



2011 Election — Candidates

Secretary-Treasurer-Elect

*The Secretary-Treasurer is elected triennially, and, beginning with the 2011 election, will serve as Secretary-Treasurer-elect a year prior to the expiration of the incumbent's three-year term. Please vote for **one (1)** candidate.*

Kristine Navarro-McElhaney

University of Texas at El Paso

I am very excited by the prospect of serving as Secretary-Treasurer of the NCPH. As a historian with degrees in accounting and history, and ten years of experience in banking and accounting, and also as member of the NCPH Finance Committee, the position presents a unique opportunity for me to combine my financial background with my deep love for history.

I have served as the director of the Institute of Oral History at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) for ten years. During this time, we expanded our scope of work and elevated our visibility through key projects and partnerships, including the Bracero Project. Through this collaborative, we developed the widely acclaimed exhibit, "Bittersweet Harvest: The Bracero Program 1942-1964", which debuted at the National Museum of American History and is currently traveling the country under the auspices of SITES. We have amassed at UTEP the single largest collection of Bracero oral histories in existence today. This project received the 2010 NCPH Outstanding Public History Award. With the support of the Kauffman Foundation, we have begun an ambitious effort to document the struggles and triumphs of Hispanic entrepreneurs along the border and across the nation through our partnership with the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and other Hispanic Chambers across the country.

I have served on the El Paso Historical Commission for nine years, the Historic Missions Restoration Board for five years, and as President of the UTEP Diversity Committee. Earlier in my career I was the executive director of the Mission Trails Association, and before that worked for ten years in the Accounting Department of Chase Bank in El Paso.

Published works include co-authorship of *Wheresoever My People Choose to Dwell, African American Women in the Southwest* (Black Classic Press) and co-author of the upcoming *Bracero Memories* (University of Texas Press).

Thomas Walsh

Arizona State University

I am currently ABD at Arizona State University in the Public History Program. I attended my first NCPH conference in Santa Fe to see if it made sense for me to return to school after working for twenty-five years in the financial industry to pursue my passion for history. I met Noel Stowe who convinced me to go to ASU, and NCPH Past-President Bill Bryans had me on the NCPH Finance Committee before I left the dinner table! I worked for banks and insurance companies primarily in the securities side of the house doing sales, training, and compliance up to that conference. I hope to find employment in a museum someday.

In the meantime I volunteer at several museums and professional organizations in the Phoenix metro area. I am on the board of directors at one museum, am creating an exhibition at a unique historic house, am the treasurer for an oral history association, and serve on several committees and act as preparatory for another.

I have served on the NCPH Finance Committee for three years and helped the group that was concerned with having NCPH consider socially responsible investing with research into appropriate mutual funds. NCPH, like all cultural and educational institutions, will struggle with providing value to its members and the historical community at an economical cost over the next several years. Keeping and attracting new members will be an issue. The board will have to set priorities that meet the needs of its members and balance these goals with the economic wherewithal to achieve them. I believe I can help NCPH along the bumpy ride ahead.

Board of Directors

The board manages and controls the business, property, and affairs of the organization. There are three positions to fill on the board. Please vote for up to **three (3)** candidates.

P. Lynn Denton

Texas State University

I have been director of the Public History graduate program since 2008, after more than thirty years as a museum curator, public programs director, and founding director of the Texas State History Museum. Throughout that time, I sought to balance research with the practical, day-to-day realities of promoting professional standards in museum collections, interpretation, nonprofit management, and audience and community relations. My work has included statewide projects, assessments of museum and historical resources, training, and program development and evaluation for a wide-range of organizations and constituencies.

Much of my career was spent in research or university based museums where I both observed and experienced the conflicting and sometimes polarizing differences in value attributed to non-traditional academic work. This is one reason I feel NCPH has made a key contribution in addressing and providing guidance for evaluating public history scholarship in academic settings. The NCPH initiatives to articulate best practices in public history curricula and training are equally significant and provide a critical leadership role for the field. They have been an invaluable resource as my department has challenged me with the task to enhance curriculum and improve internship practice.

I am enthusiastic about the diverse ways in which the public increasingly engages with public history and how the future of the field will be shaped by the students currently in our programs. It is an honor to be nominated for the NCPH board, and I would welcome the opportunity to support the energy and vision of the organization.

