formula Grant Coalition to seek federal formula grant funding for museums.

> Agreed to endorse the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) 1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* and to ask that NCPH be added as a signatory.

> Approved the appointment of Randy Bergstrom, University of California Santa Barbara, as the next editor of *The Public Historian*.

NCPH AWARDS



—THE BEST IN
PUBLIC HISTORY

The National Council on Public History invites applications and nominations for the following:

NEW PROFESSIONAL TRAVEL AWARDS

Two \$500 travel grants to the annual meeting for individuals working within the public history profession less than three years. Submissions are due by January 5, 2007.

G. WESLEY JOHNSON AWARD

\$250.00 cash award and framed certificate for the best article in *The Public Historian* in the calendar year. Submissions are due by January 5, 2007.

NCPH STUDENT PROJECT AWARD

\$500.00 travel grant to help underwrite attendance at the NCPH annual meeting in Santa Fe, NM. Submissions are due by January 5, 2007.

MICHAEL C. ROBINSON PRIZE FOR HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

\$500 cash award and a certificate for historical studies that contribute directly to the formation of public policy. Submissions are due by January 5, 2007.

Please see full details at
www.ncph.org/awards.html

WHITHER *THE PUBLIC HISTORIAN*? A NEW EDITOR'S VIEW

by Randy Bergstrom
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We are in the midst of election season, you reading this in its aftermath, me writing in its run-up. My side of the season is full of hope, pitches, and punditry, yours full of triumph, spin, and ... punditry. What links us beyond the event, what continues across the season (and indeed, all the calendar around), are the pundits' pronouncements on what-it-all-means. As historical researcher-interpreters you may be dismissive of the easy, timeless proclamations you hear across these months. There is, for one thing, a big difference we recognize as historians between prognostication prior to the event and analysis after. We know, too, that even after the event there is less predictability in it than punditry's certainty-slingers see. As impossible as it is to foretell the future, public historians have learned that it is almost as difficult to predict what will become of "the past." Those qualities make punditry and its purposes suspect; their intent seems to be more to affect the event and its understanding than to reflect it.

You might read this observation prudently as a reminder for professional restraint and humility before the uncertainty of the past, lest you become indistinguishable from the media mavens. After all, we like the righteous position of contrasting what it is that we do to what it is that those "punditainers" do. But as the incoming editor of your journal, *The Public Historian*, let me take this inaugural moment to urge just the opposite: that as history's public practitioners you acknowledge and welcome the purpose of the contemporary commentator to not only present the past but to shape it. More accurately, I would invite you to *continue* to shape it, as public historians



Randy Bergstrom, University of California Santa Barbara.

have long been doing. And most particularly and self-interestedly, I would urge that as you do it, you recognize, analyze, and report your shaping of the past through *The Public Historian*.

The Public Historian has been the profession's journal of record for nearly three decades, the primary place for reporting and reviewing public history's leading developments. As public historians have shaped the past and its understanding, the journal has shaped the profession and its understanding of the processes by which it shapes the past. Through the journal, we have made clear to our various audiences that the professional pursuit of the past is a continual process, rigorous, inquiring, deliberated, shared, debated, and critically attended. We owe a hearty round of thanks to departing editors Mary Hancock and Ann Plane, and departing reviews editor Lisa Jacobson, for their part in this, for all that the journal has achieved under their creative direction. Together with *TPH*'s editorial board members, authors, peer

reviewers, special issue editors, and sharp eyed readers, Mary, Ann, and Lisa have directed the journal and profession to a richer, more diverse, more inclusive, and more reflective practice of history.

My aim as editor will be simply to carry forward that good work. With the continuing managing editorial prowess of Lindsey Reed and new Review Editor Lee Simpson, I look forward to probing further in the long-established precincts of public history while prospecting new practices and places. It will remain our purpose to publish a selection of the exemplary work that members submit to keep fresh our sense of what public historians do and ought to do. At the same time we will actively seek pieces on particular matters including for starters: public history projects, practices, and movements elsewhere on the planet (building on extensive work by outgoing editors Hancock and Plane); public history work by and treating underrepresented peoples; the development and vitality of public history institutions, including the building, maintenance, and challenges of organizations such as museums and preservation sites, state and national programs, history societies, and university public history programs; issues of ownership in public history involving historians' authority, control, stewardship, and public responsibilities; and theoretical and methodological turns in history and neighboring disciplines.

