LYNN MARIE ALEXANDER

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Lynn Marie Alexander is the Director and Archivist of The Hill Neighborhood Center, a tourist resource and neighborhood repository of verbal and material Hill history (2016-present). She authored The Hill: St. Louis’s Italian American Neighborhood (Reedy Press, 2020) currently in its second run. She earned a Masters in British History at UMKC (2011), and a Masters at Keele University, Staffordshire, UK in International Relations (1989). She was an adjunct professor at KCK Community College (1991-2015), Johnson County Community College (2008-2015), UMKC (2010-2011) teaching courses in American history and government and political science.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

THE HILL: YIKES! WE'RE TRENDY NOW?

The presenter provides a brief history of The Hill's growth as an Italian immigrant community beginning in the 1890s. The neighborhood's institutions such as St. Ambrose serves as the neighborhood's anchor while its restaurants draw customers from all over the region. The questions this presentation explores are how did The Hill turn from a night out couples' dinner into a tourist destination with buses full of people from areas outside of the metro area spending an entire day? Is The Hill community losing identity because of it's own success or is the neighborhood on the cusp of a new kind of opportunity? There are small communities throughout Missouri that are experiencing similar dynamics who can relate and bring insight into the questions posed.

THE HILL: ITS HISTORY AND ITS PEOPLE

St. Louis' Hill neighborhood is one of the last in-tact Italian American enclaves in the United States. The presentation explores the neighborhood's origin, even before the Italian immigrants arrived, through more than one hundred years' worth of challenges and opportunities. Numerous people came from The Hill including accomplished and professional athletes, opera divas, a nationally recognized priest, authors, poet laureate, chefs, and business families three and four generations deep. The Hill continues to tell the stories of the immigrant experience at its best.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: HillNeighborhoodCenter@gmail.com
WILLIAM AMBROSE & CHRISTOPHER DUNN

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr. William Ambrose graduated from 'Rolla' with a B.S. in Chem. E. in 1972, Magna Cum Laude. During my senior year at 'Rolla' I became interested in dentistry, choosing UMKC. Where I graduated "With Highest Honors." I practiced in my hometown of Jefferson City and retired in 2010.

Chris Dunn is a licensed Missouri attorney, geospatial business owner, expert witness, and geo-historical researcher. Through GeoVelo, LLC (GeoVelo.com) geospatial forensic investigations are conducted, demonstrative exhibits are produced, and geospatial services are provided. This work involves investigating, mapping, and modeling incidents, accidents, and crimes. This requires applying well-established geospatial techniques to the facts of the case using Geographic Information Systems (GIS), 3-D modeling software, and field confirmation procedures. Cases often require integrating the geospatial work product of other independent expert witnesses into a set of unified demonstrative exhibits. Chris lives in Columbia, Missouri with his dog and motorcycle.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

GEOSPATIALLY REDISCOVERING THE TRAIL OF TEARS IN MISSOURI

What role did early Missourians play in the Cherokee removal story? Is it a derisive story of racism, indifference, and greed? With funding from the MHC and the ToT Association, a great deal of new information has been uncovered. And a new story has developed. It is a story of care and effort extended by many of the earliest Missouri settlers and farmers to aid the Cherokees on their trek across frontier Missouri. Based on newly discovered documents from almost 200-year-old contemporaneous government records, and the newest GIS techniques this newly discovered information comes to life.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: DrBill77@aol.com & Chris.Dunn@GeoVelo.com
ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Brooks Blevins is the Noel Boyd Professor of Ozarks Studies at Missouri State University in Springfield. He is a native of the Ozarks, tracing his roots deep into the antebellum era in both Arkansas and Missouri. He has written nine books and edited three more. His most recent books are the History of the Ozarks trilogy, tracing the story of the region from prehistoric times to the present day.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

HOW TO TALK OZARK IN SEVEN SIMPLE STEPS

This lighthearted presentation explores early ethnic and cultural influences on the Ozarks through the lens of dialect and accent. It dismisses the old notion of Elizabethan dialect in the Ozarks and instead looks at words, phrases, and speech patterns that were once common in vernacular Ozark (and usually Appalachian) language, tracing their origins to European or colonial American roots. The presentation invites frequent audience participation and includes a built-in “Talking Ozark” quiz. Natives or longtime residents of the Ozarks will enjoy revisiting styles and words that have probably gone unused for decades, and others will gain an appreciation for cultural diffusion and regional distinctiveness in Missouri—as well as the forces that constantly chip away at that distinctiveness.

MAGIC WATERS AND SILVER DOLLARS: A HISTORY OF OZARKS TOURISM

Tourism has been essential to the economy of the Ozarks for longer than anyone can remember. If there is any place (other than St. Louis and Kansas City) in Missouri that rings a bell for practically all Americans, it is Branson, one of the nation's premier tourist havens. But Branson is only one of many places in the Ozarks that have beckoned to travelers and tourists. Historian Brooks Blevins takes listeners on a tour through time and across the Ozarks, illustrating the origins of regional tourism and the ways the industry has changed. From the healing water craze of the late 1800s to float fishing outfitters, from mountain getaways for affluent urbanites to massive reservoirs created by the Army Corps of Engineers, Blevins connects the industry's high points to societal changes and American trends in entertainment -- and introduces audience members to colorful characters and regional oddities along the way.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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ABOUT THE SPEAKER

My years of acting have led to this passion to present these two lives so that others may learn from them. I want Missourians to be proud of our citizens and to keep their memories alive. We all have struggles to face and these two ladies are good examples to follow. I am at an appropriate age to portray these characters, and retirement gives me to time to travel the state. I have even made my husband dress up as Almanzo Wilder as he has driven me to performances.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

SINCERELY YOURS, LAURA INGALLS WILDER

In full costume, I tell the story after the Little House books end, covering Laura's move to MO in 1894 and why she wrote the books in her later years. I do the performance as if it is 1947, while Almanzo is still alive and Laura knows the books are being reprinted with new artwork by Garth Williams, and being translated into German and Japanese. I include the letter she wrote to be included in the books for the children in those countries, thus the name of the program. As Laura, I take questions from the audience and have been able to give them an honest answer. As an ending, I take questions as myself about the research I've done and why Laura's story is so important and special to Missouri. I hope to encourage children to get as hooked on books as I was, and to give them and adults an idea of how hard life was in the 1800s and early years of the 1900s but that through hard work they survived and were successful.

GEORGE WHITEMAN’S AUNT MILDRED

Sedalian George Whiteman is considered the first American pilot killed in WWII on Dec. 7, 1941. His story of bravery, patriotism and sacrifice are told by his aunt Mildred Whiteman Rogers, also of Sedalia. The performance is set in 1955, when the family had been informed that the Sedalia Army Air Corps Base at Knob Noster was to be renamed in George's honor. Aunt Mildred tells of his childhood and family life in the 1920s, his academic achievements, including a scholarship to Rolla School of Mines, and his passion to be a pilot like the WWI flying aces. His work ethic and his two years of college credit, earned him the rank of 2nd Lt. Being sent to Hawaii as a pilot was a dream come true. He was determined to protect Bellows Field from the Japanese attack, but was quickly shot down and died as he crashed his burning plane. After the presentation, I tell of how this program grew out of a “Cemetery Walk” and how valuable those presentations can be for making local history come alive. The Whiteman family has seen this program and given me their approval and thanks for keeping George’s memory alive.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Phone: (660) 620-1213
BARNES BRADSHAW

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Barnes Bradshaw is a native St. Louisan who took the long road to his B.A. in History going to eight years of night school over a 10 year period. He started doing first person portrayals of early Americans 30 years ago. The people he portrays are generally those whom he considers the proverbial "everyman." He likes to present these characters because he feels strongly that the folks we read about in our history books, the "famous" people, only got there through the wondrous efforts, the blood, sweat and tears, of countless people who are not recognized in that same way.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

THE GREAT ST. LOUIS FIRE OF 1849

What started out as a beautiful day in May of 1849 would, by dawn the next day, see the City of St. Louis become a near smoldering ruin. Re-live this harrowing night and learn about the causes and effects of this devastating tragedy. Feel the heat of the inferno of 1 million pounds of burning white pine as we stand along the St. Louis Riverfront, the wood that made up the 23 Steamboats that burned on that night. You will also hear about the history, and the bravery, of the many volunteer Firemen who fought the blaze through the night and of the tragic yet heroic deed of Thomas Targee that finally saved the city from utter destruction.

GRATIOT STREET, ST. LOUIS' CIVIL WAR PRISON, AND THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ABSALOM GRIMES

There are currently 1200+ Confederate Soldiers buried just south of St. Louis at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery. Where did they come from? How did they come to die here in the City of St. Louis? I'll tell you how - Gratiot Street Prison, Alton Prison, Myrtle Street Prison - that's how! Learn what it is like to be a Confederate prisoner of war held in or near the City of St. Louis. Relive the experience through the words and mental pictures evoked by one of Gratiot Street Prison's former inmates as he relates the hardships of prison life and the absurdities of Civil War era justice. Hear how the people of St. Louis treated the prisoners and of the life and seemingly unbelievable exploits of convicted Confederate spy Absalom Grimes; a man sentenced to death on at least 2 occasions for carrying Confederate Mail. Will he survive the war to return home to Hannibal, where he was a riverboat pilot alongside Samuel Clemons!

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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MICHELLE BROOKS

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Michelle Brooks has been studying the local history of Jefferson City and Lincoln University for more than 20 years, first as a reporter for the Jefferson City News Tribune and today as a published author. Her books include Hidden History of Jefferson City and Lost Jefferson City with The History Press and Interesting Women of the Capital City and Buried Jefferson City History through Kindle Direct Publishing. She is a research analyst at the Missouri State Archives.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

FINDING THE FOUNDERS: 62ND U.S. COLORED TROOPS

All but a handful of the surviving soldiers of the 1st Missouri Infantry of African Descent, later the 62nd U.S. Colored Troops, had some degree of literacy. Fighting in the last battle of the Civil War – The Battle of Palmito Ranch – may have been their military accomplishment, but they made an immense impact in their Missouri communities as preachers, teachers, farmers and political leaders. They also influenced the future of all Black Missourians by founding Lincoln Institute in 1866 in Jefferson City. They trusted Richard Baxter Foster, a white lieutenant with the 62nd, with their dream and their significant contributions. Foster was a school teacher who rode with John Brown in Kansas before the war and returned their to found several pioneer Congregationalist churches after establishing the school. Sgt. Major John Jeffries, who earned the highest non-commissioned rank among the 62nd soldiers, was among Lincoln Institute's first students and then an early instructor. He then moved to Rolla to establish a school there and then opened his own business. He is the epitome of the 62nd USCT's story. Meet these individuals who were freed from slavery by military service and returned from war to build their communities.

