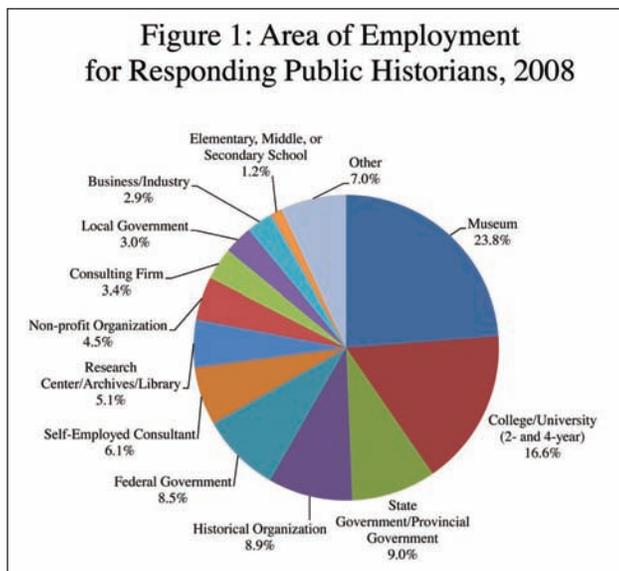


## A Picture of Public History Preliminary Results from the 2008 Survey of Public History Professionals

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*Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of articles analyzing results from the 2008 Survey of Public History Professionals. This article will also appear in Perspectives on History, the newsletter of the American Historical Association.*



Public history is one of the least understood areas of professional practice in history because the majority of public history jobs are outside of academia. The federal government collects an enormous amount of information about history teachers from school through university, which makes it relatively easy to assess the contours of their work. Unfortunately, however, we lack similar sources of data for most public history workplaces.

In order to get a better picture of public history as a profession, the National Council on Public History organized 10 historical organizations to survey their members about the demographics, training, employment conditions, and expectations of public history practitioners.<sup>1</sup> The survey elicited almost 4,000 responses from the United States, Canada, and other English-speaking countries, providing a substantial base for assessing who is drawn to this area of employment, and what their concerns were as we headed into the recent economic recession.

This survey replicated portions of a similar study from 1980, in an effort to facilitate some comparisons to the founding era of public history.<sup>2</sup> The earlier study was conducted using similar methods (a mailing to the members of a number of historical organizations), but the new survey relied on e-mail and an online response form. The 1980 survey received 2,347 valid responses; providing the best, and in many ways only, snapshot of public history to date. Wherever possible, this analysis of the results of the new survey draws comparisons to that earlier study.

### Defining Public History

One of the most significant challenges for public history as a field is ambiguity about the definition of the term. That came through in the responses to the survey. Of the 3,856 people who responded to the survey, just 2,946 were willing to identify themselves as public historians—the remainder expressed some uncertainty about the term and whether it applied to them.

In fact, 364 of the respondents who appeared to be employed as public historians (with long-term or professional positions in history outside of academia) declined to accept the label. They offered a range of reasons for avoiding the term. Some found it too confining. As one observed, “A historian is a historian whether working in government, academia, or private industry.” Others said they were not specifically trained in public history, noting that, “I don’t have the qualifications for that title” or “I view it as a sharply-defined, credentialed occupation or profession.” Others felt their work was more precisely described in other ways, preferring to describe themselves as “preservationists,” “records managers,” or “archivists” at historical organizations. And many noted that they were not actually “producing,” “practicing,” or “using” history, and worked more as “administrators” or otherwise in support of others who do the historical work. A surprising number of these respondents emphasized the public character

[continued on page 14 →](#)



NCPH Book Award submissions are due November 15; all other Award submissions are due December 10.



Image courtesy of Lisa Mighetto.

**Don't Get Caught Anywhere but Portland for the 2010 Annual Meeting!**

Details inside on page 19.



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## We're Looking for Annual Meeting Locations



Want to bring hundreds of public historians to your hometown? Now's your chance! NCPH is seeking site proposals for the 2013, 2014, and 2015 annual meetings. Proposals must be submitted by an NCPH member(s) interested in serving as the chair of the Local Arrangements Committee and as a member of the Program Committee.

The proposal should include the following information:

- A statement of why the site is appropriate for the NCPH conference.
- Information about a hotel or combination of hotels (preferably historic) in the area that are centrally located (downtown, near historic sites, near public transportation and restaurants, etc.); have sufficient sleeping rooms (approx. 200 rooms); have sufficient meeting space (for 5-7 concurrent/breakout sessions, 40-table exhibit hall, and one or more 300-person plenary events); and have availability dates generally between March 20 and April 20 that avoid religious holidays.
- Information regarding support from local individuals, institutions, organizations, and agencies who will work together to plan a successful conference and are willing to provide financial sponsorship or in-kind support, such as complimentary or discounted offsite meeting spaces. Letters of intent would strengthen the proposal.
- Potential arrangements for meeting facilities, possible tours/field trips, and transportation, with approximate costs.
- Any other information that might strengthen the proposal.

A representative(s) of the host institution(s) may be invited to present the site proposal at the spring meeting of the NCPH Board of Directors. Proposals are due in the NCPH Executive Office by February 1, 2010. We look forward to working with you! Please contact us at 317-274-2716 or at [dowdyc@iupui.edu](mailto:dowdyc@iupui.edu).

Cacti image courtesy of Flickr user cobalt123. Mountains image courtesy of Flickr user Birdfreak.com. Fir trees image courtesy of Flickr user Gregor\_y. Wheat image courtesy of Flickr user JapanBlack. Lighthouse image courtesy of Flickr user The Wandering Angel.



## THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PUBLIC HISTORY

Given the essential value of historical understanding, the National Council on Public History promotes professionalism among history practitioners and their engagement with the public. *Public History News* is published in March, June, September, and December. Individual membership orders, changes of address, and business and editorial correspondence should be addressed to National Council on Public History, 327 Cavanaugh Hall – IUPUI, 425 University Blvd., Indianapolis, IN 46202-5140. E-mail: [nph@iupui.edu](mailto:nph@iupui.edu). Tel: 317-274-2716. New members are welcome. Join online or renew at [www.ncph.org](http://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](http://www.ucpress.edu). We welcome submissions to *Public History News* sent to John Dichtl, Editor, at the above address. Articles are 400-800 words in length; announcements and bulletin items are up to 75 words. NCPH reserves the right to reject material that is not consistent with the goals and purposes of the organization. Headquartered on the campus of Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis, NCPH benefits greatly from the generous support of the IU School of Liberal Arts.

# Minutes of the 1980 Steering Committee

*Editor's Note: In commemoration of NCPH's 30th anniversary, here are extracts from the minutes of the Steering Committee for a National Council on Public History at the Second Annual Conference on Public History, which took place at William Penn Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Omitted material is indicated by ellipses.*

Robert Flanders, Secretary pro tem, reported the following:

**Luncheon meeting, April 18.** G. Wesley Johnson presiding. Twelve members present, plus Lydia Bronte, Rockefeller Foundation, and Thomas Fuller, UCSB. No formal minutes of this meeting were kept. Discussion centered on the Trask Committee Report on organization of a National Council on Public History. An alternative approach, advanced by Larry Tise, envisioned a simpler organizational form, without constituent divisions or paid memberships. The sense of the meeting favored such an approach.

**5 P.M. Meeting, April 18.** ... This meeting anticipated the public announcement of proposed courses of action on NCPH organization to be made at the convention banquet at 7 P.M. following. ...

Gayle Olson, as spokesperson for the public historical studies students, appeared and urged inclusion of students in any organization "in addition to practitioners and academicians." Informal discussion suggested a sense that students must be included; but there seemed a general disinclination to divide into constituent bodies, such as academicians, students, practitioners, etc.

David Trask (with Larry Tise, Arnita Jones, and Gerald Hermann as an ad hoc committee on organization working since the noon meeting) read a draft motion, to organize a National Council on Public History. Arnita Jones reported another proposal of the Trask et al ad hoc committee: that the present Steering Committee be constituted the nucleus of a first Board of Directors of a National Council on Public History, until December 1980.

Gerald Hermann proposed that at the following banquet meeting of the assembled conference participants, all be invited to remain after the dinner, and choose participations in one of four "advisory committees," to wit: 1) private enterprise (Darlene Roth and Philip Cantelon chairs pro tem); 2) scholarly societies (Richard Hewlitt and Suellen Hoy, chairs pro tem); 3) educational programs (Joel Tarr and Gerald Hermann chairs pro tem); and 4) historical agencies and institutions (Larry Tise and David Trask chairs pro tem).

... Discussion: Larry de Graaf was apprehensive that the organization of such "advisory committees" would tend to divide the movement. Joel Tarr expressed concern that the "developed culture" already existent within Public History, e.g. Policy Studies which he represents at Carnegie-Mellon, might be slighted in what seemed a totally "new" movement. Vote on the motion: affirmative unanimity.

