

CURCOM

UPDATE

Greetings from your Chair!

I look forward to seeing many of you at the AAM Annual Meeting in Chicago. The program looks just great, and there are numerous sessions for you to attend; it's not too early to begin planning a session for Denver in 2008! The CurCom reception at the Robie House on May 13, and Art-Care.com will once again sponsor the reception for us. The CurCom Business Luncheon is on May 15, and Cheryl Bachand, Curator of the Frank Lloyd Wright Trust, will be the speaker at the luncheon.

There is some really great news to share! The Henry Luce Foundation is sponsoring our fellowship winners this year. The late Henry R. Luce was the co-founder and editor-in-chief of Time, Inc.; he established the Henry R. Luce Foundation in 1936, and since then, four generations of the family have worked or supported the Foundation. The Foundation's interests include American and Asian art, higher education, and scholarship in American art. James Burns and his committee will announce the fellowship winners at the CurCom Business Luncheon.

Ron Potvin, Nominating Committee Chair, has created an email list of all the members who have listed their emails on their membership renewals. This year balloting will be via email; be sure to reply with your vote for Officers of the Board this year. For those who have not listed email addresses, a separate paper ballot will be sent; I urge these members to send your email address to AAM – ASAP! All membership information is kept at the AAM office, and we can only work with the AAM lists.

Jim Hoobler and a small committee are working on the revision of the CurCom Guidelines; this may be ready for approval in the Spring. John Mayer and a committee are working on the revision of the CurCom Code of Ethics, which has not been revised since 1986. You will hear about all these, either via email or through issues of your *Update*. (See page 5 for the first instalment.)

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Linda Eppich
The Preservation Society
of Newport County



March 2007

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Welcome to our first edition of *Update* for 2007. It features a very interesting article from John Russick about the redevelopment of the Chicago History Museum, as well as CurCom news, information on new exhibitions and other public programs, and developments of interest to museum curators. Thank-you to everyone who sent in contributions! As always, we welcome contributions from all our members. The cut-off date for the next issue will be the end of June.

If any of you are planning to attend the 2007 Museums Australia Conference in Canberra in May I'd love to meet you and assist with your visit in any way. Please do get in touch with me before you travel. And a note for future Museums Australia Conferences – if any of you would like to come to Australia and present a paper, I'd be very happy to help with your submission and arrangements. As many of you know, I'm always keen to support international links within our profession.

Very best wishes to everyone for this year's AAM Annual Meeting!

Deborah Tout-Smith

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SUBSCRIPTION AND MEMBERSHIP

Update is the periodic newsletter distributed to members of CurCom. It is also available on-line at <http://www.curcom.org>.

CurCom (Curators' Committee) is a Standing Professional Committee (SPC) of the American Association of Museums. All SPC members must join the AAM. Dues for CurCom (\$10.00) are payable in addition to AAM dues.

Membership is obtained through:

Membership Department
American Association of Museums
1575 Eye St. N.W., Suite 400
Washington, DC 20005

Phone (202) 289 9132; fax (202) 289 6578;
email membership@aam-us.org.

Changes to CurCom Board

Mary Jane Teeters-Eichacher has resigned as regional representative for AMM Curators (Midwest Curators). She has been replaced by **Dr Rex Garniewicz**, Director of Collections at the Indiana State Museum.

Michael Bertrand, a volunteer for the National Museum of Natural History, has joined **Brian Peterson** as regional representative for MAAM Curators (Mid-Atlantic Curators).

We warmly welcome our new Board members and look forward to getting to know them.

AAM Review of CurCom

This year it is the turn of CurCom to be reviewed by AAM.

According to AAM's Constitution/Bylaws, Chapter VIII, the AAM Board 'shall regularly and with advance notice review the activities of Standing Professional Committees.' The Board has agreed to initiate reviews of three current AAM Standing Professional Committees (SPCs) as outlined by the recently amended SPC Guidelines. The SPCs to be reviewed in the 2007 financial year are EdCom, COMPT and CurCom.

The CurCom Board will be working with AAM to facilitate the review. The review will include information about the Board, a current membership list, our mission statement, operating guidelines, professional code of ethics, financial statement, publications, and a plan outlining the future work of CurCom. We will show how our plan supports the major goals of AAM's Strategic Framework, and how the Committee provides for and supports leadership development within our own discipline.

The Strategic Framework contains ideas and goals that will drive the Association's decision-making and activities into the future. It articulates a vision for museums, the field, and AAM. The Framework can be accessed at <http://www.aam-us.org/sp/strategic/index.cfm>.

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AAM has informed the Standing Professional Committees (SPC) Council that EdCom, COMPT, and CurCom are the three committees to be reviewed for 2007 (see above for further information). This will mean considerable introspective thought to prepare; luckily, EdCom will be first. If you have thoughts about the future of CurCom, goals to be set, who we should be serving, programs for the future, etc. – **anything you can think of** – please do contact me. Both my email addresses are in *Update* and on the website.

