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Practicum Experience at State Library of Ohio

By Kirstin Krumsee

In the summer of 2009, I had the opportunity to fulfill the practicum requirement for my Master of Library and Information Science at the State Library of Ohio. Working primarily with Shannon Kupfer, I was able to gain experience digitizing government documents, creating finding aids for rare materials and learning about many different aspects of the profession. I also was given the opportunity to conduct a tutorial for State Library staff on how to effectively use Twitter to interact with the community.

However, I think the greatest thing I learned while doing my practicum was that things in any library can be fun and surprising. A number of my days were spent poring through old, dusty ledgers maintained by State Librarians from the late 1800s, cleaning what could be cleaned and encapsulating loose pages. That might not seem very exciting, but one day I was cleaning away and an old item request fell from between two pages. I glanced at it and was immediately taken aback by the signature, William McKinley. It can sometimes be easy to forget that you're dealing with real history when working in the State Library, but I surely appreciated that reminder. It made my whole experience more exciting – knowing that at any moment a piece of the state's history could fall into my lap.



Since finishing my practicum and graduating from Kent State University, I've had the opportunity to work for both the Upper Arlington Public Library and the Ohioana Library Association. In the latter, I was able to continue working with social media and rare materials related to Ohio. I also continued to have the opportunity to interact with State Library staff through joint efforts between the two libraries.

I thoroughly enjoyed my practicum experience at the State Library of Ohio and am confident that the skills I gained there will continue to help me throughout my library science career.