

by

Approved by the Department of Museum Studies

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ABSTRACT

Reality Check: My Experiences at Sharlot Hall Museum

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For ten weeks during the summer of 2014 I interned at Sharlot Hall Museum in Prescott, Arizona. Sharlot Hall Museum is a cultural center focused on the historical, social and natural aspects of Territorial Arizona. Opening in 1928, the museum is a mid-sized museum featuring seven historic buildings, an exhibit center, and a Library and Archive. Sharlot Hall's mission is to foster community understanding and appreciation of Arizona's territorial history and to promote involvement and support for research, collections, exhibits, and programming.

The purpose of the internship was to gain exposure to many areas of the museum, with a focus in education. The primary tasks consisted of assisting with summer youth programs, working in the museum archives, being exposed to the Living History program and coordination, developing potential digital technology for the museum, and editing content for a new digital kiosk display. Additional experiences consisted of work with the volunteer program, including observations of docent tours, participation in docent training, and development of a docent guide. Finally, the internship included the attendance of several staff meetings.

The results of the internship were a greater understanding of the challenges many history museums including Sharlot Hall faces. Located in a small town, retirement community, the museum has some obstacles to overcome in terms of funding and attendance. Additionally, educational programming is primarily directed towards an older demographic that can alienate younger generations.



Reality Check

My Experiences at Sharlot Hall Museum
By Rebecca Reynolds

Job Description

Tasks Performed

- Assisting with Summer Youth Programs:
 - Children's activities at summer festivals
 - Programs with the Prescott Yavapai Tribe Youth
- Working on short projects in the Archives involving vetting photos
- Exposure to the Museum's Living History program and coordination
- Assisting in the development of content for the Next Exit History Program App
- Organizing and editing biographies of territorial women to be put into a computer kiosk display

Tasks Not Undertaken

- Conducting research about Prescott residents during the Territorial period
- Developing outreach programs for area schools
- Programs with the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts/ Young Marines

Additional Experiences

- Researched and designed informational poster for activities
- Observed adult tours given by docent
- Participated in docent training day
- Created a docent guide for the print shop
- Observed the opening of a new permanent exhibit
- Observed the installation of a new museum director
- Meetings Attended:
 - Staff meeting
 - Docent tour guide meeting
 - Sharlot Hall Day Committee meeting
 - Sesquicentennial Committee meeting
 - Volunteer Advisory Committee meeting
 - Educational Programming meeting with the Yavapai
 - Strategic Planning meeting
 - Exhibit Committee meeting

Museum Education Experiences



- Mayborn Museum Complex, Baylor University
 - Facilities accommodate a wide range of topics for educational programming
 - K-8th graders
- Sharlot Hall Museum
 - Cultural History center
 - Educational programming geared toward a specific audience
 - 4th grade social studies

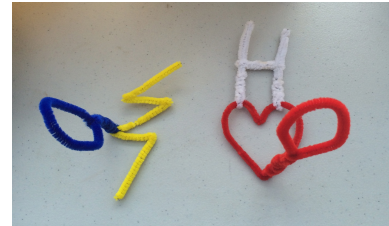
Festival Weekends: Children's Activities



Sesquicentennial Weekend



Folk Arts Fair



Audio/Visual Tours

- Developed potential digital technology for the museum
 - 7 historic buildings
 - 2 buildings have docents
 - Audio/visual component would enhance interpretation of the remaining 5 buildings
 - Researched existing companies
 - OnCell Tour Sphere
 - Next Exit History App
 - Guide by Cell
 - Met with Marketing Coordinator
 - Hybrid idea with an internal system and wifi access points

Territorial Women's Memorial Rose Garden



- Edited existing biographies
 - 504 biographies
 - Not all biographies are the same standard
 - 213 had little to no information about the women
 - Currently placed in a 3 ring binder away from physical rose garden on campus
- New digital kiosk in rose garden
 - Standardize the biographies
 - Transfer the biographies to digital format to be seen on kiosk

Day in the Life Program

- 2 day program for local homeschooled and Prescott Yavapai Indian tribe youth
 - Ages 6-13
- Activities done by Yavapai and Pioneer children during the late 19th century
 - Archery, butter churning, reading animal tracks, quilting, etc.
- Learning Objective
 - Teach each group about a cultural history they may not know as much about



Challenges

- Primary experience: Mayborn Museum
 - Educational programing plays a significant role
- History museum in a small retirement town
 - Heavy focus on an older demographic
- Few education-related tasks
 - Lack of priority in educational programing