...

Larry Tise moved (second Suellen Hoy) 1) that the Board request space for NCPH in the Public Historian of UCSB in order to publicize its business and affairs. Upon acceptance of the request, the Public Historian be designated as the official organ of the NCPH. Further 2) that one-fourth (1/4) of the twelve person editorial board of the Public Historian, i.e. there persons, be selected by and from among the Board of NCPH. Carried unanimously.

... Philip Cantelon moved, second by Richard Hewlitt, that the Board of Directors seek incorporation for the National Council on Public History as a not-for-profit corporation in the District of Columbia, with either David Trask or Robert Pomeroy, residents of the District, as agents for the incorporation process. Carried unanimously. ...

**Banquet, 7 P.M., Friday, April 18.** G. Wesley Johnson, presiding, spoke as follows:  
1) reviewed the Montecito, California, Symposium on Public History in April 1979, together with the formation there of a Steering Committee on the formation of a National Council for Public History; and the appointment of advisory committees to plan for various needs and strategies for such an organization.  
2) invited all present to join in one of the four advisory committees to be convened after the dinner program, i.e., private practice, historical societies, educational programs, and historical agencies. Corinne Gilb, Detroit, spoke from the floor for the convening of a fifth group of those concerned with policy formation. Chairman Johnson agreed to the request, arranged for the convening of a policy group, and requested that they also elect two members to the Board of Directors.  
3) announced the action to make The Public Historian the official organ of the NCPH.  
4) announced that the Third Annual Conference on Public History would be held in Raleigh, North Carolina. A spring, 1981 date will be announced later.  
...

**Meeting of Saturday Noon, April 19.** G. Wesley Johnson, chair. ... Moved by Philip Cantelon, seconded Arnita Jones, that each member of Board of Directors contribute \$100 to be used for NCPH organization and start-up expenses until December 1980. Expenditures are to be directed by the Executive Committee and collected and disbursed by its treasurer. A financial report is to be made at the December Board meeting in Washington.

Richard Kirkendall reported the willingness of the Organization of American Historians to share an office in Washington with NCPH, should OAH be able to secure an office there.

# President's Comments



Marianne Babal  
babalm@wellsfargo.com

## Put Your Money Where Your Public History Is

In the midst of celebrating our 30th year, NCPH has great ambitions. Our membership and attendance at our conferences are growing. We are increasingly engaging in advocacy, international outreach and cooperative projects with our sister professional organizations. We are launching new features on our website and social networking outlets, and exploring more ways to link together the varied community and interests of public historians. We continue to look for ways to enhance NCPH's role in serving the needs of public historians and facilitating discourse in the intersection where history, the public audience, and memory meet.

Having been involved in NCPH for two decades myself, I have witnessed firsthand how much effort is behind all these initiatives and accomplishments. Our conference doesn't just magically come together.

Web content doesn't update automatically. Maintaining our institutional ties, serving our membership, meeting our long range

planning goals, and even the basic function of evangelizing the field of public history takes a lot of hard work and effort from our dedicated staff, board members, and a whole slew of dedicated committee volunteers. All of these efforts require not only human capital, but real-money resources as well.

Personally, I value NCPH for the collegiality it offers and the community it provides. I'm willing to acknowledge and support that value by making annual contributions to our endowment fund. Others contribute generously as well. This year, donations from our board members helped fund a number of awards. My thanks to each of them and to all who have made recent contributions to support NCPH.

Likewise we are grateful to the many patrons and sponsors of NCPH who each year renew their financial commitment to NCPH and our mission. I hope every patron and sponsor will renew this year, and if you or your institution are not yet sponsors or patrons of NCPH, that you will show your support for the work that we do by becoming one.

We manage to keep NCPH running on a shoestring budget, thanks to support from our host institutional partners, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis and the University of California Santa Barbara, and each of our patrons and sponsors, endowment donors, and members. Every dollar that donors and members give to NCPH is reinvested in strengthening the community of public historians, improving our annual meeting, publishing our newsletter, posting job opportunities and a growing list of resources on our website, putting stamps on envelopes, and keeping the phone lines open. We also invest in our outstanding staff, who make it all happen.

To accomplish our goals—and more—we need the support of 100% of our membership. If you value NCPH, and NCPH brings value to you in your work as a public historian, please support our organization with an endowment donation this 30th Anniversary year. It will help guarantee that NCPH will be around for public historians into our fourth decade and beyond.

To accomplish our goals—and more—we need the support of 100% of our membership.



## Remembering NCPH with a Charitable Bequest

NCPH began promoting the work of public historians thirty years ago. Today it is a vital and growing organization of more than a thousand members and six hundred subscribing institutions. NCPH's plans for expanding programs in the decades ahead are predicated on the availability of adequate resources. These will come not only from membership dues, annual giving, and grants, but also new sources such as charitable bequests and other forms of planned giving.

A bequest is a provision in a last will and testament where a gift or property is transferred from an estate to a nonprofit organization. You can make a bequest by simply adding a codicil to an existing will. It is also possible to designate NCPH as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy, an IRA, 401(k), or other retirement plan.

If you have made or plan to make a provision for a gift to NCPH in your estate plan, we ask that you let us know. Sending a letter of intent that sets a value will help us chart the organization's future. If you would like more information about establishing a charitable bequest, please contact the executive director at [jdichtl@iupui.edu](mailto:jdichtl@iupui.edu).

# → Committees on the Go

## International Task Force

Anna Adamek | aadamek@technomuses.ca



Image courtesy of Flickr user ToastyKen.

During its April meeting in Providence, the NCPH Board of Directors discussed the increasing internationalization of the organization. Public history is well established in Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand, and there is a growing interest in the field in continental Europe.

In May 2009, a public history group which operated within the Canadian Historical Association formed the Canadian Committee on Public History and adopted a constitution.

The NCPH Board decided that this may be a good moment to survey the need for a greater international visibility of the organization and a closer cooperation between the public historians around the world. To lead the discussion and provide a forum for a dialogue among public historians worldwide, the board established an International Task Force. The main goal of the task force is to learn if there is indeed a need for more global cooperation or even for an international home for public historians. We are asking what role NCPH can play in the

internationalization of public history. NCPH could simply increase the international news in its newsletter and website, and *The Public Historian* would continue to increase its international content. NCPH could act as a mentor to younger public history organizations. Yet, we also need to consider a possibility that NCPH could become an international organization. Would public historians in other countries join NCPH if the organization became the Council for Public History? Or will there be, perhaps, a need for a new international organization, with national chapters?

The task force has begun to explore the state of public history around the world and opportunities for greater international cooperation in the field. We have started conversations with our colleagues in Canada and Europe and hope to continue these discussions in a more formal way in Portland. In the meantime, we invite anybody interested in the internationalization of public history to contact us with ideas, questions, and suggestions. The contact information for members of the task force is provided at the NCPH web site: <http://www.ncph.org/AbouttheCouncil/OfficersBoardsandCommittees>.

*Anna Adamek is chair of the International Task Force, a member of the NCPH Board of Directors, and is Curator of Natural Resources and Industrial Design at the Canada Science and Technology Museum in Ottawa.*

## Learned Societies Look beyond Academia

### ACLS Delegate's Report

Kathleen Franz

In early May 2009, the American Council of Learned Societies celebrated its 90th anniversary and hosted its annual meeting in Philadelphia. Since 1919, the ACLS has supported the advancement of scholarship in the humanities and social sciences through a fellowship program, reports, and publications that address topics of interest to universities and learned societies, and by convening once a year to discuss topics of relevance to its member organizations. Having joined in 2002, NCPH is one of the newer groups to ACLS. This report is an overview of issues of interest to public historians at the 2009 meeting.

A common concern that ran throughout the sessions was the weak economy and its impact on universities and professional organizations. The recession steered the discussions in a public direction, prompting speakers to address the social value of the humanities. Don M. Randel's speech on the state of the humanities addressed the need for life-long learning and the importance of the humanities in everyday life. Randel, former president of the University of Chicago and the current head of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, asked his audience to consider the impact of their research on contemporary society and what we expect from humanities scholarship and teaching. Randel noted that the

humanities can deepen public discussions of current social issues, but argued that scholars should nurture a passionate sense inquiry through public institutions, so that engagement with cutting edge research is not limited to professional conferences, journals, or the college classroom.

Most provocatively, Randel asked his audience to consider how we, as individuals, became interested in the humanities: were we converted in a high school or college classroom or did our interest start earlier, on family trips to museums and libraries? He observed that cultural institutions are the places that "hook" a broad public audience on the humanities. As a public historian, I thought Randel articulated the greatest promise of humanities and social sciences scholars: making our research public and nurturing an insatiable curiosity about history, culture and society in a wide spectrum of audiences. The ACLS has addressed the topic of public humanities in a 2006 report entitled *The Humanities and Its Publics*. The public value of the humanities continues to be a timely topic, especially as the Obama administration has created a new White House liaison to the arts and humanities. I hope that ACLS conference organizers will consider an entire session on the humanities and civic engagement for the 2010 annual meeting.

