

CURCOM

UPDATE

Greetings from your Chair!

Wow! We did it! Here is your very first electronic copy of *Update!* There can now be some advantages for this type issue: 1) images in color 2) longer articles 3) more scholarly articles, and 4) less cost for CurCom. Please let the editors and your officers know how you like the electronic version. We will still need to send paper copies to the members who do not list their email addresses. Thanks to Deborah Tout-Smith and Valarie Kinkade for making this happen.

Our eBlast message, 'CurCom News', will come out once a month and carry the brief messages that might require immediate attention. Stephanie Gaub will send that out to all of you; thanks, Stephanie! You can still sign up for the listserve called Forum; follow the easy steps in 'CurCom News.'

The National Program Committee met in Philadelphia and program proposals were selected for the Annual Meeting. John Russick and I served on the committee; I was representing CurCom, EdCom, RC-AAM, and SMAC for the SPC Council. It was a long and hard process. With the economy in the current crisis, you can imagine how the emphasis was on problems that will face museums in the coming years. For those of you who sent in session proposals, AAM will let you know very soon if your session was accepted. If it was not, do not be discouraged; please submit again next year. Contact Ron Potvin if you have an idea for a possible proposal for Los Angeles in 2010!

Wanda Edwards, Margeretta Frederick, and Stephanie Gaub now comprise a small Membership Committee. Contact one of them if you have ideas for adding new

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Linda Eppich
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From the Editor

Here it is at last: our first digital issue of *Update*! Most of you will have received this copy via email, although we are still printing a few copies for members who have no email addresses. Back issues of *Update* can be found at <http://www.curcom.org/newsletter.php>. The new format gives us more flexibility in terms of the length and number of articles. As our eBlast now provides immediate information to members, we're giving thought to other changes we can make to *Update* to keep it useful and relevant to members. Your comments and ideas are most welcome.

This issue includes the second of three articles on RFID applications in museums by Valarie Kinkade. Object tracking technology is a topical issue for all museums today, and Valarie provides some useful food for thought.

Look out for the information on the 2009 fellowship award - this is an important CurCom program, and has had some terrific recipients.

I look forward to hearing from more of you in our next issue, due out in March. Please forward me contributions before the middle of February, or let me know if you hope to make a contribution but are finding the deadline difficult. We will always try to fit you in!

Deborah Tout-Smith, Senior Curator, Cultural Diversity Museum Victoria, Australia

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 (\$20.00 / \$10.00 for students) 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

Future AAM Annual Meetings

Philadelphia, PA
April 30-May 4 2009

Los Angeles, LA
May 23-27 2010

2009 CurCom Fellowship Award

The Curators' Committee is pleased to announce the availability of two fellowships for curators who have never attended an AAM Annual Meeting before and whose major job responsibilities are the care and interpretation of their museums' collections.

These two \$1,000 fellowships are intended to help defray the cost of attending the Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, PA, April 20–May 4 2009.

Please note that fellowship winners will be expected to attend the CurCom business luncheon at the Annual Meeting, where they will be recognized.

Application eligibility

To qualify the applicant must never have attended an AAM Annual Meeting. To qualify the applicant's major (75%) job responsibility must be the care and interpretation of their institution's collection.

To apply, please send:

- A) Cover letter expressing:
 - 1) How participation in the AAM Annual Meeting would benefit the applicant and their institution
 - 2) How professional development is important to the applicant's career and
 - 3) How professional development is important to furthering the mission of their institution
 - 4) A brief description of how collections are significant to their work and
 - 5) An explanation of the museum's financial need for him/her to receive this fellowship

B) A letter of recommendation from the immediate supervisor, emphasizing his/her contribution to the profession; and

C) Résumé.

All materials must be submitted together. Send originals, plus **two sets of photocopies** to: James Burns, Curator of History, Tempe Historical Museum, 809 E. Southern Ave. Tempe, AZ 85282.

Due Date: postmarked on or before **DECEMBER 24 2008**.

For further information contact James Burns at (480) 350 5110 or via email at James_burns@tempe.gov. Results will be announced during the week of January 26 so recipients can register for the conference before the (early) early bird deadline on January 30.

