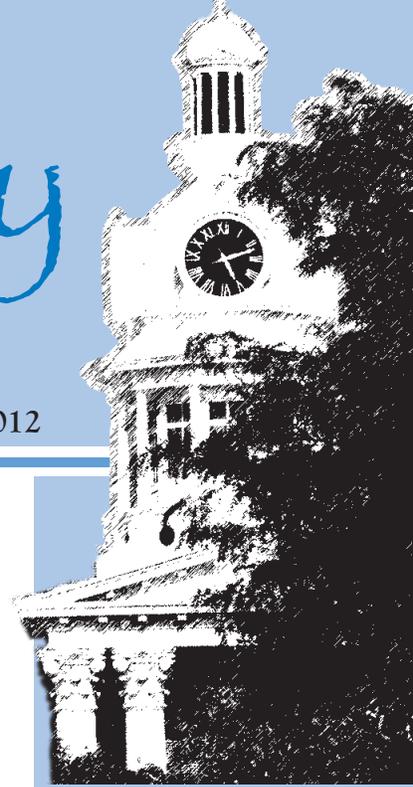


Public History

at Middle Tennessee State University

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Fall 2012



Workshop on Disability Inclusion at Historic Sites and Museums

On Saturday, November 3, 2012, the History Department welcomed several distinguished speakers and guests to “Disability and Your Cultural Organization: Sensitivity and Strategies for Going Beyond ADA.” The one-day symposium provided an opportunity for public history professionals and students to learn best practices and discuss strategies for including people with disabilities.

The event featured keynote speaker Krista Flores, accessibility program specialist for the Smithsonian Institution. With more than ten years of experience working with and advocating for the rights of people with disabilities, Flores has extensive experience in designing assessment tools and assisting organizations with accessibility issues to comply with disability laws. Her keynote address focused on the Americans with Disabilities Act as part of the larger civil rights movement.

Lisa Pruitt of the MTSU History Department gave an illustrated talk on the medical and social history of disability. She is writing a book provisionally titled *Crippled: A History of Childhood Disability in America, 1860–1990* with grant support from the National Institutes of Health.

Karen Graham Wade, director of the Workman and Temple Family Homestead

Museum in the City of Industry (Los Angeles County), California, spoke informally about strategies for inclusion her site has employed. The Homestead Museum, known for its innovative and inclusive public programs, has developed an access services white paper and is working with local advocacy groups to help maximize the experience of all visitors regardless of their abilities.

Following the speakers, Brenden Martin, Department of History; Bill Norwood, Tennessee Rehabilitation Center; and recreational therapist Andi Halbert, an MTSU Health and Human Performance alumna, offered ideas and strategies for employing and engaging individuals with disabilities.

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Lisa Pruitt, MTSU History Department; Workshop Coordinator Katie Stringer; Krista Flores, Smithsonian accessibility program specialist; Karen Wade, director, Homestead Museum (above). Bill Norwood, Bren Martin, and Andi Halbert (left).

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Katie Stringer
Newsletter Editor

Unlock the Past The Key to Your Future

New Graduate Students

Master of Arts in History, Public History concentration

Aja Bain

Mike Browning

Joseph Bryan

Ashley Cole

Alex Collins

Candace Cupps

Denise Gallagher

Michelle Gauthier

Elaura Highfield

Holly Rogers

Beth Rouse

Danielle Ullrich

Kayla Utendorf

Workshop on Disability Inclusion...

In the afternoon, participants broke into work sessions designed to give museum professionals the opportunity to discuss strategies for their own sites and to share tactics they have used or plan to use. Session topics included museum and exhibit design, sensory impairments, strategies for the physically impaired, and cognitive delay.

The workshop was sponsored by the MTSU History Department and the Public History Program, the Association of Graduate Students in History, the Tennessee Association of Museums, the Inter-Museum Council of Nashville, and the American Association of State and Local History. ↗

The 2012 Maymester Experience

“An Evening with Nikki Giovanni” capped the 2012 summer field school, which started out as an effort to document a historic African American neighborhood of Murfreesboro that was razed for urban renewal and ended up immersing field school participants in the history of African American community life, especially community identity associated with two schools: Bradley Academy and Holloway High School. In collaboration with the Bradley Academy Historical Association, nine students in the Public History program digitized the museum’s collection of photographs and artifacts, mapped community history and historic places, conducted in-depth oral history interviews with community elders, and video-recorded short interviews with graduates of Holloway High School during the annual three-day alumni reunion.

