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Public History Newsletter

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Fall 2014

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Public History Concentration

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Public History Newsletter

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 1

FALL, 2014

Celebrating 40 Years of Public History at Wright State University

“Doing History the Wright Way since 1974” took on a new meaning on October 17, 2014. Current students, alumni, current and past faculty and directors came together to celebrate 40 years of Public History at WSU. It was thanks to a collaborative planning committee of current director, and 1984 alumnae, Dawne Dewey, 2007 alumnae Natalie Fritz, and current



Above (L-R): Dawne Dewey, Karen Jean Hunt, and Kerrie Cross.

second year students, Adam Becker, Sara Fisher, and Jessica Sells that helped make the event a success. The event served not only as a symposium, but it also served as a reunion for graduates. Nineteen of these alumni participated as both presenters and moderators. In our first session, Steve Germann served as the moderator and Scott Sanders, Bill Stolz, and Mackensie Wittmer updated those in attendance on ways in which public history has been incorporated into their lives and their work in the community. Whether it was through work at Antioch University, historic preservation efforts, or ways in which aviation heritage is interpreted to various audiences, Public History is an important aspect to the history of a community.

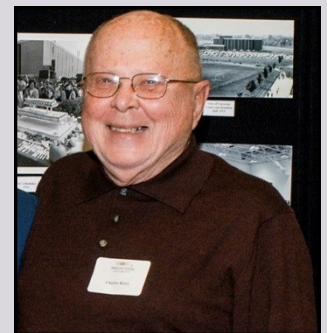
We had so many presenters, that we had concurrent sessions. Melissa Shaw moderated Session II-A. Public History in Museums featured the curatorial staff from Clark County Historical Society (CCHS)-all of them alumni of WSU Public History- Kasey Eichensehr, Natalie Fritz, and Virginia Weygandt described their efforts to inventory the collections at CCHS. What we learned was that the only thing worse than doing an inventory is NO inventory. Session II-B featured Matt Francis and Collette McDonough, where they talked about incorporating Public History in their archival careers. Bob Smith served as moderator and gave some account of his own experience in the Public History field.



Above (L-R): Melissa Shaw, Lisa Rickey, Natalie Fritz, and Collette McDonough.

Our final session highlighted the accomplishments of our recent graduates as they “Learned to Fly”. Jeremy Feador, Sarah Aisenbrey, Noel Greaser, Casey Huegel, and Bonnie Roche described what their current projects are, very similar to our article “Day in the Life.” All of them, additionally, gave advice to the current students in attendance as they prepare for life after graduation.

Those in attendance were in for a treat because Dr. Charles Berry, co-founder of Public History at WSU, told many stories of the early years of the program. Alumni from near and far came together and many took advantage of getting their pictures taken with the Wright brothers! We are always trying to find new ways to reach out to the community and include those who could not make it to the 40th Celebration. So, we decided to get “Get Social” by using Facebook and Twitter with #PH40WSU! It was a great opportunity for everyone to come together and celebrate such a wonderful accomplishment of longevity of Public History at Wright State University. Thank you to all who attended or were there in spirit!



Above: Dr. Charles Berry, Co-founder of WSU Public History

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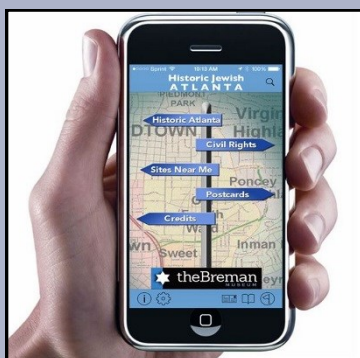
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A Day in the Life of Jeremy Katz

A typical day for me as Archives Director of the Cuba Family Archives for Southern Jewish History at the Breman Museum in Atlanta, Georgia, ranges from processing collections and completing research requests, to writing grant proposals and soliciting new donations from potential donors. I oversee all ongoing projects in the archives that support our mission to preserve and make accessible the Jewish history of the American South and the history of the Holocaust, which makes each day a little different. My staff, which includes a librarian and archivist, is currently working to transcribe and make ready for the web some of our flagship oral histories and digitize some of our most important manuscript collections. Due to the generous support of a local family, we were able to purchase a state-of-the-art document scanner, which has given us the ability to begin digitizing some of our many manuscript collections. Just this past month, we mounted our first online collection on the museum's recently redeveloped website (www.thebreman.org).



Another major project I have been involved with recently is the development of a driving tour app on the history of Jewish Atlanta, which is now available on both iPhone and Android phones by searching "Historic Jewish Atlanta." This app is the first of its kind in the country and allows users to learn about the rich Jewish history of the great city of Atlanta directly from their smart phones. The app utilizes the phone's GPS to map routes to the historic sites and display articles with images from our archives about the site's history. One unique feature of the app is the ability to create e-postcards that you can share with your friends and family through text messaging, emailing, or social media. We are hoping that both locals and tourists alike will download the app and explore the many sites around the city.



