



*Newsletter*

*Winter Issue 2007*

## COLLECTION MANAGERS COMMITTEE OF THE TEXAS

### WORKSHOP REVIEW *Collections Research*

By Anne Lenhart

Collections Assistant for the Permanent Collection, Dallas Museum of Art

On September 25th, the Mayborn Museum at Baylor University hosted members of the Collection Managers Committee for a workshop on collections research. The topic was the focus of an article in the Fall 2005 issue of Texas Association of Museum's *Museline* by Ali James, Director of Curatorial and Visitors Services at the Texas Capitol in Austin. In the article, Ms. James gave her readers an overview of what collections research is and how to make it work. As the first presenter of the workshop, she expanded on her article, identifying the many benefits of collections research: its value for exhibitions, publications, and conservation as well as its inclusion in the accreditation process. She stressed the importance of accuracy and uniformity of content for cataloging and the collection managers' responsibility for confirming the validity of the research.

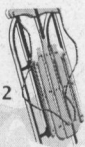
In addition to the business side of collections research, Ms. James spoke about the satisfaction of discovering the history of an artifact or completing an object file. To this end, the participants were put into groups and asked to partake in a looking exercise. Each group was given an object and a worksheet with a number of questions along with space to write their observations. The groups were asked about the physical features and construction of their object, i.e. what does it look and feel like? What does it sound like? What is it made of? How was it made? Other questions asked about the objects use and design, focusing on the decorations and the utilization of the object. Ultimately Ms. James explained each object, answering the questions on the worksheet as she went.

As the workshop continued the topic of research was taken up by Bruce Lipscombe, Curator of Collections at the Historic Waco Foundation. Ms. Lipscombe focused on how to go about researching an object. She started with traditional forms of research such as libraries, courthouses, or cemeteries and then moved on to modern research, namely the internet. Ms. Lipscombe reemphasized that like any secondary source, Web sites are prone to bias and unsubstantiated facts. She circulated a page of Web sites useful for object research including the U.S. Patent and Trademark office and the "Making of America" digital archive, [www.uspto.gov/main/profiles/acadres.htm](http://www.uspto.gov/main/profiles/acadres.htm) and [cdl.library.cornell.edu/moa](http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/moa) respectively.

Next LeAnna Schooley lectured about family research. Ms. Schooley, curator of the W. K. Gordon Center in Stephenville, began by identifying the difference between family history and genealogy. Although the two terms are often used interchangeably, she explained, genealogy is concerned only with the pedigree of a family while family history shows the family's place in society and focuses on the bigger picture. She continued by stating the relevance of family history in a museum, explaining how it provides provenance for items within a collection and, when dealing with a historical society, supports donor cultivation. Ms. Schooley provided a number of handouts, including a guideline to family research, several pages of Web sites, a generic family tree, and a timeline. Some of the guidelines were particularly insightful, including a tip to spelling names phonetically on censuses and court documents and the importance of noting what was and was not found while researching.

The final presenter of the day was Ware Petznick, Ph.D., Curator of Collections at the McFaddin-Ward House in Beaumont. Dr. Petznick provided the audience with a case study on the value of collections research, focusing on the recent restoration of the third floor of the McFaddin-Ward House. In addition to discussing how and where to research objects, Dr. Petznick gave guidelines on how to choose items. When selecting items for research and inclusion in the restoration, she considered the function of the room, the condition of the object, and if the object would fit in the room's size, style, and layout. Dr. Petznick explained that in order to make the restoration as accurate as possible, she needed to research the history of the family and society, pulling together the methods of object and family research that had been discussed throughout the day.

At the end of the day, the workshop worked to remind the participants that a museum is not just the objects it contains, but also the knowledge about the objects it keeps. The various speakers drove the point home with numerous real world tips and guidelines to make the process easier and more accessible for any collections professional.



## Letter From the Chair

I find myself more productive in the Summer. The days are longer, bright and warm.

I require warmth, being from Mexico and all. Knowing that eventually Winter would arrive even if I did not want it to, I made sure to enjoy being outside as much as possible through the Summer. I would get home and sit outside with a glass of wine for a few minutes while our furry baby, Daisy, ran around barking at the birds.

Well, I so glad I enjoyed that because sure enough, it is cold, the leaves are all over the ground instead of on the trees, and I know it will be like this for the next four months.