The field school held many memorable moments, but the highlight was a community barbeque with writer and civil rights activist Nikki Giovanni as the featured speaker. Students opened the evening program by



Dr. Gloria Bonner and University Provost Brad Bartel share a lighthearted moment with Nikki Giovanni.

reading excerpts from oral history recordings made during the course of the field school. Following a moving introduction by Gloria Bonner, special assistant to MTSU president Sidney McPhee, Giovanni delivered spellbinding readings of selected poems and essays. Giovanni, a Tennessee native and graduate of Fisk University, is University Distinguished Professor at Virginia Tech. ↗



Sitting, l-r: Katie Wilson, chair, Bradley Academy Historical Association board of directors, Rebecca Conard, Nikki Giovanni, Martha Norkunas, Brenden Martin. Standing, l-r: Margaret Davis, Bradley Academy Historical Association board member, Jerry Wooten, Ginna Foster Cannon, Elizabeth Lambert, Abby Hathaway, Lydia Simpson, Rachel Morris, Jennifer Ray, Amanda Schaffer, Hassan Karayam

Alumni Spotlight

John Lodl

In August 2006, John Lodl (M.A. 2004) assumed his position as director of the Rutherford County Archives (RCA) just in time to open the new 10,000 sq. ft. archives building in Murfreesboro, which preserves all permanent, historical county records. He stepped into the position almost naturally, having served for two years as a graduate assistant at the archives when it was housed in the top floor of the county courthouse.

“As a student,” he says, “my goal was to explore my diverse interests while making myself more marketable in the field of public history, and MTSU allowed me to do that.” Before officially completing the graduate program, he accepted a position as a senior archivist at the State Archives of Georgia in June 2002. However, he moved back to Murfreesboro shortly after that and accepted a position as the first director of the Bradley Academy Museum and Cultural Center. In June 2005, he became director of the Sam Davis Home and Museum in Smyrna. While there, he oversaw a \$100,000 NEH grant to redevelop the education and interpretation program. This included working extensively with Kevin Smith (Anthropology) and Bren Martin (Public History) to expand African American interpretation at the site with a series of new exhibits. Since August 2004, John also has served as an adjunct professor with the History Department, teaching American history survey courses and, occasionally, the upper-division course Explorations in Public History.

John has taken the Rutherford County Archives in new directions through outreach initiatives. In the past six years, the RCA has assisted with exhibit research for Stones River



John Lodl documenting a headstone as part of the African American cemetery project

National Battlefield, Bradley Academy Museum, the Sam Davis Home, Oaklands Historic House Museum, and numerous MTSU classes. In 2009, he worked with Dr. Martin to negotiate a contract with Shacklett's Photography to acquire and accession the Shacklett's Historic Images Collection. With over 30,000 images, it is one of the largest historic image collections in Tennessee and an ongoing collaborative project with the Public History program. In 2010, the RCA received a \$20,000 grant from the Tennessee Historical Commission to digitize and update the Rutherford County Historic Structures Survey as a legacy project started by Jim Huhta at MTSU in 1980. In 2011, John worked with coauthor Bill Shacklett to produce *Murfreesboro: Then & Now*, a book that highlights photographs from the Shacklett's Historic Images Collection. Last but not least, the RCA has been working with the Rutherford County GIS Department and Bradley Academy to locate, document, and map all the historic African American cemeteries in this county.

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New Graduate Students

Doctor of Philosophy in Public History

Ashley Bouknight
B.A., College of Charleston,
M.A., University of South
Carolina

Dallas Hanbury
B.A., The University of
Montevallo
M.A., History/Public
History, Middle Tennessee
State University

Joshua Howard
B.S. Statistics
B.S. Mathematics
B.A. History, Virginia Tech
M.S. Statistics, Virginia Tech
M.A. History (Public History
concentration, CRM Grad
Certificate), West Virginia
University

Alumni Spotlight *(continued)*

Kristen Luetkemeier

Kristen Luetkemeier (M.A. 2006) “began flirting with the idea” of a career in the National Park Service as a Student Conservation Association intern in Death Valley National Park in 2004. It was not until 2010, however, that she “got serious about the possibility of life in the NPS.” December 2012 marks her one-year anniversary as a park ranger at Manzanar National Historic Site in Owens Valley, California, which preserves the stories of Japanese Americans whose civil liberties were revoked during World War II, and especially the 10,000 people who were sent to Manzanar War Relocation Center.

At Manzanar, she is the lead for oral history, which is integral to site management as well as exhibits, archeology, and ranger programs. Over the past decade, park staff members have recorded nearly 400 interviews, and as lead interviewer, Kristen has conducted the fifteen most recent ones. She also staffs the interpretive center and conducts interpretive tours of the site. “It’s a perfect combination,” she says, “for someone who doesn’t want to choose between research and public programming.” Manzanar’s location also attracted her: “When I look out my home’s back door to the west, I see the highest part of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. If I drive 90 minutes east, I’m in Death Valley.”

Kristen notes that the content knowledge, understanding of public history, and powerful network she acquired at MTSU have been invaluable. The partnership between MTSU and Stones River National Battlefield enabled her to spend summers as a ranger, which “yielded great experience and one of my most dedicated references and scouts for employment opportunities.” As a graduate assistant at the Center for Historic Preservation it “became habitual for me to think thematically,” she says. Some of her achievements as a graduate student actually helped her land her current position. For the Albert Gore Research Center, she transcribed interviews conducted as part of the American Folklife Center’s Veterans Oral History Project and used interview recordings to create radio spots that were broadcast on a local NPR affiliate. As part of the Public History Seminar, she studied oral history methodology and worked with another student to conduct and transcribe an oral history interview for the Land Trust for Tennessee Oral History Project. In a nutshell, she says, “MTSU teachers and supervisors across the board remain a crucial part of my professional network.”

Moving Up

Meghan Fall (M.A. 2012) is now registrar of collections and director of education at Belmont Mansion in Nashville.

Gwynn Thayer (Ph.D. 2010) is leaving her position as an archivist with the Tennessee State Library and Archives to become associate head and curator of the Special Collections Research Center at North Carolina State University.



Kristen Luetkemeier leading an interpretive tour at Manzanar NHS

Scholarships and Awards

Ashley Bouknight received the 2012 Douglas Evelyn Scholarship for Minority Professionals to attend the American Association of State and Local History conference in Utah.

Angie Sirna worked during the summer at Maryland's Catocin Mountain Park as a cultural resource specialist for the National Park Service. The program she developed for the C&O Canal National Historical Park was featured in *Preservation* magazine.

Lydia Simpson received a George Wright Society Park Break Fellowship for the Boston field seminar in cultural resource management, October 15-19, 2012, cosponsored by the National Park Service and the George Wright Society.

Katie Stringer was awarded the competitive Zeta Tau Alpha Kitty Seitz-Phelps National Private Scholarship for 2012-2013. ↗

Internships

Jaryn Abdallah interned at the President James K. Polk Ancestral Home in Columbia, Tennessee. She assisted in researching, planning, and creating the exhibition *Sarah Polk, First Lady of Style*, which runs through March 31, 2013. She also created interactive exhibition components and lesson plans that can be used in preparation for or following a field trip to view the exhibition.

Lauren Baud's internship at Ft. Negley in Nashville included conducting and transcribing oral histories and developing and implementing an exhibit. She also greeted visitors, gave guided tours, opened and closed the visitor center, updated and managed the site's Facebook page, participated in event planning and advisory committee meetings, took on administrative roles from time to time, and, overall, learned more about managing a cultural resource in a municipal government setting.

Rachel Smith was the Heritage Communications intern with the Coca-Cola Company in Atlanta. Her main project involved processing the 13.5 linear-foot collection of the Odwalla brand. This task involved a trip to Half Moon Bay, California, to appraise records and interview long-term company employees. She also collaborated with other interns in the Global Public Affairs and Communications Department to present a business proposal to company executives. This experience expanded her archival processing skills and allowed her to provide historical contexts in a corporate setting.

David Sprouse interned with the Tennessee Historical Commission and was assigned to the Ducktown Basin Museum and Burra Burra Mine Site in Ducktown, Tennessee. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the site includes ten buildings on seventeen acres of land that was significantly degraded by the mining of copper and production of sulfuric acid in the 20th century. Sprouse's most extensive project was the formulation of a disaster plan for the site, which included gathering collections information, assessing risks, and determining priorities in the event of a disaster, whether natural or human-caused. Another significant assignment was the creation of a five-year strategic plan for the museum. In addition, he drafted text for informational signage for seven of the buildings so that visitors will have a richer experience on the walking tour.