*Kathleen Franz is the Director of the Public History Program at American University and is the NCPH Delegate to the American Council of Learned Societies.*

## Diversity, Here to There

Modupe Labode | [mlabode@iupui.edu](mailto:mlabode@iupui.edu)

At the 2009 NCPH conference, the working group “How do we get there? Racial and ethnic diversity in the public history profession” convened. Calinda Lee, assistant director for Research and Development of the James Weldon Johnson Institute for Advanced Interdisciplinary Studies at Emory University, and I organized this session to discuss the profession’s lack of diversity and share ideas about remedying the situation. The preliminary results of the NCPH’s 2008 Survey of Public History Professionals reveal a profession that is not diverse. Of the approximately 3,800 respondents, 88.5 percent identified as white; 7 percent identified as “of color” (Multiracial; Native American/First Nation; Hispanic or Latino; Asian or Pacific Islander; or Black, not of Hispanic origin); and 4.5 percent chose not to answer.

The working group and audience members—including graduate students, community historians, and historians employed by state agencies—engaged in a rigorous, often passionate discussion. A topic which ran through the session was the “pipeline”—the process by which public historians are produced. Calinda Lee noted that a diverse group of talented and energetic students exists; however they are not choosing to enter public history. In order to change the situation we need to understand that choice. The relationship of public history to academic history may be an important factor. As public history professionalizes, the graduate program, usually embedded in history departments, has become an important gateway. Often admission committees (and students themselves) tend to see history majors as the “most qualified” students. Yet, as repeated surveys by the American Historical Association bear out, racial and ethnic minorities are underrepresented at every stage in the historical profession, from undergraduate majors through tenured, full professors. Some participants noted that their programs did not actively recruit students from racial or ethnic minorities, and indicated that this passive approach was unlikely to create a diverse cohort of public historians. As several participants remarked, history

departments are not the only places in college where students encounter history. American Studies, ethnic and cultural studies, law, architecture, anthropology, English and languages are among the disciplines that engage in historical inquiry, and students majoring in these areas could be potential historians. (Many of the working group participants themselves came to public history from disciplines other than history.) Marla Miller reported the University of Massachusetts Amherst is hoping that its new graduate certificate in public history will draw students from diverse academic backgrounds and perhaps also increase racial and ethnic diversity.

Several participants emphasized collaborative strategies for increasing the profession’s diversity, such as studying the approaches of other professional organizations, such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Society of American Archivists. Rhonda Jones urged the NCPH to engage in meaningful collaborations with minority-serving colleges and universities and organizations including the Association for the Study of African American Life and History.

As participants discussed causes, they also proposed solutions. Many agreed with Robert Hayashi and Rebecca Conard that the membership of the NCPH should take an active role in sustaining diversity initiatives. The idea of creating a scholarship program for students to attend the NCPH’s annual meeting received support, as did having liaisons with other professional organizations to learn their approaches to diversity. We agreed to continue the discussion and planning via electronic means over the year and reconvene at the Portland conference. As the session ended, most participants seemed energized even as all recognized that increasing racial and ethnic diversity within the profession will require a multifaceted, long-term effort.

*Modupe Labode is Assistant Professor of History and Museum Studies, and Public Scholar, African American History and Museums, at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis.*



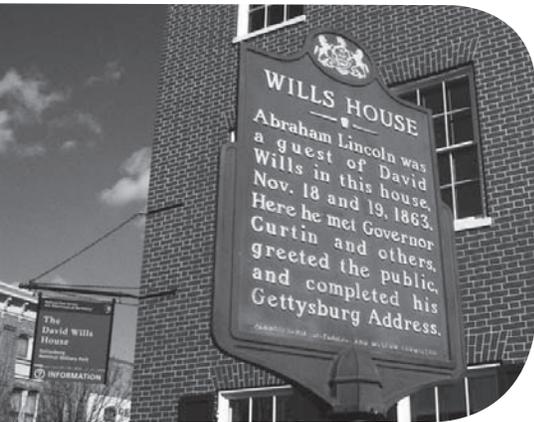
Carrie Dowdy

## NCPH Welcomes New Program Director

Carrie Dowdy joined the NCPH office this summer as program director. Her duties include organizing the annual meeting, overseeing business and membership operations, managing staff, running the Cornelius O’Brien Lecture Series Concerning Historic Preservation, working with several of the committees, and developing the website. Carrie came to NCPH from the University of Kentucky where she worked on an NSF grant program serving underrepresented students. For nearly seven years prior to that, she served in several capacities, including Community History Resource Manager and education specialist at the Kentucky Historical Society. In these roles, Carrie was a liaison to small historic sites and museums and coordinated two statewide student programs, National History Day in Kentucky and the Kentucky Junior Historical Society. She also administered a Teaching American History grant program, which was funded by the U.S. Department of Education and formed in partnership with the Kentucky Historical Society, the University of Kentucky, the Kentucky Heritage Council, and twelve southeastern Kentucky school districts. A native of Oklahoma, Carrie earned her BA in History Education (1999) and MA in History/Museum Studies (2001) from the University of Central Oklahoma.

# → Consulting Comments

*NCPH is committed to promoting the interests of its members who provide historical services as consultants. This column seeks to highlight new developments and achievements in historical consulting and contract work. Please send news of events and accomplishments to Heather Lee Miller, Consultants' Committee chair, at [hmler@hrassoc.com](mailto:hmler@hrassoc.com). Help us to explore the nature of public history work.*



The new NPS David Wills House museum in Gettysburg, PA. Image courtesy of Gary Adelman.

## **History Associates Addresses Gettysburg, Lincoln at New Museum**

History Associates Incorporated has completed a multiyear research, writing, and acquisition project to help transform the David Wills House, where President Abraham Lincoln stayed prior to delivering his Gettysburg Address, into a historic house museum. The new museum, owned by the National Park Service (NPS), and located in downtown Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, tells the story of devastation and recovery in the face of the Civil War. For the project, the NPS and its museum designer, Gallagher & Associates, turned to History Associates to conduct research, write the exhibit script, and secure high-resolution imagery for the museum's seven galleries. The David Wills House Museum opened on February 12, 2009, the 200th anniversary of President Lincoln's birth. Main Street Gettysburg, a nonprofit organization committed to the historic preservation and economic revitalization of Gettysburg, operates the museum in cooperation with the NPS. For more information about this project or History Associates Incorporated, call Garry Adelman at (301) 279-9697 or visit [www.historyassociates.com](http://www.historyassociates.com).

## **Brockington and Associates Surveys City of York, South Carolina**

In 2007 and 2008, Brockington and Associates, Inc., conducted a historic architectural survey of the City of York for the city government and the South Carolina Department of Archives and History. This project was part of the Statewide Survey of Historic Places, a program coordinated by the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. During the course of the historic architectural survey of the City of York, 675 historic architectural resources were identified. The city already had a historic district containing 4 individually eligible resources and 175 contributing resources. Brockington recommended that three expansion areas, with a total of 52 contributing resources, be added to the defined York Historic District. To reflect the textile industry in the area, Brockington recommended the York/Cannon Mill Historic District, containing 60 contributing resources. In addition, 5 resources were recommended individually eligible. The remaining 379 resources are not eligible for the NRHP.

## **History Associates Helps Carnegie Institution Preserve Scientific Legacy**

Renewing a successful relationship that began in 2001, History Associates Incorporated has been assisting the Carnegie Institution of Washington's Department of Terrestrial Magnetism (DTM) and Geophysical Laboratory (GL) Library and Archives preserve a unique legacy of scientific research. The Library and Archives, located in Washington, D.C., preserves material documenting over a century of groundbreaking work in the physical sciences. In January 2009, History Associates archivists began processing more than 11,000 prints and negatives of instruments and equipment used in the course of DTM's research into the physics of the Earth, atomic physics, and astronomy. The project, funded in part by the Center for the History of Physics at the American Institute of Physics, will also create metadata for the images in preparation for a planned digitization effort. By preserving and contextualizing the photographs, the DTM/GL Library and Archives is improving access to an important

collection relating to the history of science. In addition, History Associates archivists recently processed other materials held by the DTM/GL Library and Archives, including scientific papers, laboratory notebooks and files from World War II defense work, and the records of expeditions mounted by Carnegie scientists to remote regions of the world. For more information about this project or History Associates Incorporated, call Garry Adelman at (301) 279-9697 or visit [www.historyassociates.com](http://www.historyassociates.com).



Seven Lakes Basin, Olympic National Park. Image courtesy of Flickr user ([Brian]).