Brian D. Joyner

National Register of Historic Places/National Historic Landmarks

For the past decade, I have worked in the cultural resources/historic preservation field in the National Park Service. Working in the Cultural Resources Directorate, one of my primary responsibilities is writing on preservation matters related to diverse communities. I wrote the *Reflections on the American Landscape* series of booklets on African, Asian, and Hispanic heritages in American culture, for the Cultural Resources Diversity Program, and I serve as editor for *Heritage Matters* newsletter. Additionally, I've written articles for *Common Ground* magazine and served as book editor and exhibits/multimedia editor for *CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship*. More recently, my work with the National Historic Landmarks Program has me engaged with historic resources of great national significance that tell our nation's history.

Prior to working for NPS, I worked with the National Park Foundation's African American Experience Fund, providing support to the 18 parks and hundreds of exhibits and sites within NPS related to African American Heritage. This included helping to develop the Underground Railroad National Network to Freedom Program's website and launch. I was fortunate enough to work with Barbara Franco as special assistant on the planning of the City Museum of Washington, D.C. in 1998-1999, while interning for the Historical Society of Washington, D.C. I conducted oral histories with Washingtonians that were incorporated into the exhibit and book, *Growing Up in Washington, D.C.* (Acadia Publishing, 2000). Prior to that, I worked in for the Department of Energy as a contractor before discovering I could make a living reading and writing about history.

As a member since 2003, I see NCPH increasing the range of topics and resources addressed by the field, through the board and among its membership. As an organization, we are as strong as the links in a chain. I hope to add to this strength through my varied professional experiences and affiliations.

Jill Oglie Titus

C.V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience

Since 2007, I have been associate director of the C.V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience at Washington College. As a co-curricular center committed to encouraging innovative approaches to the study of the American past, the center straddles the gap between the academic world and the public practice of history. In directing our residential fellowship programs (established to support good writing on history for general audiences), our Teaching

American History grant programs (which support experiential, place-based education for K-12 teachers), and our interpretive tour program, I work to bring the two sides of the divide into closer conversation.

I also hold an adjunct faculty appointment in American Studies, where I have pioneered a course in historical fiction. The course uses a topic popular with millions of Americans (many of whom profess a dislike for traditional history) to introduce students to some of the issues that animate the field of public history: power, empathy, representation, authority, and the search for an emotional connection with the past. I am a graduate of the UMass Amherst Public History Program, and hold a PhD in History from UMass. Prior to joining the staff of the Starr Center, I worked extensively for the National Park Service, where I was active in the early stages of the agency's civic engagement efforts. Within NCPH, I have been a member of the 30th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee.

I believe that two of the most important issues facing NCPH are increasing the diversity of the public history field and finding new ways to encourage practitioners at the local level (and within the National Park Service) to see themselves as public historians and avail themselves of the resources and broader conceptual frameworks of the professional community. I would welcome an opportunity to work on both of these issues as a member of the NCPH board.

Pamela K. Sanfilippo

Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site

I have been fortunate to work in public history since 1995, when I first started at Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site following completion of a MA in history at Washington University in St. Louis. As park ranger and then historian at a small unit of the National Park Service established only five years before I started working there, I have conducted historical research, presented interpretive programs, developed exhibits, established the site's library, managed the web site and developed educational programs. It has been extremely rewarding to work with staff, volunteers, others within the NPS and to advance the mission of the site and the public history profession.

I believe that one of the goals of public history is to educate the public regarding the importance of studying the past and finding relevance in our lives today. I am currently ABD in Education at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. My dissertation explores the intersection between public history and education to demonstrate how interpretation, exhibits, and media are tools we use to facilitate learning.

I am excited and honored to be considered for the board of NCPH. I have attended annual meetings and participated in sessions over the years. The conferences are excellent ways to stay current with trends in public history, and publications such as *The Public Historian* keep readers informed throughout the year. My goals as a board member include working to implement the Long Range Plan, especially in the areas of developing partnerships, engaging the public in conversation about the relevance of history, and supporting history education. As a member of other related organizations, I would work to advance these partnerships to further enhance the shared mission of facilitating historical learning and relevance.

