

Stearns History Museum



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Mission: *The Stearns History Museum connects people to the power of history and culture by collecting, preserving, and interpreting its historical and cultural resources.*

Vision: *We envision the Stearns History Museum as a place where citizens of central Minnesota honor their diverse history and recognize that the past is relevant to the present and is a road map to the future.*

About Us:

Stearns County Historical Society began in 1936 and in 1973 the organization began shaping itself into a professional museum.

In 1982, groundbreaking took place for the current facility which features exhibit galleries, a research center, archives, children's playroom, museum store, and meeting rooms. The museum, nationally accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, goes far beyond the vision held in those early days.

The Stearns History Museum (SHM) serves the citizens of Stearns County, and draws audiences nationally as well as globally.

Throughout the year, SHM holds exhibits, programs and activities that educate, entertain, and inspire visitors and museum members. The facility is part of a 100-acre nature park with walking trails, ponds, and a skateboard park.

SHM is an Equal Opportunity Employer of staff and volunteer personnel and does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sexual orientation, non-job related handicap or disability.

Building and Resources

Archives/Research Center

The Research Center and archives contains maps, newspapers, genealogical files, oral history tapes and over 500,000 photographic images. The Research Center specializes in Luxembourg and German genealogical materials as well as Stearns County granite, dairy industries, sports, historic preservation and architectural information.

Exhibits

SHM has 8,000 square feet of display space. Exhibits change and topics vary from the history of immigrant populations, local businesses, and agriculture, to folk art and textiles.

A variety of long term exhibits are available for viewing. While content changes their topic remains consistent. They include:

- *On Solid Ground* Granite industry in Stearns County.
- *ArtiFind* 'I Spy' inspired display of artifacts from collections.
- *Flowing Through Time* An environmental history of Stearns County.
- *Pan Motor Company* Sam Pandolfo's bittersweet story of car production in St. Cloud.

Collections and Curation Facilities

Two on-site storerooms (4,000 sq. ft.) and one off-site building (8,250 sq. ft.).

Museum Store

The museum store sells a variety of books by local authors, various area maps, and gift items.

Internship Information

Qualifications

- Students must have a faculty advisor from their respective academic institution sign off on internship.
- While students from all disciplines are encouraged to apply, preference is given to applicants majoring in History, Public History, Library Science and Anthropology.

Intern Obligations

Intern must complete a minimum of 120 hours per semester as designated in the internship learning contract, unless specified otherwise in agreement between SHM and the intern's faculty advisor.

SHM Advisor

The role of advisor (museum staff) is to help manage the intern as he/she progresses during his/her internship. The advisor will also be communicating with the intern's faculty advisor.

Internship Training

The premise for an internship is for the individual to learn a set of skills within the following areas listed below. Each intern devotes a minimum of required hours to a specific area based on their long-term professional goals.

Collections/Exhibition

Interns will learn the skills of artifact cataloging and exhibit design, preparation and installation.

Experiences include:

- Learn how to photograph items for the collection
- Assist in the development and installation of exhibits when possible
- Learn the process of accession museum artifacts including writing artifact descriptions

Education and Programming

Interns will assist in creating and implementing diverse and appealing events/programs for visitors of all ages.

Experiences include:

- Learning docent techniques for groups of all ages (public speaking)
- Research logistics for patron tours and events
- Contribute to research used for programming and on various exhibits
- Learn the story of the museum and its exhibits
- Work with students from K-8 grades

Research Center

Interns will provide information for researchers, genealogists, staff members, students, professionals, and interested community members who interact with our facility.

Experiences include:

- Assist patrons with research requests
- Prepare finding aids for archival records
- Contribute to ongoing Research Center projects
- Learn basic archival techniques
- Initiate project ideas
- Learning to research by using multiple fact-checking methods
- Gain an understanding of quality patron service
- Work both independently and with other museum staff; using creative approaches to successfully complete project

Publication

In addition, interns have the opportunity to write an article for *Crossings* magazine. First published in January 1975, *Crossings* is a publication of the Stearns History Museum for its members. This is a unique opportunity for interns to gain experience in writing original content and publishing for a well-established magazine. While it is highly encouraged, it is not a requirement for the intern.

Capstone

Ultimately, the internship requires a lively, detailed, narrative journal of the time spent while interning at SHM. The journal must reflect, illustrate and connect interns' goals to actual hands-on experiences at the SHM. Additional internship requirements are up to the intern's faculty advisor.

Internship Learning Plan

Use the following grid to track your learning experiences here at SHM

My professional goal(s):
Objectives:
Methods:
Results:

