Winter 2005

OMA Dispatch

The newsletter of the Oregon Museums Association, Dispatch, is published four times a year: February, May, September and December. Oregon Museums Association is a statewide membership organization serving the needs of museums and related institutions, large and small, across Oregon. OMA holds meetings and workshops around the state throughout the year, advocating for the interests of its members in legislative and other matters, publishes a bi-annual magazine, holds four professional meetings held three times a year at different locations around the state, and Dispatch, OMA’s quarterly newsletter. For further information see page 11, inside.

Upcoming 2006 OMA Meetings

January 23, 2006: Board Meeting Marion County History Museum March 5 - 6, 2006 Lane County History Society, Eugene June 25 - 26, 2006 Ashland Science Works, Ashland October 8 - 9, 2006 Hood River Museum, Hood River

OMA Membership

Don’t forget to renew your membership by December 31st! Not a member? Membership benefits include discounts to attend informative meetings held three times a year at different locations around the state, and Dispatch, OMA’s quarterly newsletter. For further information see page 11, inside.

Thank you for your continued support!

Winter 2005

OMA President’s Message

It seems that every time OMA chooses to meet on the Oregon coast, the weather is perfect. Such was the case in Gold Beach, the setting for our annual meeting in October.

I would like to thank our hosts, the Curry County Historical Society, for making us feel so welcome. I would also like to thank MJ Koreeva, Ross Sutherland, PJ Estlund, and Julie Curtis for their presentations about branding and marketing-needed information for all museums and historical societies today.

The Board of Directors has appointed John Enders, Director of the Southern Oregon Historical Society, to fill a board vacancy left by his colleague, Steve Wyatt, who has left Oregon to move to Salt Lake City, Utah with his wife. We will all miss Steve, but welcome John as our southern Oregon representative on the Board. I would also like to welcome Tracy Buckley to the Board for her new term of office. Tracy is a Curator at the Oregon Military Museum and brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Board.

I am proud of the dedication and commitment of all of our volunteer Board members; they are very busy people who make time to serve the members of OMA and I appreciate each and every one of them.

Kyle Janssen of the Oregon Heritage Commission is working on the revamping of the Museum Grant program. Since the 1960s, Oregon has appropriated limited funding to benefit its museums. Formerly divided equally among all applicants, this grant fund will now be awarded through a competitive process. For any questions about the status of the Museum Grant program, please contact Kyle.

We look forward to our next meeting in Eugene in March, co-hosted by the Lane County Historical Museum and the Springfield Museum. OMA hasn’t met in Eugene in several years, and much has changed in the Eugene museum world of late. Be sure to “save the date” – March 5 and 6, 2006 to attend our next gathering in Eugene. I look forward to seeing you all there.

Sincerely,
Irene Zenev, President

Western Museums Association Annual Conference Recap

Until recently, the by-laws of the Western Museums Association designated the OMA President as Oregon’s representative on the WMA board of directors. Under this aegis, I was privileged to attend this year’s WMA January board meeting and September’s annual conference in Pasadena, California.

Having attended several WMA conferences in the past as a “lay” person, I was keenly aware of the quality of the meeting, both organizationally and in the presentations. But, until I stepped “behind the scenes” as a new Board member I did not realize the amount of expertise the staff and board of WMA possess.

Over 650 people attended this year’s conference in Pasadena (only about 10 from Oregon). The conference theme complemented the backdrop of the famous Rose Parade location, which was “A Rose by Any Other Name: Integrity, Mission and Authenticity”. The sessions explored how the entertainment industry, educational and academic institutions, business and community all influence museums’ core values. Questions about how the museum community responds to society’s need for entertainment and increased economic accountability, increased revenues and expansion of facilities, and greater demand for public programming sometimes occurs at the expense of staff, collections care, and research. It has become a balancing act for museum staff and boards throughout the country and will most likely continue into the future. The question of how we survive as cultural institutions is always on the table.

Of the dozens of sessions offered at the conference, I was able to attend several in addition to my duties as a Board member. I served on the Auction Committee, which raises money for the Wanda Chin Scholarship Fund.

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A final word about the recent changes to the Western Museums Association by-laws: no longer will automatic appointments be made through state museums associations and professional standing committees for board members. A nominations committee will solicit participation from museum professionals and volunteers in western states and affiliated organizations. Hopefully this change in the by-laws will help to fill some chronically empty board positions. Oregon, I am happy to report, has always been well-represented in the WMA, because of OMA’s support for attendance. David Porter and Dan Crandall continue to serve on the board in addition to my service, which I hope will continue through next year.

I encourage all Oregon museum professionals and volunteers to attend next year’s conference in Boise, Idaho. We will have more information in upcoming editions of the Dispatch. And, remember scholarships are available to underwrite conference fees, travel and lodging. If you need more information about Western Museums Association, you can log on to www.westmuse.org.

Irene Zenev is Curator of the Benton County Historical Museum in Philomath, and currently serves as OMA’s President.
OMA Dispatch / Winter 2005

Call to Order: Chair, Irene called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. She opened the meeting by reading Article I of the OMA bylaws regarding our name and purpose.

Minute: Julie Reese moved and Bob Hart seconded to approve June's minutes as published in The Dispatch.

Treasurer’s Report: Irene presented in Richard Engeman’s absence.

Elections: Ballot was presented in the Dispatch. Bob Hart moved, Kris Redmond seconded to approve the ballot as presented and close nominations. Approved. The ballot was then accepted as members approved.

Program Committee Report: Upcoming meetings include:
- June 2006 - Ashland - Topic: Fundraising
- October 2006 - Hood River - Topic: “It only takes a spark to get a project going”

Marketing Committee: The guide book project will begin again in the fall of 2007. Extra copies can be ordered through Irene in Philomath. The Winter 2005 Dispatch, which is published 4 times per year, will employ an informational / educational focus highlighting topics presented at the recent WMA conference in Pasadena, California.

Program Committee: Kyle gave a brief update on the Sesquicentennial Project to celebrate Oregon’s 150th birthday. The Heritage Commission and the Governors Office are working together on this project.

Reapplying the recent Heritage Commission Grant cycle, Kyle reported that 46 proposals were received with over $600,000 in requests. The grant is now in a six week process of reviews before award winners are announced. Kyle told of the proposed changes in the Museum Grant program. Changes reflect a desire by state legislators that the program still encourage smaller museums to apply and access funding. Kyle requested all members present to review drafts of changes and get back to him by November 30, 2005 with any changes or contact james.hamrick@state.or.us.

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Oregon Cultural Trust. The Oregon Heritage Commission is working with OCT and the state Historic Preservation office to establish a heritage technical support organization to assist with input and support to museum and heritage organizations and historical societies. Kyle introduced Don Ivy from the Oregon Heritage Commission. Further information will be presented on this as it develops.

Announcements: A special exhibit is planned to honor Oregon Archives Week entitled "Landscapes of Discovery. This will be at the McMennamins Grand Lodge in Forest Grove with a reception planned for October 15th.

Beginning January 9, 2006 The Captain Michael King Smith Educational Institute will begin offering undergraduate courses for Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University at the Evergreen Aviation Museum site.

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University is the world’s largest independent aeronautical university, with a student body of 600. Its campus is open to the public and includes a rich history.

The museum’s holdings are part of the collection of the United States and the lives, interests and achievements of the American people.

For questions about the Prints and Photographs Online Catalog holdings and services of the Prints and Photographs Division, consult the Ask a Librarian service by visiting http://www.loc.gov/rr/askalib/ask-print.html.

In addition, the Center offers the following, among others: workshops and materials, including work experience or military background.

Efiles is a dynamic system with both electronic and catalog records can be immediately viewed or downloaded. The catalog provides access through group or item records to about 65 percent of the division's holdings, a portion of which are accompanied by digital images. New materials are added almost daily.

In addition to photographs, these include fine and popular prints and drawings, posters, and architectural and engineering drawings. The collections are international in scope and are particularly rich in materials produced, in documenting the history of the United States and the lives, interests and achievements of the American people.

For more information, contact Cheryl Cook at 316.721.9956 or at cook@aaith.org. More information is also available at http://www.aaihl.org/performance.htm.

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A Public Trust at Risk: The Heritage Health Index

The Heritage Health Index finds that millions of precious artifacts at risk in U.S. collections. Heritage Preservation urges private donors and public officials nationwide to lead new efforts to preserve the nation's collected heritage, in light of this and other reports about the state of America's collections. "The Heritage Health Index was conducted during one of the great waves of museum building and expansion in U.S. history. Yet the data shows that we still have a long way to go to provide safe facilities for collections, not just in museums, but in libraries, historical societies, and other collecting institutions. As trustees, government officials, and institutional leaders plan capital projects, we urge them to ensure that the basic needs of collections are addressed."  **Collections Vulnerable to Swift and Catastrophic Loss**

Emergencies are inevitable facts of life, from major disasters like Hurricane Katrina to more quotidian occurrences like leaking water pipes. Yet a Public Trust at Risk found that fully 80 percent of American collecting institutions do not have an emergency plan with staff members trained to carry it out. Extrapolating from that statistic, Heritage Preservation estimates that more than 2.6 billion objects are at risk from disaster striking their home institutions.