TUSKEGEE AIRMEN FROM LINCOLN UNIVERSITY

As the U.S. anticipated entering World War II, it addressed the need for experience pilots by establishing Civil Pilot Training (CPT) programs at universities and airfields. Only a handful of now Historically Black Colleges and Universities, were selected, since no military arm existed at the time for African-Americans in aviation. Lincoln University was the only site serving Black pilots west of the Mississippi River. The Lincoln CPT program trained 50 pilots before the war began. Most of them went on to some form of military service, more than half in U.S. Army Air Corps. Three of these men flew combat missions in the Europe. Capt. Wendell Pruitt was an acclaimed acrobatic flyer from St. Louis. Capt. Richard Pullam became a squadron commander before the military was desegregated. And Lt. Wilbur Long spent the end of the war as a Prisoner of War in Poland. Several ground crew also made impressive contributions, like Sgt. Clovis Bordeaux, the first Lincolnite to join the U.S. Army Air Corps and eventually was a rocket scientist for Hughes Aircraft. Meet some of Lincoln University’s military alumni who helped influence desegregation in the military and continue to break racial barriers after their service.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr. Chavez is known for documenting the life experiences of Mexican and other immigrants in the Midwest. He has led an oral history collecting initiative for the Kansas City Museum and contributed to the Kansas City Urban Public Library’s Digital Encyclopedia Project to create a Kansas City oral histories web portal. He collaborated with the Smithsonian National Museum of American History on ¡Pleibol! In the Barrios and the Big Leagues a bilingual journey into the heart of American baseball. He was a co-author of Mexican American Baseball in Kansas City.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

HISPANO CAPITALISTA OF THE SANTA FE TRAIL, 1821-1900

In 1821, Missouri became a state, and 2021 marked the 200th anniversary of Missouri’s statehood, Kansas was still a territory. Both states played a role in developing commerce with Mexico. In that same year, Mexico became a nation having gained its independence from Spain. Mexico opened trade with the United States. Hispano and American entrepreneurs were ready and able to make the Santa Fe Trail a two-way international trade route and a conduit for cultural exchange between the two nations. This program will explore the role of Hispano capitalists who facilitated the success of the trail.

VAQUEROS: THE FIRST COWBOYS WHO MADE THE CATTLE DRIVES SUCCESSFUL

When Spanish settlers arrived in New Spain – later Mexico and the American Southwest – they brought with them the tradition of the Vaquero, a horse-mounted livestock herder that originated on the Iberian Peninsula of Europe. As American settlers moved west, they adopted the methods of the Vaqueros for managing large herds of cattle. In the 1800s, demand for beef grew and the cattle industry boomed. Massive cattle drives to railheads in towns like Sedalia, Missouri, Abilene, and Dodge City, Kansas required the unique skills of the Vaquero tradition. Wranglers of Hispanic, Black, American Indian, and White cowboys made the cattle industry of the mid-West a profitable enterprise. Eventually, much of the meat processing to place in Kansas City, Kansas, and the West Bottoms in Missouri. This presentation highlights the Vaquero culture, including the development of the corrido, a form of ballad popular among cowboys.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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SAMUEL COHEN

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Samuel Cohen is an award-winning teacher and scholar of American literature at the University of Missouri, where he teaches twentieth- and twenty-first century American literature and culture. He is author of After the End of History: American Fiction in the 1990s and co-editor of The Legacy of David Foster Wallace and The Clash Takes on the World: Transnational Perspectives on the Only Band That Matters. He is series editor of The New American Canon: The Iowa Series in Contemporary Literature and Culture and author of the textbooks 50 Essays: A Portable Anthology and Literature: The Human Experience.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

THE STATE OF THE STATE: MISSOURI WRITERS ON MISSOURI

This talk engages the things writers from Missouri have had to say about the state of their state. Writers such as the first African American novelist Williams Wells Brown, Mark Twain, T. S. Eliot, Tennessee Williams, Maya Angelou, Calvin Trillin, and many other essayists, novelists, poets, and playwrights who have hailed from Missouri have had a lot to say about the state. As a place that has been implicated in so much of American history, that is home to the last eastern U.S. city and the first western one, that has been shaped by people from France, Spain, and Germany as well as Boston, the upper South, and the people who were here before all of them, there is much about Missouri that is informed by and connects to the rest of the country and the world. The course of the nation, of its political realities and aspirations, of its expansion westward and its foreign entanglements, all of these developments have marked Missouri, and as they have done so they have provided fuel for the work of a great and varied group of writers. Ultimately, their work can itself be read as providing a composite portrait of their state.

SHOW ME: NONFICTION BY MISSOURI WRITERS

While Missouri boasts some of the most important American writers of fiction, poetry, and drama, such as Mark Twain, T. S. Eliot, and Tennessee Williams, it has also contributed a rich and interesting tradition of nonfiction. In the twentieth century, this tradition includes the war journalism of Martha Gellhorn; the civil rights reporting of Calvin Trillin; the memoirs of Maya Angelou and Dick Gregory; the hybrid auto/biography of John Neihardt; the travel writing of William Least-Heat Moon. Looking at the work of these writers and at twenty-first century work by Missouri products such as Walter Johnson and Jabari Asim, this talk explores the nonfiction accounts by Missourians of Missouri and the wider world for what they reveal about the art of nonfiction writing and about how these Missourians saw their home state, their country, and their world, alone and in relation to each other.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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Suzanne Corbett is an award-winning writer, food historian and foodways interpreter. Her by-line has appeared in local and national publications, including AAA Explorer, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, and Midwest Living. She has authored five books, including The Gilded Table, Pushcarts & Stalls: The Soulard Market History Cookbook, and A Culinary History of Missouri. She is a Telly Award winning producer/writer for Missouri UnCorked: 200 Years of Missouri Wine. She holds a master’s degree in media communications from Webster University, was adjunct culinary instructor at St. Louis Community College 1980 – 2020 and guest teacher at cooking schools throughout the country.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

EATING UP MISSOURI
A look at foods and foodways traditions and histories connected to the people, their circumstances and historic that come to define the bounty of Missouri food.

PLEASE WITH A PAST

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: suzannecorbett@me.com
ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Stephen S. Davis is a federal litigator practicing with True North Law, LLC. Steve has practiced extensively before federal trial and appellate courts in cases involving Fifth Amendment takings and election law. Steve also served as an Assistant United States Attorney, an adjunct professor at Saint Louis University Law School, and as Missouri Election Day Operations Director for Mitt Romney’s 2012 presidential campaign. A member of the Missouri and DC bars, Steve has chaired the Missouri Bar Committee on Citizenship Education. Steve graduated from Brigham Young University and the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Law.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

THE ELEPHANT (AND DONKEY) IN THE ROOM: THE 2020 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION AND ELECTION ISSUES IN MISSOURI AND THE NATION

Using examples from Missouri and across the country, election law attorney Steve Davis will explain issues of intense current debate, including voting rights, redistricting, voter fraud, and proposed election reforms. Steve will separate fact from fiction in the partisan debates and enable listeners to understand what happened in the 2020 presidential election and how the process really works.

"MORMONSING" POLITICAL & RELIGIOUS OPPOSITION IN 19TH CENTURY MISSOURI

Antebellum Missouri was a different place than the Missouri we now know. Attorney Steve Davis will reveal a little-known facet of Missouri history that will likely surprise listeners. Missouri’s state motto is “Salus Populi Supreme Lex Esto,” the welfare of the people is the supreme law, but this means something different today than it meant in 1820. In 19th Century Missouri, only the welfare of the popular majority was protected. When thousands of Mormons emigrated to western Missouri in the 1830s, their culture, politics, and religious beliefs clashed with other settlers so intensely that they were first expelled from Jackson County and then from the state entirely. Missourians’ solution to the “Mormon problem” – forced expulsion or "Mormonising" – became the precedent for dealing with other unpopular groups, like Native Americans and abolitionists, and would lead to the Civil War.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Carol Davit is the executive director of the Missouri Prairie Foundation and its Grow Native! program. She has worked for more than 25 years in the conservation and environmental fields in communications, development, administration, and leadership capacities. She has worked for private, nonprofit conservation groups and at the municipal and state government levels. She has been the editor of field guides and written on a wide variety of natural history and conservation topics for the Missouri Prairie Journal, the Missouri Conservationist, and other publications. Davit has B.A. and M.A. degrees in Interdisciplinary Studies.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

WHY PRAIRIE MATTERS: NEW RELEVANCIES OF A VANISHING LANDSCAPE

Up until the time of statehood, Missouri had 15 million acres of prairie. Today, fewer than 50,000 scattered original, unplowed prairies exist today. In this presentation, Missouri Prairie Foundation Executive Director Carol Davit shares the history, beauty, and conservation of Missouri’s prairies, and presents facets of the a "tallgrass prairie economy," which uses an ancient ecosystem as a model for new, sustainable landscapes that benefit people in many ways.

BENEFITS OF NATIVE PLANTS TO MISSOURI'S COMMUNITIES

Nearly 2,000 plant species are native to Missouri. They are the foundation of many facets of our economies--from timber production to outdoor recreation--and are the backbone of our agricultural history. Today, there are new uses of native plants in communities that improve quality of life for all, including creation of pollinator habitat, reduction of Nature Deficit Disorder, stormwater management, and carbon storage. In her presentation, Executive Director of the Missouri Prairie Foundation and its Grow Native! program, Carol Davit, will share past, present, and potentially future uses of native plants in Missouri communities.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Michael E. Dickey was formerly the administrator of the Arrow Rock, Sappington Cemetery and Boone's Lick State Historic Site (1986-2021). He is a graduate of University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg (1972-1976). He has written two books and co-authored a chapter of The Archaeology of the War of 1812. In the past he has collaborated with the Osage Tribal Museum and Wah-Zha-Zhi Cultural Center in Pawhuska, Oklahoma to produce exhibits and develop programs utilizing Native American speakers and artisans.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

PEOPLE OF THE RIVER'S MOUTH: THE SEARCH FOR THE MISSOURIA INDIANS

Historian and author Michael Dickey will present an overview of the history of the Missouria native nation from whom the Missouri River and our state got its name. French and Spanish documents, archaeological data and oral traditions of the Otoe-Missouria people and neighboring tribes will be utilized to form a picture of their material culture and general spiritual concepts. Their role in the Louisiana Territory and the impact of European culture, forced removal and the status of their descendants today will also be examined. There is a reminder that they are still with us and not museum pieces.