Rachel Knapp interned at Strawberry Banke Museum in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where she worked in several departments, including Museum Education, Archaeology, Historic Preservation, Collections/Archives, Development/Advancement, Marketing, and Horticulture/Historic Landscapes. For the Education Department, she worked specifically with the Discovery Center, creating new programs, activities, and an exhibit.

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Congratulations to Our Recent Graduates

Summer 2012

M.A. in History, Public History concentration

Dallas Hanbury

Paul Hoffman

Ph.D. in Public History

Albert Whittenberg
Dissertation: "The Promises and Pitfalls of Creating an Online Public History Program: A Study of Successful Examples of the Past and Plans for the Future"

Fall 2012

M.A. in History, Public History concentration

Jessica Bandel

Amy Kostine

Rachel Morris

Doctor of Philosophy in Public History

Michael Strutt
Dissertation: "Yes I was a house slave: I slept under the stairway in a closet: Slave Housing and Landscapes of Tennessee, 1780-1860, An Architectural Synthesis"

Amanda Schaffer completed two internships in New York City. Beginning in June, Amanda interned with the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation (GVSHP). Throughout the summer, she assisted with various projects including the South Village historic plaque project and Building Blocks website, as well as GVSHP's initiatives under New York University's 2031 plan. Amanda completed a second internship with the Brooklyn Arts Council (BAC), where she assisted the director of the Folk Arts Division with preparations for upcoming BAC folk arts programming including the spring 2013 festival *HarborLore: Where the River Meets the Sea in Brooklyn's Folk Imagination*. She also helped and with grant writing. Summer in New York City provided Amanda with numerous opportunities to experience public history in action.



Amanda Schaffer at the New York City Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival, August 2012

Mason Christensen interned at Keweenaw National Historical Park in the Upper Peninsula town of Calumet, Michigan. He assisted with the cataloging of museum objects associated with the copper mining industry. These items varied from mining lanterns to scientific specimen bottles. The cataloging involved extensive material culture research and documentation of item condition. ↗

Professional Residency

Rebecca Duke, Ph.D. candidate, is working on her residency this academic year at Skyline Farms, a New Deal resettlement community in Jackson County, Alabama, where she is supervising and assisting with the creation of a community museum. Her work during the fall semester focused on curatorial responsibilities including inventorying and labeling the entire collection, selecting items for exhibit, designing interpretive panels, archiving the paper collection, and training the museum board in best practices. In the spring, she will create educational programming and outreach initiatives. ↗



Rebecca Duke speaking with Skyline Farms Heritage Association member, Joyce Moulitis, during a collections management workshop

News from the Centers

Albert Gore Research Center

The Albert Gore Research Center continues to expand its web presence since redesigning its website at the beginning of the year. The Gore Center partnered with the Center for Popular Music to create an online exhibit called *The History of Political Songs and Jingles in Tennessee* during the election season.

For Archives Month in October, the center started its Brown Bag Lunch series. Featured were Ken Fieth from Metro Nashville Archives, Andrea Blackman from Nashville Public Library, and director, Jim Williams, who spoke about issues they face at their institutions. The center now updates its blog regularly, with posts from

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News from the Centers *(continued)*

various staff members about upcoming events and current projects. The blog can be accessed online at <http://gorecentermtsu.wordpress.com>. The center has also recently established profiles on social media sites. Graduate assistants Rachel Smith, Aja Bain, and Kayla Utendorf have taken the lead on this project by creating content and inviting followers. “Wacky Wednesday” updates draw attention to interesting items from the collection. You can like us on Facebook as the Albert Gore Research Center and follow us on Twitter: as @AGRCatMTSU. ↗

Center for Popular Music

The Center for Popular Music (CPM) welcomed Public History graduate assistants **Josh Howard** and **Elaura Highfield** to the archives’ staff this fall semester. Immersing themselves in many independent projects and tasks, both have contributed to the implementation of a grant awarded by the Tennessee Historical Records Advisory Board to produce “My Homeland’: A Research Guide to Songs about Tennessee.”

Perhaps more than any other state, Tennessee is associated with music. While many thousands of songs have been written in Tennessee over the last century, hundreds and hundreds have also been written about Tennessee. Because resources have been scattered, there has never been a systematic effort to gather and organize this powerful music.