**Staffing and Funding**

The survey found that 80 percent of institutions nationwide have no paid staff dedicated to collections care. Without trained personnel, it is difficult to address many problems identified by the survey.

"Staffing need not remain the problem it is today. Not every collection requires a full-time professional conservator, but staff can be assigned and trained to oversee the basics of caring for holdings," concludes Chute.

Underlying the pervasive problem of staffing and, indeed, all the problems cited in the Heritage Health Index is the report's finding that only 40 percent of organizations in the U.S. regularly allocate funds for care of their collections.

"Care of collections need not be a drain on resources. Conservation is a subject that can engage the public, encourage participation in an institution, and attract financial support," says Chute of the IMLS. The Smithsonian American Art Museum discovered that its audience was curious about conservation through a series of surveys and focus groups. Now, when the museum reopens in Summer 2006, its Lunder Conservation Center will offer visitors a behind-the-scenes look at how art is conserved.

To read A Public Trust at Risk: The Heritage Health Index Report on the State of America's Collections in its entirety visit www.heritagehealthindex.org.

**State Legislative Activity**

Museum Grant Program Revisions Underway

Watch this space next quarter for news about the new Oregon Museum Grant Program. The Oregon Heritage Commission, with assistance from OMA and the Oregon Historical Society, is drafting an Oregon administrative rule for this new competitive program, which replaces the 40-year-old annual entitlement program. The Legislature approved the change in programs earlier this year. Once the OAR is finished, the organizations will then work together to create a new application. That application should be complete and available to museums by February. (Continued on page 5)

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Government Relations Legislative News

Heritage Health Index Finds Millions of Precious Artifacts at Risk in U.S. Collections

Washington, D.C. - The first comprehensive survey ever to assess the condition of U.S. collections shows the need for immediate action to prevent the loss of millions of irreplaceable artifacts held in public trust. Improper storage conditions and the lack of realistic disaster planning top the list of chronic problems.

Heritage Preservation, the country's leading conservation advocate, is partnering with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), a federal agency, to help the public understand the results of findings, which are expected to be made public later this year.

"The Heritage Health Index was conducted during one of the great waves of museum building and expansion in U.S. history. Yet the data shows that we still have a long way to go to provide safe facilities for collections, not just in museums, but in libraries, historical societies, and other collecting institutions. As trustees, government officials, and institutional leaders plan capital projects, we urge them to ensure that the basic needs of collections are addressed."  **Collections Vulnerable to Swift and Catastrophic Loss**

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The Oregon Tourism Commission reports strong statewide lodging trends in Oregon for the first seven months (January-July) of 2005. Occupancy rates remained at nearly the same level a year ago at 58.3 percent. To learn more about the state’s tourism industry, visit http://www.traveloregon.com/index2.cds/TDL514576/01 Klatchöfer info@501.

The High Desert Museum Welcomes Its New Lynx
The High Desert Museum has a new big cat – a lynx. Visitors to the museum can get close to the lynx, which is local and unique to the area. The lynx is a wild animal, the animal enclosure was created to accommodate such a species. The museum has plans to use the lynx to demonstrate the habitat of the region.

Oregon coastal highway bridges have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The bridges are located along the Oregon coast, including most of the bridges on the Oregon coast.

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) have been working on the design and construction of more than 160 bridges, including the Oregon coastal highway bridges.

To learn more about the Oregon coastal highway bridges, visit http://emailer.emailroi.com/reader.ice?DJYL5457168701&her.
Summer Teaching Fellowships Offered

The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History will host 21 weeklong seminars in summer 2006 for high school and middle school teachers. A complete list of topics, dates, locations, and application forms is available online at http://www.gilderlehrman.org/events/seminars1.html. Seminars are tuition-free, and participants receive room and board. Seminars on major topics in American history are led by eminent historians. Applications must be submitted by Feb. 1. Limited to 30 participants per seminar by competitive application. Preference given to new applicants. Email seminars@gilderlehrman.org or call 646-366-9666 with any questions.