NATIVE MISSOURI AT THE TIME OF THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE

Using Spanish and American records historian and author Michael Dickey will explain the cultural tension and rapid changes that characterized Euro-American relations with the Osage, Missouria, Kansa, Ioway, Sac & Fox, Kickapoo, Shawnee, Lenape and Illinois nations in the Missouri region from 1803 to the final extinguishment of Indian titles in 1836. The presentation will demonstrate that each tribe had its unique qualities and characteristics and summarize what happened to them. There is a reminder that they are still with us and not museum pieces.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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ELIZABETH EIKMANN

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Elizabeth Eikmann, PhD is an expert in St. Louis history, women’s history, and the history of photography. She is a teacher, scholar, and public historian with experience working with museums, public libraries, universities, and the local tourism industry. She currently serves as a Postdoctoral Fellow at Washington University in St. Louis where she is working on her book project, *In Her Image: Women’s Photography in Turn-of-the-Century St. Louis*, which explores the role of white practitioners of photography in the linking of racial identification and vision. She has extensive experience as a local tour guide, university instructor, and public educational speaker.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

**ST. LOUIS WOMEN PHOTOGRAPHERS**

In the history of photography two things are often missing: St. Louis and women. Not only was nineteenth century St. Louis a bustling photography destination, but it was also home to hundreds of female photographers! This presentation explores the early history of women’s photography and highlights the lives and professional careers of several St. Louis women whose impressive work started right here in Missouri. Participants will explore these women’s stories through a variety of archival material, newspaper clippings, and numerous unpublished photographs.

**PHOTOGRAPHY IN NINETEENTH CENTURY ST. LOUIS**

If you can believe it, St. Louis was once a photography capital of the world. The city attracted all kinds of innovative photographers, manufacturers and dealers, and inventors in the nineteenth century. This presentation explores the early history of photography in St. Louis, introducing participants to the people, places, and technology behind the city’s bustling trade. Through a selection of interesting archival materials and unpublished photographs, participants will learn all about how St. Louis became a destination for photographers and how the city played a part in making the photography industry what it is today.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Nicole Evelina is an independent scholar and author who specializes in stories of little-known women and events in U.S. history. She holds a BA in English, BS in International Business, MA in Public Relations and is self-taught in history. She has written 10 books (five fiction and five non-fiction), most notably, America’s Forgotten Suffragists: Virginia and Francis Minor, the first biography of this St. Louis suffrage couple, to be published by Two Dot/Globe Pequot on March 1, 2023. She has also studied with historian and #1 NY Times bestselling author Deborah Harkness, who teaches at the University of Southern California.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

VIRGINIA AND FRANCIS MINOR: FORGOTTEN SUFFRAGE PIONEERS

In Missouri, a husband and wife couple, Virginia and Francis Minor, were key early leaders in the quest for female suffrage. Virginia founded the Woman Suffrage Association of Missouri, the first organization of its kind in the country—possibly the world—in 1867, pre-dating the National Woman's Suffrage Association (NWSA) founded by Susan B. Anthony and the American Woman's Suffrage Association (AWSA) founded by Lucy Stone by two years. This unusual and forward-thinking couple were at the vanguard of women’s rights, developing a philosophy of how the gender-neutral language of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution inadvertently gave women the right to vote, an argument that would become the official position of the NWSA for nearly five years. In putting this theory to the test, the Minors went on to face the highest court in the land in defense of women’s voting and citizenship rights in the 1873 Supreme Court case Minor v Happersett. Although they were ultimately overruled, and their case isn’t widely-known, it helped shape the current definition of state and national citizenship and their associated rights. Learn about the impact of their case today, their role in the suffrage movement, and lesser-known aspects of the couple’s lives.

SUFFRAGE IN THE SHOW-ME STATE

USA Today Bestselling author and St. Louisan Nicole Evelina will take you through 54 years of Missouri history, showing how the battle for the franchise began in the Gateway to the West in 1865 and spread out across the state over the next 30 years before finally being ratified in 1919, making Missouri the 11th state to grant full suffrage to women. Along the way, you’ll meet inspiring figures from Kansas City, Hannibal, Joplin, and St. Louis such as: • Virginia and Francis Minor, the only people to argue the issue of women’s suffrage before the Supreme Court. • Phoebe Couzins, Washington University graduate and one of the first female lawyers in the US. • Carrie Chapman Catt, founder of the League of Women Voters, which began in St. Louis. • Edna Gellhorn, women’s rights advocate, right-hand woman of Eleanor Roosevelt, and suffrage leader. • Emily Newell Blair, suffragist who came up with the idea of the Golden Lane silent protest in 1916 along with Edna Gellhorn. In addition to profiling these women and their accomplishments, Nicole will explain the many groups of women formed to band together over 55 years to raise their voices in demand of the vote.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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ABOUT THE SPEAKER

John C. Fisher studied geology at Southeast Missouri State University and at the University of Missouri in Columbia. From 1973 to 1999 he owned and operated diversified row crop and vegetable farms in Dunklin and New Madrid counties. In 2000, Fisher began freelance writing full time. He has written four books, two of which were coauthored with his wife, Carol. Fisher has coedited one volume of the Missouri Folklore Society Journal and has written numerous magazine articles about Missouri history, agriculture, horticulture, and food history.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

FROM SWAMPLAND TO FARMLAND: TRANSFORMATION THE SOUTHEAST MISSOURI LOWLands

At the beginning of the twentieth century, much of the southeastern Missouri counties of Butler, Scott, Stoddard, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Dunklin, and Mississippi were covered with virgin forests including oak, hickory, gum, and cypress. This region has been described as being a frontier behind the Frontier. A network of railroads enabled the lumber from these forests to be taken to markets but what remained was vast wetlands which contained fertile soil that was inaccessible for agriculture until it could be drained. A group of landowners followed their vision of draining this vast swampland by forming the Little River Drainage District in 1907 into what became the largest drainage project in the world. Within two decades, the swampland was converted into one of the richest agricultural regions in the nation. In this presentation John Fisher shows how this massive transformation of the region occurred. Fisher further shows that not only did the geography change, but social change also occurred as new crops such as cotton were introduced requiring a new system of labor provided by sharecroppers moving from traditional cotton growing areas of the South.

THE 1939 SOUTHEAST MISSOURI SHARECROPPER DEMONSTRATION

The drainage and clearing of the lowlands in the Missouri Bootheel during the first two decades of the twentieth century opened thousands of acres of new land for agriculture. Simultaneous with this, the boll weevil had devastated cotton production in the traditional cotton growing regions of the South. The boll weevil had not made an impact in the Bootheel yet thus thousands of sharecroppers migrated into the region looking for farms where they could continuing sharecropping cotton. Plummets in the 1930s reduced cotton profitability making the life of the sharecropper even more difficult. Unintended consequences of government programs left many sharecroppers without housing. Their plight led to the formation of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and eventually to a roadside demonstration in 1939 along highways 60 and 61 in Scott, New Madrid, Pemiscot, and Mississippi counties that drew national attention. Author John Fisher shows what events led to this demonstration and the eventual outcome for both the sharecropper and landowners.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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ELYSSA FORD

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Elyssa Ford is an associate professor of history at Northwest Missouri State University, and her research centers on memory and identity, women’s history, and public history education. Ford’s first book Rodeo as Refuge, Rodeo as Rebellion examined gender, race, and identity in rodeo and her second book project is on gay rodeo. She has published on Midwestern and Missouri history topics for the Missouri Historical Review and National Park Service. Her work on public history pedagogy examines academic-community partnerships, the value of local history for student engagement, and the potential and problems that rural museums face.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

SOOTHING THE "SAVAGE HEARTS OF MAN": WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE AND RURAL MISSOURI

Though often ignored by the national and eastern organizations, women’s suffrage groups in the Midwest learned by the late 19th century that rural areas also must be targeted to win the hearts and minds of the electorate. Historian Elyssa Ford will focus on how rural women in Missouri played an important role in the suffrage movement. From Kirksville in the far northeast to Maryville in the far northwest, rural communities engaged in suffrage discussions, invited national speakers who bewitched—and sometimes enraged—local audiences, and supported their own suffrage workers. Within this world of Missouri suffragists, Ford will highlight the compelling story of Maryville’s Alma Nash and her all-women band who traveled to Washington, D.C., for the national women’s suffrage parade in 1913. Through their actions at the parade and at home in the Midwest, it is possible to see how a small group of young, rural women engaged with the suffrage movement and how they were shaped not just by the national suffrage discussion but by the local and often heated suffrage debates within their community.

RURAL NUNS AND A “FINE HERD OF CATTLE” AT A MISSOURI CONVENT

In the Midwest, nuns at rural convents turned to God for spiritual guidance but had to rely on themselves to survive. The reality of rural geographies and the ecclesiastical dictates from the Catholic Church created a complex set of limitations and surprising opportunities for some of these religious communities. In this talk, historian Elyssa Ford will discuss a convent in northwestern Missouri where the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration have lived since the 1870s. The convent operated similarly to other rural religious establishments with the women running an orphanage and several schools, along with a dairy and farm to provide sustenance for their own use and that of their students and orphanage residents. Yet in the 1920s and 30s the convent ended their teaching efforts and turned to a more unusual source of income – a dairy herd and cattle breeding enterprise. By the 1940s these cattle were renowned across the state and stud bulls sold to international buyers. This talk will examine the unusual role of religious women in work like this, the public perception of their work, and the dairy industry’s reaction to them when they made the abrupt decision to sell their cattle herd in 1963.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: ebford@nwmissouri.edu
ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Vanessa Garry is an associate professor in the College of Education at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. She currently instructs graduate students in the areas of leadership for equity and school administration. Dr. Garry’s research centers on narratives of Black educators and histories of urban schools. She published articles in Vitae Scholasticae and the Journal of Urban Society. Dr. Garry is currently co-editing a book on Black high schools in the United States. She and her collaborator have a chapter in the forthcoming book, Schooling the Movement: The Activism of Southern Black Educators from Reconstruction through the Civil Rights Era.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

JIM CROW’S STOWE TEACHERS COLLEGE’S PRESIDENT RUTH HARRIS: HARBINGER FOR FUTURE AFRICAN AMERICAN ACADEMY PRESIDENTS

In 1940, St. Louis Public Schools named Dr. Ruth Harris, the first African American female President of the Harris-Stowe State University, previously named Stowe Teachers College. During the Jim Crow era, Harris joined a small cadre of African American females who were harbingers for future academy administrators. These women, who supported and advocated for their faculty paved the way for their peers who are currently leading or teaching at colleges and universities. Situated in Black feminist thought, race uplift, and female mentoring model, this educational biographical narrative examined Harris’ support of faculty as she guided the development of Stowe. In her book, Stowe Teachers College and Her Predecessors, Harris referred to the collaborative work performed by her and her staff to gain accreditation as one of her guiding principles. Another principle, the university should study itself, helped the faculty gain Stowe’s accreditation. This representation of Harris’ collaboration with her colleagues revealed her willingness to support her faculty. Vestiges of Black feminist theory and race uplift in the form of mentoring exist today as African American women help junior faculty navigate tenure in higher education.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: garryv@umsl.edu
KATHERINE GILBERT

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Katherine Gilbert is Associate Professor of English in the Department of Languages and Literature at Drury University. She teaches British Literature, Women Writers, as well as courses on the Gothic and Law and Literature. She directs the Humanities & Ethics Center at Drury University and co-organizes the annual Missouri Humanities Symposium. Her recent publications center on law and literature in the Victorian period, women and the law, and essays on Rose O'Neill. She received her M.A. from the University of Virginia and her Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

ROSE O'NEILL: ARTIST, WRITER, AND SUFFRAGIST

While Rose O'Neill is most famous for her Kewpie dolls, which she described as “little round fairies” who could “teach people to be merry and kind at the same time,” Kewpie dolls represent only one portion of the breadth and depth of her art, art that was exhibited in both New York and Paris. Over the course of her life, O'Neill published illustrations for over 600 national corporations and magazines. She became the highest-paid illustrator in her time. She created no less than 5500 drawings, including some of the most famous suffragist posters. She was also a sculptor, painter, and author of novels, children's stories, and a wealth of still unpublished journals. She also produced countless drawings in support of the suffragist movement and marched for women's right to vote. This talk discusses her art, writing, and extraordinary life as a cutting-edge figure who moved between the Ozarks, the island of Capri in Italy, Greenwich Village in New York, and, in her final years, the Ozarks. The talk highlights O'Neill's love of the Ozarks, and the ways that the landscape shaped her art, and her "sweet monsters" series in particular.

