

Newsletter
Spring Issue 2005

COLLECTION MANAGERS COMMITTEE

Workshop Overview: Do We Need a Lawyer? Legal Issues for Museum Collections

By Bonnie Grysko
Collections Management Intern, The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza

This year, at the Texas Association of Museums Annual Meeting, CMC cosponsored the pre-conference workshop titled Do We Need A Lawyer? Legal Issues for Museums Collections.

Gabriela Truly, Director of Collections Management for the Dallas Museum of Art, coordinated bringing John Sare, a partner in the law firm of Patterson, Belknap, Webb and Tyler in New York, and Kristi Alexander, Executive Director of the Historical Society of Baltimore County, to Dallas in order to address several pressing legal issues confronted by museums.

As the chair of the event, Gabriela introduced both the speakers and several topics for discussion, including deeds, fractional acquisitions and restricted gifts. Through reviewing a number of alarming situations involving special conditions on donations, this full day workshop encouraged the attendees to be forthright and prudent in thinking about the

future in an attempt to reduce the potential for harm to the object or the institution's responsibilities as a public trust organization.

Kristi began the day by reviewing a number of situations where donor imposed restrictions created strained relationships between the institution and supporter. Based upon her expertise gained working with both collections and in an administrative role, Kristi determined that the best way to avoid potential complications is to write down everything, review institutional policies, weigh the ethical considerations associated with accepting a restricted gift, and to always be "a little bit attorney, a little bit accountant, a little bit diplomat and a little bit crazy."

John continued the morning's discussion by posing the question, "Do you want to see this on the front page of your local paper?"

THE

FUTURE IS

LIKE THE

PAST. BUT

DIFFERENT



Inspiring Thoughts From the Annual Meeting

By Gabriela Truly
Director of Collections Management
Dallas Museum of Art

This year I heard many things through out the four days of the conference, which have remained with me. Some are a bit on the funny side, some are dramatic, and all are inspiring to our work, and highly appropriate. I wanted to share some with you.

- Create a paper trail.
 Rick Casagrande
 Casagrande Appraisals
 Session: When It's Gone It's Gone: But Was It Insured?
- Firemen have 12 15 seconds in their air tank.
 Fire Chief Bobby Haltom
 City of Coppell
 Session: State of Texas Alliance for Response Task Force (START)

 Have you read the book by Marie Malaro?

Kristi Alexander Historical Society of Baltimore County Pre-conference workshop: *Do We Need* a Lawyer: Legal Issues for Museum Collections

 Think of worst-case scenarios when updating your collections policies and forms.

John Sare Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy Counselors at Law Pre-conference workshop: *Do We Need* a Lawyer: Legal Issues for Museum Collections Fiduciary responsibility is one reason why you have insurance for your collection.

Jeff Minett Henderson Phillips Fine Arts Session: Loan Agreements: I Don't Like This Part, Can I Delete It?

 Look (at your museum) for the location of your maximum probable loss.

Lynn Marcin Henderson Phillips Fine Arts Session: Loan Agreements: I Don't Like This Part, Can I Delete It?

- The future will happen whether you plan for it or not.
 Peter Bishop
 Studies of the Future/Institute for Futures Research, University of Houston-Clear Lake
 Opening Luncheon
- We ARE the turn of the century.
 Peter Bishop
 Studies of the Future/Institute for Futures Research, University of Houston-Clear Lake
 Opening Luncheon
- Do not let your staff and volunteers try on your textiles .
 Melanie Sanford

Textile Conservation Session: Rolled, Flat, Boxed Textiles: Designed for Challenge

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Inspiring Thoughts From the Annual Meeting

Continued from page 2

 For years we collected without a mission statement, and we are suffering the consequences.

Rebecca Huffstutler
The Witte Museum
Session: Collections by Design: Mission
Statements and Collection Planning

- The most important thing in design is the story.
 Van Romans
 Fort Worth Museum of Science and History
 Closing Plenary
- If you continue to be involved with TAM, you will have someone to help you carry your burden.

Ellie Caston Past-President, TAM Closing Plenary

 The future is like the past, but different.
 Peter Bishop
 Studies of the Future/Institute for Futures Research, University of Houston-Clear Lake
 Opening Luncheon

It seems to me that the thoughts listed above give us a lot to think about. And there certainly were many other thoughts and bits of information shared by the speakers, which are important to our particular responsibilities within the museum setting.

