

**Missouri State Museum, Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
Museums for America Proposal 2009**

**Narrative**

**1. Statement of Need:**

The mission of the museum is to interpret Missouri's cultural and natural history to sustain them for its citizens and visitors through research, exhibitions, preservation, and public programming. At this time, museum staff is unable to meet its dual mission of preservation and interpretation because of inadequate knowledge of the collections. One of the top priorities of the museum is to improve collections storage and management so that Missouri's history can be interpreted through quality exhibitions and educational programming. The completion of a full collections inventory will provide information necessary for future projects, including effectively designing and planning for better collections areas and preservation and providing quality, visual interpretation (through exhibits and programming) for visitors. Two recent assessments (CAP in 2007 and CMAP in 2008) have recommended additional staff to complete the inventory. This inventory project must be complete before the museum can take additional measures to preserve deteriorating objects in conditions which are overcrowded, unorganized and well below minimally acceptable standards for a museum environment.

With knowledge gained from the completion of the inventory, staff will be able to provide Missourians with more access to information about the collections, which belong to the citizens and which museum staff holds in trust for them. Exhibits using the collections and an electronic database with collections information (particularly for artifacts not on display) will provide access. Staff will also be able to respond quickly and correctly to the many public inquiries we receive regarding items in our collections. In addition, the inventory information will enable staff to provide teachers with resources to help them fulfill state curriculum standards.

The ultimate audience for the inventory project is the public—visitors (particularly students) and citizens of the state of Missouri. The inventory will give the staff the information and tools needed to plan and carry out the preservation of the history of Missouri for all citizens of the state. Increasing the amount of available and correct collections information will provide an important building block for other museum activities that reach out to the public, such as quality interpretation through exhibits and educational programming.

The Missouri State Museum is one of over 80 state parks and historic sites administered by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Division of State Parks. As part of the Division of State Parks, each facility is required to have a General Management Plan (GMP), which is essentially a strategic plan. It consists of five chapters including Operations, Cultural Resource Management, Interpretation, Natural Resource Management, and Conceptual Development. Each chapter is drafted by appropriate museum staff as a team effort. The museum currently has completed and received approval on the first three of those plans (we have no natural resources to manage). The Resource Management and Interpretation Program and the Facility and Visitors Services Program within the Division of State Parks provide a general template for

the first four chapters of the GMP. State Park staff throughout the state review each chapter before approval by the division director. The Conceptual Development chapter is developed with input from not only State Parks but also surrounding communities, visitors and the public. This process will begin in the fall of 2008.

In the Operations, Cultural Resource Management, and Interpretation chapters of the GMP, the improvement of our collections is listed as a top priority. The inventory is necessary to accomplish other goals, particularly with regard to interpretation (exhibits and programming).

The inventory project will strengthen the museum for the future so that it can better serve Missourians and other visitors. With a completed, full inventory, museum staff will be able to proceed with a regular inventory schedule in which the whole collection will be inventoried over the course of 10 years. This will maintain intellectual control over the collection for sustained use in exhibits and programs in the future. The inventory will also aid the museum in producing short-term and long-range conservation plans.

## **2. Project Design:**

### Background:

The Missouri State Museum (MSM) has collections in two locations, the State Capitol, which also houses MSM's exhibit galleries, and the upper floors of an historic building (Union Hotel) at Jefferson Landing State Historic Site (located 2 blocks from the State Capitol and operated by museum staff). Some artifacts are also exhibited in historic buildings at Jefferson Landing (Union Hotel and Lohman Building). The museum's collections include over 60,000 objects. The collection is mainly 3-dimensional historic objects including wood pieces, textiles, guns, swords, beadwork, archaeological and anthropology pieces, pottery, and other items.

The Missouri State Museum was founded by legislation in 1919 as the Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial Hall. The original collections (not all of which have been accessioned) consisted of trophies of war, memorials, and memorabilia acquired by the authority of the Missouri Adjutant General's Office. As the museum transformed into the Missouri State Museum in 1923, a larger variety of artifacts were acquired through donation and loans. Throughout much of the museum's history, its mission remained extremely broad and acquisition standards were inconsistent. This resulted in a large volume of artifacts that do not support the current mission of the State Museum but take up space and resources. There was also a history of inconsistent paperwork, which makes it difficult to determine at this time what the full scope of the collection.

