



Community History Matters

a newsletter of Humanities Tennessee's Community History Development Fund

Welcome to the May 2013 issue of Humanities Tennessee's quarterly newsletter dedicated to the work and interests of our Community History Development Fund (CHDF) partners. This issue highlights our newest partner, and our newest project--a traveling exhibition tour. The exhibit is a program resource for all of our partners, as is our media collection, which consists of numerous award-winning documentaries, all free and at your fingertips. See below for some suggestions for using the media in your public programming plans.

Humanities Tennessee is far from the only place out there for high-quality, no-cost resources; MTSU's Department of History is hosting a forum later this month focusing on the visitor experience--something important to all of us--featuring a trio of high profile museum practitioners. Don't miss this opportunity to gain from some of the most experienced in our field. Visit the [website](#) for details and to RSVP. Also check under *News of Note* to register for free collections care workshops occurring this summer!

Have a question about a community history matter? An idea? A resource? Please send it in to us and we'll see if we can share it in our next issue of *Community History Matters*. Happy reading!

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Not to Be Missed

Touring Exhibit a Launching Point for Programs about Immigration & Tennessee Communities

by Melissa Davis, Humanities Tennessee

Humanities Tennessee is launching a new statewide touring exhibit, *Bittersweet Harvest: The Bracero Program, 1942-1964*, which highlights both the opportunity and exploitation of this monumental migration of guest workers under the auspices of the US and Mexican governments.

The exhibition consists of six, bilingual poster panels of text and National Archive photos, and is easily accommodated by small, community-based organizations, museums and libraries. Intersecting important events in our nation's agricultural, labor and immigration history, the exhibit provides opportunities for CHDF partners to explore these topics at the local level, attract new visitors, and share quality programming at no cost.

Exhibit hosts will receive the exhibit, a scholar-led public program, and an opportunity for support for additional, related programs. Detailed announcements and application information will be sent early this summer. Please let us know if you, or others in your community, would like to receive one, or if you have any questions about this exciting new program.



The first of six bilingual panels of our touring exhibit.



Planning underway at Amqui Station.

Partner Projects: Sharing Stories across the State

Planning a Strategic Vision, Building a Sustainable Future

By Cate Hamilton and Nikki Ward, [Discover Madison, Inc.-Amqui Station and Visitor's Center](#) Madison, Tennessee

In December 2012, the Board of Directors and Staff for Discover Madison, Inc.-Amqui Station and Visitor's Center decided there was a great need for the organization to have a planning session to clearly define the organization's mission and vision, and to establish realistic goals. We submitted a request to Humanities Tennessee's Community History Development Fund (CHDF) for assistance.

On February 2, 2013, board members and staff gathered for a half-day strategic planning session. As part of our CHDF project, we contracted with Linda Caldwell of the Tennessee Overhill Heritage Association to lead and facilitate the planning session. Linda took us through a three-stage planning process: where DMI-Amqui Station is currently; our hopes and dreams, and how to make them a reality; and prioritizing both short- and long-term goals and strategies. Each participant had a voice in this process.

Based on the responses and active participation by the board and staff, Linda prepared a report that covered successes to date, opportunities, and challenges. The report also covered both the short- and long-term goals that were decided by consensus by the participants. She also included several observations and immediate challenges, such as sustainable funding, office/storage space, program development and interpretation, and grant writing.

Since we received the report, active committees have been formed and a date set to develop a written action plan to ensure that both board members and staff are fully involved. Without the support of the CHDF, we would not have had the resources to begin the process of planning, which has enhanced our organization's culture of questioning, learning, and changing—actions necessary to an ongoing plan. It is our belief that our plan will be our bridge between where our organization (and museum) is now and where our board, staff, and volunteers want it to be.

Advice & Answers: A Consultant's Two Cents

Fresh Programs, Just a Click Away!

by Paul McCoy, Humanities Tennessee

Humanities Tennessee's [Media Lending Library](#) contains a collection of rare, award-winning documentaries about southern culture, literature, race relations, and politics. Best of all, these films are available to you Free of Charge!

There are a number of ways to use our Media Lending Library. You could simply select one of our documentaries, pick a date to show the film at your museum, and get the word out to your community. That's it. No fuss, no muss.

But you could also build a series of programs to take place over a few weeks. For example, you could choose selections dealing with [Southern Literature](#). Don't have enough room at your institution to host a film screening? Then partner with your local library (they have plenty of room!). The library could highlight books featured in the series and encourage reading discussions among its patrons and your membership. In one fell swoop, you've enriched your community and strengthened your relationship with a neighboring institution.

But if you really want to step up your game, select a film or two dealing with [race relations or the Civil Rights Movement](#). Host screenings at your museum, or partner with a library to host them (Did I mention how much room they have?...Probably have a good sound system as well). Then, choose a selection from our [Conversation Bureau](#) to cap off the film series with a lively discussion in your community. The [Stigall Museum](#) in Humboldt had great success hosting [this Conversation](#) with a small group of local high school students and senior citizens.

Best of all, these programs are FREE! Humanities Tennessee covers the expenses. All you have to do is publicize and host the program. And don't forget [the popcorn!](#)

CIVIL ^{WAR} RIGHTS
Discourse

News of Note

The *Conversations Bureau* is part of our latest initiative that explores the impact and legacy of divisive issues over the past 150 years.

Free, Public programs Available Across the State

Hosting a program from our new *Conversations Bureau* is a great way to offer your community an engaging, educational experience at no cost to your organization. Nonprofits, high schools, and adult learning programs are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity. The *Bureau* is a selection of ninety-minute discussion programs, each compelling participants to consider issues of race and equality since the United States Civil War—from the Emancipation Proclamation to Brown v. Board to James Baldwin and more. Each conversation begins with participants reading a page of excerpts followed by a scholar-facilitated discussion. Find out more about the [Conversations Bureau](#).

Free Workshops in Middle Tennessee

Two free collections care workshops are being offered this summer. Take advantage of one—or both—to bone up on the basics of collection management for your museum or the basics of cleaning and caring for your museum's artifacts. The workshops are free, but with limited space, so [register](#) today.

Support for Your Organization's Civil War Programs

Is your organization planning a project related to the Civil War in Tennessee? A source of support to consider is the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area (TCWNHA), which seeks to interpret stories of national importance in a congressionally designated region--in the case the entire state of Tennessee. The TCWNHA has partnered with folks across the state to preserve and present stories of the Civil War and Reconstruction eras in Tennessee. Visit their [web site](#) for more information about the TCWNHA and what it supports.

Building Tennessee's Civil War Collection, One Town at a Time

Events to mark the sesquicentennial of the Civil War are well underway across the state, and, indeed, the nation. The Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA) is offering a unique opportunity for Tennesseans to contribute to a growing collection of Civil War materials. Through *Looking Back: The Civil War in Tennessee* the TSLA invites you to one in a series of scanning events in order to digitize local material related to the Civil War. Visit the [TSLA website](#) for more information and to find an event near you.

Help spread the word. Take a minute to forward this newsletter to your board, volunteers, or members who are interested in preserving and strengthening community life in our state.

We created a brief video that illustrates the ways in which two partners used the CHDF resources, and the growth each enjoyed as a result. Click [here](#) to see the CHDF in action!

The smallest gift from an individual can make a big difference to community life in Tennessee. Please consider including the CHDF in your giving by making a [secure donation](#) to Humanites Tennessee.

Humanities Tennessee

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