21ST CENTURY MISSOURI GOTHIC: THE NOVELS AND FILMS OF GILLIAN FLYNN

Gillian Flynn's Sharp Objects (2006), Dark Places (2009), and Gone Girl (2012), have been best-sellers as well as wildly popular films or series in the past two decades. Flynn, a native of Kansas City, Missouri, sets her gothic thrillers in rural Missouri and Kansas. Sharp Objects takes place in the fictional southern Missouri town of Wind Gap, and Gone Girl is largely set in North Carthage, Missouri. In all three works, Flynn takes the Gothic novel, a genre going back to the eighteenth century in Europe, and mixes it with the Southern gothic of nineteenth-century American writers like Edgar Allen Poe. She then gives it her own 21st century Missouri twist to create what I call in my talk 21st Century Missouri Gothic. Flynn draws on the landscape and history of Missouri and Kansas to frame families generational secrets. She layers a rugged Missouri over a Gothic underbelly, surprising and thrilling readers and viewers with unexpected plot twists. This talk frames Flynn's work in the cultural context for the earliest Gothic works and discusses how Flynn's hits make the old come newly alive—and specifically Missourian.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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LARRY GRAGG

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Larry Gragg is a Curators' Distinguished Teaching Professor Emeritus of history at Missouri University of Science and Technology. He taught at S&T from 1977 to 2021. He was chair of the history and political science department for 17 years. He has written 10 books and over 40 articles on subjects ranging from 17th century Puritans to the development of Las Vegas. Most recently, he has published Forged in Gold, Missouri S&T's First 150 years and an article on the desegregation of the Missouri School of Mines and the University of Missouri in 1950 in the Missouri Historical Review.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

“What Are You Going to Do If a Negro Student Presents Himself for Registration in the Fall?” Missouri College Presidents Respond to Demands for Desegregation in 1950

Drawing upon letters and memos to and from the five state college presidents, the presidents at the University of Missouri, and Lincoln University, and the dean of the Missouri School of Mines, I will talk about the "behind the scenes" discussions of presidents prior to and following Cole County Circuit Court Judge Sam C. Blair's declaratory judgment in 1950 that the Missouri School of Mines and the University of Missouri must admit three African American students who wanted to pursue degrees not offered at Lincoln University, the state's only college for black students. Collectively, the presidents' responses varied from caution to opposition to desegregation. Only Sherman Scruggs, the president at Lincoln University, called upon the state to open the doors of all public colleges to students regardless of race. In large part, the timid responses of these presidents reflected the reality that they led colleges in a deeply segregated state. Ultimately, this will be a talk about how challenging it was in 1950 to desegregate higher education prior to the 1954 Brown decision.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: lgragg@mst.edu
ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Stephen C.W. Graves is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Black Studies at the University of Missouri. He is also an affiliate of the Department of Political Science. Stephen received his PhD in Political Science from Howard University. His book entitled A Crisis of Leadership and the Role of Citizens in Black America: Leaders of the News School, is a theoretical examination of the concepts of citizenship and Black leadership. While teaching, Dr. Graves has been involved in the community as the founder of Troublesome, a non-profit organization that focuses on community outreach and serving underrepresented groups.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

BLACK MISSOURIANS QUEST FOR UNIVERSAL FREEDOM

From Dred Scott and Milly Sawyer to the Concerned Students of 1950 and Ferguson, the African American quest for universal freedom has a unique and extensive history in the state of Missouri. Using these examples from Missouri history with the greater national conversation concerning political inclusion and the role of politics in the attainment of the American dream, this presentation will focus on the many ways African Americans and whites interpret American politics differently. The goal of this presentation is to encourage individuals and groups to seek to understand the historical forces that have shaped African American politics and their quest for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: gravessc@missouri.edu
GALEN GRITTS

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

An established Missouri Humanities Council speaker, Galen Gritts is a registered member of the Cherokee Nation. Born and reared in Missouri, Mr. Gritts has a degree in history from UMSL. He serves on many advisory boards and committees representing Native Americans and is a founding member of the Alliance for Native Programming & Initiatives. He is bemused to find out he is now an Elder and grateful that he has made it this far. One of his goals when he was young was to be old.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

FORGOTTEN TRUNK IN THE ATTIC

Missouri, like most states in the center of the U.S., has no extant tribes like some other states have. Therefore, the knowledge of either the history of Natives, or the experience of contemporary Native Americans, is one step further removed from people’s consciousness. Using startling facts as stepping stones to fascinating and forgotten stories, this presentation starts to remedy this phenomenon.

BEING CHEROKEE

People are fascinated by Native Americans and the Cherokee tribe in particular. There are 574 federally recognized tribes - one of them has to garner the most attention and alas, it is the Cherokee. Many Natives, from any tribe, has heard a white person tell the myth of the Cherokee grandmother climbing the family tree. As so many people think of Native people as frozen in time in a John Ford western, their wonderment of hearing from a contemporary Cherokee is boundless. History, personal stories, hidden truths, and more are the backbone of this presentation.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: ghominy@gmail.com
WILLIAM HART

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Bill Hart is currently the director of the Perry County Historical Society in Missouri. Prior to this position, he served as executive director of the statewide preservation organization, the Missouri Alliance for Historic Preservation. He received a degree in Historic Preservation from Southeast Missouri State University and completed his graduate coursework in Architectural History at the Savannah College of Art and Design in Georgia. He is currently working on a pictorial history of Missouri’s barns and agricultural buildings.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

HISTORIC MISSOURI ROADSIDES

Historic Missouri Roadsides presents a travelogue of Missouri on two-lane highways, featuring histories of small towns in Missouri, natural attractions, and local amenities. Richly illustrated with images by the author, the presentation links the promotion of local history to heritage tourism and the boosting small town economies. Like a travel book, places to visit, stay and shop are listed, but the guide is for ONLY LOCAL businesses.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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STUART HINDS

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Stuart Hinds is the Curator of Special Collections and Archives for the Libraries of the University of Missouri - Kansas City. In 2009 he was a co-founder of the Gay and Lesbian Archive of Mid-America, an initiative to collect, preserve, and make accessible the documents and artifacts that reflect the histories of the LGBTQ communities in the Kansas City region. He has written and presented extensively on LGBTQ history, and is an adjunct instructor in the UMKC Department of History.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

FROM HOMOPHILES TO LIBERATORS: QUEER ACTIVISM IN THE 1960S

This talk centers on American LGBTQ activism in the two decades preceding the well-known 1969 Stonewall Uprising. It details the formation of a national movement that launched on both US coasts, and brings to light the surprising and pivotal role Kansas Citians played in this struggle.

FROM PROSCENIUM TO INFERNO: THE TRANSFORMATION OF FEMALE IMPERSONATION IN KANSAS CITY

During the first thirty years of the twentieth century, female impersonation was a regular feature of theatrical and vaudeville performance. With the onset of Prohibition, the practice evolved to meet the changing entertainment needs of audiences. Examining female impersonation in Kansas City, this presentation unveils details about this theatrical form, its transformation, and the unique facets of the Kansas City experience.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: hindss@umkc.edu
ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Patrick Hotle is the John Sperry Jr. Endowed Chair in Humanities at Culver-Stockton College. Before coming to Missouri, he taught in Nicaragua, Egypt, Belgium and the Netherlands. He is also the secretary of the Dr. Richard Eells House, a site on the Underground Railroad museum. He has authored a number of books and articles on world history and is currently working on a book on abolitionism on the Missouri/Illinois border. Patrick holds an M.Phil and PhD from Queens’ College Cambridge in England.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

ABOLITIONISM ON THE MISSOURI-ILLINOIS BORDER

The border between Missouri and Illinois saw a great deal of activity related to slavery and the Underground Railroad. Abolitionists founded the college’s first chartered institution of higher learning at Marion College in Missouri as well as the Mission Institute across the river in Quincy, Illinois. My presentation will explore the impact of abolitionism on both sides of the border especially during the years 1831 to 1844 when the two college’s were most active. Thus the presentation is a case study on how slavery and abolitionism shaped the early history of the area.

SLAVERY AND THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD ON THE MISSOURI-ILLINOIS BORDER

The border between Missouri and Illinois before the Civil War saw a great deal of activity related to slavery and the Underground Railroad. Abolitionists founded the first chartered institution of higher learning in Missouri at Marion College as well as the Mission Institute across the river in Quincy, Illinois. Hotle’s presentation will explore the impact of abolitionism on both sides of the border especially during the years 1831 to 1844 when the two college’s were most active. This presentation is a case study on how slavery and abolitionism shaped the early history of the area.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr. Becky Imhauser is an author, educator, and conference leader. She has been named Missouri's Best Local Author for 2020, 2021, and 2022 based her 18 published books. Imhauser holds a bachelor's degree in English, a master's degree in education, and a doctorate degree in education. Combining her experience in publishing and education, Imhauser frequently leads conferences and makes presentations.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

LOVE AND WAR: A DOUGHBOY’S DIARY

Dr. Becky Imhauser portrays Frances Truitt Rogers through the lens of her husband’s unpublished World War I diary. Written with clarity, compassion, and humor, the military diary of Lieutenant James F. Rogers provides an intimate glimpse into the Sedalia couple's life during World War I (including their wedding day...and night!) This presentation features family photos and correspondence, as well as a “rest of the story” overview of the Rogers’ lives. While James Rogers left no biological descendants, his diary is a priceless legacy. It speaks of love and loyalty, patience and patriotism. This doughboy’s historical experiences resonate with contemporary audiences. Dr. Imhauser is an author, educator, and conference leader. Through research and writing, she has encountered historic Sedalians that she brings to “life” through first-person portrayals.