A full inventory of the collection has not occurred in at least 30 years. Museum staff is currently unable to adequately plan for the preservation and care of the collection because of inadequate knowledge of its contents. Nor can it effectively interpret the history of the state of Missouri without knowing what is in (and what is not in) the collections.

In 2005, museum staff created a Collections Committee. The committee reviews all potential donations for compatibility with the museum's mission, collecting plan and interpretation

goals. It ensures that before a new donation is accepted, the museum has the resources to maintain professional standards of collections care for that object. The committee also makes recommendations regarding possible deaccessions.

Museum staff began a collections inventory in 2006. However, less than 5% of the collection was inventoried during the first two years of the project. Outside assessors recommend additional staff to complete the inventory.

#### Goals:

The goal of this project is to achieve better intellectual control of the objects entrusted to the Missouri State Museum. Without the inventory and more knowledge about the collections, the museum cannot fulfill its mission of preservation and interpretation. The information from an inventory is vital to the continued survival of the collections. In addition, the inventory will provide more access to the collections for students, teachers, visitors and all Missourians through quality exhibits and programming using the museum's own artifacts as well as through access to an electronic collections database (particularly for information on items not currently on display).

Specific goals include:

1. Building public confidence in the museum's ability to preserve the artifacts entrusted to their care by the citizens of Missouri;
2. Improving the museum's ability to disseminate accurate information about artifacts to the public and researchers;
3. Increasing and/or verifying information available in the collections database;
4. Assisting development of exhibits and educational and interpretive programs;
5. Resolving existing collections management issues with undocumented artifacts;
6. Prioritizing conservation treatment; and
7. Enabling staff to make informed decisions about deaccessioning items that do not meet the museum's mission (while taking up limited time and resources).

#### Activities:

The main activity of the project will be a physical inventory of the entire collection, fully describing and at least minimal cataloguing of each object, review and revision of existing paper and electronic records, accessioning and physical numbering (as needed), digital photography, and any necessary data entry (new or correction) in our Past Perfect database. Re-housing will occur for artifacts stored in non-archival or deteriorated archival materials.

Museum staff will recruit and train additional, temporary staff to perform the physical inventory. The physical inventory team will consist of 1 full-time collections inventory manager (hired for 2 years) and part-time collections assistants. The team will methodically go through all collections and exhibits areas, shelf by shelf, drawer by drawer, and case by case. The team will begin in the main collections area, room B-3. They will then proceed to our secondary storage area followed by the exhibit galleries. While the team works through the collection in

this manner, the Collections Curator will also be inventorying objects as long-term exhibits are dismantled.

After the physical inventory, the team will match the records with the accession numbers and files, which include catalog cards and Past Perfect entries (if available). If possible, they will resolve inconsistencies among the records and make a new Past Perfect entry or review/revise the current one. The team will then add the digital images to the Past Perfect object record. In instances where the physical inventory team cannot resolve discrepancies or other issues in a timely manner will be addressed by the collections curator and assistant director so that the physical inventory can proceed.

Museum staff will supervise and assist with the daily work of the physical inventory team as needed. Curators will give public presentations on the collection, using artifacts to describe the techniques for their care and preservation. The Assistant Director will create electronic access to collections information using Virtual Exhibit. The museum has already purchased this software that connects to our Past Perfect database. This will provide public access to collections records online and/or in a collections information kiosk in the public galleries. (The museum already owns one kiosk that can be used for this application.) Users will be able to find artifacts related to particular topics or themes. In particular, teachers will be able to find artifacts related to Missouri history lessons that fulfill the state curriculum standards.

#### Project Management:

The project team will consist of the Assistant Director, the Collections Curator, the Collections Inventory Manager, and the Collections Assistant. The Director, Exhibits Curator, and State Parks Registrar will also participate.