While that could be enough to keep the journal busy, you undoubtedly have other good ideas that would direct public history's future in equally important ways. In the spirit of this election season, forego restraint and pundificate. We will look forward to hearing your professional opinions.

NCPH WELCOMES THE NEW REVIEW EDITOR TO *THE PUBLIC HISTORIAN*



Lee Simpson is an assistant professor and the director of the public history program at the California State University Sacramento Department of History. She began her term as review editor with the Presidential Libraries special issue of the journal. NCPH welcomes her and thanks Lisa Jacobson, the outgoing review editor, and Mary Hancock and Ann Plane, the former coeditors of the journal, for their dedicated service and expansive view of the practice of public history.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

David Neufeld, Chair

The NCPH Board of Directors approved a draft Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct at their meeting in Washington, DC, this spring. It accepted the committee's recommendation to post the draft code on the NCPH web site for a period of eight months (May-December 2006) and solicit comments via the H-Public list serve and the *Public History News*. Notices were posted on H-Public in spring and fall and a notice appeared in the May issue of *Public History News*. All comments received will be considered by the committee and the final Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct will be presented to the board for approval at the spring 2007 meeting.

CONSULTANTS COMMITTEE

Donna Neary, Chair

The main goal of this committee is to raise the profile of this segment of our membership. Members of the committee will look for opportunities of preparing stories for submission to the newsletter and encourage submissions to *The Public Historian*. Chris Heidenrich has chosen to work on the charge to update the list of consultants for the NCPH website to include links where appropriate. Emily Greenwald will take over as chair and will work on annual meeting programming to encourage consultant's involvement. Christopher Clarke is working with Rose Diaz, 2007 Program Committee chair, to organize a breakfast meeting for consultants at the conference in Santa Fe. Donna Neary will work on draft guidelines for a Consultant's Award and a draft of the new consultant's travel prize, both for consideration at the

spring 2007 Board of Directors meeting. Heather Lee Miller has agreed to work on marketing the NCPH to consultants and updating the consultants' list on the web site.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Amy H. Wilson and Dee A. Harris, Cochairs

The membership committee conducted a survey of NCPH members and has presented its findings, based on an initial analysis by committee member Barbara Stokes, to the Board of Directors. The board and the Long Range Planning Committee will use the report during the NCPH strategic planning process, which will then help lead to the development and design of new branding elements for NCPH in the coming year. In addition, the Membership Committee has been coordinating its efforts with the executive office to use the new membership database to keep track of membership statistics on a monthly basis. Committee member Jay Price is taking the lead in developing marketing plans for reaching academic departments and professional organizations that have a stake in public history. In October 2006 the committee began sending welcome emails to new members. Committee Member Stephen Light will work with the Local Arrangements Committee to plan an agenda for the New Professionals' Breakfast on Friday, April 13, at the 2007 Annual Meeting in Santa Fé.

Program Directors' Listserv

The NCPH Curriculum and Training Committee has started a discussion listserv for directors of graduate and undergraduate programs in public history. Send us an email at ncph@iupui.edu if you would like to join.

RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!

We are now accepting advertisements for the 2007 NCPH Annual Meeting *Program*, a great way to promote:

- Consulting firms and services
- Graduate programs in public history
- New publications in the field
- Upcoming conferences, symposiums, and exhibits
- Documentary films and other media
- Products and services for the research, writing, and presentation of history

Contact ncph@iupui.edu for details.



2007 NCPH ANNUAL MEETING

April 12-15, 2007

Santa Fé, New Mexico

Preregistration for the 2007 NCPH Annual Meeting opens December 1. Visit www.ncph.org for more information.

Don't forget to register online and reserve a room at the La Fonda Hotel!



by Bruce Craig
rbcraig@historycoalition.org

SOME PARTING THOUGHTS FROM CAPITOL HILL

As regular readers of this column are aware, at the end of December, after seven years, I will be departing the National Coalition for History (NCH) as the organization's executive director. This then will be my last regular column contribution to *Public History News*.

My wife Patricia and I are both looking forward to our new lives on Prince Edward Island, Canada. I am especially excited to be working with members of the University of Prince Edward Island history department in helping to design what may well develop into one of the few undergraduate programs in Public Historical Studies in North America.