However, I wanted to highlight the last thought I listed. I choose this because it relates to something I often remind our department of, here at the DMA. Our museum has been around for over 100 years, and we still have tons of work to do with our object records, our archives, our loan files, and of course, our storage. I keep saying that I want ours to be the generation of Registrars that solves the problems we have been carrying for years. Identify that mysterious object on the shelf, integrate the object files (long story), clean up our data, update our forms, etc., etc., etc.

So, THE FUTURE IS LIKE THE PAST, BUT DIFFERENT. To me it says, you will follow the same procedures, you will act on the same policies, you will care for your collection with the same intensity – the trick is to enlist the help you need (I learned this past week at the conference that you CAN find volunteers, sometimes it takes a miracle!), so you hand your PAST, to the FUTURE, in better shape than it was given to you.

Happy filing, cleaning, organizing, typing, filing....



I'm sure this is nothing new, but I am suffering from a serious case of "TAM-lag" this year. The Annual Meeting was fantastic, but it's almost three weeks later and I'm STILL exhausted (and for those who might be wondering—my foot still hurts a little, but the doc says it's just a slight sprain)!

As physically tired as I am, I'm feeling energized on a professional level. TAM and CMC gatherings always do that for me — giving me a sense of professional fulfillment. All of you are part of that, and I thank you for it.

Some highlights, from my perspective, of this year's conference: recognition of the role of Rick Casagrande and Kim Peel in founding CMC 15 years ago; presenting Carolyn Spears with the CMC Outstanding Member Award; visiting with a wide variety of new and returning CMC members at our resource table; and a great selection of collections-related sessions!

For those of you who did not make it to TAM this year, you were missed! I hope to see you at a workshop or in Beaumont next spring!

One of the many things we discussed at our affinity group meeting was the possibility of giving this newsletter an actual title. It was only mentioned in passing, but a bunch of enterprising members (instigated by Lynne Littrell) have taken up the discussion and run with it on the CMC E-Group. There are some great suggestions being put forth, and we will soon be trying to pick one.... Stay tuned!

Finally, and you had to know I was gonna go here, if you haven't done so already please please please renew your membership for 2005. We'd hate to lose you!

A quick update on CMC officers: Carolyn Spears completed her term as Vice Chair, and is taking a well-deserved break (thanks Carolyn!); Trey Reed is your new Vice Chair (contact him with any workshop suggestions); Amy Fulkerson joins the CMC board as our new Secretary (welcome, Amy!!); and Jennifer Cook is taking on another term as Officer-at-Large/Editor. Then there are those with one year left on their yours truly as Chair, terms: Rebecca Huffstutler as Treasurer, and Kim Cupit as Officer-at-Large.

Megan Bryant, Chair

2003-2004 CMC OFFICERS

Megan P. Bryant / Chair The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza 411 Elm Street, Suite 120 Dallas, TX 75202 Tel: 214-747-6660 Ext. 6619 E-Mail: meganb@ifk.org

Trey Reed / Vice Chair
Fort Bend Museum Assoc. /
George Ranch
10215-G FM 762 Road
Richmond, TX 77409
Tel: 281-545-9223
E-Mail: treed@georgeranch.org

Rebecca Huffstutler /
Treasurer
The Witte Museum
3801 Broadway
San Antonio, TX 78209
Tel: 210-357-1867
E-Mail:
rebeccahuffstutler@wittemuseum.org

Amy Fulkerson / Secretary
The Witte Museum
3801 Broadway
San Antonio, TX 78209
Tel: 210-357-1868
E-Mail:
amyfulkerson@wittemuseum.org

Kim Cupit / Officer-at-Large
Denton County Courthouse Museum
110 W. Hickory
Denton, TX 76201
E-Mail:
kim.cupit@dentoncounty.com

Jennifer Cook / Officer-at-Large (Editor) Mary Kay Museum P.O. Box 799045 Dallas, TX 75379-9045 Tel: 972-687-5889 E-Mail: Jennifer.cook@mkcorp.com

CMC Newsletter

is a quarterly publication of the Collection Managers Committee, a non-profit affinity group of the Texas Association of Museums. Submissions are due to the Editor by the first of March, May, August and November.