Other AAM 2009 Annual Meeting Fellowships

Not eligible for the CurCom fellowship for the 2009 AAM Annual Meeting, but still finding it hard to resource your trip? Don't despair – there are several other fellowships on offer at <http://www.aam-us.org/am09/fellowships.cfm>.

They include Diversity Fellowships, Emerging Museum Professionals (EMP) Fellowships, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Fellowships, DeWitt Stern Group Travel Fellowships, Masterpiece International Travel Fellowships, Willis Travel Fellowships, and several other SPC fellowships.

Do consider applying!

Announcing the Global Curator Fellows

Linda Eppich

The AAM Curators' Committee and the Museums Australia Historian's Special Interest Group launched the Global Curator Program this past Spring. Never did any of us think that it would be so successful! Two very worthy candidates will travel to Australia or America for each organization's respective museum conference in the Spring of 2009.

Coming to the AAM Annual Meeting in Philadelphia (April 30-May 4) will be Carla Pascoe, who is the Assistant Curator managing the Australian Children's Folklore Collection at Museum Victoria in Melbourne. Carla is currently completing her PhD program at the University of Melbourne and will graduate in June of 2009; she even has a law degree! She has studied and published widely on the subject of the history of childhood in Australia. Carla will be the featured speaker at the CurCom Business Luncheon on Saturday May 2 2009, in Philadelphia. Her subject - what else? 'Histories of Children and Childhood in Museums.' Be sure to sign up for the CurCom Business luncheon, and come to meet her! Carla will also be CurCom's guest at the CurCom Reception at the Eastern State Penitentiary on April 30.

Trevor Jones, a CurCom member, was chosen to go to the Museums Australia Conference in Newcastle, New South Wales, later in May of 2009. Trevor is currently Curator of History at the Neville Public Museum of Brown County in Green Bay, WI. By the time that this issue of *Update* is received by the CurCom membership, he will be in North Carolina, where he has will become the Curator of the Mountain Heritage Center at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, NC. He has a MA degree in history and

Certificate in Museum Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. You may remember reading some of Trevor's articles in *Update*; the last one was his essay on an exhibition about Wisconsin during World War I. He is very excited and says 'this is the chance of a lifetime.' So – the whole Jones family is going to Australia!

The Global Curator Committee consisted of: Valarie Kinkade, the Chair of the American committee, Allison Cywin, John Russick, and Linda Eppich for CurCom; Deborah Tout-Smith, Charlotte Smith and Meighen Katz served on the committee in Australia.

Update on SPC Membership

Nik Honeysett, Chair of the SPC (Standing Professional Committees) Council, has calculated that 27% of AAM members are also members of SPCs – a correction from a previous, much lower calculation of SPC membership.

The AAM currently has 13 Standing Professional Committees. A list can be found at <http://www.aam-us.org/getinvolved/comm/spcs.cfm>. CurCom counts for approximately 3% of the total AAM membership. Only NAME, EdCom and RC are larger than CurCom. CurCom still needs to expand its membership some, as we have lost about 40-50 members since raising dues.

Linda Eppich / Deborah Tout-Smith

—EXHIBITION NEWS—

At Home in Maine

Maine State Museum

The Maine State Museum opened a major new exhibit, *At Home in Maine*, on November 22 2008. *At Home in Maine* is the museum's largest new exhibit in over 20 years. It features a renowned and varied collection of domestic artifacts from every corner of Maine, most on exhibit for the first time. These objects, exhibited with dozens of historical photographs in colorful displays and evocative room settings, tell stories of Mainers at home throughout history. In *At Home in Maine*, visitors of all ages will discover the nearly-forgotten summer kitchen, hear traditional music, watch home movies, glimpse treasured possessions, experience the hard work of housekeeping, appreciate indoor plumbing, share memories, and learn about the many other, sometimes unique ways that life in the past has shaped today's Maine.

Kate McBrien, Curator of Historic Collections
Maine State Museum
www.mainestatemuseum.org

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members to our CurCom roster. Regional Representatives: contact a Committee member to ask for assistance within your region. Taking our brochure to various meetings around the country is one of the Committee's very first ideas. I will send them out when requested.

Consider nominating an active CurCom member, or yourself, for an office. We work very hard for you and AAM, but the experience is rewarding. Rob DeHart will be sending out a request in early 2009 for nominations for the following officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Wanda is the only current Officer eligible to run again, for the position of Secretary. The term is now for three years, due to the changes of the CurCom Guidelines for 2008.

