

## The History in Children's Literature Melissa Prycer | MPRyker@dallasheritagevillage.org

When I was a kid, I spent most of my time in the nineteenth century. It all started with the Little House books. My grandmother read them to me, and they became the very first chapter books that I could read all by myself. From there, it was just a hop, skip, and jump to *Little Women*, *All-of-a-Kind Family*, *A Little Princess*, and *Anne of Green Gables*.

Yet, there were so many things in those books that I just didn't understand. What was consumption and cholera? Why were puffed-sleeves such a big deal? What did the food taste like? Why was Sara Crewe in India? What's this Great War they keep talking about? There's one key thing that all of these books have in common: they are either semi-autobiographical or they were written as contemporary and, over time, have become historical fiction. Either way, they're an important source in learning about history. A source that too many historians have ignored. To me, they should be considered in much the way memoirs or oral history are considered—perhaps not true in every detail, but more true than not.

By the time I got to college, I was convinced that I was going to be an English major and become a writer. Then, I got an internship at the Dallas Historical Society, going through their archives and writing educational curricula. It took me almost another year to admit that I was really a historian, which surprised me at the time. Perhaps it shouldn't have—I had already spent most of my childhood in the past.

As I began to dive into the study of history, I began to make all sorts of random connections between the history I was studying and the books I had loved as a child. I kept returning to one book in particular, *Rilla of Ingleside* by L. M. Montgomery. Set during World War I and published in 1921, it's one of the few novels about the home front. Recently, a new edition of this classic was published in Canada.

Benjamin Lefebvre and Andrea McKenzie have put together a wonderful edition, complete with introduction, timeline, glossary of events, and some World War I poetry. It beautifully sets the story in its historical context. When I first read this book, I had so many questions about World War I, and it took years to find the answers. But now, all of those answers are in one beautiful package!

*continued on page 3* →



At Dallas Heritage Village's recent Plow, Plant and Shear/Girl Scout Day event, visitors were invited to explore the past through the eyes of Laura Ingalls Wilder. Visitors made sunbonnets, searched for beads at camp fires, completed chores around the village to earn key items for crafts, and listened to selections from the books.



### For the First Time, Membership in NCPH Comes with Access to All *TPH* Issues

**An individual NCPH membership** now provides digital access to all back issues of *The Public Historian*. In January 2011, the University of California Press and JSTOR, the not-for-profit archive, launched the Current Scholarship Project "to make current and historical scholarly content available on a single, integrated platform...." Previously, members received digital access only to the current issue and the past three years of the journal. To read or search older issues, one had to be at an institution, such as a college or university library, which held a major JSTOR subscription. (Register your MyJSTOR account at [jstor.org](http://jstor.org). Call UC Press toll free at 877-262-4226 with questions.)

**Institutional subscribers**, such as libraries, museums, government offices, nonprofits, and for-profit corporations, can now subscribe to *TPH* and receive JSTOR's complete back run of digital *TPH* issues without having to pay for a subscription to JSTOR's entire Arts & Sciences VII Collection. If you have been wanting your institution to get back issues of *The Public Historian*, it is now possible and very affordable.  
<http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/libraries/current-scholarship-program>



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- Wichita State University, Department of History

HISTORY supports the **NCPH** for promoting the value and significance of history every day.



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## The History of Children's Literature (cont. from page 1)

If I had to pick just one book to explain my whole thesis about kidlit history—that there is some history that is found in children's literature and can't be found anywhere else—this book would be the one I would pick. Primary sources on the emotions and daily lives of the women that watched and waited are hard to find. We tend to document the extraordinary. Though these women were living in extraordinary times, I don't think they realized how much their lives were changing.

Montgomery knew she was telling the story of the masses of Canadian women that worked at home and waited. She wrote "In my latest story, 'Rilla of Ingleside,' I have tried, as far as in me lies, to depict the fine and splendid way in which the girls of Canada reacted to the Great War—their bravery, patience and self-sacrifice. The book is theirs in a sense in which none of my other books have been: for my other books were written for anyone who might like to read them: but 'Rilla' was written for the girls of the great young land I love, whose destiny it will be their duty and privilege to shape and share." In their introduction, Lefebvre and McKenzie

write, "*Rilla of Ingleside* thus pictures, as no other war novel of its time does, a uniquely Canadian perspective about the women and families who battled to keep the home fires burning throughout this tumultuous era." Montgomery was a historian, even though her books are always shelved with children's literature.

In my current job as a museum educator, I'm pulling children's literature in whenever and wherever I can. Using books that kids or adults are familiar with is a wonderful way to make connections with history. And in talking with colleagues, I know I'm not the only one that can trace a love of history back to literature first discovered as a child. In the last couple of years, I've started paying more attention to the threads of history woven through these books, and it's been a fascinating journey. If you're interested in coming along, please join me on my blog: [www.kidlithistory.com](http://www.kidlithistory.com)

*Melissa Prycer has an MA in Public History. She is currently the Director of Education at Dallas Heritage Village.*

### @NCPHConsultants

The Consultants Committee recently launched a Twitter account @NCPHConsultants. If you are active on Twitter, please follow us. Those not using this form of social media can still view the page by visiting <http://twitter.com/NCPHconsultants>.



## 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: [ncph@iupui.edu](mailto:ncph@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. 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.



John Dichtl  
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## Semi-Annual Report

*The following is an updated version of my report to the Board of Directors during the 2011 Annual Meeting in Pensacola.*

### Membership & Subscriptions

Because NCPH is a membership organization, I usually begin my semi-annual report with an update on our numbers. We currently have 1,180 members. Dropping 11% immediately after the economic crash in late 2008 and early 2009, the membership grew by 5% from spring 2009 to spring 2010, and by more than 10% from spring 2010 to spring 2011. Taking a longer view, NCPH grew by approximately 25% from 2005 to 2010.

NCPH's expansion in individual memberships is somewhat counterbalanced by the continuing downward trend in institutional subscriptions to *The Public Historian*. The erosion has been serious, perhaps as high as 33% during the past decade. Still, our journal is faring better than most others in the humanities, which have seen more precipitous declines as institutions cut costs and as digital access has allowed an institution to share a single subscription across its entire campus. Nevertheless, the new Current Scholarship Program (CSP) pioneered by JSTOR, the nonprofit archive of more than 1,000 scholarly journals, and our publisher, the University of California Press, has created one consolidated platform which is bringing more attention to *TPH* and is making it easier and more enticing for libraries to subscribe. Our journal is now one of 175 publications from 19 different publishers/presses that are available to institutions via the CSP platform. This means that libraries, museums, national park sites, historical societies, and other institutions can get a *TPH* subscription—and ONLY a *TPH* subscription—covering current issues and back issues from 1978 to 2011, without having to add the entire Arts & Sciences Collection VII, which contains *TPH* and 13 other journals. JSTOR, UC Press, and other publishers are breaking down the silos and offering subscribers more flexibility.

### Finances

Despite the bad economy and rising costs everywhere, NCPH is holding steady financially. Income from our terrific group of Patron members has unfortunately shrunk by \$4,000 in the past year as financial pressures have pushed some institutions in that group to renew their support at the lower Partner level instead. Cuts in personal, office, and institutional budgets have reduced participation in tours, meal events, and workshops at the annual meeting. Also affecting the budget slightly negatively are the two joint annual meetings (2010 and 2012), which require much more coordination than NCPH stand-alone conferences, are more expensive to plan, and which generate less income due to overlap in memberships and contrasts in budgeting, pricing, and marketing. Meeting in conjunction with other organizations has important benefits for members and the field, however, and NCPH will be gathering with members of the Organization of American Historians in Milwaukee for a combined 2012 Annual Meeting next April 19-22.

The total income for FY2010 was \$210,171 and total expenses were \$224,121, leaving a deficit of \$13,950. The previous year, FY2009, however, produced a surplus of \$15,400, and FY2011 is projected also to leave a slight surplus. NCPH's total endowment now exceeds \$447,000 in Vanguard accounts, along with \$7,000 cash in our endowment savings account, for a grand total of \$454,000. As decided by the board in October 2010, 20% of the endowment is now in a Socially Responsible Investing fund at Vanguard.

### Development

Alan Newell and Shelley Bookspan of the Development Committee have been joined by Connie Schulz, Bill Bryans, Mike Devine, Patrick O'Bannon, and Sharon Babaian as inaugural members of the NCPH Legacy Circle. Each has committed to providing a substantial future gift from their estate. Collectively they will be providing more than \$200,000 of support for NCPH. Annual fundraising for 2010, our 30th anniversary year, was \$11,425. For 2009 it was \$6,350. Thank you to all our contributors, past and future!

### Programs

As part of its memorandum of agreement with the Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis to house the NCPH executive office, NCPH staff work with the IUPUI

Department of History from time to time on public history programming of mutual interest. On November 9, 2010, the NCPH office organized a "Careers in History Symposium" with the department its Graduate Student History Association for 140 undergraduate and graduate student and faculty registrants from across Indiana, as well as from Ohio and Kentucky.

NCPH is leading an effort to build the International Federation for Public History under the auspices of the International Committee of Historical Societies (CISH). Board member Anna Adamek, American Historical Association Executive Director Emerita Arnita A. Jones, and I hosted an inaugural meeting of the federation during the NCPH conference Pensacola. The group is now revising its bylaws and electing a steering and a program committee.

In answer to the call for the 2012 Annual Meeting with the Organization of American Historians in Milwaukee, OAH and NCPH received about 280 session proposals. To this the joint committee added a healthy number sessions it had solicited. NCPH's five representatives on the committee met with their nine OAH counterparts for more than nine hours during the OAH Annual Meeting in Houston in March. Meanwhile, the OAH Executive Board announced it was directing its members of the program committee to create plenary and other sessions focusing on the current Wisconsin labor issues, especially ones that will connect with the local community. The OAH board also authorized \$5,000 to be spent on special expenses associated with bringing the "public" into some of these Wisconsin/labor sessions. The resulting program includes approximately 220 sessions.

### Committees

The full agendas of NCPH's numerous standing and ad hoc committees has been covered in the previous two issues of *Public History News*. From the Consultants' foray into Twitter and Curriculum & Training's recommended reading lists in public history, to Professional Development's exploration of how NCPH should provide continuing education and Long Range Planning's focus on where we are headed, our committees are hard at work for us all.

# Newly Elected NCPH Leaders

We are pleased to introduce NCPH's recently elected Secretary-Treasurer-Elect and members of the Board of Directors and Nominating Committee. They assumed their duties at the conclusion of the annual meeting in April 2011.



**Kristine Navarro-McElhaney**  
Secretary-Treasurer-Elect

Kristine Navarro-McElhaney has served for ten years as the

director of the Institute of Oral History at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). The institute's Bracero Project received the 2010 NCPH Outstanding Public History Award. Navarro-McElhaney serves on the El Paso Historical Commission, the Historic Missions Restoration Board, and as president of the UTEP Diversity Committee. Earlier in her career she was the executive director of the Mission Trails Association, and before that worked in the Accounting Department of Chase Bank in El Paso.



**Brian Joyner**  
Board of Directors

Brian Joyner works in the National Historic Landmarks Program. For the past decade he has written about

preservation matters related to diverse communities, serving for a time in the Cultural Resources Directorate of the National Park Service. He has also worked with the National Park Foundation's African American Experience Fund. Prior to that, Joyner was a special assistant on the planning of the City Museum of Washington, D.C. in 1998-1999, and was employed in the Department of Energy as a contractor.



**Liz Ševčenko**  
Board of Directors

Liz Ševčenko was founding director of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, a network of historic

sites—from the Gulag Museum in Russia to the District Six Museum in South Africa—that foster public dialogue on pressing contemporary issues. Before launching the Coalition, she was vice president of programs at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York. She is currently working on the Guantánamo Public Memory Project.



**William Willingham**  
Board of Directors

William Willingham has 41 years of experience in the fields of American history, historic preservation,

architectural history, cultural resources management, and water resources development. He has taught at the college level for 11 years, served as a District and Division Historian for the Corps of Engineers for 15 years, and spent 14 years as a consulting historian. He has authored numerous books, scholarly articles, reviews, consultant reports, and professional papers. Willingham received his PhD in American History in 1972 from Northwestern University.



**Melissa Bingmann**  
Nominating Committee

Melissa Bingmann is the director of Public History at West Virginia University and was a faculty member

at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis, where she taught graduate classes in public history and museum studies. She has eleven years of experience in museum education and worked at the Historic Columbia Foundation, Chicago Architecture Foundation/Prairie Avenue House Museums, Mesa Southwest Museum, and the Rhode Island Historical Society. In 2009 she was the program chair for the 2009 NCPH Annual Meeting in Providence, RI.



**Robert Weible**  
Nominating Committee

Robert Weible is State Historian of New York and chief curator of the New York State Museum. He previously worked

in several positions with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and as Historian at Lowell National Historical Park in Massachusetts. Weible has served NCPH in various capacities, including president in 2005-06.

## Section 106 Comments on NMAAHC

The Smithsonian Institution wants to hear your opinions about the National Museum of African American History and Culture. As part of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (Public Law 89-665; 16 U.S.C 470 *et seq*), the Smithsonian must solicit public comment and assess the effect the proposed museum will have on nearby properties of historic significance.

The museum, opening in 2015, will be located between 14th and 15th Streets, N.W., and Constitution Avenue and Madison Drive, N.W., near the Washington Monument, the Federal Triangle, and the National Mall. We're interested to know your thoughts on how this newest addition to the architecture and history of Washington, D.C. might change the historic characteristics and uses of the site and its surroundings.

Please go to [www.nmaahceis.com](http://www.nmaahceis.com) and click "Background Materials: Section 106" which contains support documents for public review and a list of historic resources. Renderings of the design and placement of the museum are found under "Background Materials: NMAAHC Tier II". Please send your comments to [preservation@si.edu](mailto:preservation@si.edu) or write to: Amy Ballard, Architectural History and Historic Preservation, Smithsonian Institution, P.O. Box 37012, MRC 511, Washington, D.C. 20013-7012.

# → National Coalition for History Update



Lee White  
lwhite@historycoalition.org

## House Bill Introduced to Eliminate Teaching American History Grants

Legislation has been introduced in the House of Representatives that would eliminate the Teaching American History (TAH) grants program at the U.S. Department of Education. The bill (H.R. 1891), the "Setting New Priorities in Education Spending Act," would terminate forty-three K-12 federal education programs.

The President's fiscal year 2012 budget request for the Department of Education would eliminate Teaching American History grants (TAH) as a separately funded program. However, the Administration proposed consolidating history education into a new program called Effective Teaching and Learning for a Well-Rounded Education. This reflects the President's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization proposal, the *Blueprint for Reform* that was released in March 2010.

It is important to note that this legislation would remove the authorization for Teaching America History grants. It is not an appropriations bill that provides actual funding for the program. So unless and until H.R. 1891 passes both houses of Congress, TAH still exists. It will be left to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to decide whether TAH receives any money in the fiscal year 2012 Education Department funding bill that the Congress will consider later this summer. In the recently enacted fiscal year 2011 budget, the Teaching American History Grants program sustained a cut of \$73 million (-61%) down from \$119 million in FY '10 to \$46 million.

## Gettysburg Casino Proposal Killed

On April 14, the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board rejected a proposal to bring casino gambling to the doorstep of Gettysburg National Military Park. Since it

was announced last year, the proposal to open the Mason-Dixon Gaming Resort a half-mile from Gettysburg National Military Park has drawn immense opposition—an April survey by a national polling and research firm found that only 17 percent of Pennsylvanians supported the idea, with 66 percent actively opposed and 57 percent indicating that such a facility would be "an embarrassment" to the Commonwealth. Last year nearly 300 American historians sent a letter to the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board in opposition to a proposal to license the casino. Beyond the individual signatories, the NCPH, American Historical Association, National Coalition for History, Organization of American Historians, Society for Military History, and Southern Historical Association sent a separate letter of opposition to the Gaming Board.



Proposed site of Smithsonian Latino Museum, west northwest of the U.S. Capitol. Courtesy of National Museum of the American Latino Commission Final Report

## Commission Recommends Establishment of Smithsonian Latino Museum

On May 4, the National Museum of the American Latino (NMAL) Commission delivered its Final Report to President Obama and Congressional leaders. The panel's findings call for the establishment of a museum on a site at the base of Capitol Hill that would come under the administration of the Smithsonian Institution.

### COMMISSION FINDINGS:

There is a need for a national museum in Washington, DC, that is devoted to the preservation, presentation, and interpretation of American Latino art, cultural expressions, and experiences; a museum that "illuminates the American story for the benefit of all." The commission determined that a private fundraising goal of \$300 million over a



10-year period is achievable. This estimate is based on an overall \$600 million total cost figure, with a 50-50 split between private donations and congressional appropriations. Approximately \$463 million would be needed to open a national museum on the Capitol Site. Upon opening, approximately \$50 million is needed annually for operations/ maintenance.

### COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS:

The museum should be established within the Smithsonian Institution as the Smithsonian American Latino Museum. According to a statement issued by the Smithsonian, "If Congress passes legislation to establish and fund a national Latino museum—the National Museum of the American Latino—the Smithsonian would be prepared to welcome it to the Smithsonian family of museums in Washington." Congress should designate the Capitol Site, adjacent to the U.S. Capitol Reflecting Pool, as the location for the museum.

The commission found that no federal appropriation would be necessary for the first six years upon establishment of the museum. Private donations could sufficiently fund the initial years of planning and organization that are required in the pre-design, pre-construction phase of such a project.

*NCPH is a member of the National Coalition for History (NCH), a Washington, DC-based nonprofit educational organization providing leadership in history-related advocacy. Consisting of more than 60 organizations, NCH serves as the historical profession's national voice in the United States and acts as a clearinghouse of news and information. Anyone may subscribe to the weekly NCH newsletter, The Washington Update, by visiting <http://historycoalition.org/subscribe/> or subscribe to the RSS feed by going to <http://feeds.feedburner.com/historycoalition>*

# NCPH Board of Directors Spring Meeting

On Thursday, April 7, 2011, the NCPH Board of Directors convened during the Annual Meeting in Pensacola, Florida, and took the following actions:

- Agreed to form a committee of the board to solicit new or reprise NCPH sessions for other organizations' conferences, to promote public history.
- Approved the Minutes of the Fall 2010 Board Meeting in Chicago, Illinois.
- Voted to amend the NCPH Bylaws to add the immediate past president to the Nominating Committee ex officio, to identify the organization's fiscal year as January 1 to December 31, to specifically allow electronic balloting in the annual election, and to clarify that the election concludes at least two months prior to the annual meeting.
- Discussed a policy on panelists using Skype or other video conferencing tools during the annual meeting.
- Reviewed the Workshop Guidelines, which the Professional Development Committee drafted.
- Voted to use endowment earnings to cover the expense of providing complimentary Awards Luncheon tickets to award winners.
- Voted to increase the Excellence in Consulting Award from two \$300 prizes to two \$500 prizes.
- Voted to approve the Book Award Committee's proposal that there should continue to be honorable mentions but no more than two each year.
- Voted to limit eligibility for the Graduate Student Travel Award to NCPH members.
- Voted to approve the Robinson Prize Committee's several recommendations to improve the prize by publicizing it more widely and by making its criteria more flexible.
- Heard a report from Editor Randy Bergstrom about upcoming special editions and focuses and about plans to use alternative

review formats in *The Public Historian*. The board also discussed the UC Press marketing and circulation report for the journal.

- Heard a report from Cathy Stanton, chair of the Digital Media Group, about launching a new blog, which will encompass and absorb, among other things, the existing NCPH conference blog and *Off the Wall* blog.
- Continued discussing the negotiations with dean's office and Department of History at UC Santa Barbara about hosting *The Public Historian* editorial offices.



Executive Board Meeting in Pensacola

Between the Fall 2010 and the Spring 2011 and board meetings, the board took the following actions:

- Through the Executive Committee, agreed to sign a letter from the Coalition for the Civil War Sesquicentennial, of which NCPH is a member organization, to Senator Jim Webb (D-VA) in support of his reintroduction of legislation to establish a commission to commemorate the sesquicentennial of the American Civil War.

## Building an Encyclopedia through Civic Engagement

How does Philadelphia live up to its reputation as the "City of Brotherly Love"? Does Pennsylvania's foundation as a "Holy Experiment" continue to foster community in the Philadelphia region? Have Philadelphians risen to the challenge of maintaining a "Green Country Town"? In an unusual initiative that puts civic engagement at the forefront of creating a regional encyclopedia, these questions and others are being debated in public programs that will shape a planned *Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*.

Launched with a civic partnership and planning workshop in 2009, the Encyclopedia is envisioned as not only a reference source but also a gateway that will link users to numerous digital archive projects and to museums and historic sites in the Philadelphia region. Content will be published online as it is completed, allowing for public review and comment. The editors expect to create additional online and print

resources, including a printed volume to be published by the University of Pennsylvania Press.

The public program series, the Greater Philadelphia Roundtable, has been organized in partnership with the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and is supported by the Pennsylvania Humanities Council. Prior to each program, an essay is published in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and on Newsworks.org, the news site of public television station WHYY. In the subsequent public program, discussion begins with the essayist and a panel of scholars and other experts, but then opens to audience participation. Suggestions are collected on comment cards and posted online as a step in building a table of contents for the encyclopedia.

NCPH members are welcome to participate online at <http://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org>. The project is based at the Mid-



Participants in the "City of Brotherly Love" roundtable discuss topics for *The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*. More than sixty people attended this event at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania on March 23.

Atlantic Regional Center for the Humanities (MARCH) at Rutgers-Camden and is led by Charlene Mires and Howard Gillette of Rutgers-Camden and Randall Miller of St. Joseph's University.

# Congratulations 2011 Award Winners!

Recipients of 2011 NCPH Annual Awards were honored at the Annual Meeting in Pensacola, on Saturday, April 9.

The full 2011 Awards Program is at [www.ncph.org](http://www.ncph.org).



NCPH Vice President Robert Weyeneth and Elizabeth Osborn, winner of the Outstanding Public History Project Award

## Outstanding Public History Project Award

“My Place is in the Voting Booth”  
**Elizabeth R. Osborn** and **Sarah Kidwell**,  
Indiana Supreme Court

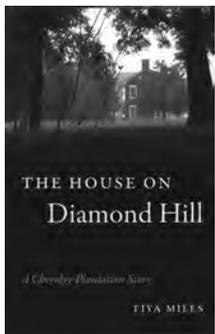
Under the auspices of the Supreme Court of Indiana “Courts in the Classroom” initiative, this well-conceived project educates students about the women’s suffrage movement and nurtures an understanding of law and the American court system.

## Honorable Mention

“Polk Street: Lives In Transition.” **Joey Plaster**,  
Independent Consultant  
A multi-faceted history project sponsored by  
the GLBT Historical Society.

“Cleveland Historical.” **Mark Tebeau**,  
Cleveland State University  
This is a free mobile smart phone application  
developed by the Center for Public History  
and Digital Humanities at Cleveland State  
University.