I also work closely with the other departments at the museum to help develop programs and exhibitions. For example, our curator is currently working on a new exhibition titled, "The History of Jewish Atlanta told through 18 Artifacts," which is set to open early next year. Although it is his responsibility to create and mount the exhibition, I am helping to identify artifacts from our archives that best fit the historical events featured in the display. I also work closely with our other department, the Weinberg Center for Holocaust Education, to help build critical thinking skills in students through exercises that examine primary sources from our archives related to the atrocities of the Holocaust.

My job is extremely rewarding because I get to preserve and make accessible a part of my heritage and a little known part of American history. I owe the success of my career to the knowledge, skills, and networks I gained as a student and graduate assistant in Public History at Wright State University. My diploma hangs proudly in my office!



What are They up to Now? Alumni Update

Brittany Snider (2011) recently began work as the Registrar for the Pizzuti Collection in Columbus, OH.

Karis Raeburn (2014) accepted an archivist position with the Congregation of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, Third Order Regular of St. Francis of Assisi in Oshkosh, WI.

Sarah Deffinger (2014) is now the A/V Archives Assistant for the PETA foundation in Norfolk, VA.

Matthew Peek (2010) is now the military collections archivist for the State Archives of North Carolina.

Rachael Bussert (2010) began work as the Congressional Papers archivist at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Kaitlyn Goss (2014) accepted a position with AmeriCorps/Local History Corps. She is now at Oberlin Heritage Center working on Educational Programming and outreach while doing some collections

management. Oberlin, OH.

Sarah "Sam" Mikell (2013) was recently appointed Project Assistant-Assistant Curator of Entertainment History at the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution. Washington, D.C.

Mackensie Wittmer (2005) recently began a new position as Partner Relations & Program Manager with the National Aviation Heritage Alliance, Dayton, Ohio.

Margaret Zakri (2012) started a new position in summer 2014 as Collections & Archives Specialist at the Neon Museum in Las Vegas, NV.

Save the Date!

4th Annual Public History Graduate Symposium

March 13, 2015

Wright State University
Student Union, Apollo Room

Director's Note, Dawne Dewey

I'd like to take this opportunity to remember one of our recent graduates, Kyle Pitzer. Kyle passed away unexpectedly on July 3, 2014, just weeks after graduating from Wright State University with an M.A. in History. Kyle was an exceptional student in the Public History concentration who had a passion for social justice issues. His capstone project, oral histories of participants in the Occupy Dayton movement, completed as part of WYSO's Community Voices Program, set a high standard. His project culminated in the creation of a story for public radio and aired on WYSO. It can be heard at <http://wyso.org/post/revisiting-occupy-dayton>. Kyle always did more than was required of him in grad. school. He was a great writer, thoughtful, and fun to spend time with. He was and will continue to be an inspiration to all who knew him.



The Kyle Pitzer Capstone Project Award, established to honor Kyle, will be presented annually to a graduating student in Public History whose capstone project is nominated by an instructor and judged by the History Graduate Committee to be the most outstanding capstone project for that academic year.

The award includes a cash prize.

If you would like to support this award, please send your donation to:

Department of History, 370 Millett Hall
Wright State University
3640 Colonel Glenn Hwy.
Dayton, OH 45435

Checks should be made payable to *Wright State University-History Department* and accompanied by a note designating it for the Kyle Pitzer Capstone Project Award.



It got a little chilly in the archives in November, so Dawne brought out the CocoMotion! As a result, we keep singing the song *Locomotion*.



DOING HISTORY THE WRIGHT WAY SINCE 1974!

The mission of Public History at Wright State University is to prepare professionals who are well-grounded in knowledge of historical content, professional training, and hands-on experience.

Department of History
Wright State University
370 Millett Hall
3640 Colonel Glenn Hwy.
Dayton, OH 45435
(937) 775-3110

Dawne Dewey
Director of Public History

Dr. Carol Herringer
Chair Department of History

Dr. Kathryn Myer
Director of Graduate Studies

Sara Fisher
Public History Graduate Assistant, Newsletter Editor

[http://liberal-arts.wright.edu/
history/programs/graduate/
public-history-plan](http://liberal-arts.wright.edu/history/programs/graduate/public-history-plan)

Welcome New Students!

Cindy Baker-Colorado State University
Victoria Chadbourne-Wright State University
Fayelee Conley-Berea College
Shelby Dixon-Wright State University
Mitchell Dorsten-Wilmington College
Samantha Green-Bluffton College
Jacqueline Heiss-University of North Carolina
Nina Herzog-Wright State University
James McKinnon-Ohio State University
Justin Risner-Wright State University
Jordan Utterback-Louisiana
Tech University
Kathleen Walters-Miami
University
Heather Webb-Wright State
University

Congratulations to the December Graduate!

Marcus Manchester
Best of luck in all your
endeavors!