For the AAM Annual Meeting – the CurCom Reception will be held on April 30 at the Eastern State Penitentiary, which opened in 1829. Have you ever toured a cellblock? Come and enjoy; Ellen Endslo is chair of the event and has arranged for catering in several areas of the penitentiary. Our Global Curator candidate will be the featured speaker at the CurCom Business Luncheon. There is more about that in this issue. I hope to see each of you in Philadelphia!

Linda Eppich
The Preservation Society
of Newport County
Chair, AAM Curators' Committee

Barcoding Disadvantages in an RFID World

Valarie J. Kinkade, Museum and Collector Resource

This is the second in a series of three articles on the topic of RFID applications in museums.

RFID, or Radio Frequency Identification, has several advantages over barcoding. Museums that are currently contemplating barcoding projects should instead consider RFID as the automatic identification and data capture technology of choice. There are many problems presented with barcoding that RFID does not have. In some areas, such as security and object handling, RFID technology provides increased safety for collections that barcoding cannot.

Adhesion

One impediment to barcoding implementation is the fact that the barcode needs to be attached to an artifact – either directly or indirectly. In order to attach a barcode to an object an adhesive must be used. Since there are few conservator-approved, reversible adhesives, attaching a barcode directly to an artifact or artwork is not recommended. Barcodes have typically been printed on paper. The generally accepted practice is to print barcodes on foil-backed labels or on a paper product with an adhesive back. The paper with the adhesive back is then attached to an archivally-safe tag which is then tied to the object. Some museums have experimented by printing barcodes on acid-free paper. These labels are then adhered to artifacts using the B-72 sandwich – also known as the ‘floating number system.’¹ However, problems exist here with labels peeling off of uneven surfaces and inks fading over time. If one is storing or exhibiting objects in an area without climate control, issues can arise when the paper has differing dimensional qualities than the substrate it is attached to. This can cause the tag to tear, become detached, and in some cases even harm

the object if the paper is stronger than the artifact it is attached to.

In large collections such tags are inherently a problem for permanent numbering. They fall off, are accidentally torn off, and can be removed by non-human agents. Mice have been known to remove the clean, soft strings of tags for use as bedding material. The museum field has long realized the vices of using tags, and just because a barcode has been attached to a tag does not mean the tag functions any better as a permanent labeling device.

While the problems of adhesion have not been solved with RFID, the RFID tag does have a feature that barcodes do not. Since one does not actually have to see the RFID tag it can be encapsulated in something that can be adhered to artwork or an artifact.²

Language

RFID communication is numeric and happens at the software level. The RFID tag has a number, but that number is not visible without the reader and the software. On passive tags the number is ‘engraved,’ meaning it is permanently assigned to that tag. When the reader receives the signal from the tag, the engraved number on the tag is received by the middleware.³ This is not necessarily the artifact number. In fact it is usually NOT the artifact number. The number broadcast by the tag may be 15, 20, or even 50 digits long. In the software that number is linked to the object ID and the corresponding object information in the database. The user may not even see this engraved number – but simply sees the display showing the object number. Some active tags actually have the capacity to have numbers that can be changed by the user. Since most museums do not change

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the numbers on a high percentage of objects, the value of this feature of active tags does not outweigh the disadvantages of active tags in a museum setting.⁴ Some feel that this absence of a visible number on the object is a negative of RFID. However, one can always add a visual number to the piece as has traditionally been done in the museum. With collections that have already been numbered one would not normally remove the existing permanent number, but simply add the RFID tag.

Barcodes, on the other hand, have a visual number printed on them. These numbers can be the object number (such as 2008.0054.7) or it can also be the barcode number (i.e. 03071P00547635). The barcode may also have no visually discernable number printed on it.⁵ When the barcode is read the software links the number to the computerized object data – the same way RFID does.

As with RFID, the number on the barcode is generally not the number of the object. For example, under the barcode on a box of cereal at the grocery store there are a series of digits. They may read 24698214. In the computer, this equates to the product information which may be 'Raisin Bran Cereal, 20oz box, \$3.99.' In the museum, this is the object number which may be 1996.2.34a. Once you equate the barcode with the artifact number, the two are used to track the object. You cannot reassign 24698214 to another object, just as you would never assign 1996.2.34a to another artifact. Any glitch in the system which disturbs this equilibrium is not good. Dirt, ink, fading, and other agents which visually obscure or fade a barcode can cause the barcode to be unreadable. This does not bode well in disaster recovery situations. Steps taken to make barcodes 'waterproof' or more indestructible often introduce chemicals which can adversely affect collections.

