

April 29, 2008

# Museum on Main Street

## Workshop Bureau

### Offering Capacity Building Training for MOMS Host Communities

*The following workshop presentations have been developed by Museum on Main Street to coincide with MOMS exhibitions. State humanities councils are encouraged to consider using their Community Assistance Subsidy & Services allowance to bring one or more of these workshops to their host communities. These workshops are also available to other museums or cultural organizations.*

#### **Docent Training Workshop**

*Offered by: **Ann C. Easterling***

**Description:** This workshop is designed to give volunteer docents the information, skills, and confidence to guide tours through MOMS' exhibitions. Workshops begin with an overview of exhibition themes and a discussion of inquiry-led exploration of these themes. A review of the docent handbook and its easy and effective use in the exhibition follows. The workshop continues with basic presentation techniques and guidelines for leading tours. There is an emphasis on "the art of asking questions" and recognizing what questions are appropriate for different age groups. After a sample tour, new docents will have the opportunity to use the information and techniques they have learned with other workshop participants as each practices leading an exhibition tour. Workshops are relaxed and participation is encouraged. The basic skills docents acquire during the docent training workshop can be used in other exhibitions at the host venue.

**Timeframe:** Adaptable to fit a 90-minute or half-day schedule.

**Costs:** 90 minute workshop: \$350 plus travel expenses. Half day workshop: \$500 plus travel expenses

**Facilitator:** Ann C. Easterling is the author of docent handbooks for six Museum on Main Street (MOMS) exhibitions including *Key Ingredients: America by Food*, *Between Fences and New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music*. She has conducted docent training workshops in Kansas, Missouri, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin and is eager to assist volunteers at MOMS host venues learn how to enrich visitors' exhibition experiences.

**Contact:** [moms@si.edu](mailto:moms@si.edu) (please reference "MOMS docent training workshop" in the subject line)

## **Interpretive Exhibit Workshop**

Offered by: *Tom McKay*

**Description:** Creating an interesting and insightful local exhibit to accompany a MOMS exhibition can help host institutions achieve the full benefit of participating in the MOMS program. This workshop presents each of the basic steps in planning content and creating label text for interpretive exhibits.

Because good exhibits begin with good ideas, the workshop addresses how to develop exhibit topics through studying museum artifacts, researching local history, and understanding local landscapes and culture. The workshop also examines how to organize exhibits by main concepts and how to use artifacts, documents and images to communicate historical ideas. Communication of exhibit content includes creating effective labels. The workshop presents a coordinated approach to preparing labels from choosing titles to writing text.

To build confidence among participants, the workshop draws heavily on examples of successful exhibits prepared by other small museums and historical societies. The workshop includes interactive exercises in organizing exhibit content, analyzing exhibit information, and writing label text. In combination with the example provided by the MOMS exhibition, the workshop can help participants build their capacity to produce local history exhibits that are informative, insightful, and engaging.

**Timeframe:** A half day program.

**Cost:** \$500 plus travel expenses.

**Facilitator:** Tom McKay is the former coordinator of Office of Local History at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. He has authored more than a dozen articles about planning history exhibits and has been project director for more than two dozen exhibits in historical societies and small museums. Three of his exhibit projects received Awards of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History. He has presented exhibit training workshops in New York, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, North Dakota, Kentucky, Minnesota, Ohio, Illinois, and Wisconsin.

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## **Exhibit Design Workshop**

Offered by: *Teresa M. Goforth*

**Description:** The goal of this workshop is to provide small museums, historical societies, and cultural institutions with information, skills, techniques, and problem-solving ideas to design and install local exhibitions. Workshop topics include: budgets, design theory, installation materials and techniques including mount design and fabrication, graphic design, and label design and production. Participants will have the opportunity to sample exhibit materials and try their hands at various exhibit techniques. All of these topics are taught within the context of the small museum staff (including volunteers) and a very limited budget. The presenter will also talk about creative ways to help fund temporary and permanent exhibits in small museums. This workshop is ideal for museums with all volunteer staff or a paid staff of one or two.

**Workshop Timeframe:** Approximately 4 hours.

**Cost:** \$600 plus travel expenses. (Fee includes supplies for hands-on activities)

**Workshop Presenter:** Teresa Goforth is currently the executive director of the Michigan Museums Association and an exhibits trainer for Museum on Main Street. She received her M.A. in American History from Michigan State University and worked as assistant to the curator of Exhibits at the MSU Museums and executive director of the Courthouse Square Museum in Charlotte, MI. While at the Courthouse Square Museum she hosted one of the earlier MOMS exhibitions, *Barn Again! Celebrating an American Icon*.

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## **Education Workshops**

*Offered by Lisa Thompson*

- **Exhibition Hosts Workshop:** This workshop provides local coordinators with tools for encouraging educators to bring students to their MOMS exhibition/programs and for strengthening their sites' ties to the local education community. The workshop includes strategies for marketing MOMS education opportunities to teachers, guidelines for creating a teacher-friendly tour program, ideas for relating a MOMS exhibition to state and national education standards, and an overview of the MOMS teacher's guide and other resources for educators. The workshop format is interactive and involves participants in hands-on activities. As they focus on the exhibition through an education lens, MOMS hosts will brainstorm a variety of approaches for enhancing their education programs and serving the needs of educators in their communities.

- **Educators' Workshop:** This workshop provides educators with the background and resources they need to prepare their students for a visit to the MOMS exhibitions *Key Ingredients: America by Food* or *Between Fences* and incorporate the exhibition themes into their curriculum. The workshop includes an overview of the exhibition themes, demonstrations of activities from the teacher's guide, a discussion of how these themes and activities meet state and national education standards, and information on additional resources. The workshop format is interactive and involves educators in hands-on activities.

**Timeframe:** Adaptable to fit a 90-minute or half-day schedule.

**Costs:** 90 minute workshop: \$350 plus travel expenses. Half day workshop: \$500 plus travel expenses

**Facilitator:** Lisa Thompson, Executive Director for the Utah Museums Association, is the author of the teacher's guide for four Museum on Main Street exhibitions, including *Key Ingredients* and *Between Fences*. She is eager to assist MOMS host communities in building relationships with local educators and promoting the exciting education opportunities offered by MOMS exhibitions. Lisa has led workshops on MOMS education programs in Utah, Idaho, Arizona and Minnesota. Her experience includes over nine years in developing K-12 education programs on history and architecture for the Utah Heritage Foundation and presenting these programs at both local and national conferences.

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