Liz Sevcenko

International Coalition of Sites of Conscience

I would bring to NCPH experience wrestling with how historic sites can confront difficult social issues, and how to develop and profit from international partnerships. It is exciting that NCPH is exploring working across borders to keep public history in the public eye, and I would be delighted to contribute to that effort.

I was founding director of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, leading the organization from 1999 until a few months ago. The coalition was founded by nine historic sites from around the world to build new methodologies, and new support, for historic sites to open public dialogue on contemporary social issues. Today it includes over 250 sites in more than 45 countries, from the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in the US to the District Six Museum in South Africa to the Gulag Museum at Perm 36 in Russia. As director I built an international membership; identified key challenges and best practices across the network; and developed peer-led workshops, publications, and one-to-one consultations on common challenges. These included connecting past and present effectively and responsibly; dealing with contested histories; facilitating effective dialogue; and how to build strong community collaborations. Before founding the Coalition, I spent ten years at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum developing exhibits and programs on the neighborhood's immigration history to bring diverse audiences—from community leaders to national policymakers—in dialogue on immigration issues today.

I worked with NCPH to edit a volume of *The Public Historian* that included essays from the field from a range of our member sites. At last spring's NCPH meeting, Coalition staff coordinated a workshop among sites from the US, Israel,

and India—ranging from March-Billings National Historic Park in Vermont and the Union Carbide plant site in Bhopal—to found an Environmental Sites of Conscience group offering historical perspective on current environmental questions.

William Willingham

Consulting Historian

I have been an active public historian since 1979, serving 15 years as a historian for the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. Since 1996, I have been a consulting historian in private practice, specializing in water resources development, architectural history, historic preservation, and community history. Prior to my public history career, I taught Early American history at various colleges and university for 10 years. Since joining NCPH in 1983, I have twice served on the Consultants' Committee and was Local Arrangements Chair for the 2009 annual meeting in Portland, Oregon. During my career as a historian, I have authored or co-authored 11 books, over 20 scholarly articles, and dozens of consultant's reports. In my professional career, I have focused on producing historical work that would prove useful to decision-makers and the broader public seeking information to better understand and resolve contemporary problems and issues. I have also taught public history courses at the graduate level.

I feel my wide experience in all facets of public history would equip me to play a useful role in shaping the policies and programs of NCPH. In particular, I would like to insure that the views and perspectives of public historians who work as consultants have a strong voice on the board. I am committed to expanding and broadening the membership of NCPH and strengthening its collaborative work with other historical organizations, while working to maintain and improve internal functions of NCPH to better serve its membership.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee identifies, determines the eligibility of, and recommends to the Board of Directors persons to be considered for elected offices of the organization. There are two positions to fill on the committee this year. Please vote for up to two (2) candidates.

Chuck Arning

John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, National Park Service

As a member of the governing council for the American Antiquarian Society, the Editorial Board of *The Public Historian*, and the Executive Committee of the New England Historical Association, I have learned firsthand the value of an engaged and passionately committed volunteer board, committee members, and officials. As a National Park Service interpretive ranger & audio-visual Specialist for 17 years in a National Heritage Area Park where the federal government does not own anything and all projects are driven by partnerships, I understand the importance of communicating mission, goals, and a shared organizational perspective. As part of the Local Arrangements Committee for the 2009 NCPH Annual Meeting in Providence, RI, understanding relationships, connecting resources, and looking for team players were just some of the skill sets I brought to the table.

While many organizations are struggling to stay relevant in this digital age, the NCPH has broadened its appeal, expanded its membership including an expanded international membership base, sought diversification and continued to ask the difficult questions regarding the role of public history in an increasingly complex world. This has happened due to a talented, committed staff and an equally visionary board and officials.

The Nominating Committee bears a lot of responsibility for continuing to bring committed talent into the organization for each year brings new challenges and fresh faces with fresh ideas are critical to NCPH's continued growth and relevancy. I like to think that my experience in the corporate world (Wall Street & Data General), public education (Montclair (NJ) Public Schools & Fitchburg (MA) Public Schools), the National Park Service, and membership in a wide variety of organizations provides me with the necessary skill sets to uncover and tap the visionary future leaders of the NCPH.