If the desire is to have the printed number on the barcode represent the actual object

number there are barcode language decisions to be made. There are over 25 different barcoding languages to choose from. One needs to select the language which is best suited to the numbering system in use at the institution. Some museums have old/eclectic numbering systems which contain everything from decimal points, small and capitol letters, to the number symbol (#) and underlining. Not all barcoding languages have all of these characters and the more intricate the language the larger the barcode needs to be. RFID chip language is handled at the software/middleware level and does not affect the size of the chip.

Two-dimensional versus one-dimensional barcodes

The standard bar code used at the grocery store is one-dimensional. It is read from left to right to form a 'code.' In the software, this code leads to an entry in the database which corresponds to the product information. The physical width of each black bar determines the number or character represented to the software. This works well until you get long numbers or numbers which are complicated by things other than digits – like the number sign, decimals, or dashes. The result is that the traditional barcode gets longer and longer until it is not practical for museum applications here tags need to be discreet. This problem has been solved through the introduction of two-dimensional bar codes like those in use by the United Parcel Service, American Biomedical Group, or newer Pitney Bowes postage machines. These two-dimensional barcodes are significantly smaller and look like a dot or a grid of small squares (See Figure 1). Museum Traq, LLC's MuseumDot® is as small as 3/16 inch in diameter.⁶ The scanner reads this grid of squares just like the lines on a standard barcode, but the data is read from either the center outwards, or left to right and top to bottom. Therefore, more information can

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be handled in a smaller space. Because of its configuration this kind of barcode can be more intricate and the language more complex in a smaller space. Thus, two-dimensional barcoding is a better solution than standard barcodes.



Figure 1: a two-dimensional bar code
Image courtesy Valarie Kinkade

Object handling

With barcodes, as with traditionally adhered permanent numbers, one still has to get the barcode reader to 'read' the bars. This requires visual contact between the reader and the barcode. It also requires an action on the part of the person attempting to 'read' the bar code. Thus, barcoding alone does nothing to lessen object handling. Objects often still need to be handled just as much as they would if the artifact had a simple permanent number written on it – perhaps even more. Since a barcode reader often needs a few passes to capture the number, the person working the reader may actually manipulate the artifact more than would a technician simply reading the number with their eyes. Picture the grocery store cashier with the packaging that the barcode reader can't readily see... Since RFID tags can be read through many materials such as paper, plastic and cardboard, an artifact can be more easily read without handling.

Barcodes on the outside of a box mimicking the number of objects in the box does nothing to negate the need for object handling. In an inventory you still have to

open the box and go through every object in order to check the accuracy of the information related to the barcode on the outside of the box. If an entire collection is stored unboxed in order to facilitate quick barcode reading, other issues may be exacerbated. Objects could accumulate dust and be more vulnerable to the environment, or theft.

Security

Barcoding does little to improve security. Barcodes still require the person moving the object to 'swipe' the barcode at some point during movement and then enter where the object has been moved to. It also relies upon the object handler to enter their name as the mover, unless the barcoding software somehow is made to interface with the proximity reader.⁷ Since many workers currently in the museum field cannot seem to enter this information every time something is moved, barcoding will not improve accountability. With RFID, it is possible to have such changes recorded in an automatic manner, and the object handler does not need to do anything but return the object to any location within antenna range. When an object is relocated, be it to the correct or incorrect location, an RFID system can be designed to automatically update the database.

Since a barcode reader has to be relatively close to the object to read its barcode, the application of barcodes as object numbers for use in an interpretive setting are dubious. If an object has a barcode which can be read by a scanner it is probably also vulnerable to abuse and theft. The object would most likely need to be uncovered and be within about six inches of the barcode reader for a visitor to use the reader with some success. Since visitors are used to seeing barcodes and readers in action outside the museum, the temptation would be to bring readers in contact with the object – similar

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to the actions of the grocery or clothing store clerk – potentially endangering the object. While barcodes can be placed outside casework and on didactic materials, this would be a separate application to that of providing an identification number.