Linda Eppich
The Preservation Society
of Newport County



Sights of Chicago: Cloud Gate (The Bean),
designed by Anish Kapoor, Millennium Park,
Chicago
Photo courtesy Jim Hoobler

Under Review: the Curators' Code of Ethics

CurCom leadership has organized a special workgroup to review and revise the Curators' Code of Ethics. While there is no deadline for this assignment, work is underway and this committee hopes to complete this task in a timely manner.

Have you read it? Perhaps you did not even know a Curators Code of Ethics existed. It can be found online at www.curcom.org/ethics.php

Workgroup goals are to consider how the museum field has changed over the past few years, and to develop a revised Code able to guide, support, and inspire our work as curators into the future. In addition, the group hopes that a new Code can serve the diverse range of curatorial interests in the field.

To succeed, input from curators of all disciplines will be vital – and each of you can play a role in the process. Your first opportunity is now – you can submit your assessment of the existing version of the Code of Ethics and any suggestions for additions or changes directly to the committee.

Send your comments to the chair of the workgroup:

John Mayer
Museum Curator
Maine Historical Society
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Also, look for reports of progress in future issues of the *Update*, at the AAM Annual Meeting in Chicago, and at regional museum meetings.

This can be a powerful tool for all of us. Please take a moment to read the existing Code, think about how this document might be improved, and share your thoughts with the workgroup.

Future AAM Annual Meetings

Chicago, IL
May 13-17 2007

Denver, CO
April 27-May 1 2008

Philadelphia, PA
April 30-May 4 2009

Los Angeles, LA
May 23–27 2010

Exhibit Highlights 19th Century Women's History in Nashville

Treasures from France Exhibited

On March 3 2007 an exceptional exhibition featuring items from the Bibliothèque nationale de France (National Library of France) was unveiled at The Historic New Orleans Collection.

Four Hundred Years of French Presence in Louisiana: Treasures from the National Library of France is presented as a gift to the people of New Orleans in affirmation of France's commitment to the preservation of New Orleans culture in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The exhibition is on display through June 2 2007 in the History Galleries.

The first exhibition to focus exclusively on the National Library's extensive collections relating to Louisiana, *Four Hundred Years of French Presence in Louisiana* explores the strong cultural ties between France and its former colony, from the 17th through the 20th century. Items from 13 of the National Library's divisions, many of them never exhibited before, are complemented by a selection of artifacts from The Historic New Orleans Collection, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Center of Diplomatic Archives in Nantes, France.

Hidden Histories: the Lives of Women in Nineteenth Century Nashville features 35 photographs of buildings, tombstones, landscapes and artifacts that tell the stories of everyday women who lived in Nashville more than 100 years ago. Developed by Travellers Rest Plantation & Museum, the exhibition highlights the work of Kimiko Sakai, Nashville-based international photographer.

'The goal of this exhibition is to provide a fresh approach to understanding the everyday lives of historic Nashville women,' said Rob DeHart, curator of Travellers Rest. 'Rather than focus on elite women of the 19th century, we concentrated on themes such as child-rearing and political participation, which challenged and affected everyone during that period.'

There are not many historical accounts or records detailing the lives of women honored in the exhibit, yet their stories and strifes were the ones most commonly experienced during the 19th century. For example, Rachel Moyers was an emancipated slave who married a white plantation overseer. Although portraits or photographs of Rachel do not exist, her story is conveyed through her 1830 marriage license shown in the exhibit.

Sakai's photographs capture these untold stories through black and white images that are hand-painted in color and reminiscent of colorized photographs popular in the early 20th century.

Other pieces in the exhibit include a photograph of the inner halls of historic St Cecilia, which represents how women created educational opportunities for children in Nashville during the Civil War. A photograph of the Edgehill neighborhood where former slave Callie House once lived expresses the political activities of Nashville women. House was a powerful activist who sought reparations for ex-slaves following the war.

Additionally, many photographs use the Travellers Rest grounds and house to portray the lives of everyday Nashville women. One photograph shows a bedside table laden with items usually found in an apothecary set, such as medicines and syringes, conveying the role women played as primary caregivers in times of illness as opposed to doctors.

Hidden Histories will be displayed at the Downtown Nashville Public Library Courtyard Gallery from March 30 through June 15.

Chicago's First Museum

John Russick

What's in a name? As it turns out, quite a lot. In early 2006, the Chicago Historical Society changed its name to reflect a new direction for the city's oldest cultural institution. On September 30 2006, after 150 years documenting and illuminating Chicago's remarkable history, the Chicago History Museum opened its doors for the first time. Visitors encountered the fruits of an ambitious, multi-year renovation plan – including exhibits, programs, and services – developed and designed to set a new course for the Museum.

Years of research, planning, and fundraising resulted in more than just a name change. They led to the development of a new institution, with a sharper focus on visitor services; a renewed commitment to know and serve the broadest audience; the re-establishment of a curatorial presence at the Museum; and a willingness to invest in new technology to provide innovative experiences with history content. Changing the name symbolized the metamorphosis occurring within Chicago's first museum as it charted a path to a new destiny.

