



Office of Museum Services Newsletter

Greetings from Hal Hickman, OMS Board Vice-Chairman

IS ANY UTAH MUSEUM LESS THAN THIS?

In the scheme of things, as far as museums are concerned, Utah boasts medium-sized holdings and small venues. But they are no less valuable than the giant museums in other parts of the nation or the world.

It is impressive to visit the National Museum of Art, the British Historical Museum or the Louvre, and if their value is measured by their size and holdings they should be revered. But with more than 250 museums within the State of Utah serving a local population of 2.5 million (and perhaps an equal number of tourists each year) the value of our venues to those individuals who take the opportunity to tour and use these places is just as precious as those of renown.

Our museums have been founded and maintained by people in Utah who treasure our graphic arts, history, and culture. They have placed the legacy of our past in these buildings to store and revere our heritage.

The great Smithsonian was founded from a bequest from an Englishman, James Smithson. He died without progeny and left his fortune of more than 100,000 gold sovereigns (\$500,000 in 1836 money) to his nephew with the stipulation that his inheritance would go to the United States if he also died without children. In 1836 Congress accepted the legacy and established the national museum.

Smithson's bequest was to fund the Smithsonian as "an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men." In Utah, it appears, we also have heeded this goal and objective. The increase and diffusion of knowledge is the prime objective of all our venues – whether medium or small as measured on the world stage.

The people of Utah and those who work so hard to maintain our museums should be proud of what they have created.

OMS has a New Logo

Check out our new logo above. We think our updated logo makes us look dashing and modern!

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OMS Project Support Grants Update



An OMS Project Support Grant is helping fund the Geneva Steel exhibit which opens March 2008 at the Simple Earth Art Center in American Fork.

The OMS Board met to discuss policies for the OMS grant program in November 2007. New (or clarified) policies for **Project Support Grants** include:

- 1) Project Support Grants will be available to **all** non-profit museums that have been open to the public for at least one year regardless of the number of hours they are open each year.
- 2) Each museum may submit only one Project Support Grant application each year, and that application can contain only one project (although the project may have several components).
- 3) Museums that are open less than 1000 hours each year may apply for both a Development Grant and a Project Support Grant each year.

Museum Day at the Capitol Returns in February

The Utah State Capitol Building renovation is nearly complete, and we are planning to reinstitute *Museum Day at the Capitol* on February 4th. This is the day in which museums set up small exhibits on the Capitol floor to remind legislators and visitors to the Capitol how wonderful and important Utah's museums are. We have sent letters to all Utah museums to determine who is interested in participating (space is limited!) OMS will organize the museums' exhibit space while the Utah Museum Association will brief participants on effective advocacy techniques and help them talk to their legislators. We have not been able to have exhibits on the Capitol floor since 2002 when the renovation started, so we are pleased and excited to be able to have Museum Day again.



Renovation at the Utah State Capitol

Museum and Library *Disaster Swat Team*

Western States Preservation Assistance Service (WESTPAS) recently presented a Disaster Training workshop in Salt Lake City taught by Randy Silverman. (More of these workshops will come to Utah in 2008). One outcome is that OMS and The Utah State Library are organizing a *disaster swat team*. This core of willing volunteers (some with supplies) can be called on to help you "get out of the muck" after a disaster has struck. We took a poll and found that most museum and library personnel are interested in receiving help in such a situation. If you would like to join our swat team, go to <http://webapps.dced.utah.gov/survey/entry.jsp?id=1192574033442> and fill out the form. We are excited about the possibilities of helping museums and libraries in need, although of course, we hope there never is a need!

If you ever need the swat team, contact OMS at 801-533-3592 or 3589, lcasjens@utah.gov or dburke@utah.gov. If we are not available, contact Colleen Eggett of the State Library at 801-715-6776, ceggett@utah.gov or Randy Silverman, University of Utah, 801-585-3464, randy.silverman@utah.edu.

MAP Grants Available

The Museum Assessment Program is designed to help museums understand how they compare to standards and best practices in the field. It is a process of guided self-study and consultation with a museum professional who offers recommendations for improvements and implementation of those recommendations. Costs to the museum usually range from free to \$750. For more information visit <http://www.aam-us.org/museumresources/map/index.cfm>. Grants are awarded on a first come first served basis. The application postmark deadline is February 15, 2008.



Celebrate Your Museum: Utah's Museums Celebrated in 2007

How did you *Celebrate Your Museum* on September 15? Here are just a few examples of what museums did around the state.

Connie Nelson, Alf Engen Ski Museum, Park City: "We had a fabulous Celebrate Your Museum Day. We had over 800 visitors attend our Celebrate Your Museum Day held 10am-4pm on Saturday, September 15, 2007 with 132 folks completing the Museum Scavenger Hunt winning prizes on our 'Wheel O' Fun'."

