

Field Services Alliance
Spring Training Symposium
Ohio History Connection
March 13-15, 2016

Day 1: Session Notes

Conferees met at 5:30 p.m. for dinner at Barney's with informal discussions on grant programs, sticky coaching problems, and updates on progress of various initiatives.

There were 23 people in attendance throughout the symposium.

Day 2: Session Notes

Agency Reports

American Association for State and Local History (1) – This report will be delivered on the next day.

Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (1) – Although primarily serving the Mid-Atlantic region, CCAHA through an IMLS grant is broadening its service area to the entire nation. In this next year they will seek to serve the underserved portions of the country with national funding, strategic planning, and emergency preparedness. The organization has gone through significant staffing changes due to the former executive director's retirement and hiring from within.

Indiana Historical Society (5) – The Ely Lilly Foundation has provided them \$2.5 million dollars for grants to local history organizations. The money is available in five cycles of \$475,000 each. IHS adopted the Fluxx software to manage the program as has Minnesota and Connecticut. IHS is very grateful for all of the advice given to bring their program into being. The biggest challenge has been assigning each staff person as the permanent coach to individual applicants. However, as part of the new grant initiative, IHS now provides a staff person to provide fundraising training so that the grants funded by Lily will go farther. The Local History Services Office continues to manage an IMLS grant to improve collections care.

Minnesota Historical Society (2) – Local History Services completed a visit to each of the state's 87 county historical societies having traveled some 17,000 miles. Summary statistics were provided to the group. Local History Services is expanding with the addition of Todd Mahon (present), and two new half time positions coming on soon. The office recently coordinated a meeting of other outreach professionals and covered the training topic of how to stay safe while traveling for work.

Ohio History Connection (13) – Through a recent reorganization Ohio History Day has joined the History Services Department, which includes local history, museum in a box (traveling trunk program), history to go (traveling exhibits), grants, historical markers, professional continuing education, and partnerships.

Western New York Association of Historical Agencies (1) – They are exploring further partnerships with a wide array of regional organizations to reduce duplication of services and sharpen others.

Facilitation Training Session with Dan Elliot

Key Thought: Facilitation is a Courageous Thing

- Review David Grady's TED Talk, "Mindless Acceptance Syndrome," about the need for intentionality in accepting invitations. We need to collaborate as a key to enterprise success. We are not powerless to change our behavior in choosing to accept an invitation.
- Dan Elliot insists on knowing why someone asks him to facilitate. Why this time now?

- He sets up meetings at least an hour before start time, provides a wild blend of music genres, and provides color. This is all meant to reduce any barriers to participation. There will always be people who do not want to come to the meeting.
- Before holding the meeting, establish “What’s in it for me?” (WIIFM, “whiff ‘em”) for all participants. Consider ice breakers to include all. If there is an elephant in the room, acknowledge it (e.g., Who is not happy to be here? Raise your hand.) **Acknowledge that work is waiting for them back at their desks.**
- Establish the “Ground Rules”
 - Have everyone suggest “How to have a crappy meeting”: disrespect, have all your devices on, emote hostile silence, interrupt everyone, never laugh, judge all suggestions, never take a break, the facilitator should only look at one person, pushing an agenda, too much information, etc.
 - Have everyone then suggest an “Agreement” by which the meeting will work. Some call this reflective listening, race horse vs plow horse thinking, listening to the silence, etc.
 - Keep both lists up, and refer to them as needed.
- Facilitator Tips to remember.
 - The facilitator will tend to go right, it is natural so just watch it. Be sure to turn and “scoop up” people. If things are not going well, change the environment: stand up if you had been sitting, e.g. Also, be sure to budget time at the end to deal with the unforeseen.
 - Telling Ain’t Training.
 - You are not trying to hurt anyone’s feelings, but you will hurt them in the best interest of all the other participants. Plan for it.
 - Watch to see who is taking notes.
 - Watch the feet (never allow use of modesty table skirts). If the foot is wandering so is the brain.
- All of us are special needs learners.
 - Deal with the chatter with phrases like:
 - One at a time. (We can’t have a split level head).
 - Wait, I can’t hear you.
 - Please do not shut down others.
 - Deal with dominance with phrases like:
 - Ok, I would like to hear another point of view.
 - We need an unscheduled break.
 - I wish we had more time.
 - I appreciate your passion for _____.
 - Can we set aside that issue to accomplish _____.
- Facilitation preparation.
 - See Alan Weiss, Ph.D., *How to Write a Proposal That’s Accepted Every Time* (1998), to cover the basics of a proposal (contract)
 - Determine what has been done already.
 - Conduct a survey of participants with a free survey tool to generate a fears and concerns list.
- Other tips.
 - Try the McGurck Effect of getting something new by combining images and sounds that do not belong to one another.
 - See the Steve Jobs Method for PowerPoint: one word per slide.

- See *Gamestorming: a Playbook for Innovators, Rulebreakers, and Changemakers* (2010) to help create an environment for creative thinking and innovation.
- Ice Breakers.
 - Have all write something on a piece of paper, fold the paper into an airplane, toss into the center of the room, and retrieve a different plane.
 - Index finger dancing: everyone pair up and touch index finger tips. Have Partner A lead with Partner B following. Then Partner B will lead. Then have both lead. Then have both follow. Discuss which was easier.
- See Harvard Graduate School of Education's Project Zero: Making Thinking Visible for innovative ideas based in data about adult learning.