## **Historical Research Associates, Inc., Completes Ethnographic Overview and Assessment for the Women's Rights NHP and Administrative History for Lava Beds National Monument**

Historical Research Associates, Inc. (HRA) recently completed an ethnographic overview and assessment report for the Women's Rights National Historic Park. Using historical documents, oral interviews, and participant observation techniques, HRA historians Heather Lee Miller, Emily Greenwald, and Dawn Vogel examined the traditional and contemporary associations that various cultural groups (for example, Native Americans, African Americans, and Quakers) have to the resources the park manages. Historians Matt Godfrey and Paul Sadin of HRA also recently completed an administrative history of the Lava Beds National Monument. For more information about these projects or HRA, call Heather Lee Miller at (206) 343-0226 or visit [www.hrassoc.com](http://www.hrassoc.com).

# How Historians Can Assist Environmental Restoration Projects

David A. Bainbridge | Sustainable Management, Alliant International University

*In the cooperative spirit of our upcoming joint Annual Meeting with the American Society for Environmental History, we reprint here an article from a past issue of ASEH News. It addresses the intersection of public and environmental history.*

Probably more environmental restoration projects have failed from lack of due diligence in analyzing historical impacts and changes in ecosystem structure and function than for any other reason. Yet developing a site environmental history is not difficult or costly. Hiring an environmental historian to develop a site environmental history can help project biologists and environmental scientists understand what types of disturbances to look for, reveal historical or archeological sites that should be protected, and identify special problem areas where ecosystem structure and function have been dramatically altered.

A better sense of environmental history can also help refine restoration plans for a site. An environmental historian can help restoration planners decide what the restoration goals should be by determining what was on the site in the past. In Southern California for example, we might consider a restoration goal of 2006 (before current disturbance), 1890 (before widespread farming), 1800 (before extensive grazing), or 10,000 or 25,000 years ago, before people arrived. Ideally we would like to find an undisturbed reference site; but there are few, if any, undisturbed sites in Southern California.

We can learn a great deal by developing a good site environmental history. In many cases more information is available to us than we might first suspect. The visit of Jedidiah Smith to San Diego in 1827 is a good example of what we can learn from historical study. He noted the oaks and pines around Old Town. These had to be Torrey Pines (*Pinus torreyana*), but by the time botanists got here they were all gone except for a small grove near Del Mar. Ethnoecologist Florence Shippek also unearthed evidence of the presence of Torrey Pines on Point Loma

through interviews with Kumeyaay elders and field work. Research is also highlighting the potential impacts of prehistoric management activities that can affect restoration.

An environmental history can also help identify the likely disturbance effects on a site. This can enable limited resources to be focused on the changes in ecosystem structure and function that are most likely to be an issue. A detailed study can identify the location of old roads, corrals, building sites, and other disturbances that will require special efforts during the restoration project. It may also help identify special problems that may demand special soil or water tests, such as the use of boron as a weed killer in early industrial areas.



Torrey Pines at Del Mar City Beach, California. Image courtesy of Flickr user chrislee-cm.

Many consulting firms neglect environmental history because they do not have an environmental historian on staff. Researching environmental history takes training and experience; it is very local, with resources varying widely from place to place. Going back in time through papers, photographs, maps, books, air photos, fieldwork, and the internet starts out as a scientific and historical procedure, but often ends up as an “art.”

Expertise in environmental historical research is often needed by ecologists, biologists and others who are trained in the latest science -



U.S. soldiers clean rocks affected by the Taean oil spill in South Korea, 2007. Image courtesy of the Army Environmental Update.

but not very well versed in history. If you are interested in expanding your environmental history work to include restoration you might arrange a meeting with your local restoration firms (you can look them up in the yellow pages or on-line). You might also contact and/or join the Society for Ecological Restoration; see [www.ser.org](http://www.ser.org).

## Recommended Reading:

Bainbridge, D. A. 2007. *A Guide for Desert and Dryland Restoration*. Island Press, Washington, DC 391 p. (see especially Chapter 4 which describes site evaluation).

Egan, D. and E. A. Howell. 2001. *The Historical Ecology Handbook: A Restorationist's Guide to Reference Ecosystems*. Island Press, Washington, DC. (see especially Chapter 2, by M. Kat Anderson).

Sandor, A., P.L. Gersper and J.W. Hawley. 1990. *Prehistoric agricultural terraces and soils in the Mimbres area, New Mexico*. *World Archeology* 22(1):70-86.

Smith, J. S. 1977 [1827]. *The Southwest Expedition of Jedediah. S. Smith*. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, NE.

On July 13, 2009, National Park Service staff, park rangers, and a public history academic gathered in the conference room of the Department of Interior Library in Washington to discuss the ideas in *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American Memory*, by James and Lois Horton. This event, in addition to earlier sessions, emerged from a working group at the 2008 NCPH Annual Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky.



The Lincoln Memorial. Image courtesy of Flickr user hyku.

The working group, entitled “Finding Common Ground between Interpreters and Historians,” had addressed “issues of contrasting but complementary professional attributes in the two groups” and began “to map out ways of facilitating future exchanges.” Co-facilitators, Professor Charlene Mires of Villanova University, and Lead Ranger Chuck Arning of the National Park Service at the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, directed the preparation of case

study papers and preliminary exchanges of ideas and criticism among the participants, and led what turned out to be a lively annual meeting session.

In addition to a broadened understanding of the public history issue considered by the working group, both the advance contact and the discussion in Louisville generated many specific ideas about cultivating the common ground between historians and interpreters. Professor Kathleen Franz, Director of Public History at American University, Park Ranger Jennifer Epstein at the National Mall in Washington, and Carol Kelly, a retired park ranger adopted one of the suggestions. They formed a reading group of historians from American University and park rangers from the National Capitol Region to read and discuss scholarly writing on public memory in the United States. The three meetings of the group to date have fulfilled the program organizers’ hope of fostering productive dialogue between historians in the academy and interpreters working in the field.

The Washington group provided a model for Professor Peter Wosh, Director of the Archives and Public History Program at New York University, in developing a reading group to be offered to park rangers at the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island. Both programs demonstrate a commitment to the original NCPH working



Image courtesy of Flickr user ConspiracyofHappiness.

group purpose of finding common ground between interpreters and historians, and both are evolving successfully due to the efforts of their organizers, the flexibility in their formats, and the contributions of their participants. Hopefully, other public historians will use the example of these reading groups to promote expanded contact among the wide variety of professionals known as public historians.

*Carol Kelly is a retired National Park Service park ranger. She is currently serving as an assistant manager and interpreter at the Chase Lloyd House, a National Historic Landmark in Annapolis, Maryland.*



Synchronized swimming in a women’s physical education class at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, April 1956. Image courtesy of the University of Wisconsin Digital Collections.

## What’s an Annual Meeting “Working Group”?

NCPH working groups are seminar-like conversations of 10-15 people during the annual conference that explore, in-depth, a subject of shared concern.

### How will they be formed for the upcoming conference?

People willing to serve as facilitators propose topics in response to the Annual Meeting Call for Proposals. The program committee then selects several working group topics and releases another call, this time for working group participants, in September or October. Facilitators build their groups in the fall by selecting from among individuals who have submitted one-paragraph requests to join. Several weeks prior to the conference, facilitators ask each member of their working group to write a 2-3 page case statement. These are exchanged by email and discussed.

### What makes a working group so special?

When a group convenes at the annual meeting, the conversation has already begun. Participants are invested in the outcome. Facilitators have had time

to refine their questions and perhaps refocus on the issues. Sometimes, the facilitators develop plans within the group to develop afterward an article, a white paper, a session proposal for other conferences, or a new collaborative project.

### Who may participate?

Anyone who proposes a working group topic that is accepted by the program committee, or anyone selected by working group facilitators in the fall in response to the working group call for participants. Most facilitators will open their working group to other conference goers in Portland who want to sit in on the discussion. Such observers may be welcome to join in the conversation but are reminded that facilitators might give priority to the participants who submitted written case statements.

### Questions?

Watch the NCPH website for the call for participants or contact the NCPH office at (317) 274-2718 or [ncph@iupui.edu](mailto:ncph@iupui.edu).

# HRA New Professional Travel Award Winner

NCPH acknowledges the generous support of Historical Research Associates, Inc., for underwriting this award each year.

## Broadening the Horizons of Public History



Meghan Bishop (left) in period dress at Tryon Palace Historic Sites and Gardens. Image courtesy of Tryon Palace.