Mary Ann Kirk, Murray City Museum, Murray: "Murray teamed up with Taylorsville and West Jordan for a bus tour. We had about 25-30 people tour the various museums. We hope to do the same next year spotlighting other museums in the south valley area of Salt Lake County."

Annette Tidwel, Farmington Historical Museum, Farmington: "[We] had a very successful day. In conjunction with the Celebrate Your Museum Day, we also had a birthday party for our building which turned 100 years old this year.

We had birthday treats for everyone and had drawings for some items we normally sell in the Museum. We gave away 'Whammydiddle' toys to all the children over 5 years of age. They are wooden replica pioneer toys that we buy from a local craftsman. We also gave away copies of artwork from local artists of Farmington scenes and historical locations. We had a great day, and have already talked with local DUP leaders about joining forces for next year."

Paul Stavast, Museum of Peoples and Cultures, BYU, Provo:

"We invited BYU students and community members to the Museum to view the new exhibit 'Touching the Past,' to participate in crafts and activities, and to enjoy refreshments from 1-4 pm. 450 people attended (more than we expected).

- Tables were set up near the entrance of the Museum with face-painting, MPC flyers and brochures, and refreshments. This station acted as a welcoming station."
- Docents were stationed in the galleries to answer questions.
- Visitors made "Mexican Bird Shakers," and colored and made masks from drawings of an African mask on exhibit.
- Two large tables were set up under a canopy outside. Visitors created their own pottery from clay and made 'petroglyphs' from painted plaster discs.
- Visitors excavated a replica archaeological dig and made necklaces with the arrowheads, beads and twine."

Celebrate Your Museum Day
Alf Engen Ski Museum
Utah Olympic Park
Saturday, September 15, 2007
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Join us at the Quinney Center in celebration of Utah's museums and their contributions to the community.

Park City Chamber/Bureau event funding has made it possible for the Alf Engen Ski Museum to provide a day of fun activities and prizes in appreciation of museum patronage.

Activities will include:

- Free admission
- 1/2 off Park rides - Ziplines, Comet, Chairlift & Alpine Slide
- Museum treasure hunt
- Ski history movies in theatre
- Wheel O' Fun - Spin to Win - 5 folks on the hour

After touring the Alf Engen Ski Museum and the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles 2002 Olympic Museum, venture out to the Olympic Park and watch the athletes train.

We look forward to celebrating our Museums with you. See you at the Utah Olympic Park!

ALF ENGEN SKI MUSEUM FOUNDATION
Utah Olympic Park
Phone - 435-658-4240
www.engenmuseum.org

park city
a world of possibilities

Alf Engen Ski Museum used this poster for publicity. They received a \$1500 grant from the local Chamber of Commerce to print it and fund other activities.



Visitors at the Museum of Peoples and Cultures excavate a replica archaeological site.

Opportunities for Learning

Historic Houses and Buildings

Do you know how to properly take care of your old mansion or log cabin? Don Hartley (Division of State History) offers presentations and personal consultations to museums housed in or exhibiting historic buildings. This is a great chance to learn if your paint job, roof, landscaping, mortar, etc. are doing what they should and if you are doing what you can to take care of them.

Everyone Welcome

Would you like to learn more about welcoming visitors with disabilities (indeed, all visitors) properly? Ruth Lubbers (Art Access) and Jenny Woods (Utah Museum of Fine Arts) are happy to come to you and present a 90 minute, interactive workshop covering topics such as: The Language of Disability, Political Correctness, Disability Awareness, and Practical Strategies for Making Persons with Disabilities Feel Welcome. Important ADA information is also included.

Collections Management, Performance Goals, etc.

Laurel Casjens (OMS) is pleased to present workshops on collections management, covering documentation, museum policies, preventive conservation, cataloging, numbering museum objects, and resources for obtaining support. She will also help you implement or operate the PastPerfect database to catalog your collections. Dan Burke (OMS) and Laurel are happy to come to you and consult on any museum topic. We urge all Utah museums to complete our Performance Goals Program, thus assuring your museum's professionalism.

Interested in any or all of these?

Give Laurel Casjens a call at 801-533-3592 or email to lcasjens@utah.gov.



Territorial Statehouse State Park



Signing at Art Access

Welcoming Visitors with Disabilities

Ruth Lubbers (Art Access) and Jenny Woods (Utah Museum of Fine Arts) presented a session at the Utah Museum Association Conference in October entitled *Everyone Welcome: Accessibility in the Museum*. They graciously have allowed a paraphrasing of their presentation and handouts for the benefit of the entire Utah museum community:

Serving visitors is an important part what we do. We need to serve all of them well. Approximately one in five persons has some type of disability—either physical, sensory, developmental, learning, or psychological. Disabilities can be mild or severe, permanent or temporary. Most of us feel unsure and uneasy when we interact with people who have disabilities with which we are not familiar. Once we get to know people with a certain disability, we find we don't have a problem anymore.