MORE THAN MONEY: BEING "RICH" DURING THE DEPRESSION

Life magazine declared Sedalia, Missouri, the city second-hardest hit by the Great Depression in the entire United States. At the same time, community members declared themselves “rich” and proved resilient. Consider department store owner Harry Waldman, as described by Dr. Becky Imhauser. When Sedalia entered the Depression. Waldman led a charity event, where civic leaders and businessmen were “arrested” for humorous infractions. All money from the arrests went to the financially destitute. Months later, Waldman, himself, was destitute. His business was bankrupt, and his assets were sold at public auction. Many of the people he had “arrested” pooled their money and bought his assets, so he could remain in business until his retirement. Waldman is one example of one community’s spirit that applies to all people who encounter adversity and challenge.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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MARA COHEN IOANNIDES

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Mara W. Cohen Ioannides is faculty at Missouri State University, president of the Midwest Jewish Studies Association, founding president of the Ozarks Studies Association, and Vice President of the Greene County Historical Society. Her doctorate, from The Spertus Institute, is in Jewish Studies with a specialty of American Jewish Studies. She has written the only history of the Jews of the Ozarks and the Jews of Missouri.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

HOW JEWS HELPED CREATE MISSOURI

In this talk, I explain how Jews were integral to the creation of the State of Missouri. It begins before the purchase of the Louisiana Territory and continues through the First World War. It can be shifted to emphasize the community that requests the talk.

JEWS OF THE OZARKS

This talk examines the history of Jews in the Ozarks. It begins before the creation of the State of Missouri and continues through WWI.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: maraioannides@missouristate.edu
ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Suzanne Jones is a high school science teacher in the Ferguson Florissant School District. She received a bachelor of science degree in zoology, a master's degree in biology, and a teaching certification from Arkansas State University. From 1999 until its close, she was involved in the American Indian Center of St. Louis. Since then she has tried to provide education about Native Americans in the St. Louis area through a variety of presentations and venues including scouting groups, schools, museums, and libraries.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

NATIVE AMERICAN STORYTELLING

This presentation focuses on traditional stories told primarily by Choctaw, Cherokee, and Delaware Nations/tribes, all of which Jones is either a tribal member or descended from. These stories are often told to educate children or entertain people at gatherings.

IMPACT ON NATIVE AMERICA

The contents of this presentation may be tailored to the needs of the host. It frequently delves into the history of European and Native American interactions and often lends itself to showing how interactions between people of European ancestry and Native Americans have often forced changes in the population and cultures of the indigenous people. Jones has primarily talked to school groups in these presentations on a variety of topics, for example Native American Differences (Minority Scholars), English class (Native America is still here), and FACS (Native foods). Her focus tends to be on the southeastern Native Americans and Pan-Native American experience.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: chahtastorytellr@aol.com
ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr. Brad D. Lookingbill is Distinguished Professor of History at Columbia College of Missouri. Previous to his academic career, he served in the Army National Guard and Reserve. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Education at Southwestern Oklahoma State University, where he graduated summa cum laude in 1991. At the University of Toledo, he obtained the Master of Arts in History in 1993 and the Doctor of Philosophy in History in 1995. From 1995 to 1996, he taught classes on U.S. and world history at Independence Community College in Kansas. In 1996, he joined the Columbia College faculty.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

NATIVE GROUND: THE FIRST PEOPLE OF MISSOURI BEFORE STATEHOOD

Long before the Europeans arrived and claimed dominion over an imagined wilderness, the original inhabitants developed diverse cultures in relation to the rivers, prairies, plains, plateaus, and woodlands. Missouri was native ground to multiple tribal groups, who made it home. In addition to the Osage Indians, the Quapaw, Otoe, Missouria, Ioway, Sauk, Fox, Omaha, Peoria, Piankeshaw, Ponca, Kaw, and Chickasaw resided in parts of the state before its boundaries appeared on a map. After the formation of the United States, migrating communities of the Shawnee, Delaware, Pottawatomi, Miami, Kickapoo, and Cherokee relocated to the western side of the Mississippi. Native stories of origin illuminate worlds of wonder in mid-America, and Missourians are seeing them anew.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: bdlookingbill@ccis.edu
CECILIA NADAL & SYDNEY NORTON

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Cecilia Nadal, sociologist, educator, producer, and playwright is currently the principal of Cross-Cultural Strategies, a consulting firm that uses multidisciplinary approaches to help organizations build community through diverse engagement. Cecilia is the founder and executive director of two successful companies: Productive Futures, a human resources firm (1984-2007) and Gitana Productions, a nonprofit arts and education organization. (1997-2019) She also served as assistant professor of human services at St. Louis Community College. (1975-1980) The German abolitionists story moved Cecilia to write the play and organize symposia on the topic inspiring Hermann’s first social Black History Month celebration. (2017-2020)

Sydney Norton is an independent scholar and the director of German Language Solutions, a company that specializes in language teaching, translation, and cultural programming. While teaching German at Saint Louis University (2012-2020), she curated "German Immigrant Abolitionists: Fighting for a Free Missouri," an exhibition that travelled to Deutschheim State Historic Site in Hermann. Sydney earned her doctorate in German literature and cultural studies from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. Her publications include books and articles on contemporary German art and literature, the performing and visual arts of the Weimar Republic, and German immigrants in Missouri.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

THE SHARED HISTORY OF GERMAN IMMIGRANTS AND AFRICAN AMERICANS

Within the social and political context of nineteenth-century Missouri, German specialist Sydney Norton examines the contributions of German immigrants who dedicated their lives to ending slavery, and who, in some cases, worked with African Americans to institute laws of social equality after slavery was abolished. We will investigate the contributions of key political figures, such as Friedrich Muench, Arnold Krekel, and Henry and Augustus Boernstein, who, in their actions and writings, helped mobilize members of the German community to support Abraham Lincoln and fight for the principles of democracy. Sociologist and playwright Cecilia Nadal will follow with a discussion of how the story of the German abolitionists inspired her to investigate the shared history of African Americans and German Americans. After discussing their complex and evolving historical relationships prior to, during, and following the Civil War, Nadal will share personal insights gleaned from discussion groups she facilitated with urban and rural Missourians from both ethnic groups. She will explain why this history of relationships is crucial for our society’s wellbeing today. Nadal will also discuss how this history shaped the direction of her play, An Amazing Story: German Abolitionists of Missouri, which toured in St. Louis, Washington and Hermann.

THEN AND NOW: CONVERSATIONS WITH A SLAVE

History gives us the tools to analyze problems in the past so that there is a better understanding of the present and future. But what happens if someone from the past comes to us in the present to discuss where we are now! Caroline is a former enslaved woman (played by Cecilia Nadal) who comes to us in the present using the wisdom of her past. She readily engages in conversation that probes the “whys” and “why nots” of our relationships with each other then and now. She comes to learn, share her experiences not as an object of history but as a woman wanting to see unity in the world by sharing one on one in a humanistic way. THEN AND NOW: CONVERSATIONS WITH A SLAVE uses history and performance art to create a relationship between the former slave and audience members as observers and participants. Caroline will share her personal story and guide the conversation. Audience members will be invited to have a one-to-one conversation without interruption with Caroline in front of the audience. The questions are whatever the audience member desires based on history and/or the “here and now.” (This presentation is exclusively presented by Cecilia Nadal)

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: info@gitana-inc.org & sydnorton@gmail.com
ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Christian Naffziger is a researcher in the St. Louis archives of the Recorder of Deeds. For the last fifteen years, he has turned his scholarly research to the study of the history and built environment of the city of St. Louis, Missouri and the Midwest, with a particular interest in the development of the German American brewing industry in the Nineteenth Century. His work has been published throughout America and Europe. Recently, he has been exploring the history of the Lemp Brewery, and its foundation in the 19th Century.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

THE HISTORY OF ANHEUSER-BUSCH

What began as a small brewery in St. Louis has now grown to be part of the largest corporation producing beer in the world. The story of Anheuser-Busch is an interesting and compelling story of Missouri entrepreneurship with many untold tales. This lecture will include many never before told discoveries along with exclusive historic photographs from the Anheuser-Busch archives that together will weave a fascinating story of how Adolphus Busch, a young immigrant, and Eberhard Anheuser, a soap factory owner, started one of the most iconic American brands.

THE AMAZING DEPTH OF ARCHITECTURE IN MISSOURI CITIES AND TOWNS

The architecture of Missouri’s cities and small towns is as rich as its history. For over two hundred years, Missourians have built churches, houses and businesses that t their needs as the state grew to what it has become today. Over the course of Missouri’s history, the styles of architecture have changed along with the times. This lecture will explore how the varied styles and forms of architecture have developed out of European and American models to create the beautiful communities that we treasure throughout the state of Missouri today.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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JEREMY NEELY

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

A sixth-generation Missourian, Jeremy Neely is an award-winning teacher at Missouri State University whose writings explore the rich, often contentious history of his native state. Much of this work focuses upon the ways that people of different backgrounds reckoned with Missouri's place as a border state, neither northern nor fully southern while also a vital part, for a time, of the American West. Now a resident of rural southwest Missouri, he often reflects upon their stories while pedaling his bicycle along the gravel roads of the Osage prairies and Ozark foothills.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

TERRORS AND TRIALS: HENRY AND LUCY FIKE'S CIVIL WAR

Drawing upon the 400 letters that Henry and Lucy Fike wrote to each other during the Civil War, Jeremy Neely considers the ways that two ordinary people--one a schoolteacher who became a Union quartermaster and the other a homemaker--navigated the greatest challenges that their nation and marriage faced. During the fall of 1864, Henry marched from St. Louis to the Kansas border, chasing Sterling Price's Confederate army and confronting the damage caused by years of guerrilla violence. Lucy, meanwhile, exemplified the outspoken patriotism of loyal women on the home front. In addition taking on the responsibilities once held by her absent husband and raising their spirited toddler, Ellie, she also spearheaded the local Union League and found herself constantly feuding with Copperhead neighbors. "For my part," Lucy wrote in 1863, "I feel like putting on britches now, and fighting." Together, the Fikes remind us how the war was indeed a shared experience which demanded extraordinary sacrifices by men, women, and children alike.

THE POLICY WHICH PUT DOWN THE WAR SHALL SETTLE THE RESULT: ROBERT VAN HORN AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF MISSOURI

Drawing upon the writings of Robert Van Horn, a newspaper editor, politician, and Union veteran, Jeremy Neely considers the ways that Missourians wrestled with the legacies of the Civil War. Many households saw Union victory and emancipation as an opportunity filled with revolutionary potential. Others, however, resisted the political, social, and economic changes that they saw as too radical. The year 1865 brought forth a new state constitution, but the struggles that followed over the meanings of freedom, equality, and loyalty showed that although the military conflict had ended, the deep divisions within Missouri continued.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: JeremyNeely@MissouriState.edu
Dan O'Neill graduated from the University of Missouri Journalism School and then spent 36 years as a sportswriter. From 1985 to 2017, he worked for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, where his primary beats were the Cardinals, the Blues and professional golf. In 2017, he was named the recipient of the distinguished Burnes-Broeg Award by the Missouri Athletic Club. He is the author of seven books and continues to contribute freelance pieces to Sports Illustrated, the USGA Journal, Memorial Magazine and other national media outlets.