Barcodes placed on the outside of containers do nothing to stop someone from removing an object from the collection through theft. To obviate this system all one has to do is remove the object but leave the box, bag, or frame. Any grocery store owner will tell you that barcoding does not deter, nor interfere with, shoplifting or employee theft.

RFID can greatly improve security if the system is designed with security in mind. Doorways through which artifacts might travel can be equipped with antennas. If the data received by the antennas also interfaces with existing proximity cards carried by employees, the system can track who moved the object, when it was moved, where the person moved it to, and if that person was authorized to move the object.⁸ If the object handler did not have a proximity card – as in the case of an outside theft – the system could also sound an alarm or notify security staff.

Final thoughts

Barcoding, like RFID, is a back-end solution. Applying either technology as you initially inventory or catalogue a collection does nothing to save time in the implementation phase. Barcoding would still save time and resources during subsequent inventories and can improve collections stewardship through accountability. However, as the price of RFID comes down and architects are more aware of designing spaces which are RFID-friendly, this new technology will prove to have a much greater return on investment, provide better security application, and can lend itself to uses outside of simple recordkeeping.

Endnotes

1. Colorado Historical Society.
2. <http://www.washiwrap.com/>, accessed October 1, 2008.
3. Middleware is the software necessary to deal with the huge amount of data which comes from a room full of RFID tags. Especially in a system where active tags are in use the tags can 'beep' to the receiver every two seconds. Middleware is software that essentially looks at the end application software, notes if any change has occurred and if none has does not continue to pass 'old' information on. This leaves the memory of the end application free to conduct necessary changes when they do happen.
4. See 'RFID Application in Museums,' *Update*, July 2008.
5. For example, Museum Traq's MuseumDot®.: <http://www.museumtraq.com/images/museumdot/01.html>.
6. <http://www.museumtraq.com/images/museumdot/01.html>, uploaded October 30, 2008.
7. A proximity reader is a device usually on the wall near a secure door. When the proximity reader is activated by a card carried by person authorized to enter a room the door unlocks and allows the person to enter. Software via a network can also record this transaction and the number of the proximity card used to open the door. Most of us use these cards in museums as part of an ID card. They are about the size of a credit card, but slightly thicker.
8. Ibid

Philadelphia 2009 Annual Meeting Theme

'The Museum Experiment'

With each generation, museum professionals in the United States seek to redefine the word 'museum' and determine anew our responsibilities to the society we serve. While we continue to ask the same questions as our predecessors — What should the museum be? How should it best do its work? Whom should it serve? — the answers change, sometimes subtly, sometimes overtly, with each generation.

Museums are unfinished, ever-changing. We continue to learn along with our visitors, our communities, and society. Museums are a grand and continuous experiment in educating, engaging and inspiring people of every age and background.

Through experimentation, innovation, and risk-taking museums continue to refine the core values that are key to success — being relevant, responsive, and real.

Relevant, first of all, to our many publics, finding ways to encourage all visitors to connect with our collections and programs, working toward an inclusiveness where all visitors can find their own and other stories in our institutions.

Responsive to the changing needs and realities of our communities by being active and generous partners in civic life, and earning and re-earning the public trust.

Real, as in authentic. A museum's greatest asset, one that the public tells us they value most highly, is authenticity. Museums promote meaningful public engagement with real objects and/or primary experiences enlightened by scholarship and interpretation.

The museum experiment is one of continuous adaptation. In Philadelphia, we have invited proposals that demonstrate the core beliefs and values of our museums

and their ability to remain relevant, responsive, and real. Break-through ideas and innovative practices and strategies will be explored:

- Engaging the public in the museum experience
- Advancing the understanding of collections care and heritage preservation
- Promoting learning in museums
- Creating resource efficiencies
- Knowing, understanding, and applying best practices in museum operations
- Managing information to support scholarship and knowledge
- Embracing diversity of participation, thought, and action
- Examining world cultures to promote understanding and tolerance

More information about the 2009 AAM Annual Meeting is available at <http://www.aam-us.org/>

CurCom at the Annual Meeting

Planning for CurCom sessions at the 2009 AAM Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, PA, is in full steam. CurCom is planning no less than 12 single sessions and one double session!