What does that have anything to do with Collections? Well, since I cannot be outside enjoying warmth – I guess this is a good time to catch up on a few things. Like – when was the last time you did an inventory? Even a little one? Set everything up for a warm cup of chocolate, print whatever you have from the last inventory effort – and choose one

shelf, or one rack, or one cabinet. When you get that done, you can have that cup of warm chocolate. The following week do the same and choose a different type of thing to inventory.

As we always have much too much to do, and regardless of the goals we set for ourselves each morning, each week or each month there will always be the large number of things brought to our calendars by outside forces – we then need to remember to take small steps in the areas of our responsibilities that never seem to get attention or large blocks of time.

I know we all know this. But I find that it helps me to think about it again and make a new effort at tackling things in small pieces. The season comes with plenty of stress already – I hope this helps you to relieve the stress when you next look at that pile on the top of your file cabinet...

Best wishes for a wonderful holiday season to each of you.

Gabby

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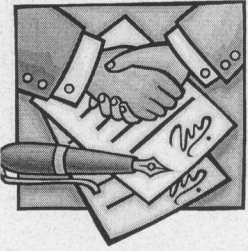
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**CMC Newsletter**  
*is a quarterly publication of the Collection Managers Committee, a non-profit affinity group of the Texas Association of Museums. Submissions are due to the Editor by the first of March, May, August and November.*

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



## WORKSHOP ALERT! WORKSHOP ALERT!

# Can I Borrow Your Stuff?

Building lender relationships and a better loan agreement

We'll begin the day talking about negotiating loans... and lenders? Our speakers will discuss working with lenders that range from the individual to large institutions, even the Library of Congress, and from the perspective of both small and large museums. Why do you always need a loan agreement and what should every loan agreement include? You've negotiated the loan. Now you need to insure and ship it. The speakers will cover insurance and the basics of shipping and couriers as we tour the new Blanton Museum of Art's shipping dock and collection storage.

**Featured Speakers:** Rebecca Norton, Collection Manager Consultant, Frontier Times Museum  
 Michael MacDonald, Registrar, Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Archives  
 Gabriela Truly, Director of Collections Management, Dallas Museum of Art  
 Laura Condon, Willis Fine Art Insurance  
 Meredith Sutton, Associate Registrar, The Blanton Museum of Art

**When:** Monday, January 29, 2007, 9:00am - 3:00pm

**Where:** Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, Austin

**Cost:** \$25 for CMC members, \$30 for non-members (make checks payable to CMC)  
*Additional charge for lunch \$10*

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

**Amy Hooker**

The Petroleum Museum

1500 I-20 W, Midland, TX 79701

Phone: 432-683-4403

Fax: 432-683-4509

Email: [ahooker@petroleummuseum.org](mailto:ahooker@petroleummuseum.org)

**PLEASE REGISTER BY January 22, 2007 (limited to 25 attendees)**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Institution:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail/Phone** (for confirmation): \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration** CMC Members \$25.00 each / Non-members \$30.00 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**CMC Dues** (JOIN TODAY for \$15 per year – you get a quarterly newsletter, special workshop rates, and wonderful lifelong friends and connections.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Lunch** Box lunch \$10 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Please select:* Chicken Salad \_\_\_\_\_ Smoked Turkey \_\_\_\_\_  
 Smoked Ham and Swiss \_\_\_\_\_ Pimiento \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**For more information contact:**

Kathleen Koonce, Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum; phone 512-936-8746; email [kathleen.koonce@thestoryoftexas.com](mailto:kathleen.koonce@thestoryoftexas.com)



## 2007 CMC Stipend Application Guidelines

The Collection Managers Committee of the Texas Association of Museums (CMC of TAM) is sponsoring an annual meeting stipend made possible through the support of CMC by workshop attendees and members. This stipend will assist a CMC member in attending the Texas Association of Museums Annual Meeting in Austin, April 17 – 20, 2007, by paying for all or a portion of conference registration expenses. The stipend award is not automatic and may be withheld if there are no qualified applicants.

Applicants for the stipend must be current voting members of CMC who reside in the United States. (CMC membership information may be obtained from Kim Cupit at 940/349-2850 or any other member of the CMC Board). Eligible to apply are registrars, associate and assistant registrars, collection managers, and museum staff members whose work is registrarial or otherwise collections-based in nature. The award winner will receive money to defray the registrations costs associated with attending the TAM Annual Meeting. In return, the recipient will be required to provide a report on one or two of the TAM sessions for the CMC Newsletter.