Available Presentations

When the Blues Go Marching In
A 45-minute powerpoint presentation that includes still images, as well as video/audio highlights, and takes one through the colorful and dynamic history of Blues hockey in St. Louis. The Blues were part of NHL expansion in 1967 and waited 52 years before winning their first Stanley Cup championship in 2019. Along the way there have been lots of special players and memorable moments. I take questions after the presentation concludes.

Celebration: The Magic of the Cardinals in the 1980s
The 45-minute powerpoint presentation takes the audience back through the special decade of the 1980s, when the Cardinals had the best record in the National League and went to the World Series three times. There are lots of images and video highlights of the biggest moments - the trades, controversies (Don Denkinger) and memorable personalities, like Whitey Herzog, Ozzie Smith and Willie McGee. I take questions at the end of the presentation.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION
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KANSAS CITY BUFFALO SOLDIERS
CHAPTER

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

John "JR" Bruce is President of the KC Buffalo Soldiers Chapter and earned four Bronze Stars for Valor in Combat in Vietnam. Certified Oral Storyteller.


Donna Madison is Treasurer of the KC Buffalo Soldiers Chapter and the daughter of the Co-founder of the Alexander/Madison Chapter of KC Buffalo Soldiers. The world's first Buffalo Soldier chapter and forerunner of the 9th & 10th (Horse) Cavalry Association.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

BUFFALO SOLDIERS; SLAVE TO SOLDIER

One of the greatest and most successful human experiments in American history had its seminal roots in Missouri. Starting in 1866, Jefferson Barracks, Missouri was the receiving station for the men (and woman) of color following the Civil War. There the most unlikely of soldiers joined the United States Army in the United States Colored Troops (USCT) by the name of Cathay Williams, aka Pvt. William Cathay, the only known female to serve in what became known as the Buffalo Soldiers. Pvt. Isaac Johnson, the great grandfather of one of the presenters enlisted on May 6, 1866, and joined his company at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri. An original Buffalo Soldier, he traveled across Missouri by rail to the Western Frontier to serve with honor in the 38th and 24th Infantry, and later reenlisted into the famed 9th Cavalry. His story is the basis of "Slave to Soldier." All presentations are in period uniform/dress. Covering the evolution of USCT from the first ever engagement of black troops and Confederate forces during the Civil War happened in Bates County, Missouri at the Battle of Island Mound. Coming full circle, we discuss the development of o-shoots of the Buffalo Soldiers through WWII and Korea.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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ABOUT THE SPEAKER

William Garrett Piston is a native of Tennessee who moved to Springfield in 1988 and taught history at Missouri State University until he retired in 2017. He is the author, co-author, and editor of numerous books and articles, most of which focus on the Civil War in Missouri. He has twice been awarded the State Historical Society of Missouri’s Annual Book Award and has been a frequent speaker at professional, educational, and civic venues across the nation. He currently serves on the board of directors of the Wilson’s Creek National Battlefield Foundation and the Friends of the Missouri State Archives.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

SOWING THE WHIRLWIND: MISSOURI AND THE COMING OF THE CIVIL WAR

Missouri’s application for statehood and admission to the Union placed Missourians at a confluence of political, racial, and social issues that eventually tore the nation apart. Historian and author William Garrett Piston explores Missouri’s role in the famous compromises in 1820 and 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, and the Dred Scott Decision of 1857, to examine how and why the Constitution and the American political system were unable meet the stresses accompanying the expansion of slavery into the West.

REAPING THE WHIRLWIND: THE GUERRILLA CONFLICT IN CIVIL WAR MISSOURI

Popular focus on notorious guerillas has obscured the complexity of Missouri’s civil war within the Civil War. The consequences of the conflict were not limited to those who took up arms. Historian and author William Garrett Piston will focus on the disorder that engulfed Missouri’s social structures, economic systems, and political institutions between 1861 and 1865. Although the war was a great tragedy, it overturned gender and racial norms in ways that produced opportunities for women and African Americans even amid hardship.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

- Email: number5study@live.com
ALEX PRIMM

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Alex Sandy Primm has been an oral historian for 40+ years in the Ozarks. Beginning his journalism career in Vietnam and Pennsylvania, he realized his reporting was often the final account for many peoples' experiences. Gradually he developed the practical skills of a public historian. His projects have ranged from an oral history of a World War II US Navy ship to a multi-media project documenting people's feelings about trees. His recent book ‘Ozark Voices: Oral History from the Heartland’ is being made into an audio book for the blind via the Library of Congress.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

MISSOURI'S NATURAL HEROES

During our state’s recent bicentennial many appreciated famous people living in our state. But which other Missourians have been heroic? What does it mean to be a hero now? This presentation will describe little heralded Missouri heroes. It will also ask the audience to describe their heroes. We live in a time where we need heroes, especially in rural areas. This program's particular heroes are conservationists. Thanks in part to several state agencies, Missouri has been a renowned pioneer in restoring wildlife and protecting our environment. Many private citizens have helped establish a tradition of appreciating our natural heritage. Among individual conservation heroes: Thomas Hart Benton, artist; Daniel Boone, early explorer and friend to native people; George Washington Carver, agricultural pioneer, Leonard Hall, conservationist and farmer, Lloyd Stark, governor and nurseryman; Laura Ingalls Wilder, agricultural journalist and novelist. Others too depending on audiences. We will also explore Missouri’s natural areas inspiring these conservationists. Missouri has great parks, sensible development regulation, protection of farmland, drinking water and natural resources. We need to appreciate those who created a heritage of conservation respected around the world. We need to focus on what we value about rural Missouri.

ORAL HISTORY FOR EVERYONE

Drop modern Greece into the middle of America. That's roughly the size of the Ozarks: 50,000 square miles. But the Ozarks has one-tenth the number of residents. I've spent 40 years working as an oral historian traveling from Sallisaw, Oklahoma, to Saint Louis; Little Rock to Columbia and many towns in between. Here are my most inspiring stories. I want to share people I cannot forget. I hope to encourage others to interview families and friends. Oral history is a natural trait. We all appreciate true struggles. Local history influences everything we do. In early 2022 McFarland Co., an academic publisher in North Carolina, brought out my 'Ozark Voices: Oral History from the Heartland'. Some 60 chapters share accounts sponsored by the U.S. Army at Ft. Leonard Wood, the Forest Service, Geological Survey, National Park Service along the Ozark National Scenic Riverways and other institutions. This program on Ozark oral history will offer stories and encourage people to record their family history to make it useful for the future. Modern technology makes oral history possible for everyone. But it has to be done right to make it valuable. This foundation is what I offer.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr. Ann M. Raab earned her PhD in archaeology from the University of Kansas, and her MA degree in Anthropology at California State University, Northridge. She is Anthropology Instructor at Metropolitan Community College Longview, and a lecturer at Johnson County Community College. She has research interests related to the Civil War/Border Wars, in particular The Battle of Island Mound and General Orders No. 11. Ann’s work has been featured in numerous newspapers and publications, including Archaeology Magazine (April 2010). Most recently she appeared in 2 episodes of season 2 (2018) of the PBS series, America from the Ground Up.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

THEY FOUGHT LIKE TIGERS: THE SKIRMISH AT ISLAND MOUND AND THE FIRST ENGAGEMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN SOLDIERS IN THE CIVIL WAR

While many people are familiar with the historical significance of the Massachusetts 54th, as depicted in the movie “Glory,” few people are aware that the very first engagement of African American soldiers in the Civil War occurred on Missouri soil, not far from Butler in Bates County. Dr. Raab worked as an archaeologist at the site of one of Missouri’s newest state historic sites (Battle of Island Mound State Historic Site), commemorating this momentous event in our country’s history. Much of what is known about this event comes from military records of the time, or oral histories. Dr. Raab will share her experience working on the archaeological piece of this fascinating puzzle, as well as the social and cultural considerations of properly memorializing this moment in time.

UNLEASHING THE WOLF: GENERAL ORDER NO. 11 AND CIVIL WAR ON THE WESTERN BORDER

Archaeologist Dr. Ann M. Raab’s research in the Bates County, MO area offers a unique context for understanding not only the destructiveness of the Civil War, but also how the survivors of General Order No. 11 were able to recover. The Missouri-Kansas Border War and General Order 11 were like no other American war. On August 25th, 1863 General Order #11 was issued by Brigadier-General Thomas Ewing of the Union Army. This order, which took effect on September 9th of the same year, ordered the depopulation and suspension of civil rights of all residents of four counties in the state of Missouri, along the Kansas border. More than one hundred and fifty years later, this devastating historical event has received some historical attention, but until recently almost no archaeology had been done to better understand this critical moment in time. This talk will provide historical context for the events which led up to General Order #11, and Dr. Raab’s archaeological work in the Bates County area will be outlined and discussed, emphasizing how this helps us to understand the ways this important event had an impact on the daily lives of ordinary people.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: Ann.Raab@mcckc.edu
TOM RAFINER

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Tom Raner is an independent researcher having devoted twenty years recovering and documenting Missouri’s Burnt District (Jackson, Cass, and Bates counties) history. A University of Missouri graduate, he later earned an MA from the University of Missouri - Kansas City. Following a business career he turned full attention to the Burnt District. To date, he has published two histories and a biography, all anchored in antebellum and Civil War western Missouri. Tom has spoken in over 30 Missouri counties as well as numerous venues outside Missouri; historian and storyteller he captivates audiences of all ages and interests.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

CINDERS AND SILENCE: WESTERN MISSOURI’S BURNT DISTRICT

By September 30, 1863, 2,200 square miles of western Missouri had been reduced to ashes and all civilians not residing at a military station had been removed from the area. Their homes destroyed and destitute in near 100 degree heat the refugees scattered throughout the United States. Jackson, Cass, and Bates counties were a battleground from 1861 to 1863. Order No. 11, issued in August 1863, completed the devastation and rendered the area empty. Many historians deem Order No. 11 the single worst military attack on civilians of the Civil War. This presentation, as the title suggests, answers the questions (1) What happened? and (2) Why has it been forgotten? The chronological period covered is 1854 to 1870. Maps, photographs, music, and props bring this history to life for the audience. The presentation demonstrates the explosive and emotional issues that led to Civil War resonate loudly in western Missouri and how national issues flared in local communities and families. In conclusion, the presentation addresses how events in the burnt district informed international decisions made in the 20th century. This presentation does not use electronic devices.