**Meghan Bishop | mayflower024@yahoo.com**

Like many sites around the country, Tryon Palace Historic Sites and Gardens is currently undergoing changes in structure and interpretation. With the opening of our new North Carolina History Education Center in 2010, Tryon Palace will face the need to reevaluate and redefine itself. Since its inception fifty years ago, the Palace's interpretation has been alternately simplistic, complicated, incorrect, and revised. Nowhere is this more true than in its interpretation of slavery—look up John Carruthers Stanly for an example of the

complex stories the site presents. As Tryon Palace and other sites face fundamental changes, public historians, as a profession and as individuals, need to reconsider and reevaluate our purposes as well. The theme of this year's NCPH annual meeting, "Toward Broader Horizons," expressed that need.

In the face of steadily dropping attendance rates at museums, a poor economy, and a nation seeking to redefine itself in the twenty-first century, public historians have the responsibility of moving beyond our current boundaries. Ultimately, our role is to educate the public with regard to the past, and as we face lower numbers and an occasionally reluctant audience, we need to seek beyond the traditional answers of the past fifty—and even the past twenty—years.

Several of the sessions I attended at NCPH related to this need—the working group on the interpretation of enslaved peoples, the session on remembering slavery in which I presented, and the screening of *Traces of the Trade*. However, James Brewer Stewart's keynote address, "Abolishing Slavery in Lincoln's Time and Ours: The Legacies of American Slavery and the Challenges of Human Trafficking," best exemplified the message. His call for the formation of and active participation in modern abolition societies to fight twenty-first century slavery around the world exemplified public history in action. Stewart's radical call

challenges us, as public historians, to step out of our comfort zones, take action, and use the past to change the future.

Students who view history as "boring," children dragged to historic sites on field trips, and an uninterested public reflect the necessity of developing new, dynamic methods of teaching and interpretation, and of answering the needs of our own communities. The answers of twenty years ago are not sufficient; it is time to revise revisionist history and challenge traditional methodology. The accepted historical method—developing a thesis, then finding primary sources to prove it—is outdated and backward. Rather, the same techniques of psychology and communication apply: listen with an open mind and no preconceived ideas. Historians need to move beyond tradition by examining primary sources, listening to the voices of the past without the filter of preconceived theses, and letting the past speak for itself.

The evolving field of public history allows us to broaden our own horizons, as well as those of our audiences. As we move into the second decade of the twenty-first century, let's bring the past into the present to change the future.

*Meghan Bishop, Historic Interpreter, Tryon Palace Historic Sites and Garden, Bern, North Carolina*

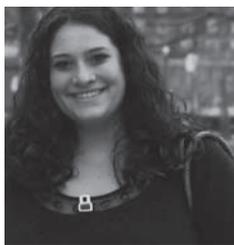
## 2009 NCPH Student Project Award Winners

**Hannah Howard | hhoward9@uncc.edu**

**Kristin Foster | kfoste28@uncc.edu**



Hannah Howard.  
Image courtesy of the authors.



Kristin Foster.  
Image courtesy of the authors.

No matter how rewarding you might perceive your own work to be, discovering others who recognize its worth always comes as a surprise. When our class began this project over a year ago, none of us could have predicted its initial success, much less the national recognition it would receive.

It began with an ambitious professor and a company that valued community involvement. Charlotte Area Transit System, or CATS, had already incorporated local culture in their pre-existing light rail stations by employing local artists to design their rail stops. They were intrigued when Dr. Karen Cox of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte proposed a partnership with

her museum studies class for the development of CATS's future Northeast Corridor line.

Expanding on CATS's initial efforts, students dug into the history of areas surrounding the proposed railway and developed station displays. Additionally, several architecture students incorporated this research into the design of a potential station stop. By proposing these additions to the light rail, students sought to enlighten local commuters of the rich history of their neighborhoods. We hoped that in illustrating to the public the role railways and community developments have played in the evolution of their city, Charlotte residents could be better prepared for their future. These displays and the accompanying station design were unveiled at a highly successful reception attended by CATS officials, members of the University, and local citizens. These designs and the impact of the future rail line are currently being discussed at neighborhood meetings.

While pleased with the outcome of our project, we had no idea when submitting our work to the NCPH that it would be so well received. Still in shock, we packed our bags for Providence and arrived eager to experience our first professional conference. From the moment of our arrival, we were warmly welcomed and ushered

into a whirlwind of introductions and social networking. Surprised by both the number and range of opportunities for young professionals, we participated in the mentor program as well as in workshops on everything from history performance to use of the technology in the field. Additionally, a number of sessions focused on the broader issues facing public history, such as encompassing previously excluded histories within our interpretation and the involvement of communities within their own history preservation.

On our final day in Providence, we were privileged to be included in the capstone plenary session which summarized and expanded on several of the critical issues brought forth in the conference. The discussion that ensued followed topics such as the generation gap, controversial history, how people in other disciplines end up doing public history work, and the future of the field. As we start our careers, we look forward to continuing these debates with our colleagues and becoming increasingly involved in the development of the field of public history.

# → National Coalition for History Update



Lee White  
lwhite@historycoalition.org

The Obama administration just passed the six-month mark, and appointments to key positions affecting historians are finally starting to fall into place.

## Archivist of the United States—David S. Ferriero

On July 29, President Obama announced his intent to nominate David S. Ferriero to the position of Archivist of the United States. Mr. Ferriero currently serves as the Andrew W. Mellon Director of the New York Public Libraries (NYPL). Mr. Ferriero succeeds Professor Allen Weinstein who resigned last December. Ferriero's Senate confirmation hearing is expected to be held in mid-September.

The New York Public Libraries form one of the largest public library systems in the United States and one of the largest research library systems in the world. Mr. Ferriero is responsible for collection strategy; conservation; digital experience; reference and research services; and education, programming, and exhibitions. The NYPL has 2600 full-time employees and a budget of \$273 million.

Mr. Ferriero was formerly the Rita DiGiallonardo Holloway University Librarian and Vice Provost for Library Affairs at Duke University. He joined the staff of Duke University in 1996. He began his career as a Junior Library Assistant at the the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Libraries, where he spent 31 years, leaving in 1996 as the Acting Co-Director of the MIT Libraries.

On May 29, the National Coalition for History testified at a hearing before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on Information Policy, Census and the National Archives on the policy challenges facing a new Archivist of the U.S.

## National Endowment for the Humanities Chair—Jim Leach



Jim Leach

On August 13, former Congressman Jim Leach was sworn in as the ninth chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), after being confirmed by the United States Senate the previous week.

Leach previously served 30 years representing southeastern Iowa in the U.S. House of Representatives, where he chaired the Banking and Financial Services Committee, the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, and founded and co-chaired the Congressional Humanities Caucus.

After leaving Congress in 2007, Leach joined the faculty at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School, where he was the John L. Weinberg Visiting Professor of Public and International Affairs until his confirmation as NEH chairman.

## Director of the National Park Service—Jonathan Jarvis



Jon Jarvis

In June, President Obama announced his intention to nominate Jonathan Jarvis to be director of the National Park Service. Jarvis, a 30-year veteran of the Park Service, currently is the regional director of the agency's Pacific West Region.

As regional director of the Pacific West Region, Jarvis is responsible for the 54 units of the National Park System in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, Nevada, Hawaii and the Pacific Islands of Guam, Saipan and American Samoa. He oversees 3,000 employees with a \$350 million annual budget.

A native of Virginia, Jarvis has a B.S. in biology from the College of William and Mary and completed the Harvard Kennedy School Executive Program in 2001.

## Gardner Named Senior Scholar at Smithsonian's NMAH

National Museum of American History Director Dr. Brent Glass announced on July 30 that Dr. Jim Gardner has been appointed to a newly created position of Senior Scholar at the Museum. Glass stated he established this position at NMAH to enhance the Museum's efforts in the areas of research and collections planning, and to strengthen relationships with colleges, universities and historical associations by developing new opportunities for collaboration.

Dr. Gardner will lead two major initiatives focusing on the Museum's highest strategic priorities. The first will examine NMAH scholarship and develop a research plan. Second, Gardner will review the NMAH's priorities for collections and develop the NMAH collections plan to complement the research plan.

Glass stated that he hopes to name a new Associate Director for Curatorial Affairs to replace Gardner by mid-October.



NCPH is a leading member of the National Coalition for History (NCH), a nonprofit providing leadership in history-related advocacy. To subscribe to the NCH's free weekly newsletter, The Washington Update, or get the RSS feed, visit <http://historycoalition.org/>.

# “Future of History Museums” Workshop at Brown

Steven Lubar | [lubar@brown.edu](mailto:lubar@brown.edu)



In moments of crisis, start your creative thinking with a warm beverage in hand. Participants in the workshop each received a mug with the word cloud, “What is the most important function of museums?” The mug is available at [newcurator.com](http://newcurator.com).

These are challenging times for history museums. We’ve seen articles that call it a “golden age” and others that say it’s time for Plan B. Budgets are impossibly stressed, missions are unclear, technology is changing, and audiences are demanding new ways to participate. It seems that everything’s up in the air right now; we’re at a moment of crisis.