Some general communication guidelines for interacting with people with disabilities:

- Treat all visitors with respect.
- Focus on the individual, not the disability.
- Be patient. It may take longer for a person with a disability to speak, understand, or move.
- Do not ask questions about a person's disability.
- Ask all visitors if there is any way you can help, and respect the answer. If your offer is accepted, ask how you can best help (not all disabilities are obvious).
- Assistance animals are always welcome. Do not pet them, they are working!
- The appropriate way to describe visitors with special needs is "People with disabilities" or "People who are deaf or ...".
- Speak directly to the visitor, not to his or her companion.

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These Tips May Make Interactions More Pleasant for You and Your Visitors

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Tips for greeting and assisting visitors who use wheelchairs or other mobility aids:

If possible, sit or kneel so you are on the same level as the visitor. Do not touch the wheel chair unless the visitor asks you to do so. Respect each person's choice of mobility aid. Be able to give barrier-free directions to any area in the museum, parking, and the elevator.

Tips for greeting and assisting visitors who are deaf or hard of hearing:

Attract the visitor's attention by waving your hand or, if necessary, by tapping her or him on the shoulder. Speak clearly and at normal speed. Face the visitor, provide a clear view of your face, and keep your hands away from your mouth. If you are having difficulty, rephrase the message or write it down. Do not pretend to understand if you do not. Not all visitors can read lips, speak American Sign Language, or hear you if you speak loudly. Let the visitor guide you to the best way to communicate.



Visitor at Art Access Gallery

Tips for greeting and assisting visitors who are blind or partially sighted:

Introduce yourself to the visitor as a staff member or volunteer. Speak at your normal volume, and in your normal tone of voice. Be aware that a noisy environment can be a distraction for a person who relies on hearing. Do not pet or distract a service animal.

Tips for greeting and assisting visitors with cognitive disabilities or mental retardation:

Be patient: it may take longer for a visitor with a cognitive disability to process information. Use short, clear sentences. Help the visitor feel comfortable and welcome through your tone of voice and facial expressions. Treat an adult visitor with cognitive disability as an adult.

Tips for greeting and assisting visitors with speech difficulties:

Give your complete attention to the visitor. Do not pretend to understand if you do not. Repeat what you have understood, and allow the visitor to repeat or rephrase. If difficulty persists, ask the visitor to spell or write it down. Be patient. Do not correct the person or speak for him or her. Take the time to understand the visitor. If possible, ask questions that require short answers.

Tips for greeting and assisting visitors with psychological disabilities:

Act naturally and welcome the visitor as you would any visitor. Speak at a level appropriate to the visitor's age.

Be considerate, but do not allow inappropriate behavior. If necessary, seek assistance from the security staff.

Words are Important!!!

Things are disabled

People have disabilities

Golfers have handicaps

Emergencies and building evacuation:

In case of emergency, dial 911. Do not attempt to move a victim unless the environment is life threatening. In case of a building evacuation, a staff member should lead or direct visitors with disabilities to the nearest exit and designated assembly point. Elevators should not be used. Move visitors who use wheelchairs or who cannot use stairs to a room with one or more doors between the person and the hazard. Alert emergency responders to the exact location.

Museum resources for people with disabilities:

Think about resources your museum can offer visitors. With advance notice you could provide guides who speak sign language or non-English languages. You could provide wheelchairs, ramps, accessible restrooms, wider doors, large print copies of labels, and videos of or guides to non-accessible areas of the museum.



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Coming Up: *Interpretation Workshops* and Grants Program

The Utah Humanities Council (UHC), The Utah Museum Association, and The Office of Museum Services will begin offering a series of workshops on museum interpretation next spring. The goal of these workshops is to help museum staff and volunteers discover, document, and tell the stories behind the objects in their museums. Workshops will cover a range of subjects, including how to research and dig out information about objects: how to talk to donors and their families, how to collect oral histories, and how to carry out archival and library research. The workshops will also focus on producing labels that are informative, attractive, and archivally safe for museum objects. We will also cover methods of documentation and data storage—keeping the information in a manner so that it is readily accessible, can be connected to the proper objects, and won't be lost again.

UHC and OMS will also jointly offer small grants for Interpretation Projects. These grants will probably be available spring of 2008, so start planning now. Funding will be available for data gathering projects, exhibit renovation, and data storage and label production materials and hardware, including computers and printers.



Photos, newspapers, and captions tell the story of Topaz at the Great Basin Museum in Delta