EXODUS: ORDER NO. 11’S IMPACT ON WESTERN MISSOURI

Using the "Cass County Exodus" mural (original now in SHSM collection) as the focal point, the presentation takes the audience into the personal experiences of individual civilians and families forced to abandon their homes following the issuance of General Order No. 11. This presentation does not use electronic devices. Each member of the audience is given a copy of the mural. The mural, a collaborative effort, between the artist and the presenter, depicts actual refugees whose stories emerged from extensive research. The presentation goes beyond the refugees, bring the audience into the exodus itself. The stifling August heat, the dust drifts, the pervasive fear of death, the sounds of animals and humans, and the smell of destruction. The audience is quite literally asked to participate in a flood of frightened humanity driven to desperation in 1863. The journeys and the stories all told - and then there were none.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: kctokyo@aol.com
ANNETT RICHTER

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

A native of Halle, Germany, Annett Richter has taught courses in music history, music iconography, music bibliography, and writing about music at North Dakota State University, Concordia College and Minnesota State University (Moorhead, Minnesota), and the University of Missouri, Columbia. Her research focuses on intersections between music and painting, and, more broadly, on interrelationships among music, art, society, culture, and place. She received her Ph.D. in musicology from the University of Minnesota where she studied with art historian Karal Ann Marling. Richter’s dissertation is the first sustained musicological discussion of Missouri artist Thomas Hart Benton and his connections to music.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

THE FOLKSONG ARRANGEMENTS OF “SATURDAY NIGHT AT TOM BENTON’S” (DECCA, 1942): A VISUAL AND SOUNDING TRIBUTE TO THOMAS HART BENTON’S MUSICAL EVENINGS IN KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

This lecture focuses on Missouri artist and folklorist Thomas Hart Benton (1889-1975) and his connection to music. Music historian Annett Richter takes a closer look at “Saturday Night at Tom Benton’s,” an album of musical Americana recorded by Benton and released on the record label Decca in 1942. Its three folk song tracks (“Cindy,” “Wayfaring Stranger,” and “Old Joe Clark”) recall the musical evenings Benton hosted in his Kansas City home beginning in the later 1930s. He performed here on the harmonica alongside local composers, members of his family, and musicians from the Kansas City Philharmonic Orchestra. In this presentation, Richter enlightens listeners about the visual, aural, and verbal constituents of “Saturday Night.” Her combined discussion of Benton’s cover drawing and album notes, the photos of the musicians, the folk song arrangements, and the musical instruments heard on Benton’s record album and during his musical gatherings in his Kansas City home will show that, in this recording, Benton traverses self-constructed, unique musical worlds of fluid boundaries through both image and sound.

THOMAS HART BENTON AS MUSICIAN AND FOLKLORIST ON THE ISLAND MARTHA’S VINEYARD

This lecture continues the general subject matter of the previous one by focusing on Thomas Hart Benton’s musical activities, however this time in a location other than Kansas City. For over fifty years beginning in 1920, Benton spent his summers on Martha’s Vineyard, an island off the coast of Massachusetts. He came to the Vineyard together with his family members, all of whom were musicians as well. Richter shares her research and discoveries regarding Benton’s work as musician and folklorist on the Vineyard, a place where Benton fostered, in his summer home, musical traditions with his family and with Vineyard resident and visiting musicians. Listeners will see photos of Benton’s musical activities with his island group “Tom Benton and His Harmonica Boys” and learn about “Chilmark Suite” and “Gay Head Dance,” two Vineyard-inspired compositions written for a unique combination of instruments (harmonica, flute, and harpsichord) and recorded on “Saturday Night at Tom Benton’s” (1942). Richter shows that these artifacts reflect Benton’s efforts in preserving his self-created musical community, and she reveals what they tell us about Benton sharing with audiences during World War II: “real American-made music”—music inspired by those fellow musicians with whom he made it.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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MADELINE RISLOW

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr. Madeline Rislow is an art historian, currently serving as the senior manager of learning and engagement at The National Museum of Toys and Miniatures in Kansas City. She has taught art history at the Kansas City Art Institute, the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and, most recently, Missouri Western State University where she was associate professor and director of art history. While she is a specialist in Italian Renaissance art, she has also published and presented on contemporary art, virtual reality, and popular culture through varied frameworks.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

COLLECTING IN MISSOURI: HOW TWO KANSAS CITY WOMEN'S LOVE FOR "SMALL THINGS" GREW A NATIONAL MUSEUM

In 1982, Mary Harris Francis (1927-2005) and Barbara Hall Marshall (1923-2021) combined their respective passions for historic toys and fine-scale miniature art to form a museum near Kansas City's Country Club Plaza. The idea to do so came about after the two friends returned from a trip with new purchases for their ever-expanding collections. Francis' mother exclaimed that if they got one more thing, they'd have to start a museum! Forty years later, The National Museum of Toys and Miniatures (T/m) houses over 90,000 objects—and growing. Each miniature is a testament to the artist's keen ability to achieve incredible detail at a seemingly impossible scale. A broad array of toys—the largest number on public display in the nation—serves as a catalyst for conversation reflecting on the connections between past and present. Rislow will delve into what it means to "collect" in Missouri. Using the backdrop of T/m, the presentation will explore how we all share stories and create memories through the process of collecting. The presentation will include highlights from the broader T/m collection. Venues have the option to customize content to focus more specifically on either toys or fine-scale miniatures.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: rislowm@toyandminiaturemuseum.org
JOHN DRAKE ROBINSON

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

John Robinson grew up in the Ozarks, and graduated from Mizzou J-School. Along the way he formed a deep abiding love for Missouri's culture. He served Missouri as director of tourism immediately following the tragic events of 9/11. Beyond all that, he sailed on the Queen Mary, held a tarantula, moved grand pianos for a while, and sat in a gas chamber. He was a field producer for America's Most Wanted. John is an avid sailor, and survived Hurricane Omar and Tropical Storm Gamma. But his sloop was destroyed by Hurricane Dorian in 2019. John and Cheryl live in Columbia.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

A ROAD TRIP INTO AMERICA'S HIDDEN HEART

Together, my car and I have traveled every mile of every road on Missouri's highway map, a 300,000-mile journey to discover the real America beyond the interstate veneer. Real People. Obscure places, Forgotten facts. Along the roadsides we found stories in diners and dives and dead-ends, in graveyards and courthouses and museums, we found history and culture beyond the beaten path, and tales that shout out from America's flyover country. During this 13-year odyssey I kept notes in 40+ steno notebooks, and eventually wrote the stories that appear in my books and magazine submissions. My speakers bureau presentation will explain why I set out on this journey, and tell some of the stories I encountered along the way. For each audience, I will select stories and subject matter custom-tailored to their interests. There are 350 million different reasons why people travel. But one common thread runs through them all: stories. People want to hear stories. I'll give 'em my story, and within that road trip framework, tell more tales.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: cjrobin@socket.net
CAROL SHELTON

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Carole Shelton is a retired educator from the St. Louis City Schools, a professional storyteller for more than twenty-five years and an author. As a storyteller it is a calling to share the real life experiences, the myths, the legends, and folk tales of all people. Story telling evokes the imagination, it empowers, it educates, and it entertains. It is through the art of storytelling that our actions can reach new heights and contribute so much more to ourselves, our families, our communities and the world.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

PORTRAITS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN IN MO; BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE CIVIL WAR

This program offers first and third person portrayals of Black women in Missouri; creating biographical sketches which illustrates the impact of enslavement and pending freedom upon their lives.

PLEASE CHOOSE TWO OF THE FOLLOWING: Mary Robinson, Elizabeth Hobbs Keckley, Lucey Delaney, Harriet Scott, Annie Malone, Sarah Graves, Marie Rogers Martin

ONE DAY AT THE 1904 WORLDS FAIR

Examining the truths and myths of the day African Americans were to be allowed into the 1904 Worlds Fair. What really happened July 13, 1904.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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DOUGLAS SHIPLEY

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr. Douglas Shipley is a retired FBI Supervisory Special Agent. Shipley grew up listening to the stories of his older relatives and compared them to the American History he was learning in school. He realized that traditional history narratives exclude the voices of those persons colonized, conquered, or enslaved. Shipley focuses his research and presentation efforts on the exploration of the lives of Black people in Missouri and documenting them for a wider audience. Shipley holds a Master’s in Education, specializing in Training and Performance Improvement and a Doctor of Business Administration in Leadership.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

HARRISON SCHOOL: TIPTON’S “COLORED” SCHOOL

Like other towns in Missouri’s “Little Dixie,” Tipton, Missouri was settled by proslavery individuals from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia. From 1890 to 1957, Harrison School (the “colored” school) operated as a racially segregated school. Sharing the complete history of Tipton, Missouri’s first fully funded Black public school, Dr. Douglas S. Shipley reveals the origins of why and how Harrison School was created. Through historical documents, photographs, newspaper articles, and oral and written histories, Shipley describes how from its inception and construction, through its maintenance for over sixty years, the Harrison School exemplified the United States codified racial system of “separate but equal.” The goal of this presentation is to encourage individuals and groups to develop and gain a deeper appreciation of the early history of Black student education in Missouri and the obstacles presented toward receiving that education. The Harrison School is a microcosm of the forces that shaped Missouri’s segregated educational system, which while separate was never equal.

SELF-DEFINING ROLES OF BLACK WOMEN BABY BOOMERS

Dr. Douglas Shipley’s presentation seeks to expand the viewing aperture through which American history is presented. This presentation was conceived to highlight a concept that traditional historic narratives are not neutral, and that is particularly true within curriculums that exclude women’s and Black people’s perspectives. Therefore, this presentation uses a phenomenological approach for the stories from Black female alumnae students of Tipton, Missouri’s Harrison School. From 1890 to 1957, Harrison School was racially segregated and the only public school available to Black students surrounding Tipton, Missouri. Like other towns in Missouri’s “Little Dixie,” Tipton, Missouri was settled by slaveholders from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia. Harrison School alums are the descendants of the enslaved laborers brought into the area with those settlers. These alumnae's histories provide a unique insight into the lived experiences of people whose accounts have gone unrecorded. With additional sources for context, the interviews highlight these women's self-defined roles in society juxtaposed against the historic roles of their ancestors.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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Marideth Sisco is a retired journalist, storyteller and singer-songwriter who participated in making a low budget film about the country of her roots, crafting the soundtrack, finding musicians, choosing songs. She then toured the nation, first representing the film at festivals in the U.S. and internationally, and then toured with the soundtrack, playing in 27 cities in the U.S. and Canada, logging 12,000 miles—in 29 days. The film: the Ozarks noir Winter’s Bone. Along the way, the film garnered 4 Oscar nominations and put Ozarks Roots and Routes firmly in the national spotlight.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

A HISTORY OF SURVIVAL IN THE HARDSCRABBLE OZARKS: USE IT UP, WEAR IT OUT, MAKE IT DO, OR DO WITHOUT

Stories, wild tales, a few songs and serious discussion of the joys and travails of Ozarks life, covering who we are, how we got here and what the journey into these hard hills has made of us, from frontier times to the present. Navigating this ancient, tortured geography has affected how the Ozarker has viewed and used language, changed habits, formed customs, created a unique mythology, influenced demographics and made our heritage one from which we can glean many lessons. Topics may include the Ozarks Karkaghne, the black panther and the lazy hillbilly.