Congratulations to our 2009 Program Chair Ron Potvin for his work in setting up those sessions.

Further information on our sessions will be available soon.

Conferences, Meetings and Workshops

SEMC's Jekyll Island Management Institute 2009

Jekyll Island, GA
January 20-27 2009
<http://www.semcdirect.net/>

The SEMC (Southeastern Museums Conference) proudly announces the 9th Annual Jekyll Island Management Institute. JIMI '09 is specifically designed for administrators from new and emerging museums, and for museum professionals with subject area expertise wanting knowledge of general museum administration and operations.

Located on historic Jekyll Island, GA, this highly successful training program provides an eight-day immersion for museum professionals seeking the opportunity to learn management, personnel, and interpretive skills from leading experts. Sessions include management styles, administration, and trusteeship, fundraising and marketing, financial management, developing exhibits, public relations, collections management, disaster preparedness, education and interpretation, volunteer management, and museum ethics.

'Bridges: Collaboration / Innovation / Risk'

California Association of Museums
2009 Annual Conference
San Francisco, CA
February 25-28 2009
http://www.calmuseums.org/conferences_and_workshops/2009overview.html

The Golden Gate Bridge, Chinatown, Alcatraz, cable cars... These are the iconic images that people from around the world associate with the beautiful city of San Francisco. For several decades, however, San Francisco has been equally known for its progressive and liberal spirit - from the Summer of Love to same sex marriages. It is this aspect of the city's persona that inspired the content and theme for the California Association of Museums 2009 Annual Conference. We invite you to meet with your California museum colleagues in San Francisco to explore how museums are embracing new ideas, supporting

sustainable practices, building communities, taking risks, and inspiring change.

CMA National Conference 2009

Toronto, ON, Canada
March 25-28 2009
http://www.museums.ca/en/conferences/annual_cma_conference/

The 62nd CMA (Canadian Museums Association) national conference will address a combination of elements that represent the changing concept of citizenship, setting critical agendas that should really influence people both within and outside of our community. Contributors include recognized figures on the political and cultural scene. You can select from a wide range of educational sessions to help you learn about new approaches, to share experiences, and to stay on top of what's new in our field.

Toronto, the city has a rich, multicultural history, and many wonderful museums and galleries. Delegates will have a chance to visit these museums during the course of the conference.

'History without Boundaries'

Organization of American Historians
Annual Meeting
Seattle, WA
March 26-29 2009
<http://www.oah.org/meetings/2009/call.html>

The OAH Annual Meeting will provide an eclectic program highlighting the use of history in research, education, the media, and public presentations. Our papers will reflect the broad chronological and subject diversity of American history, including race, gender, disabilities, political, diplomatic, and military studies, teachers, public historians, and independent scholars. The program should feature the history of the West and borderlands, rural life, Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans, and issues of immigration and environmental policy.

'Rendezvous 2009'

Pacific Northwest History Conference
Portland, OR
April 15-18 2009
<http://www.ccrh.org/announcements.php?p=6>

The 62nd Annual Pacific Northwest History Conference will be held jointly with meetings of the Northwest Oral History Association, the Oregon Heritage Commission, and the Northwest Archivists in a unique opportunity for exchange among academic and public historians, students, and the general public. The goal of 'Rendezvous 2009' is to reflect the sharing of ideas, multiplicity of perspectives, and convergence of cultures that occurred in the fur trade and statehood rendezvous of the 19th century.

Commemorations such as the celebration of statehood can reveal a people's values at a specific time, becoming important watershed moments that both reflect the past and project a future. The narratives we craft at these moments characterize who we think and hope we are.

'Agents for Change'

Colorado-Wyoming Association of Museums Annual Meeting
Estes Park, CO
May 7-10 2009
http://www.coloradomuseums.com/annual_meetings.html

Change is something that we are faced with everyday. Sometimes it is something to be embraced, while other times it is something that we resist.

The 2009 meeting will focus on helping CWAM members initiate, accept, and implement positive change in their institutions and the museum community as a whole.

NAI International Conference

Athens, Greece
May 6-10 2009
<http://interpnet.com/ic/>

The NAI (National Association for Interpretation) conference will bring together delegates from up to 40 nations in an effort to create opportunities for professional development for attendees and establish a network for professional associations and individuals involved in heritage interpretation around the globe.