Throughout much of my tenure at the helm of the NCH, both Congress and the White House have been supportive of history in general and American history in particular. For example, during the last seven years or so the National Endowment for the Humanities has been implementing its "We the People" initiative, which has brought renewed vitality to history as a vital segment of the broader humanities community. In the Department of Education, Senator Robert C. Byrd's "Teaching American History" grants initiative (in excess of a half billion dollars has gone to this program now) has done much to boost the teaching of "traditional American history" in our elementary and secondary schools. And with Allen Weinstein serving as Archivist of the United States, well, the National Archives could not be in better hands.

Of course, not all the news has been good. For example, year after year the White House has proposed to zero out all funding for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. As a consequence, every year the NCH and a few of its member organizations must make the case to Congress to convince members that some level of funding needs to go to this small but important NARA program office. The Higher Education Act—which holds so much promise of generating

The Executive Committee of the National Coalition for History has appointed **Leland J. White** to replace Bruce Craig as NCH executive director. White is currently director of government relations for the National Society of Professional Engineers. An attorney with nearly twenty years experience in government relations with membership associations, as well as several years in government as a legislative specialist, White also earned an MA in history from George Mason University. White's tenure begins in January 2007.

yet another pool of funds for history (training and education for new teachers of history)—was relegated to a back burner by the former Republican majority. Just weeks ago, Congress passed its third extension of the Act, and we have yet to see reauthorization hearings in both houses of Congress address the important issues that need to be discussed. And then there is the "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) Act – the centerpiece of the Bush administration's education program. Perhaps the NCLB legislation has made some progress in improving students' reading, math, and science skills but it has certainly done little if anything to improve the teaching of history in the public school system.

My years on Capitol Hill have taught me one truism—no matter who is in charge, life on Capitol Hill goes on. Members come, members go—new, eager, young staffers fill in behind retiring pros. My departure this next month brings this aspect of my career (nearly 25 years of working on Capitol Hill) as a public historian to a close. It has been a memorable and satisfying experience, but frankly I am glad to be settling into what I hope will prove to be a less hectic but equally rewarding lifestyle.

BOMAR CONFIRMED AS PARK SERVICE DIRECTOR



The Senate has confirmed Mary Bomar as the new director of the National Park Service (NPS) to replace Fran Mainella, who announced her resignation in July 2005. Bomar, born in England, became a U.S. citizen in 1977 and has worked for seventeen years with NPS. She served as acting superintendent at Rocky Mountain National Park and as superintendent at the Oklahoma City National Memorial. Since July 2005, she has been Northeast Regional Director. Like several of her predecessors, Bomar brings to the position considerable knowledge and experience in managing historic sites. On behalf of the Policy Board of the National Coalition for History, we wish Mary Bomar well in all her future activities as head of the NPS.

WOODROW WILSON PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY ACT

On September 28, 2006, the House passed a bill "to authorize grants for contributions toward the establishment of the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library." Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) introduced the legislation (H.R. 4846), which in essence authorizes a future Congressional appropriation that directs the Archivist of the United States to make a grant to contribute funds toward the establishment of a private presidential museum—the Wilson Presidential Library in Staunton, VA, which is owned by the Wilson Library Foundation. The legislation "requires non-federal matching funds of at least double that of the grant" and stipulates that no grant funds can be used for the maintenance or operation of the library. In other words, while federal funds would be contributed, the library would not be made a part of the NARA-administered presidential library system. The legislation creates a precedent for what some would perhaps like to see—a new NARA-administered program of pass-through grants for private presidential libraries and museums.



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AWARDS, GRANTS, AND INTERNSHIPS

History News Network (HNN) seeks interns to work on internet journalism, editing, and graphics for a site which receives 300,000 visitors a month. Internships are six hours a week, with a minimum term of two quarters. Interns communicate with the editor through email and can work from home or the library. Internships are unpaid. Class credit can often be arranged. <<http://hnn.us/articles/9749.html>>

Numerous internships are available in **Smithsonian Institution** museums, research institutes, and offices. <http://intern.si.edu/internship_types_all.html>

National Air and Space Museum offers a variety of fellowships for predoctoral, postdoctoral, and non-academic researchers. Ranking factors that govern selection include the scholarly merits of the proposal, research and academic record of the applicant, potential use of museum collection and facilities, and availability of research staff to serve as advisors. Deadline is January 15, 2007. < <http://www.nasm.si.edu/getinvolved/fellow/index.cfm> >