Printing and mailing costs for this issue were donated by the Mary Kay Museum, Mary Kay Inc., Dallas, Texas



Workshop Overview: Do We Need a Lawyer? Legal Issues for Museum Collections

(Continued from page 1)

In order to avoid detrimental legal issues which may dissuade potential donors in the future, when developing a contract or gift document, John suggests to consider all of the "what ifs?" and use clear, blunt language in your writing. A paragraph on representations, warranties and indemnifications is often included in the contract in order to protect the institution from misrepresentation. In dealing with potential donors, he encouraged both parties to mull over perpetuity in relation to the gift; conservation concerns, length of exhibit time, and other restrictive factors should also be considered. In view of fractional gifts and acquisitions becoming more commonplace, John stated that such a gift agreement should include paragraphs about the right of length of possession, a binding promise to give the rest of the object at some time and an agreement that parties waive rights of partitioning; provisions that deal with conservation, the appraisal process and insurance needs of the object are also helpful. Following a number of questions, John briefly discussed legal issues associated with deaccessioning practices, copyright and abandoned property laws.

Following lunch, the group critiqued some of the deed of gift forms that had been submitted by museums in attendance. The workshop's predominant themes were summarized at the end of the session in the following statements:

- · Be forthright and be upright.
- Keep everyone honest.
- · Keep all cards on the table.
- Avoid being embarrassed by any contract language should it come out in the paper.
- Make sure arrangements made are in the best interest of the museum.
- When in doubt, call somebody!

Taking advantage of the network of museum professionals in Texas can be both helpful and supportive, but sometimes, the best interest of the institution requires the expertise of legal counsel.





Member Spotlight Carolyn Spears

CMC Outstanding Member

By Megan Bryant, CMC Chair

From time-to-time, CMC nominates one or two individuals as Outstanding Member. As you know, those of us who work to make CMC what it is do so on an entirely voluntary basis. A lot of folks work really hard at it, and it can get time consuming. But it's a labor of love and dedication. There was no question that this year, as she finished out yet another term as a CMC officer, Carolyn Spears should receive CMC's Outstanding Member Award in recognition of her many contributions and dedication to CMC. Carolyn has served CMC in various and numerous capacities throughout its entire 15-year existence and, I think it's safe to say, has become something of a guiding light.

Take a look at some of her many contributions (and this is just a short list!):

- In 1989, she acted as the first Membership Committee for CMC, and took on that same committee again in 1994.
- She helped developed CMC's By-Laws in 1994-1995.
- In addition to serving on various CMC subcommittees, Carolyn has held various officer positions: Officer-at-Large/Newsletter Editor (1991-1993), Chair (1994-1996), Secretary (2000-2003), and most recently, Vice-Chair (2003-2005).
- Carolyn manages the TAM Environmental Monitoring Kit program.
- She has planned, organized, and spoken at countless workshops; has represented CMC on the TAM Program Committee numerous times; and has chaired or spoken at many conference sessions.

• As one of the most organized people I've ever met (and that's saying something among a group of collection managers and registrars!), Carolyn has become a sort of unofficial historian for CMC – keeping track of and documenting virtually everything the Committee has ever done.

Carolyn has shown a special determination to foster good collections care and professional development through CMC, helping to grow CMC into a strong, vital organization to support collections professionals in Texas.

For me, personally, she has been a lifesaver (at times a lifeboat!), an inspiration, and a dear, dear friend. I was a relative "newbie" when I took over as CMC Chair after a string of venerable leaders, and would have been lost without her guidance and support. I am excited, thrilled, honored and proud to present Carolyn Spears with the CMC Outstanding Member Award!





T.A.M. ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Rolled, Flat, Boxed Textiles: Designed for Challenge Presented by Melanie D. Sanford - Textile Conservator



By Jennifer Rodgers, Archives & Collection Coordinator, Matagorda County Museum

We walk on, cover up, wear, wash, hand and fold (or drape and crumple) textiles in our households on a daily basis. Eventually we dispose of them and purchase new ones. Why? Because as stated by Melanie Sanford, "Textiles were created to use not last." But what do we do if we want to preserve these materials for historical purposes? Use preventative conservation to protect textiles from the hazards of deterioration. Melanie provided the class with the knowledge to begin this process.

