

## 2023 Arkansas Museums Association Conference Session Descriptions

### Monday, 3:00 – 4:00 pm

#### **Small Museum, Big Exhibits**

Darragh Room (Central Arkansas Library)

Courtney Bradford, *Curator*

Mosaic Templars Cultural Center

Small museums are constantly challenged to do more with less. The onset of COVID 19 created an entire new set of never seen before obstacles as the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center prepared to open its largest traveling exhibit to date. Museums don't have to feel limited by space, money, staff, or even a pandemic. Join the museum's curator, Courtney Bradford as she talks about how to create groundbreaking and dynamic exhibits no matter who you are. Gain real-life knowledge on how to adapt to change when bringing in highly sought-after traveling exhibition with limited resources.

#### **Introduction to Evaluation: Understand Your Audience (Workshop)**

Fribourgh Room (Central Arkansas Library)

Liya Wizevich, *Research & Evaluation Specialist*

Rachel Lindsey, *Research & Evaluation Specialist*

Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art

This workshop will arm participants with tools and knowledge for conducting evaluation for their own programs and museum initiatives. Today, almost all funding proposals include questions related to evaluation or how the project will determine success. However, many museum professionals and institutions struggle with articulating goals and collecting data to support their plans. This workshop intends to share evaluation basics to help attendees feel ready to put them into practice. During this workshop, drawing upon their experience as Research & Evaluation Specialists at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Rachel Lindsey and Liya Wizevich will lay out tangible methods and accessible techniques. This workshop will begin with sharing our process for conducting audience and program evaluations for institutions, including small museums and historic houses. This will be followed by distribution of an evaluation basics toolkit developed by our team. The toolkit covers three primary methods used to collect data in museums: surveys, interviews, and observations. This introductory level workshop is intended to support participants from any museum size or discipline. Ample time will be allotted for individuals' general or project-specific questions.

Participants could reference the following online resources prior to the conference:

<https://crystalbridges.org/reports-and-research/>

<https://www.visitorstudies.org/>

<https://www.eval.org/>

**Tuesday, 9:30 – 10:45 am**

**Making Mannequins (Workshop) Part 1 of 2**

Fribourgh Room (Central Arkansas Library)

Angela Gibbs, *Curator*

Jacksonport State Park

Displaying historic garments can be a daunting task. Learn how to measure textiles, make a basic mannequin, and use various supports to create an inexpensive but quality mount for your exhibits.

Limit of 10 participants. Pre-registration required.

**Moving Beyond the Field Trip: Connecting Communities through Student Led Civic Engagement (Panel, Demonstration and Hands-on Workshop) Part 1 of 2**

Darragh Room (Central Arkansas Library)

Kathleen Pate, *Educational Specialist*

Clinton Presidential Library and Museum

Amber Pirnique, *Program Administrator for Disciplinary Literacy*

Jeffery Davidson, *Program Advisor for Social Studies*

Cassandra Barnett, *Program Advisor for School Libraries*

Arkansas Department of Education, DESE

How can you develop a relationship with local high schools that goes beyond the traditional “one and done” field trip model? Let’s explore the opportunities available through the Arkansas Department of Education Division of Elementary and Secondary Education community service learning program. In the first half of this two-part session, presenters will demonstrate how students can engage with your collections to learn about the history of the communities your institution serves then use that knowledge and understanding to create civic engagement projects. The second half of the two-part session will be a hands-on exercise for participants to start the planning process.

**Throwing Flames (Safely): Building Safety Programs at Living History Sites (Panel)**

East Room (Central Arkansas Library)

Aaron Shuman, *Museum Experience Coordinator*

National Museum of the Pacific War

Safety is an essential and often overlooked element of living history interpretation. In this session, you will learn about developing a safety program from Aaron Shuman, whose programs at the National Museum of the Pacific War include Flamethrowers and Tanks that easily make the case for a stalwart safety program.