Inventory procedures and instructions have been approved by the museum's Collections Committee (and by State Parks) and are part of the museum's Collections Management Manual. Forms and checklists have also been designed and tested. The project team will follow these procedures to ensure consistent descriptions, location notations, data entry, etc., for all objects. The Registrar and the Collections Curator will provide training and instruction on appropriate procedures and on the use of the Past Perfect database to the new temporary staff.

The Collections Inventory Manager and Collections Assistants will perform the physical inventory. The Assistant Director will participate at least once a month and the Collections Curator at least once per week to ensure adherence to procedures and to assist in problem solving. The Curator will have the main responsibility for oversight of the physical inventory team. The Assistant Director will serve as project director. The Collections Curator, Assistant Director and Director will step in and assist the physical inventory team to stay on schedule.

Adjustments and corrections, particularly with the timetable, are anticipated as unforeseen "problems" arise during the physical inventory. Past sources of problems include discovery of environmental damage to artifacts from pests, water leaks, etc. In these cases, the Collections

Curator and the Assistant Director will take over the resolution of these issues so that the physical inventory team will be able to keep on schedule. For damage issues, the museum director will contribute time and effort as well.

The project team will have quarterly meetings to evaluate the process (making any necessary adjustments) and to ensure consistency and continued progress. Meetings that also include the Museum Director and DSP Registrar will occur at 6, 12, 18 and 24 months. These will include reviews of activities, problems and accomplishments in preparation for the interim IMLS reports.

### Evaluation

Process evaluation will be on-going with minor adjustments made when necessary and with the approval of the Assistant Director. Evaluation of the project will occur through several measures, not all of which will be measurable during the grant period. These will include (1) % of collection with complete records, (2) % of collection with legal title, (3) % of artifacts in future exhibits from museum collection, (4) number of talks/presentations to the public on our collections and preservation issues, (5) number of additional public programs offered each year, and (6) the number of users accessing the collections database through Virtual Exhibit. A qualitative measurement will be the usefulness of the information to staff and the public for the development and enjoyment of quality exhibits and educational programming for the public.

### Audience

As noted above, the ultimate audience for the inventory project is the public—visitors (particularly students) and citizens of the state of Missouri. This project will reach the audience through the improved interpretation of and access to the collections through exhibits and educational programming. In addition, the public will be able to get quick answers to questions regarding the collection (particularly if the museum has an artifact(s) donated by an ancestor). This project will also reach a wider audience with electronic access to a collections database.

## **3. Project Resources: Time, Personnel, Budget**

### Time

The project will begin September 1, 2009, to allow museum staff adequate preparation time for the project. This time will include recruitment and hiring of the Collections Inventory Manager position, recruitment and hiring of a part-time (40 hours/week for 6 months) Collections Assistant and set-up of the internal fiscal accounts and requirements.

Museum staff has estimated that one shelf (or “shelf equivalent”) will take one week or approximately 40 person hours. The museum holds approximately 150 “shelves.” Thus, an estimate of the time needed is 75 weeks (80 person hours/week). This allows adequate time in the schedule for meetings, reports, and unanticipated problems requiring flexibility.

### Personnel

The positions of Collections Inventory Manager and Collections Assistant will be filled during the grant period. Job descriptions are included in the supporting document on Project Staff.

MSM Director Kurt Senn will assist the other project staff as needed, particularly with large “problem” issues. He currently assists collections staff with crisis issues. When Mr. Senn joined the MSM staff in August 2004, he became a driving force behind staff, resource and planning improvements for which the inventory is a necessary step. He has extensive experience with historic site administration and cultural resources management.

Linda Endersby, Assistant Director of MSM, will serve as Project Director and create electronic access to collections information. Ms. Endersby’s current responsibilities include special project development and implementation. She has archival experience as well as experience administrating grants.

Collections Curator Kate Keil will oversee the daily operations and work of the physical inventory. She will also work on resolving problems and/or inconsistencies that the physical inventory team cannot resolve and perform physical inventory on artifacts coming off long-term exhibit in the galleries. Ms. Keil currently performs these tasks as part of her regular job duties. She has wide-ranging collections experience.