## NCPH Book Award



*The House on Diamond Hill: A Cherokee Plantation Story* (University of North Carolina Press, 2010).  
**Tiya Miles**, University of Michigan  
This book illustrates the ways in which university-based historians can

collaborate with working public historians to tell complicated and controversial stories in an accessible and engaging manner.

## Honorable Mention

*Those About Him Remained Silent: The Battle Over W.E.B. Du Bois* (University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

**Amy Bass**, The College of New Rochelle  
An exemplary local study of a 1960s campaign to honor Du Bois embedded in racial politics, Cold War tensions, culture wars, and insider/outsider divisions.

*Voices from the Back Stairs: Interpreting Servants’ Lives at Historic House Museums* (Northern Illinois University Press, 2010).

**Jennifer Pustz**, Historic New England  
A comprehensive and valuable survey of the ways in which historic sites throughout the U.S. address domestic servitude.



Patrick O’Bannon (Individual Excellence in Consulting Award recipient) and Maria F. Schroeder, Marlin R. Ingalls, and Carl A. Merry (Group Excellence in Consulting Award recipients)

## Excellence in Consulting Award

**Patrick W. O’Bannon**, Gray & Pape, Inc.,  
“Working in the Dry: Cofferdams, In-River Construction, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers”

An innovative study in its use of historical analysis for documentation of engineering and construction methods associated with a particular genre of engineering structures.

**Carl A. Merry**, **Marlin R. Ingalls**, and **Maria F. Schroeder**, Office of the State Archaeologist, University of Iowa  
“Iowa’s Historic Roads: A National Register Study of Pre-1948 Arterial Highways”

A model study of transportation-related resources, it includes exhaustive investigations of highway engineering and construction in the Midwest during a crucial period of road-building.

## G. Wesley Johnson Award

“Public Policy and the Public Historian: The Changing Place of Historians in Public Life in France and the UK,” *The Public Historian*, Summer 2010.

**Mary Stevens**, University College London  
Focusing on recent developments in France and Britain, this book is a sweeping, theoretical, and frankly alarming look at the contentious fight over who “controls” memory when national discourse about history becomes public policy.



Christy Johnson, Patrick Sullivan, and Mary Beth Reed, winners of the Michael C. Robinson Prize for Historical Analysis with NCPH Vice President Robert Weyeneth

## Michael C. Robinson Prize for Historical Analysis

*The Ranch House in Georgia: Guidelines for Evaluation*

**Patrick Sullivan** and **Mary Beth Reed**, New South Associates, and **Christy Johnson**, Georgia Transmission Corporation.

The thoroughly researched, well written, and beautifully designed book that resulted from their project has been the basis for a statewide training session for preservation professionals and has changed the survey policy for Georgia’s architecture..

## Honorable Mention

“Unsealing Federal Grand Jury Records (1996-2010)”

**Bruce Craig**, University of Prince Edward Island

**NCPH Student Project Award**  
**“Uncertain Futures: Americans and Science Fiction in the Early Cold War Era, 1945-1965”**

**Morgan Hubbard**, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Unusual in its placement of science fiction in a local as well as national perspective, this project was a physical exhibit in fall 2010, and a highly sophisticated web exhibit ([www.library.umass.edu/spcoll/exhibits/uncertain/](http://www.library.umass.edu/spcoll/exhibits/uncertain/)).

**New Professional Travel Awards**  
**HRA New Professional Travel Award**

**Erik Christiansen**, Rhode Island College  
 An enthusiastic new faculty member, Christiansen is helping to reorganize the institution’s undergraduate public history program.

**NCPH New Professional Travel Award**

**Nicole Annette Moore**, Culture and Heritage Museums in Rock Hill, South Carolina

Moore’s passion for public history has played out in her work as a researcher and historical interpreter of slave life at and in gathering oral histories of Civil Rights Movement participants.

**Honorable Mention**

Lauren Safranek is the Lead Content Developer for the American History for Citizenship Project with the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution.

**Graduate Student Travel Awards**

**Charlotte Egerton**, University of North Carolina at Wilmington

**Paula Hunt**, University of Missouri, Columbia

**Sarah McCormick**, University of California, Riverside

**Angela Sirna**, West Virginia University

**Joan Frangasz Troyano**, George Washington University



Joan Frangasz Troyano, Charlotte Egerton, Angela Sirna, and Sarah McCormick (Graduate Student Travel Award recipients) and Nicole Moore (New Professional Award recipient)

*Congratulations 2011 award recipients and thank you award selection committees!*

**Welcome New Members!**

|   |  |                                      |  |  |  |                                       |
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| Sheila Aird<br>Saratoga Springs, NY               | Aaron Chism<br>Cordova, TN             | Amy Gagnon<br>Wethersfield, CT       | Shannon Keller<br>Bellmawr, NJ                 | Mandi Magnuson-Hung<br>Burlington, NJ    | Jordan Poole<br>Atlanta, GA            | Katharine Thompson<br>Columbia, SC    |
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|   | Katelyn Fredericks<br>Indianapolis, IN | Elizabeth Kay<br>Brookeville, MD     |  |  |  |                                       |

# NCPH New Professional Travel Award Winner

Nicole Annette Moore, Culture and Heritage Museums in Rock Hill, South Carolina



Courtesy of Windy Tuck.

I crossed a few borders to change my life and it was the best thing I could have ever done. Participating at a conference for the first time, I didn't know what to expect and was nervous. What I found when I got to Pensacola was that the atmosphere

of the conference, like the city, was very welcoming and put me at ease. The opening reception let me know that the conference would be the start of something good and lead to some major changes. As I made my way to various sessions and heard other public historians share their passions, I found myself with a strong sense of belonging.