**'Mining for Change:
Transforming our Museums'**
Museum Association of Arizona 2009
Annual Meeting
Bisbee, AZ
May 13-16 2009
[http://www.azmuseums.org/
annual_meeting.htm](http://www.azmuseums.org/annual_meeting.htm)

At the 27th Annual Meeting in Bisbee, a mining town that knows all about transformation and how to make it happen successfully, we will examine how museums can move confidently into the coming decades through transformation in:

1. New technology
2. Fresh ways of conveying knowledge
3. Increased accessibility to our collections
4. Interdisciplinary collaboration
5. Enhanced methods for connecting to our communities

'Work in Progress'
Museums Australia Conference
Newcastle, NSW, Australia
May 17-20 2009
[http://
www.museumsaustralia.org.au/
site/pg700.php](http://www.museumsaustralia.org.au/site/pg700.php)

Collecting institutions often fall into the trap of only presenting the finished product, the flawless *fait accompli*. The 2009 Museums Australia conference wants to turn 'How on earth did you get there?' into 'That's how we can do it.' With the four sub themes Working Together, Working Hard, Working Differently, and Working New focussing on innovation and collaboration, this conference will showcase inspirational projects from around Australia and the world.

DEMIST (ICOM Historic House Museums Committee) Conference

Stavanger, Norway
June 19-24 2009
[http://demhist.icom.museum/
conferences.htm](http://demhist.icom.museum/conferences.htm)

The 2009 DEMIST conference will focus on the theme of historic houses as documents of social life and traditional skills. More details will be available soon.

2008 LEAD National Conference

Fort Lauderdale, FL
August 22-24 2008
[http://www.flamuseums.org/
news/](http://www.flamuseums.org/news/)

This year the Kennedy Center is pleased to partner with the Broward Center for the Performing Arts, VSA arts of Florida, and the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs to bring the 2008 LEAD (Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability) National Conference and Training to Fort Lauderdale, FL.

The conference will provide an array of opportunities to:

- Discuss issues ranging from physical and programmatic access to ticketing policies and marketing strategies
- Share ideas and learn what has been successful at other arts organizations and cultural institutions
- Engage in an open dialogue with representatives from the Disability Rights Section of the Department of Justice
- Learn about best practices and how to develop sound policies
- Participate in stimulating and enriching discussions with leaders in the field.

'Making History a 21st-Century Enterprise'

American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) 2009 Annual Meeting
Indianapolis, IN
August 26-29 2009
[http://www.aaslh.org/2009-
annual-meeting.htm](http://www.aaslh.org/2009-annual-meeting.htm)

The days of museums as 'cabinets of curiosity' are gone. To succeed in our increasingly fast-paced,

technology-saturated society, we must embrace new models of operation. Remembering from 2007 that relevance equals the bottom line and from 2008 the power of transformation, we envision becoming centers for ideas and inspiration-cultural entrepreneurs. The 2009 AASLH Annual Meeting will explore the place of entrepreneurship within the field-marrying fresh concepts with our mission as stewards of the past.

Illinois Association of Museums Annual Conference

September 30-October 2 2009
Bloomington-Normal, IL
[http://www.state.il.us/hpa/iam/
annconf.html](http://www.state.il.us/hpa/iam/annconf.html)

The IAM Annual Conference is an opportunity for museum professionals and volunteers to learn new techniques or refresh old skills, network with colleagues, and enjoy the sights and sounds of the host location. Save the date!

Mountain-Plains Museums Association 2009 Annual Conference

Cheyenne, WY
October 5-9 2009
[http://
www.mpma.net/2009ac.htm](http://www.mpma.net/2009ac.htm)

Mountain-Plains Museums Association (MPMA) is pleased to announce that it has chosen Cheyenne, WY, to be the location for its 2009 conference. Stay tuned to learn more about how to attend and how to become involved.

'Museums and Harmonious Society'

ICOM General Conference
Shanghai, China
November 7-13 2010
[http://icom.museum/
gen_conferences.html](http://icom.museum/gen_conferences.html)

The next ICOM General Meeting is being planned for 2010 in Shanghai, China. More information will become available during 2009 – do consider attending the most significant international museum event on the calendar!

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Nov 2008

AMERICAN  ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS

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UPDATE