The transformation began in the summer of 2003, when the Museum re-established a curatorial presence. After a 10-year hiatus, curators were back. No longer tied to specific collections, CHM curators were free to tackle any subject in Chicago history. In many ways, this new group is unlike the curators of previous eras. It's a mix of public historians

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The Chicago History Museum is located at the intersection of North Avenue and Clark Street on the southern tip of Lincoln Park.

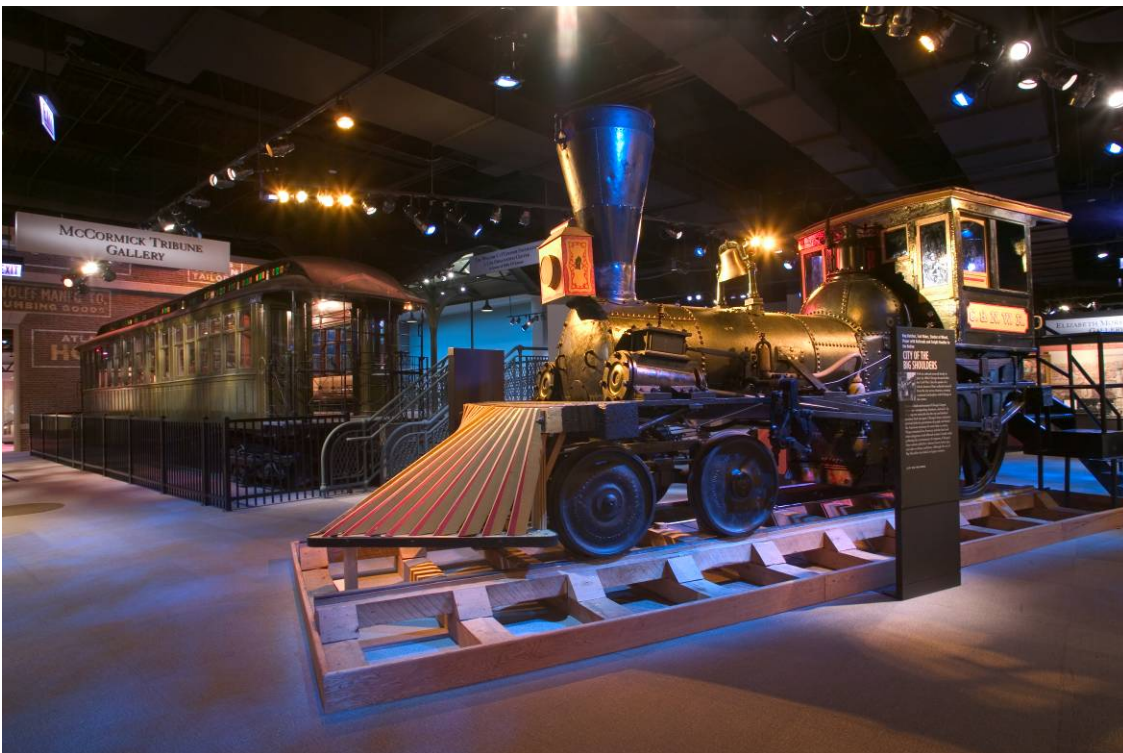
Photo courtesy Chicago History Museum

grounded in new scholarship, traditional curators trained in collections development and management, and exhibition developers focused on education, design, and evaluation. The varied skills, backgrounds, and values of the curators led to a wide range of approaches to interpreting history in the Museum's new exhibitions and programs.

The flagship exhibition, *Chicago: Crossroads of America*, presents Chicago in five themed galleries. *Crossroads* features powerful artifacts, images, and media to tell a sweeping tale of Chicago – a dynamic city that has both influenced and shaped the nation. Organized thematically, the exhibition explores the city's economic history, moments of crisis, innovations, neighborhood histories, and leisure time. To expand the exhibition's reach and offer a humorous take on the past, *Crossroads* also features an audio tour developed with Chicago's own Second City comedy troupe. Visitors can access the tour online at the Museum's website and download the tour to any mp3 player, or they can borrow one of the iPods available for use at CHM during their visit.

One of the most important achievements of *Crossroads* is the sheer volume of Chicago history featured in the gallery. With over 15,000 square feet of exhibit space and more than 1,500 artifacts, the exhibition provides a broad overview of the city's long and complex history. With so much of the city's history covered by *Crossroads*, the Museum's other curators were free to be more adventurous with their projects: to select historical

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The massive *Crossroads* exhibition features two trains, a section of Fort Dearborn, and a nightclub setting

Photo courtesy Chicago History Museum

content, employ collections, and develop communication strategies in unique and unexpected ways.

For example, one of the most striking features of the new Museum greets you when you first walk in the door: a 1978 Monte Carlo lowrider dominates the main lobby. Custom-designed and built by the Amistad Car Club of Cicero, a largely Latino community just outside of Chicago, the lowrider was a commission for the *Treasures* exhibition program. For most patrons, the car is their first encounter with the new Chicago History Museum. Heads turn. Sometimes eyebrows furrow. You can almost see some visitors silently ask: *What the heck is that doing here?* But the lowrider is the object that best reflects the direction of the new Museum. It's unexpected. It reflects the impact on the city of Chicago's fastest-growing ethnic community. And it's an accessioned CHM object. It's history in the making.