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) invites applications for its 2006-07 Scholars in Residence Program. Provides support for up to eight weeks of full-time research manuscript and artifact collections maintained by a PHMC facility, including the state archives and museum in Harrisburg, or any of 25 historic sites and museums around the state. Open to all who are conducting research on Pennsylvania history and may be scheduled any time between May 1, 2006 to April 30, 2007. Stipends are awarded at the rate of \$375/wk. Info: Linda Shopes, (717) 772-3257; lshopes@state.pa.us; <www.phmc.state.pa.us>

Society for History in the Federal Government (SHFG) awards eight prizes annually to recognize and encourage excellence in the study of the history of the federal government. The Society hopes that the result will be increased appreciation of both the federal government's history and the efforts of those who, through a variety of methods and media, explore that history. Prizes presented at the Society's annual spring meeting in Washington, DC. <<http://www.shfg.org/towards.html>>



ABC-CLIO Online History Award of \$3,000 is offered biennially to developers of freely available and sustainable online history resources that are useful and innovative. The award is administered by the History Section of the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) of the American Library Association (ALA). Deadline is December 15, 2006. For complete information visit <http://www.ala.org/RUSATemplate.cfm?Section=rusaawards&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=135902>

CALLS FOR PAPERS, ARTICLES, PROPOSALS, AND PRESENTATIONS

New England Historical Association holds its 78th conference at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester on May 5, 2007. Proposed papers may be submitted by January 15 to the program chair. Contact Luci Fortunato, Bridgewater State College, History Department, Bridgewater, MA 02325; lfortunato@bridgew.edu or see www.wpi.edu/~jphanlan/NEHA

The 29th annual **North American Labor History Conference**, "Global Connections and Unfree Labor," October 18-20, 2007, invites proposals. Integration of public historians and community and labor activists into conference sessions, and use of differing session formats encouraged. Submit 1-2 page abstract and brief vita/bio statement for all participants by March 1, 2007, to Prof. Janine Lanza, Coordinator, North

American Labor History Conference, Dept. of History, 3094 Faculty Adm. Building, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI 48202; (313) 577-2525; Fax: (313) 577-6987; ao1605@wayne.edu. See <<http://www.clas.wayne.edu/unit-inner.asp?WebPageID=1085>>

Eighth Maritime Heritage Conference, Oct. 9-12, 2007, invites abstracts for individual papers (15-30 minutes in length) and session proposals (three to four papers in 75 minutes). Papers may address a specific subject or aspects of the broader themes of maritime history and culture. Deadline is June 1, 2007. Conference Program Chair, Kevin Sheehan librarian@sdmaritime.org, at The Maritime Museum of San Diego, 1492 North Harbor Drive, San Diego, CA 92101. Phone (619) 234-9153, ext. 118. Fax: (619) 234-8345. Website at <<http://www.sdmaritime.org/ContentPage.asp?ContentID=421>>

Preserving Aboriginal Heritage Symposium, Sept. 24-28, 2007, in Ottawa, Ontario (Canada). Aboriginal heritage and conservation needs in Canada; ways in which Aboriginal people and conservators can work together; respectful handling, storage, and exhibition of Aboriginal objects; care, conservation, and/or analysis of Aboriginal records and materials; and facilities planning and upgrading, preventive conservation, and risk assessment of collections. Papers, oral presentations, posters, demonstrations, workshops, or short courses welcome. Due January 15, 2007. Include type of contribution being proposed, title, 500-word summary, and author's contact info and one-paragraph biography. < http://www.cci-icc.gc.ca/symposium/callforcontributors_e.aspx >

The **American Association for History and Computing** invites papers for the 2007 Annual Conference, "Open Source History: Making History Public," to be held April 19-21, at Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island. Proposals for complete panels should include a chair and must include a 200-word abstract for each paper, along with a brief vita for each participant. Please include name, address, telephone number, and email address for each participant. Deadline: January 31, 2007. Electronic submissions are encouraged. Please direct submissions and inquiries to either: Aaron Marcavitch, President, AAHC, Phone: 508-325-6231, Email: aahc_providence@yahoo.com. < <http://theaahc.org/cfp.htm>>

CONFERENCES AND LECTURE SERIES

Western Association of Women Historians, 29th annual conference, May 4-6, 2007, San Diego, CA. The keynote speaker will be Asuncion Lavrin. Conference begins Friday morning and ends with the banquet on Saturday evening. <<http://www.wawh.org/2007conference.html>>

