



Saturday, April 22, 2017
8:00 am – 10:00 am
The Westin Indianapolis
Indianapolis, Indiana

2017 NCPH Awards

Robert Kelley Memorial Award

This award perpetuates the legacy and memory of a founder of the modern public history movement, Dr. Robert Kelley. It honors distinguished and outstanding achievements by individuals, institutions, nonprofit or corporate entities for having made significant inroads in making history relevant to individual lives of ordinary people outside of academia. Award committee members: Marianne Babal (chair), Victoria Harden, Patrick O'Bannon, and Anne Whisnant

Lonnie G. Bunch, III

The 2017 Robert Kelley Memorial Award winner is Lonnie G. Bunch, III, who exemplifies the ideals of public history described in 1978 by Robert Kelley in the first issue of *The Public Historian*.

Lonnie Bunch became the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture director in July 2005, having no staff, no building, no building site, and no collections. The international acclaim that greeted the museum's opening eleven years later in September 2016 testifies to Lonnie's vision, his determination, his talent and, above all, his commitment to public history.

Lonnie not only created a clear and compelling vision and mission for the museum, but also coordinated its fundraising and membership campaigns; developed its collections; established cultural partnerships around the world; oversaw the design and construction of the museum's building; and hired a remarkable team to make it all happen. He inspired the museum's outreach efforts, including the successful *Save Our African American Treasures* program.

The National Museum of African American History and Culture is only the latest accomplishment in a distinguished career dedicated to interpreting American history. For three decades Lonnie has brought the best of historical scholarship to regional, national, and international audiences. Since his early career as a curator, he has consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to public history and an uncanny ability to present that history in a variety of settings.

He began his career in the academy, with teaching positions at The American University in Washington, DC and the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth. Finding the parameters of traditional history a bit too restrictive, he moved to the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum, where he wrote a history of African Americans in aviation – and launched a career in public history. Lonnie served as the curator of history for the California African American Museum in Los Angeles from 1983 to 1989, where he organized award-winning exhibitions and produced several historical documentaries for public television.

He returned to the Smithsonian in 1989 as supervising curator at the National Museum of American History (NMAH). In 1994, he became Associate Director for Curatorial Affairs at the NMAH, managing a curatorial and collections staff of nearly two-hundred. He also led the curatorial team that developed a major permanent exhibition *American Presidency: A Glorious Burden* in 2000. He left the Smithsonian in 2001, to become president of the Chicago Historical Society, one of the nation's oldest museums of history. There, he developed an unprecedented outreach initiative to diverse communities.

Lonnie has written on topics including diversity in museum management, the impact of funding and politics on American museums, slavery, the black military experience, the American presidency, and all-black towns in the American West. He is a popular and engaging speaker and has addressed audiences of both museum professionals and scholars in the United States and in many nations abroad. He has served on the advisory boards of many organizations and has trained and mentored countless museum professionals and public historians.

Knowing one's history and understanding how it has shaped the creation of both community and culture is essential to the role of public history in the 21st century. Lonnie Bunch has helped a national and an international public understand this relationship and, in so doing, has given them an insight into the meaning of history to their lives. For this, and for his many other accomplishments – publishing, teaching and leading – NCPH is proud to present Lonnie G. Bunch III with its highest award, the 2017 Robert Kelley Award.

NCPH Founders Award

The NCPH Council of Past Presidents developed the Founders Award in 2015 to recognize those individuals who were present at the creation of NCPH and who played critical roles in the organization's success.

Jack M. Holl

After receiving his PhD from Cornell University, Jack Holl started his career in the federal government as a historian at the Atomic Energy Commission in 1974. He “moved” to the new Department of Energy in 1977, all while he “sat at the same desk, doing the same job!” Jack was chief historian of the Department of Energy from 1980 to 1988.

He moved to Kansas State University in 1988, where his responsibilities included being principal investigator of the Argonne History Project and founding director of the Institute for Military History and 20th Century Studies before retiring as professor emeritus of history in 2005. He also consulted with the Department of Energy, History Associates Incorporated, and Argonne National Laboratory. Jack's prize-winning books include *Argonne National Laboratory, 1946-1996* (University of Illinois Press, 1997) and *Atoms for Peace and War* (University of California Press, 1989).