And that means it’s time to quote Rahm Emanuel, Obama’s chief of staff: “Rule one: Never allow a crisis to go to waste.” With that in mind, it seems a good time to take stock, think hard about the possibilities, and see what the next big things might be for the history museum.

In mid-August, a group of about 30 history museum staff, exhibition designers, academics interested in museums, and others, gathered at the John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage at Brown University to do just that. We were mostly from the US but representatives from England and Australia let us know what was going on elsewhere in the world. The “unconference,” organized by Kym Rice and Steve Lubar, and supported by the 1772 Foundation, was designed to allow for conversation. We hoped to give participants a chance to think about the issues removed from the press of daily activities, to meet new people, to share ideas and plans. The call for participation outlined the ideas:

We would like the meeting – someplace between a conference, a conversation, and a workshop – to address a range of aspects of history museums, including collections, interpretation, and audience. We are interested in the high-tech future and new forms of institutions as well as in more traditional presentations and connections. We’d like to look at the past, to learn from successes and failures, as well as to the future. We think that it might be time to reconsider the goals and purposes of the history museum, or at least to think hard about what those are. We’re interested in reconsidering the boundaries of the history museum, how it might collaborate with other institutions.

And we did all of that. Starting with short, provocative papers (they’re online, along with a list of participants and a list of sessions, at <http://historymuseums.wordpress.com/>), we focused discussion on these topics and more. The conversation was free-ranging and, no surprise, reached no consensus conclusions. The twitter feed from the workshop, at <http://twapperkeeper.com/historymuseums/>, gives a sense of the discussion. Some of my personal takeaways provide a sense of the conversation:

- Web 2.0 might be more useful, first, for transparency, rather than for sharing authority. Maybe we should aim for Web 1.5.
- Not master narrative. But not cacophony. Not everyone an expert, but a range of designed encounters. Balanced, not shared authority
- The exhibit as a space for performance, staged by the museum, acted by the visitor
- The understated role of emotion in museum; we should play this up
- The importance of taking advantage of the work of amateur historians (buffs, genealogists, etc.), and of using, carefully, the enthusiasm that comes with popular history and nostalgia
- The importance of providing enough history, historical thinking skills, and practical museum expertise to museum studies and public history students
- A reminder that history museums are always in crisis and always resistant to change; but that they adapt and survive, nonetheless.

We came out of the meeting reinvigorated, but also with a new sense of how things might be done differently.

What’s next? Another conference would be useful, of course, along with other ways of continuing this conversation. We thought about extending this meeting into a more-philosophical-than-practical roving professional development workshop. There was considerable excitement about workshopping real projects for a professional, student, or public audience. Perhaps a collaborative travelling exhibition, or series of travelling exhibitions, that defined best practices for a wide audience. And, of course, the TV show: *Extreme Makeover: History Museum Edition*. The EHM team shows up and, 24 hours later, your museum—your community—is transformed...

We’re convinced that these discussions should continue. How might that best be done? What do you think would be useful? Let us know: contact Steve Lubar <[lubar@brown.edu](mailto:lubar@brown.edu)> or Kym Rice [kym@gwu.edu](mailto:kym@gwu.edu).

## Getting at Thirty Years of Scholarship

An updated index to articles and reviews in *The Public Historian* is available on the NCPH website at <http://www.ncph.org/PublicationsResources/ThePublicHistorian/tabid/311/Default.aspx>. Many entries include abstracts and lists of key terms, which will make your searching and research more efficient. Some of the annotations have been provided by authors and some by graduate students in the Public History Program at the University of California Santa Barbara, where the journal has been edited since its founding in 1979. If you have been a *TPH* author or reviewer and would like to substitute your own abstract for the one included for your article, please send it to [LREED@history.ucsb.edu](mailto:LREED@history.ucsb.edu).



## Raise Your Profile

Join the growing list of NCPH Annual Meeting partners and advertise, exhibit, or sponsor an event at the 2010 conference in Portland, Oregon. Reach a thousand public and environmental historians from the United States, Canada, and abroad; local community members who attend; and many other history professionals, educators, and students who see the conference web site and *Program*.

- Raise the profile of your consulting firm, agency, or institution.
- Promote the latest scholarship, forthcoming titles, and journals from your press.
- Network with potential clients, partners, or colleagues.
- Announce and celebrate the accomplishments of your organization.
- Recruit graduate students or professors to your program.

For more information visit [www.ncph.org](http://www.ncph.org) or contact Carrie Dowdy [dowdyc@iupui.edu](mailto:dowdyc@iupui.edu).

# A Picture of Public History

## Preliminary Results from the 2008 Survey of Public History Professionals (from page 1)

of public history, noting that they “don’t deal with the public domain,” “do not directly disseminate information to the public,” have “little or no public interaction,” or that they work for private institutions.

Conversely, 641 of the respondents who accepted the label were either employed at, or were students in, a college or university. In some cases, these were faculty who teach public history, in other cases they were archivists and librarians at those schools. Other full-time faculty who embraced the term were also employed as consultants or digital historians. Digital history, in fact, seems to provide a new avenue for academic historians to enter the realm of public history.

Setting aside some of these ambiguities, we took an expansive definition of public history practices, and included all those who either defined themselves as public historians or were employed in a historical activity outside of academia. This raised the level of respondents included in our tabulation of the survey to 3,492.

### Public History in the Workplace

Not surprisingly, the survey revealed that public historians were employed in a diverse range of workplaces. Almost a quarter of the respondents were employed in a museum (23.8 percent), while faculty and students at colleges and universities accounted for another 16.6 percent of the respondents (Figure 1).

Government—at the federal, state, and local level—was a significant employer for the remaining public historians in the survey. State/provincial governments employed 9 percent of the respondents, the federal government another 8.5 percent, and local governments employed another 3.0 percent. Beyond those broad categories were a rich array of employers, including historical organizations (8.9 percent); research organizations, archives, and libraries (5.1 percent); non-profit organizations (4.5 percent); and consulting firms (3.4 percent). Another 6.1 percent reported themselves as self-employed, while 7.0 percent indicated that they were either semiretired or that their employer did not fit into one of the other categories.

Due to variations in the labeling of particular work areas in the new study, we could not draw direct comparisons to the 1980 survey. But there was a notable increase in the number of

academic historians adopting the public historian label in the new survey (up from less than 7 percent in the earlier survey). And in relative terms, there appeared to be a significant decrease in the proportion of public historians employed by federal, state, or local governments. With the rise of graduate programs in public history creating MAs moving into other areas of activity, and better dissemination of the concept of public history into the wider historical profession, the employment picture has become considerably more complex.

Most of the respondents who were not currently students were employed full-time. Of those who provided information, 81.3 percent reported they were employed full-time, 11.8 percent said they were employed part time, and 0.9 percent indicated they were unemployed. The remainder were either retired or working as a volunteer (often after retirement). This marked a modest change since the 1980 survey, when 86.9 percent of the respondents reported they were employed full time, and just 7.6 percent reported they were employed part time.

In general, however, public historians appeared to be doing fairly well economically. Their average income was modestly higher than that of other Americans last year, as 61.4 percent of the respondents

employed full time earned more than \$45,000, while 20.0 percent earned more than \$75,000. Most of the respondents (71 percent) said they are satisfied or very satisfied in their jobs (though 47.0 percent felt they were “underpaid” in their jobs). In comparison, the Conference Board found that less than half of all Americans were satisfied with their jobs in 2007.

### The Demographics of Public History

The increased proportion of women in the public history workforce since 1980 was quite striking, and in sharp contrast to the relatively modest change among historians in academia. Thirty years ago, as public history was first being established, women accounted for barely a third (36.0 percent) of the public historians responding to the survey. In the latest survey, women comprised two thirds of the respondents (65.5 percent), reflecting a profound transformation in the field (Figure 2). In comparison the proportion of women among historians in academia has grown from 12.7 in 1980 to just 30.4 percent in the most recent federal survey of department (conducted in 2003).



# Where to Find NCPH Online

As the field has reached maturity as an area of employment, it has also become much older than it was 30 years ago. In the 1980 survey, 72.4 percent of the respondents were under the age of 46—reflecting in part the job crisis of the 1970s, but also the relative novelty of public history as a term of art. In the more recent survey, more than half of the respondents (55.2 percent) were 46 years of age or older.

More than three out of four of the respondents (76.5 percent) held an advanced degree. While this cannot be compared directly to the earlier survey, there was a significant decline in the proportion holding PhDs. Reflecting the job crisis of the 1970s, more than a third of the respondents to the 1980 survey (38.5 percent), held a PhD. In the more recent survey, 20.9 percent held the PhD, though almost 4.9 percent were ABD. Thanks to rapid growth in the number of MA-level public history programs over the past decade—currently approaching almost 120 in the U.S. alone—the proportion of public historians with master's degrees has grown significantly in recent years.

