



National Museum of Forest Service History

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A 501 C3 Nonprofit Corporation

Oral Historian Position

The National Museum of Forest Service History, is a nonprofit organization independent from the U.S. Forest Service whose mission is to share the rich story and history of America's conservation legacy. Located in beautiful Missoula, Montana our mission is supported by a 55,000-item archival collection, virtual and traveling exhibits, and a 31-acre campus located one mile west of the Missoula Airport. The Museum is in the final stages of a \$10.5M Capital Campaign to build the National Conservation Legacy Center- a world class, one-of-a-kind conservation history center.

Position Overview

The Oral Historian position is a full-time position, currently funded for three years. It is the desire of the Museum to merge this position into the curatorial staff of the new National Conservation Legacy Center once completed (anticipated Spring 2024).

Primary focus of this new position will be developing a comprehensive Oral History program including:

1. Collection of oral histories from individual USFS retirees and others
 - Conduct in-person and zoom oral histories utilizing both audio and video recordings.
 - Transcribe oral histories utilizing industry standards of best practice
 - Under the guidance of the Museum archivist, enter oral histories into the Museum's Past Perfect database
 - Develop a priority list of:
 - individuals whose stories are in danger of being lost
 - Under-represented groups such as the "people behind the scenes"- the people that made the organization function on a daily basis
 - Stories that may be incorporated into upcoming Museum exhibits, at the National Conservation Legacy Center, traveling exhibitions, and virtual, online exhibits
 - Oral histories will be catalogued and made available through the Museum repository and online collection
2. Development of a centralized national database of oral histories that have been collected but are "hidden". There are hundreds of USFS retiree oral histories which have been conducted and are scattered throughout the U.S. in libraries, Universities, etc. No catalog exists of these oral histories and they can be difficult to find. A national catalog of which institutions hold what oral histories will be immensely helpful in sharing these stories which are currently unknown and hidden.
3. Build upon the current Museum program of oral history collection surrounding a specific topic. These oral histories are larger in scope and include many individuals sharing their oral histories focusing on their experience surrounding a specific topic, accompanied by a public panel discussion or other event. Topics and coordination are developed with the support of the Museum's Oral History Committee and could be a scope of work within the agency or an event. This position assists with administration of the Annual Oral History projects. These projects/events are focused on significant or defining cultural or historical events that shifted or transformed the

US Forest Service (history/culture). These annual projects are anticipated to encompass 2 to 3 days, and includes completion of about a dozen interviews on sight, in Missoula, MT; and similar to the Higgins Ridge project, a panel or other learning module may complete the event, depending on specific topics.

Other projects and priorities may surface as we develop this comprehensive oral history program.

This position is full time and may require significant travel for in-person oral history collection. The Oral Historian will be based at the Museum's current offices located in midtown Missoula.

The successful candidate understands that Oral Historians do more than just record history. They find out not only what happened, but also why it happened. Oral Historians focus on the richness of human experiences, and convey those experiences to other people.

The ideal candidate will possess the following qualifications:

- Degree from an accredited institution with a specialization or interest in oral history, journalism, museum studies, or other related field preferred. Equivalent experience will be considered in lieu of MA.
- Minimum of three years of professional work experience in developing or running oral history program
- Knowledge of oral history professional practice, methodology, theory, and ethics, particularly as applied in museum functions.
- Experience with audio recording, editing and transcription technology, equipment, and software; proficiency in audio editing.
- Excellent interpersonal skills.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively
- Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail, with the ability to handle multiple simultaneous projects and to prioritize work to meet deadlines
- Proficiency in MS Office Suite (Word, Excel, Outlook), as well as the ability to learn new software applications, such as Past Perfect. Previous Past Perfect experience a plus
- Ability to travel domestically including nights and weekends (25–40%)
- Strong understanding and demonstration of written and visual communication
- Ability to gather information through extensive research
- Journalistic understanding of how to capture raw emotion that others can relate to
- A connoisseur of good narratives- as much a Journalist as a Historian
- Ability to direct and oversee interns and volunteers, depending on program development

General Information

- Full-time position
- Competitive salary and limited benefits package
- Works closely with the Curator/ Archivist to organize and catalog oral histories
- This position reports directly to the Executive Director

To be considered for this position, please send cover letter, resume, salary requirements, and contact information for three professional references to lisa.tate@forestservicemuseum.org by June 24, 2021