From the Speed Networking event, to the field trip, "From Black Slaves to Blue Angels," I always walked away learning *something*. And I walked away with opportunities and chances to become a better historian. You always hope that what you do is interesting and important, but to have those ideas confirmed by your peers who have varying degrees of experience is something I never saw coming. To be encouraged by so many and told "You're on the right track just keep it up" was the recharge I needed when I was at a point where I wanted to advance, but did not know how to get the process started. This is where I'd like to thank Dr. Regina Faden for inviting me to join the panel "The Story of Slavery across the Atlantic."

As an interpreter of slave life, it is interesting to take scholarly research and combine the expectations of museum executives and make a product the public will find enjoyable and educational. Being able to talk an



Courtesy of Windy Tuck.

audience about what it is I do, and the challenges it entails was the most liberating experience in my career thus far. I was able to discuss what it is I do as a public historian and why it makes a difference to a public who is still slightly uncomfortable about the institution of slavery. What Pensacola did for me was let me know it was okay to do what I do and challenge others to think about how we talk about slavery. Being a part of the National Council on Public History let me know that there really are professionals like myself, taking their passion for history and sharing it with the public and LOVING IT! That alone made me realize I'm doing the right thing.

The icing on the cake, other than an amazing presentation with my panel of Dr. Regina Faden and Dr. John Coombs, was being named one of two New Professionals for 2011. It was something that has made me aware of my potential and what I have already accomplished. When your work isn't always recognized by those who see it every day, you can become discouraged. I see this award as an investment that NCPH is making in me. I believe that the investment will be well worth it, and as I got on the plane back to Charlotte, I immediately started planning how to act on my inspiration. I have been emailing people I met at the conference with whom I want to work and who have been dedicated to making things happen for me that I never thought could happen before. So thank you, for the opportunity and for changing my life.

# HRA New Professional Travel Award Winner

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

Erik Christiansen, Rhode Island College



Morgan Hubbard (Student Project Award) and Erik Christiansen (HRA New Professional Award)

I would like to express my appreciation, not just for the award that allowed me to be in Pensacola but also for everyone involved in the 2011 conference, which I believe was an unqualified success. As a "new professional" in the field, I cannot imagine a better forum for sharing and absorbing ideas about the teaching and practice of public history.

The coincidence of the NCPH conference overlapping with the threat of a government shutdown and the beginning of the Civil War Sesquicentennial helped to make the relevance of public history terrifically apparent. As I am involved in Rhode Island's ongoing sesquicentennial planning, in Pensacola I found myself thinking a lot about how public history might constructively utilize connections between historic civil strife and the current political divide. Fortunately, several sessions dealt with commemorating the Civil War sesquicentennial. The recurring themes I heard at these panels, which included the need for greater public understanding of the causes and staggering costs of the conflict, the need for open and frank discussion with sometimes hostile interest groups, and the potential for developing new appreciation of the meanings of citizenship, seemed to speak directly to current events—or *could*, as long as the kinds of projects presented in Pensacola continue and flourish.

continued on bottom of next page →

# Student Project Award Winner

Morgan Hubbard, University of Massachusetts Amherst

By all accounts, the 2011 conference of the National Council on Public History was a big success. My personal experience certainly bore this out. In my days in Pensacola, I attended an informative workshop on institutional sustainability, sat in on some fascinating panels, and took in the history of the town.

It's incumbent on historians not to shy from hard questions, and NCPH does the field and the public a service by showcasing work that challenges us. I recall one panel in particular that dealt with underground economies, illicit border crossings, and modern-day slavery. It was a stirring reminder that historians can and should engage with modernity's ugliest issues, and bring their perspectives to bear on the hard questions of citizenship and social justice.

For me, though, the most gratifying part of the conference wasn't any particular event. For me the best part was what happened in the margins of scheduled events. Between sessions, walking from the hotel to the historic village, out to dinner with some old friends and some new ones—these are the places where important professional relationships are founded.

Group conversations go interesting and unpredictable places. On my second night in Pensacola I found myself at a tiny vegan cafe (on open mic night, no less) behind the Crowne Plaza hotel. I was at a big, round, family-style table with a few other UMass Amherst grad students and a couple of people I had just met. I honestly don't remember the food. I do remember that our collective conversation was a frank and fruitful debate about the state of the public history field. The following day, I saw my mentor from last year's conference in Portland, Oregon. She was in Pensacola only for a couple of days, but we managed an impromptu lunch on Palafox Street. It was just lucky happenstance that we bumped into each other when we did.

Each morning of the conference, after departing my Days Inn room, walking past the memorial to "our Confederate dead," and slipping under I-110, I attended a delicious sponsored breakfast that did my heart no favors. Fittingly for NCPH, these breakfasts were friendly, casual events where the conversation, while informal, often offered as much substance as the formal sessions and yet also allowed for the forging of new friendships and extraordinarily useful professional relationships. The intimacy of the conference and the atmosphere of inclusion was something that I think had less to do with size—smaller conferences I've been to have felt far less inclusive—and more to do with the planning choices made and the culture of the organization.

The formal sessions were in that sense no different. Every session I attended, from Thursday morning through Saturday afternoon, offered a satisfying blend of theoretical problematizing with more positivist and practical approaches to engaging or confronting various publics with the past. I am particularly indebted to those presenters who shared their experiences in building an academic public history program. Gathering perspectives on this consuming task was my primary purpose in attending the conference; my expectations were exceeded. I left Pensacola excited about the new ideas that were forming in my mind after hearing the presentations on the practicum



NCPH has many purposes, but forging connections is surely one of its most important. Enabling and nurturing professional relationships between people is the best way to grow our field. And putting like-minded people face-to-face is the best way to make those relationships happen.

On the second-to-last day of the conference, I was honored to receive the NCPH award for best student project for my web exhibit *Uncertain Futures: Americans and Science Fiction in the Early Cold War Era, 1945-1965*. (<http://www.library.umass.edu/spcoll/exhibits/uncertain/>) Working on the exhibit introduced me to the tribulations of public history—though it was fun, it was also challenging. Receiving the student project award introduced me to the joy of recognition for one's hard work. I was honored to receive the award.