The research guide takes the form of an informational website and searchable database, which makes accessible a unique collection of songs about Tennessee held in the CPM’s archives and elsewhere. We created a new database using Inmagic software in order to accommodate the various musical and other song formats. Elaura digitized many of the sound recording labels, sheet music, and photographs. Josh worked on creating digital derivatives, linking those to the database records and producing and mounting an exhibit in the center’s reading room. The exhibit highlights some of the sheet music, sound recordings, photographs, manuscripts, other original materials contained on the “My Homeland” website, which was launched November 16.

One of the first projects Josh completed involved accessing and transferring information contained in a large obsolete-format database from the Richard Kamrar Collection. This will help save time and labor in adding approximately 30,000 pieces of sheet music to the CPM’s collections. Josh has also cataloged 200 pieces of sheet music orchestrations from the Thornton Hagert Collection. He is working on the Joe Crook collection of popular music videos, inventorying them, preserving them, and creating a finding aid for the collection. In addition, Josh is assisting with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to help the CPM mount a festival, *America’s Music: From Broadway to Bluegrass to Blues*, in the spring of 2013, in partnership with Linebaugh Public Library and the City of Murfreesboro.

Elaura has been busy with numerous new accessions to the CPM collections. She has been responsible for the initial counting, inventorying, accessioning, and numbering of five large collections containing hundreds of sound recordings of all formats, sheet music, and songbooks, as well as several smaller collections of manuscript and archival materials. Elaura spent a great deal of time checking recently acquired sheet music against current holdings, then updating current catalog records in the CPM’s Inmagic database. She has recently started cataloging additional sheet music for the database. Elaura also assists with the retrieval of special collections and archival materials for patrons. ↗

Center for Historic Preservation

Abigail Gautreau finalized a National Register of Historic Places nomination for Oak Hill Farm, a Century Farm in west Tennessee continuously operated by the same family for over 100 years. The house is one of the oldest extant Federal-style homes in Tennessee, and the farm’s landscape reflects its significance as part of the progressive farming movement of the early to mid-20th century. Originally a cotton farm, Oak Hill was transitioned to a dairy farm in the 20th century. The current owners raise heritage pork and lease part of the land.

Amber Clawson, **Abigail Gautreau**, and **Jessica French** are working on a National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property

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Submission (MPS) relating to the voting rights movement in Selma, Alabama. This project is the culmination of a long-term relationship between the Center for Historic Preservation and the Selma community. The MPS is the product of extensive fieldwork and archival research including interviews and consultation with community members.

Ginna Foster Cannon, Thomas Flagel, and Jessi White spent the fall semester conducting a historic house assessment of Windermere, a c. 1890 home in Franklin. Thomas was responsible for researching and writing a historical overview of the house and its original owners. Ginna and Jessi conducted an overall assessment of the

house and the changes it has undergone since its construction.

Rachel McCreery and Savannah Grandey worked on a furnishings plan for Cragfont, a state historic site in Sumner County, Tennessee. **Angela Sirna** is undertaking an interpretive plan for the site. Their contributions continue the work of Dr. West's spring 2012 Seminar in Historic Preservation class, which completed a historic structure report. ↗

Association of Graduate Students in History

Under the direction of the 2012–2013 officers, **Amanda Schaffer** (president),

Lauren Baud (vice-president), **Amber Clawson** (treasurer), **Rachel Smith** (secretary), and **Angie Sirna** (social chair), the Association of Graduate Students in History (AGSH) had a

successful fall semester. The group kicked the semester off with a First Friday event at the Boulevard; the event was well attended and enjoyed by graduate students and History Department faculty alike. Since then, the group has held monthly meetings and continues to help graduate students take a break through planned and impromptu outings including a trip to a local vineyard. AGSH is looking forward to the spring semester, which will begin with the annual Faculty vs. Student Bowling Night in January (hopefully, this year the grad students can defend their honor!) and continue with monthly events, meetings, and the annual AGSH bake sale. AGSH encourages graduate alumni to keep in touch and join the group at First Friday events. For more information, visit the Association of Graduate Students in History at MTSU on Facebook, or email [Amanda Schaffer at abs4v@mtmail.mtsu.edu](mailto:Amanda.Schaffer@abs4v@mtmail.mtsu.edu). ↗



Abigail Gautreau at Oak Hill Farm

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