Agents which will cause textile to lose quality include light, heat, pH, rH, insects, water, dust, lint and environmental pollutants. Keep in mind that synthetic fibers are much harder to preserve than other fabrics. Some important steps to follow are never place textiles near heating/cooling vents or open windows/doors. Optimum temperature is 65 percent, humidity is 50 percent and lighting is 50 lux. Wear safety equipment when handling textiles, avoid excess handling, use cotton or nitrile gloves, and make use of handling aids.

Use supports to secure textile when displaying. Display time for average textiles should not be more than six months and for fragile materials time should not exceed three months.

For storage, ideally textiles should be stored flat. Begin by

lining the box with tissue and plan to pack according to type of material. Always place heavier material on bottom and layer tissue between each textile. Lightly pad sleeves and pant legs with tissue, then use sausage style rolls for cushioning folds and tissue snowballs to fill void areas. Purchasing tissue by the rolls instead of sheets is cheaper and easier to construct sausage rolls. If possible, use shallow shelving and don't stack too high for safety reasons. When using hangers for storage, they need to be padded. Textiles should not hang touching each other or the floor. Avoid hanging narrow strapped garments, delicate, lacy or bottom heavy garments. Squeeze hangers lined with padding or tissue are best to hang skirts on. Large flat textiles are best stored rolled. The tubes should be six inches longer than the textile, acid free, and covered in Mylar®. Roll tissue-lined textile with top of fabric out and then cover with tissue, washed muslin or clean white sheet. If roll is placed in a box instead of hung, use foam cutouts to support the tube.

Checks should be done every six months for fragile textiles, yearly for average textiles, and textiles that are in excellent condition can wait up to two years before checked.

Museum software programs such as Past Perfect are very helpful in keeping track of location, check dates, etc.



COLLECTION MANAGERS COMMITTEE An Affinity Group of the Texas Association of Museums

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE 2005-2006

July 18, 2005	Port Isabel Historical Museum,	Housekeeping Basics for Collections
October 2005	Texas Fashion Collection	Clothing and Textile Collections
January 2006	Mayborn Museum Complex. Waco	The Many Aspects of Collections Research
April 2006	TAM Annual Meeting, Beaumont	CMC co-sponsored pre-conference workshop topic to be
Summer 2006	Houston	International Shipping and Air Freight
Fall 2006	San Antonio or Austin	Possible topics: Caring for Photography, Collections, Preventative Conser-

MEMBERSHIP FORM

\$15.00 yearly dues

Please Print Clearly

Name: _____ Institution: _____

Address:

Phone: _____ Fax: ____ E-Mail: _____

State: _____ Zip Code + 4: __

If you have not yet renewed your membership for 2005, please do so as soon as possible!

Please make checks payable to the Collection Managers Committee. Send check and form to Rebecca Huffstutler, The Witte Museum, 3801 Broadway, San Antonio, Texas 78209



COLLECTION MANAGERS COMMITTEE OF THE TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS

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CMC Newsletter c/o Mary Kay Museum P.O. Box 799045 Dallas, Texas 75379-9045



COLLECTION MANAGERS COMMITTEE AN AFFINITY GROUP OF THE TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS

COLLECTIONS' BASICS: HOUSEKEEPING

Join us for a day dedicated to simplifying the overwhelming, and yes, monotonous task of housekeeping. Not fun, but definitely fundamental. Three speakers will address maintenance, planning and implementation of housekeeping in storage and galleries. There will be a discussion period for participants to address specific concerns and finally a tour of the Port of Isabel Museums at the end of the day.

Featured Speakers and Topics

Trey Reed, Historical House Specialist/Curatorial Assistant, Fort Bend County Museum & George Ranch *Trey Reed will address maintenance and equipment issues in historic houses.*

Bruce Taylor-Hille, Education Curator, Brazoria County Historical Museum
Bruce will focus on how to put together a housekeeping plan using a system that generates information that you can use and helps you do your job, rather than just a bookkeeping operation.

Weasle Ahlstrom, Collections Manager, Varner Hogg Historical Site, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department Weasle has recently dealt with implementing a new system, and she will address the problems involved in starting from scratch.

When

Monday, July 18, 2005, 9a.m. to 4p.m. (Lunch on your own at a local restaurant.)