More than half of the respondents in the 2008 survey had earned their highest academic degree in history (54.9 percent) or had received some other training in historical work (17.9 percent).

In our next report, we will break these numbers down a bit more—highlighting some of the differences in these results when we separate the responses by area of employment, gender, and age. We will also delve more deeply into some of the related questions in the survey, looking at more specific questions about the fit between the types of training public historians receive and their job prospects.

*John Dichtl is the executive director of the National Council on Public History. Robert B. Townsend is the AHA's assistant director for research and publications.*

## Notes

1. The survey was distributed in fall 2008 to members of the American Association for State and Local History, American Association of Museums, American Historical Association, Canadian Historical Association, National Council on Public History, Oral History Association, Organization of American Historians, and Society for History in the Federal Government. Each society sent out a request to those they identified as public historians in their membership that asked them to fill out the survey "If you engage in public history work (including academic historians who do consulting or other public history work on the side)." Given variations in the definition of the term among the three organizations, and overlapping memberships in the participating societies, it is not possible to treat the results as scientific in any way, but given the size and diversity of the respondents, we feel comfortable in treating the results as valid for assessing the larger contours of the public history profession as well as their issues and concerns.

2. Lawrence B. de Graaf et al, *Survey of the Historical Profession: Public Historians, 1980–81* (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 1981). The report is available online at [http://www.historians.org/info/SurveyofProfession\\_Public\\_80\\_81.pdf](http://www.historians.org/info/SurveyofProfession_Public_80_81.pdf).



Image courtesy of the Library of Congress; LOC LC-B2- 2191-9.

## Join NCPH on LinkedIn

If you already use LinkedIn, the social networking site for professionals, now you can add NCPH as one of your "groups." If you've never tried LinkedIn, now is the time to join. Participation in the NCPH group is open only to current NCPH members. It's a quick way to reach other public history professionals and benefit from their job experiences and connections. NCPH is also experimenting with using the group presence on LinkedIn as a membership directory.

<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=1190337>

## See us on Facebook

How many NCPH members are also on Facebook? Become a fan of NCPH on Facebook and find out! What does the changing digital face of the public history field look like?

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Indianapolis-IN/National-Council-on-Public-History-NCPH/37735617214>

## H-Public

Sponsored by the National Council on Public History and operated by H-Net, this email listserv provides members of NCPH and other interested subscribers with updates on opportunities and developments in the field. Postings include free-ranging discussions of issues in public history, as well as conference, internship, job, workshop, and other announcements.

[www.h-net.org/~public](http://www.h-net.org/~public)

For weekly updated information on jobs, fellowships, internships, awards, conferences, and calls, please visit [www.ncph.org](http://www.ncph.org).

## AWARDS, GRANTS & INTERNSHIPS

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission seeks proposals to develop new strategies and tools that can improve the preservation, public discovery, or use of historical records. Projects may also focus on techniques and tools that will improve the professional performance and effectiveness of those who work with such records, such as archivists, documentary editors, and records managers. **NARA Strategies and Tools for Archives and Historical Publishing Projects** grant applications are due October 5, 2009. <http://www.archives.gov/nhprc/announcement/>

The **Conservation Project Support** program awards grants to help museums identify conservation needs and priorities, and perform activities to ensure the safekeeping of their collections. Deadline is October 15, 2009. <http://www.ihms.gov/applicants/grants/conservProject.shtm>

The Southeastern Museums Conference (SEMC) proudly announces the 10th Annual **Jekyll Island Management Institute** (JIMI), January 19-26, 2010. JIMI is a unique eight-day immersion for museum professionals seeking the opportunity to learn management, personnel and interpretive skills from leading experts. New this year is the Peter S. LaPaglia JIMI Scholarship, which will cover the cost of tuition. Deadline to apply is October 31, 2009. [http://www.semcdirect.net/education\\_and\\_programs/jimi/index.html](http://www.semcdirect.net/education_and_programs/jimi/index.html)

**NEH America's Historical and Cultural Organizations and Interpreting America's Historic Places Grants.** The Division of Public Programs at the U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities funds projects intended for broad public audiences at museums, libraries, historic sites and other historical and cultural organizations. New application guidelines are posted at <http://www.neh.gov>. The next deadline is January 13, 2010.

**Museum Grants for African American History and Culture** are intended to enhance institutional capacity and sustainability through professional training, technical assistance, internships, outside expertise, and other tools. Deadline to apply is January 15, 2010. <http://www.ihms.gov/applicants/grants/AfricanAmerican.shtm>

## WORKSHOPS

**Focusing on Photographs: Identification and Preservation.** September 22-23. Presented by the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts. This two-day program will focus on the fundamentals of identifying and caring for photographic collections. Using lecture and hands-on demonstrations, topics will be intertwined over the course of the program to give participants a holistic view of identifying photographic materials, caring for these collections, developing appropriate handling procedures, and establishing safe storage environments. <http://www.ccaha.org/>

**American Association of Museum's Museum Essentials Webinar Series**  
Audience Research and Evaluation: Why It Matters Now More Than Ever. September 23, 2:00pm-3:30pm; Project Management Basics. November 4, 2009, 2:00pm-3:30pm <http://www.aam-us.org/getinvolved/learn/museumessentialsseries.cfm>

## CALLS FOR PAPERS, ARTICLES, PROPOSALS, & PRESENTATIONS

**Department of Veterans Affairs Book Project.** The Department of Veterans Affairs is seeking a contract historian/writer for a special book project. The solicitation number is VA-798-09-RP-0052. You can view the RFP at [www.fbo.gov](http://www.fbo.gov).



## CONFERENCES & LECTURE SERIES

**"Moving Beyond the Interview,"** Oral History Association, October 14-18, Louisville, KY. <http://www.oralhistory.org>

**"Going Public: Cross-disciplinary perspectives on presenting women's history,"** October 22-24, 2009 Edmonton, Alberta. [http://www.royalalbertamuseum.ca/events/listinfo/CAWPH\\_registration\\_eng.pdf](http://www.royalalbertamuseum.ca/events/listinfo/CAWPH_registration_eng.pdf)

**"Oceans, Islands, Continents,"** American Historical Association, January 7-10, 2010, San Diego, CA. <http://www.historians.org>

**"Annual Meeting and Advocacy Day,"** National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, March 8-11, 2010, Washington, DC. <http://www.ncshpo.org/>

**"American Culture, American Democracy,"** Organization of American Historians, April 7-10, 2010, Washington, DC. <http://www.oah.org>

**"75th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology,"** April 14-18, 2010, St. Louis, MO. <http://www.saa.org/>

**"Museums without Borders,"** American Association of Museums, May 23-26, 2010, Los Angeles, CA. <http://www.aam-us.org>

## JOBS & POSITIONS AVAILABLE

**U.S. House of Representatives,** Office of the Clerk, has available a **Research Assistant** position. Assists in administering the office's oral history program and provides specialized historical reference and research assistance to Members, congressional staff, and the general public. <http://www.house.gov/vacancies/VacancyDetails.aspx?PositionID=1532>

**Minneapolis Institute of Arts** is searching for an experienced **Project Archivist** to establish an archives/records management program for the museum. Duties include: institution-wide records survey; records disposition schedules; implement an arrangement and description project in a manner consistent with standard professional archives practices, which will include establishing physical and intellectual control over collections; educate and train staff on the archives program; assist in developing archival guidelines, policies and procedures; collaborate with MIA staff in contributing series level original cataloging of archival records to OCLC in the MARC format and to also make them available in the local library online catalog. Send a cover letter and resume or complete an employment application at [www.artsmia.org](http://www.artsmia.org)

**Heritage Farmstead Museum,** Plano, Texas, seeks an energetic experienced museum professional to serve as **Executive Director** to oversee all daily administration, business procedures, and management of the site and buildings, supervise employees and volunteers necessary to operate the facility, oversee museum education, collections, and maintenance

departments, and supervise expenditure through approved annual budgets and financial development plans. <http://www.heritagefarmstead.org/>

**Edwards Air Force Base** (CA) is seeking **Architectural Historians**. The Architectural Historian career path is your chance to be a member of our Cultural Resources Team evaluating sites for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, preparing nomination packages and maintaining the site buildings database, and other challenging tasks. Candidates should be self-motivated professionals with a successful 2 to 9 year track as an Architectural Historian, have a Master's Degree, and a desire to grow personally as well as professionally with each project. [http://jobs.brassring.com/1033/asp/tg/cim\\_home.asp?partnerid=434&siteid=47&CODES=INTNCPH,30421BR](http://jobs.brassring.com/1033/asp/tg/cim_home.asp?partnerid=434&siteid=47&CODES=INTNCPH,30421BR)

**University of Michigan**, Flint is hiring an **Assistant to Associate Professor in Public History**. PhD in American History or Public History required. In addition to survey courses in American history, teaching responsibilities will include courses in public history and candidate's other areas of expertise. Send letter of application, c.v., writing sample, and at least three letters of recommendation to Dr. Roy S. Hanashiro, Chair, Search Committee, UM-Flint, History Department, Flint, Michigan 48502. Applications received by 11 November 2009 will receive first consideration. [www.umich.edu/~jobs](http://www.umich.edu/~jobs)

**Department of History at the University of Tennessee** seeks to hire a full-time staff member at the rank of **Assistant or Associate Editor** for The Correspondence of James K. Polk project. Ideally, candidates will have a PhD in U.S. History and a record of pertinent scholarship consisting of publications and/or historical editing

experience. Email submissions are strongly preferred: [tchaffi1@utk.edu](mailto:tchaffi1@utk.edu). <http://web.utk.edu/~history/>

**The 106 Group**, a cultural resources management & planning firm, is seeking a **Cultural Resources Project Manager** in its St. Paul, Superior/Duluth or Washington DC area office. Minimum requirements include an MA or MS degree in architectural history, archaeology, historic preservation, planning, environmental sciences, or closely related field, and at least four years of work experience in Section 106 and/or NEPA planning processes. [www.106group.com/employment.htm](http://www.106group.com/employment.htm).