Indiana Historical Society's Write In Technique with Alan Rowe and Jamie Simek

Key Thought: Adults seek training:

- in order to change something;
- to work collaboratively; and,
- because they want real life, practical solutions.
- Purdue University and an effort in New York City created an encouraging environment of a "write in." The idea is that there are prompts to aspects of writing that, if provided, help a writer to get started on a writing project.
- Collections Management Policy example.
 - IHS staff began by deconstructing a Collections Management Policy. Although they budgeted 30 minutes for this, they needed 1:30 to complete due to questions.
 - They held the Write In at a library with one large room for general discussions with smaller rooms for quiet writing space.
 - The morning was guided by IHS staff, but the afternoon developed into a nice peer-to-peer collaborative effort.
 - There was a charge for this program. The cost was helpful to the participants who could distance themselves from their work by "attending a workshop."

Ohio History Connection Community Engagement with Tony Gibbs

Key Thought: Expectations lead to judgments.

- Exercise on who is our neighbor and among them underserved audiences.
- Know your own community.
 - Strengths: support, diversity of opinion, multigenerational, e.g.
 - Weaknesses: disunity, isolation, mental health, non-exposure, substance abuse, nosy, e.g.
 - Be aware of your own biases and sensitivities.
- Imperatives.
 - Plan to include and be inclusive.
 - Maintain ongoing engagement.
 - Make a lasting impact.
 - That organizations provide field services is a commitment to an audience, too.
- Magnetic Engagement Concept
 - Difference of "in an exhibit" and "as an exhibit."
 - Generally all people are happy to tell stories.
- Representing Your Community (your organization)
 - Bring resources to share.

- Represent what your organization does.
- Practical Tips
 - Be a member of every community in which you engage
 - Take the time to be a member of the community.

NAGPRA: The Basics with Stacey Halfmoon and Linda Pansing

Key Thought: NAGPRA resulted from a long, aggressive protest to change treatment of human remains

- History
 - Rise of Native Rights and the American Indian Movement in the 1970s
 - Signed into law by President George H. W. Bush on April 5, 1990.
- Process
 - There are 770 recognized tribes in the United States.
 - 36 CFR 79
- Ohio History Connection
 - Willing to accept transfer of covered objects so that small organizations will not have to bear the costs and responsibilities of NAGPRA.
- Most of this session was very introductory.

Great Collections Experiment with Anna Altschwager and Jason Crabill

Key Thought: Can objects be housed and retrieved like library books?

- Three new galleries for experimentation:
 - Everyday life
 - Tom and Agnes Christopher Collection
 - Organization of organization
- There are obvious issues with this concept as
 - books come with preventative conservation measures in place (the covers and binding), whereas museum collections objects do not.
 - The minimal interpretation does not provide a deeper exploration of the objects, and visitors may be left wondering about the deeper meaning of the curator's choices.
- Ohio History Connection sees this project as beneficial because
 - Current off-site storage is inadequate and its history center has better control
 - They believe people just want to see stuff.
 - They want to use galleries like the donor endcaps in storage areas.

Day 3: Session Notes

Updates from American Association for State and Local History with Bethany Hawkins

Key Thought: AASLH trying to make interactions less onerous

- StEPs
 - There will be more resources coming
 - AASLH is still looking for more StEPs groups to form
- Continuing Education Offerings
 - Webinars
 - "Interpreting History of _____" based on the book series now in print
 - Human Resources module
 - A series of StEPs "Labs" (next is on copyright)
 - House Calls

- History Relevance Campaign
- Hot Topics Series (next is Confederate Iconography)
- Seminar in Historical Administration (applications due May 16)
- Annual Meeting is September 14-17, 2016 in Detroit
 - Keynote: Tom Segrue, author of *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (1996)
 - Keynote: Mary Wilson, founder and vocalist for the Supremes
 - Wednesday Evening Event: Detroit Historical Society
 - Thursday Evening Event: a “Muse Cruise” coordinated by the Charles Wright African American Museum
 - Friday Evening Event: History Awards Program
 - Awards: record 130 nominations this year, and Minnesota is #1 with 15.
- There are new membership rates to bridge between student and full professional rates.
- There will be a new registration system in place.
- AASLH offices will be moving, but no facility has been identified.
- Staff changes:
 - Hiring a new Education and Services Coordinator
 - Bethany moving to a more administrative role.

Field Services Alliance Business Meeting

Key Thought: Lots to do.

- Spring Training
 - Possible venues for 2017: Buffalo NY or Wisconsin
 - Julie Hart from American Alliance of Museum would like to present a train the trainer session on AAM’s 5 Core Documents Review.
- Annual Meeting in Detroit
 - Session accepted: Laura Hartz Stanton, Tamara Hemmerlein, and Jeanette Rooney, “Training Volunteers for Front of House and Back of House Assignments.”
 - FSA will meet on Wednesday September 14, 1:30 – 4.
- Ask FSA column blog: many ideas were generated.
- National Project Discussion: a great deal of time was spent considering what kind of cross-member project might be undertaken to provide better context for the work that we do.
- Review your entries on the *Encyclopedia of Local History*
- Discussion on current issues
 - A long discussion on how small local organizations can broach the subject of asking that cash accompany a donation of artifacts. How does one construct a formula to do so? A variety of suggestions were made, and there was an acknowledgement to beware of a “pay to play” scenario could develop.
 - A second long discussion was on how to gently nudge board turnover without appearing to play king-maker.