The lowrider is parked in the Museum's main lobby with other objects that reflect Chicago street life, such as a four-foot-tall terracotta owl from Chicago's North American building and a sign from the historic Maxwell Street market
Photo courtesy Chicago History Museum

The lowrider is symbolic of the Museum's transformation (and its newest treasure), but the *Treasures* project required a total of five exhibition spaces to provide visitors with a sampling of CHM's impressive collections and some of the city's favorite stories. Together, the *Treasures* galleries offer a visual feast of the city's past and present that extends through the Museum's lobby, corridors, and event spaces. These exhibits feature

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stained glass from premier designers and craftspeople, objects from Chicago's two World's Fairs, and items related to the life and death of Abraham Lincoln, including his deathbed. The team developing *Imagining Chicago*, a gallery that explores Chicago's first century through a collection of finely crafted, 75-year-old miniature dioramas, devised an interpretation that specifically targeted family audiences. The Chicago history dioramas, which have been on display since the building opened in 1932, are some of the best-remembered objects in the Museum. A large contingent of CHM's adult patrons, members, and staff love them and feared that a new interpretation and gallery design might undermine the power of these revered objects. The team followed a path that served both constituents.

The dioramas were painstakingly restored. The mechanical components that animate these scenes were upgraded so that the dancing figures twirl inside the Sauganash Tavern (the city's first civic and social center), and the dramatic lighting effects that convey the drama and intensity of the Great Chicago Fire, flicker once again. State-of-the-art cool lighting was installed, and buildings, figures, and painted backdrops were all carefully conserved. Simultaneously, the team developed an interpretation scheme designed to provide consistent opportunities for learning about the past for families and children, which included: lowering each diorama by nearly a foot to provide better viewing access for children; developing accessible label copy – in both Spanish and English; and adding interactive elements throughout the gallery, including the development of a 'Can You Find?' activity that encourages close looking at the scenes and provides a point of entry for young children.



Near the diorama of the Rush Street Bridge c. 1830, visitors manipulate a model of a swing bridge like the one in the scene to better understand how these bridges worked

Photo courtesy Chicago History Museum

The Museum's most adventurous project was a 4,500-square-foot temporary exhibition of the life and career of contemporary Chicago painter Ed Paschke. Often inspired by his experiences in Chicago, Paschke's paintings employ striking imagery drawn from popular culture, celebrity, urban street life, and the media. The much-loved painter died suddenly in his sleep less than two

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years before the Museum reopened. As a sign of CHM's new nimble and responsive spirit, the Museum developed the first complete retrospective of this important artist's work and included it in the exhibit program for the grand reopening.



The *Ed Paschke* exhibition was the first complete retrospective of the artist's career

Photo courtesy Chicago History Museum

Another temporary exhibition, *Dior: the New Look*, featured Christian Dior couture fashions from 1947 to 1957. While CHM is already known for its extraordinary costume collection, *Dior* is part of a new commitment by the institution to have significant exhibitions of costumes and textiles throughout the year. The exhibition, like the clothing, is exquisite. *Dior* reaffirms CHM's commitment to superior exhibit design and installation.

Sensing Chicago, the Museum's new history exhibition for children and families, also broke new ground. The project paired an educator with a curator to lead the project and create a fully interactive, unfacilitated history exhibit. The big idea behind *Sensing Chicago* is that history is all around us. We encounter it every day through our five senses and are connected to the past by just being alive. The team embraced this idea and drew on the long, rich history of Chicago to find stories, artifacts, images, and most importantly, experiences that would help visitors see, feel, smell, taste, and touch the

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Dior: the New Look is a beautifully-designed and executed temporary exhibition

Photo courtesy Chicago History Museum

past. With two centuries of rich and varied Chicago history from which to pull content, the team had the freedom to use only the stories from the city's past that best communicated the message, resonated with the audience, and provided opportunities to develop interactive experiences with history.



A view from the entrance to *Sensing Chicago*. The gallery explores history through the five senses.
Photo courtesy Chicago History Museum

The Chicago History Museum has not been the same since *Sensing Chicago* opened. The exhibition has redefined the way visitors experience Chicago history and the response has been tremendous. One of the iconic experiences in the new Museum is a giant hot dog bun in the 'taste' section. Visitors climb in, their friends pile on the condiments, and they imagine themselves a Chicago-style hot dog. Nearly every article or review of the Museum during the reopening featured this experience, and parents have

already begun to bring their children back for another chance to be a hot dog. Since *Sensing Chicago* opened, laughter is now a common sound in the Museum.

Moving on a parallel track to the physical changes, the Chicago History Museum's education department staff developed new programmatic plans. With the reopening of the building, *New Directions in Adult Education* launched with an implementation grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The project was designed to create core programming to be offered

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This young visitor can see what she looks like as a Chicago-style hot dog just by looking up. Directly above the bun is a large circular mirror with the words, 'Mmmm, you look delicious' in Spanish and English.
Photo courtesy Chicago History Museum

on a monthly and annual basis. Programs include monthly bus tours of the city; the series *In the K/now*, a monthly forum for discussion and debate of current issues; an annual American history lecture series; quarterly seminars on Chicago history; and a fall and spring *Chicago Treasures* series that pairs Chicagoans who have shaped the city (and in turn, the city has shaped their work) in conversation about life in Chicago.

For school programs, a cross-institutional team forged a new path for school group visits. Moving away from the traditional, hour-long guided tours, the group defined an experience-based approach for school group visits. The centerpiece of this new approach is called *History à la Cart*. These six interactive stations facilitated by CHM staff and volunteers offer a variety of activities for exploration and discovery. Children trace the path of the Great Chicago Fire using a massive reproduction map of the city. At an eight-foot model of the John Hancock Building, children explore the changing skyline and building types and sizes using colored magnets. Other activity carts focus on the prairie, bridges, and front porches. All offer opportunities for collaborative and individual investigation; dialogue, discussion, and debate; exploration of primary sources; and opportunities to share discoveries through role-playing and creative expression.

When the \$27.5-million renovation project neared completion, Gary T. Johnson, CHM president, said 'as we prepare to celebrate the next 150 years, it is time to develop a clearer vision of the Museum's future.' With new exhibits and programs, a renewed commitment to curatorial leadership, and a firm commitment to serve the broadest audience, the Chicago History Museum is ready for that future to begin.

Chicago History Museum Curatorial Staff:

Peter T. Alter, Curator
Joy L. Bivins, Curator
Jill Thomas Grannan, Curator
Timothy Long, Assistant Curator for Costumes
Olivia Mahoney, Chief Curator
John Russick, Curator

Explore the Culinary History and Culture of New Orleans

The Historic New Orleans Collection is hosting a fascinating new exhibition, *What's Cooking in New Orleans? Culinary Traditions of the Crescent City*. The exhibition explores the influence food and dining has had on New Orleans's culture for 300 years. The interactive multimedia show will remain on view through July 7 in the Williams Gallery.

What's Cooking in New Orleans? builds upon the Collection's nationally-acclaimed 2005 project 'A Dollop of History in Every Bite,' which involved hundreds of area school children exploring their own culinary traditions and an array of public programming.'

The exhibition serves as an appetizer to understanding the cuisine that defines the city. The eclectic display of cookbooks, menus, photographs, and other objects span the 18th through mid-20th centuries and introduce patrons to the cultural, economic, and social factors that shaped New Orleans cuisine, primarily Creole cuisine.

What's Cooking in New Orleans? explores the relationships between food and the city's dynamic, ever-changing lifestyle.

Curators' Roundtable Held

Curators' Roundtable was held at the Georgia Association of Museums and Galleries on Saint Simons Island in January. Several 'hot topics' were discussed and the curators and collections managers present agreed that an email group should be formed to continue the dialogue.

James Burns, Director of Curatorial Services at the Booth Western Art Museum in Cartersville, Georgia agreed to get the group started and serve as moderator. Contact information was gathered for nearly 75 curators and collections managers across the state. Collections managers were included because so many of the curators at small museums wear both hats.

The list continues to grow in popularity and topics being discussed are the new Georgia Museum Property Act, collections and exhibitions sharing, cooperative collecting, funding sources for conservation, collections storage issues, the changing role of museums in society and how that is affecting curatorial positions, issues of academic freedom in interpretive labels and programming, sources for curatorial volunteers, stewardship and interpretation of collections, professional development opportunities, standards for exhibition labels, and collections management databases. These topics are not necessarily Georgia-specific, so if you would like to be added to the group please contact James at jburns@boothmuseum.org



Sights of Chicago: Crown Fountain, designed by Jaume Plensa, Millennium Park, Chicago
Photo courtesy Jim Hoobler

Make May Day your Disaster Planning Day

Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma provided a wake-up call, reminding us of the importance of disaster preparedness. Ironically, the Heritage Health Index, released soon after the hurricanes, reported that few institutions have disaster plans, and for some of those that do, the plan is out of date. Given human nature, it's easy to put off disaster planning.

That's why the Heritage Emergency National Task Force hopes you will join us for May Day. On May 1, set aside some time to do at least one thing to get more prepared to respond to a disaster.