This session will address the need for a living history safety program and the steps by which one can be envisioned, recorded, and made available to staff and volunteers. Special emphasis is placed on the importance of the risk management cycle and the continued evaluation/training that is needed to ensure that staff, volunteers, visitors, and artifacts are safe from harm.

## **Tuesday, 11:15 am – 12:30 pm**

### **Boxing it Up (Workshop) Part 1 of 2**

Fribourgh Room (Central Arkansas Library)

Angela Gibbs, *Curator*

Jacksonport State Park

Have you ever needed to make a custom box for your artifacts but are not sure where to start? Learn how by making a box of your own in this hands-on workshop! Participants will learn to measure artifacts, build their own custom box, and learn of the various methods of supporting the artifact within the box they made.

Limit of 15 participants. Pre-registration required.

### **Moving Beyond the Field Trip (Part 2 of 2)**

Darragh Room (Central Arkansas Library)

### **Adapting to the flow: partnerships between historic sites, breweries & cideries (Panel)**

East Room (Central Arkansas Library)

Ian Beard, *Executive Director*

Historic Arkansas Museum

Vanessa McKuin, *Executive Director*

Historic Cane Hill

How can historic sites rethink their approaches to local breweries & cideries to create sustainable partnerships? We'll explore successful (and not so successful) programs from both the historic site and brewery perspectives. There are more licensed alcohol manufacturers operating in the USA right now than at any other time in history. New breweries, cideries, distilleries, meaderies, and wineries have popped up in every region of the country in both urban and rural settings, creating community gathering spots and loyal local customers. In this session we'll examine how two very different historic sites in Arkansas rethought their potential partners to include local breweries and cideries, creating sustainable relationships that were mutually beneficial. From fossil beds to art nights, anniversary releases to orchards, and trivia to homebrew contests, the presenters will share their experiences from both the historic site and brewery perspectives. Attendees will learn to rethink the value of partnerships between historic

sites and the local alcohol manufacturing community through approaches and programs that can be adapted to their sites and will also be warned of pitfalls that might bubble up along the way.

## **Tuesday, 3:00 – 4:15 pm**

### **Boxing it Up (Part 2 of 2)**

Fribourgh Room (Central Arkansas Library)

### **Blacksmithing Basics (Demonstration/Workshop)**

Historic Arkansas Museum (Blacksmith)

Casey Marshall, *Museum Program Specialist*

Historic Arkansas Museum

Come swing a hammer and learn the basics in a 19th century blacksmith shop at Historic Arkansas Museum Forge. We will cover the different parts to the Anvil, the tools of the trade, and some simple hammer techniques. As time permits, participants will get the opportunity to forge a nail.

Limit of 6 participants. Pre-registration required.

### **A Blind Guy Walks into a Museum (Panel)**

East Room (Central Arkansas Library)

Leon Tidwell, *Museum Interpretive Specialist*

Historic Arkansas Museum

As Museum professionals, we have a duty to provide access to our facilities to everyone who comes through our door. This seems like a daunting task, but we can accomplish a lot with the resources we already have. In this program we will discuss the ways one can adapt programming to accommodate people with disabilities. We will look at accommodating adaptive technology while not limiting access to programming for other visitors. We will also discuss the advantages of having an accommodation plan in place and how accommodations might also be useful to members of the public.

### **From Facebook to TikTok: Museums in the Age of COVID 19 (Hands-on Workshop)**

Darragh Room (Central Arkansas Library)

Brian Rodgers, *Community Relations Liaison*

Mosaic Templars Cultural Center

In the age of COVID-19, museums and museum professionals must find new and creative ways to interact with the public. The Mosaic Templars Cultural Center created a dynamic new program, "Where in Black History is Brian Rodgers?" Join community relations

liaison, Brian Rodgers, as he discusses the process of creating virtual programming and using social media to maintain a presence when patrons are not visiting museums in person. Participants are encouraged to bring their personal devices and produce social media content on site. (Optional)

## **Wednesday, 9:15 – 10:30 am**

### **Making Mannequins (Part 2 of 2)**

Fribourgh Room (Central Arkansas Library)

### **YIELD! Families at Play (Hands-on Workshop)**

Darragh Room (Central Arkansas Library)

Whitney Holman, *Director of Education*

Mosaic Templars Cultural Center

Many museums have the goal of engaging families, but their museum experience is not very family friendly. This session focuses on evolving museums into a family experience with interactive programming and promoting learning through play. Participation in this hands-on session will help museum educators gain insight, resources, and tools to create curriculum and programming that are engaging and interactive for families.