Melissa Bingmann

West Virginia University

I am currently in my second year as the director of Public History at West Virginia University. Before coming to WVU, I was a faculty member at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis and taught graduate classes in public history and museum studies. I also have eleven years of experience in museum education and worked at the Historic Columbia Foundation, Chicago Architecture Foundation/Prairie Avenue House Museums, Mesa Southwest Museum, and the Rhode

Island Historical Society. Throughout my professional career I have been active in National History Day and the American Association for State and Local History. One of the aspects of working as a public historian in the academy I enjoy most is the opportunity to partner with many different historical agencies. This has helped me to maintain a strong and generous network of practitioners.

My service to NCPH includes two years on the Student Awards Committee and I was the Program Chair for the 2009 Annual Meeting in Providence, RI. Working with the Program Committee, I found great satisfaction in advancing an interdisciplinary approach to the conference and appreciated the opportunity to meet many NCPH members. I am particularly interested in providing networking opportunities for graduate students and new professionals. Working with the Program Committee, Professional Development Committee, and NCPH staff, I contributed to the launch of “Speed Networking” and the Graduate Student Ad Hoc Committee.

Cultivating organizational leadership is essential to the continued growth and expansion of the field and to the future of NCPH. I would be honored to serve on the Nominating Committee and assist in identifying and recruiting future board members who reflect the diversity of the field and demonstrate enthusiasm for innovation and organizational growth.

Daniel Vivian

University of Louisville

I have been active in NCPH for more than a decade, first as a graduate student, later as a public history professional, and now as a university faculty member and public history educator. My background is mainly in the field of historic preservation. I earned an MA in public history from the University of South Carolina in 1997 and subsequently worked as a historian with state and federal agencies. From 1998 to 2002, I coordinated the statewide architectural and historic resources survey program of the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. In February 2002, I joined the staff of the National Register of Historic Places Program, as administered by the National Park Service, in Washington, D.C. In this position I reviewed National Register nominations and related documentation for seven states in the Southeast. In 2007, I left the National Park Service to pursue doctoral-level studies in American history at Johns Hopkins University. I am currently completing a dissertation on the preservation of “historic” plantations in the South Carolina lowcountry. For the 2010-2011 academic year, I am teaching at the University of Louisville, where public history is a growing part of the graduate curriculum. My major research interests focus on historical memory and commemorative practices in post-Civil War America, especially the South.

I am delighted to be considered for the nominating committee. If elected, I will work to identify candidates who reflect the diversity of NCPH and the breadth and depth of public history as a realm of intellectual endeavor. As the promise of public history continues to grow, the potential for public historians to claim a greater stake in the historical profession does also. I look forward to the opportunity to guide NCPH’s direction in the coming years and help to raise public historians’ profile in American life.

Robert Weible

New York State Museum

NCPH has made enormous progress in the past several years. Membership is up, finances are strong and getting stronger, our conferences are getting better and better, and we are playing an increasingly active leadership role in the profession. This did not happen by accident. Our board and committee members, officers, members, and staff have all contributed significantly and made us what we are today. So it is important that we keep the momentum going by recognizing, recruiting, and recommending the strongest possible candidates for leadership roles within the organization. On the one hand, this seems like an easy task, given that we have so many talented and qualified members—but on the other, it is a hard job, given that, well, we have so many talented and qualified members. My own sense is that the Nominating Committee needs to balance its recommendations and recruit young visionaries as well as experienced veterans, academics and non-academics, people from different regions of the country (not to mention other countries), and people from different public history fields (historic preservation, museums, government, business, etc.). And as should be obvious to anyone who has ever attended an NCPH conference, we need to do more to attract a more culturally diverse membership.

I know NCPH and its members well, having served as President (2005-6) and even on the Nominating Committee (1990-93). I’ve also contributed to *The Public Historian*, been a participant in numerous conferences, and served on various program and other NCPH committees—as well as on different committees and boards for AHA, OAH, AASLH, and other professional groups. I am presently the New York State Historian and Chief Curator at the New York State Museum and have worked over the past thirty years for the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and Lowell National Historical Park.