THE MAKING OF WINTER'S BONE, AN AUTHENTIC DEPICTION OF THE UNDERBELLY OF OZARKS LIFE.

How a tiny Independent production company consisting mainly of two city girls who, before they encountered the galleys of Daniel Woodrell’s dark novel had never lived in the country nor heard of a place called The Ozarks. Armed with a tiny budget of $2 million (for a film to be called independent they only have to prove they spent less that $50 million) how did they capture and distill an absolutely authentic version of the real hardscrabble Ozarks, and with it, grab top Sundance honors, umpteen festival wins and four Oscar nominations. First o, they went to the general area where the story was set, found folks living the way the novel described, rented those people's homes and bought the clothes out of their closets. They hired local amateurs for all but the leads, and they hired me to produce authentic Ozarks music. The rest is history, and a pretty entertaining story. I describe their ingenious route to accurately portraying the land of my roots.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: maridethsisco@gmail.com
JEFFREY SMITH

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Jerey Smith is professor emeritus of history after 26 years teaching history and a nationally recognized scholar writing about cemeteries and death studies. He is author of The Rural Cemetery Movement: Places of Paradox in Nineteenth-Century America. He has performed first-person presentations portraying Andrew Carnegie, P. T. Barnum, William Clark, George Washington, and George Catlin. He is currently writing a book of narrative cemetery stories titled Grave Mistakes.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

CEMETERIES AND MEMORY: CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS IN CEMETERIES

Cemeteries are seen as both sacred spaces and secular tools for articulating and preserving the collective memory a community wants to preserve. The monuments, cemetery design, and gravestones hold a version of a community's collective memory. When additional monuments are placed in these spaces, they become part of that memory as well. Presented by a nationally recognized scholar in cemeteries and death studies, this lecture will examine the ways Confederate monuments in cemeteries represent a special case for understanding the Lost Cause in the 21st century.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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CHAD STEBBINS

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Chad Stebbins is a professor of journalism and the director of the Institute of International Studies at Missouri Southern State University. He is also the executive director of the International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors. Stebbins is the author of "All the News Is Fit to Print: Biography of a Country Editor," published by the University of Missouri Press in 1998, and "Joplin's Connor Hotel," published by The History Press in 2021.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

JOPLIN'S CONNOR HOTEL

Determined to build "the nest hostelry in the Southwest," Joplin's first millionaire spared no expense on the magnificent Connor Hotel. Opened in 1908, the hotel would serve as the city's main gathering spot for the next 50 years. The Connor hosted hundreds of conventions, outlaws such as "Pretty Boy" Floyd and more reputable guests, including star athletes, Harry Truman, Richard Nixon, Eleanor Roosevelt, Gene Autry, and Robert Wadlow, the world's tallest man. Local residents rallied to save the Connor in the 1970s, but couldn't stop its demolition and tragic ending that caught the nation's attention.

TOM CONNOR: JOPLIN'S MILLIONAIRE ZINC KING

Born in Ireland, Tom Connor lived the classic American rags-to-riches story. He witnessed several of the Civil War's major battles as a newsboy with the 8th Ohio Voluntary Infantry and then spent a decade wandering around the U.S. working various odd jobs before ending up in southwest Missouri. Connor soon developed a knack for knowing which tracts of land had rich zinc deposits. He bought thousands of acres of land containing the ore and was a millionaire by the time he turned 31. Unlike Joplin's other mining kings, Connor never built a mansion for himself, preferring to spend his money on others.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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CHRIS SUTTON

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Whether performing at schools, historical sites, state parks, or on a train, Chris leaves you with an unforgettable performance! He has done stage, theatre, television commercials, modeling and voice over work. He has also worked as an interpreter, guide & storyteller for the Saint Louis Zoo and for Missouri state parks. He performs brilliant and intriguing living history programs that are done in period clothing through a first person account of someone who lived and experienced each adventure. With his soothing voice, he brings a gripping sense of awe to every presentation and leaves the audience with an unforgettable experience!

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

CIVIL WAR RIOTS IN MISSOURI

The Civil War Riots in Missouri - On the brink of civil war, Missouri is torn between Northern & Southern alliances. Both sides know the key to winning the war is securing the arsenals. Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis put their faith in two different men to accomplish this in St. Louis, but only one will prevail and make his mark in Civil War history. Through a first hand account of a Union officer, discover what happens & relive the events that changed our nation forever!

THE HISTORY OF TAPS!

Of all the bugle calls in the world, none has more notoriety or fame than TAPS. TAPS is the most famous bugle call in the world and one solid cornerstone of American Military history, but do you know the incredible story behind it? One night in July of 1862, in the midst of the American Civil War, an inspirational tradition was born from an unforgettable tragedy.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Phone: (314) 324-3451
ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Elizabeth Terry is a historian in St. Louis, Missouri. She earned her Bachelors in history from the University of Nebraska at Kearney and her Masters in public history from James Madison University in Virginia. She has served as Director of Archives for a 180-year-old church for fifteen years. Additionally, Elizabeth conducts independent research on everything from family histories to historic railroads. Elizabeth has published two books, Oysters to Angus: Three Generations of the St. Louis Faust Family and Ethnic St. Louis, and is researching her next publication on St. Louis’ impact on westward migrants of the Oregon and California Trails.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

OYSTERS TO ANGUS: THREE GENERATIONS OF THE ST. LOUIS FAUST FAMILY

Tony Faust entered rough and rowdy St. Louis in the mid-nineteenth century. As patriarch of the Faust family, he lived lavishly while rebelling against those who wished to shut down his saloon. Tony’s savvy son, Edward, rose to the top of the St. Louis business elite, and in so doing, shunned his German-American heritage. In contrast, Tony Faust’s steady grandson Leicester quietly built his farm in rural St. Louis County. That land became his legacy: a park built upon the proud Faust name. Through it all, the Fausts navigate the timeline alongside the iconic Busch family, firmly entrenching themselves as movers and shakers of the St. Louis scene. A narrative that has never been told, Oysters to Angus is historically important to both St. Louis as well as greater Missouri, where German immigration and rural growth developed in its own right.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: eterryhistory@gmail.com
ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Ria Unson is a Filipino American artist in St. Louis. She was born in the Philippines and emigrated to the U.S. at age 13. Unbeknownst to her, Ria's great grandfather was brought to the 1904 World's Fair after the American colonization of the Philippines. By sheer coincidence (or destiny) she moved to the historic neighborhood that once housed the Philippine Exhibit at the fair. Her work explores the continuing legacies of imperialism on identity, migration, and culture. Ria's art will be in the permanent collection of the History Museum for the 120th anniversary of the Fair.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

FILIPINOS AT THE 1904 WORLD'S FAIR: A LEGACY OF RACE AND EMPIRE

One of the most popular attractions at the 1904 World's Fair was the Philippine Exhibit, a 47-acre site that for nine months became home to over 1,000 people on display. Ria Unson, St. Louis-based Filipino American artist and researcher, traces the legacy of the fair as a descendant of one of those people. Learn about how the image of Filipinos constructed at the fair was a method used to gain support for American imperialism and to domesticate the immigrant workers of St. Louis.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: riasharon@gmail.com
ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Steve Wiegenstein taught at a number of Missouri colleges, including Drury University, Culver-Stockton College, and Central Methodist University, until his retirement. A native of the Ozarks with roots in Madison, Iron, and Reynolds counties, he is the author of three historical novels set in the Missouri Ozarks. His most recent book, a collection of short stories, was a finalist for the 2021 PEN/Faulkner Award in Fiction. He now writes full-time and is at work on a continuation of his historical novel series.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

MISSOURI'S UTOPIAN COMMUNITIES

Nineteenth-century Missouri was home to several alternative communities, often termed "utopian communities" for their emphasis on social betterment and a different way of life. But although their neighbors sometimes considered these utopians odd or eccentric, they were often within the mainstream of progressive social thinking of the time. Steve Wiegenstein has been researching these communities for decades, both as a scholar and in his role as a leading historical novelist. In this presentation, he will invite discussion of Missouri's well-known and lesser-known utopian communities, including religious communes, secular communities, and those in between.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: steve@stevewiegenstein.com
ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr. Loftin C. Woodiel is a dynamic university professor, criminal justice professional and corporate security executive with a successful track record of performing with excellence. A Professor with Missouri Baptist University’s Criminal Justice & Corporate Security Leadership graduate program, Dr. Woodiel is a nationally recognized researcher and communicator with a demonstrated ability to achieve global understanding and compliance through quality discovery and presentation. Woodiel is a USAF veteran who excelled in three leadership tiers as an innovative, results-driven law enforcement and security professional. As an upfront international security executive, Dr. Woodiel possesses the business acumen to influence and drive change.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

WILLIAM C. QUANTRILL, THE FATHER OF POST-CIVIL WAR MISSOURI BANDITRY

During the American Civil War, Captain William C Quantrill commanded a band of Confederate irregulars who reeked death and destruction throughout the Missouri and Kansas borders. Tactical and technical perfection was a trademark of his organization. Prior to the war, Quantrill was a school teacher in the state of Ohio. A number of Quantrill’s men continued to hone their skillset, maintained these deviant behaviors and channeled them into post-war career banditry opportunities; e.g., James Robert Cummins, the James Brothers (Jessie and Frank), and the Younger Brothers (Cole, Bob and Jim). Just as a teacher motivates his students to adopt specific standards of academic and social behavior, did Quantrill’s pedagogical skillset propel his subordinates into deviant careers? This interdisciplinary research design employs historical context analysis, psychological evaluation of motivation in a running text, and the application of criminological theory.

MISSOURI THROUGH THE “BELFAST LENS”

“The Troubles” of Northern Ireland have been defined as an ethno-nationalist conflict with so many moving parts and deep feelings that the conflict lasted for 30 years. The battle was political and nationalistic, ethnic and sectarian, with unionists and loyalists, Ulster Protestants and Irish Nationalists & Republicans (mostly Irish Catholics) at odds. The Troubles heated up when the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association sought to end discrimination against the Catholic nationalist minority by the Protestant unionist government. In attempting to suppress the protests law enforcement, the Royal Ulster Constabulary who were in large number Protestant, were accused of sectarianism and police brutality. Protests turn to civil disobedience, riots to counter-insurgency, and guerilla tactics to segregation. British troops were called on to keep the peace, which began a near 40-year occupation. Come with us as we historically draw the parallels between Northern Ireland of yesteryear and Missouri (and the United States) of today – discrimination, lines in the political sand, hatred for opposing views, riots, counter-insurgency. Let us understand the potential path we travel. Could Missouri and America become the next Northern Ireland? We shall see, through the “Belfast Lens”.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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