### **The National Cold War Center, Two Years In (Panel)**

East Room (Central Arkansas Library)

Joseph Alley, *Exhibit Manager*

The National Cold War Center

This session is an introduction and review of the past two years of operations at The National Cold War Center, one of the newest museums in the state of Arkansas. The NCWC's Exhibition Manager, Joseph Alley, will give a 20 minute presentation on the genesis of the NCWC as well as go over the project's development. This will not only cover the museum's genesis as a potential National Park, but also cover what the museum's board worked through to overcome the trials of starting a museum in the middle of the Covid pandemic. Finally, the presenter will go over the development and operations of the BAFB Exhibition, the NCWC's first major permanent exhibit.

### **A Study of Victorian Sentimental Hair Art: Learning the Gimp Technique (Hands-on Workshop) Part 1 of 2**

Historic Arkansas Museum (Room TBD)

Amy Armstrong, *Living History Coordinator*

Morgan Weithman, *Public Programs Assistant*

Historic Arkansas Museum

This session will enlighten and educate museum professionals who seek to gain a deeper understanding of hair-related items in their collections. Attendees will: a) learn about the history, application, and creation methods of Victorian Hair Work. b) be instructed on the method of gimp work. c) be supplied with the materials to make their own hair work. d) have the opportunity and support to create their own piece.

Through participation in the hands-on activities, attendants will gain knowledge, skill, and appreciation of the art of hair work.

Participants will be able to create a piece of hair work using the gimp technique and will be able to share their knowledge and skills with others in the museum community.

Participants could reference the following online resources prior to the conference:

<https://archive.org/details/selfinstructori00campgoog>

Limit 10 participants. Pre-registration required.

## **Wednesday, 11:00 am – 12:15 pm**

### **A Study of Victorian Sentimental Hair Art (Part 2 of 2)**

Historic Arkansas Museum (Room TBD)

### **We Got 99 Problems but Museums Aren't 1! (Panel)**

East Room (Central Arkansas Library)

Quantia Fletcher, *Director*

Mosaic Templars Cultural Center

Daniel Cockrell, *Director*

Old State House

Stephanie Wade, *Director*

Historic Arkansas Museum

Kyle Miller, *Director*

Delta Cultural Center

Despite the tremendous stress caused by the pandemic, museum professionals are filling the gaps to meet the needs of their communities. In our post pandemic world directors of museums are shifting. We are often more than collectors, researchers, and fundraisers, we are cultural leaders. How do we learn about best practices and move forward in the museum field? Join this panel as they share the lessons they have learned and expertise they have gained. Come and hear from the directors of our largest history and cultural museums in Arkansas. Lean in with the directors of the museums of the Division of Arkansas Heritage as they share the successes and challenges in the some of the states and most successful institutions. Discussion will include panelists' personal leadership styles, the origins of their leadership practices, and the importance of equitable and compassionate leadership. Participants will walk away with strategies for building successful museums.

**Wednesday, 1:30 – 3:00 pm**

**Behind the Scenes Tour of Clinton Library**

President Clinton Library and Museum

Diane Karlson, *Curator*

Jennifer Wisnewski, *Exhibit Specialist*

President Clinton Library and Museum

Discover some of the treasures of the 1990s and the Clinton administration on a guided tour of the Clinton Presidential Library's museum collection. Guests will see and hear of some of the staff's favorite artifacts that will bring smiles to your faces and chills to your spine while you walk through storage... and have flashbacks to the last scene of *Raiders of the Ark*.

Limit of 15 participants. Pre-registration required.