Exhibits Curator Julie Kemper will train and assist the physical inventory team during the inventory of artifacts in exhibit areas. Ms. Kemper has extensive collections experience at various sites.

Heather Rudy serves as Registrar for the Missouri Department of Resources’ Division of State Parks. Ms. Rudy will train the physical inventory team in the use of Past Perfect, artifact handling, and DSP policies and procedures. She will also periodically monitor team activities to ensure compliance. Ms. Rudy performs these tasks as part of her regular job duties. Ms. Rudy’s collections experience at comparable institutions provides a source of knowledge and expertise upon which MSM staff depend.

For additional information on major team members, please see resumes in the Supporting Documents section.

### Budget

The project budget includes the salaries and expenses necessary to complete the inventory and associated activities. MSM is requesting funds for supplies, computer equipment and the salaries of the additional temporary staff needed to complete the inventory in a timely manner. MSM’s budget match will include the estimated hours of MSM staff time and part of the supplies required to complete the inventory. The budget was prepared in consultation with budget analysts in the Missouri Department of Natural Resources’ Division of State Parks (of which MSM is a part). The Financial Management Section of the Division of State Parks will monitor the grant funds and their use.

#### **4. Impact**

The direct results of this project will be better intellectual control of the collection (staff will know what is in the collection as well as their condition and location) and public electronic access to collections information. This will result in quality interpretation and preservation of Missouri's history using the museum's collection. As described above in the Project Design (Evaluation) section, these results will be measured in various ways.

Specific products of this project will include electronic, paper and photographic records for each artifact in the collection. Another product will be the access to collections information through Virtual Exhibit. The laptops and Past Perfect Network Upgrade will be an investment in future collections management projects.

With the completion of this project, a number of other projects will then be possible: conservation surveys, short-term and long-range conservation plans, and collections sections in the disaster plan.

The long-term impact of this project, in combination with others, is improved collections care. It is impossible to improve the museum's ability to care for the collection and provide access to it without knowing what is in the collection as well as its location and condition. If the museum cannot appropriately care for and preserve the collection, it will not be available for public access through programming and exhibits.

# BUDGET FORM - PAGE FOUR

## Section B: Summary Budget

	\$ IMLS	\$ Cost Share	\$ TOTAL COSTS
1. Salaries and Wages			
2. Fringe Benefits			
3. Consultant Fees			
4. Travel			
5. Supplies and Materials			
6. Services			
7. Student Support			
8. Other Costs			
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (1–8)			
9. Indirect Costs			
TOTAL COSTS (Direct and Indirect)			

## Project Funding for the Entire Grant Period

1. Grant Funds Requested from IMLS

2. Cost Sharing:

    a. Cash Contribution

    b. In-Kind Contribution

    c. Other Federal Agencies\*

    d. TOTAL COST SHARING

3. TOTAL PROJECT FUNDING (1+2d)

% of Total Costs Requested from IMLS

\* If funding has been requested from another federal agency, indicate the agency's name:

**MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES,  
 MISSOURI STATE MUSEUM, Schedule of Completion**

ACTIVITY	Aug. 2009	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan. 2010	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.
Recruit and hire 1 full-time collections inventory manager and 1 part-time collections assistant for 6 months.													
Train temporary staff.													
Physical inventory, B-3.													
Quarterly team meeting.													
Recruit part-time collections assistant for 6 months.													
6 <sup>th</sup> month team meeting.													
Physical inventory of artifacts from dismantled long-term exhibits.													
Train collections assistant.													
Quarterly meeting.													
12 <sup>th</sup> month team meeting.													
Recruit part-time collections assistant for 6 months.													

ACTIVITY	Sept. 2010	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan. 2010	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.
Train collections assistant.												
Physical inventory, secondary storage.												
Quarterly meeting.												
Recruit part-time collections assistant for 6 months.												
Creation of electronic access to collections information.												
Physical inventory of artifacts from dismantled long-term exhibits.												
18 <sup>th</sup> month team meeting.												
Train collections assistant.												
Physical inventory, exhibit galleries.												
Final project meeting and preparation for												