The CMC Board will select the stipend recipient on the basis of the applicants' demonstrated merit and financial need. Demonstrated merit includes, but is not limited to, such activities as participating in

professional museum organizations at the state, regional, or national level; presenting sessions at meetings of professional organizations; and publishing articles in professional journals. Preference will be given to first-time attendees.

To apply for the stipend, complete the form on the reverse and submit, along with the following:

- Cover letter
- Resume
- Letter of recommendation from your immediate supervisor

Applications must be received by February 2, 2007. Faxed and e-mailed applications are acceptable, but be sure to mail the original. Send applications to:

Kathleen Koonce, Registrar  
Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum  
PO Box 12874  
Austin, TX 78711  
(512) 936-8746 (main museum line)  
[kathleen.koonce@TheStoryofTexas.com](mailto:kathleen.koonce@TheStoryofTexas.com)

### 2007 CMC STIPEND FOR TAM ANNUAL MEETING APPLICATION FORM

**Institution:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Will this be your first time attending the TAM Annual Meeting?** Yes ☐ No ☐

**Professional Affiliations and Activities:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Explanation of Financial Need:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**How will information gained at meeting be shared with others?:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Mark your calendars!

The following pre-conference workshop and sessions will be of particular interest to CMC members.

## TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2007

### *Digital Photography Basics*

Collection Managers Committee Sponsored Workshop  
at the Texas Association of Museums Annual Meeting  
(April 17-20)

## MONDAY, JULY 23, 2007

*Summer CMC Workshop on Shipping*  
Houston

## OCTOBER 2007

*Winter Workshop on De-accessioning*  
San Antonio

## Call For Nominations



It's time once again for new leadership on the Collection Managers Committee Board! Are you energetic, multi-tasking, and committed to the professional growth of collection managers in Texas?

Do you want to get more involved with your professional support organizations?

Nominations are currently being accepted for the following three CMC officer positions:

**Vice Chair**

**Secretary**

**Officer-at-Large (Newsletter Editor)**

Each is a two year position (2007 - 2009), beginning immediately following the TAM Annual Meeting in Austin. Nominees must be current voting members of the Collection Managers Committee

Please send nominations by February 13, 2007 to:

**Megan Bryant**

**CMC Nominating Committee Chair**

**c/o The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza**

**411 Elm Street, Suite 120**

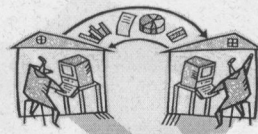
**Dallas, TX 75202**

**[meganb@jfk.org](mailto:meganb@jfk.org)**

Nominations will be reviewed by the Nominating Committee and a slate of one candidate for each office will be presented to the membership for approval by written ballot prior to the Annual Meeting. Results will be announced at the CMC Annual Business Meeting on April 18, 2007.

## Join the CMC E-Mail Group

To join the CMC E-Mail group visit our homepage at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CollectionManagers/> and Yahoo! will guide you through the process.



### **Choose how you would like to receive your messages:**

There are two ways that you can choose to receive e-mails from the group. You can change your preference at any time.

1. Individual e-mails – If you choose this option you will receive all new postings via e-mail as soon as they are sent.
2. Daily Digest – In this option a digest of all postings for a single day is sent as a single e-mail. You will still be able to follow the thread of topics, but may not be aware of discussions as they occur. This is good option for those who do not like to receive a lot of e-mail.

### **How to post a message:**

E-mail [CollectionManagers@yahoogroups.com](mailto:CollectionManagers@yahoogroups.com) to send a message to the entire group.

### **To change your preferences:**

If you need to change any or your personal preferences (i.e. the e-mail address at which you receive postings, switch from individual e-mail to daily digest, etc.), you may click on the "Edit My Membership" link on the upper right side of the homepage.

### **To unsubscribe or leave the group:**

Send an e-mail to [CollectionManagersunsubscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:CollectionManagersunsubscribe@yahoogroups.com) and your name will be removed from the group.

### **Additional features:**

If you visit the homepage at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CollectionManagers/> you can use these additional features:

- Calendar
- Membership List
- Chat
- Polls
- File sharing

# MEMBERSHIP FORM

\$15.00 yearly dues

Please Print Clearly

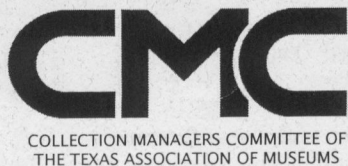
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code + 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to the Collection Managers Committee.  
Send check and form to Kim Cupit, Denton County Museums,  
110 W. Hickory, Denton, TX 76201



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## CMC Newsletter

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