Museums of Port Isabel, Treasures of the Gulf Museum (transportation & accommodations attached)

Cost

\$25 for CMC members, \$30 for non-members

To register, fill out the form below and send by MAIL, FAX OR EMAIL to:

TREY REED

Fort Bend Museum Association/George Ranch 10215-G FM 762 Richmond, TX 77469 281-545-9223 ext.270, fax 281-343-5060, treed@georgeranch.org

Name:	Institution:
Address:	
E-mail/Phone (for confirmation):	
Registration CMC Member \$25.00 each, or	
Non-member \$30.00 each	\$
CMC Dues (JOIN TODAY for \$15 per year)	\$
TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED:	\$
CMC Federal Tax Identification Number: 75-225-318	39

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Museums of Port Isabel • 317 E. Railroad Ave. • Port Isabel, Texas 78578 • 956.943.7602 • Fax: 956.943-4346 e-mail: director@portisabelmuseums.com or infor@portisabel.org. Further information available at http://www.portisabel.org.

TRANSPORTATION:

- Port Isabel/Cameron County Airport is located ten miles north of Port Isabel. Municipally owned, it has a lighted primary runway of 10,000 feet.
- Brownsville-South Padre Island International Airport is located in Brownsville, 22 miles south, with commercial and passenger service.
- Valley International Airport, located in Harlingen, 35 miles east, is a hub serving the lower Rio Grande Valley and South Padre Island.
- Bus service is available through Valley Transit and Gray Line.

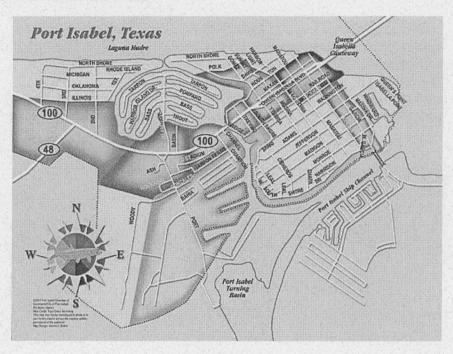
DIRECTIONS TO PORT ISABEL AND TO TREASURES OF THE GULF MUSEUM:

From Harlingen and points north: heading southbound on Hwy. 77, turn east onto Hwy. 100. Exit is marked 'South Padre Island'. Proceed approximately 23 miles.

From Brownsville and points south: take Hwy. 48 and proceed approximately 20 miles. Turn right onto Hwy. 100/Queen Isabella Blvd

Once in Port Isabel... turn right on Tarnava Street, the Museums are located on the corner of Railroad and Tarnava Streets, across from the Port Isabel Lighthouse and one block west of the Queen Isabella Causeway.

From South Padre Island... turn left on Tarnava, the second street from the Queen Isabella Causeway. The Museums are located on the northwest corner of Tarnava and Railroad Streets.



LODGING:

Bahia Mar Resort Ebbie & Donna Ahadi P. O. Box 2280 So. Padre Island, TX 78597 956/761-1343 956/761-6287 http://www.bahiamar.com

Casa Rosa Inn 761 W Hwy 100 Port Isabel, TX 956/943-2052

Executive Inn P. O. Box 546 Port Isabel, TX 78578 956/943-7866 956/943-6461 spibudget@aol.com

Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort Larry Murphy 100 Padre Blvd. So. Padre Island, TX 78597 956/761-5401 956/761-1560 Padre South Hotel Debbie Moutsos P. O. Box 2338 So. Padre Island, TX 78597 956/761-4951

Queen Isabel Inn John Haywood/Pat Younger 300 Garcia Port Isabel, TX 78578 956/943-1468 http://www.queenisabelinn.com

Radisson Resort Bill Donohue 500 Padre Blvd. So. Padre Island, TX 78597 956/761-6511 956/761-5397

Seabreeze I Ann Wilson P. O. Box 3559 So. Padre Island, TX 78597 956/761-7734



Southwind Inn Rick and Valerie Ekstrom 600 Davis St. Port Isabel, TX 78578 956/943-3392 http://www.southwindinn.com

southwindinn@prodigy.netSunchase IV Resort
Larry White
1000 Padre Blvd.
So. Padre Island, TX 78597
956/761-5704
956/761-1537

White Sands Motor Lodge & Marina Patrick Marchan P. O. Box 1027 Port Isabel, TX 78578 956/943-2414 956/943-2384

Yacht Club Hotel & Restaurant John & Barbara Allen P. O. Box 4114 Port Isabel, TX 78578 956/943-1301 956/943-1301