Jack's contributions to NCPH drew on his vast administrative experience. He attended the 1979 meeting at the National Archives and became a member of the first board of directors at the 1980 Pittsburgh meeting. Each director represented a constituency, and Jack represented the Society for History in the Federal Government (SHFG). Arnita Jones remembered that “Jack was the person who thought that there ought to be an organization for federal historians,” and he was its first president in 1979-80. He became vice-chair of NCPH in 1983 and chair in 1984, also serving on a myriad of other committees.

Jack reflected, “I was especially gratified that Noel [Stowe] and I together were able to save *The Public Historian* for the NCPH.” He had the gravitas to negotiate among the principal parties while mentoring younger board members. Ted Karamanski and Barb Howe especially remember a meeting in Chicago where Jack led the executive committee through difficult discussions. To Phil Cantelon, “Jack was absolutely crucial to the survival of the organization;” he “was very important in keeping it alive.” As a token of our gratitude, we promised Jack, as out-going chair in 1985, a life-time subscription to *The Public Historian* if we found the original copy of the contract. (He's never collected!) But, again quoting Jack, “my heart has always been deeply committed to the values and objectives of the public history movement. We have had quite a ride, haven't we?”

Darlene R. Roth

“I was a public historian before there was public history.” That is how Darlene Roth characterizes her pioneering career in which she helped to found one of the country’s first history consulting for-profit businesses, The History Group, in 1974.

When the City of Atlanta’s mass transit agency, MARTA, was planning and constructing its rail system in the mid-1970s, it encountered environmental requirements theretofore unknown, including one we now know as “Section 106,” designed to identify and mitigate disruption to cultural resources. The archaeologists assigned to the study team found themselves at a loss to research and analyze “above ground” resources, but they did find The History Group and Darlene Roth, who, through this multi-year project, developed some of the professional standards still in use for conducting historical CRM work.

Through her MARTA work, Darlene began to develop an expertise in local Atlanta history. She had emphasized aspects of women’s history in her studies at George Washington University, and through that lens she recognized a larger social need for local studies of classically underrepresented populations. Combining social history with study of the built environment, Darlene developed walking tours of historic Atlanta. “Atlanta Women’s History,” “Black Atlanta,” and “Early Atlanta Suburbs,” were among the tours she offered. They were the first local tours ever integrated into a conference of the Organization of American Historians. Darlene also parlayed her growing expertise in local history and its physical manifestations into blockbuster exhibits for the Atlanta History Center and for private entities such as Delta Airlines and the Atlanta Braves.

Darlene first heard the term “public history” when she received an invitation to attend what turned out to be the storied 1979 meeting in Montecito, California, which laid the groundwork for what became NCPH. She had not really known what she was, career-wise, until then. And the reverse is true as well. The other founders of NCPH—mainly academics and federal historians—were discovering what a rich and encompassing field public history could be. Darlene served on the acting executive committee elected to organize the National Council on Public History, incorporated in the District of Columbia on May 2, 1980. She also served on the original board of directors, which, in effect, was “the national council” until NCPH became a membership organization in 1984.

Outstanding Public History Project Award

This award is presented for work completed within the previous two calendar years that contributes to a broader public reflection and appreciation of the past or that serves as a model of professional public history practice. NCPH acknowledges the generous support of Stevie and Ted Wolf that makes this award possible. Award committee members: Rebekah Dobrasko (chair), Erin Bernard, Andrea Burns, and Robert Townsend

Award Winner

Mann-Simons Site Interpretive Enhancements

John Sherrer, Historic Columbia

By bringing a historic house museum into modern relevance with enhanced storytelling, videos, artifacts, and the community, Historic Columbia Foundation's Mann-Simons Site is the Outstanding Public History Award winner for 2017. The Historic Columbia Foundation, located in the capital of South Carolina, created a model historic house public history project. The Mann-Simons Site interprets the history of a free African American family and their descendants, and the interpretive enhancements tell the story of race, space, and entrepreneurial spirit in a fresh 21st century way. Historic Columbia performed extensive archeological excavations of the property. This led to a partnership with a local high school to build "ghost structures" on the historic house grounds, a powerful use of space that interprets urban African American living. Extensive community involvement included hosting the annual Jubilee festival at the Mann-Simons site, providing a community space in the basement of the building for meetings and other events, and installing outside wayside signs to allow the site to tell a story even if the house itself was closed. The public interpretation of the South is under constant scrutiny, especially in terms of confederate monuments in public space. Historic Columbia demonstrates how an institution can use the context of their own space and land to help all Americans connect to the past and each other.