Here are some simple ideas:

- If you have a disaster plan, dust it off and make sure it's up-to-date.
- If you don't have a plan, commit to creating one. Consider using dPlan, a free online program to help institutions write comprehensive disaster plans. dPlan provides an easy-to-use template that allows museums, libraries, archives, and other cultural institutions of all sizes to develop a customized plan. See <http://www.nedcc.org/about/news.dplan.php>
- Review and update key documents (including collections inventories and site, building, room, and storage plans); make copies to be sent off-site.
- Conduct a building evacuation drill, evaluate the results, and discuss ways to improve on your staff's performance.
- Update your staff contact information and create a wallet-size version of your emergency contact roster – e.g., Pocket Response Plan™ (PReP™) at <http://www.statearchivists.org/prepare/index.htm#preps>
- Assess risks to your collection.
- Identify and prioritize important collection materials.
- Eliminate hazards such as storage in hallways, blocked fire exits, or improper storage of paints, solvents, etc.
- Do annual maintenance and checks – test your alarm system(s) and fire extinguishers.
- Make a plan to install any needed safety systems.
- Plan to train and drill an in-house disaster team.
- Provide staff with easily accessible disaster response information, such as the *Field Guide to Emergency Response*. See <http://www.heritagepreservation.org/Update/2006/06suFieldGuide.HTM>
- List and plan to secure disaster response supplies for documentation, personal safety, clean-up, and salvage.
- Identify off-site storage options for your collections.
- Find a 'buddy' institution to work with in case of a disaster.
- Get to know your local fire fighters and police – invite them to come tour your institution and give you pointers on safety and preparedness.
- Develop a timeline for writing a continuity of operations plan.
- Plan to take a course in risk assessment or disaster planning.

You can make a difference – help save our heritage!



Museums Form Post-Katrina Partnership

Quilt Exhibition Opens

Drawn from the state-wide survey of more than 9,000 quilts documented by the Georgia Quilt Project from 1990 to 1993, this unique exhibition explores the vibrancy and relevance of quilt making in Georgia – as labors of love and aesthetic achievements.

Designs of the Times: Twentieth-Century Georgia Quilts features 70 quilts, each with a unique history for visitors to discover. The exhibition presents these quilts in categories of fabrics, colors, pieced shapes, appliqué, technology, and use/purpose, which will help visitors to better ‘see’ quilts by showing the many decisions a quilter makes when creating a piece.

Georgia Quilts: Piecing Together a History, a 13-essay / 100 color plate book on the Project, was published by the University of Georgia Press in November 2006.

For more information, visit www.AtlantaHistoryCenter.com

The Historic New Orleans Collection and the New Orleans Museum of Art have unveiled *The New Orleans Arts and Crafts Club: an Artistic Legacy* at the New Orleans Museum Art. The exhibition marks the beginning of a post-Hurricane Katrina partnership between THNOC and NOMA. It will be on display through Thursday May 31 2007.

The new partnership will include the sharing of their collections of Louisiana art, both for temporary exhibitions and long-term loans; the sharing of curatorial expertise and research; and joint educational programming. The combined holdings of Louisiana art at THNOC and NOMA are the finest and most comprehensive in the country.

For more than a quarter of a century, from 1922 to 1951, the Arts and Crafts Club of New Orleans played multiple roles in shaping the Crescent City’s visual culture. Its exhibitions fostered appreciation of both historical and contemporary art works, and its faculty formed the core of a ‘New Orleans school’ of painters, printmakers, and craftsmen, reflecting national artistic movements. Housed over the years in several different French Quarter locations, including the historic Brulatour House now owned by THNOC, the Club provided a meeting place and forum not only for visual artists, but also for writers and cultural patrons.

The New Orleans Arts and Crafts Club: An Artistic Legacy, curated by Judith Bonner of THNOC, illuminates and celebrates this artistic legacy. Paintings, watercolors, sculpture, ceramics, prints, and drawings by more than 40 artists from the holdings of both THNOC and NOMA trace the evolution of the Arts and Crafts Club and the individuals associated with it. Works by Clayre Barr, John Clemmer, Josephine Crawford, Leonard Flettrich, Weeks Hall, Knute Heldner, Morris Henry Hobbs, Alberta Kinsey, Olive Leonhardt, John McCrady, Clarence Millet, Paul Ninas, William P. Spratling, Dr Marion Souchon, Helen Turner, and Daniel Webster Whitney are among those on display.

Doris Duke's Wardrobe on Display: Collection of Couture Fit for an Heiress

Known for her style and glamour, the willowy heiress Doris Duke was a designer's dream. Designs from top fashion houses frequented by Doris Duke such as Yves St Laurent, Chanel, Christian Dior, and Halston feature in *The Look! Doris Duke's Day & Evening Wear*, a new exhibit at Rough Point in Newport, RI. Opening on April 12 2007, this exhibition showcases items from Miss Duke's wardrobe between the 1930 and the 1980s.

Rough Point was willed to the Newport Restoration Foundation by Doris Duke upon her death in 1993 with the request that it be opened to the public as a museum. The Newport Restoration Foundation was itself founded by Miss Duke in 1968, as a non-profit institution for the purpose of preserving, interpreting, and maintaining landscape and objects reflecting Aquidneck Island's 18th and 19th century architectural culture.

The Look! presents 26 outfits, all of which are on view to the public for the first time. Photographs of Miss Duke wearing several of the outfits will be included in the exhibit, along with a sampling of handbags, hats, shoes, and other accessories. Highlights of the collection include a circa 1978 feather trimmed white satin cape by Tam, a 1959 Christian Dior white satin suit, an Yves St Laurent white quilted dress with rhinestones from the 1960s, and a blue beaded pantsuit by Halston from 1981.