AAAHRP Fourth Annual Black History Conference, "The Black Experience: Presenting History's Hidden Pages (Previously Avoided, Dismissed, Forgotten, Submerged, or Unknown)" will be held February 3, 2007, at Seattle University, Seattle, WA. Early-bird registration is now open. <http://www.aaahrp.org/html/2007_conference_news.html>

The **American Historical Association** 121st Annual Meeting titled, *Unstable Subjects: Practicing History in Unsettled Times*, will be held January 4-7, 2007 in downtown Atlanta with events scheduled in the Hilton Atlanta (headquarters), Atlanta Marriott Marquis (co-headquarters), the Hyatt Regency Atlanta, and the Westin Peachtree Plaza Atlanta. Visit <<http://www.historians.org/annual/2007/index.cfm>> for more information.

Association of Living History, Farm, and Agricultural Museums Annual Conference will be held June 2-6, 2007 in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Conference information can be found at <http://www.alhfam.org/index.php?cat_id=113&nav_tree=111,117,113>

Heritage Conference 2007, "The Economics of Heritage," February 12-14, 2007, Olympia, WA. This biennial conference is an excellent opportunity for heritage professionals to share what they know and to network with colleagues from across Washington state. To be involved in planning or helping at the conference, contact HRC coordinator Lauren Danner at ldanner@wshs.wa.gov or (360) 586-0165.

Small Museum Association Annual Conference, February 25-27, 2007, Clarion Fontainebleau, Ocean City, Maryland. The theme, "Stayin' Alive," explores the need for museums to reach

beyond normal comfort zones, look outside the box, and develop new and exciting educational programs, long range plans, collections policies and more in order to remain relevant in a quickly changing world.

<http://www.smallmuseum.org/winter07.htm>

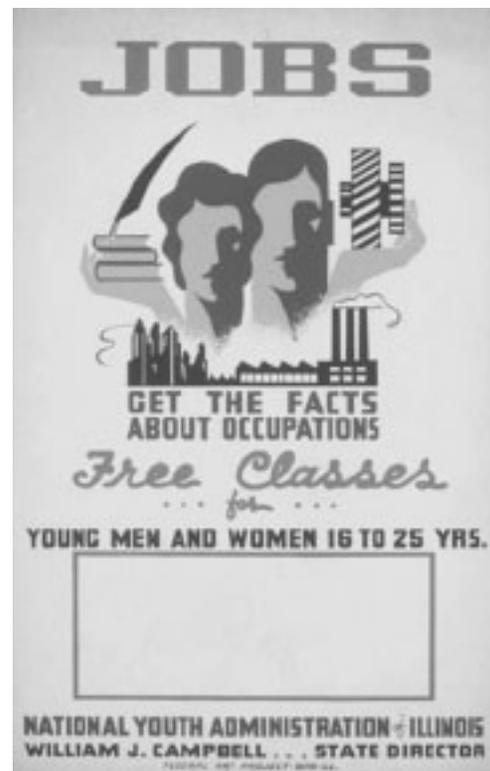
JOBS AND POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Heritage Documentation Programs seeks applications from qualified individuals for summer employment documenting historic sites and structures throughout the country. Duties involve onsite field work and preparation of measured and interpretive drawings and written historical reports for the HABS/HAER/HALS Collections at the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress. Projects last 12 weeks, beginning in May/June 2007. Salaries \$6,000-\$11,000, depending on job responsibility, locality of project, and level of experience. Positions open only to U.S. citizens. Deadline is January 15, 2007.

<<http://www.cr.nps.gov/hdp/jobs/summer.htm>>

Minnesota Historical Society seeks an experienced Museum Director/Site Manager to oversee the creation and administration of a new 70,000 square-foot museum at its preeminent site, Historic Fort Snelling, and management of its Sibley House Historic Site. Master's degree preferred with at least five to six years experience in museum or historic sites management. Full job announcement available at (651) 296-0542 or <<http://www.mnhs.org/about/jobs>>.