Honorable Mention

Prisons Today: Questions in the Age of Mass Incarceration

Annie Anderson and Sean Kelley, Eastern State Penitentiary History Site

NCPH Book Award

The NCPH Book Award recognizes outstanding scholarship that addresses the theory and/or practice of public history or that includes the products of public history work. Award committee members: Rebecca Shrum (chair), Mary Battle, and Rolf Diamant

Award Winner

The Stages of Memory: Reflections on Memorial Art, Loss, and the Spaces Between

(University of Massachusetts Press, 2016)

James E. Young, University of Massachusetts Amherst

The 2017 NCPH Book Award is presented to James E. Young for *The Stages of Memory: Reflections on Memorial Art, Loss, and the Spaces Between*, a particularly relevant book for the disturbing times in which we live. This book examines the complex and contested process of memorialization focusing on the Holocaust, the events of September 11, and Anders Breivik's mass murders on Norway's Utøya Island in 2011. Young brings an insider's perspective to the subject matter, drawing on his service as a member of the commission that oversaw the design competition for Berlin's Denkmal Holocaust memorial, as a member of the jury for the National September 11 Memorial design competition, and as an adviser to Norway's July 22 Memorial Research Group. The book is framed around a difficult and provocative question: in the face of great tragedy and the pressure to memorialize it, "How to articulate a void without filling it in? How to formalize irreparable loss without seeming to repair it?" Beginning with a discussion of Maya Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Young traces the history of "negative-form monuments," in which empty spaces and multiple, even competing, meanings surface. Young asserts that the contentious local, national, and deeply personal debates on how to memorialize loss should be transparent and somehow incorporated into the memorial itself. As Young writes, "the monument only succeeds insofar as it allows itself full expression of the debates, arguments, and tensions generated in

the noisy give and take among competing constituencies driving its very creation.” Through Young’s book, readers confront some of the most painful moments in modern history and access new and powerful insights into the excruciating process of public remembrance. For public historians, as well as a wider readership, this book’s insistence that we critically examine and document the processes of contemporary memorialization in time and place provides us all an opportunity to reflect on the continuing physical, psychological, and emotional toll of these tragedies.

Honorable Mention

Interpreting Food at Museums and Historic Sites

(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2016)

Michelle Moon, Newark Museum

Michael C. Robinson Prize for Historical Analysis

Offered in alternating years, this prize recognizes historical studies that contribute directly to the formation of public policy. Dr. Robinson was a pioneering public works historian who tirelessly promoted historical research as a component of policy formation. He was associate editor of the American Public Works Association’s bicentennial History of Public Works in the United States, and served as research coordinator for the Public Works Historical Society and as the first historian of the Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Commission/Lower Mississippi Valley Division. Award committee members: Meghan O’Connor (chair), Mandy Chalou, Roger Launius, and Emily Pipes

Award Winner

Police and Fire Pensions in Florida: A Historical Perspective and Cause for Future Concerns, Florida

League of Cities and Florida City and County Management Association

Robert Lee, Florida Gulf Coast University and **Joseph Vonasek**, Auburn University

Dr. Robert Lee and Dr. Joseph Vonasek are awarded the Michael C. Robinson Award for their outstanding and formative study, *Police and Fire Pensions in Florida: A Historical Perspective and Cause for Future Concerns*. This article effectively summarizes the historical evolution of government pensions while providing true insight into current pension issues that governments across the country struggle with today. This work truly embodies the spirit of the Michael C. Robinson Award, as Drs. Lee and Vonasek have been able to bridge the gap between historical scholarship and real-world policy decisions—affecting legislative actions and impacting the way our elected officials consider pensions for the future.