The Look! explores changing fashions of appropriate for day-wear versus evening-wear. Between 1930 and the late 1960s, a well-to-do woman might have to change her outfit two or three times in order to accommodate a full day of shopping, luncheons, meetings, cocktails, and dinner. By the 1970s, the combined forces of the women's liberation movement and the recession led to a rejection of designers' demands that women change hemlines every season. Working women embraced pants as acceptable daytime attire and daring socialites were already wearing them for evening activities. Free from the rigid rules, women were frequently able to wear an ensemble throughout the course of an entire day and make the transition from day to night with a mere change of accessories.

Further information is available at www.newportrestoration.org.



Evening cape by Richard Tam, circa 1978,
owned and worn by Doris Duke
Photo courtesy A. Bruce MacLeish

Conferences, Meetings and Workshops

'Rethinking Protected Areas in a Changing World'

George Wright Society Biennial
Conference on Parks, Protected
Areas & Cultural Sites

St Paul, MN
April 16-20 2007

[http://
www.georgewright.org/2007.html](http://www.georgewright.org/2007.html)

This conference will be a week of reflection, reconnection, and renewal along the banks of the Mississippi River in downtown St Paul, Minnesota. Professionals from every field in natural and cultural resources will gather at GWS2007 to create America's premier interdisciplinary meeting on parks, other kinds of protected areas, and cultural sites.

By these three overlapping terms we mean a broad array of places – both 'cultural' and 'natural' – managed by different entities under a variety of designations: parks and protected natural areas at all levels; historic, archaeological, and other cultural sites; cultural landscapes; research areas and designated wilderness on public lands; tribal reserves; marine, freshwater, and other aquatic sanctuaries; private land-trust reserves; and similarly designated areas. The GWS conference also encompasses disciplines and activities that support the work of parks, protected areas, and cultural sites, such as ethnography, GIS, and museum work.

'Museums in a Changing Climate'

Museums Australia 2007
Conference

Canberra, Australia
May 17-20 2007

<http://www.museumsaustralia.org.au>

The 2007 Museums Australia Conference is an opportunity to assess our professional values and take a measured look at the society that we serve and the environment we study and live in.

The theme has been designed to allow speakers the freedom to explore contemporary issues on which they have strong and well-developed views. Newly qualified professionals are also encouraged to contribute their perspectives.

'Why Museums Matter'

AAM Annual Meeting
Chicago, IL

May 13-17 2007

[http://www.aam-us.org/am07/
index.cfm](http://www.aam-us.org/am07/index.cfm)

Museums: trusted sources of knowledge and inspiration. Safe places for the exploration of ideas and experiences. Vital partners in our communities. Economic engines. Sources of civic pride and accomplishment. Catalysts of social change and partners in a knowledge economy. Stewards of a shared heritage that represents humankind's greatest achievements and nature's greatest treasures.

As museum professionals and volunteers, we understand how and why museums matter. But we need to do a better job communicating this to others. What are the most effective ways of conveying the value of museums to the public, the media, policy-makers and funders? What are the key messages that we, as a community, should be communicating?

South African Museums Association 2007 National Conference

Maropeng, South Africa

May 29-31 2007

[http://www.samaweb.org.za/
conf.htm](http://www.samaweb.org.za/conf.htm)

The SAMA 2007 National Conference and Annual General Meeting will be held at Maropeng, Cradle of Humankind, situated just outside Johannesburg, Gauteng.

Maropeng means '*returning to the place of origin*' in Setswana. The name was chosen to remind people that the ancestors of all humans, wherever they live today, originally came from Africa. When visiting the Cradle of Humankind, people are actually '*returning to their place of origin.*' The meaning '*returning to the place of origin*' lends itself as a starting point for comments, suggestions and discussion. As caretakers of the history of hominids and their impact on the environment, museums have a responsibility to preserve as well as

display that which has brought us to the present moment.

'Museums: Fundamentals of Understanding'

ICOM 21st General Conference
Vienna, Austria

August 26-31 2007

[http://austria.icom.museum/2007/
index.html](http://austria.icom.museum/2007/index.html)

The topic is particularly pertinent to Austria, which has a long history reaching back to Celtic and Roman times, the expansion in the early modern ages in middle Europe and the ruins of the multilingual national monarchy around the Danube, and the terrible incidents in the middle of the twentieth century.

'Race, Memory, and Reclamation: "There are Years that Ask Questions and Years that Answer"'

School of American Studies,
University of East Anglia
Norwich, UK

Sept 07-09 2007

[http://www.uea.ac.uk/eas/events/
racememory.html](http://www.uea.ac.uk/eas/events/racememory.html)

The anniversary of abolition of the transatlantic slave trade in Britain (2007) and the United States raises all sorts of pertinent questions. The conference will be reflecting on the commemoration of various histories within the United States and will consider questions such as:

- How have the histories of subaltern groups been commemorated within these specific communities?
- How have the ways in which various peoples have scripted their remembrances of these pasts changed over time?
- Can remembrances of these histories in their various forms be regarded as a form of cultural resistance and/or resurrection?
- What are the implications of commemorative history to both dominant and subaltern groups within American society?