The History Factory is seeking a mid to senior-level Curator with 5-10 years curatorial or applicable museum experience. This includes curation and image sourcing for print, exhibition, and other multimedia projects. Undergraduate or graduate degree in History, Museum Studies, or Humanities preferred. Send your resume in confidence to careers@historyfactory.com, fax to (703) 631-1132, mail to Careers, The History Factory, 14140 Parke Long Court, Chantilly, VA 20151, or submit online <http://www.historyfactory.com/careers_apply.html>



The Otis House Museum in Boston, MA, is seeking a Senior Development Manager. This position is the lead administrator for Historic New England's annual fund, corporate membership program, donor events and travel program, Young Friends of Historic New England group, annual online auction, and related special project fundraising. BA in a related field and 5+ years of job-related experience are essential. Send resume and cover letter to jobs@historicnewengland.org, fax to (617) 227-9204 or mail to Historic New England, 141 Cambridge Street, Boston, MA 02114, attn: Human Resources

American Numismatic Association (ANA) Money Museum is seeking a full-time Collections Manager to manage its collection of coins, paper notes, and other numismatic objects. Candidates should have a thorough knowledge of museum operations, a degree or advanced training in museum studies, and 1-2 years of relevant museum experience. Send resume and cover letter to ANA, attention Lane Brunner, by email brunner@money.org or fax (719) 634-4085.



Fort Lauderdale Historical Society is seeking an Executive Director to provide dynamic institutional and community leadership to an organization poised for its next stage of growth. BA from an accredited college is required. Completion of advanced college level courses in historic preservation, museum studies, American History preferred. Send resume and cover letter to Connie Hoffmann, Interim Executive Director, 219 SW 2 Ave, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301.

Oakland Museum of California Foundation is seeking a Museum History Researcher in the Museum's History Department. Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in history, American studies, anthropology, or a related field required. Two years work experience in a museum or related institution desirable. Send resume and cover letter with three references to: Dr. P. Christian Klieger, Oakland Museum of California Foundation, 1000 Oak Street, Oakland, CA 94607, Fax: 510/238-7795, Email: cklieger@museumca.org <<http://www.museumca.org/about/employ.html>>

U.S. Federal Government has an ever-changing list of open positions for historians in various states and countries. For more information visit <<http://federalgovernmentjobs.us/job-search/historian-0170.html>>

History Department at the University of Alabama in Huntsville is accepting applications for a tenure-track position at the assistant or associate professor level in American history prior to 1877, with preferred subfields in public, women's, and/or Southern history. Candidates should have completed a Ph.D. by July 2007 and have a strong commitment to teaching. Send letter of application, c.v., and at least three letters of reference to Andrew Dunar, Chair, Department of History, University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville, AL 35899.

Flying Heritage Collection (FHC) is looking for a Senior Curator capable of working in a highly collaborative structure and able to articulate ideas and concepts. Bachelor's degree from accredited institution and 8+ years relevant experience. < <http://www.vulcan.com> > or < <http://www.flyingheritage.com> >

Arkansas State University Museum seeks a Museum Director. Three to five years of administrative experience and ability to teach graduate-level



museum classes required. Ph.D. in an area related to the museum's collections and experience in fundraising, community/public relations, team leadership, and grant writing preferred. This position is a twelve-month, non-tenure appointment. Send a letter of application, c.v., and contact information for three references to Museum Director Search Committee, c/o Dr. Ruth Hawkins, PO Box 2050, State University, AR 72467. <<http://academicaffairs.astate.edu/Faculty%20Positions/Museum%20Director.htm>>

Panamerican Consultants, Inc. is seeking an entry level and/or experienced Architectural Historian to work in the Buffalo, NY, office. Responsibilities include conducting historic structure and landscape surveys and working closely with field survey and archeological staff. Travel required. Candidate should have MA degree in Architectural History, Art History, Preservation Studies or closely related field. Experience related to NY/North Eastern architecture or landscape, 106 process, NR & HABS/HAER is a plus. <<http://panamconsultants.com/>>

The Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center seeks a Director of Development to oversee all aspects of development and fund raising to promote a better understanding and appreciation of the traditions and perspectives of all native peoples of the United States and Canada. For immediate consideration, send your resume and salary requirements to: Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation Attn: Human Resources Rt. 2, P.O. Box 3777 Mashantucket, CT 06338 Fax (860) 396-3598 Email: award@mptn-nsn.gov.

The Chemical Heritage Foundation invites applications for the position of historian in

the Roy Eddleman Institute for Interpretation and Education. The historian provides a scholarly authority on all exhibits and educational projects involving the history of science and technology. Qualifications include a Ph.D. with minimum of three years experience in a relevant field or subdiscipline of history, and a significant subject expertise in history of science or technology. For consideration, e-mail cover letter, C.V., and contact information for three references to historiansearch@chemheritage.org.