Excellence in Consulting Award

Created in 2007, this award recognizes outstanding contributions to the field of public history through consulting or contract work. Award committee members: Lila Teresa Church (chair), Eric Abrahamson, and Lisa Simpson

Group Award Winner

Jennifer Stevens, Stevens Historical Research Associates (SHRA), ***Idaho Power Centennial Project***

While issues of global warming and the long-term effects of greenhouse gases continually rise to the forefront, Idaho Power Company’s economic and technological developments have undeniably generated a strong current of historic interest. During 2014, the company hired Stevens Historical Research Associates to design and manage its centennial commemoration. Principal historian Jennifer Stevens and her associates consulted with Idaho Power’s Corporate Team for this undertaking. The

result, a highly successful two-year project that produced a traveling museum exhibit; an online digital exhibit; a 10-segment documentary narrating the story of Idaho Power Company through each decade; a cookbook with historic recipes and popular history essays; and a year-long social media campaign featuring historic photographs and ideas. The traveling exhibit attracted more than 17,000 visitors from a wide audience over the course of two months while at the Discovery Center of Idaho during 2016. Stevens Historical Research Associates exemplified excellence and best practices for this monumental task requiring extensive research, analysis, and the use of numerous historical materials to reconstruct the narrative of Idaho Power Company's service and contributions from 1916 to 2016.

Individual Award Winner

Alicia Barber, Stories in Place LLC

Alicia Barber has been described among her clientele as “a local history superstar,” evidenced by the numerous projects she has undertaken during the past fifteen years. She has contributed immensely to the understanding, appreciation, and dissemination of public history in Nevada and beyond. Alicia has researched and documented an array of stories about people, locales, and communities in the city of Reno. Through best practices and her writings, she has made a wealth of information accessible in a variety of formats, including oral histories, exhibits, historical markers, and tours. Notable among her achievements are two projects completed for the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County, Nevada during 2016. The first of these, the “Midtown History Project,” documented the history of the South Virginia Street corridor, the main north-south thoroughfare through the city of Reno, until the 1970s. Secondly, the “4th Street-Prater Way History Project” documented the history and significance of a corridor that facilitated business and residential travels between the cities of Reno and Sparks during the early part of the 20th century. Among two other projects, both launched during 2015, the “Illuminating Reno’s Divorce Industry” website sheds light upon the University of Nevada, Reno’s Libraries Special Collections documenting the history of Reno as the Divorce Capital of the World from the early- to mid-1900s. Lastly, “A Story of Encounters” is featured on the *Nevada Humanities Online Encyclopedia* and serves as a portal for accessing information about various Nevada tribes. Alicia Barber’s attention to local history contributes great value to local, state, and national conversations about the past and informs the present and future.

G. Wesley Johnson Award

Named in honor of the founding editor of The Public Historian, this award recognizes the most outstanding article appearing in the journal during the previous volume year. NCPH acknowledges the generous support of Stan Hordes of HMS Associates in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and many of his friends for underwriting this award. Award committee members: Julie Davis (chair), George Boudreau, Donna DeBlasio, and Kelly Spradley-Kurowski

Award Winner

“History Matters: What Happens When African Americans Confront Their Difficult Past,” *The Public Historian* Vol 38, No 2

Phillip Seitz

Phillip Seitz’s powerful article on the groundbreaking History and Reconstruction project in Philadelphia demonstrates how the careful, creative practice of public history can address pressing contemporary needs and transform individual lives. By illuminating the historical foundations for persistent structural inequalities, the project helped participants better understand their collective circumstances and interpret their own experiences. The project stands out for its collaboration among scholars, community

activists, and participants, and for its interdisciplinary integration of theory and applied practice. The issues of historical trauma and healing also resonate within many other communities in the United States and internationally. Seitz effectively situates the project within relevant literature and practice, thoroughly explains its methodology, critically evaluates its outcomes, and reflects thoughtfully on its implications. He also reveals the emotional complexity of public engagement with the past. The result is a compelling analysis of courageous, cutting-edge work in our field.