Professor Stanley Engerman and Professor Leslie A. Schwalm will be giving keynote lectures.

'Fargo – the Leading Edge'

Mountain-Plains Museums
Association 2007 Annual
Conference

Fargo, ND

September 10-14 2007

<http://>

[www.mountplainsmuseums.org/
documents/
fargoproposalMPMA07second.doc](http://www.mountplainsmuseums.org/documents/fargoproposalMPMA07second.doc)

Fargo is on the leading edge of the Mountain-Plains region in many unexpected ways. Richly influenced by the environment and history of the Northern Plains, the natural and cultural landscape of contemporary Fargo is bright with innovation on traditional themes. In September 2007, we have the chance to hone our leading edge at the MPMA Conference in Fargo. The Conference will highlight three special themes: leadership, heritage preservation, and technology. Session proposals relating to any of these themes are warmly welcomed, along with proposals relating to other material culture and/or scholarly museum issues that are on the leading edge between object-based and traditional technical sessions.

'No Museum is an Island'

Association of Midwest Museums
Mackinac Island, MI

September 25-28 2007

<http://www.midwestmuseums.org/>

Make plans now for something a bit unusual and exciting! The Association of Midwest Museums (AMM) will host the 2007 conference at the magnificent Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island, Michigan. Once again, AMM will collaborate with the Michigan Museums Association. The AMM conference is an excellent opportunity to network with colleagues and keep apprised of important trends in the museum field.

In the coming months, AMM will provide additional information about the conference.

'Shake it Up: Museums Activate and Innovate'

Western Museums Association
2007 Annual Meeting

Oakland, CA

October 10-14 2007

[http://www.westmuse.org/
oakland_rfp.html](http://www.westmuse.org/oakland_rfp.html)

Join the Western Museums
Association for our 2007 Annual

Meeting in Oakland, California, on the eastern side of the San Francisco Bay and bordering the infamous town of Berkeley. The area is renowned for social activism and newsworthy events. Oakland is the ideal venue for us to convene and rally our own innovative and activist sides. In addition to sessions that teach the nuts and bolts and basics of our profession, we are also seeking proposals that ask the challenging questions. How resistant are we to change? Do we advocate for our professional role in our museums and assert ethical practices? Is our museum socially responsible, and how far can we or should we push agendas and personal views? What can we say about censorship – not to mention self-censorship – when threatened by funders, media, or politicians? How do we make choices between social responsibility and responsible business practices?

Museum Association's Annual Conference and Exhibition

Glasgow, Scotland

October 22-24 2007

<http://>

[www.museumsassociation.org/1303
6&search=1.1](http://www.museumsassociation.org/13036&search=1.1)

The Museum Association's annual conference and exhibition is the largest museum and gallery event in the UK. Over 1,000 museum and gallery professionals will come together to discuss the key issues affecting the sector and to review the range of products and services from the country's leading suppliers. Topics will focus on developing collections-related knowledge, increasing visitor numbers, and measuring the value of museums.

'New World Cartographies: Mapping America, 1500-1776'

The American Museum, Bath, UK

Nov 2-3 2007

[http://www.rai.ox.ac.uk/seminars/
index.html](http://www.rai.ox.ac.uk/seminars/index.html)

The American Museum in Britain and the Rothermere American Institute at the University of Oxford welcome proposals for papers for this symposium.

The symposium will be held in conjunction with an exhibition of maps of early America at the Museum, will focus on cartographic

representations (and misrepresentations) of America before the Declaration of Independence in 1776 which gave rise to the present-day United States.

Issues to be considered may include: the significance of imaginative projections of America; the uses of science to map the new continent; interrelations between various conceptions of territory, colony, nation, and continent in the New World; Native American representations of space and place; the iconographic idea of America; changing ideas about America between the Renaissance and the Enlightenment eras; and associations between maps and politics. This symposium should be of interest to those interested in the history of exploration and cartography, as well as those involved with the study of early American history, geography and culture.

Proposals for papers should be submitted by 15 May 2007.

'Fields of Vision: the Material and Visual Culture of New England, 1600-1830'

Boston and Worcester, MA

November 9-10 2007

[http://www.americanantiquarian.org/
fieldsofvision.htm](http://www.americanantiquarian.org/fieldsofvision.htm)

It has been 25 years since the path-breaking exhibition 'New England Begins' opened at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, bringing scholarly attention to the art, artifacts, and built environment of early New England. Since that time, the discipline of material culture has matured, while the emerging field of visual culture has brought new methods and genres to bear on the study of images, objects, landscapes, and the technologies that shaped them.

This conference, sponsored by the Colonial Society of Massachusetts and the Center for Historic American Visual Culture at the American Antiquarian Society, will assess new approaches to the material and visual culture of New England. Reflecting the scholarly trends that have emerged in the past quarter century, the conference will extend the chronological scope of inquiry to embrace the 18th and early 19th centuries, and will explicitly address the innovative work being done in the field of visual culture.

CurCom *Update*
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March 2007

AMERICAN  ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS

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UPDATE