The **East Coulee School Museum and Cultural Centre** in Alberta, Canada, seeks a Director of Operations/Museum Manager. Incumbent is responsible for: museum administration; overseeing a busy visitor services program including educational programs, special events, post office, tea room and gift shop; developing and conducting collections management and research programs; and facility maintenance and upkeep. Please apply in writing to: East Coulee School Museum, Box 539, East Coulee, AB. T0J 1B0, email: gnse@telus.net, Ph/Fax (403) 822-3976, Attention: Robin Digby. Closing date for this position is January 31, 2007.

The **New Mexico Museum of Space History** is seeking a dynamic director to serve as the chief executive officer with overall responsibility for programs, personnel, budget, and community relations. The director will continue the Museum's development, growth, and daily operations as a Division of the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs. Please submit a resume and letter of interest to Wilma Casias-Schofield, Department of Cultural Affairs, Bataan Memorial Building, 407 Galisteo Street, Suite 260, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501. Applications will be accepted until December 31, 2006.

INTRODUCING THE NPS: A REVIEW

by Susan Ferentinos
sue@oah.org

In August, the National Park Service (NPS) announced a new online course entitled *Introduction to the National Park Service: Its History & Mission*. The class is self-guided, free of charge, and open to anyone with an interest in learning about this federal agency. It is available at www.parktraining.org.

Developed through a collaborative effort between the NPS Horace M. Albright Training Center and the Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands at Indiana University, the *Introduction to the National Park Service* adapts the standard orientation for new NPS employees for use by a more general audience. It combines text, visuals, video, timelines, and practice activities to provide students with a general picture of the agency's mission and role.

The course is divided into three modules: The History of the National Park Service, The Organization of the National Park Service, and The National Park Service and the Federal Government. The course developers estimate that each module takes about thirty minutes to complete, though forty-five minutes is probably a more accurate estimate for those interested in taking advantage of some of the opportunities for further learning offered throughout the course. Each module pursues its learning objectives with six to nine pages of primarily straight text. However, at various points, students have the opportunity to explore topics of interest by following links to pop-up windows offering more detail. The delivery of this information varies in format; it includes video, additional course text, and links to external web sites.

On a technical level, this course is easy to navigate. On each page, options for moving through the lesson are clearly marked.



Rocks National Lake Shore, Munising, MI.
Courtesy of the National Park Service.

However, the course as a whole gives the impression of having been adapted from a different medium; it does not fully embrace the potential of web-based learning. Most significantly, the presentation of information is essentially linear. One moves through the course by reading one page and linking to the next. There are opportunities to veer off the main track to pursue a topic of interest, but in general, these detours lead immediately back to the main structure of the lesson. Thus, the opportunity for a self-guided journey of discovery is lost. Likewise, the multimedia components of the course—visuals and video specifically—are confined to the auxiliary portions of the site. The core lessons are presented only as text, a strategy that probably improves the efficiency with which information is conveyed, but also reduces some of the pleasure of web-based learning.

Despite the intent of its creators, this course is not for everyone. Its emphasis is on making sense of the federal bureaucracy. As a result, the history section is mostly a recounting of significant legislation affecting the NPS; the organizational section is mostly about the



Vietnam Memorial, Washington, DC
Courtesy of the National Park Service.

chain of command within the agency; and the federal government section contains a detailed description of the NPS budgeting process. None of this information captures the vibrancy of this beloved agency, whose charge is to protect the nation's natural and cultural treasures. The breathtaking vistas of the Grand Canyon, the tragedy and pathos of Gettysburg, the grandeur of the National Mall are all absent from this course; and as such, the average NPS junkie is likely to be put off. Nevertheless, *Introduction to the National Park Service* does contain essential information for anyone who actually does business with the NPS. For those professionals, the course offers a strait-forward way to get up to speed on the sometimes mystifying workings of the federal government. Seasoned NPS contractors will find little new here; casual fans of the NPS will likely be bored. But for those public historians who are new to working with the agency, this course provides an efficient means of learning the structure and constraints within which they must learn to operate.

Susan Ferentinos is the Public History Manager at the Organization of American Historians.



To read current and recent back issues of *The Public Historian* on the web, you will need to register at the University of California Press "Caliber" login page, [<http://caliber.ucpress.net/>](http://caliber.ucpress.net/). The Caliber system will recognize your email address if you are a current member of NCPH. New NCPH members will need to wait 5-10 days after joining to be added to the Caliber system. Full text article PDFs going back to Winter 2001 are available.



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