NCPH members are doing so many innovative things. And the organization did an amazing job assembling this conference. I want to commend them all for their efforts and say that I'm excited to attend more NCPH conferences in the future!

course and other projects undertaken by students directed by their public history mentors. Community histories, preservation, exhibits, books, websites—my little notebook (thanks, Historic Pensacola Village!) contains enough project ideas to keep our program at Rhode Island College going for years to come. I look forward to sharing the results of stealing your ideas in Milwaukee next year.



## Jobs

Searching for or posting a public history job or internship on the NCPH website is free!

<http://ncph.org/cms/careers-training/jobs/>

# HISTORIANS

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*The following excerpt is borrowed with permission from the May 2011 issue of the American Historical Association's (AHA) Perspectives on History. Anthony Grafton (Princeton University) is the president of the AHA, and Jim Grossman is its executive director.*

## The Imperative of Public Participation

Anthony Grafton and Jim Grossman

*Take risks. Get out there in public and talk about history and why it matters.<sup>1</sup>*

As the two of us were thinking last summer about our prospective leadership roles at the AHA, Jim decided to make his position clear from the outset: we historians ought to take seriously our role as mediators between the past and the present. Three months later, in his inaugural column, Tony attacked the issue from a different angle. He pointed to the direct relevance of historical scholarship—even scholarship that might seem arcane: “Historians of everything from drought in ancient Egypt to the economy of modern China do, in fact, have knowledge that matters—knowledge based on painstaking analysis of hard sources, which they convey to students and readers as clearly and passionately as can be managed.”<sup>2</sup>

We remain committed to these braided notions of the role of historians and of historical scholarship in public life. From the start,

we wanted to insist that our research has value for the world beyond the classroom and scholarly journal. It stimulates critical thinking, it contributes to our knowledge of our neighbors and ourselves, and it provides vital context for contemporary conversation. Wringing your hands over our “academically adrift” educational system and the inability of our youth to take ideas seriously? Read Plato. Want to wrestle with the concept of peer culture as an aspect of that problem? Read Paula Fass’s *The Damned and the Beautiful: American Youth in the 1920s*. But we were also urging our colleagues to be proactive. Write an op-ed piece about higher education, drawing on your historical expertise. Run for the local school board to give your community the benefit of your learning. Help create an exhibition at the historical society or the library. Our scholarship is useful in one context in the form of the books and articles that we write for colleagues and students. It is useful in other, equally significant, ways in more public venues. “Public culture,” Jim wrote, “would benefit from the voices of historians.”

To read the rest of Grafton and Grossman’s column, visit <http://www.historians.org/Perspectives/issues/2011/1105/1105pre1.cfm>

### Notes

1. The concluding sentence of Jim Grossman, “History in a Public Square,” *Perspectives on History*, 48:6 (September 2010). Online at [www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2010/1009/1009exe1.cfm](http://www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2010/1009/1009exe1.cfm).
2. Anthony Grafton, “History under Attack,” *Perspectives on History*, 49:1 (January 2011). Online at [www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2011/1101/1101pre1.cfm](http://www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2011/1101/1101pre1.cfm).  
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# Annual Meeting Wrap Up

Five hundred fifty public historians flocked toward the warm ocean breezes of Pensacola, Florida, for the NCPH Annual Meeting, April 6-9. Despite some unusually persistent fog, there was plenty of sun for those of us fleeing winter's grasp. The conference's open venues—from Historic Pensacola Village—which includes a gelato shop and a brewpub—to the Crowne Plaza Hotel, six blocks away, allowed attendees to mingle among beautiful examples of colonial architecture and tropical flora while walking between sites or chatting on the shuttle buses. One conversational motif of the meeting was what would happen to federal employees, such as National Park Service historians, in the pending government shut down.

The Opening Reception, sponsored by the History Channel, was a bit windy, but featured a chattering throng of public historians enjoying good food and a view of Pensacola Bay. Like most of the special events, this reception seemed to materialize effortlessly out of nowhere, thanks to the hard work and efficiency of our meeting's hosts at West Florida Historic Preservation, Inc. and the University of West Florida graduate public history program. The reception capped a productive opening day. THATCamp NCPH, one of the earliest and longest events of the meeting, was a bustling success and generated ideas that popped up in other conversations and events throughout the next three days of the conference. (Note: THATCamp and many other aspects of the annual meeting are covered in the NCPH conference blog, at <http://ncph2011.blogspot.com/> ) One of the Wednesday field trips, the Public History Community Service Project at Ft. Pickens drew a group of sturdy volunteers who cleared sand and other debris, which earned the gratitude of NPS staff and visitors. You can see the group's photos on the NCPH Facebook page.



Service Project at Ft. Pickens. Courtesy of Roy Oberto

Thursday, the first full day of sessions, concluded with the Consultants Reception and the first of the meeting's two public plenaries. Thanks to Hugh Davidson and the Consultants Committee, the reception was vibrant, cohesive, and informative. In "The Coming of the Civil War Sesquicentennial" plenary, five Civil War historians laid open current commemoration efforts for examination and offered ideas for encouraging dialogue. The Public History Educators Breakfast on Friday was far larger than usual, probably due to growing interest in the field and efforts by history departments to launch public history programs. Simultaneous with the educators' breakfast was another example of expanding interest in public history—the inaugural meeting of the International Federation for Public History. Nearly 40 participants attended, representing several countries beyond the U.S. and Canada. (Let us know at [ncph@iupui.edu](mailto:ncph@iupui.edu) if you're interested in joining the listserv for this group.) A large, yet crowded Poster Session brought Friday's presentations to a close, and then two busloads of historians headed to Naval Air Station Pensacola for the banquet at the National Naval Aviation Museum.