Two young girls with banners in English and Yiddish. Probably taken during the May 1, 1909 Labor Parade in NYC. Image courtesy of the Library of Congress; LC-DIG-pmsca06591. Blackfeet Teepees, Summit of Logan Pass, Mount Reynolds, Montana; 1933. Image courtesy of the NPS Historical Photo Collection; HPC-000133. The Savoy Ballroom; Harlem, NY.

## Wanted: Your Books and Journals, for Faculty and Students in China



Library card catalogue at Tsinghua University in Beijing, China. Courtesy of Flickr.com user OzinOH.

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# How Does Membership in NCPH Benefit You?

For nearly three decades, NCPH has been the leading advocate for history at work in the world. Through its awards, programs, publications, meetings, and other forms of professional development, NCPH recognizes and supports the work of individuals, like you, and the diverse institutions and organizations involved in public history.

Members of NCPH gain access to:

- Publications—Both print and online versions of *The Public Historian* and *Public History News*
- Professional Networking Opportunities—At the annual meeting and online communities
- Discounts—On Annual Meeting registration
- Resources—Job Listings, professional development offerings, conferences, and call lists
- Advocacy—On behalf of the profession
- Leadership Opportunities—Shape the field by serving on committees and task forces

### Membership Dues

Patron: \$500	New Professional: \$40
Sponsor: \$300	Student: \$30
Individual: \$70	

Institutional subscriptions are available through University of California Press. Join or renew online at [www.ncph.org](http://www.ncph.org).

## Welcome New Members!

Rebecca Amato Brooklyn, NY	Tabitha Erdey Pullman, WA	Bruce Harvey Syracuse, NY	Fred Mobley Decatur, GA	Kati Singel Morgantown, WV
Val Ballestrem Portland, OR	Laura Ettinger Potsdam, NY	Glenn Johnston Lutherville, MD	Steve Murray Montgomery, AL	John Southard Scottsdale, AZ
Edith Butler Eureka, CA	Jessica Forbes Plano, TX	Annette Kassis Citrus Heights, CA	Adam Nilsen Oakland, CA	Melinda Van Wingen Everett, WA
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Bridget Edwards Bloomington, IN	Gina Guzzon Royersford, PA	Jane Lee Jefferson City, MO	Bryanna Ryan Rancho Cordova, CA	David Woudstra Grand Rapids, MI
D. Stephen Elliott Cooperstown, NY	Julie Harris Ottawa, ON	Jeanine Mazak-Kahne Lansing, MI	Hans Schwartz Williamsburg, VA	

# A Sneak Peek at our 2010 Annual Meeting

March 10-14

“Currents of Change” will bring 900 to 1,000 people together as NCPH and the American Society for Environmental History meet in Portland, Oregon. All sessions and events will be open to all attendees. This is an opportunity to participate in an international conference covering the best in public history, environmental history, and their many intersections. It is also NCPH’s 30th Anniversary conference.

“Currents of Change” will include more than 130 sessions and the following workshops:

- The National Park Service and Environmental History – includes site visit to Columbia River Gorge along the historic Columbia River Highway
- People, Place, and Voice: Oral History Basics
- Careers in Public History
- Speed-Networking – bring your business cards, questions, and resumes to this professional twist on ‘speed-dating’

We will begin with a floating seminar on the Willamette River aboard the boat “Portland Rose,” led by historians and local environmental justice activists.

Ten field trips have been scheduled, including the following:

- 1) Fort Vancouver & Cathalpotle Plankhouse – bus tour of Hudson’s Bay Company fort and Columbia River Chinook archaeology site
- 2) Guided bus tour of METRO’s “Urban Growth Boundary,” an inside view of Oregon’s land-use planning system
- 3) Columbia River & Bonneville Dam tour guided by staff of Northwest Power and Conservation Council – addressing dams, hydropower, and salmon issues
- 4) Historic architecture walking tour of downtown Portland
- 5) Green Buildings walking & public transportation tour of LEED certified buildings
- 6) Downtown Portland parks walking tour
- 7) Birding at Sauvie Island on Columbia River
- 8) Dam-removal and water resource/management tour east of Portland (Sandy River and Bull Run)
- 9) Bicycle tour of Willamette River & Johnson Creek corridor
- 10) Exploring agriculture and local food networks

A joint dinner banquet will feature Jack Ohman, political cartoonist for *The Oregonian*, as keynote speaker. Our conference will also offer a joint book exhibit and poster session.

Located at the confluence of the Columbia and Willamette Rivers, Portland combines stunning scenery with an interesting built environment. The conference will be held in the Portland Hilton



Hotel downtown, near many restaurants, several historic districts, and a river walk along the Willamette (which includes spectacular views of Mt. Hood on clear days). Portland’s reputation as a European-style city comes from its relatively small business district, streetcar transportation, and accessible riverfront that includes a three-mile Esplanade trail on west and east banks of

the Willamette in downtown. Conference attendees can look forward to great coffee and brewpubs, an outstanding bookstore—Powell’s, and terrific jazz and blues music venues.



A city of parks, Portland includes substantial green areas and the largest urban forest in North America. The city has been called a laboratory for modern environmental city planning; it was rated as America’s “cleanest city” in 2006. The city’s reputation is based, in part, on tackling difficult problems, including re-plumbing the city to clean up the Willamette River and addressing Superfund designation of polluted harbor regions. Portland offers conference attendees opportunities to visit and tour places where environmental remediation and planning are addressing today’s important urban challenges.

See the NCPH website, [www.ncph.org](http://www.ncph.org), for more information.

Boats at Night. Image courtesy of the Portland Convention and Visitors Bureau. Neon Oregon. Image courtesy of Flickr User Thomas Hawk. Powell’s Books. Image courtesy of Flickr User peyri.



Image courtesy of Flickr user Indy Kethdy.

# 2010 NCPH AWARDS

## Now Accepting Nominations

Because of the early dates for the 2010 Annual Meeting, where the awards are presented, the NCPH call for submissions and nominations closes a bit sooner this year: book submissions are due November 15; materials for other awards by December 10. Details are at [www.ncph.org](http://www.ncph.org)

### Outstanding Public History Project Award

A \$1,000 award for work that contributes to a broader public reflection and appreciation of the past or that serves as a model of professional public history practice. Media/digital, exhibit, public programming, and written work are eligible for consideration.

### Excellence in Consulting Award

This \$500 prize is intended to recognize professionals whose primary engagement with public history is through consulting or contract work.

### Robert Kelley Memorial Award

This biennial \$500 award honors distinguished achievements by individuals, institutions, or nonprofit or corporate entities for making history relevant to individual lives of ordinary people outside of academia.

### Graduate Student Travel Award

Five \$300 travel grants for graduate students who have a poster or other presentation accepted for inclusion in the program of the NCPH Annual Meeting.

### Book Award

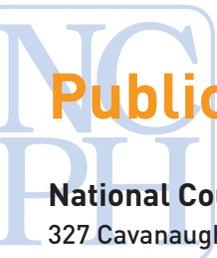
A \$1,000 award for the best book about or growing out of public history published within the previous two calendar years. Entries may be monographs, edited collections of articles or essays, or any other published work of comparable scope.

### New Professional Awards

Two \$500 travel grants to encourage new professionals to attend the annual meeting. Applicants must be members of NCPH, have been practicing public historians for no more than three years, and have no institutional travel support to attend the annual meeting.

### Student Project Award

For projects initiated as academic coursework and then implemented and recognized beyond the classroom as a contribution to the field, this \$500 travel grant supports the student author(s) attendance at the annual meeting.



## Public History News

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