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FINAL REPORT

KENTUCKY CRAFT ENCYCLOPEDIA Planning Session

On November 7, 2012, the Kentucky Craft History and Education Association held a planning session for the Kentucky Craft Encyclopedia at the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft in Louisville. The session was attended by over 20 representatives of the crafts community from throughout the state.

Fran Redmon, President of KCHEA explained the function of the meeting and thanked people for attending. Aldy Milliken, Executive Director of KMAC, extended a welcome to Louisville and KMAC. Participants then introduced themselves and their affiliations.

Dr. Jamil Zainaldin, President of the Georgia Humanities Council, described the development of the virtual New Georgia Encyclopedia and included points to consider for the Kentucky Crafts Encyclopedia. Philis Alvic followed his presentation with a brief overview of the Kentucky Craft Encyclopedia. The afternoon concluded with a group discussion led by Joanna Hay. Summaries of these program items follow.

KCHEA would like to thank KMAC for hosting the session. The Kentucky Arts Council through the KPAN program provided the services of Joanna Hay. KCHEA thanks major donors Lila and Richard Bellando, Dr. Steven and Susan Goldstein, Marlene Grissom, Dr. Frederick G. Heath, Ellen Karpf, Leonard Leight, Elizabeth Mays, and Mary , L. Reed, who contributed to the program costs.

Kentucky Craft Encyclopedia Committee, Philis Alvic, Chair
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NEW GEORGIA ENCYCLOPEDIA by Jamil Zainaldin

Summary of presentation given at Kentucky Craft Encyclopedia Planning Session November 7, 2012

Dr. Zainaldin presented about the development of the New Georgia Encyclopedia (NGE), which was initiated in 1999. He addressed their approach, issues considered in its implementation, planning and partnerships, and funding. He pointed out decisions that affected the direction of the project along the way. He shared how technology makes the online site more dynamic and creates exposure. It's now in its second redevelopment, based on improvements in current technology.

Jamil pointed out the importance of having a vision, and staying true to that vision even though in the beginning the path may not be clear. The first step to consider is the audience, by asking, "who cares"? What about the concept of an online Encyclopedia is compelling? There can be many reasons, but some of them could include, "sense of place", the story, state pride, artifacts (objects), and being part of a pioneering effort. All of these can be part of a Kentucky effort.

From there, the presentation of the encyclopedia will need to pass the audience test. At what level of readership will the text be written? The needs of the audience must be understood. Audiences may include students/children, cultural tourists, and other specialized or professional audiences (e.g. genealogists, researchers, etc.). Consideration needs to be given to how people utilize the Internet and what will drive the audience to the site. In other words, the audience may have an interest in the material, while not even knowing it's there. For the Georgia Encyclopedia, Wikipedia and Google are significant portals to the site. Thought should be given to what the site needs to do and what it needs to look like. Questions related to visuals, functionality, navigation will need to be answered. How can a feeling of harmony within the site be created?

In looking at the organization of content, there are many considerations to address. For example, the reading level of the material (high brow vs. low brow). The NGE is written at the 8th grade level. Will the content be created, replicated, or a combination of both? What rights and permissions might be involved? Will it be multi-disciplinary? Will it include both words and images?

Jamil expressed the importance of finding focus by identifying the essence of the project. For the New Georgia Encyclopedia, focus was created through the recognition that it would be "article" based. Meaning, it would be interpretive, copy would be edited, fact-checked and signed, and a bibliography would be needed. Integrity for the work must be established.

Planning needs to address who will do the work, i.e. who will be hired? The Georgia Humanities Council is the lead organization for the NGE allocating time, money and people to the project, and acting as the fiscal agent. Jamil emphasized the importance of partnerships, and strength in numbers. The development of the concept was addressed by scholars and experts. For content, assistance was provided through the University of Georgia Press. The University of Georgia assisted with the technology platform (Galileo). Support is also provided by the Georgia Governor's office in a partnering role. The issue of function, i.e. reference work, was developed by librarians. Fact-checking was done by grad students.

Technology has advanced and there are simpler, more functional, non-proprietary options available today, such as content management system platforms. Jamil stressed the importance of Evergreen (open source) a cataloging interface library technology and the necessity of obtaining a web developer.