"Collecting the Material Culture of Difficult Subjects" Session. Courtesy of Jodi Clement-Samala

On Saturday, Stephanie Toothman, the NPS's Associate Director for Cultural Resources, spoke at the Awards Breakfast about her and Director Jarvis's vision for history in the Park Service and encouraged the graduate students and new professionals present to consider an NPS career. Pulitzer-prize winning author Tony Horwitz packed the Pensacola Little Theatre with his humorous slant on covering the past as a journalist in the present and his realization of his own reverse path from the outer reaches of popular and public history toward the traditional craft of history writing and archival research. The conference wrapped up with plenty of food, beer, and music under sunny skies at the Shrimp Boil fundraiser. Relaxing after the long haul of getting to and working through the conference, attendees talked into the balmy night.



*The Civil War: 150 Years* is the official National Park Service sesquicentennial commemoration website. It includes essays taken from *The Civil War*, a commemoration handbook published this spring by the National Park Service and Eastern National, links to upcoming commemoration events and Civil War-related National Parks, and a database to search the 6.3 million soldiers who served in the conflict. An interactive timeline currently connects events in 1860-1861 to more recent incidents and provides historical relevance. The timeline continues throughout the duration of the war and will continue to follow the legacy of the Civil War through 2015. For historical news updates each day, follow the link to The Civil War Reporter on Twitter ("CivilWarReport").

# Highlights from the Pensacola Working Groups

Three sets of facilitators and discussants met as Working Groups in Pensacola. More are planned for the joint NCPH/OAH Annual Meeting next April in Milwaukee, and their calls for discussants will be issued in early fall. NCPH working groups are seminar-like conversations of 10-15 people that explore, in-depth, a subject of shared concern and that work toward a purpose or a problem they are actively trying to solve. Details about the format are at <http://ncph.org/cms/conferences/working-groups/>.

## Gentrification and Public History: A Contentious Relationship

Jeff Manuel, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville; Amy Tyson, De Paul University; and Andrew Urban, Rutgers University

Public historians and heritage professionals working in urban neighborhoods are often participants in the process of urban change called gentrification. At the 2011 NCPH conference, the Gentrification and Public History working group addressed this difficult issue and planned future projects for interested public historians.

The working group's discussion began over the winter, when twelve participants drafted case statements that highlighted the range of experiences and attitudes toward gentrification among public historians and community partners. The case statements included advocacy efforts by public historians fighting to prevent the dislocation of poor residents, development professionals who were enthusiastic about using heritage to increase property values, and more ambiguous efforts to address the history of changing urban neighborhoods. Using a wiki site, the group discussed issues and questions that emerged from the case statements. The group also began compiling a bibliography of sources on the topic of gentrification and public history.

At the Pensacola meeting, the working group met in person on Saturday afternoon. In addition to the group's formal participants, several other conference-goers attended the session and contributed to the discussion. Since the group had been actively discussing the topic on the wiki, the conference session primarily focused on clarifying several unresolved issues, such as the relationship between public historians and preservationists and how they might collaborate to address gentrification. The group also discussed similarities and differences in specific local sites.

Most importantly, participants discussed what actions they would take to address this issue in coming months. Although many intriguing suggestions were offered, the group ultimately decided to pursue

a few key actions. In addition to refining their bibliography for distribution to interested NCPH members, some members of the working group will work toward publication of articles on the theme of public history and gentrification, hopefully through a special issue of an academic journal. Additionally, the group is planning to develop a set of case studies appropriate for different audiences, such as undergraduate students or community partners, which discuss how gentrification has been addressed by public historians in a variety of settings. Ultimately, the group hopes that these products are the beginning of a larger conversation among public historians regarding their role in urban change and development.

## The Choices We Make: Public Historians Role in the Commemorations of the Sesquicentennial of the American the Civil War

Kati Engel, National Park Service, and William Stoutamire, Arizona State University

In Pensacola we welcomed a new crop of Sesquicentennial working group participants and sought to build upon the discussions begun by two similar Sesquicentennial groups in Providence (2009) and Portland (2010). A conference call in early March, and a group breakfast the morning of the working group session, helped to fuel the conversation and provided a series of talking points for members to cover.

The discussion began with asking "Why should we remember and commemorate the Civil War at all?" Participants argued that the conflict is central to American identity and that the role of the public historian is to tell a fuller story than in previous anniversaries. This means moving far beyond the battlefield, acknowledging the important influence of new trends in Civil War historiography. The discussants felt that the present commemoration should focus on such issues as: the role of slavery in secession, the home front, emancipation, medicine, mourning/death, Reconstruction, and the differences between the war's political purpose and its lived reality. All agreed that the Sesquicentennial should be made relevant to present concerns, tying the Civil War to modern conflicts and social issues. Further discussion involved effective ways to engage communities which have typically been disregarded or whose interpretation of the war may differ from our own.

The group concluded by discussing possible next steps. All would like to see an NCPH-hosted Sesquicentennial blog, so that these conversations may continue over the next four years, and a possible special issue of *The Public Historian* at the conclusion of the anniversary in 2015.

## Thank You 2011 Annual Meeting Sponsors!

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Maricopa County (AZ) Public Works – Consultants Reception  
Pensacola Bay Brewery – Shrimp Boil Fundraiser  
Bill Willingham – Consultants Reception

# 2011 Annual Meeting Photos from Pensacola



The Public Historian Editorial Board Meeting



Pulitzer-Prize Winning Plenary Speaker Tony Horwitz and NCPH Executive Director John Dichtl



THATCamp NCPH



"The Coming of the Civil War Sesquicentennial and Public History" Public Plenary Panel



Opening Reception at the Barkley House in Historic Pensacola Village



Session in Old Christ Church. Courtesy of Jodi Clement-Samala



Banquet at National Naval Aviation Museum. Courtesy of Jodi Clement-Samala



Poster Session



Service Project at Ft. Pickens. Courtesy of Roy Oberto

# Public History News

## National Council on Public History

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## 2012 NCPH/OAH Annual Meeting

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