Collection's Curator Sought by Halle Ford Museum

The Halle Ford Museum of Art in Salem, Oregon, with diverse collections of European, Asian, Native American, and regional art and a dynamic schedule of temporary exhibitions, seeks an experienced individual to oversee the proper care, storage, presentation, and security of the collection. The position requires an MA, MS, or MFA degree in art history, art museum administration, or related field, with additional training in archives and record management; two years of collection-related and/or registration experience; knowledge of curatorial, registrar, conservation, and ethical practices and procedures; computer skills; and familiarity with NAGPRA. Permanent, full-time appointment (40 hours per week). Competitive salary, plus excellent fringe benefits. Position closes February 24, 2006. Send cover letter, resume, and three references to Search Committee, Collection Curator, Halle Ford Museum, 1500 State Avenue, Salem, Oregon 97301.

Spring Meeting Preview

The Spring Meeting of the Oregon Museums Association will feature discussions about libraries and archives, online auctioning and the opportunity to explore the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at the University of Oregon. Held in Eugene, meeting sponsorship is provided by the Lane County Historical Society and Museum, and the University of Oregon's Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art and Museum of Natural and Cultural History.

Reserved the Dates!

March 6 and 7, 2006

OMA Dispatch / Winter 2005

ARCHIVIST SOUGHT

OHS PREPARING FOR NATIONAL EXHIBIT

OMSI, PORTLAND

OMA Dispatch / Winter 2005

COPPERHEAD: Good Buildings Give Excellent Hardware,
which highlights a major manufacturer of building hardware and locks, is currently on exhibit at The Architectural Heritage Center.

THE ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE CENTER, PORTLAND

Cora, Olaf. "These are the Faces of Loyalty: The Loyalty Nickel Legacy Center tells the story of Japanese Americans who have served their country with honor. The exhibit, which features photographs and other items gathered from veterans, runs through February 24, 2006. Group tours are welcome by appointment. For further information call (503) 224-1458.

Jews@Work: 150 Years of Commerce and Industry in Oregon

Jewish Work: 150 Years of Commerce and Industry in Oregon explores the role of Jews in the development and operation of Oregon businesses. The exhibit opens January 6, 2006. For further information call 503-797-4640 or visit http://www.omj.org/

Becoming Americans: The Corps of Discovery II

Out of the Darkness: Contemporary Mezzotints

Contemporary Mezzotints, on December 17, celebrating the experimental fractile images of Arthur C. Clark's 1951 film, "Primiti-Too- Infinity.

The Old Man and the Sea

Laser Nutcracker

Practicing, the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, the Smithsonian Institution, the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the Library of Congress, and the National Archives.

The Old Man and the Sea

where the Trains Used to Go

THE OREGON JEWISH MUSEUM, PORTLAND

THE ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE CENTER, PORTLAND

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which highlights a major manufacturer of building hardware and locks, is currently on exhibit at The Architectural Heritage Center.

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Jews@Work: 150 Years of Commerce and Industry in Oregon

OMSI, PORTLAND

Enjoy the IMAX Experience, at OMSI's OMNIMAX® this winter through January 6, 2006. This holiday-themed film, based on the classic Caldecott medal-winning book written by Candace bushes through March 4, 2006 with a 25-foot desktop hamburger and living history actors. Corps II is largely staffed by the National Park Service but involves more than two dozen federal agencies, 41 national unions, 18 Lewis and Clark Trail state commissions, dozens of tribal and ethnic agencies, non-profit groups and thousands of individual volunteers.

Follow this St. Helens visit, Corps II will stop next in Oregon at Grand Ronde Reservation. Other Oregon visits include:

Mar 13-20 St. Helens, Waterfront

Mar 23-24 Grand Ronde, Grand Ronde Reservation

For further information on the Corps II's traveling schedule in the Pacific Northwest, visit http://www.lcb.o.net/corps.html.

OHS PREPARING FOR NATIONAL EXHIBIT

On exhibit through March 2006 at the Oregon Historical Society is the largest collection of Northwest animation artifacts, artwork, and documents of the past 208 years. Artifacts, artwork, and documents entrusted to the Missouri Historical Society by the Clark and Lewis families in the early 20th century form the core of this one-in-a-lifetime exhibition. Period objects and art represent the explorers used, the landscapes they saw, and the Native American tribes they met. More than 600 artifacts illustrate cultural encounters along the journey of Lewis and Clark.

This exhibit features the collections of the Missouri Historical Society's augmented by objects from other institutions with significant Lewis and Clark and ethnographic holdings, including the Oregon Historical Society (OHS). Other institutions include the American Philosophical Society, the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, the Smithsonian Institution, the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the Library of Congress, and the National Archives.

OHS is the only museum on the West Coast to host this unique exhibition. In anticipation of large crowds, OHS is using a timed-ticket system. Tickets and other information about the exhibit, programs, and related exhibits are available at http://www.ohs.org/Lewis-and-Clark-and-OHS.cfm.