Funding for the NGE included private sources, foundations, individual and in-kind contributions, support from higher education, and state and federal resources. The University of Georgia maintains and houses the site. He indicated that the traffic numbers generated by the site are a convincing argument for its success. Today the NGE generates 1 million views a month. It represents an important public/private partnership and a distinctive and never-ending project.

***Prepared by Fran Redmon
November 11, 2012***

VIRTUAL KENTUCKY CRAFT ENCYCLOPEDIA

Summary of presentation by Philis Alvic

The Kentucky Craft History and Education Association (KCHEA) is initiating the development of a virtual Kentucky Craft Encyclopedia (KCE). The idea for the KCE came out of the Forum that KCHEA held in November of 2009. At this meeting, KCHEA outlined our mission and goals and asked craftspeople and representatives of craft related organizations for suggestions for future projects and collaborative ventures. The KCHEA Board compiled the long list of suggestions and ranked them according to goals and feasibility. The Kentucky Craft Encyclopedia came out on the top of the list.

KCHEA formed a committee to begin how one would go about developing a virtual craft encyclopedia. Encyclopedia models both in print publications and in Internet sites were sought. Investigation into the New Georgia Encyclopedia <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org> and Craft Revival: Shaping North Carolina Past and Present <http://www.wcu.edu/library/DigitalCollections/CraftRevival/> presented many elements to consider in constructing the KCE. Several writers who submitted articles to encyclopedias shared their experiences and suggestions.

The craft encyclopedia project is part of KCHEA's mission to gather, conserve, and present the history and on-going impact of crafts in Kentucky. An encyclopedia of Kentucky crafts on the Internet will serve as a portal to information about all aspects of crafts. Therefore the definition of crafts will be all those possible aspects that a participant might search. Information will be provided on the website with links to other sources for more extensive study.

The KCE will be a resource for schools, an information destination for makers and appreciators of crafts, a link to organizations and institutions concerned with crafts, and a starting place for further scholarship documenting Kentucky's crafts. The KCE will strive to be inclusive—embracing different types of crafts; craft makers and supporters; organizations that exhibit, market, or provide services to crafts; historical periods and geographic areas of Kentucky.

The KCE will base entries on current scholarship and writings about Kentucky crafts and will also encourage investigation into areas where research has been scarce. An Advisory Board will be established to guide the development of the project.

The KCE will rely on the expertise of the many organizations and institutions in Kentucky that deal with different aspects of the crafts world. The KCE partners will assist with presenting a broad view of Kentucky's craft history and help in promoting the craft encyclopedia. Since this project will take many years to launch, funding will proceed in stages and draw from a variety of public and private sources. The KCE partners will demonstrate to funders wide support in making the Kentucky Craft Encyclopedia an informative, comprehensive, and exciting website.

Kentucky Craft Encyclopedia – Group Discussion

Facilitated by Joanna Hay, Summarized by Philis Avic

Purpose and Value

Groups that will be served by the Kentucky Craft Encyclopedia

- Educators
- Academics
- Grad students
- Elementary and secondary teachers
- Collectors of crafts
- Curators
- Researchers
- Cultural and Heritage Tourists
- Tourism Bureaus
- Crafts sales venues

Benefits

- Documentation before lost
- Connecting craft and place
- Merchandizing aid
- Connecting the maker with the object
- Advancing knowledge of crafts in KY history
- Locating where things are

Inclusion

- Historical periods
- Identify minorities, different ethnic groups, religious groups
- Wide spectrum from household crafts, to job-related crafts, to fine arts
- Crafts as part of migration
- Historical context – big picture

Resource for

- Students
- Storing accumulated history of organizations
- Scholarly research completed and in progress

Content

Format

- Articles signed by authors
- Keyword searches
- Concepts relating facts
- Prioritizing content
- Written by experts
- Editorial guidelines and evaluation
- Criteria for inclusion
- Divide content into sections – section leaders
- Maintenance of site

Scope

- Wide
- Primary sources but with context
- Links to primary sources and additional information
- Understanding different types of audiences and their needs
- Develop metadata
- Constantly evolving and adding

Next steps

- Sequence for development
- Applying for a planning grant
- Expanding planning committee