Honorable Mention

“Pulling from Outside, Pushing from Inside: Imperiled Promise and Change in the National Park Service,” *The Public Historian* Vol 38, No 4

Anne Mitchell Whisnant, East Carolina University and **Marla Miller**, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Student Project Award

This award is given to an outstanding public history student project initiated as academic coursework and implemented and recognized beyond the classroom for its contribution to the field of public history. Award committee members: Erin McLeary (chair), Annie Anderson, Ella Howard, Anne Lindsay, and Martha Tye

Award Winner

The Chrysler Village History Project

Rachel Boyle, Chelsea Denault, Maggie McClain, and Kelly Schmidt, Loyola University Chicago

The NCPH Student Awards Committee recognizes “The Chrysler Village History Project,” submitted by Rachel Boyle, Chelsea Denault, Maggie McClain, and Kelly Schmidt of Loyola University, with the 2017 Student Project Award. This multi-faceted project, centered on Chicago’s Chrysler Village neighborhood, the site of a planned community for factory workers during World War II, represents exceptional focus, momentum, and project management. Despite the significance of the wartime manufacturing that occurred at the site, the neighborhood’s history has been obscured and largely forgotten. Over the course of four years, Loyola University students engaged a diverse set of stakeholders—including local politicians, a neighborhood historical society, the park district, a parish, and community residents—to recover this unusual neighborhood’s history and significance. Project activities included a successful National Register nomination, community oral histories, a community mural, and the neighborhood’s first community festival, featuring a pop-up museum focused on neighborhood history. The students’ contribution to the vitality of this neighborhood is recognized in community members’ organization of a homeowners’ association to advocate for their neighborhood at the local level.

New Professional Travel Awards

New Professional Travel Awards are for individuals who are new to the field and practice of public history. These two grants assist new professionals in attending the conference, helping them become more connected with other members of the profession early in their careers. NCPH acknowledges the generous support of Historical Research Associates, Inc., for underwriting one of these awards. Award committee members: Kristin Ahlberg (chair), Lara Kelland, Cecelia Moore, and Jeff Sellers

HRA New Professional Travel Award Winner

Lily Anne Welty Tamai, Japanese American National Museum & University of California, Los Angeles

Lily Anne Welty Tamai is curator of history at the Japanese American National Museum (JANM) and lecturer in the UCLA Asian American Studies Department. She received her PhD from the University of California Santa Barbara. At JANM, where she serves as the sole curator, Tamai has helped to develop the collections-based exhibits entitled "Sharing Our Stories," a series designed to broaden public understanding of the Japanese-American experience. She has also published articles in *Southern California Quarterly* and *Forum Journal* that focus on JANM's exhibits and the importance of diversity and inclusion in organizations.

NCPH New Professional Travel Award Winner

Alyssa Constad, General Federation of Women's Clubs

Alyssa Constad is the Women's History and Resource Center Manager at the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC). She received her MA from the University of South Carolina. At GFWC, she works to develop and maintain exhibits, manages and organizes the collections, and also schedules and conducts tours of GFWC headquarters in Washington. Constad intends to work toward the preservation of GFWC's documents and archives, while pushing the organization to reinterpret its history and broaden its appeal beyond a narrow audience.

Honorable Mention

Victoria Throop, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Graduate Student Travel Awards

The Graduate Student Travel Award provides assistance for conference travel costs for five graduate students who will present a session or poster or will participate in a working group at the annual meeting. Award committee members: Erin McLeary (chair), Annie Anderson, Ella Howard, Anne Lindsay, and Martha Tye

Congratulations this year go to the following:

Aiden M. Bettine – DePaul University

Chris Fite – University of Pennsylvania

Cheryl Jiménez Frei – University of California, Santa Barbara

Leslie J. Leonard – University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Harvee White – University of West Georgia

Congratulations to the 2017 award recipients, and thank you award selection committees!

Submissions for the 2018 NCPH Book and Robert Kelley Memorial awards are due November 1, 2017 and all other award submissions are due December 1, 2017. Please see www.ncph.org for details.